

# OUT OF CHAOS

*A PERSONAL STORY OF THE REVOLUTION  
IN RUSSIA*

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BY

PRINCE MICHAEL TRUBETZKOI

TRANSLATED BY

EDITH LIVERMORE

'We feel ourselves akin to those great spirits  
That struggled out of Chaos to the light.'

GOETHE.

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EDWARD ARNOLD

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## PREFACE

My life, as I describe it in these pages, may seem unreal and strange ; yet it is the natural outcome of an insupportable condition, and typical of thousands and tens of thousands of lives in Russia under our present crushing system. I am one of the rank and file whose eyes have now been opened to the needs of this great downtrodden people, and who have but one definite purpose in life—to strive and struggle for the emancipation of their less-favoured fellows.

I realize that this is neither a full record of my own experiences, nor yet a perfect picture of the intricate political difficulties in which my country has long been involved ; still, I hope the reader will gain some insight into the longings and struggles of our poor Russian people, so richly endowed by Nature, and so deeply wronged by man.

I hope, too, to awaken the sympathy of all English-speaking peoples for those brave men whose noble altruism and blind patriotism are often misconstrued. And, above all, my aim is to impress

it upon the world that our ideal revolution is not to be attained by violence, but by systematized and concerted action on the part of men with lofty principles and a spirit of deep self-abnegation, whose life-work is the establishment of a better public polity.

THE AUTHOR.

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# OUT OF CHAOS

## CHAPTER I

### FIRST THOUGHTS OF REFORM

My mother died shortly after my birth in Petersburg in 1870, and my father soon married again. But we were not long under our new mother's care, for she was ordered to a milder climate, and we were put in charge of strangers, as my father's position in the Artillery kept him at outlying posts.

My sister Irene, seven years older than myself, was brought up with her cousins, and I went to stay with my aunt, who lived on her estates in the province of Rjäsan, and had recently lost her only child.

Here I lived till I was six years old, very much petted and surrounded by every tender care, but with no playmates of my own age. My father often visited us, and as he felt I was being spoiled, he decided to take me to Petersburg and put me in charge of our old nurse. She was to keep me till he was transferred and could take me home.

The contrast between our quiet country life and the noise and bustle of a city flat made a deep impression on my mind. I longed for the great stately rooms, with their dim, mysterious portraits ; for the lovely shady park and the forests. I missed the tenderness and hospitality of my old surroundings. Everything was different here. At bed-time there were no fairy stories. Here I was made to obey, and they punished me if I so much as whimpered. Sometimes, indeed, my nurse's husband beat me.

But that, fortunately, was soon over, and my father came to take me home. Our house was a large two-story villa near the Winter Palace, with a garden and a great square courtyard, where the stables and the servants' quarters lay. Many of the rooms were closed and empty, and possessed a tremendous fascination for me. Our staff of servants was considerable. I had a French governess, and our old housekeeper gave me lessons in German. I saw my father only at luncheon, and occasionally in the evenings before I went to bed.

I was brought up as most boys of my position were, studying German, English, French, and a very little Russian. I was taken out walking, and drove in my pretty little pony-cart. I often went to see my cousins, and they and their friends came to our house. If I was bored, the servants' children were sent for to play with me ; but naturally there was rather a strained relation between us.

The children were shy, hardly dared to speak above a whisper, and only played to order. At Christmas, Easter, or my birthday, I was always sent round to make them formal presents.

When I was eight years old my father thought it high time I had a tutor. 'You're far too soft,' said he. 'You're more of a girl than a boy. We must make a man of you.'

And now my days were arranged like clock-work. Up at eight, when I began immediately to study; at ten my tutor came for mathematics, geography, history, and Russian. Then I had an hour of gymnastics and a walk or a drive. I lunched at half-past one, and afterwards read either French or German. Then I played in the garden or in the courtyard, and studied my next day's lessons. I dined at seven (I was now allowed to dine with my father), and at nine or half-past was duly sent to bed.

In the summer of 1878 I made my first trip abroad. We visited my stepmother, and there I also met my sister, to whom I soon became devoted, and who impressed me tremendously with her knowledge of the gossip of Baden-Baden. I was rather afraid of my stepmother. She had a chilling manner, and was constantly finding fault with me. A typical woman of the world, she dominated the small circle in which she moved with her beauty and her airs of exclusiveness. Anything outside her own aristocratic sphere had simply no existence for her. Our

old butler, Matwei, who had been in our service fifty years and simply worshipped the memory of my own mother, used to declare she did not love my father, that she had a frightful disposition, and that his poor master had a great deal to put up with ; and I now began to see that he was right.

The last part of the summer we spent, as usual, on our estate, and in the autumn returned to Petersburg.

My relations with my father were most unusual. His manner had nothing of the 'stern parent,' and he was more like an older comradé to me. Gentleness and consideration were the groundwork of his character, and I have always remembered what he said one day when I had been dictatorial to the servants—'You must never forget that they are your fellow-beings, and that a child has no right to *demand*—he must ask.'

When I was ten years old my stepmother came back to town for the winter, bringing my sister, who was to have her first season and to make a brilliant marriage. My stepmother's presence had a depressing effect upon the whole household. When old Matwei heard of her coming, he said to the housekeeper : 'Ah, well, we shall have to say good-bye to all the fine old furniture now. It won't be fashionable enough. We shall have everything turned upside down here, and the poor master will have the worst of it, you'll see.'

I have never known a more faithful creature than old Matwei. His only interests in the world were his master and his master's son. When my father and my stepmother disagreed, he took it upon himself to show his displeasure by ignoring her. He insisted upon serving my father first at dinner, and paid no attention whatever to any of her orders. Only at my father's express command was he willing to serve my mother and my sister. Hard as it was for my father, he had to order Matwei to keep exclusively to our own rooms; the household service was no longer possible for him.

My stepmother and I often had unpleasant differences. She hated my independence, and complained of my lack of manners. But my father stood by me, and I was not obliged to conform to her views. As for my sister, she was a 'young lady' now, and made me feel it most decidedly, so there was very little intercourse between us. We entertained a great deal, and our quiet house had changed completely. We had a great staff of servants, and I kept to my own rooms, usually alone, after my tutor was gone.

I must say I was quite overjoyed to hear of my sister's engagement. She was to be married in January, and my stepmother would then go abroad.

It was the year 1881 when an event occurred that filled us all with consternation—the assassination of Alexander II. We were simply terrified.

I saw my mother leave the house in the deepest mourning, and with tear-stained eyes; my father I did not see at all, as he was gone all day, but the servants told me the Czar had been murdered, and I shared their wild alarm. I think it was on the following day that my father and mother were speaking of it at dinner. They spoke French, of course, and my mother was fearfully excited, denouncing both the criminal and the crime. My father was calmer, and said it was the direct result of a feeble and vacillating national policy; and then they stopped, probably on my account.

As the years passed, my father and I became closer friends. One day, when I was thirteen, he sent for me in his study. 'You are growing up now,' said he, 'and it is time you decided certain questions for yourself, so we will make an agreement. I will be your elder brother; if you ever need advice, if you ever are in trouble, come to me. With my greater age and experience I may be able to help you out. Make friends of your own, and invite them here. The house is absolutely at your disposal: you may order what you please. If I were you I should not smoke just yet, but if you must do it, be sure and tell me. I hope you will soon find out that it is not good for you. Now, as I say, you are perfectly free to act as you like; only never try to hide anything from me.'

I see now that my father's experiment was rather dangerous for a boy of my age ; but, at the same time, he wisely decided not to send me to school till I was sixteen, for he felt that the younger boys learned many bad habits there, from which he wished to shield me. So I had tutors in the different branches, and once a year passed the regular school examinations. Now and again my father and I talked over the books we had been reading, and he told me much of famous men, dwelling often upon the idea of the brotherhood of humanity. He spoke, too, of my grandfather, who had freed his serfs long before the Imperial Ukase of Emancipation.

Old Matwei had often told me tales of the days of slavery, saying how happy the peasants had been on our estates. I asked my father if it could possibly be true that many people had ill-treated their serfs, and he answered that, unfortunately, it was. 'They shed their blood and many bitter tears in those old days—our poor, long-suffering people ! And I'm afraid it is not much better yet.' Then he told me I was too young to understand it all, but the time would soon come when I should see things more clearly.

Another year went by, and I was fourteen. About this time I chanced to find a book my father was reading, 'The Memoirs of a Décabrist,' which had been forbidden in Russia, and published abroad. I glanced at it, and certain descriptions of convict

life in Siberia touched me so deeply that I secretly read the whole book, taking it from my father's room each day while he was out. Parts of it, naturally, I could not understand, and I decided to ask my father to explain them. He was astonished to hear I had read it, and said I was far too young to judge of such affairs. I must study history first, and know something more of the world. But he told me of the struggle of 1825, with its fatal ending on December 14, and added that one of his uncles was concerned in it, and had been sent to Siberia. Naturally, the story of these men who had sacrificed their lives to inaugurate the cause of personal liberty and constitutional government made a tremendous impression on my mind. Soon after this I came upon Tolstoi's 'Anna Karénina' and 'War and Peace' in the library, and eagerly devoured them, although I understood very little of what I read. Yet through these books I first learned my own mother-tongue.

And this winter, for the first time, I came into close personal touch with one of my tutors. He was the son of a Russian priest who had just graduated from the seminary, and was fitting himself for the University. He taught me Russian literature and history, and not only made these subjects most interesting, but encouraged me to think along other lines. He asked me what I did in my spare time—what I read, for instance. This rather astonished

me, for none of my other tutors had ever seemed to care for anything beyond their own special departments. I told him I had certain hours for athletics, riding, and walking; and beyond that I read my German and French and also certain Russian books. The foreign books were chosen for me either by my tutors or by my old governess, who was now our housekeeper. 'As for Russian books,' said I, 'I read what my father reads. For instance, I have just finished "Anna Karénina."'

'Don't you think that's rather old for you?'

'I don't see why.'

'I'm afraid you have simply skimmed it, and so spoiled the keen edge of your enjoyment when you come to read a great book like that understandingly.'

Then I boasted that I had not only read Tolstoi, but 'The Memoirs of a Décabrist' as well.

'That, I should say, was decidedly foolish, for you are not well enough up in history yet, and it would be impossible for you to grasp the political significance of a book like that without the necessary training.'

'But I don't see why I have to know history to understand it. It is simply the story of the fate of a band of noble-minded patriots.'

'How do you know that they were noble-minded?'

'My father said so.'

The conversation dropped, but the next day my tutor came to me and said he should like to go out

walking with me ; we could go on with our lessons that way, and he could tell me about historical events and affairs in general. As I liked him tremendously, I was delighted with the plan, and in pleasant weather we had many interesting walks. He talked of famous men, and among others whose lives and thoughts have influenced their fellows he told me of Spinoza, in whose works I became very much interested.

Unfortunately, this friendship was interrupted by his admission to the University of Moscow ; but when he left he said : ' I think you have tremendous possibilities. Never forget that your distinguished position demands that you fill it with distinction, and enables you to do great, good, and useful things for all your fellow-men. There is much to do in this world, and you have more opportunities than most for lightening the load of the oppressed. Remember that integrity is the only true patent of nobility, and dignity and consideration the only warrants for the existence of an aristocracy. But idle sympathy—words and forms—are not enough. You must live up to your convictions. I am certain that some day you will make your mark. If you value my friendship, remember what I have said, and steer clear of the insincerities of your class.'

I never forgot his counsel.

In September, as I was almost sixteen, I was to

go to school. Before passing my entrance examinations, my father sent me abroad with my tutor. We were to make a tour of the Riviera, and finally visit my stepmother in the South of France. Our first stop was in Berlin, where we spent ten days visiting the theatres and the galleries. Here I met three young Englishmen on their way to Switzerland. We became great friends, and in spite of my tutor's opposition, I determined to join their party. In Switzerland we took a number of walking trips, going through a most exquisite country, and after a three weeks' stay we left for Rome.

From here I telegraphed to my stepmother, who sent word that I was to come directly to Nice. She received me in an unexpected manner when I finally arrived, saying she had been exceedingly anxious about me. This first evidence of her interest affected me quite deeply, and brought us much closer in touch than ever before. We spent a glorious spring together, she showing me her gentlest side, and giving me to understand that she had been deeply wronged by my father. My sympathies were aroused, and I felt she was the victim of a hideous misunderstanding, so with a boy's impetuosity I devoted myself to her cause, and came to love her with a chivalrous ardour. This naturally estranged me somewhat from my father.

I was to spend the last months of my vacation on our Russian estate, and the parting from my

stepmother was most affecting. Fortunately, my father was still in the Caucasus, and I should not see him again till autumn. I was in a great quandary. Convinced that he was directly responsible for my stepmother's misery, I still loved him none the less. Naturally, I could consult no one on such a delicate subject, and I spent my days in planning how I should demand retribution and reinstatement for my poor mother.

In September I went to Petersburg to take the examinations, which I passed with honours, and was admitted to the preparatory department of my college. It was an endowed law school, where the sons of the higher nobility and occasionally princes of the reigning houses were educated for subsequent careers in the Department of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, or the Diplomatic Service. As my father was not at home, I decided to follow my uncle's advice and live at college. But from the first the dormitory system struck me as uncomfortable. I longed for my old independent life, and begged my father on his return to take me home. So from that time I was a day scholar.

I now summoned up my courage, and asked for an interview with my father.

'Something is troubling you, my boy. What is it?' said he gently.

Then it all came out. I wanted my father and my mother to be reconciled.

‘I can’t stand it any more!’ I cried. ‘I love you both so much. I can’t bear to believe you could have been so cruel, father. . . . It breaks my heart to think how you’ve treated poor dear mother.’

He was thunderstruck at this, and said :

• ‘I might put you off by saying you are far too young to meddle with such affairs, but I shall try and explain it to you. I don’t want you to think I am hard and cold. There are situations in this life where the best intentions are of no avail, and this is one of them. Later, when you know more of the world, I shall explain the matter more fully. Your stepmother is a good woman, and a very beautiful one, and I am glad you two are such great friends, and that you seem so fond of her at last. But I am very sorry you have suffered on my account, and had such a poor opinion of me. I have only one thing to say : believe me—for I know you trust me—it can never be otherwise. I love her, and I honour her ; but she and I can never live under one roof, and we have parted by mutual consent. And that’s all on this subject for the present. . . . We shall still be good old friends, shan’t we, my boy ?’

My father was deeply moved, and kissed me tenderly, and I left the room in a tumult of feeling.

My school went on as usual. I studied hard, and made friends among the students, and they often came to our house, as they found they had

less restraint here than at home. So my first year passed quickly and pleasantly, and my intercourse with my father was most delightful.

I had finished the preparatory department, and in the spring took my college examinations.

As I was not yet eighteen, and had passed a brilliant examination, my father celebrated this achievement by giving me a trip to Constantinople, Athens, Italy, and the South of France. My companion was a young fellow of whom I was very fond, who had been engaged as my travelling tutor. As I was unable to endure the sea trip, we made the journey from Constantinople by way of Budapest and Vienna, going from there to Florence, where I looked forward to meeting my mother again.

We spent a delightful summer together, though occasionally our pleasant relations were disturbed by her worldly attitude. She often said: 'I see your father's democratic tendencies in you. But don't forget you are the only son, and sole representative of a splendid line, and you should hold yourself a little higher.' This was à propos of my friendship for a Russian scholar of very humble origin, a teacher in Florence, with whom I used to visit the museums.

Autumn came, and I went back to Petersburg to study law. But none of my old companions now seemed congenial, though I had liked them well enough the year before. They had grown up now,

and each was an imitation of some cousin or older brother. Their absurd airs of 'men about town,' and their chatter of horses, ballet-girls, and little suppers, thoroughly disgusted me. I shared some of their pleasures, but generally amused myself at home alone. My father now, contrary to his custom—for he was a great card-player and a club-man—spent one evening a week with me. Occasionally we went to the theatre, but usually sat in his study and talked.

I began to notice a change in his attitude since I had been at college. We now discussed all sorts of topics, and he advised me on different questions. He showed me the folly of giving myself up completely to the social treadmill, and pointed out my cousin, only two years older than I, and already a hideous example of the effects of dissipation. Petersburg society is no worse than that of any other great city, and such examples, unfortunately, are not rare in any society.

These talks with my father had a great influence on me, for though the habits of my set never particularly appealed to me, without his restraining counsel I should have drifted insensibly into the current.

Beyond seeing that we attended the lectures, the Faculty had no control over us, and the students went a very swift pace—drinking, carousing, and the like. Shocking tragedies were not unusual,

and I remember that one of our men shot himself in a café in a fit of desperation.

After this the supervision was rather more rigid. But it was still inefficient, for we could go where we pleased without our uniforms—like all Russian Universities, we had our distinctive dress—and even, with it the owners of all the disreputable resorts were only too glad to welcome members of the most exclusive school in Russia. There were some very rich men among us, who were able and willing to pay high for an evening's entertainment. I had very little to do with that set, spent most of my time in reading or talking with my father, and began to go out now in society.

My three years of college life passed very rapidly. I spent the summers usually on our estates, with occasional trips abroad.

My father gradually developed in me a deep personal sense of responsibility toward the world. Among other things, he told me much of my grandfather's life—how he had studied abroad, and, returning to Russia, imbued with the ideas of the German philosophers, had liberated the serfs on his estates. He told me, too, of his own early youth, spoke most tenderly of my mother, who had died so young, and then explained how he happened to enter the army. He often spoke, too, of his own personal conception of God, and of his attitude toward his fellow-men.

Now it was that he first discussed the reforms of Alexander II., explaining his great stroke, the emancipation of the serfs, and describing his later unfortunate reactionary policy at the instigation of the official clique. He did not approve of the measures of Alexander III., yet had to admit that he showed a masterly determination in following out the national Russian policy. He spoke, too, of the tremendous influence of Alexander Herz in the liberal reforms of the early sixties, severely criticized his weak measures in the Polish insurrection of 1863, attributing the wane of his popularity to that crisis, although he in no wise approved of the severe measures of Murawjews and other leaders in the Russification of Poland.

My father's personal religion was most remarkable. As far as I understood it, it was a mixture of Christianity and Buddhism, and his relations to his fellow-men could be summed up in the golden rule, 'Do unto others as you would they should do unto you.' His nature, however, was not sufficiently forceful to carry out his theories, and he fell back continually into the narrow prejudices of his class.

It was my last year at college—the happiest time of all my youth—and my father and I were the best of companions. One evening I remember the following incident: Some friend had asked me to go to a rather questionable house, where a

number of well-known men met every evening to gamble. The stakes were very high and the pace exceedingly fast. We were cordially received by the hostess and her *aides*, and all went on gaily till I suddenly perceived my father in one of the supper-rooms. He nodded serenely, strolled up to me, and said: 'This is the first time you've been here, isn't it? But I am a regular habitu , my boy! I come here always on Tuesdays and Fridays. I think it would be rather better if you were not to appear on those nights, for you surely can't expect me to change my habits on your account. One of us, of course, must leave directly.'

Naturally, I left the place. Next morning after breakfast my father called me into his study, and said: 'I shouldn't advise you to get mixed up in that set. It's not a healthy place for a fellow of your age. You need to know more of life before you can steer clear of their wiles. And, besides, intercourse with women of that type—dissipated, cold-blooded, and calculating—is not good for any young man, least of all for you. I could not forgive myself if you ever came back from there old, hard, and embittered. I see it is high time now you knew more about women. But I advise you to choose your friends among simpler people; there you can still get a fresh atmosphere and a less objectionable point of view. But for this phase of society it might be better if you waited till you are older.'

I must confess, however, the admonitions of my father had less to do with my keeping away from that house than my own distaste; for even *my* limited observation assured me that everything in the place had its price, and the cold-blooded barter of it all sickened me.

As our privileged University covered in three years the course that ordinary mortals must do in four, I passed my final examinations in 1891, and was admitted to the Bar before I was twenty-one.

My father now advised me to travel, that being the pleasantest way of completing my education. But first I was to serve my year as volunteer and pass the military examination. This was to improve my carriage and to give me a 'smart' air, as my father expressed it.

Every inch a soldier himself, he naturally had a weakness for the service; yet, knowing the limited scope of a military education, he felt that one year of training would be enough. The interesting point to me was his advice not to enter the Guards. 'You have too little to do there,' said he. 'You can never hope to get into the Artillery, and that is the only corps where you learn anything.' Unfortunately, I could not pass the physical examination, so did not follow his advice.

My stepmother now wrote that she was coming to Petersburg. The house must be opened, we must entertain, and I must have a place at Court. My

uncle advised me to apply for a position either in the Department of the Interior or in the Ministry of Justice. If those failed, there was always the Diplomatic Service. In short, every one spoke constantly of the importance of choosing one's career ; not that they needed the money, these people, but it was part of their tradition that sooner or later members of the best families should occupy the highest places in the State.

However, I could come to no decision, and, disgusted with social life, both in Petersburg and abroad, I gladly went off to our estates in the country after a three weeks' visit to my mother.

It was all so peaceful. Only a distant relative lived there, an Abbess who had taken the veil after the death of her young husband in the Crimean War. She was a woman of remarkable character, over sixty, and interested in all the affairs of the world. She was not actually *advanced*, yet quite free from all the prejudices of her class. She was probably the only friend I had beside my father who would advise me to follow any other course than that prescribed for wealthy young men of our set.

But all her good counsels were swept aside when my young cousin turned up one day and wanted me to go with him to Paris. He would show me life there as it really was, he declared. I had been there often, but always with my father or my step-

mother. His plan fascinated me, and we started off at once.

The very evening we arrived I met a little ballet-girl at the Variétés, and was so charmed with her that I made arrangements at once to meet her family. A situation that began with the fascination of novelty was fanned by its object into a piquant interest, and soon developed into a genuine passion, or perhaps it was only a boyish infatuation. Possibly the ideas of Tolstoi had affected me, and I had also been influenced by my father's talks ; at all events, I believed that all our emotions were sacred, and that love was the last thing that could be bought with a price. Consequently, I had no right to declare my love without making an offer of marriage, so I proposed in due form for the lady's hand, and was immediately accepted.

Radiant with joy, I ran to tell my cousin ; but he was furious at my 'confounded nonsense,' as he called it, and, in spite of my protests, carried me off to London. Here we spent three days seeing the sights ; but all we saw was theatres, restaurants, and slums.

And here I had a terrible experience. Late one evening we were leaving a restaurant, and as we had been drinking rather heavily, some one proposed walking home to cool our heads. We started off, and suddenly out of the dark a woman stepped up and spoke to me. I let the others pass, and asked her in my broken English what she wanted. All I

could understand of her answer was that she was offering me her daughter—a little girl of twelve. For an instant I was so horrified I almost flew at the woman in my rage; but I controlled myself, and handed her all the money I had about me, and ran. Amazed at my sudden generosity, she followed me down the street, saying, 'Come back! I think you'd better take her, after all. I'd rather have her fall into decent hands.' I broke away, and went back to the hotel so utterly disgusted with life that I could not speak to anyone that night. This scene impressed me so horribly that I shudder when I think of it to this day.

On our return to Paris we found a telegram announcing the serious illness of my father, and without a moment's delay we started for Russia. At Warsaw I was about to take the first train for home, but my cousin tried to stop me by saying he had word that my father was better. Finally, however, he confessed that he had concocted the first telegram himself to get me out of the clutches of the ballet-dancer. For an instant I was furious, and decided to go directly back to Paris; but having no passport, I should have to wait two days before I could leave the country, so I resigned myself to my fate. We visited friends in Warsaw for a time, and then went back to the estate, where I soon forgot my 'first love', in a genuine sorrow that now came into my life.

That false telegram had been prophetic, and before the end of September my father was taken very ill and died. It was all so sudden I had scarcely time to see him at the end. My grief and despair were boundless, and again I went abroad to forget my sorrow in travel.

And now came the first break between my stepmother and myself. We were discussing my future, and when she found she could not persuade me to apply for a position at Court, she made some sneering allusion to my dead father. She had already made several covert remarks of the kind, but this last infuriated me, and I told her she had no right to speak so of a man who had shown such great forbearance. He was a gentleman and the soul of honour.

Shortly before his death my father had given me a package of letters and a journal concerning his relations with my stepmother. I had read them, and was convinced that she had been to blame; so in this discussion I could prove in her own handwriting that she had falsely accused my father of injustice. I handed her the letters, and told her that further explanations were unnecessary. I must confess that the scene which followed now seems vulgar, foolish, and melodramatic.

Now I was all alone in the world. I went to Petersburg, took an apartment, and settled into the conventional life of my class. A young fellow must

have his servants, keep his horses, and go into society, so I began my new existence automatically, and with hardly a purpose in life.

To keep myself from the reproach of idleness, I joined a charitable association, which distributed food, clothing, and money to the 'worthy' poor, and conducted a rescue home for fallen women.

I was roused to this work by an old priest on our estate. He was a widower, and priests of the Russian Church are not allowed to marry again; but having no desire to join a brotherhood, he lived there quietly in his little garden, cultivating his bees and reading philosophy. I was very fond of him, and we had many a talk on the life to come and our present purpose in living. He held that every one had a capacity for usefulness, small though it might be. I, for instance—aimlessly though I might spend my money—must often give it where it did great good, affording work to the poor and needy. His theory was that no one had a right to interfere with his neighbour's actions, nor even to advise as to the conduct of his life. He was an ardent admirer of Count Tolstoi, and, strangely enough, a devotee of Buddha.

But it was his niece who really first made me aware of my insignificance. Olga Nikolajewna was a medical student who spent her vacations here with her uncle. We had often met, but I had never spoken with her. One day, as I was waiting for

the old priest, a number of peasants came to consult with him. I fell into casual talk with them, and they gave me clearly to understand that I knew nothing whatever of the situation. Presently the niece came out and sent the men off to the kitchen to get something to eat while they waited for the *batjushka*.

I made some trivial remark about the peasants' affairs, and she answered brusquely: 'That's a matter you're utterly incapable of judging, and I think it would be more to the purpose for you to attend to your *own* affairs and see that your bailiff stops fleecing your poor workmen.'

This astonished me, and I answered that I'd no idea——

'Oh yes! ideas!' she interrupted scornfully. 'You're just like all the rest! You'll soon be as bad as your cousin. Perhaps you think you're elevating the masses by cultivating the peasants.'

There was such scathing sarcasm in her tone that I turned away and rode slowly home. Here I sent directly for the bailiff, and questioned him about the 'sweating system' among the peasants.

The next day my uncle scolded me roundly for interfering with his management of the estate. 'What makes you think I'm taking advantage of the people? You know very well they look up to me as a father! I do everything in the world for them, and I am sure they're grateful. The bailiff

is a thoroughly capable man, and honest, too. Of course, you have to be severe with the peasants—they are like children in many ways—but we are never unjust to them. If you want to carry on your philanthropical experiments, you must take a place of your own. I am responsible here for the family interests, and I don't intend to have my actions called into question.'

Some days later I rode over to the village, and had an opportunity of asking Olga Nikolajewna what I could do to help. She assured me I could easily find something if I really wanted to be useful, and gave me the address of a physician in Petersburg who would gladly answer any of my questions.

I had no one to turn to. The only friend I ever had—my father—had just died, and yet I hesitated to apply to this strange physician. So I worked away again in my charitable organization. But after a few months I began to see that even here greed and gain were the ruling motives, and that some of the members were working for influence and others simply salving their conscience with a few good deeds. •

There was a general panic in the meeting when I undertook to criticize their conduct of affairs, especially in the department of the rescue home.

Such women could never be reformed simply with a few tracts and a sewing-machine. And the most short-sighted policy in the world was this

constant harping on their sinful condition, which seemed to be a favourite topic with the ladies of the board.

‘These poor women should not be treated like criminals. They are as much human beings as the rest of us, and but for the force of circumstances and the accident of birth our fate might be like theirs. I should suggest that each member of the board go home and read her Bible, where it says, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”’ Here I was hysterically interrupted by one of the members, who said I had no right to interfere in the affairs of the home, as that was not in my department.

The upshot of it all was that I handed in my resignation, and the story of my investigations was repeated and exaggerated, to the scandal and delight of society and the indignation of my relatives, who said I was quixotic.

To get rid of all this talk I went off to the mountains on a hunting trip. But misfortune seemed to follow me, for here I had another unpleasant encounter, this time with a Captain of the Guard.

He was boasting of one of his ‘affairs,’ where the father of the girl came and begged him most pitifully to marry her. For some reason he seemed to find this amusing, and the idea of marrying below his station in life struck him as exceedingly comical. I took it upon myself to tell him he was a

cad, and the end of the matter naturally was a duel. When I came back to Petersburg and saw my uncle, he said he hardly blamed me. 'Only,' he remarked witheringly, 'the days of chivalry are over, you know!' And that, I found, was the general verdict, so I kept out of society, stayed at home, and worked at my books.

My old butler came to me one day, saying he had met a delegation of peasants from his village. They had been sent up to testify in a case against their landlord, and were looking for an attorney. As he told me the story, and I recognized that these men had right on their side, the thought struck me, 'Why not take it up myself?' Quite interested in this new idea, I drove directly to an old friend, a well-known barrister, explained the case to him, and said I wanted him to conduct it, and let me put it through the courts. He smiled dryly, and observed: 'What's the use of that? If you want to help them, why not give them money? I don't want to offend you, but such impulses are never lasting, and seldom mean anything. Think this over for a while, and if you still want to carry out your scheme, get some good lawyer to go into partnership with you. If you insist upon conducting this suit against Prince L——, put it into the hands of some able man, for there are too many technical difficulties for a beginner like you to handle.' I was then only twenty-three years old.

I took his advice, had the papers made out, and went into partnership with a clever lawyer named Nikotin, who took the case not merely as a business proposition, but was interested in its ethical side as well.

I now saw much of our peasant delegates, and, in spite of their deep-rooted reserve, learned more of village life in Russia. Shortly before the trial I asked the men to come to me, and go over some of the technical details, and, passing easily from one subject to another, they told me of their own hard lives.

‘You see,’ said one, a man of about forty, with a keen, intelligent face, ‘what we most need is land. The parish is large, and there’s not enough ground for every one. We tried to colonize somewhere else—in Siberia, but we finally had to give it up. Each year now seems worse than the last. Two years ago we had a famine—not as bad as in some of the other districts, though; but we couldn’t pay our interest, and that soon mounts up, you know. The fields won’t support so many people, and the taxes are too high. We have had to put off payments on our lands so often now that some of us are mortgaged for a generation ahead.’

At the freeing of the serfs the Government had paid the property-owners the full value of the lands turned over to the liberated peasants. In the course of thirty or forty years the peasants were to

pay this back. In poor seasons and times of crop failure the payments were allowed to fall into arrear, and in many places that had suffered heavily from drought the interest on their debts had grown to be simply enormous. I remember reading in Professor Janson's table of statistics that the peasants' debt in the district of Twer was nearly 300 per cent. of the value of the land. The increase of population naturally aggravated the situation. In many provinces the people were encouraged to emigrate to Siberia, the Caucasus, or some other less thickly settled spot; but, like all other Government reforms, this plan was carried out in a most desultory way.

One must remember that in Russia it is the peasants who pay most of the taxes, for the aristocracy, the bureaucracy, and the Church, are all exempt.

I learned from these men that in the great famine of 1891 most of the assistance they had was through private subscriptions, and not from the Government, the officials often even blocking the path of individuals who tried to establish relief stations. Also that the greater proportion of their supply of seed-corn had been contributed by charity. I was thoroughly amazed to hear their sweeping condemnation of the Government officials—one and all they distrusted them. The pay-rolls of the private charities showed ten or twenty

times as many cases as the Government lists, and the mismanagement of the latter must have been incredible.

My clients told me—and I afterwards had it confirmed—that in the great famine huge stacks of provisions lay and rotted in the yards, because of lack of transportation, and that diseased horses were bought in job lots, and turned over to the peasants at a high premium. One man said: ‘Do you know, I had to pledge myself to pay eighty roubles for a horse, and then the officials gave me a broken-down beast that died within a week. They took off three roubles for the hide, and the rest I had to pay. I went to the judge, and told him all about it, and he said: “I’m sorry for you, but it is the law”; and I paid it.’

I now understood more of the rights and conditions of the peasants, their relations to their landlords, their life in the community, and their plans and hopes, yet I saw that they still looked upon me as an outsider, and very naturally, too. For what had I or any of my class done to deserve their confidence? To be sure, my father and his father had been good to their tenants, but had I ever troubled myself about their wrongs?

Our case came to trial, and I soon saw how wise my old friend’s advice had been. Without the experience of my colleague I should have made a most brilliant fiasco, for I could never have coped

with their technical chicanery. However, we won ! And as a result I soon found a number of such cases on my hands.

This enraged and infuriated my relatives. Now they no longer called me quixotic ; they simply told me I was a fool. That I should have taken up a case against Prince L—— was to them a most incomprehensible outrage. ‘It could not be from love of my profession . . . and I certainly hadn’t done it for money. I must have been infected by the crazy notions of Count Tolstoi, and would soon probably be a full-fledged atheist and anarchist !’

In our set they might understand a man who gave up everything for his religion. That went very well in our life ; it was a picturesque contrast, and an interesting topic for the salon. But simply to take a common lawsuit for a lot of grimy peasants—that was a bit too much !

My practice increased, however, and I had letters from all parts of Russia asking me to conduct the peasants’ cases. This, naturally, only served to arouse the further wrath of my relatives.

One day, in the case of a Jew who was accused of having resisted the police, I asked for a hearing of important testimony for the defence. The judge brusquely overruled my motion, and it came to a discussion between us, in which he said : ‘You certainly have singular tastes ! I notice you only stand up for Jews and moujiks !’ I told him his

remarks had no bearing on the case, and asked to have his answer recorded. After two days, when my complaint had already been filed, he came to me and apologized. But I said it was too late now for me to withdraw my action. He was sharply reprimanded, and the next time I had a case before him he took his revenge by objecting to all my motions, and refusing to give me the floor. My only possible reprisal was to leave the room. This is a measure that Russian lawyers use as a last resort. The result was that the whole case had to be adjourned, for the next day my partner also had to follow my example.

In less than a week I received an official communication from the Minister of Justice. He wished to speak with me. I answered that if His Excellency wished to see me he would find me at home in my office hours. Then came a most friendly note deploring the fact that he could not call upon me personally nor ask me to his house, as his wife was a great invalid, and they did not receive, but he begged me to see him at a certain hour in his study.

I went, and was immediately ushered in. His Excellency greeted me by saying: 'What is this I hear about you? It really won't do, you know, for you to make these demonstrations in public court, and expose the weak points of the law in this way.'

I answered calmly : ' Is this a reprimand, your Excellency, or how am I to take it ? I can hardly look at it as an official reprimand, for I am not in your branch of the service, and you can scarcely be talking in your private capacity, for you are not a member of my family. If this is all you have to say, I think I need not trouble you any longer ' ; and I went to the door.

' My dear fellow, stop a bit ! I don't mean this as a reprimand. I simply asked you to come here out of kindness to your family. Your mother and your uncle are good friends of mine, and I want to make you see the error of your ways. I know you mean well, but one mustn't interfere with the course of the law. It would really be far more interesting for you to use your talents in some other way—say, for instance, in my department. We need some good officials in our branch of the service.'

I thanked him for his well-meant efforts, and left without any further words.

He was naturally much chagrined at this result of his interference. I found, however, that he had only undertaken it at the instigation of my uncle, who told me later : ' You will have to go abroad pretty soon if you don't stop your nonsense and settle down to something. I think it would be wise to disappear for a time, and let people forget some of your foolish freaks. I have written to your mother that she had better invite you to visit her.'

I thanked him, and said I thought I could manage my own affairs. He then suggested that I should ask for a billet in one of the Embassies—Paris, London, or even Berlin. But I had nothing further to say.

My unsettled condition prevented my throwing myself whole-heartedly either into some philanthropic project or into a 'career.' Dissatisfied and disillusioned, I left town, where no one seemed to understand me, and went to visit my aunt, the Abbess, at her convent. It lay in the province of Twer, about an hour's drive from the station, in the midst of a wonderful forest, and close by a little lake. So calm and still it looked, with its gilded cupolas and whitewashed walls, and seemed to promise peace to every restless wanderer who came that way.

During the few days I stayed with her I had many long talks with that gentle, enlightened soul. She felt I ought not to dissipate my energies, but decide upon one line and keep to it. It might be well if I went abroad and studied foreign conditions, then when I came back I could apply my knowledge and experience in my chosen task. 'There is enough to do here in our poor Russia. If they make it impossible for you to practise law, why don't you settle on your estate and found a school, or try model farming, and be the mainstay of your peasants? You could help them by your example

and your counsel too, and put your legal training at their disposal.

My aunt was not at all orthodox. She had read the French philosophers, and out of her reading and experience had built up a beautifully clear and simple theory of life. Always ready to help, she was known and loved for miles round. People came to her for practical aid, for sympathy, and for advice.

These long talks I had with her quite steadied me, and I returned to Petersburg, looked up a professor in my old college, and asked him for a list of books on economics. I wanted to read up and judge things as they really were. Under his direction I began to study the legal rights of the peasant and his status in the community, the origin of class distinctions, the development of the village commune system, etc.

Financially, of course, I was independent, yet certain of my property I shared with my mother, which made matters rather awkward for me.

As far as the rest of my family was concerned, our relations were purely formal. I appeared at their dinners, and dropped in to see them in their opera-box. Occasionally my uncle or aunt attempted to convert me to their views of life, and they all generally advised me to marry. But their counsels made very little impression on me. My intercourse with the men of my set was intermittent. I had no

real friends among them. I went when I was asked to their rooms, and entertained occasionally myself, but we had absolutely no interests in common. I was told that Count Tolstoi had a number of adherents in the Guards who thought of leaving the service and leading the simple peasant life in imitation of their leader. I also heard occasionally of people who interested themselves in the 'new thought,' and tried to live up to their Christian doctrine. But I never met any of these, nor did I especially seek them, for the theories of Tolstoi never particularly appealed to me, though I must except his views on the relation of man to woman, which I consider almost perfect.

Between my studies and my social duties my days were now quite full, yet it was not a life that suited me, and I grew constantly more discontented.

It was now the year 1894, in which the death of Alexander III. took place. The Liberals hoped much from his successor, but the Conservatives predicted hard times, for the young Czar was weaker than his father, and unable to carry out his firm, hard policy.

Soon after his coronation a strike broke out in Petersburg, ending in a bloody conflict between the people and the cossacks. I was much interested in this, and began earnestly to study the labour question. My uncertainty as to a career and the conviction that I was following the wrong course had

driven me nearly to despair. Then I recalled the physician, Olga Nikolajewna's friend, and looked him up, hoping he might help me. I failed to find him at home, however, and as it was Christmas-time, I went out to the estate to spend the holidays.

The old priest's niece had just been appointed district nurse near by, so I often used to see her. She dropped her satirical tone, and spoke earnestly and quietly now of conditions in Russia, pointing out certain reforms that should be introduced into our system. We quarrelled violently, but our discussions opened my eyes to many things. Her criticisms of modern conditions and the social evils were most bitter, and now for the first time I heard the theory advanced that the only means of reform was a radical and complete upheaval.

She was no longer contemptuous of me, yet she could not grasp the idea that one of my class might be able to see her point of view ; and although she gave me much food for bitter reflection, I returned to town strengthened and inspired, and firmly resolved to look up her friend and meet him ' soul to soul,' as we Russians say.

## CHAPTER II

### SOME BAFFLED SCHEMES

DR. POPOFF lived in a small house in a manufacturing suburb of Petersburg. Following the advice of Olga Nikolajewna, I visited him almost by stealth—that is, I took a cab instead of my carriage, and dismissed it at some distance from his door. This gave the undertaking a fascinating air of adventure. I was ushered into a small, plainly furnished room, sent up my letter of introduction, and was finally received by a man with brilliant dark eyes and a small pointed beard. Realizing that he was a complete stranger, I did not want to intrude my personal affairs, so I simply said I was interested in the labour problem, and had been recommended to go to him for information.

‘Have you studied the question at all—especially the present Russian conditions?’ he asked. I named a few books I had read, and he answered with a smile: ‘Those don’t quite cover the ground. I will give you a few others,’ mentioning several well-known authors. Then, as he was very busy,

and we were constantly interrupted by patients, he fixed an evening later in the week when we could talk more at our leisure.

My first impression of this man agreed with all I had heard of him. He was about thirty-six, had been assistant in a city hospital, and then for a short time doctor in a prison. I never heard how he lost his position, but he was now medical attendant in a factory. The practice there was small, and in his free time he worked among the factory hands in the suburb where he lived. He was much beloved and respected, and had a tremendous following among the men, which was probably the reason why the officials did not interfere with him. I found later that his views were thoroughly revolutionary; but at our first meeting nothing of that appeared.

I left him feeling that my life had started on a better course. There was no foundation for such a conviction, but there it was. I spent the next few days in reading the books he had recommended, and waited impatiently for the given evening, going again in the same circumspect way. It was about eight o'clock; the room was brightly lighted, and his surroundings seemed homely and pleasant. He received me cordially, offered me tea, and we sat and talked.

I happened to remark that I thought the great uprising of the seventies would not soon be repeated, and he asked: 'Where have you heard

about that, and how do you know all their names ? Most of your class don't know of their existence, and if they do, they call them common murderers.' I explained that Olga Nikolajewna had lent me some books, and had told me something of them. He reflected a moment, and then said : ' You are wrong in thinking that an idea great enough to fight for can ever be crushed out. However, I agree with you perfectly that it will never come up in quite that form again. We must adapt ourselves and strike from a better point of vantage—that is to say, we must get the masses on our side, and show the people by agitation and propaganda the necessity for a radical change of government. That is a tremendous undertaking, but there are men in Russia already who will be able to see it through. I am glad to hear you express such an interest in the cause, and I should like to give you a short outline of the reform movement in general.'

I was forced to admit that my interest was not very deep, as I was mainly concerned in planning my own life, and told him I could not throw myself into a cause of which I understood neither the aims nor the methods. He answered : ' That is just what I was about to explain—of course, only superficially. If you really were interested, I could lend you a number of books on the subject.'

He spoke of the early revolutions—1870 and 1880—and their aim, which was a constitutional govern-

ment, and ascribed their failure to the fact that they worked on false premises, went at it theoretically, and were not supported by the masses. 'You see, we have had to be convinced that our historical development must follow its gradual course, as that of Western Europe has. It is simply absurd to say that Russia is safe from the dangers of "capitalism," that the old "commune" still exists with us, and under normal conditions can be used as a solution of the social question. Our chief danger is an unsound, underdeveloped financial system. The peasants are no longer a solid mass of common property-holders. Competition, a series of famines, and the tremendous burden of the taxes, have forced the farmers to leave the soil and add to the rabble in the larger towns. Class distinctions are more sharply marked than ever before.

'Scientific investigations are being made from the modern practical point of view on the agrarian question, the communal system, the industrial development of the country, and other matters of national interest. The censor, naturally, can forbid their publication, but thinking men will ask themselves, "What can I do to help?"

'From the Government we expect no assistance: we have instances enough of the hindrance of the law. Our only support for the cause is now the people. We must work in small circles, teach the labourers the rudiments of knowledge, and make

them see their political and social condition clearly.

‘The impulse must not come from us, nor must it be based upon theory. It must be born of the people’s need, and be the direct result of an insupportable pressure from above. Ours is the task of guiding this movement, of steering it in the channels where it will do the greatest good to the greatest number of the oppressed. Our first important work is the education of the masses, both politically and in the general branches of knowledge; and in the great coming revolution you will find the Russian workman fighting in the van.’

I was completely carried away by my new friend, and in all my later experience I have never met a more masterly champion of the cause. We now saw each other often, and whenever he was not too busy we had long discussions, in which I always held the ground that much good and useful work could be done in Russia on the side of law and order. I felt that if I only had the necessary information I could carry my point and hold my own against him here.

One evening he said: ‘Would you like to go to a little meeting with me to-night? It might interest you to meet men who have grown up under different conditions and have another point of view.’ At first I hesitated, but finally curiosity got the upper hand, and I went.

I remember now distinctly how we climbed four flights of stairs in a house on a back court, and after shaking hands with our host, found ourselves in two small rooms, where seven or eight men and a few women were talking in groups. They were simply dressed, and looked like school-teachers and clerks. In the course of the evening, however, I found that most of them were students, and the rest college graduates. I cannot say that they received me cordially, for whether it was due to my appearance or for some other reason, they were quite ill at ease till my companion whispered something to each one in turn.

Later, a simple supper was served, and before the meeting closed the talk became lively and general. They spoke of the Russian peasant and his status in society, the labour question at home and abroad, the evolution of the Citizens' Alliance, and all sorts of municipal affairs. I took very little part, as it was all new ground to me. One of the members asked if I would contribute something to the cause, and I handed him a hundred roubles. 'You must be a very rich man,' said he, 'to be able to give away a sum like that.' That struck me as strange. I had not been in the habit of considering this a large sum, and how often had I wasted twice, thrice, or even five times as much in one evening of folly!

I went home very thoughtful, wondering what these men really wanted, and whether they would

ever be capable of carrying out their vast reforms.

When I saw the doctor again I asked : ' How can they hope for results with no influence or position to back them ? I know you will tell me that at the proper time the masses will rise and will exact of the classes the prompt fulfilment of their just demands. But you certainly must admit that a man is better able to oppose a tremendous pressure if he is in a position of vantage himself.'

The doctor laughed and said : ' You see how deeply you are still infected with your old-fashioned prejudices ! When you have worked more, studied more, and reflected more, you will realize that history is not made by the people of position, but by the masses. I am glad to see that you have been thinking it over, and I am convinced that sooner or later you will agree with me. Just go on as you are. Help us now with your money, and the rest will come in time.'

Since I had met the doctor I had neglected my other friends, and spent all my time at home reading the books he had recommended.\* Some were worth a careful study and some were useless books of reference. I remember particularly one list of German books. I carefully waded through them, but found they only made the subject vague, and unsettled my convictions without giving me any other solution. Naturally, I could have asked the

doctor to explain these things, but I was rather ashamed to acknowledge my stupidity, for, to tell the truth, I had been decidedly proud of having been admitted to the Bar at my age, and thought I knew a vast amount and understood everything.

In a short time my relatives began to wonder where I was and what I was doing. To reassure them I told them I was reading law, and was going to practise sooner or later.

I now had a glimpse into the doctor's busy life. I knew these people must have a secret press where they printed handbills and appeals to the masses. I knew, too, that they canvassed for the cause. But what their methods were, or where they worked, I had never yet been told.

The doctor often declared that Russia needed a parliamentary form of government. But when he spoke of universal suffrage, it seemed to me this would be absolutely impossible in a country where the greater part of the people could neither read nor write. I even went so far as to say that a 'benevolent despotism' was the best form of government, and instanced Germany to prove my point. We differed most radically, yet still he took me seriously, only smiling now and then at some of my strange points of view, and trying to convince me that my theories were untenable. For instance, I had suggested furnishing the capital to establish

a number of schools, and to edit a good cheap newspaper for the gradual education of the people.

I could never carry this out, he said, for I should inevitably come into conflict with the established party organs. 'I have never yet known a single instance of private enterprise being upheld by our public men,' said he. 'Quite the contrary. Their policy is obstructive, and they regard all philanthropists as criminals. A country school-teacher surely has no very enviable position at eighteen or twenty roubles a month, but his life is made still harder by constant supervision, and he never knows but that he may be suddenly transferred by order of the police or of the priests.

'In times of famine, if private individuals try to distribute food, they must have a Government license for a restaurant. When they apply for this they are coolly told there is no famine. If it finally has to be granted, the officials annoy the workers with their vigilance, and cheat them wherever they can.

'In seasons of epidemic they demand that a physician offering his services must show a certificate of character, and if there is the slightest record against him, even in his student days, or if he is suspected of ever having mixed in politics, he is not allowed to practise, for he might be an agitator in disguise.'

In spite of all this, I asked him to tell me of an honest, capable editor who could help me to organize

my paper for the people. I also wanted two good teachers—a man and a woman—for a school I hoped to establish on a small estate I owned.

My whole plan was this : I would start a cheap paper, well edited, and with popular articles by the best Russian writers, for the better papers are so dear with us that neither the working men nor the peasants can afford them. When this enterprise was firmly established I would turn it over to a competent manager, who would run it in the interests of the people, and would then devote myself to another matter which interested me.

Among the villages on our estates a small household industry was carried on in ironware. I had chanced to read an article denouncing the sweating system prescribed by the *kulaks* (the middle-men) of this province. I now meant to investigate this, watch the market, and see that the people were paid a fair price for their work. Then the goods would be put on sale, and the profits divided among the labourers, keeping a certain percentage for the sinking fund of the concern. All our home industries might be capitalized and made self-supporting in this way, and when I had founded a series of such concerns in different parts of Russia, I could open a large central bank, which would be the base of all these operations. Thus the producer would have the greatest possible profit, and material well-being would lay the foundation for education and culture.

This, of course, would be a colossal undertaking, and I was well aware I could never carry it out alone. But I counted on the spirit of self-sacrifice among the liberal minds of Russia, and was confident I should be supported. I meant to devote the greater part of my fortune to this purpose, and felt sure that in ten or fifteen years it would be so well established that I could draw out my original capital and invest it in some other great public project.

Besides this co-operative plan and my newspaper, I hoped, in time, to publish a list of the best books at nominal prices, and distribute them at district fairs and among the villagers.

If I succeeded in carrying out all these schemes my life would be quite full ; but, as I have said, I counted on the altruism of my fellow-men, and was convinced that I should have all the help I needed.

I now drew up the prospectus of the Co-operative Industrial Association, and asked the doctor to read it and give me his verdict.

'Your idea is beautiful,' said he ; 'but don't forget that the Government will put all sorts of obstacles in your way, and even you, with all your family influence, will never succeed in carrying out the smallest fraction of this plan. The important point, however, is that you will be making a bold step forward in the progress of the times. I will give you some books and pamphlets on other experiments of

this kind. Proudhon, the celebrated French economist, had a similar project, but nothing ever came of it.'

As I could not manage it alone, I asked the doctor to find me a partner. He promised to see about it, but advised me to begin on the paper first.

In the meantime summer had come, and I went out to the country. I was all alone on the estate that year, and worked at my plans for the newspaper, carrying on a long correspondence with a number of prominent journalists whom I hoped to interest in my enterprise.

On my return to Petersburg in the autumn I laid my plans before the doctor, who approved of them after a few minor corrections. I handed in a petition to the Board of Administration, and in the course of three weeks had an interview with the Inspector-General of the Press Department. This official announced that I could have a licence for my paper on two conditions. One was that I raised the price (I believe I had set it at six shillings a year, and the inspector insisted I should make it twenty-four). Secondly, I must have no Jews on my staff. . . . Then, too, he said, the programme must be changed a little. I could not agree to this, so I tried through outside influence to carry out my original plan.

But although wherever I went people showed me a great deal of deference, found my idea good, and

were interested in it, they did nothing to help it along. This failure was a great surprise to me, and I despaired of ever being able to carry out any good or useful purpose, since these autocrats of a red-tape system had no comprehension of such things.

So I quietly went on with my studies, took up several lawsuits for the peasants, and saw a good deal of my friend the doctor, who comforted me when I told him how my plan had fallen through, and advised me to go on with the publishing work. The men I met at his house came to me occasionally for money, or else asked for contributions through the doctor. I gave it very gladly, and felt it was a bond between me and those brave people who were fighting for Russian independence. I now knew more about their aims, and though their methods were not such that I should care to join them, I gave most gladly what they asked to help the work along. My purpose was chiefly, as I have said, to establish myself in a useful and legitimate career. I helped to support these people, not for the cause, but because I felt they were all inspired with the holy spirit of self-sacrifice. It was a personal interest with me, and not a matter of principle.

## CHAPTER III

### A HOPEFUL PROJECT

To carry out these plans I needed far more money than was now at my disposal. My father had left me personally 100,000 roubles, and from his estate, which I shared with my mother, I had somewhat more ; so that in all my income was at least 25,000 or 30,000 roubles a year. According to my father's will, however, I was entitled to a still larger share of the common estate.

My project would need a great deal of money, and as I had been accustomed to abundant means, I was apt to be rather careless in calculating expenses. So I resolved to compromise with my mother, explain the whole thing to her, and interest her in it if I could.

She was staying in Baden-Baden, and received me rather ungraciously when I arrived. We soon fell into a discussion of my future.

'What do you mean to do with your life?' said she. 'Are you always going to flit about in Petersburg society? Aren't you ready yet to settle down

into a place at Court or in the Ministry ? I should like to see you enter the army. . . . I can't see what objection you have to the life. You surely must do something soon. It is high time you married, too ; but possibly that is why you are here ? We are not such good friends as we were—at least, you are no longer friendly—but perhaps you want me to advise you in some love affair. I should be delighted to see you suitably married. Your aunt wrote me last winter that she knew just the girl for you, but she saw you so seldom that there was no chance of arranging it.'

'I do want to consult you about something important,' I said, 'but not about a love affair. I see for myself that I must have an occupation, and I want you to help me arrange my life. I have a plan, but I need more money to carry it out.'

She stared at me astonished, and said : 'It must be a most remarkable plan if you need still more money. Tell me about it.'

I was so full of my subject that I began to explain it in detail—how I had been aimless and lonely, looking for something to do, and how I had finally stumbled on the right thing, to help the peasants and the working men. I saw that the only way to lift them out of their present condition was to give them good schools, books, and papers.

My stepmother listened quietly, and then

answered : ' I have met people with these notions before, and I have listened to their wild flights ; but the usual result was that, sooner or later, they gave up in despair, unable to carry out their romantic dreams. Either they fell into the hands of swindlers, and were relieved of their property, or else they turned swindlers themselves and inveigled other people. Don't think I have never been interested in charity myself. I have often tried to do good work, but have only met with the rankest ingratitude. That is the way of the world ; the people don't recognize goodness : they're all selfish and ungrateful. Lately I tried to help a most talented young man ; and what was the result ? As soon as he got the position he wanted, he was most impudent, and deceived me shockingly, when I had done everything in the world for him. Experiences like that have cured me once and for all.'

I listened gravely, thinking of the many stories I had heard of her artistic protégés. To my mind that was a most singular sort of benevolence. She continued : ' I can understand your doubts and your restlessness, and recognize that they are the direct result of your father's peculiar system of education. He was a theorist, pure and simple, and tried his experiments on you, and now you have to suffer for it, poor boy ! I advise you to drop all these plans. I should hate to see you taken in. You

will simply get rid of your money, and have nothing to show for it but the experience. You will lose your faith in mankind, and end by being a wretched misanthrope. I mean this for your own good. Now, if you don't want to enter the service, why don't you travel? Amuse yourself, go about and meet people—perhaps you will see a girl you'd like to marry. I would gladly welcome any suitable girl into the family. That is absolutely the only solution, and the very best thing you can do.'

'I suppose you mean well,' I answered, 'but I have decided, and my life is mapped out. I recognize the truth of what you say, but I think people will hardly "take me in," nor do I expect much gratitude. I have read and studied and worked, and I realize that the sort of charity you and your kind indulge in is simply a matter of a passing emotion, and when you have some unfortunate experience, you drop the work and say, "All men are liars."' These glittering generalities don't mean anything. I shall carry out my plan. I have explained it all to you, not because I wanted your advice, but because I needed the money. I might simply have drawn on my own responsibility, but you would have wondered where it was going, for, as you know, I live very quietly. To be quite candid, I have told you all about it, and now I ask you to let me draw a part of my capital.'

My stepmother had tried to interrupt me, but I went calmly on. Finally she said :

‘ Is that all ? Now listen to me. I don’t intend to let you carry out your father’s visionary schemes. I am directly responsible for you, and I cannot stand by and watch you play the “ patron saint ” to all sorts of adventurers, who will take what they can get and then laugh at you. While I live, that property belongs to me, and I shan’t give a penny of it for any of your hair-brained notions. You have your share, and may do as you like with that, but you shan’t get anything more from me. I am perfectly convinced you would lose every scrap within a year. You young fellows can run through a fortune in a very short time. But you are so different from the rest that I am sorry to see you throw yourself away in such a foolish undertaking. I can’t hinder you, however, so all I have to say is, “ Go on, and be as absurd as you like ! ” ’

There was nothing further to be done, so I left on the following day, my hopes still high in spite of her predictions.

Back in Petersburg, my first step was to see the doctor about starting the publishing house.

‘ We will begin differently this time, ’ said he. ‘ We will go at it diplomatically. I advise you to look up some of your influential friends. You might approach a few of the more liberal-minded, and interest them in your plan. After that it

would go smoothly enough, especially if they were inclined to back it financially. Then you need only put part of your capital in, and use the rest for something else.'

This struck me as excellent advice. I went out more, cultivated the official set (particularly the heads of the departments), and gradually began to lay my plan of action.

Following the doctor's advice, I undertook it very cautiously, learning to know my man and hear his views before I broached the subject. But I found that most of them were absolutely convinced of the infallibility of our system of government, and sneered at all philanthropic schemes for the spread of learning among the poor. Occasionally I heard a man say that it was this very education that fostered the dissatisfaction of the masses and made the ground ripe for plots. But often such men themselves had been touched in their youth with these same revolutionary ideas: some of them had been in prison or in exile. This encouraged me to hope for sympathy among these seasoned functionaries whose ancient fires had been almost stamped out by the routine of their lives.

Two or three months passed, however, without my having made any progress. In the meantime I still carried on my lawsuits with my partner, Nikitin. À propos of this, a Chancellor whom I met one evening came up and said :

‘I see you are making a speciality of petty agrarian cases. Are you supposed to be the official mouthpiece for the trials and tribulations of our “bulwarks of society” ? It is a pretty undertaking, but rather a thankless one. I shan’t try to discourage you, but I wish you joy of your work. Good luck to you !’

He said this half in earnest, half in sarcasm ; the latter I attributed to his age and his experience of the world. But this touched me, for it was the first time any one of my acquaintance had mentioned my work.

I decided to see him again, and explain fully the details of my plan. He received me cordially, and said that he was quite at my service, encouraging me by his manner to take the plunge. I told him how deeply I had been affected by the helpless misery and lack of justice among the people. He interrupted me by saying :

‘I know all this. It’s nothing new to me. Do you really think this condition can ever be relieved ? Is that why you’ve come to me ?’

Then I spoke of my plan for a publishing house ; how I meant to bring good books within reach of the masses—books on popular science, politics, and literature. I even went so far as to describe my visionary scheme for a newspaper, and enthusiastically hoped that we might in time establish University extension lectures. ‘There certainly are enough

clever men willing to help. The small amount of capital required I am quite ready to advance. It all hinges now on permission from the Government.'

The Chancellor looked thoughtful when I had finished, and said: 'That sounds very plausible, and I hope you will be able to carry some of it through. But I don't quite understand what you want me to do. My influence is not strong enough to ward off the interference of the department. Why don't you go to your uncle for that? And as for the money—I think I understand you want contributions—I am in no position to help you, for my salary is small and I have no private means. I don't really see why you do not apply to your mother or some of your other relatives.'

'My uncle would neither understand me, nor help me if he did,' I replied. 'I have only a small income of my own, and my family refuse to let me touch the capital. I thought your influence might make things go more smoothly, and hoped you would say a good word for me, for you wished me luck so genuinely last night. I thought you would understand me if I came, and could give me good advice at least, if nothing else.'

'Oh yes, yes,' said His Excellency pleasantly; 'I do understand and sympathize with you, and I think your proposition is admirable, really. But I must tell you that your scheme would succeed

better if you were in a Government position. I would advise you to get a good influential billet in one of the provinces. There you could carry out your plan much more easily. You will have great difficulty in establishing a publishing house, and as for the paper, you will find that next to impossible, for you would be sure to have the officials down on you. Instead of helping the people, I should say you would only do them harm, and I'm afraid most other public men would simply agree with me. We love the people too, and would gladly help them, but not in your way. You can't run your head up against a stone wall. I admit that Russia needs more general education, but not along those lines. Sooner or later we shall make attendance at school compulsory. All these reforms must come from the Government, and can only be carried out when we have honest and capable officials. That is where we are deficient. So, instead of going into this thing on your own account, you should really take a Government position. As far as I can I shall be glad to help you. You may safely call on me at any time if you need me.'

I saw I had come to the wrong man, so I left without further discussion. My first move had failed, but that did not discourage me. I myself had often thought I might do more good in an official capacity; but I knew, too, that, in spite of my family influence, I should have to spend

many years in a subordinate position, and there I could do nothing to carry out my scheme of helping the people. I had enough experience, too, to know how much force of character it would take to carry on the daily struggle against corruption.

• I had known a man who took an office honestly meaning to be scrupulous in the performance of his duties. He found himself in a hornets' nest of irregular transactions, and felt he must expose them, whereupon a number of his colleagues, and even his chief, were found to be seriously implicated. An investigating committee was appointed, and the truth of his report established, but nothing happened! The officials went on as before, except that the inconvenient investigator was transferred to another department, and, as he began to show the same zeal here, he was dismissed from the service. I heard that he afterwards made similar efforts in another field, but I believe he was finally declared insane.

Of course, there are honest and decent officials even in Russia, but they are very much in the minority, and by the time they have risen to an important position age has robbed them of all their ideals.

I now cultivated the acquaintance of a high official who had taken part in his youth in the revolutionary movement. I was told he had been imprisoned in his college days, and after a long, hard

sentence had accepted an influential position under the Crown. His clouded past, and his present reputation as a liberal-minded man, made me hope that he might listen to my case. At our first meeting I found him thoroughly congenial, so, without much preamble, I laid my plan before him. When I had finished, he smiled mockingly and said :

‘How young you are, my boy! I shouldn’t wonder if you still believed in human nature. You seem so delightfully sure of yourself. I fancy you have ideals, too, and all sorts of lovely things we old fellows have long since had rubbed out of us by the world. I hope you will always keep your enthusiasm. With your impulsive temperament you should make quite a sensation in society. In this empty, dreary round of life we need just such contrasts. They give us a zest, and remind us of our own young dreams. After a good day’s work it is exceedingly pleasant to sit and talk of theories and high-flown plans, but in the practical, everyday world, my dear fellow, your bubble, of course, would burst. I can really do nothing for you except introduce you to two rich old ladies who would do anything in the world for me—but, beyond that, absolutely nothing.’

His answer amazed me. Thoroughly disgusted, I had nothing further to say, and went home, wondering how he had made his reputation as a

broad-minded man. At my first opportunity I asked my uncle casually about him. He answered :

‘That man ? He’s a parvenu ! . . . Years ago he was mixed up in some political scandal and exiled, I believe. Later—I don’t know how—he turned up as secretary of some benevolent association in one of the provinces. The president of the society was a rich widow—you know her, the Princess T——. She took him up, and got him a good position in Petersburg. He is a capable man and a splendid worker. He had some influence, and was taken up by society, where his keen wit, biting sarcasm, and his knowledge of affairs, soon made him a power. He invariably said what he thought, and was known as the *enfant terrible*. His remarks were quoted at Court, and the question of the day in society seemed to be, “Have you heard His Excellency’s latest ?” That little incident in his past only served to establish his reputation for broad-mindedness. Besides his Government position, he is legal adviser to several large corporations. But why do you ask ? Do you know him ?’

Then something impelled me to explain the whole of my scheme, and confess that I had tried to interest this man, as well as several others, in the work.

‘H’m !’ said my uncle, ‘that plan is just like you. Unpractical from start to finish ! There’s only one thing I can’t understand. Why didn’t you come

to me at first, instead of going to all sorts of outsiders? These people naturally would back your plan if they could get anything out of it. But now they say, "Oh, he's nothing but a green boy, with more time and money than he knows what to do with. He's been reading some Sunday-school book, and has gone to work and made up his scheme on that pattern." They are clever enough to know that if his family won't stand by him he will never succeed. I don't know exactly what His Excellency told you, but I'll warrant he got out of it diplomatically, for he can't be sure that you may not forget all this nonsense and accept some good appointment that will give you an influence at Court. What a fool you have been! But I should like to talk this matter over with you. Perhaps you will be so good as to tell me what you intend to do next?

I hardly felt just then like airing all my dreams, but I thought: 'After all, he is human. Perhaps he will understand me.' So I outlined my scheme in all its detail, carefully omitting all mention of Dr. Popoff.

'How strange it is!' said my uncle; 'you and I have never had such a good talk before. Why have you never spoken to me of all this?'

I answered: 'You must remember how often you have laughed at my "quixotic" philanthropy, and how you have always urged me to enter the

service. You have misunderstood me all my life, and misjudged my father too, blaming him for my "Utopian" ideas.'

'You are Utopian still,' said my uncle, 'and I should like to show you how much mistaken you are. What good will your schools and newspapers or books do? You are planning to force cultivation upon the masses. But it will take more than one day to do that! There is such a thing as evolution in the development of a country. Russia to-day stands where England stood in the sixteenth century, and our whole State system is built on a different basis from that of other European nations. We have already tried to introduce reforms here in Russia, and, as time has only proved that they were harmful, we have been forced to go back to the old régime.

'I was brought up in England myself, and I thoroughly understand the Liberal idea. But I tell you, what we need here is more firmness and union of purpose among the cultured classes. It is only through them that reforms can come. We, who have been chosen to play a great rôle in the State, and are the pillars of the Throne, can only accomplish our aims if we all hold together. That is the idea that you should fight for. You don't care to join the service? Very well; go down to the country. Be a power in the country. Rally the aristocracy around you, and spread the doctrine

of standing together and working for our principles. Tell them that the Crown depends upon our firmness.

‘We stand in the relation of fathers to our peasants. If you suddenly deluge these people with culture, the result will be that they will only raise fresh demands, and involuntarily you will find yourself a tool in the hands of the agitators. Your plan is not only impracticable, but exceedingly harmful. There is no reason why you should not edit a newspaper if you want to, but not with a policy like that. Preach the doctrine that the strength of our nation lies in its faith, in self-reliance, in patriotism. This is the basis on which to build a sound and harmonious national institution.

‘The peasants will not understand the articles in your high-flown paper; but if you tell them about “The Little Father,” if you appeal to their love of the Mother Country, they will understand you perfectly, and I can assure you the results will be great. It takes a vast amount of tact to handle a paper, and that, I fear, you have not cultivated yet. Take me into partnership. We will each put in a certain proportion of the capital, and hire an experienced journalist of sound views to do the practical part.’

As he talked on, my one thought was what utterly different points of view we had, and how narrow he was. I was extremely bored, and tried

to change the subject. But when we finally parted I know he was convinced that he had converted me to his views.

A few days later I went to Dr. Popoff and told him of my failure. I loathed all these people, with their high-sounding talk and their empty lives. Quite crushed and dejected, I described how I had been received, but the doctor jumped up, and clapped me on the shoulder, saying: 'Don't lose your courage. I didn't think it would be easy exactly, but I did hope the plan would at least be started before the trouble came. What is your next move? Do you want some good man to help you carry it out, or do you mean to give it up?'

'No,' I said; 'I want to carry it out. But I can see now what obstacles I shall meet.'

'You have to fight for things in this life. You are too much used to having your own way, my boy, and most of the things of this world are at your beck and call. You have money, position, and influence, and you thought this affair would be settled quite as easily as any of your other idle whims. That's the radical fault in your system of education—you people have never been thwarted. To tell you the truth, I can't see why you don't take the money and use it for some other good cause. I have always told you that, under the existing conditions, open activity is impossible in Russia. What we need is a totally different form

of government. We must rally the discontented faction to our standard, and then we can insist upon better conditions for the evolution of the masses. The first step is to force the Government to give us a constitution. The people must have a voice in the making of the laws, and the only way to bring this about is by a revolution. Every other avenue is barred by the tyranny of our present system.'

Although I understood and sympathized with many of his ideas, I was not yet sufficiently convinced of the necessity of the revolution to wish to join his party.

My studies had shown me clearly that capitalism had long since asserted itself in Russia, but, owing to our unsound financial policy, had not established itself on a firm basis. It was clear, too, that the old village commune no longer existed, for statistics showed that the greater part of the peasants were without lands, and their number constantly increasing. The commune was simply a method of collecting the taxes. According to my theory, our country must go through the same periods of development as the other nations of Europe. It was idle for our statesmen to assert that her mainstay was the old communal system, which could be relied upon to protect Russia from the aggressions of a money power that had threatened other lands.

My views of political progress and civic duties had been broadened by my talks with Dr. Popoff,

yet I still doubted whether he and his associates would succeed in freeing the Russian people. In my opinion, only a few of the workmen in the larger cities were sufficiently enlightened to help them in their undertaking. The masses still believed in the Czar as their only salvation in time of trouble.

In spite of this, I gave them all the assistance I could, lent them my rooms for their secret meetings, and allowed them to store their proscribed papers and proclamations in my house. Naturally, I knew that my proceedings were actionable, but I could not refuse to help these splendid fellows with their high and lofty aims.

Now came the coronation of the young Czar, Nicholas II. In spite of the famines in the provinces, it took place with gorgeous pomp and circumstance. None of the usual taxes were remitted. Then followed the frightful tragedy in Moscow—that blot upon the festival for which no one could be held directly responsible, though it was well known that the Grand Duke Sergius was to blame. At the same time a large strike broke out in Petersburg. Meetings were held in the streets in the poorer quarters, and loud complaints were heard against the Government.

This was the general political situation when something came into my life which decided my career, and threw me into the arms of the revolutionary party.

## CHAPTER IV

### A POLITICAL PRISONER

ONE day I came home from a lawsuit in Moscow. On entering, I saw directly that something unusual had happened. My man came rushing up to explain, but before I could 'catch what he said, the door opened and a constable stepped out from the dining-room. I knew, of course, that they had been searching the house, and that the officers were waiting to speak to me about the papers and the copying-press my friends had stored there.

The man asked if these were my rooms, and I said 'Yes.' He was about to question me further, but I paid no attention to him and walked into the next room, which I found in a most extraordinary condition. The furniture was upset, the pictures torn down, and covers ripped from the divans and the chairs. Indignant at this lawless breaking into my house in my absence, I went on into the dressing-room to bathe and change my things, and then meant to have a talk with the intruders. I had just rung for my valet when the door was flung open and an officer appeared.

‘What are you doing here?’ I asked sharply.

‘Will you please come into the study? I want to open the desk in your presence. There are secret drawers of which I should like the keys. Then I shall have to take your evidence; we have been waiting quite a long time.’

‘If you will kindly leave the room, I will send for you when I am ready,’ was my reply.

The officer muttered something and withdrew. As I dressed, my man told me that he had been awakened at two o’clock; the police had demanded entrance, and had ransacked the whole house, even the kitchen and the bath-room. I was tremendously excited, but tried to appear cool. When I had dressed, I went into the study, where I found a number of constables, an officer of the gendarmes, two common soldiers, and several secret service men. The desk was open, and all sorts of papers and documents lay scattered about. The officer handed me his report, and asked me to read and sign it. I pushed it aside, saying it was no concern of mine; they had forced their way into my house and undertaken the search without my presence. I should go directly to the Minister and lodge a complaint. ‘And I must ask you to leave the house this instant.’

The officer was very calm, took a paper off the desk, and handed it to me. ‘You see, we are authorized in our search,’ he said.

I glanced it over, and saw it was an order from the Chief of Police for an inspection of my rooms, and in case anything suspicious were found, I was to be arrested.

I handed back the paper, and said : 'There must be some mistake. I shall take the necessary steps to get to the bottom of this, and I ask you again to leave my house directly.'

The officer said : 'Do these papers and that copying-press belong to you ?'

'No, they are not mine. They have simply been left here.'

'Who left them, and to whom do they belong ?'

'I decline to say whose they are. All I know is that the things are here, and I am responsible for them.'

'Then I shall have to arrest you.'

'We'll see about that,' I answered angrily ; 'you can't do it on such trifling evidence.'

'We are simply obeying orders,' said the officer courteously.

I decided to let things take their course and make no resistance. The officer asked me again if I would sign the report, but I said that the search had not been conducted in my presence. How did I know what they had found, or whether these were all my papers or not ? The officer answered in a rage :

'You don't think we brought these things here

ourselves, and have made out a false report, do you ?'

' I certainly don't know what I may expect from such people,' I answered dryly.

He drew my attention to the fact that I was insulting an officer in the performance of his duty, and I calmed down and thought it would be best not to irritate him further. The matter would soon be settled quietly—my uncle would surely see to that.

The report was finally signed by all the witnesses, with a note to the effect that I had refused my signature, and I ordered my man to pack my things.

As I left the house, I met the old cook sobbing in the hall. The servants were all fearfully agitated, and took leave of me as if I were going to my death. I laughed and joked, telling them there was nothing to worry about, and that I would soon be back. A closed carriage stood before the door. We got in—the officer sitting beside me and the constable opposite. They drew the blinds, and we drove off.

We drove for some time, without my having the vaguest notion where I was being taken. Only when we crossed the bridge, as I could tell by the rumbling of the wheels, did I think of the fortress of Peter and Paul.

Finally the carriage stopped. We got out, and I noticed that we had driven into a great square courtyard, and were about to enter a huge stone

building. I walked upstairs with the officer, followed by two sentries, and found myself in the warden's office.

Here I was treated most politely. They took down my personal description, and when they saw my bag asked what was in it. I told them clothes and a few books.

'Will you please open it?' They looked it over, and confiscated the books. 'The other things the keeper will bring you when you need them. You will be taken to your cell now, but I hope you will not make us a very long visit.'

After a physical inspection, the keeper took me down a long corridor and led me to my cell.

I knew something already of our Russian jails from the cases I had had in court, but I had never seen a political detention prison before. The cell which was to be my lodging for the night—and possibly even for several days—was a tiny room with a high blind window. Only the upper half was transparent, but that was barred. The furniture consisted of a wooden bunk, which was now hooked up against the wall, a table, a chair, and a sink. The walls were whitewashed, and the floor was bare. As soon as I entered, the door was closed and locked.

Not till this moment had I realized that I was shut off from all the world, though, of course, only for a few days; it was impossible that I should stay

in this horrible hole for any length of time. To be sure, I had broken the law, but it was such a trifling crime. And, besides, I had such influential connexions that they surely would have me freed in a very few days, if not immediately.

I stood at the window and thought, deep silence all about me; only in the distance I heard an occasional muffled clank. I was locked in! Then for the first time a horror came over me, and I ran up and down in my cell and rattled at the door. In a few moments the keeper came and asked me civilly enough what I wanted.

‘I want some books.’

‘You’ll have to ask somebody else about that.’

‘What shall I do, then, all this time in here?’

‘Do what the other prisoners do—walk up and down. To-morrow you’ll be all right.’

It was about two o’clock in the afternoon, and I paced the floor up and down, up and down, incessantly. I stood on the chair, and climbed on to the window-sill to look out into the good free world, but all I saw was a little piece of the sky and a high-walled court. I was pacing the cell again when the door opened. It was the keeper, with a sentry, who brought my dinner.

‘I think you will probably not like this stuff,’ said he. ‘You can order your own meals if you choose to pay for them. Did the man at the office tell you that?’

‘No.’

‘Well, then, write a requisition for a private order. I’ll bring you pen and ink.’

He left me, and I examined the food he had brought. I had not the courage to try it, it looked so bad, so I rapped on the door and asked him to bring me something better.

Finally the long day passed and night came on. They lighted the lamp over the door of the cell, and I wandered up and down in the dim twilight, lonely and forlorn.

Suddenly the door was flung open again, and the keeper appeared with my supper. ‘This is better,’ said he. ‘I’ve brought it on my own responsibility. You must eat it now and be in bed by nine. Lights are turned down then.’

He went to the door, and called in two soldiers, who brought in a covered wooden pail between them. It was the so-called *parasha*, of which I had often heard, the only substitute for sanitary plumbing in the Russian prisons! They set it down and went out. But my appetite was gone.

The hours passed so slowly. I grew more and more desperate. I had a wild impulse to batter down the door with my fists and shriek, ‘Let me out of this hideous cell! What right have you to lock me up? Set me free!’ But I soothed myself with the hope that it would soon be over.

The constant pacing up and down had exhausted

me, and I was now feeling the reaction of the strain I had been under all day. I could hardly keep awake, but sleep on that loathsome bed was utterly impossible. The keeper came by again, and I begged him to get me a fresh sheet and a decent blanket.

‘No, young man; you’ve had enough. You are a prisoner like all the rest, and you mustn’t be always calling for extras. You will have to get used to it, like many another fine young man, and you had better forget that you ever were a gentleman.’

He slammed the door, and I was alone again. I sat on the edge of the bunk, and meant to sleep that way, but finally, overcome with fatigue, I stretched myself out and slept.

That was an awful night, so broken with shuddering dreams. I often started up and peered about in terror, not knowing for an instant where I was, and when it all came over me the weight of dread and pain would almost crush me. Towards morning I fell into a heavy doze, to be startled awake by a sudden clash. The keeper stood in the door and said affably :

‘Did I frighten you? It’s time to get up. Here’s your breakfast.’

They brought me some of my things—tooth-brush, a comb, and a piece of soap. I washed at the sink, and the cold water did me good. I planned to take as much time as possible in dressing, went

through an elaborate set of calisthenics, paced up and down, and tried to make the hours go until I should get my books. I must have been awakened at about 6.30, so I should have fully twelve hours more to pace the floor, and think of nothing but the fact that I was locked in. Presently I knocked at the door, and the keeper appeared.

‘What do you want now?’

‘I want the warden or the inspector. I want some books and writing materials. I can’t stand this any longer.’

‘The warden will be here soon, and you can ask him. But I can tell you now that you will not get any books to-day.’

‘Whether you think so or not,’ I retorted, ‘I will see the warden.’

Again the hours passed. I began to rage. ‘I can’t stand it! I *must* find some way out! I’ll go. I shan’t stay here any longer!’ Then the door opened, and an elderly man in uniform appeared, followed by several other officials.

‘I’m told,’ said he, ‘you’ve been complaining that you have no books. According to law it will be eight days before you can get them, but you can put in a petition to-day if you like. Possibly you don’t like your quarters, but that’s not our fault, you know.’

I stood and stared, surveying him from head to foot.

‘In the first place, I am accustomed to being politely addressed when people come into my room,’ said I. ‘You seem to have forgotten your manners, sir. And then, I’ll thank you not to make remarks about my unfortunate condition.’

‘What you’re accustomed to outside,’ said he, in a rage, ‘is nothing to me. I am in command here, and if you are insubordinate I shall have you flogged. Good-day, sir.’

The door was slammed, and I was alone again. But this little scene had steadied me tremendously. I decided to conform absolutely to the rules, and ask no more favours.

Toward noon the keeper came in with two guards. ‘Follow me, please.’ Again we traversed the long corridor, and at intervals I heard voices through the little gratings in the doors, calling, ‘Who are you?’ or, ‘What are you in for?’ Then the keeper would turn and threaten to punish the inmate of the cell.

Finally we came to a large hall. The sentries were posted at the door, and the keeper handed me a chair. I sat and waited. People came and went, looking at me curiously as they passed. Finally they led me into an inner room, where an officer of the gendarmes sat at a table with a man I took to be the Attorney-General or one of his deputies.

‘Sit down, please,’ said the officer. ‘Your name

is? Residence? Now, I should like to know where you got that copying-press and the pamphlets that were found in your house. In the official report you expressly declared they did not belong to you, but you refused to say where you got them. Now, perhaps, you will have the kindness to tell us about it. And I want you to understand that the sooner you tell us, the sooner you will get out. We are convinced that you have been imposed upon and victimized by a very clever set of scoundrels.'

'As I have already said,' I replied, 'I am directly responsible for all the things found in my rooms. I knew, of course, that they were proscribed. You can punish me according to the law, but I refuse to say anything further. You violated the law in breaking into my house, and my arrest is unconstitutional. As a member of the Bar myself, I am surprised to see lawyers countenancing an illegal detention. I shall answer no questions until I am brought to a public trial before a judge who will investigate your report and file the complaint against me in the State department. This is my final answer. Set me free, begin your investigations, and we shall see what the outcome will be.'

The officer smiled. 'You are only aggravating your case by your stubbornness. We are acting quite within the law. As a member of the Bar, you must have heard of "Chancery proceedings." All political intrigues come under that head. I am

convinced, however, that this whole thing will be cleared up in a few days.'

I rose and said: 'Will you kindly let me have a pen and ink? I should like to write to the Minister of Justice.'

'That will do you very little good,' he remarked; 'but still, you might try. Here they are.'

I wrote my note, and handed it to the Attorney, saying: 'Please see that he gets it to-day. May I go now?'

'So you won't explain how those things came into your possession?' Of course, we know they are not yours. We know, too, that you have been interested in a circle of agitators and have backed them financially. We know a good deal more, too, but that's enough for us now. Hadn't you better stay and answer our questions? Your stubbornness and your—what shall I say?—Utopian and most unnecessary notions of honour are simply prolonging your detention.'

'I have told you already that I have nothing to say to either of you, and I should like to go back to my cell.'

'As you wish,' was the answer. And the keeper came and led me away.

That day passed as the first one had, and the night was as bad as the last—broken by hideous dreams. On the third day, when the warden came in, he said I might walk in the courtyard for half an

hour twice a day, followed by two guards and under the keeper's eye.

Next morning, at about ten, I was summoned to the office. We went down the long hall again, a sentry in front, a sentry behind, and the keeper at my side. Presently the officer of yesterday appeared and said: 'Although you don't deserve it, since you are so obstinate, I have brought you a pleasant surprise.' With that he ushered in my aunt and uncle! My aunt was sobbing violently, and could only say: 'Why did you do it?' 'How could you treat us so!' My uncle was calmer, and said: 'Your nonsense has brought you to a pretty pass! Who would have dreamed that your father's son would ever come to this—in jail with a lot of common thieves and cutthroats!' He tried to persuade me to give up my senseless loyalty to my friends, and my aunt continued to sob, 'What will your poor mother say? Oh, how could you do it?'

The officer naturally was in the room. I was rather excited, but firmly determined not to give way. I would rather stay in prison for a short time, and leave it with a clear conscience, than spare myself a few hours of misery by sacrificing the men who had trusted me. So I told my uncle I should wait; the matter would be settled soon, for I had not really committed any crime. Here the officer interrupted:

'You are mistaken if you think we are asking

you to incriminate anyone or to do anything dishonourable. You will have to stay here some time, and it is possible, as things look now, that you may be convicted. I would advise you to talk it over with your relatives. I shall leave the room, and you can speak more freely.'

Again my aunt and uncle pleaded with me simply to give the names. I should not be injuring them at all, for they were already under arrest, or would be in a very short time. 'Just tell us who sent you those things.' And my aunt added: 'You are not well, dear; you need a rest. We will take you out to the country and take care of you. You will soon be your old self again. Heavens! when I think you have been plotting against our dear good Czar—the sacred head of Russia!'

'I have not been plotting. I have simply allowed my friends to count on me, and helped them out in time of need. And now you must let me alone, please. I can't stand any more of these scenes. I am old enough to decide for myself what I must do; and besides, this prison life may be good discipline for me.'

My uncle shrugged his shoulders and said: 'We can't do anything with such an idiot; I think we will go.'

I was taken back to my cell, and from now onwards for two weeks every day I was brought down and put to the question, but still I firmly

refused to give the names. Now and then they shifted their tactics by giving me letters from my mother, my uncle, and all my other relatives, begging me not to bring disgrace upon our good old name, and imploring me not to be so blind as to throw away my 'career.'

In the meantime they had given me books. I read diligently, paced my cell, kept up my exercises, and walked in the court for my allotted time each day. The life had grown more tolerable, but the attitude of the keeper and the other officials had changed. They were less deferential than before. They probably knew of the failure of the cross-examination, and that I should doubtless be there for some time.

My uncle made one last attempt to move me, but he finally left in a rage. 'Very well, then, you will stay here till you learn sense, and I shall not stir a finger to help you.' I simply shrugged my shoulders.

That was our last interview, and I soon noticed that he really had been using his influence, for now the keeper began to be harsh with me. He had never said anything before when I tried to look out of the window, but now, as soon as he saw me on the sill he flung open the door and said: 'You get down from there. Don't you know that's not allowed?' using the Russian 'thou,' a deliberate insult from a menial. I made him a sharp answer. He looked

at me impudently, then strolled over to the table, coolly picked up my cigarette-case, and walked off with it, locking the door in my face.

When the warden made his next round I said : ' I should like to ask that the keeper be instructed to address me formally by my title. I am not convicted of any crime, and I demand decent treatment.'

' We can make no exception in your case. You must submit to the general regulations.'

' There certainly are no regulations that require a filthy beast of a keeper to call me " thou," are there ?'

' You ask for politeness, my good sir, but you yourself have used a very impolite expression in speaking of a man who may be a subordinate, yet is still an official.'

He left the cell, and my cigarettes were soon returned. I must admit I was ashamed of my own conduct in this matter, but it infuriated me to think that I was so at the mercy of an ignorant man.

I had not realized before what a salutary effect it had on these people when you demanded pen and ink and wrote to the heads of the departments. But as soon as I made this discovery I sent for writing materials at the slightest sign of ill-treatment.

A month passed, and I was gradually accustoming myself to the confinement. I found some interest-

ing books in the prison library, among them, singularly enough, a copy of 'Capital,' by Karl Marx. I studied this eagerly, for I knew it was the 'Holy Writ' of the political economist. At first it was difficult reading, but I finally grasped the meaning, and it was a great help to me : it settled my political convictions and taught me to think for myself.

My days were now methodically arranged. I had made a calendar and kept account of the date. I believe it was about two months before I was sent for in the office again. I expected either a cross-examination or, another scene with my relatives, so my surprise and delight can be imagined when I caught sight of my old friend Dr. Popoff. How he managed it I can't tell ; all I know is, how glad we were to meet again. Of course, as the officer was present, we could say very little, but the knowledge that he was free was a great relief to me, and as he took my hand in parting, I knew by his strong, firm clasp and the shining light in his eyes how deeply grateful he was for my endurance and my self-control.

Eight months went by. I was no longer moody and desperate. I slept better, and after my complaints to the directors the keepers treated me well. I even laughed and joked with them when they brought me my food or cleaned out my cell. I still had the privilege of ordering my own meals, with occasionally a little wine, and as much good

milk as I wanted. As I did not wish to be the only exception, I paid so much a month to be set aside for the use of all political suspects ; that is an old custom among the revolutionists—to share and share alike.

• In my loneliness and the silence of my cell, I often reflected on what I had read and heard of the political development of Russia, and the early revolutionary attempts. Naturally, too, I was confronted with the question of what to do with my own life when I came out.

I no longer believed in the statesmanship of Alexander II. I did not look upon him as the gracious 'Czar of Freedom,' for I knew that the liberation of the serfs and the introduction of his reforms had simply been the natural outcome of the Crimean War. They were not in the slightest degree due to his good-will, or the wishes of his dying father. The war begun by Czar Nicholas, in his proud adherence to the divine right of Kings, showed up all the rottenness of the ancient regime, and made reform imperative.

In the first documents filed by the committee appointed by the Czar for the freeing of the serfs, it was clearly proved that the Liberals had been continually hampered in their work by the Conservative element. The whole political system of Alexander II. is nothing but a series of concessions, and, as is true of political development in every

country, the Government only renounced its prerogatives when driven to it by force. All the committees appointed to investigate the freeing of the serfs, the legal reforms, public education, and the army, were composed of Liberal members, with a chairman of the strongest Conservative tendencies. Russian society was already sceptical about the reform projects of the Government, and with good reason, for the reforms then inaugurated were all curtailed or entirely abolished within the next ten years.

Our early period of revolution was called 'Nihilistic,' but that does not mean that the leaders began with bombs and revolvers. They first tried peaceful means. The more enlightened of the people tried to help their neighbours to a better condition: psychologists and scientists, historians and novelists, studied the conditions, wishes, and hopes of the newly freed serfs. Thousands of students went into the field, and accepted positions as teachers, clerks, and physicians to help the people. Instead of furthering these undertakings the Government tried to hinder them.

The censorship of the press was re-established after a short interval of freedom. I can understand perfectly the feelings of a spirited young fellow, filled with altruistic ideals and longing to work them out, who suddenly finds himself exiled to Siberia. His dream had been to make the newly

liberated serf truly free in spirit, to give him back the treasures of mind of which slavery had robbed him. They talked in those days of 'Our Crime against the Moujiks,' spoke of the 'Brand of Cain'—meaning that the men of intelligence had betrayed their weaker brothers. They said: 'Let those who have earned us our opportunities with the sweat of their brow have an equal share in our enjoyment of this great field of culture.'

The reactionary measures of the Government forced the Free Thinkers to acts of desperation. They believed they could make terms by terrorizing the party in power. They even went further, thinking that, if they did away with the Czar, the whole rotten system would fall with a crash.

And now began the struggle between the Government and the enlightened 'thinkers' of Russia. It was an unequal fight. I am firmly convinced that the revolutionists of those days were not blood-thirsty terrorists at all. I remember now having read a protest of the Russian Revolutionary Committee against the murder of President Garfield in America. Among other things they said: 'We utterly condemn such means in a land where our ends can be attained in a legal and orderly way.'

We can hardly doubt that the vacillating policy of Alexander was directly responsible for his death. Later it was whispered that, on the day of his assassination, the Czar, at the instigation of Prince

Loris-Melikoff, had signed a ukase for the convocation of the Estates ; but it was further said that this proclamation gave not the slightest ground for hope of the introduction of a constitution in Russia. This document, which was to give the representatives of the Semstvovoe an advisory voice in the various administrative committees, was drawn up in the strictest secrecy.

On his accession to the throne, Alexander III. stood at the threshold of a crisis. Should he publish his father's ukase ? As first he hesitated, then he called a Cabinet Council. It was a stormy session. Loris-Melikoff and the Liberal Minister of War, Prince Meljutin—who had been the most trusted advisers of Alexander II.—declared that the publication of the ukase would quiet the country. Pobedonosjew, on the other hand, assured them that, if the edict were issued, they were absolutely pledged to establish a constitution. He tried to prove, by citing other Governments, that a parliamentary system promoted discontent, uprooted the people's faith, and gave the demagogues an opportunity to play the rôle of patriot under safe cover. Russia was lost if they took this step. The Czar agreed, adding that he had often heard in official circles in Denmark that a parliament merely represented the wishes of the interested minority.

The result was that the loyal councillors of Alexander II. handed in their portfolios, and now

the Conservative party had full sway. A forced quiet brooded over the land of the Czar, the few scattered acts of terror that cropped up were stamped out, and the revolutionists were helpless and dismayed. They had hoped to have the masses on their side, but their ideals were shattered. They had wanted to enfranchise the people, but the people had not supported them. So it had been a daring, desperate attack of a small handful of enlightened patriots against the iron might of an absolute monarchy. Some among them had dreamed of Utopias, but many would have been glad to carry out even the smallest fraction of the promised reforms.

Throughout the eighties the intellectual condition in Russia was, as one of our writers put it, 'an arid waste.' But early in the nineties the old ideals of twenty years before began to be revived with some slight modifications.

Our statesmen declared that it would be possible for us to avoid the dangers of an inflated money power, since our greatest strength was in the soil; and that, therefore, the solution of the social problem was easier in Russia than in other countries. But, in point of fact, monopoly was already established among us; consequently the revolutionary party could count on labour agitations to back their efforts, and it now became part of their system to make converts among the working classes. That

was the only way slowly, but surely, to achieve their ends.

Now came the year 1896. At the accession of Nicholas II., the Liberals, who for a time had kept in the background, hoped by means of petitions to influence the young Czar against the reactionary policy of his father. Their hopes, however, were wholly unfounded, for against them was massed the solid front of the Conservative bureaucracy. It may be too severe to characterize them all as self-interested booty-seekers who made a business of politics. There certainly were men among them who honestly, but short-sightedly, held firm to the idea that a better Russia could gradually be developed along the old lines of Nationalism, Orthodoxy, and Imperialism, and that the discontent among the masses was only the work of a handful of demagogues who had been infected with foreign notions of democracy. In their eyes the evolution of Russia would be quite different from that of other European States, and they believed they could avoid all the dangers of the labour situation by suppressing the voice of the people.

The Liberals, who had hoped to carry out their reforms by means of petitions, had, of course, no party organization. One can readily see that, under the existing conditions in Russia, that would be utterly impossible.

Behind these two factions stood the solid, immovable mass of the people, of whom only a small minority—the intelligent workmen—had the power or the energy to better their deplorable condition by organization and strikes.

• My personal question—what to do with my life?—had been answered for me. Had the Government gone in for reforms I should probably have entered the service, though I well knew that I should have had a long, hard struggle against deeply rooted abuses. But I was young, and thrilled with a desire to benefit my country. However, the reforms had not come about, and it was clear to me that, whatever my sentence was, I should always have to live under police surveillance. I could never think of founding a school on my estate, neither was social life in Petersburg open to me, for I was a ‘political suspect.’ In reading the history of the revolutionary movement in Russia, I was furthermore convinced that the Liberals would always take their same old course of ‘petitioning’ for their rights. Only one other way was open to me: to join my friends the revolutionists, and follow the cause of my people’s freedom to the bitter end.

I was now convinced that the workmen must be roused and capably led, so that their strikes should have a political significance. They must first be made to see that suffrage was what they most needed, and that, armed with this, they could state

their case and demand their just dues from society and the Government. I knew this struggle would last for years, possibly for a lifetime ; but I counted on other elements which would join the stream to deepen and broaden its channel.

One morning I was taken again to the office, where I had not been for some time, as they had given up my cross-examination. Much to my indignation, they stripped me and put me through a physical examination. I hardly knew what to think. It dawned on me that possibly they were going to set me free. But I hardly dared expect that. Oh, it would be too glorious ! I had been through so much in my lonely little cell—seen things so clearly, and thought them out so deeply. And now I was eager to dedicate all my strength to the great cause—freeing my people from the shackles of a high-handed despotism. Oh, when I was free I should—— But why did they not speak ? Why had they searched me ? No, I was mistaken ; they were not going to set me free. Two soldiers appeared. One of the officers handed them a paper and gave them a few directions which I could not hear. Then my things were brought, and the officials said good-bye and wished me a pleasant trip.

Again the closed carriage drove up. All I knew was that I was to leave this particular prison, but where I was going I had not the least idea.

Strangely enough, a wave of home-sickness came over me when I thought of my little cell. I had grown so accustomed to it, and I wondered whether I should be taken to another prison—or perhaps I was to be set free. Perhaps! But then, why so many precautions? Why are these guards here? Why are they taking me in a closed carriage? Probably I was only going to change prisons. But I could get used to another prison too. These last eight months had strengthened me, had deepened my convictions and developed my faculties. Now, at last, I was a ‘revolutionist’; I had decided to throw all my energies into the cause of Russian freedom; I should try to be a power.

All this flitted through my brain as the carriage drove up. I stepped in with my two guards, and soon we were out in the street. When I attempted to raise the curtain a bit to catch a glimpse of the life and whirl outside, the guard ordered me sharply to put it down, saying it was against orders. After a long drive the carriage stopped, we got out, and I recognized the Nikolai railway-station.

‘You are travelling at your own expense,’ said the soldier. They gave me the money for it, and led me into a first-class compartment. I thought to myself, ‘My relatives have probably seen to that.’

The engine whistled, the train started, and still I had no idea where we were going.

## CHAPTER V

### IN EXILE

It was early in February, 1897. The ground was white with snow, and it was bitterly cold. I had been sent to prison early in May, and had spent the summer there. Now I came into the open world again, and saw it changed and frozen. I saw great snow-covered wastes, with now and then a village. Forests appeared and vanished; sledge-tracks ran along our course, and then turned off and were lost; we passed sleighs full of peasants—they turned and stared at the train. Oh, when should I be free like them!

Beyond bringing me my food the two guards paid very little attention to me; they usually talked of their own affairs, and I hardly even listened. They would tell me nothing about my destination, and I passed the time in reading and watching the country. I had been over that line so often before on my way to Southern Russia or to our estate, and I smiled as I thought how strange it was to see all these familiar places under such

different conditions. I gradually forgot my little cell ; it seemed so long since I had been there. But where was I going now ? Were they taking me to Siberia, or to some small town in European Russia ? Was I simply going to another prison ? Or had my uncle arranged that I should be sent to our estate under police supervision ? Why didn't they tell me ?

I began to talk with the guards again, and they seemed more communicative. I offered them cigarettes, and gave one of them some money. Night had fallen ; I knew we should soon be in Moscow, and yet I had not found out whether we were to stay there or were going on.

Finally we arrived, and I was taken to a small waiting-room. One of the guards left, and came back directly saying it was all arranged. We got into a carriage again, the snow crisped under the wheels, and off we drove into the Great Unknown.

Again I tried to pull aside the curtain, and again the guard interfered. Finally we stopped before a brightly lighted building. This time it was a railway-station that I had never seen. Then on we went with our journey. As they were making up the berth, I heard one of the guards say : ' When we get to Wologda they'll have horses waiting, so we shan't be delayed.' Then we were going north. But where ? At a venture, I said to the man : ' Do you take me right through to Archangel,

or do I change my guard in Wologda ?' And he answered good-naturedly : ' Well, you are not supposed to know, but it doesn't matter now. We are taking you as far as Archangel. I don't know how much further you go. You must be a very rich man to be able to travel in such style. What are you in for ?' I made no answer, but went to bed. One of the men threw himself fully dressed on the couch, and the other sat up at his feet and kept watch.

The next day we arrived at Wologda. As before, one guard stayed with me while the other ordered the *troika*, and now we travelled by sledge. Day and night we went without stopping, and got to Archangel late in the evening of the seventh or eighth day. At my request we went to a hotel, the guards with me, of course. They had probably had directions from Petersburg to show me every courtesy.

Next morning I was taken to their head-quarters, and had to wait in the office while my two men went through all sorts of formalities. Then they explained they were to take me to the Governor's office and leave me. Here an officer took my address, and said I should hear from them soon as to my destination.

I went back to my hotel without the guards, and learned there, to my astonishment, that my relatives had stretched a point, and sent me a box full of

books and clothes. They had given me a wadded travelling-coat in Petersburg, and in Wologda they sent me furs and high felt boots, so everything had been done to lighten the rigours of such a trip.

I was about to go out and take a look at the town, when a policeman appeared, and said the Governor would like to see me. Surprised at that, for I had just been in his office, I went back immediately with the man. I found an elderly officer in uniform with a star on his breast; he had a gentle face, and said cordially, in French: 'I am sorry about this mistake. I told the officer to find out if you were at home, as I wanted to call on you. The fool of a policeman didn't understand, and gave you all this trouble. I used to know your father, and when I heard to my astonishment that you had been sent here, I wanted to look after you a little.'

I bowed, and said: 'Is that all you wished to see me for, your Excellency? If so, I think I can go back to my hotel.'

'No, you misunderstood me. You think I am speaking in my official capacity, and I see you have no especial love for the service; I cannot blame you, after your experience. But I want you to look upon me as an old friend of your father's, not as the Governor.'

I thanked him, and went back to my rooms. Hardly twenty minutes had passed before my door

was flung open without knocking, and the hotel porter appeared, bowing in the Governor.

‘You seem surprised,’ said he. ‘I asked them to announce me, and they brought me right up instead.’

Evidently they didn’t think it was necessary to knock at my door, as I was a criminal, and the porter seemed to think he was my keeper.

‘Don’t mention it, your Excellency,’ said I. ‘Won’t you sit down?’

‘I have come to return your call, and ask you in my wife’s name to dine with us to-night *en famille*.’

I thanked him for his cordial invitation, and accepted. I went at six o’clock, and was charmingly received by his wife. We chatted easily at dinner, and the Governor said how sorry he was not to be able to keep me in Archangel; he would have to send me further north. ‘But I hope,’ he added, ‘that you will be back here soon, and then we may be able to make your exile more pleasant, and see you often at our house.’

‘Thank you, sir; but I don’t really know how long my exile is to be. They said at your office they would let me know in a few days. I have not even heard my sentence yet; I don’t think that is quite within the law, is it?’

The Governor smiled, and said: ‘Ah, yes, but this is an affair of the Administration which I cannot

alter, much as I should like to. However, I can tell you on my own responsibility that you will have to spend five years in the province. The punishment is exceedingly severe because you were so stubborn at your examination. Besides, you must have insulted the officials. I get my impressions from the report, of course. However, I am convinced that your family will be able to shorten your sentence, and then it depends somewhat upon yourself, you know. Perhaps here in this comparative freedom, without the hard prison restrictions, you will come to see for yourself that it would be best to give in, and send a petition to the Czar, and then you will be back in Petersburg in no time at all. I can understand fully how it all came about. You probably were good-natured enough to help some man whom you scarcely knew, and now you have to suffer for your kind-heartedness. You made the matter worse by being—well, we will say, peppery. But, as I said, a short stay in a Siberian village won't be very trying, and then you will be back here again for a little "after-cure," and before long you will be as gay as ever in Petersburg society.'

I said nothing of my resolution to devote myself to the cause of Russian freedom, but I was none the less firm in my determination.

We spent a pleasant evening talking of all sorts of things—experiences in Petersburg, Paris, and

Berlin, and spoke often of my father. A few people came in after dinner, and I felt that I had gone back to the old days of social life.

I stayed in Archangel several days, dining almost every night with the Governor. On the last evening he said : ' To-morrow you will have to leave. This time you will travel alone, and when you get to your destination go straight to the Isprawnik ; that is only a form you will have to go through. I will give you a private letter to him, so that he will not bother you at all. I am sorry we cannot keep you here any longer, but I must obey orders. My wife is heart-broken too, for she wanted you to help her with a charity bazaar. But we shall soon see you again. Good luck to you, and I hope you won't be bored in your little visit up North. You will be back soon. Good-bye !'

The next day I went through the necessary preliminaries, hired a sledge, and started for Mesen. It was more a village than a town ; it lay on an arm of the White Sea inside the Arctic Circle, and had about eight hundred inhabitants. I looked curiously at the low cottages and the few people I met in the street as I drove in. I ordered the coachman to go directly to the police-station, and asked for the Isprawnik. ' What do you want of him ?' said the officer. I handed him the Governor's letter, and was ushered into the office of the Chief. He greeted me obsequiously, having had orders from

Petersburg and Archangel to treat me well. He had already looked up a suitable house, and asked me to dinner that day. Yet all this rather irritated me, for why should I be treated better than any other exile? So I was somewhat cool, and declined his invitation. Then he sent a man with me to show me my new quarters.

We stopped before a small low cottage with three red-shuttered windows looking out on to the street. Across a tiny court was the entrance, where an old woman stood and bowed us in. She was an officer's widow, and lived here alone with her son. I decided to take the house, paid off the driver, dismissed my guide, and at last I was alone. My landlady's son helped me unpack my books; I arranged my things; there were a few green plants in the window, and the place soon began to look like home.

I ordered dinner—and, by the way, it was no worse than my prison fare—and then I started for a walk through the town. A horrible feeling of loneliness came over me. So I was to spend five years in this dreary place! The plan of going back to Archangel had no special charm for me. I should see the Governor every day, and possibly be made secretary of one of Her Excellency's pet charities. . . . I would rather stay where I was. At least here I should have my books. I could work, and fit myself for the purpose in life that I could now see so clearly.

Next morning I went to the police-station, where the Isprawnik greeted me most cordially—rather too cordially. He asked me how I had slept, and what he could do for me.

‘I should like to have the addresses of the other exiles here.’

‘But what do you want to know these people for? They are not your type at all. They are most uncultivated. Nearly all workmen, students, and trash of that sort.’

‘Still, I should like to meet my fellow-sufferers,’ I insisted, ‘and I think I can safely form my own judgment.’

‘Just as you wish,’ said he, smiling. ‘This gentleman will give you the addresses, though that is not really a part of our official duty.’

They gave me a list of names, addresses, and occupations, and that afternoon I chose one of the men at random, went to the given number, asked for ‘Mr. Nadeshdin,’ and was ushered into a roomful of people.

A tall, black-bearded man, with fine, dark eyes, stepped forward, and said: ‘I am Nadeshdin; what can I do for you?’ I told him my name, dropping my title, of course, and said I had been sent here for five years, and wanted to meet some of my companions. I was invited to stay, introduced to the circle, and talk soon became general.

They asked me where I had been arrested, what

prison I had been in, how long I had been there, and what I was charged with. I answered all their questions, and one of the men said: 'That is not much of a crime. But perhaps they punished you more because you were impudent to the officials. Your political convictions do not seem to be very clear, but time will tell what will become of you. Do you expect to be here long? But perhaps it is too soon to ask? We shall see how you stand it. If it gets too monotonous, you can always hand in your petition to the Czar.'

That was not particularly cordial, and I answered rather sharply: 'Even if my political convictions are not quite as clear as yours, you have no cause to mistrust me. I came here to talk things over with you, and wanted to offer you any of my books. But you treat me as though I were an impostor!'

'I didn't really mean it in that way,' said he; 'but you must know, all sorts of people are sent here, and we are not in the habit of taking new-comers for granted. Who are your friends in Petersburg?'

I mentioned Dr. Popoff, and noticed that several knew him.

Nadeshdin asked: 'Where is he now, and how is he getting along? He is a fine friend and a splendid worker. I know him well, and if you are a friend of his, that is all we need. But let us have something to drink. Won't you stay and have a glass of tea with us?'

I thanked him, and sat there till late in the evening.

In the course of the conversation some one asked me : ' Is your name simply Trubetzkoï, or have you a title ? ' I answered that I had a title. ' Well, then, you are not the first aristocrat that has fought on our side. What college are you from ? ' I told him I was from the Law School. ' Oho ! that's a far cry. They generally turn out rascals there ! '

They all seemed more cordial now, and several others appeared in the course of the evening. Nadeshdin said : ' You came just at the right time, for the whole colony is here to-day. You can meet them all. '

One of the most interesting of the new-comers was a quiet, fair-haired man of about thirty-five, with frank blue eyes. He sat down by me, and we had quite a long talk. ' Have you just come ? ' he asked. ' Where are you from, and how long will you have to stay ? ' I told him, and he explained that he was a Pole, and had been a workman, first in Warsaw, and then in Lodz. There he had been arrested, and sent here for three years. ' I have been here six months already. It's not so bad. We have our friends and our books, and Nadeshdin has arranged to hold a meeting once a week, when we have a lecture and a debate, and it is quite interesting. '

Next morning he came to see me. We spoke of

the life in the colony, and he admitted that the others had seemed to mistrust me. 'You see,' he said, 'we are all old friends, and you are a stranger from quite another sphere of life. Then, to tell you the truth, you have not done anything to deserve penal servitude. So naturally you have to make your record yet. I am glad you mentioned Dr. Popoff, though, for after that they all took it for granted that you were a safe man, but that you simply didn't know your own mind.'

I answered: 'I undoubtedly have my own opinions, but I do not mean to declare them to every casual stranger I meet.'

He stayed some time, talking over the labour question in Poland, and telling me about his comrades in the cause in Moscow and Southern Russia. One of his friends who had been exiled to the same province had recently escaped.

'But isn't that almost impossible?' I asked.

'No, not if you have money and connexions.'

'But what can you do even if you really succeed? You have to go abroad, don't you?'

'Not necessarily. If you have anyone to help you, you can always take out a passport under an assumed name, and go quietly on working in Russia.'

'That would be a great scheme,' said I. 'I have money enough, not only to get away myself, but to take a few of you fellows with me. But I don't know quite how to do it.'

‘If you are going,’ said the Pole, ‘it would be best to go at once. You can do it easily, if you get away before you are known. Or else, if you stayed six months, and asked occasionally to go on short trips, they wouldn’t be surprised if you should want to take a longer one. The main thing is to keep on the right side of the Isprawnik. They were all wondering yesterday what made him so attentive to you. You must have very influential friends, for he even looked up your quarters for you. That made some of the others here rather angry, but Nadeshdin said you might be of service to us yet.’

Finally he left me, and I was alone with my thoughts of the possibility of freedom.

That evening I went again to Nadeshdin’s house, where I met a number of people, who wanted me to tell them about Petersburg, Dr. Popoff, and some of the Revolutionists I had met through him. They had all been concerned in political intrigues, and, after a few months in prison, had been sent here to serve their terms. They told me more of their life in exile. Conditions here were comparatively easy. They were not quite cut off from the world, as some stations are, for they had a mail every two or three weeks, and were allowed to receive their letters and papers unopened, which saves much friction with the authorities. Also, they were not required to report daily at head-quarters.

The worst feature of this banishment for men of

education is the enforced inactivity. They are not allowed to follow their professions. A doctor is not permitted to practise, nor can a teacher open a school, unless the Isprawnik has a family and there is no one else to give them lessons. One thing is certain, however, that those whose constitutions are not undermined by their long imprisonment throw themselves eagerly into the revolutionary work. They study foreign languages and political economy to keep their minds from rusting; they do what they can in the colony, helping the workmen among them with their education, and holding lectures and debates. In this way they keep up their courage, which the administration would be so glad to crush. The dream of freedom and the broader sphere of usefulness lives in them all, and when they have served their term, or if they are lucky enough to escape, no power can keep them from their beloved work. They get the paltry sum of ten or fifteen roubles a month from the Government for their living expenses; and even here rank counts, for a titled exile gets more than a common citizen or a simple moujik.

My chief purpose in calling on Nadeshdin had been to see him alone or to meet the Pole again. The latter came in as I was about to leave, and I asked him to walk home with me. He stayed for a little, and we discussed the details of my flight. I had won his confidence, and he promised me a list of

addresses. His friends in Moscow and in Southern Russia would see that I got a new passport.

Then we planned how I was to get a sledge without arousing suspicion. The possibility of getting away excited me tremendously. I was reckless, and declared that money could do anything. But the Pole smiled and said: 'There is no use in throwing your money away. Give it to the cause . . . we need all the money we can get. Why do you want to spend so much on yourself? Perhaps ye can do this more cheaply; I have a plan, but I want to talk it over with Nadeshdin first. Then to-morrow we three will hold a council of war: three heads are always better than one.'

I spent a restless night, dreaming of my glorious plan, and early in the morning hurried over to see Nadeshdin. He was alone, and said directly: 'The Pole has told me of your scheme. It is the best thing you can do if you have the money. We shall have to be very diplomatic about it, though, and utilize your influence with the Isprawnik. You must ask him for permission to go to Archangel—say, to buy furniture for your house, or, better still, to see the Governor. He will let you do anything, because he hopes to curry favour with His Excellency. You are his trump-card, you know. There is no need for you to go to Archangel at all; you can branch off where you like, and take the shortest route for Moscow or any other large city.'

I asked him to come with me, as I could easily pay for two, but he said it would only spoil my plan, for he was better known, and might be suspected. He would serve out his full time, or else take some other opportunity to escape. He finally said : ' You had better call on the Isprawnik ; it will do him good, and won't do you any harm. You might mention casually that you would like to go to Archangel. He will certainly let you go for a few days. I will tell you this evening the rest of the plan.'

I made my call, and was received with deep respect—I might almost say with servility. The Isprawnik came in from his office complaining of the amount of work he had to do, of the laziness of his subordinates, and the many cares of his position. His wife fairly beamed with pride at receiving a man with a title, who had actually been in society in Petersburg, and was a friend of the Governor.

They talked chiefly of His Excellency's graciousness, and said I must either be a relative or a very dear friend, to make him so anxious about me. I saw this was my cue, so I said lightly : ' I should like so much to see him again in the next few days. I want some things for my house, too, and perhaps I could get them better in Archangel.' He fell into the trap directly. ' Of course, I really have no right to let you go, but in a case like yours we have to make exceptions. I am sure the Governor will approve.' I told him I thought His Excellency

would understand just why I had gone—and then it was for such a short time too.

When I left I asked him whether I should come in the next day to get his official permission, but he said that would not be necessary. ‘However,’ he added, ‘I should be charmed to see you again before you go, and hope you will often call when you come back.’

I was delighted that I had played my part so well, and could hardly wait for the appointed time to tell Nadeshdin. When I got there I found him talking with the Pole. They advised me to go to Archangel, after all, and from there directly through to Wologda. That would be the easiest and quickest way, and the Isprawnik would never suspect there was anything wrong till I was safe in Moscow.

They gave me addresses and letters, and advised me to settle first in Moscow. I then asked the Pole to come with me, but he refused. ‘I will bear it a little while longer, and then, if Nadeshdin tries it, perhaps I shall go with him. I should suggest that you travel as light as possible, and make no stops whatever. And the more you can tip along the road, the better.’

Next morning I called on the Isprawnik in his office. He wanted to be remembered to the Governor, wished me a pleasant journey, and asked me when I thought of coming back.

‘ Oh, in about four or five days, perhaps.’

‘ Yes ? That’s not much. But don’t forget to tell the Governor that you had terrible difficulty in getting away from me. I hope he won’t mind my doing it without orders. Well, *au revoir !*’

The horses started, and off I went at a brisk trot. We made better time to Archangel than I had coming up, and, once there, I took the precaution of dismissing the driver and taking a new man. Day and night we drove straight through from Archangel to Wologda, where I boarded the first train for Moscow. Throughout the long trip it was borne in upon me that now my life was just beginning. Now at last I should be able to carry out the plans I had been revolving all these months. How I should do it was not yet certain, but if I stayed in Russia I could use my money to found a system of secret printing establishments, which would be a great help in our work. I was glad my imprisonment had been so short, for my health had not been shattered by confinement, and I could devote my full powers and an undaunted courage to the cause.

As the money they had given me in Archangel would not hold out much longer, I decided to go directly to my uncle in Petersburg, and ask for my own private means. I had turned over my fortune to him on my arrest, fearing it would be confiscated. So I hurried through Moscow, and, as luck would

have it, caught a fast express to Petersburg, and arrived there safely next morning.

I took a cab from the station to my uncle's house, ran upstairs unannounced, and walked into his study. I shall never forget the old butler's frightened face when I met him in the anteroom ; but my uncle was still more disturbed. He jumped up from his chair, and said : " What, *you* here ! Are you crazy, boy ? I will give you anything you want if you will only leave the country. Go abroad, and later I will move heaven and earth to have you recalled. That is the only way. What did you come here for ? I have been trying to have your sentence commuted ; you were only to stay there one year more : they had promised me. And now you have spoiled it all. You have brought enough disgrace upon the family. You must now disappear for a time, and I will do the best I can to have you brought back respectably.'

'I have not come here for advice,' I replied, 'but for my money. I need it to carry out my plans. I cannot live as I used to, and I am convinced that nothing can be done in Russia by legal means. I have joined the party that will force the Government to give the simple rights of humanity to our poor Russian people.'

'Are you mad ? Where did you learn all this nonsense ? " Force the Government to give the people their rights !" How are you going to set

about it? Are you going to add your good old name to that band of low-class demagogues who are overturning the whole country to gratify their own private greed? What a crazy idea! You will end on the gallows yet, with the rest of the lot. Can't you be reasonable? Don't you see that not even the "people," whom you revolutionists pretend to love so, will have anything to do with you? No; your head has been turned by your life in prison. Go abroad as soon as you can, and keep quiet there for a little. When you have had a rest and change, we will have another talk about all this.'

'I know what I am about, and I will thank you to hand my money over to me,' said I.

'I certainly shall not. I will only give you just enough to go abroad, and the rest I shall carefully invest. I have your mother's sanction for absolute control of the property. However, I am willing to put you up until you start for the frontier.'

'I am not going to start for the frontier,' I replied, 'and I demand my property. I shall arrange my life as I please.'

'I have told you once, and I repeat it, that you shall never have your money. I will not be responsible for your being taken up by a set of rascals and plucked. We have had enough of your nonsense; you are to stay here with me till I can arrange to send you abroad.'

‘Since you will not give me my money, I believe there is nothing further I have to say. Good-bye.’

As I left, I heard him frantically shouting after me, ‘Come back here ; do you hear me ?’ But I was soon out of the house, jumped into a cab, and drove madly to the station. There I had to wait some time for a through train to Moscow. I was very much excited, for I feared I might be followed ; but I calmed myself with the thought that my uncle could not have known where I was going.

Arrived in Moscow, I stopped in a hotel where I used to go with my father. I wanted to look up an old friend, a civil engineer, who had borrowed about 10,000 roubles from me before my arrest. I had nearly 200 roubles with me, but when I had paid my bill there would be only thirty left. I could not go on living at this rate, so I rang for the porter, paid my bill, and had my things taken to the station. Then I looked up a small shabby hotel, and took a cheap room. Fortunately, the engineer soon got my message, and met me in a little restaurant near at hand. I told him all my story (he had known of my arrest), and that I had been afraid to wait for him in the hotel.

‘What luck !’ said he. ‘Here is part of what I owe you, and the rest I’ll deposit in the bank under my own name in six or eight weeks. Then you need only write me in any name under which you want to draw it, and the matter is settled.’

I now presented the letters Nadeshdin and the Pole had given me. Their friends received me cordially, and when I told them I needed a passport, promised to get me one by the following evening. In case I might have trouble at my hotel, I had better spend the night with friends of theirs.

## CHAPTER VI

### REVOLUTIONARY WORK IN TULA

I STAYED some time in Moscow, and, thanks to the arrangement of my friends, lived in the house of a railway employé, where I was safe from police surveillance till my papers came. How they got it I do not know, but they brought me an exceedingly good pass—that is to say, it was good because it was genuine—and henceforward my name was Michailoff.

I spent most of my days with my new friends talking over their work. They gave me an outline of their plans and convictions. Like most of the men I had met, they were loyal followers of Karl Marx, and believed firmly in spreading political propaganda among the workmen. We had many long discussions, and I was especially interested in the study of the Socialist movement.

One evening they told me they had had a letter from Nadeshdin, who wanted to be remembered to me. ‘Do you know that your escape made a tremendous uproar in Mesen ? As soon as the matter

dawned on the Isprawnik, he telegraphed directly to Archangel, and when he heard you had not been there, he was wild. He sent for the other exiles, and read them the Riot Act. Since then he has been frightfully severe. He examines all the mail, which he never used to do, and raises all sorts of rows. Nadeshdin is glad you got away so well, and hopes to see you soon. It seems he is going to try it himself in a short time.'

That same evening another man said to me: 'I think it would be a good thing for you to go to Tula and start your work there. There is a stricter supervision here in Moscow, and it would be harder for you. Tula is a large factory town, and we have a number of workers there. They need more men, and more money.' So I left Moscow in a day or two, and looked up their friends in Tula.

Here no one knew anything about me or my record; they simply knew that I had been exiled and had escaped; so I had no prejudices to overcome. I took a furnished room, studied there in the daytime, and spent the evenings with my friends making out a plan of campaign.

They had a number of small clubs for the workmen here, ten or fifteen in a club. They met after working hours, and listened to a lecture on continental politics, and labour conditions at home and abroad. Then came a general discussion and a reading, either from history or political economy.

These were the more advanced clubs, and the debates, in which the men took part, were most interesting. They showed a vast amount of insight and sound comprehension of affairs. I myself soon gave a series of lectures, which were very well received, on Jurisprudence, the Common Law in Russia, and our projected Labour Laws.

The other members told me repeatedly that I did not dwell enough on class distinctions. I had to admit it, and owned I was not quite sound myself on this subject as yet, but I hoped it would come in time. So after that I always went over my lectures with them before the club met, and we discussed them point by point.

Beside this higher class, they had others where the men were taught to read and write. In Russia, of course, there is no compulsory schooling. Evening schools and Sunday classes are carried on in a small way, but they are very much hampered by lack of means and Government regulations. A revolutionist, however, could not teach in these schools, for he could show no proper certificates. These free classes are lamentably insufficient, and the revolutionists have simply met the demands of the people by establishing their clubs. In Russia, naturally, this is considered a hideous crime, and is severely punished by the law. I often went to these club meetings, and I think I never saw anything more touching in my life than the sight of these

grown men, after a hard day's work, patiently poring over their ABC.

The teacher of this class told me one evening after the lesson, 'You have no idea how quickly they learn. They are so eager to read well enough to spell out their newspapers. They never miss an evening, and some of them have learned to read and write quite well in two months. I read aloud to them, and then we have little discussions; that stimulates them to think for themselves.'

A teacher's life was most precarious. According to statistics, the revolutionists worked in these clubs on the average two or three months. At the end of this time they were usually arrested, and after a few months, or even possibly a year, in prison were exiled for a number of years. Of course, I have known of men who continued their work for a longer term, but, as a rule, the task of elevating the masses and doing good by stealth required an iron nerve, tremendous endurance, and unlimited time—time in the sense that a short period of activity must be paid for with a long season of exile. But, in spite of the sacrifices and the daily dangers of this life, the number of its devotees is endless.

All the evening meetings, naturally, were held in secret, and one night one of the leaders, a Mme. Kusmin, told me she would have to drop her classes. 'I am a professional teacher,' she said, 'and have good credentials. I have not fallen under suspicion

yet, so I can get a position in any Government school. There I can reach a class that will be very useful to us in the work. I should advise you to look for a good position too, for you will get into trouble if you keep this up.'

Two months had passed, more or less in idleness, and I myself had wanted to find a position. The man whose passport I had was a college graduate of about my own age, and could easily have known something of the law. One day a friend of mine in the Census Office told me of a lawyer who was looking for a private secretary. 'Why don't you apply for it? His name is Kudrin. The work will probably be very easy, and I should go directly to see him about it.'

So early next morning I called at the house, and was asked to wait in the anteroom. Presently appeared an elderly woman, with a very pleasant face, greyish hair, and soft brown eyes. She told me that her husband was ill, asked me a few questions, and then took me in to his bedside.

He lay there groaning occasionally, and evidently in frightful pain. His thin, pale face and emaciated hands showed the strain of a long, severe illness. His hair and beard were white, but I could not judge of his age. Between his groans he asked me if I could come a few hours every day and write at his dictation. 'You will have to look up some legal references, but I can easily tell you where to find them.'

We will set a definite time for our work, but I don't know that I shall be able to dictate every day. Masha,' he said, turning to his wife, 'I think Mr. Michailoff will dine with us. We must make him feel at home here.' His wife nodded, and said: 'Certainly, my dear; just as you wish.'

Then we arranged the details of the work, and finally he said: 'I will give you 100 roubles a month. Is that enough?' I was glad to get anything, for it was the first money I had ever earned. In my old life I had never had to calculate, and in those days I should have thought 100 roubles a month absurdly small; my butler got more than that. But now I was a new man, and I wanted to live just as my comrades did, and I knew a great many of them had very much less.

Next day I began my work, copying out a long dry legal brief. It went very slowly, for M. Kudrin could hardly speak. I stayed to dinner, and for the first time since the break with my people I found myself one of a large family. It was the first time, too, that I had been in touch with society since my exile. Of course, I had met a number of people in all sorts of classes, but I had not been asked to their houses. I felt rather out of place, and every time Mme. Kudrin looked at me so gently, and questioned me about my life, it was almost impossible for me to answer in the character of Michailoff. But it had to be done.

From the very first day my relations with the whole family were delightfully cordial. They treated me as an old friend, and I spent most of my time there. In the evenings I usually looked up some of my other friends, but I rarely lectured now in the workmen's meetings, for we had to be exceedingly careful. A number of our men had been arrested in a neighbouring town, and we feared that the police had found some of our Tula addresses there. Consequently we had to avoid even the appearance of evil.

Not only our work among the people, but our social meetings had to be interrupted. I rarely saw any of the teachers now. I met Mme. Kusmin one day, and she asked, 'How do you like your work? The Kudrins are a most interesting family, and you probably enjoy their company more than all those dry talks on the labour question we used to have. I am afraid at heart you are not much of a Socialist. Of course, you are interested in our struggle, but you belong to the same party as the German Socialists of '48. By the way, did you ever hear that there was a famous revolutionist in the Kudrin family? You may remember reading the case of Alexandra Kudrin. She was this man's sister, but he and all the rest of his family belong to the Liberal party.' I said I had never heard them speak of her.

'She was a brilliant and a most fascinating woman, but she finally committed suicide—no one ever knew why. Mme. Kudrin may tell you about it some day.'

I often had long talks with Mme. Kudrin, who said it was a shame, with my gifts, that I had not had more education. 'Why don't you study law? You could do so much good in that profession. It would be a pity for you to spend your whole life in a subordinate position. Do you know, if we win this great case, it will bring us a tremendous amount of money; and I think then that I will send you and my two girls to Moscow in the autumn. You can all three study there; then you'll come back some day, and make something great of your life.'

I listened, tremendously touched and encouraged by her sympathy, but tortured, too, with the thought of my deceit, and that I was betraying such implicit trust; yet there was no other way.

I told her frankly I did not believe in the possibility of working openly for the good of the people, and that the only feasible way was the revolutionists'. Once as we were discussing this Mme. Kudrin said: 'I have heard those ideas often before. Have we ever spoken of my sister-in-law?' And she told me how her husband's sister, then a girl of seventeen, had finished school, and gone abroad to study medicine. She came home from college thoroughly imbued with socialistic ideas—worked in a factory as a day-labourer, canvassed for the cause, and was finally arrested and sent to Siberia. 'She escaped by a clever ruse, went to Moscow to live, and even practised medicine under an assumed name. Finally

she went abroad, and suddenly she shot herself—we never knew why; perhaps she despaired of ever carrying out her great ideas, or perhaps something else—who knows? How some people throw their lives away! If she had given all her talents and energies to some profession—medicine or teaching—she would have done the “people” she loved so much more good than by all her revolutionary propaganda.’

‘Yes; but, Mme. Kudrin, you forget that the Government would not have allowed her to teach or to practise medicine. They would have put so many obstacles in her way that she would have become a revolutionist in spite of herself.’

‘Perhaps. But it is a pity, such a useless sacrifice of life!’

‘One life means very little to the cause, where so many human lives are at stake; but *no* sacrifice is ever useless. Time alone can tell whether her ideas have borne fruit or not. I maintain that a short life of such usefulness is worth ten or twenty years of ordinary routine activities.’

‘My dear Michailoff, I have told you this story as an awful warning. I have grown as fond of you as though you were my own, and it would be a terrible blow to think of your being a revolutionist, and that your life might some time be in danger.’

I saw how widely we differed in our points of view. I had heard these same things before from my rela-

tives, but never so gently spoken, nor with such good intentions.

The spring wore on, and when the warm weather came the family left for the country, and I went with them. It was a glorious summer—the first one since my prison days. To be free and in such charming surroundings was the keenest delight. Our country house lay in a large park—almost a forest. We often went up on to the hill, where we had a splendid view of the town, and sat about under the trees laughing and talking till late. Sometimes then we sang, and all took part in the chorus. It was a wonderful time, only far too short. The dream was over, and we all went back to town. Here the old life began again, and I gradually, too, fell into my evening work in the clubs.

All the summer I had not been very well, and by September, when we returned to town, I was in great pain. I had contracted a stomach trouble—probably while I was in prison—and had to go to Moscow for an operation. After six weeks I was discharged from the hospital as convalescent, and went back to Tula, but not to my old place. For my work for M. Kudrin was finished, and I went there now simply as a friend, and met many interesting people at their house.

During a call one day on the teacher, Mme. Kusmin, she said to me: ‘I have been hearing a good deal about you lately. People say it is very careless of M. Kudrin to take a stranger with such extreme views

into his family. You are too excitable, and altogether too reckless. You must remember that people cannot air their convictions on all occasions.' I had no recollection of having been indiscreet, but promised to be more careful in future.

As there was little to be done now in Tula—for we were still closely watched by the police—I resolved to go back to Moscow and look for work there. I had made up my mind to put part of my money into a circulating library, as this would give me an ostensible occupation. Under cover of this, I could always carry on my revolutionary work. So I went to Moscow to talk over my plan with our people there. They approved, but said that was hardly the place to carry it out. First, it would be too expensive; and then I should have to obtain a special permit from the police, which would probably get me into trouble.

'You had better go to some other large town—say, Odessa or Charkoff—where you can carry out your plan more safely. By the way, do you know that Nadeshdin has escaped? He is in the Caucasus now, and has taken up the work again.' I was delighted at the news.

It was during this visit to Moscow that I made the acquaintance of Abramoff, the well-known Social Scientist, who afterwards became my friend, and with whom I worked for many years. He and his wife—but especially the latter—were associated with me in most of my later enterprises.

## CHAPTER VII

### INSURANCE AGENT—AND CONTRABAND PRINTER

I NOW started for Charkoff, where I hoped to buy or lease a library. My friends in Moscow had given me letters, and I looked up my people carefully, calling only late in the evening, and taking all the customary precautions against detection. When I explained my intentions, they said: 'You must remember that Charkoff is a university town, and all the libraries are connected with some college. You could not rent one, and would have to establish one yourself. But why don't you start a printing-house? That would be a splendid plan, and we could run a secret press in connexion with it.' I suggested it might be difficult to get a permit for that, for I did not know how Michailoff stood with the police. They might ask me all sorts of embarrassing questions, and find out who I really was. With a library there would be less trouble. The others saw my point, and said they would look me up something in that line.

I was sitting one evening in a café-chantant in

the suburbs. A dark man of about forty, apparently either an Armenian or a Jew, shared the table with me. He was very well dressed, had a prosperous air, and seemed well-mannered too; for I noticed that when we fell into casual conversation he did not offer to introduce himself, nor ask me any personal questions. When we left the place, we decided to drive back to town together, and when I gave my address my companion said: 'That's odd; we live in the same hotel. Allow me to introduce myself—Director Salomonson, of the Mutual Life Insurance Company.' So I gave him my name (but naturally not my own).

When we got back to the hotel we saw it was not late, so we ordered supper in the little garden, and sat and talked awhile. I found he was a Jew and a lawyer. But as Jews cannot practise law in Russia (except those who were admitted to the Bar over thirty years ago, before this rule was made), and as he did not care to be a lawyer's clerk indefinitely, he had gone into an insurance office. He lived in Odessa, and was simply passing through Charkoff on one of his quarterly tours of inspection.

I told him something of my life—I mean, the life of Michailoff, as I had imagined it—and said I had come to Charkoff to look for some easy position where I could have time to go on with my studies.

'I hope you won't think I'm impertinent,' said he, 'if I give you some advice. You are a clever man,

and cultivated. Why don't you go into the insurance business?—I don't mean necessarily in my company. You'd make your way there, and make money too, and still have time for all the outside work you wanted.'

'I don't see that,' I answered. 'Office work means eight hours a day, and after that routine is over, your head is so tired you are not fit to take in anything deeper than a trashy novel or a variety show.'

'No, I don't mean that you should be a clerk. Take an agency.'

'Yes, but agencies don't grow on every bush.'

'Oh, I can easily find you one. Think it over to-night, breakfast with me in the morning, and we'll talk it over and decide.'

The next morning I appeared promptly, and, after weighing the pros and cons, we came to the conclusion that it would be a good thing for me to take a district agency in the province of Kursk, with my head-quarters either in the county town or in a manufacturing village. The plan took my fancy so much that I set off with the inspector the very next day.

The agent whose place I was to take had been made inspector of the district. He lived in a small suburban house in the factory town of Petrowka, and when we had discussed our business he said: 'I think it would be just as well if you took my

house too. The people are accustomed to it, and know where to come when they want anything in that line; and you know there is a great deal in habit. It is not far from town, and near the station; and, as you see, we have electric light. Of course, the house is simple, but it's very comfortable, and, since you're not married, I think you'll find it large enough.'

So I took over the whole establishment, and was now settled as agent of the Mutual Life Insurance Company in Petrowka. I did not keep a horse, for I could rent one from the miller next door; but the house had a telephone and electric light—rather unusual luxuries in that part of the country. It had four large rooms, simply furnished, and two small empty store-rooms.

I took an assistant at first to do the accounts and to teach me the business routine, but in two or three weeks I had mastered all the details, and managed it alone. Now I had a position . . . but what next? How could I best help on the revolutionary cause?

My work was not at all strenuous, but I decided to take a clerk, as my predecessor had; so I wrote my friends in Moscow to send me one of their trusty men who understood the business. About ten days later I received a telegram: 'Coming this evening.—PETROFF.' I did not understand it, but went to the station, though I had no means of recognizing him. The train had come, the passengers had left,

and I saw only two men in the waiting-room, and a third who was drinking at the buffet. I strolled through the place a number of times, and finally the man at the buffet came up and said : ' Is your name Michailoff ?' .

• ' Yes.'

' I am Petroff. I have a letter for you here. Dmitrieff has probably written you about me.'

This was strange, for I had had no letter, and I felt I must be on my guard. My note might have fallen into the hands of the authorities, and though I had been exceedingly careful to word it so that only the initiated would understand, yet they might have scented something and put a spy on my track.

I took him home, and read his letter, but still was rather suspicious, for letters of recommendation are easy enough to forge ; so I put him through a rigid examination, which he stood very well, and my doubts began to disappear. The matter was not explained till later. Dmitrieff really had written, but had sent the letter to Tula under cover. From here it was forwarded to another man in Charkoff, so, out of excessive precaution, it only reached me long after Petroff's arrival.

We got on very well. Petroff simply knew that Michailoff was not my real name, and thought it a splendid plan to take an agency as a blind. We made friends with the manager of the works, the Police Commissioner, the parish priest, and the post-

master, and found them all very cordial. Petroff and I worked hard, extending, renewing, and paying off policies. He was registered on the books as a draughtsman and my book-keeper.

After a few weeks of business routine, he suggested one evening, as we were talking things over, that we should communicate with the members of the committee in town. There were five or six thousand factory hands there, and surely among all these there must be some of our party. We could get in touch with them, and might help them a great deal, as we had storage room for their dangerous papers, and could even start a secret press in time.

Our house lay back from the road on a little hill about fifty paces from the ruins of an old mill. The same distance on the other side stood the office of the new mills, and these were our only neighbours. We were about two kilometres from Petrowka, and in the other direction lay a tiny little hamlet. It was a capital place for a secret press, but there was one great drawback : we had no trees or shrubs, and our coming and going, and the number of our visitors, could never be concealed. However, that was not serious, for we were great friends with the postmaster and the 'Pristaw,' as the chief of the police was called, and so had a position in society to safeguard us.

We were often invited to their houses, and asked them to ours in return, and here I soon found what

a valuable thing it was to have a steady head. For they began the evening by talking a bit, then came a supper, and finally they settled down to the business of drinking, which they proceeded to attend to most thoroughly. Occasionally they played cards, while those who could not play had to entertain the ladies. We soon had the reputation of being very 'good fellows,' which simply meant that we were good steady drinkers.

The insurance business brought me in touch with all sorts of people—workmen, tradespeople, moujiks, and officials. I soon made the acquaintance of a man named Davidoff. He kept the general merchandise shop in town, and we bought all our supplies from him. We were associated in business as well, for he was my sub-agent. Furthermore, we started a small private enterprise. The company had just asked for bids on the shipment of a new supply of rails, and Davidoff was anxious to take the contract. But as he had no capital, he asked me to go into partnership with him. Since it was only a matter of a small amount, I was glad to do it, for it would establish my reputation as a business man. I was to have none of the responsibility, as Davidoff attended to all the details.

These connexions made our intercourse with the central committee possible, for constant visitors at our house would not attract any special attention.

So one day we started for town to look up our

people. In the train we met the Pristaw, who called out cheerily : 'Hullo ! Are you going up to town ? That's good. We'll go somewhere this evening, and have a lark.' This hardly suited us, as the only time we could meet our men was in the evening. But as he insisted, we finally decided that Petroff should attend to our affairs, and I should spend the evening with the Pristaw, telling him that my friend had a pressing engagement. Our evening's rendezvous was in a café, where several friends of the Pristaw joined us, and things went as they usually did. The men soon were all tipsy, and I finally got away and started off after Petroff. He had seen the committee, and found the members delighted to have such well-established friends. They promised to visit us as soon as possible.

We now led a very active life. Our days were taken up with the insurance business, and we spent our evenings talking things over with the workmen. Often the members of the society came out, singly or by twos and threes, and we gathered either at our house or at a chosen spot in town, and held a council as to the best means of settling the labourers' troubles and expressing their general dissatisfaction.

We were in the iron district, and the principal works in the town were a smelter with a foundry attached. The wages were poor, and the working day was thirteen hours ; even the men at the furnaces

had twelve-hour shifts! The management was careless about sanitary conditions, and had refused medical attendance in several cases of accidents lately. The engineers and overseers were hard on the employés, and when these latter heard that one of the overseers had knocked a man down and ground his boot-heel into the poor fellow's face, they went wild, and the first big strike broke out in Petrowka.

The labourers demanded the following concessions: A small rise of wages; an eight-hour shift at the furnaces; regular medical attendance, with a better hospital service; and the dismissal of the offending overseer.

Our house was now turned into a printing-office. We had managed to get type, a small hand-press, and the paper, and now we began to issue carefully-worded appeals to the workmen. While the servants were in the house, the work, of course, could not go on, but as soon as they left for the night we made a start. There were seven or eight of us, and we worked all night long in shifts. As soon as our proclamations were printed, they were taken to the village and distributed among the factory hands.

The following morning Petroff and I went over to see what effect our work had had. There was great excitement in the village, and our proclamation was up on all the fences. The streets were full of workmen talking over our appeals, and we even saw a

policeman standing in front of one of the placards, surrounded by a mob of people, and reading them our words as solemnly as if they had been the inspired utterances of his chief, the Pristaw.

We had been far-sighted enough to cut the wires a few kilometres from the village ; so the management would not be able to telegraph for the Cossacks. Trouble had been brewing for some time, and the directors of the smelter had arranged with the General of the province to send down a regiment in case of need. This we had cleverly circumvented.

On the first day of the strike Davidoff said to us : ' What do you think those fellows have done ? By thunder ! if they haven't distributed that proclamation of theirs in every office in town ! I don't know how they did it, but one of them actually turned up in the company's office on the manager's desk . . . and his clerks even found some in their overcoat pockets. No, by Jove ! but they did that cleverly.'

When I went to the office for my mail, I met the postmaster hurrying out of the door. He called breathlessly as he ran : ' What the devil ! Have you heard about this business ? Don't stop me now. The Pristaw is waiting for me. We are going to the station.'

On my way back I met them dashing down the street in a sleigh. The postmaster nodded, and the Pristaw waved his hand most cordially. But a sinking feeling came over me as I remembered that

I had not found out where they were going. They might yet succeed in getting the Cossacks here before the strike was over. That would be more than serious.

I hung about the village all day long, and toward evening found out where the Pristaw and the post-master had gone. They were convinced, of course, that the regiment would be sent immediately upon receipt of their telegram, and had hurried off to the station to be ready to receive them. They both came to me that evening, and complained bitterly that no one had paid any attention to their despatch.

‘I can’t understand it! We’ve sent another telegram now, and told them to rush it. But there’s a chance still of their coming on that late train.’

The trains were not very convenient. There were only two a day, one at noon and the other at two in the morning.

I spent that evening with the Pristaw. He was tremendously excited, and said: ‘What do you think would become of us all if those damned rascals should take it into their heads to wreck the works or plunder the place? What can I do with only two policemen to back me? Not a thing! Haven’t I begged them time and again to give me a bigger force?’

I tried to comfort him. ‘Perhaps things wouldn’t be so bad. The people would quiet down soon, and by to-morrow it would all blow over.’

‘Yes, but I hope the Cossacks will get here soon. Then we’ll show these brutes what it means to break the laws. I must go down to the station now to be ready for that late train.’

I went with him. We watched the train come in, but not a soul was on board. The poor Pristaw was disconsolate, and I had to take him in and comfort him with a few glasses of vodka before we could drive home.

When I finally said good-bye he begged me to spend the night with him.

‘It is such a comfort to know that there is some one in the place I can depend upon. You may be able to help us yet. The devil only knows what those rascals will do next!’

I could hardly keep my face straight as I accepted his invitation to act as his guard. But the night wore off quite peacefully, and the workmen were perfect models of propriety. There was absolutely no rioting, and not a single case of drunkenness—even late that night.

The second day passed just as quietly, though the military reinforcements had not yet arrived. The manager and the Pristaw were beside themselves, and could not understand why troops were not sent to their relief.

Finally the Directors and the Board of Managers held a meeting, and decided, as I afterwards heard, to compromise. For they had too much at stake

to hold out for terms. There was only a small force of non-union firemen, and if these should go over to the strikers, the smelter would have to shut down. So the great strike was at an end!

On the third morning the works started as usual, and no signs of the struggle were visible in the village except a few tattered rags of our proclamation hanging to the fences.

But the excitement was not yet over. One day I went down to see how things were progressing, and as I stood in the door talking with Davidoff, he suddenly exclaimed: 'Look there! the Cossacks are coming! They might as well go home again; there's nothing here for them to do.' He was right, there they came, two hundred and fifty Cossacks, our noble band of reinforcements, but, fortunately, too late.

I called on the Pristaw to see what I could find out.

'Do you know what those scoundrels did?' said he. 'We have just discovered that they cut the wires some way down the line, and that is why the troops didn't come in time. But wait till we catch them!'

'Who do you suppose it was? Don't you think the workmen probably had the strike all planned and cut the wires themselves?'

'Certainly not. The workmen haven't sense enough to think of such things; it is some of those damned agitators. I have had word lately that

there are several in the neighbourhood. I know who they are, too, and I'll nab them yet.'

The police had been very busy since the strike. At the station and in the village itself we noticed many strange faces—secret service men, like bloodhounds on the track.

In a few days I had occasion to go to town. At the station I ran into several questionable specimens that looked to me like spies. I was travelling third-class, and these men got into the same compartment, together with several workmen and peasants from the neighbourhood. Presently one of the spies drew a proclamation from his pocket, and began to read it aloud. 'Isn't that fine writing, now? I tell you fellows those are great men; they are fighting for us poor workmen all right.' Not a soul looked up, or paid any attention. I had never lived through quite such a trying moment, but the other men had often told me of such experiences.

When I got to town I heard there had been a raid on our head-quarters the night before, and a number had been arrested, among them several friends of Petroff. So I hurried anxiously home to warn him. After the strike we had cleared the house of everything that might arouse suspicion. The hand-press and the pamphlets we had buried under a great stone out on the steppe, and a chest full of type and fittings in another place. Yet something might have gone wrong in my absence,

so I bribed a station-master and rode home on the first passing goods train.

Nothing had happened, however, and I calmed down again. Petroff even laughed at my case of 'hysterics.' 'But,' he added, 'I think I shall have some important insurance business in Odessa soon, and wait there till things blow over a bit.' They are getting rather sharp in Petrowka. Davidoff told me they roused Krasinsky's son-in-law out of bed the night before last and hauled him off to court.'

'Do you think he is absolutely safe?' asked I.

'Oh, he's all right. But I'm not so sure about his wife. He has just been married, and I don't know what she's like.'

'Don't you think it would look suspicious if you were to leave to-day?'

'Yes; I think I'll wait a little. I have a good keen scent for danger, and I shall know when it's time to get out of the way. You might go and call on "your friend" the Pristaw, though, this evening; that wouldn't do us any harm.'

The Pristaw greeted me affably, and asked how my business was doing. 'How I envy you,' said he. 'You are a free man. We poor devils of officials never get out of harness. I have worked like mad all day long, and even then I don't earn nearly as much as you. Ah yes, money is a great thing! You can have all kinds of a good time with it, and do such good solid business beside.'

We sat down in a restaurant, where the postmaster, Davidoff, and a couple of assayers from the works soon joined us. The drinks went round, and presently they were all rather mellow. Finally the assayers had to leave, but we four stayed and chatted longer. I think it was Davidoff who turned to the Pristaw and said: 'You bagged a fine bird yesterday, didn't you?'

'Yes,' said he, 'and that is not all. We've got the whole nest, too. I know where each one of them is this very minute.'

'Where's Petroff?' suddenly asked the postmaster, turning to me.

My heart stood still. 'Oh, he is at home,' I said as lightly as I could. 'He had some work to finish. By the way, Davidoff, do you know we have got the contract for the second consignment of rails?'

'Yes; you have got a great business there,' said the Pristaw. 'But I'm sorry Petroff is not here; he is such a jolly good fellow. The head of the concern sits here and amuses himself, and poor old Petroff has to keep his nose to the grindstone.'

'Petroff can't complain that I work him too hard.'

'No, no. I didn't mean that. I think you are very good to him. You are great friends of mine; I like you both.'

The Pristaw was evidently getting rather drunk, so I 'treated' them all round again and enjoyed

myself hugely, for I was quite certain now that neither Petroff nor I was under the slightest suspicion. The next day, however, Petroff decided it might be wiser for him to leave.

All through the province, as well as in our village, arrests had followed each other in quick succession. Sometimes the victims had really been concerned in the movement, and sometimes they were absolutely innocent. Either from chance, or because of our extreme precautions, not the slightest suspicion had yet fallen upon us.

My life went on as usual. I did the office work, and interviewed the manager of the smelter and all sorts of dealers with regard to my new business ventures. I had arranged with Petroff that when everything had quieted down I should send for him again.

I had often taken little trips to the different larger towns, to keep in touch with the workers in the cause and to widen my circle. This attracted no particular attention, for I was looked upon simply as an enterprising business man. I was planning such a trip now to Moscow, and, as usual, telegraphed on ahead (in cipher) to a certain address to find out if my friends were still there. But this time no answer came, which rather worried me. Either they were arrested or were in some trouble and could not reply.

Early one morning a country cart drew up at

my gate, and a young fellow of about twenty-five got out and handed me a note, saying, 'I have come with a message from Alexieff.' The note was from my friends in Moscow, and read: 'Our business has not gone well. The bearer will give you details.' He told me that a clever spy had succeeded in joining the band in Moscow, had betrayed the circle, and nearly all had been arrested. This young man (Smirnoff by name) had only got off by some lucky chance, and asked if I could put him up for a short time.

'You will have other visitors soon,' said he.

'Yes? Who are they?'

'A friend of yours and his wife. They have heard that you are comfortably established here, and they want a little rest and change in some good safe place. They will not stay long.'

I wondered how I should be able to explain their coming. But first I had to plan for Smirnoff. I asked Davidoff if we could not give him a place as overseer and assistant book-keeper for the force of men that was unloading our shipment of rails. Davidoff agreed, so now I had a companion in the house who proved to be quite pleasant. Petroff wrote to me from Odessa, too, that he would soon be back.

I continued my friendly intercourse with the Pristaw and the postmaster, and told Smirnoff to see them as well. But he was reserved and unable

to accustom himself to his surroundings. When Petroff came home he said to him :

‘ You will have to behave differently to people like the Pristaw. I cannot stand him either, but beggars mustn’t be choosers. We are here for our health, and even if we are not going to stay very long, we must be careful not to bring them down upon us. Probably Michailoff will be staying longer than we, and he can run a sort of sanatorium where we poor devils can come and take a “ rest-cure ” occasionally.’

Smirnoff answered: ‘ I don’t intend to have anything to do with *any* policemen. I have a physical antipathy for those beasts ; and, what is more, if you make concessions here and there, even the smallest, you lower your standard, and before you know it you are as bad as the people you associate with.’

‘ Do you mean that for me ? ’ said I, for I had noticed that Smirnoff had not seemed to approve of me lately.

‘ Yes, to tell you the truth, I do. I don’t know what you are doing here, anyhow. You are apparently an insurance agent, have plenty of money, and do business with Davidoff, and that sort. You say you are a Socialist, but you lead the same sort of life as these other men. And what is it all for ? I could understand it if you were canvassing among the workmen or running a secret press. But to

keep a sanatorium! By Jove, that is a little too much! I like you tremendously, and I only say this for your own good. You will be just like all the others soon.'

'My dear fellow, you are not altogether fair. Petroff can tell you that, though we've not done much, we have helped a little. That ought to balance my "friendship" for the Pristaw. I may eat and drink with these people occasionally—that is necessary to keep on a good footing with them—but I never lower myself.'

Later Smirnoff told me that the visitors of whom he had spoken were coming soon. I was surprised that they should go so far out of their way when they could only stay for a short time.

'I don't understand it myself,' said he, 'but possibly they want to get the police off their track.'

I had no idea who these visitors were, so I was tremendously surprised when I recognized Abramoff and his wife, of whom I have spoken before. They had escaped arrest by a miracle, and were now on their way to the Caucasus, where they had friends and work waiting for them. They had stopped here only to shake off the spies on their track.

I have never seen two people so diametrically opposite as Abramoff and his wife. He was tall and thin, with prominent irregular features and a stubbly blonde beard. Usually very quiet, he only lighted up when it came to a discussion, especially

on one of his favourite topics, such as 'The Influence of Agrarian Conditions on Modern Thought,' or 'The Interpretation of the Common Law.' She, on the other hand, was small and dainty, sparkling and energetic. The most singular thing about her was the strange expression that came across her face when she spoke of 'the cause;' her blue eyes, then seemed to grow dark and baleful with an inner fire.

She thought I had done very well here, and tried to convince the sceptical Smirnoff.

'What more could he have done?' said she. 'He lives here near the smelter, is in touch with the workmen, and on a good footing with the authorities. They could even set up a whole printing establishment here and no one would be the wiser.'

The few days that Abramoff and Anna Michailovna spent in my house brought us very close together.

'What a pity,' said she, 'that you cannot go with us. We must not stay here, and yet we do need some one to help us—some one capable and, outwardly at least, in touch with the authorities.'

'Who knows?' said I. 'Perhaps we shall meet again. Go and see what it is like in your new place, and then, if you really need me, send me word. How would it do if I established a branch office in Rostoff? I am known as an enterprising business man, and that would certainly be living up to my reputation.'

‘I can see,’ said Abramoff, ‘that you and my wife are exactly suited to each other. Now she will go on building her plans indefinitely.’

To make their sudden visit seem less mysterious, I invited the Pristaw, the postmaster, and several of the engineers to a little supper in their honour, and introduced them as my cousins. It went very well. The Pristaw got quite drunk, and began to flatter ‘Cousin Anna’ prodigiously, while the postmaster carried on a lively discussion with Abramoff. I had casually dropped the information that my cousin was a mining engineer, going to Siberia on a prospecting tour, so the postmaster wanted to know all about it, how and where he was going to take up his claim, etc. Abramoff played his part very well, and what he did not know about mining he invented on the spot.

I was only too sorry when their visit was ended and they had to leave Petrowka.

I had wound up my business with Davidoff, and my profits had been considerable. He wanted to persuade me to take another contract for delivering coal at the works. But it was to run for a long term, and I thought it best not to tie up my capital for a period of years. So I promised to give him my decision later on, and talked it over with Petroff. Simply to keep open house and run a ‘rest-cure’ for revolutionists hardly suited me. If we started a secret press, and kept in constant correspondence

with the party throughout the province, we should very soon awaken suspicion and be landed in jail. So I told Petroff I was thinking more and more of Anna Michailovna's proposition to work with them, and go about from place to place doing what we could to help.

Petroff tried to dissuade me.

'Of course, it's a good plan ; but the best scheme of all is simply for you to stay here and open a regular printing-office. Smirnoff and I will help you, and we can drop it all and run if we get into the least bit of trouble. Don't go into this interminable business with Davidoff ; find something that will bring you quicker returns and that won't take all your capital. Then if anything happens to our printing concern, we'll still have money enough to get away. You mustn't forget that there are several thousand workmen here, that it's a great field. And then, of course, we can supply outside towns too. What's more, you see we have everything on hand : we only need a few more founts of type and another large press.'

So I decided to stay and go on with the work with Petroff and Smirnoff. We arranged it so that the business should be run as usual. Petroff was to be my partner and Smirnoff my secretary. We could set up the press in our little store-room, Smirnoff and Petroff taking turns working it in the day-time, and at night we would all three work

together. Everything was settled, and the time fixed for driving out over the steppe to bring back the things we had buried; the extra type either Petroff or I was to get in Moscow.

But one evening as we sat at supper with the Pristaw and the postmaster, the latter suddenly turned to me and said: 'Tell me, do you know very much about this Smirnoff? Where did he come from, anyway?'

'I can't say I know *much* about him,' I answered, for I felt there was something wrong. 'I asked a friend in Moscow to send me a good man when Petroff went away. I only engaged him for a short time, but I did not want to let him go till he got another place. I hoped I could get him a position here, but that is not so easy.'

'Do you know,' said the Pristaw, 'he's been going about with some very queer people lately?'

'I do not bother much about his outside interests,' I answered.

'H'm! Naturally not,' said the Pristaw. 'But you must be a little careful, you know. I have heard from several people that Smirnoff has been talking a lot of nonsense lately. For instance, he told one man that all the troubles in the world were due to the unequal distribution of capital! I never trusted him from the first. He is probably one of those crazy students who stir up trouble in the Universities, and attend to everybody's business but

their own. I shouldn't wonder, now, if he thought he was better than *we* are! He's too grand to come and sit with *us*, but he goes about the town with all sorts of riff-raff!

'Oh, he is not as bad as that!' said I; and Petroff backed me up by saying:

'You know, he can't stand any liquor, and just to sit here and watch us drink when he cannot take anything is no fun. He gets lonely at home, so he goes about with some of these engineers he has picked up here.'

When we got home we told Smirnoff what they had said, and asked him if it were true.

'You will have to be more careful when we get the press started. Any little thing may tell against us then. Who *are* those friends of yours?' said Petroff.

'They are people who were here at the time of the strike, and they are getting ready for something else now. *They*, at least, are *busy*.'

'Does that mean that you think *we* are not?' said Petroff. 'I can tell you I know all the men who were here for the strike, and not *one* of them is here now. Either these men are bragging of something they have never done, or else they are worse—they are spies! I must ask you particularly to be more careful. Do not forget that we have to share any suspicion that falls on you.'

'I think I can manage my own affairs, and choose

my friends as I please,' said Smirnoff hotly. 'I know what I am about, which is more than *some* people do who sit all day and theorize, instead of working.'

Petroff and I decided that night to tell Smirnoff he had better leave.

'I shall go this instant,' said he. 'I do not care to accept favours from people I do not approve of. I hate men who talk and talk, and then never do anything. I have been here a month and a half now, and we have lived high, talked about all sorts of rot, and nothing has been done.'

'Can't you see that we are planning something important? That it has to be arranged carefully, and every detail considered? We want to help the workmen not only in Petrowka, but in the whole province; and I should like to point out, that, if we had been less careful, we never could have worked that *last* strike as we did.'

'So *you* had a hand in that, did you? I had not heard about that. Not one of these men even suspected you.'

'Now, you see,' said Petroff quietly, 'how much your friends know about it. Why did not you ask us about them at first? We have been here longer and know the people better. I am afraid you have been making rather a fool of yourself.'

Smirnoff stuck to his point, however, and, in spite of our warnings, moved to Petrowka. We decided

to see what came of it before we set up our press. In the course of the week we heard from Davidoff that he had been arrested in the night and taken up to town. Petroff thought things looked rather black for us, too.

‘I think we had better get out. I shall go to Odessa, and you might join the Abramoffs. I am not sure, but I have a feeling that Smirnoff told those people something about us. That would be fatal.’

‘I hope he did not say anything about the Abramoffs,’ I said.

‘He could not say much. By the way, that *friend* of his from Moscow has not been arrested yet. Does not that strike you as suspicious? Let us go and call on “your friend” the Pristaw, and see what we can make of it.’

But we did not get any particular satisfaction there, and it struck us that the Pristaw was rather cool. Either it was our vivid imagination, or he had found out something. So I finally agreed with Petroff that we had better be ready to move.

I settled my business as well as I could, simply closing the office and going through the form of telegraphing the inspector to send a new man, as I had been suddenly called abroad. A few of our things we sent on ahead, and in the course of the following night we slipped out of Petrowka without any formal farewells. Petroff started for Odessa, and I went back to Moscow, to wait until I heard from Abramoff.

## CHAPTER VIII

### ADVENTURES IN MOSCOW

I FELT that Moscow was always my headquarters, for I had made my first connexions here. But many of my friends had now been arrested, and the others I dared not look up for fear of compromising them. It struck me as terrible that Freedom should demand so many sacrifices, that so much patient work should be done in vain. No sooner is an undertaking started than the police are on the track, and time and money, and often even life, are wasted.

My idea now was to start a press abroad and smuggle the papers in across the frontier. I knew that had been done successfully before, but the smuggling was risky, and cost us very dearly in the end. I often thought of Anna Michailovna, and wondered if we could set up a press in the little town where she was working. We might buy the machinery abroad, and run it into the country; for foreign things were better than the Russian, and so much easier to get. I was restless and miserable here, for I had nothing to do, and I dared not go to

a hotel for fear my passport as Michailoff might not be good. My 'dear friend' the Pristaw might have been chagrined at my sudden departure, and perhaps had telegraphed on to Moscow to have me sent back.

So I spent the evening in a restaurant, and decided to take a room in rather a disreputable house where I knew I should be asked no questions. I sat alone at my table, brooding and reading the paper, and soon noticed a young man opposite who seemed to be either very nervous or most decidedly ill. I was horrified at the amount he drank. He poured down huge bumpers of vodka, one glassful after another, and finally I began to wonder whether or not I should speak to him. I decided not, however, and was absorbed in my paper again, when he suddenly startled me by a sharp fierce cough, and I heard him mutter: 'Oh, the devil! There it is again!' and I saw that the handkerchief with which he had wiped his mouth was stained with blood. 'Poor fellow, he's probably a consumptive,' I thought, 'and that's why he's drinking so hard.'

He rose to leave, but tottered so that the waiter had to hold him up. I ran to help.

'Are you ill?' I asked.

'No, just a bit dizzy.'

'That's probably because you have been drinking so much.'

'I think not. I am used to it, and I can stand a

good deal. But the sight of blood always makes me dizzy.'

'Sit down, and let me order you something,' I said. I ordered a lemonade with a little brandy in it. He drank some and smiled.

'There now, I am better.'

'Why do you drink so, if you are not well?'

'It's the only way I can forget myself.'

'Won't you go home now?'

'Oh no, not yet. I must have another bottle before I can go to sleep.'

'Rather a good-sized sleeping dose you take,' I said, and this seemed to excite him, for he said fiercely :

'Why shouldn't I drink? What have I got to live for? I love my life, and yet I hate it! I want to live, and yet I can't! I hate everything; I despise people! They are mostly low-lived blackguards. I have often thought it would be easier to put a bullet through my brains than to drink myself to death, but I haven't the nerve. No; drink's the only thing! Waiter, bring me another bottle.'

I tried to stop him, but I couldn't, and thought the best thing I could do was to stay and drink with him. Presently he said: 'Now I've had enough. I am going home. I like you. You are the right sort.'

'Can you get home alone?' I said.

'Oh, the cabbies know where I live.'

'I think I had better go with you,' I insisted. So we started off together. We had not driven far when he stopped the cab and said: 'I can't go home yet, I'm hungry. If you don't mind, I'd like you to come with me. Of course, if you don't want to, just say so.' So we drove to another restaurant, and when he had had his supper, he said: 'I am a sort of literary chap—that is, I write articles for a scrub paper.' Then suddenly he broke down, and told me the story of his whole life.

He had had an unhappy childhood and a brutal training. After many struggles he was graduated from the preparatory school, and started to earn his living. At twenty he got a position as tutor in a wealthy family, and there he began a course of dissipation which cost him his place. Now came a long, hard struggle for existence that embittered him, and filled him with a hatred for all his more prosperous fellows.

After many trials he finally got a place as proof-reader on a good paper, and there they discovered his literary talent. They paid him well, and he now plunged into his old dissipated life again. His articles attracted attention, and he was taken up by society, where he met the daughter of a lawyer—a 'New Woman' of the most aggravated type and a violent partisan of the Anti-Semitic movement. He fell completely under her influence,

and only occasionally rebelled at being made to write for a paper that he utterly abhorred.

‘And yet I do it,’ he said. ‘I write their old articles for them when I need the money. For my “daily bread,” you know. I used to spend it all on wine, but now wine does not do me any good; it can’t put me to sleep. Only vodka—the poor man’s drink—can do that now. It helps me forget that I have lowered my standards and lost the ideals I used to have when I was twenty-one. Oh, I had dreams then! I was going to write up my own miserable life and my mother’s pitiful fate, to show the world a true picture of its criminal indifference. I meant to call it “Am I my Brother’s Keeper?” But my story is nearly over now. I know just what my condition is, yet it is a hideous thought that I must die so soon.’

His story stirred me powerfully. I pitied him as one of the many victims of our unjust social laws.

‘Why don’t you leave the paper if you hate it so? You will never get well if you work yourself up like that. Have you no one to take care of you, or send you south?’

‘No,’ said he. ‘I have mortgaged my income so far ahead that it will take me all the rest of my life to work it off. I get drunk, and then I have to write to get enough money to drink again. But it will be over soon; my time is getting shorter. I don’t

know why I am telling all this to a complete stranger ; I don't often speak of it—it's queer. But it won't do any harm ; it had to come out some time ; and I shall probably never see you again. By the way, do you live here, or are you just passing through ?'

I told him I had just arrived and had not found a lodging yet. ' But now we had better go,' I added. When I put him in his cab, Harlamoff (that was his name) asked me to spend the night with him. This suited me exactly, so I accepted, and found he lived in two little furnished rooms of the most ordinary type.

Next morning at breakfast he tried to laugh off his morbid talk of the night before. ' Now I must get to work,' said he. ' What are you going to do ? Perhaps we can dine together to-night, or are you off again ?'

I said I would meet him that evening, and went to look up some friends, whom I failed to find, however. It seemed to me something must be wrong. I found afterwards that the police were watching their house. Before they make a raid they usually set spies on guard to keep track of all visitors, and sometimes even after the arrest a couple of secret service men go on living in the place, and take up every one who comes there to make inquiries.

Luckily, I happened to meet one of our men that evening, and I stayed with him till it was too late to meet Harlamoff. We talked over my plan of smuggling pamphlets across the border.

‘It’s not a bad idea,’ said he. ‘Do you remember Sundelevitch, who made a regular business of that in the seventies, and all the professional smugglers thought he was simply a clever member of their gang? You would have to take a partner, though, and not let him on to your game. But that is rather risky.’

We finally came to the conclusion that I needed a new passport, and must get a place here in the freight department to learn the necessary details of the service. Then we took steps to arrange for my ‘baptism,’ as he called it.

It took several days to make out the necessary papers. In the meantime I lived about, first with one friend and then with another, till we had finally turned out a perfect certificate of a new and irreproachable identity. My name was now Alexieff, and I started off to find a furnished room, for, whether my plan succeeded or not, I meant to stay in Moscow for a while.

Petroff had sent me word in a roundabout way that our sudden departure from Petrowka had awakened suspicion, and warned me not to go near the place again. But from the Abramoffs we had no word as yet, so I could not go to them. I now had the choice of being a clerk either in a factory or in a large Express Company. I chose the latter, as they had a foreign connexion that might be useful to me later. I was really astonished how soon I

learned the business, and in a short time was transferred to the foreign department, as I knew the languages. This gave me all my evenings free.

Three months passed in this way. During that time I made friends with a neighbour in my lodging-house, a young law student, who introduced me to all the men in his class. He and I usually dined together, and occasionally I spent the evening with them, learning much about the student movement in Russia. I had enough training to know that the student body was simply clamouring for special privileges. But I, on the contrary, was working for the common weal, and the interests of the small minority were of very little moment in the great struggle. Yet I took part in their debates, and tried to explain that academic freedom and the autonomy of the University could only be attained through the political independence of Russia as a whole. Several of them told me that they were simply interested in their own troubles, but that they would have nothing to do with the Socialists; such a connexion would only injure their cause.

In spite of my elaborate precautions, it struck me one day that I was being followed. That put me on my guard. Next morning as I walked to the office I turned casually, and noticed a suspicious-looking character slouching along behind. Then I took a cab, and when I had gone some distance, turned again, and saw him driving along after me.

As soon as I could get home from the office I gathered up all my compromising papers (I had only a few pamphlets), stuffed them into a rubber bag, and when the house was quiet that night I put them into the cistern of the bath-room, meaning to destroy them the next day.

That afternoon I had word from one of my friends that he wanted to see me, and I left the office and hurried to the café where we were to meet. He told me the Abramoffs had sent for me. They wanted to see me on important business within the next three weeks.

It was late when I got home, and as I neared the house I saw my spy of the day before standing and talking with two queer-looking men. My room was on the ground floor, so I carefully drew the blinds and rummaged through all my things again to see if I had anything at all that might get me into trouble. Then I finally went to bed. But hardly was the light out when I heard some one fumbling at my window. Still, I tried to convince myself that it was just a trick of my overwrought nerves. But suddenly the door opened from the next room, and I heard my neighbour whisper softly : ' There's some one outside at my window. I watched him from behind the blind. I am convinced that we are going to have a police inspection here.'

A moment later we heard a ring at the door. The landlady opened it, and we heard a sound of voices

and the steady tramp of feet coming down the long hall towards our rooms. My neighbour vanished as silently as he had come. Presently my door was flung open, and though I pretended to be asleep, I managed to catch a quick glimpse of uniformed figures, with the glint of light on their arms.

'Here he is,' said my landlady.

I opened my eyes and sat up in bed. There stood an officer with a couple of soldiers and the two suspicious-looking men I had seen outside.

'Is your name Alexieff?'

'Yes.'

'We want to look through your things.'

'Let me see your order, please.'

'Certainly, here it is.'

'Ask one of your men to hand me my glasses, will you? they are over there on the table.'

The man's jaw dropped with surprise, but a soldier handed me my glasses and I read the order.

'Yes, very well. You may proceed,' I said coolly.

The search lasted fully an hour. I was not in the least excited, for they would find no papers here. Evidently they knew nothing of my career as Michailoff, or they would have said something. If they were to arrest me, though, it would be serious. For I should be photographed when I got to prison, they would send my picture to Petersburg, and there they would know I was the man who had escaped from Mesen.

They searched my neighbour's quarters as well, but found nothing treasonable in either of our rooms. Out in the hall the captain stopped suddenly before a door and said : ' What's in there ?'

' This is the bath-room,' said my landlady, ' and over here is the dining-room. They can't have hidden anything there, for I keep the key myself.'

He glanced in, however, and finally departed, and quiet settled over the house again ; but neither my neighbour nor I felt much like sleeping. He crawled into my room softly, down on all fours, so that his shadow should not be seen, and we talked and talked till dawn.

Next morning, while I was at breakfast, a policeman came and said I was wanted at head-quarters. So I went there and showed my papers, which was all they demanded that time.

As I now planned to join the Abramoffs, I went to my chief to ask for a few weeks' leave, and when I got home the landlady told me an officer had been looking me up, and she had given him my business address. I was about to go out to lunch, when he appeared again, and told me I was wanted at the police-station. They took me in a closed carriage, and when we got there I was led into a room, where I had to sit and wait several hours, with people constantly coming and going, staring at me sharply as they passed. It is customary, when they want to establish the identity of a 'suspect,' to

cause the secret service men to pass him in review, and see whether any of them can recognize him.

I finally tired of this, and asked one of the men if he could bring me something to eat, as I had not had anything since early morning, and did not know what I was waiting here for, anyway. So he brought me tea and sandwiches, and I waited another two hours before they finally called me for my examination. I found I had been arrested merely as a witness. They asked me if a certain man were a friend of mine, and what I knew about another, what I was doing in Moscow, and all that sort of thing. Then they let me go. I had tried to answer very carefully, and felt I had settled the matter; but two days later I was sent for again, and told I must leave town in three days. I was ordered out of Moscow! On what grounds they declined to say. And they kept my papers, too.

I now had to decide whether to wait here till the end of my time and leave town under police surveillance, or to slip quietly off as soon as possible, taking what I could and leaving the rest with my student friends. The latter seemed wiser, so I wrote my chief that I had been suddenly called out of town by the death of a relative, and would be back as soon as I could.

Although there was no definite charge against me, I still noticed that same spy on my track. He

knew, of course, that I had been 'warned,' and probably knew the very day of my forced departure, so, if he saw me making off with my luggage, he would at once suspect something and have me arrested at the station. So I took the students into my confidence, and they promised to help me out. One of them was to buy a suit-case, and take it to his rooms. I was to do up my things in six small packages, and, when we all went out for a walk, we were each to take one under our coats. Then we were to meet in a café, and all adjourn to the rooms of the man with the suit-case to do my packing, after which one of the students should take it to the station and bring me the receipt. Then no one could possibly suspect that I was leaving.

As we started out we saw the spy following, and amused ourselves tremendously by giving him something to do. After our plan was safely carried out, and I had said good-bye to those fine fellows, I took a long walk, for it was too early for my train. Then I noticed that the spy was still on my track. I hailed a passing cab, making sure it was the only one in the street, and gave the man a random address. The spy stood there helpless till I was out of sight, yet I knew I could not count on very much time, for he would probably soon find a cab and follow.

So I stopped at one of the large restaurants where

the first-class cabs always stand, and, picking out the best horse I could find, got in, and told the man to drive like fury for the station. I had judged my horse-flesh well, and in a few moments I was there, had bought my ticket, called for my luggage, and had taken my seat in the train. In five minutes more we had started, and I must admit that I was very glad to be clear of Moscow.

After a trip of three days and three nights I finally reached the little town in the Caucasus where the Abramoffs were living.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE PRESS AT WORK

My friends were delighted to see me, and said they were doing very well.

‘There’s no end of work for you to do here,’ said Abramoff. ‘These underhand business details are not very much in my line, and besides, I have my own work on hand.’

I gave them a little description of my adventures in Moscow, and Anna Michailovna turned to her husband and said: ‘I told you he would be a good one to send for. He certainly *has* a head on his shoulders, and we may need a cool hand to get us out of trouble yet.’

They had taken a little house, and Anna Michailovna had put up her sign as a trained nurse.

‘We shall have to be here a few months more at least to finish our work. I will tell you about it. You know, of course, how important it is to interest the better classes in our plans. But the censorship is most severe, and all papers and pamphlets with

a "Marx-ist" tendency are immediately suppressed. So we shall try to run a secret press here in some deserted mine in the neighbourhood, and you shall play the same rôle you played in Petrowka and be our go-between.'

It was a good venture. All previous efforts of the society to publish articles on economics had failed. Their periodicals had been suppressed, and also the open meetings of the Economic Association in Petersburg. So that nothing was left to the prophets of the new order but to distribute their pamphlets by stealth. It was a great task they had undertaken, these Social Democrats: they stood between two classes, and while on the one hand they had to popularize their theories to make converts among the lower order of workmen, there were others whose intelligence demanded a more advanced literature; and while one set had to be held in check, the other must be stimulated. Add to this that their ranks were constantly thinned by arrests, and they had to make new recruits to keep up their steady work among the people.

That same day I met the fourth member of our household, whom they called 'Raisa' for short. She was a great strapping woman, who had been trained in a Petersburg hospital, and had drifted into this work through the influence of some of the medical students. She told Anna Michailovna, however, that the life did not suit her at all. She

had been sent here to learn the work under the Abramoffs, and later was to start a branch establishment herself on these same lines.

Anna Michailovna had already made arrangements with the superintendent of a mine, who was to rent us a vacant house where he would see that we were not molested in our work. But I had a better scheme than that. I suggested that we should lease the whole mine—I had money enough for that—and then we should be quite independent and could do what we pleased. Raisa should be our cook; Anna Michailovna might pass as my wife; and Abramoff—but that was the trouble. What *could* he be? He wouldn't do for our coachman, for he knew absolutely nothing about horses. Oh, well, he might be my secretary. I would hire a few men, and start the works gradually. I should speak to the superintendent about it directly.

Anna Michailovna thought her own plan was better. She said my scheme was too expensive and far too risky; and we were in the midst of a lively debate when the superintendent himself appeared. He knew the ground thoroughly, and could give us the best of advice. But he thought we should wait a while until he had investigated further.

So we lived on quietly a few months in this little town. Abramoff was working at a pamphlet on 'Factory Inspection in Russia,' comparing our

methods with those of other countries. I undertook the task of getting together our supplies, entering into negotiations with a number of printers, and making occasional short trips to get what we needed for our work. When the things were finally collected, and the superintendent had safely stored them in the mine, it was decided that Anna Michailovna should be the first to move out to our new quarters.

But our plans were suddenly frustrated, for we found that spies were on our track, and were warned that the head of the department for the province was soon coming himself to investigate the matter. We held a council of war. We were perfectly sure we were being followed, and Anna Michailovna declared it would be the height of folly to set up our press at such a time. We should store it in the mine either till the spies left, or till we could find a safer place for our operations. The superintendent tried to persuade us to stay on in town, but he failed to convince us, and finally had to admit that the Abramoffs had more experience in revolutionary matters than he. He promised to keep our things safe, and we left the place.

Our plan was for each to go alone, Anna Michailovna leaving first. Her disguise was perfect. No one would ever have recognized the dainty Mme. Abramoff in the simple little woman I met near the station with a kerchief over her head

and a basket on her arm. She nodded at me gaily, but we did not stop to chat.

The next to go was Abramoff. He travelled with a shopkeeper that we knew, and in a few days I got word that he had gone to a neighbouring town, hired a sleigh, and driven to the nearest railway-station.

Now we began to notice that the spies had observed the Abramoffs' departure, and were watching us more closely. Neither Raisa nor I were ever out of their sight. We were prepared for arrest at any moment, and I decided to leave as soon as possible. I told Raisa she must stay a little longer, and left her with friends, saying I would write when it was safe for her to follow. I was to leave at two o'clock that night, and my friends were to help me throw the spies off the track. We went out for a little stroll, and when we came back I saw one of the men making himself quite comfortable on a bench by my front door. He was evidently waiting for me. My companion walked off down the street in hopes of being followed. I watched the man from behind the curtains, however, but he never left my door.

That settled it in my mind, and I felt it was high time I disappeared. So I packed a small handbag, and fully an hour before train-time sneaked out of my room, climbed the garden wall, and let myself down into a back alley. Every few moments I

turned to look, but, thank Heaven, no one was following. I got to the station, took a ticket, and sat down in the waiting-room, when suddenly, to my *horror*, I looked up and saw the man I had left sitting on my front step! He never took his eyes off me. My train came, and went again, but I sat calmly on. Fortunately, I had had sense enough to lay my bag down on a bench near the door, so that no one need take me for a traveller, especially as I paid no attention to the passing trains.

There would be another train down in about two hours, so I managed to get a few things out of my bag, put them into my coat pocket, and then began a lively chase. I went back into town, strolling first up one street and then down another, my man still at my heels. Soon it was time to go back to the station, and when I got there I paced slowly up and down the platform, noticing in the darkness a large wood pile that stood near the track. I thought that if I could hide behind that wood pile I might have a chance of jumping on to the train as it drew out from the station.

I succeeded in giving my man the slip, as it was very dark, and when he noticed that I had left the platform he hurried off, passing right by me in his excitement. Presently, however, he came rushing back, but fortunately neglected to look behind the wood-pile. And now the train came in. There were very few passengers on the platform, so I could

watch every move of my man. He stood at the door of the waiting-room, evidently expecting me to come through at any moment. But I waited, as I had planned, till the train moved off, then jumped for the first compartment I could get, tipped the guard, telling him I had not had time to get a ticket, and sank into the first comfortable seat I could find.

Of course, I could not be sure the spy had not seen me and telegraphed on ahead to have me arrested, so I left the train at the next station, and struck out across the country through the snow. I finally came to a little village, where I got a sleigh, and drove to a station on another line, taking the train again after a roundabout trip of nearly three hundred kilometres.

In the course of three days I was with the Abramoffs in Charkoff. They had found friends here, and had plunged eagerly into the work. I met a number of most interesting people through them, and heard of their success among the workmen. They all had the same complaint to make of the lack of campaign literature, and were anxious that we should start a paper in which the labour question could be strongly agitated, and all the topics of the day discussed and explained for the benefit of the lower classes.

We could no longer hope to set up our press in the mine, for they were looking for us all through the

province. Several arrests had followed our sudden flight, and the superintendent himself only kept his place by a miracle. To add to our dismal news, we got word one day that Raisa had shot herself. She sent us a letter of farewell, but it was so vague that we could not quite make out her motives for the deed. She wrote: 'I thought I'd be happier, that my life would be more peaceful, if I devoted it to doing good. But I soon saw that I lacked the cultivation for the work, and the endurance too. I did my best, but the main thing that rankles was your reserve toward me, when we were all working for the same cause. You always seemed to mistrust me, and doubt the sincerity of my purpose.' None of us could recall a single word or deed that could have given Raisa this impression. Certainly we were all reserved with our plans, and rightly so. The very dangers of the secret work necessitated that. But reserve and mistrust are two very different things.

Her tragic end made a horrible impression upon us all. Anna Michailovna, in looking over her effects, found a pathetic little journal which threw light upon her life and death. She had been divided between love for the cause and longing for a personal happiness. And it was an unfortunate love-affair that really drove her to despondency. The poor creature had not been able to forget her own sorrows in a struggle for the welfare of

others. Poor unhappy victim of the ferment of the times !

But we had to get about our work, and our most important task now was to set up a press. I interviewed different manufacturers, and finally got an agency for agricultural implements in a small town near by. It was the capital of the district, and they told us our party had several influential men among its members. I went there, and took a house on the outskirts of the town. It was a tiny five-roomed cottage with a large garden and a good-sized shed that I could use as a warehouse. Behind the cottage the garden sloped down to the river, and here we had a pretty little summer-house. I now rented some furniture, started in my business, and in a few days was quite comfortably settled.

The next thing was to send a trusty man to the superintendent of the mine to call for the supplies we had stored with him. But my messenger soon returned, saying he was not to be found, and no one knew what had become of him.

This necessitated our laying in a new stock, and I had to draw out the rest of my little capital (about 6,000 roubles now), hoping soon to get it back, however, from the sale of my machinery. We bought part of our stuff without any trouble in the different towns about, but when it came to the press itself I was advised to go abroad for it. And, thanks to our connexions among the smugglers, I

succeeded in getting through safely, and bringing the things back with me into the country.

Matters were now going so smoothly that we decided Anna Michailovna might come down, but Abramoff was not to follow until later. His personality was too well known, and might have led to our detection. So we took another assistant, a young Socialist named Andreeff.

We set up the press in our little summer-house, and Anna Michailovna worked so steadily that we soon had a huge package of pamphlets ready for distribution. I could help very little, for I was constantly busy with my outside work, but her energy and endurance were remarkable, and in a very short time she had printed and bound 800 copies of a book of 160 pages.

While I was away Andreeff helped her in the work. I had to make a good many trips to deliver our books, and on one of these I stayed in Moscow for a time. But I hardly dared go to a hotel, so I looked up my old friend Harlamoff, whom I had seen again a number of times during my last stay there. I found him at home and very ill, but exceedingly glad to see me. He told me he had given up his job, and had not a penny in the world. He only hoped to die soon. And it seemed as though his wish would presently be granted. 'You'll spend the night with me, won't you?' he said. 'You're probably just here on a flying trip, and

you might as well stay with me. I know all about your work. Oh, you need not be afraid of me. I knew it long ago, when I went to see you, and your landlady told me how the police had raided your room, and you got away. I have been reading up the subject since then, and I have come to the conclusion myself that every other avenue of reform is closed for us in Russia. Oh! If I were only well again, wouldn't I like to get into that work!' Poor boy! His devotion to the cause was not from love of his fellow-men, but from hatred of the authorities, since he felt the world had treated him so shabbily. I pitied him, and wondered what I could do to help. I could easily give him enough money to go south, and then interest others in his case, and perhaps in time we could turn him out a good sound member of society.

So I told him to get ready, and we would be off in a few days for the Crimea. 'I'll take you south myself, and see that you are well taken care of before I leave you.' After a long discussion he finally accepted my offer, and as soon as I had finished my business we set off. I found a kind-hearted doctor there, who took charge of Harlamoff, and, much relieved, I started home again.

Everything had gone well in my absence, except that Anna Michailovna had overworked, and needed a thorough rest and a change. And as I wanted to see Harlamoff again myself, I decided

to send her off, and take a vacation at the same time. So we worked feverishly day and night, Andreeff and I, to finish up the books ; then we took the whole press to pieces, hiding it in the cellar, and I wrote my manager to send me another man, as I must have a few months' leave. Andreeff was to stay by to see that nothing was tampered with. Anna Michailovna went to her relatives, and I went off to join Harlamoff.

I found the poor fellow much worse. The doctor said he could not last much longer, and I myself could see the change. He often spoke of his coming death, and asked me to take charge of his papers and use any that I might need. Possibly they would be very valuable to me some time. I had destroyed all my own documents, and had grown a beard to prevent identification. Each time I left a place where I had settled down I burned all my papers religiously. Of course, I had a passport (very good of its kind, but forged !), still, genuine papers might some time be useful in case I were ever arrested. For then I could only be punished for the immediate crime I was charged with.

Apart from his illness, those were *glorious* days we spent in the Crimea—Harlamoff and I. Like all consumptives, he alternated between the wildest hopes and utter despondency. One day he spoke with shining eyes of his plans for the cause, and the next was gloomily sure he was dying.

‘What was I ever born for? I have never done any good in my life. All my splendid resolutions have come to nothing. How terrible to die with such a fact staring you in the face!’

He often broke down completely, and accused himself of all sorts of follies. One day he handed me a little diary. ‘I can’t tell you all about my life,’ said he; ‘there are too many hideous things in it. Read this, and then tell me if you think there is any hope of my ever becoming a decent member of society. I think I will try for a position as school-teacher in some quiet country village.’

‘Why do anything so extreme?’ said I; ‘a country life would be very dull for you. You can do just as much good in a city, and you are more used to that atmosphere. I have known a number of men who were disciples of Tolstoi, and wanted to live the simple life of the peasants. But they all soon drifted back, very much disgusted, to the sphere they had left, and took up the “demnition grind” of society again. But we will see you well first before we begin to talk about your plans.’

I read his journal, and found it simply the hysterical record of a degenerate, impelled by the lowest passions to the most unutterable acts. It was so full of disgusting detail and morbid introspection that it was all I could do to be decent to the man. Sometimes I was overcome with such a loathing that I could hardly bear to touch him,

to wait upon him, or to smoothe his pillow. But that mood soon passed, and a great pity came over me for the poor lad born and bred in such miserable surroundings and dying here in my care.

The doctor was right : Harmaloff was dying. On the day of his death he sat up, talking excitedly about the future, his eyes glittering, his thin hands gesticulating as he outlined his plans, and a hectic flush on his cheeks. We had pulled his cot to the window, and raised him on his pillows, so that he could look up at the wonderful blue sky, and see the shimmer of the sea far off in the distance. Suddenly in the midst of a sentence, while he was planning his life so hopefully, he was taken with a hæmorrhage and fell back dead.

I buried him under my own name—that is, the name that I had been using last—and then I had to travel on. I took his papers with me, but as I did not care to use them, I left them with a friend for safe keeping.

Back again in Belaja Zerkov, I found Andreeff had managed so well that in two weeks he had mastered all the details of the business and dismissed the assistant, telling him that Kudasheff (that was my name just then) no longer required his services.

The Abramoffs now sent me word that our old friend Petroff had been imprisoned for eight months and was to be sent to Siberia. That certainly was

bad news, but only what any of us—myself most of all—must expect at any moment.

Andreeff now suggested that we should set up the press again, and start a daily paper with the help of some of our men. But that had been Anna Michailovna's special scheme, and as she was not there to help, we decided to put it off till she and her husband could join us. So we stayed there quietly for about six weeks, simply attending to our business concerns.

Suddenly the Abramoffs appeared one day. She was to stay, and he was going on to Charkoff. Now the old busy life began again. Mme. Abramoff was my cousin, and Andreeff's position in the firm had been shown by his good management in my absence. Anna Michailovna started her press, and turned out copies of her husband's pamphlet on 'Factory Inspection.' She worked all day, we helping when we could, but in the evenings we often had to go out to keep up our reputations as keen business men.

Occasionally, when we were working at night, we had long political discussions. Anna Michailovna and Andreeff both thought the time had come to let the working man come forward and demand his rights. The labour problem could never be settled on the old lines, and our first demand must be for universal suffrage. I was glad to hear them say this, for I had always felt the work should be done

more along political lines ; but most of my associates disagreed with me. They thought the workmen must first be taught the importance of solidarity, made to feel the force of combination, and when they had realized their own power, then it could be directed into political channels.

My argument was that, if the workmen came forward with their demands, the great discontented element in Russia would soon join forces with them, and our country would then be all but unanimous for reform. In my experience I was convinced that our revolution would not be like the German movement of 1848 ; but that we should undoubtedly win, having all the strength of the masses to back us. But most of my friends simply laughed at my optimism, and called me Utopian.

We were now printing not only pamphlets, but also a series of appeals to our comrades in other towns, and I spent much of my time travelling about to deliver them. There was not much danger of my being suspected, for I dressed well, always travelled first class, and went to the best hotels. Many of our friends criticized my luxurious habits, but Anna Michailovna felt it was the safest thing to do : she never failed to understand.

In spite of my precautions, however, I noticed I was being followed. This made me doubly careful, and my only false step was making an appointment one day in a public place with a man who was being

watched by the police. It was absolutely necessary, however, that I should see him and hand him over some papers, so just before my train left we met in a café and had a long talk. Suddenly, in the midst of our conversation, he muttered: 'Damnation! Don't move. There is a spy over there—the cleverest man in the force. Let's call for our bill and get out.'

We walked down the street a short distance, and then I said good-bye, jumped into a cab, and drove to the station. Just as I had seen to my luggage, I caught sight of the same man we had noticed in the café. There was nothing for it but to take the train, so I got in, and saw that my pursuer—who was distinguished-looking and very well dressed—went into the next compartment.

'Of course, he can't arrest me on the train,' I thought, 'and if he follows very far the only thing to do is to jump off. That's rather risky, but anything is better than being arrested.'

I hoped I should be alone to stand a better chance of slipping out unobserved, but just before we started a stout good-natured man got in beside me and began to consume huge sandwiches and great gulps of brandy from his flask. He offered to share with me, and we soon fell into talk. He owned an estate in the country, was a member of the Semstroe, and decidedly Liberal in his views. He freely denounced the Conservative party, and said:

‘It’s a shame we men of the Semstvoe are so hampered. We’re the only progressive people in the country. Our schools are the only ones that are worth anything at all. Government schools are all under the thumb of the clergy, and instead of teaching their scholars, they are only trying to spy out some heresy among them, or accusing them of sacrilege against the Lord or the Czar. I have lived through the days of slavery, and I gave myself up soul and body to the work of freeing our poor peasants. But what can a man do now? I started a model school out on my place, and they simply made me close it. Ah, these are sorry days for Russia!’

I listened in silence, and when he asked me if I were a landowner too, I said no, I was an agent for agricultural machinery. The train went rushing on, and I was steadily puzzling how to get away from my spy. Each station we stopped at I paced the platform anxiously to see whether he was still there.

It was now late in the autumn. We went through great stretches of woods, then came the broad, level steppes, with here and there a village, and then another forest. The trees looked so bleak and bare, stripped of all their leaves. My companion went on with his grumbling monologue, and then he began to tell me the advantages of certain farming implements. Suddenly he asked: ‘Are you going far?’

‘I am not sure yet ; I may have to get off soon to see about something. How far do you go ?’

‘I get off at a little place about an hour and a half down the line. It is not a regular station. They just stop the train by signal.’

We were then running into a large town, and I thought possibly I should have a chance to slip off here. But no ; when I got out on the platform, there was my man at my heels. I pretended not to notice, and laughed and talked with my companion, who had got out too.

Again we started off, and still I had not decided what to do. Suddenly the guard looked in, and said to my companion :

‘You want the train stopped here, don’t you ?’

‘Yes,’ he answered, as he gave the man a tip. Then he packed his things, put them in the passage, and said good-bye. I took my bag under my coat and went out into the vestibule. The train slowed down. With a sudden, tremendous wrench I opened the opposite door, and jumped out on to the further track. I had to crouch so that my pursuer should not see me as his carriage passed. The train had barely stopped, and in another instant it was away, and had vanished around a curve in the track.

I sauntered leisurely across to the platform, and the station-master eyed me sharply as he said :

‘ Let me see your ticket. Why did you get down on the wrong side of the train ?’

‘ Because I couldn’t open the other door.’

‘ Are you going on ? Your ticket is not for here.’

‘ I’m going further, but I have to stop here to see a man out in the country.’

‘ You won’t be able to get any horses here.’

But I told him I was going to drive out with Mr. Titoff (that was the name of my travelling companion).

He was standing by the station steps watching them load his traps into a carriage. I went over, and said in French : ‘ Don’t be astonished, I’ll explain it later.’ But before I could stop him, he called out in great surprise : ‘ What ! You here ?’ I begged him (still in French) to be good enough to drive me over to the next village, where I could hire a carriage. He was delighted, and as we drove along I told him I was being followed. I couldn’t explain it all, but he knew, of course, that people were often arrested on the flimsiest pretexts.

Finally he said : ‘ Do you know, I think you had better come home with me. I should like to see anyone touch you there. You can stay awhile and pay us a visit.’ I thanked him, but said I thought I had better not trespass, for I was not sure of my safety even with him. ‘ You told me yourself they had closed your school, and we mustn’t forget that the man who is on my track is a past-master of his

art. He is too well dressed to be a common spy ; he is one of the heads of the profession. He will probably telephone to the station-master, asking if a man answering my description got off here, and then it will be a simple matter for him to find out where I am.'

'You're right there,' said Titoff. 'So I'll take you on to my brother's place ; they'll never think of looking for you there.'

As soon as we reached his house Titoff changed horses, and took me over to his brother. Here I asked immediately for a railway guide, and found that this part of the province was intersected by three lines. Then I wondered which would be the most convenient station for me. My host was about to advise me, but his brother interrupted : 'Let him alone. He'll find the best way for himself. He's used to getting out of a hole, and we're not.'

After I had a few hours' rest I set out for the nearest station. There was an early morning train at 4.30, and I got there at about four. To be sure, the train was going in the wrong direction, but still I took it. And after travelling back and forth for nearly four days I finally arrived at Belaja Zerkov—late, but safe.

When I told my story both Andreeff and Anna Michailovna were fearfully depressed. 'Our lucky star has set,' they said, 'and misfortune seems to

be at our heels. Abramoff writes that there have been no end of arrests in Charkoff. We have sent him word to leave directly. We have a piece of work to finish now, and for the present I think we can safely stay on here.'

Word had comê from the south that agitators were inciting the people to uprisings against the Jews (this was in 1899), and in some towns massacres had actually taken place. At the earnest request of our central committee we had been printing circulars saying that these acts had been inspired by the authorities, and egged on by the police. Union labourers and all intelligent workmen were urgently recommended to shelter the Jews, when possible, from the excesses of the mob.

'Let it be our duty to stand by our poor down-trodden brethren,' was our appeal.

As soon as this piece of work was finished every trace of our occupation was destroyed. The whole press was hidden away safely, and Anna Michailovna and Andreeff started off. But I stayed on alone a while to wait for news from our friends.

## CHAPTER X

### THE ESCAPE OF THE PETROFFS

It was about two or three weeks before I heard from them again. They had settled down in a new place, and taken up the work with very good results. Soon after his letter Andreeff himself came back to see me about something important in connexion with Petroff. His long imprisonment had utterly shattered his health, and now he had been condemned to North-Western Siberia. Andreeff brought me a most despondent letter from him, telling of his pathetic struggles to be banished to the same place as his wife.

‘Anna Michailovna and I feel sure you are the best one to help him,’ said he. ‘He must get away and go south, where he will soon get well, and be able to take up the work again. His wife, or whoever makes the escape with him, will take him as far as the frontier. There you must meet him—or, sick as he is, he would never have the energy get through alone—and you can easily manage take him across the border into Germany. I’ll

give you a few addresses that may be of service to you, mostly Jews and Poles, and the rest of the details we will leave to you.'

Naturally I felt, too, that everything must be done to help a good old friend and such a splendid worker. But I decided it would be easier and less expensive not to meet him in the north, but to take him across the southern frontier, where I had more important connexions. We then calculated the date of his probable arrival, but of course could not determine the time of his escape, so we arranged a system of underground post. We sent a cipher letter to Petroff, and Andreeff was to let me know his answer in a harmless-looking business telegram. The latter then left me to arrange for the flight, and to lay a train of underground communications.

I wrote to a friend in Odessa who had often served me before as a blind. He was agent for a number of firms, and had important connexions throughout the country. He was not in the least interested in the cause, or anything else of a serious nature. He was simply a man of the world, a high liver, and a 'good fellow.' For convenience, I shall call him Ossip Ivanovitch.

I should tell him my tale somewhat after this fashion: 'My friend Petroff has run off with another man's wife, but cannot live with her in Russia, for her husband is on his track. He is not in a position to get a foreign pass, and even if he were she could

not go abroad with him, for you know, of course, a woman can only take out a passport with her husband's written consent. Now they're wandering about from place to place in constant danger of their lives. The question is, Can't we manage to help them?' This little romance would be very much more apt to appeal to the sympathies of a man of his type than a long-winded discourse on the sorrows of the Russian people and the necessity of political reforms.

In the meantime I had a telegram from Andreeff. It read: 'I can offer you a first-class machine-oil'; and that meant that Petroff was about to escape, or else had left already.

So I went to Odessa, and looked up Ossip Ivanovitch, who received me with open arms. 'Heaven be praised!' he said, 'you've turned up again. Now I shall have somebody sensible to talk to. Just wait a minute while I finish up this business, and then we'll drive round together to the club.' So over a good bottle of wine I told him my romantic invention, and found him more than ready to help. 'Why, damn it!' said he, 'if his wife won't live with him, why won't he give her a divorce? What does he bother about her for? I'll tell you there are ~~only two~~ things in the world worth worrying about—a good woman and a good bottle of wine. If it weren't for them this life would be pretty dreary. Yes, yes, wine and women are great

things. I tell you, I've got a little friend now'—here his kissed his finger-tips—'I'd like you to meet her.'

Then followed the usual talk about his present and his past 'affairs,' but all in such a sprightly vein that I was glad to listen. As we parted, he said: 'Send your friends down here to me. I'll take them right into my house, or, if they prefer, I'll look them up a cosy little flat. I'll see to it that that fool of a husband doesn't get on their track.'

I waited anxiously a whole week in Odessa. According to my calculations, Petroff and his wife should already have arrived. Finally came the welcome despatch: 'Have shipped two collie pups on the eleven-thirty.' I looked up the trains, and found that the Petroffs—who were the two collie pups—would arrive at about ten that night, so I went to Ossip Ivanovitch and asked him what to do.

'Too bad they're coming just to-day,' said he. 'I should like to put them up, but I am not alone to-night. But I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll see about getting that little flat.' We went to interview the landlady, and after a quick wink and a whispered conversation Ossip Ivanovitch announced it was all settled. The landlady showed us a suite, with a private entrance, and handed me the key. 'The gate is always open,' said she, 'but you'll have to tip the watchman. He's a friend of mine, and he won't say anything.'

I thanked Ossip Ivanovitch, and told him that the 'bridal couple,' as he laughingly called them, would probably only stay a few days. Then I went off to the station. The train came in, and I saw Petroff and his wife get out of a third-class compartment. I knew him directly, though he had changed very much and was fearfully emaciated. I let them pass on, however, for Petroff had not noticed me, and I wanted to see whether they were followed. We had planned that they were to wait half an hour at the station in case I might not have been able to make arrangements for them or anything should have gone wrong. When most of the passengers had left I went into the waiting-room, and stepped up to them. He was pathetically glad to see me, and introduced me to his wife, whom I had not met before. Then we took a cab, and went to their new lodgings.

It was nearly a year since we had met, and we had much to talk about. In spite of their fatigue they told me all their adventures. I finally insisted that Mme. Petroff should go to bed, and we men sat up a while and talked in whispers, for, although the rooms were away from the rest of the house, we could not be too careful. You never knew how thin the walls were!

After we had left Petrowka, Petroff had settled in a large manufacturing town, and there he had been arrested simply for attending a Socialist

meeting. 'No one ever connected me with that strike,' said he, 'nor did they know that I had been working for the cause, and yet I served nine months in prison, and was finally exiled to Siberia. While I was in prison I got word that my wife had been arrested, and would also be exiled. By the way, I never told you in those old days that I was married. We had to separate for a time in order to avoid suspicion. But now, when we were being sent to Siberia, I petitioned the Governor to send us to the same place. We had a very comfortable trip. My father advanced the money so that we could travel privately. I don't think I could have stood the journey, weak as I was, if I had had to do it in the ordinary way. But the mere thought of freedom now makes another man of me. I think we can get across the border safely, and then, once in a free country, I shall soon be well.'

I then gave him a short description of how I had won over Ossip Ivanovitch, and he laughingly said: 'There is a comic side to every tragedy. I shall have to tell my wife about that, and we will play the rôle as well as we can.'

The next morning I called on them early to inspect their wardrobe, and see if they could carry off the part. Then I begged them, for Heaven's sake, not to forget, and we all went off to meet Ossip Ivanovitch in a restaurant.

He shook hands with us all cordially, but I ob-

served that he eyed Mme. Petroff from head to foot, as if to see what Petroff found in her that he should make such unutterable sacrifices for her sake. We lunched in a small private room, and all the while Ossip Ivanovitch showed Mme. Petroff the most gallant attention.

‘You don’t mind if I flirt with your wife a bit, do you, my dear Petroff?’ he asked in his most impressive manner. Then he suddenly jumped up, and made an elaborate speech about love and women and all that sort of thing, and ended by saying: ‘I can always sympathize with youthful follies. If I had been in your place, my dear fellow, I should have done just the same thing; and here’s success to both of you.’

His interest in their case was truly touching. He advised them to stay quietly in their rooms, and only go out for their meals. ‘It’s a sort of arrest, you know, but only for a short time, of course. We will soon get you out of trouble. You leave all the arrangements to us. We will see that your kusband doesn’t turn up and bother you.’ They had to wait over two days, and Ossip Ivanovitch was there constantly. He took a very great fancy to them, and, after many apologies, he finally asked if they had enough money. ‘I know our friend here would help you, but why not let me share the pleasure? Tell me honestly, now, don’t you need any money?’

Petroff thanked him, and refused his offer of financial assistance. But he finally had to take two hundred roubles in spite of himself.

On the evening of the second day we both went to Petroff's rooms, and Ossip Ivanovitch asked what baggage they had. All they needed now was a small handbag, and he would see to forwarding the rest. 'And, by the way, it is time we were off this very minute,' said he.

And now, at last, he told them they were to go by steamer that night. Their surprise and delight was touching.

'Didn't I do that well?' said Ossip, rubbing his hands. 'My friend the captain knows all about you, and will guard you as the apple of his eye. The trip won't be long; you will be over the border by to-morrow probably, and then the captain will tell you where to land. Just leave it all to him.'

So we drove down to the pier, where Ossip showed us a large freight steamer lying at her wharf. Not a soul saw us go on board but the captain and one of the deck-hands, and after we had sat awhile in the cabin, we were told we must go ashore. So I said good-bye to Petroff, sad at heart to think I might never see him again. Ossip was very much moved too, and was quite effusive in his farewells.

On the way back to town he said: 'Those were charming friends of yours—most delightful. Let's go in and have something. We'll drink their good

health and a pleasant journey to them. I like your Petroffs.'

Over our little drink, which spun itself out till late, I found that their steamer was not to leave till next morning. 'But they are safely stowed away by now, and nobody knows' where they are. The captain will telegraph me when he lands them, and I hope Petroff will tell you where they decide to settle. You must give me their address. I certainly must write to them.'

The dear old fellow had not the faintest idea that he had just been conniving at the escape of two dangerous anarchists.

I stayed in Odessa a few days longer, waiting to hear of their safety, and in the meantime I looked up some of our people. They all wanted to know what I was doing there and where the Abramoffs were. I told them I was here only for a short business trip, and as to the Abramoffs, I could not say, as I had not seen them for some time. I took these precautions because so many of the circle were new to me; I hardly saw a single familiar face.

'Don't you want to see our work?' they said. 'Of course, our plans are not as extensive as yours, but we have done rather well in a small way with our workmen's clubs.'

I understood their insinuations, for Anna Michailovna and I had often been told we talked more

than we worked, and that we overlooked the needs of the present in our thoughts for the future. So I said I should like to attend a meeting, and asked where it was held.

'I think we had better call for you and take you there,' said one. 'We have just started, and we must be very careful.' So, with all sorts of precautions, we went on the following evening. There were about thirty members, mostly working men, and some familiar faces among them. My companion whispered: 'To-day you will hear one of our cleverest speakers. He is a new man, but has done splendid work. It's mainly through him that this club has been started.'

Presently a man came in with an air of hurried importance. He was a short, stocky fellow of about thirty, with light hair and a keen, energetic face.

'That's Kretchman,' said my friend; and forthwith he began:

'I shall speak to-day on the position of the labouring classes in Belgium, and the means by which they have brought about their reforms.' The hall grew still, and the speaker told in a few simple words how the co-operative idea had been developed in Belgium, how the workmen, by their own unassisted efforts, had set up a system of stores and built model villages, so that each one, after his day's work, could go home to his own little cottage. They had their clubs, their lectures, even had a

University of their own, and thoroughly felt the sense of their social equality. 'Of course, they had to work for it; we *all* have to work in this world. But the Belgian labourers are not treated like beasts; they are not ground down by the capitalists. Their laws look out for that, for the workmen themselves have a voice in the making of the laws.' Then the speaker went on to advise the Russian workmen to band themselves together, to form leagues, to found mutual benefit associations, and to fight in solid ranks for progress and their rights.

It was a most brilliant speech, and a keen debate followed it. The workmen were eager to know exactly how all these results had been reached, and complained how hard it was here to carry out even the simplest reforms. Capital always had the Cossacks and the police behind it in Russia. Several of the men spoke up: 'What we need is a better education.' 'Knowledge is power.' 'Look at the men in our works. The Frenchmen get three or four times as much as we—and why? Because we are ignorant.'

Then Kretchman spoke again: 'We must begin slowly. First we'll start a number of small clubs, and get a campaign fund. Later we can consolidate and form a union. That will give us a backing, and then we can make our wishes known. The capitalists will be afraid of us, and even the Govern-

ment will have to help when they see the people are unanimous.'

At the close of the meeting they distributed books and pamphlets among the workmen, and seven or eight of us stayed awhile to talk; among the number Kretchman, to whom I was introduced as 'a rank revolutionist who had done much for the cause, and was now here under an assumed name.' Kretchman asked me if I were looking for a position, but I said I was not sure, it was hard to find one here.

'That depends upon what you can do,' said he. And I told him I had been through the high school, knew something of book-keeping, and spoke several languages.

'Oh, then it would be easy enough. I am in the city office myself, and I will see if they can't find a place for you in our department. We need just such men as you, and we can't afford to let you go.'

His manner grated on me. He asked too many questions. I can't tell why, but I simply did not trust him; not that I had the least ground for this feeling. My friends all firmly believed in him, and I myself had heard how well he talked. To be sure, they might not all agree with him; most of them thought the economic conditions of the labourers should first be improved, and political reforms would then gradually follow.

When I saw Ossip Ivanovitch again, he told me

he had had word of Petroff's landing, and asked if I had any further news. I was rather uneasy, and said I was afraid something had gone wrong.

'Don't you know where he was going?' he asked. 'I have any number of business connexions, and if we knew where he was we could telegraph and look him up.'

But I had not the vaguest idea!

The next time I went to see him, to talk over my anxiety with some friendly soul, I ran into Kretchman in the street. I was about to pass him, but he stopped, and asked if I had found any position yet. I said no, but I was on my way then to an office where I hoped to find something.

'Why don't you try the municipal department? Of course, you'll have to begin with a small place, but you would soon work up. The main thing there is that you can help the cause.' This last he whispered in my ear; then he gave me his address and asked me to call. I thanked him and went on. But my thoughts were with the Petroffs, and neither Kretchman nor his plans had any interest for me just then.

When I got to his office, I began telling Ossip Ivanovitch how uneasy I was, and he looked at me a moment in silence. Then he said: 'You are excited, my boy! Let's take something for it. As for Petroff—oh, well, he's probably all right.'

That struck me as odd. He had seemed so

tremendously interested, and now this sudden change. Could he have heard anything? No; he was so guileless he would certainly have told me, and would probably have been perfectly furious with me for taking him in.

The mystery, however, was soon solved. He filled our glasses, and said: 'Here's to the Petroff family! I had a telegram from them just now, and I didn't send it on because I knew you would be coming here. So I had my little joke with you this time, old fellow! Well, jokes won't hurt you. But I was glad enough to get that news myself, though.'

It seems they had sent the message from Vienna, and the delay was explained by the fact that Petroff had been very ill, and his wife had neglected to send us word. As my mission in Odessa was now ended, I thanked Ossip Ivanovitch with all my heart, and said good-bye.

Before I left, however, I decided to find out something more about Kretchman, so I called on him that evening. Unfortunately, he was entertaining company, but he greeted me most effusively, and introduced me to his wife. She was a delicate little woman, with a gentle, sensitive face—quite a contrast to her husband. Seeing that I was uncomfortable at my intrusion, she turned to me in a friendly way and said: 'Have you been here long? Ah yes, I remember now. You are the stranger my husband has been telling me of.'

You are looking for a position, aren't you? My husband would be so glad to get you a place in his office; he was so much interested in you.'

'I don't quite see how that can be,' I said, 'when he really hardly knows me.'

'Yes, but he has heard so much about your work, you know. You are the man who carried on the secret press, are you not?'

'I am afraid I have not done very much,' said I. 'I am tremendously interested in all sorts of reforms, of course; but I don't belong to any party. And I am afraid that "secret press" story is the romantic invention of some of your clever friends.'

It startled me, though, that she should know so much about my work. Who could have been discussing my affairs?

Not even the man who introduced me to the circle knew anything positive about my life, and it irritated me to think he had been so free with his conjectures. Later in the evening he came in, and I asked him what he had said.

'I didn't tell them anything special; I simply said you had had a great deal of experience, that your work was different from ours, and that you planned to set up a shop and do printing. There's nothing in that.'

Still, I thought it odd that Kretchman had made his tale out of so little evidence. The fact was, I didn't trust him, and could never like him.

Before I left the house, discussion grew rather lively. They spoke of the best methods of making converts among the workmen. Most of them thought the unions should strike first for improved labour conditions—that to demand political rights just now would be simple insanity, for the middle classes had not yet asserted themselves, and it would be too hazardous for the labouring men alone to come forward and claim the suffrage.

I contradicted this opinion, claiming that the workmen could never be lifted out of their present condition by the mere reform of our labour laws. 'Of course, I grant you that we shall have no help from the middle classes. But, on the other hand, we must not fail to count on the Russian Student Party. We can easily give their manifestations a political character, and induce them to join us in the work. As a matter of fact, the very stringency of the Government lately with regard to them is constantly making recruits for us in their camp. Our first duty to the workmen, however, is to make them recognize the crushing pressure of our present system, to show them their own helpless condition, and the crying need for Government reform. What good do all these labour agitations and our lectures on conditions in Western Europe do, if the men are not made to see how entirely these things depend upon the voting power of the people? History will soon show that I am right; for, believe me,

friends, out of the ranks of the labourers themselves will come the best political agitators of us all, and we shall all be left behind in the great movement.'

'Pardon me,' said Kretchman, 'you are not quite fair in saying we simply deal with the economic side of the question. Naturally we show them the other side as well, and often demonstrate the necessity for political freedom. You probably belong to the optimistic party, who really believe that Russia is ready for universal suffrage. But you must remember that history is not made at a single bound, and we must bide our time. This does not mean that we are not working for the same ends as you, but we keep them more in the background. I have a proposal to make. Stay here with us. I can get you a position if you like. Your energy and your enthusiasm will count for much more in a place like this than they do in your present erratic life.'

'My life is not erratic,' I answered somewhat hotly. 'I have been doing steady work in one small place, and have been settled there for some time now.'

'I don't doubt that you have,' said he. 'I simply meant that you had no permanent home. But won't you tell us about your work? It would interest us exceedingly to know what you and your friends are doing among the labourers.' I declined,

however, telling him I would be glad to speak some other time.

As we went home, my friend said: 'What have you against Kretchman? You don't seem to trust him. I have never seen you so reserved and evasive before. He is a splendid worker, and has done so much good here. You have no cause to mistrust him.'

'It's not that,' I said, 'but I don't know the fellow, and I don't mean to tell all I know to the very first man I meet, especially as it concerns others beside myself.'

The following day I met a friend of Andreeff's (Mme. Sofie by name), who had recently come to Odessa. She was astonished to see me, and we talked things over at length. Among others, Kretchman's name was mentioned.

'What do you think of him?' asked Mme. Sofie.

'He seems a very good worker,' I answered, 'but I don't exactly trust him. I can't tell why.'

'Have you ever heard of him before?' said she.

'I have an indistinct impression of Petroff's telling me something about a man in Odessa who worked with our party, but who was suspected of dealings with the police; whether it was Kretchman or not I'm sure I don't know.'

'I mistrust him too,' said Mme. Sofie, 'and I have better ground than you. You have heard, I am

sure, that a number of our people have been arrested lately, and among them were my sister and her husband. I have just had word that they are here in prison, and I came down to see if I could manage an interview with them. But since I arrived I have found out something rather important. It seems that Kretchman was connected with my sister's arrest. He was apprehended with all the others and imprisoned, but they released him in the course of a few days. That in itself would not be so remarkable, but, strangely enough, it is not the first time this has happened.

' A young friend of mine told me this other story. Though she herself is not a Socialist, she often helps us in our work, and we have every reason to trust her implicitly. Kretchman, it seems, was arrested on a former occasion also. Only one young woman outside the prison knew where the incriminating papers were kept, and when he was set free, in a very short time he went to this girl with a message from her friends, saying, "The police are on the track of our papers. Hide them somewhere else." She had no reason to doubt him, so that evening they went together to the house where they were stored, and after looking at them, he told her perhaps they were safe enough there for a while ; in a few days he would find a better place for them. But that very same night the papers vanished, and both the young girl and the woman in whose house

they had been stored were arrested. Doesn't that strike you as strange ?'

'It certainly does. Only I can't understand why all our people trust him so ; they are not usually so easy to hoodwink.'

'If he *does* belong to the secret police, which, of course, we don't know as yet, he is one of their most dangerous agents, for he is a clever talker, is cultivated, and carries on a splendid canvass among the workmen. Possibly he has dazzled our friends a bit, for really we are accustomed to such inefficient and uneducated spies.'

I was very much disturbed at what I heard, and resolved to leave Odessa directly. But I asked Mme. Sofie to send me word if she found out more about Kretchman. I went back to Belaja Zerkov, sold out my stock, telling my friends I had been appointed to a position in the Semstvoe, and must leave for Moscow in ten days.

On my way to join the Abramoffs I visited the man who usually received my mail and forwarded it. Here I found a note from Mme. Sofie, who wrote that she had just barely escaped arrest. Soon after I left Odessa our whole band had been put in prison, and Kretchman, too, of course. But he had again been released in the course of a few days, and now there was no doubt that my suspicions had been justified, and he was a secret agent of the police.

We meet such men frequently in our work. They are well educated, have often studied the labour problem abroad, and are professional agitators, or *agents provocateurs* as they are called. They go to a town and join one of our clubs, or else found a circle of their own. Here they lecture and canvass among the workmen—under cover of the police, of course—and presently other men join their ranks. Then, finally, the whole faction is arrested; but the founder naturally is set free after a nominal investigation, and takes up his despicable work again in some other place.

## CHAPTER XI

### A STRIKE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

THE Abramoffs had settled in a town that had rapidly risen to be a manufacturing centre. A number of factories had recently sprung up, and thousands of labourers were employed. Anna Michailovna advertised as a nurse, and had a large practice among the people. Her husband was writing a series of articles on the Fundamental Theories of Socialism ; but, like all other works on political economy in Russia, on account of the strict censorship, they had to be written obliquely, the meaning being conveyed rather than expressed.

‘ This is a splendid place for our work,’ they said ; ‘ not much of a police force and no spies at all as yet. How is your money holding out ? Can you manage without taking a position ? For the present there is no need of your going into business as a blind, and you can give all your time to the work.’

I had to admit I had been making rather heavy inroads on my capital lately, though I had lived carefully and been at work too. So Anna Michail-

ovna suggested that I should help Abramoff in his translation of an English book. 'You can both work on it together, and the pay is not so bad.'

They gave me a few sample sheets to translate, and as they were satisfied with the result, I took a room in the neighbourhood and set about the work quite eagerly.

There were five of us now in our little community : the Abramoffs, Andreeff, his brother—who had lately joined them—and I. Anna's earnings were intermittent, Abramoff's pay for his articles and translations uncertain, and as Andreeff was out of work, I put what I had in the common treasury, and we lived like a happy family. We lunched and dined together, shared each other's fortunes, and often each other's clothes, for boots, hats, and even linen, were common property among us. After supper we could sit and spin out plans for our future work. We already had a following among the men, and it was only a question of time when we should begin our regular system of secret lectures.

We had been settled for about three months. Andreeff and his brother had taken positions as draughtsmen in a machine-shop, and soon we began to hear mutterings of discontent among the workmen. Now was the time for us to stand by, for in case of a strike we could be of great assistance to the men. Almost every night they came

to us for advice. One day they told us that Maximoff had come down, and taken a position in the works where Andreeff was employed. Maximoff had led the great strike in Alexandrovsk four weeks ago, and was a thorough-paced agitator and idolized by the men. He had many personal friends among the employés, and had taken his place as leader at once.

The dissatisfaction increased. We were in daily communication with the leading workmen, and they told us they had succeeded in raising a campaign fund.

‘That’s the signal,’ said Anna Michailovna. ‘They will be coming to us for help presently.’

We had not seen Maximoff as yet, for he prudently kept out of our way. But we were constantly informed as to his movements, and had already drawn up an appeal to the workmen in case he should suddenly call for it. One evening he finally appeared with one of the local leaders, and we all held a council of war.

The work had been done so well that none of the employers had any suspicion of trouble. They knew the hands were grumbling, but found nothing at all unusual in that.

Maximoff and Anna Michailovna decided we should set up a press, so I went to a neighbouring town to look up a friend who could help me buy one. I was unsuccessful, however, for the place was swarm-

ing with spies, and we had to content ourselves with a hectograph copying-press.

Suddenly the strike broke out. Two of the largest factories shut down, and all night we worked to get our handbills out. They were very tersely worded: 'Better treatment. Better pay. Shorter hours. Extra wages for overtime. More precaution against accidents, and free medical attendance.'

The morning after their distribution Andreeff and I hurried out to see what effect they had upon the people. The streets were filled with groups of workmen talking over the case. We met Maximoff, and all three went down to the Guseff works, finding a great crowd before the gates, who recognized and cheered us as we came. Maximoff went about among them saying a few words here and there, advising them to keep cool and wait for the managers to make the next move, and, above all, not to let any riots start.

They sent a delegation (of whom Maximoff was one) to lay their demands before the directors, and presently these returned, saying the board had declined to arbitrate. 'We will treat with you when the Cossacks come,' was their answer.

'Don't they give themselves airs!' said one of the men. 'We aren't their serfs!' shouted another. But Maximoff called out in his ringing voice: 'Stand together, men; we'll win yet. The right is on our side. Cool and steady is the word. Don't

give these men a chance to say they had to use force. We are fighting for a good cause. Go home now quietly, and talk it over among yourselves.' The mob disbanded, the street was still, and nothing but the guards at the factory gates gave token of any disturbance.

On our way home we met the chief of police hurrying down, and a small squad of soldiers marching to the scene of action, and Maximoff observed dryly: 'They are rather late. I wonder what they think they are going to do?' Andreeff began to calculate how soon the Cossacks might be expected. 'You never can tell,' said Maximoff. 'But what we have to do first is to gather in the men and explain this matter to them. We shall have a hard job, for most of the hands are untrained moujiks, and not regular workmen at all. I'm afraid we shall have rioting on our hands. In my last strike in Alexandrovsk things went splendidly—not a sign of disorder—as quiet and steady as an organized labour strike in any other country.'

When we got home we found all our people hard at work getting out handbills. The appeal was short and forceful: the workmen were reminded that they belonged to one great family, and they must all stand together. Solidarity was their watchword. Then the underlying political significance of the social problem was dwelt upon, and it was signed 'By order of the Central Committee

of the Social-Democratic Party in Russia.' We took turns at the work, and in a few hours had a thousand copies ready to deliver.

Now we went out into the street. Crowds of workmen stood at every corner, and as we hurried along Maximoff called out: 'Come to the square by the City Hall.' The word had probably been passed throughout the town, for by the time we got there a mob had assembled, and two or three other speakers were already addressing them. Anna Michailovna and I stood near Maximoff to hear what he would say. Some one brought out a table, and Maximoff jumped thereon and began to speak. He outlined the position of the men, and the reasons for their strike. 'We want shorter hours and better pay, because we need the time and the money for our education. You men have often enough said that knowledge is power. So stand together now, and don't forget that you are standing up for each other. You can make any conditions you want, if you just realize this and hold firm. "*Union is power,*" too. Don't be afraid of the Cossacks. Keep cool and keep out of their way, and they can't touch you. Your delegates will meet the directors and look out carefully for your interests. We are fighting for our just rights, and all our men in other towns are looking to you to uphold the cause of Freedom worthily. Long live the United Labourers!'

Hardly had he ended when Anna Michailovna, to my amazement, sprang up on to the table, and in fiery words told the people how their brothers in other lands had fought and suffered for the cause, and what splendid things they now had realized. 'But *there* they have what we yet lack—political freedom! After years of toil and countless sacrifices, they have achieved their aim, and now at last they have a voice in the making of their country's laws. They still have far to go, but their path is so much smoother than with us. You, my comrades, have a long and dreary road before you—a bitter road of sacrifice. But the time will some day come when Russian workmen will be as free as those abroad, and hold their meetings openly without fear of the police, for these will be appointed by the will of the people. The day will also come when we shall send our delegates to Parliament to watch over the welfare of the masses.

'But that is just the *first* step, men. We must go still farther. In the struggle now before us, you must learn the power of Federation—that you can stand in line and fight for your own rights. And remember, brothers, that the cause you fight for is not simply your own; it is your children's too.

'The news of your achievement—though it may not be a victory—will be shouted to the furthest village in the land, and every Russian peasant will rise up proudly and say: "These are our brothers;

they are fighting for our freedom." Long live the workmen, the united workmen of Russia !'

It was still as death. I had never heard Anna Michailovna address a meeting before, and her devotion to the cause and her fiery zeal had transfigured her. The blue eyes that usually smiled so gently were black now, and blazed with excitement. Her face was ghastly pale, and stern with the spirit of her exalted purpose.

I pressed her hand in silence ; it was icy cold. The mob still stood there breathless. Far off at the end of the square we could hear the voice of a speaker still urging the men to restraint. Then Maximoff turned to the workmen and said : ' Now go home, my friends. Keep firm and steady. Don't let the police have any cause for complaint. And think over what you have just heard.' Quietly they went off in groups of two or three, and the square was empty again.

It was dusk when we got home, and we sat there silent in the twilight, surrounded by the litter of our work—torn evidence of our feverish activity. Finally some one procured a light and got the tea, and now and again we dropped a casual remark. At length Anna Michailovna called us out of our dreams by saying : ' Hadn't we better clear up ? We shall have to start work at the hectograph again soon.'

Maximoff had suggested that we should issue

hourly bulletins and distribute as many appeals as possible.

Suddenly the door was burst open, and a man rushed in, saying : ' Come on ! They have broken into a gin-shop. We shall have to be quick if we want to stop a riot ! '

We all rushed out, the Abramoffs as well, but we finally persuaded them to stay at home. The men had plundered the shop before we got there, and were now trailing down the street ; we could hear the clamour of their voices as we ran. Maximoff called out : ' Run for the other shop ; they have headed for there, I think. '

We raced down a side alley, and got there just ahead of the crowd. The place was barred. Maximoff and Andreeff ran to find the back door, and his brother and I guarded the front. The mob was coming, and we could see a few of our men with the leaders evidently trying to quiet the people and keep order. Presently we were surrounded by a howling mass shrieking, ' Batter down the doors ! '

A man with an iron bar in his hand stepped up and swung it at the door, but the lock still held. I tried to stop him, and called out : ' What are you doing there ? You will spoil your own strike. They will say you men got drunk and rioted, and then you know very well what will happen. '

' Oh, well, we are celebrating to-day. We're on top. We want a drink. '

Suddenly Maximoff appeared, whispered something to Andreeff's brother, and turned to the crowd. 'Stop, men! Listen to me! What do you think you are doing? You aren't thieves, are you? You wouldn't steal another man's property, would you? This stuff is poison, I tell you! You *shan't* get drunk! You *shan't* besmirch the cause of Freedom in that way. Shame on you! think of your children! Go home, now, every one of you!'

'Ho! what do you listen to him for?' said a voice. 'Alexei, bang down that door; you can do it; we'll all help you!'

Some rushed at the door, others tried the shutters, and we stood there helpless; but Maximoff whispered, 'We have smashed every bottle in the shop; the floor is just swimming with liquor. It was the best we could do, and at least they can't *all* get drunk.'

Finally the lock gave way, a gang of men rushed in; some one brought a lantern, for it was dark as pitch. Suddenly there came a howl. 'The *hell* he has! He's broken every bottle in his shop! Hand us a bucket, boys; we'll get enough for the crowd off the floor.'

It was a hideous sight. Some threw themselves flat on their faces and lapped the brandy up with their tongues.

Maximoff whispered: 'Isn't there another shop in the town? Let us get there before they think of it.'

We can't do anything to help at the Distillery ; the excise men will have to shift for themselves.'

We forced our way through the mob and ran down the street. 'Odd there are no policemen about,' said Andreeff. 'Perhaps they have all been ordered to the Distillery.'

We found things locked and quiet at the third place, but a ray of light came through the shutters. Then Maximoff said : ' I think we can get in the back way, boys.'

A woman opened the door when we knocked, but we pushed past her and ran down the hall to the shop. The owner stood behind the counter trying to protect his till.

'What do you want?' said he. 'None of your tricks now!' and he made a rush at Maximoff.

Andreeff grabbed him, threw him down, and shouted : 'You old fool! We haven't come to rob you ; we only want to keep the crowd from getting drunk. We want to smash your bottles before they get here.'

'It's State property ; I can't let you touch it. That's a police affair, not just any common man's.'

Andreeff sang out, 'Let's lash this man down in the next room. We have not much time to lose. Here,' he called to the woman, 'you look out for the cash,' and he handed her the till.

Our work was soon done. Hundreds of bottles lay broken on the floor ; the place was reeking with

brandy, and the odour nearly stifled us. We put out the light, closed the door, and went to find the proprietor. He cursed at us, but Maximoff answered: 'Hold your tongue! You don't know what you are talking about; we may have saved your life by this.'

We could hear the mob pouring down the street, and decided to wait and see what they would do. On they rushed, shrieking and screaming as they ran. 'Hallo, you fellows,' they called to us, 'come on and have a drink! Drinks are free to-night!'

Maximoff shook his head, muttering: 'It's no use. We can't do anything with these fellows now.'

Again we watched them hammer down the door, and again we heard their howls of rage and disappointment when they realized what had happened. Some were for stringing up the shopkeeper, but that finally came to nothing. Then the old disgusting scene was repeated—men wallowing like beasts on the reeking floor, and lapping up the liquor with their tongues.

The mob was growing fast. 'Let's go,' said Maximoff. So we started home, deeply discouraged, though we had known, of course, that rioting is the usual outcome of a strike where the union is not strong enough to control the movement. Just to go on with the work is the only remedy, and the time may yet come when the wilder element will disappear.

As we crushed our way out we heard a voice calling : ' I say, boys, we shall not get much to drink to-night. They will shoot us down if we loot the Distillery. Let's go for a spree.' So on they swept, madly howling and cursing, to the disreputable quarter of the town. A few of the leaders still followed, trying to turn them back.

When we got home we decided to issue an appeal to the more intelligent workmen, in the name of the United Brotherhood, to stop all further rioting, since every crime against the community, each breach of law and order, was an injury to our cause. A second proclamation set forth in clearer terms the just demands of the workmen.

We worked all night, and at dawn some of our men went out to distribute the handbills. They told us when they came back that the mob had plundered the whole disreputable quarter, thrown furniture out of the windows, and given themselves up to the most unbridled licence.

When our work was over we sat and waited, too tired to move and yet unable to sleep. Suddenly came a knock at the door. ' The Cossacks have come,' shouted one of our men, ' and the town is full of spies. You must all get out of this.'

We called our party together and left the house, going down through back alleys till we reached a place of safety. Maximoff and Andreeff had gone to join the workmen, but they begged me to stay

by the others, promising to send for me if I could be of any use. Messengers came at intervals to let us know how things were progressing.

I soon found it impossible to sit here and hide while the others were out working in the streets, so I told Anna Michailovna not to stir from the spot till I returned, and off I started. The streets had been cleared as if by magic; simply the sound of the word 'Cossacks' had done that. I went down to the works, where I saw troop horses hitched to the fence, and the men massed in the courtyard. The people were assembled in the public square. Now and then you heard a drunken shout, but in the main they were quiet and orderly. The workmen stood in groups talking together, and among them I caught sight of Maximoff, whom I presently joined.

'The union wants to send a delegation to the managers,' said he.

'Why try that again? They told us yesterday they positively refused to arbitrate. Why not wait and let *them* make the next move?'

'That's what I advised,' said Maximoff, 'but they still want to do it.'

'Their committee is made up of picked men, and the workmen must see that they would surely do everything for their interests.'

Just then two squads of Cossacks in marching trim came riding through the town. The people

silently crushed back, forming a lane for their passage, and they rode clattering across the square, and, turning down a side street, disappeared at a smart trot.

Maximoff turned to the men. 'We'll wait for them to make the next move now, and the first thing we must do is to disperse *this minute*. Go home, you fellows.'

I went back to join the Abramoffs; and towards evening Maximoff came to say he thought we had better leave the place. 'The strike must take its course. They will be making all sorts of arrests to-night. It's just a waste of good material for you to stay, since you can't help. They tell me the spies are on your track already, and there is a string of guards round your old quarters. I myself shall stay awhile, if possible, but you must certainly go.'

We could see for ourselves it was useless, so we decided to leave the town.

'But where is Andreeff?'

'I don't know,' said Maximoff. 'I expected to find him here. But you can't wait for him; you have no time to lose. He'll probably turn up safely, both he and his brother. If I see them, I will send them after you.'

We gave him our address, and a workman took us down to his house, not far from the station. Here he left us for a while, but soon returned, saying :

'That's all settled; come on now. I know a brakesman on a goods train. He'll take you as far as the next junction. From there you will have to shift for yourselves.'

The brakesman took us down the line to an empty goods van standing in a siding. Here he locked us in, and it seemed an eternity that we sat there in the dark while they were making up the train. Finally the engine whistled and we were off. At one of the next stations the door of our van opened on the further side and the brakesman appeared. By the light of his lantern we saw that he was carrying a large loaf of bread and a pitcher of milk. 'I don't suppose you have eaten anything to-day, have you? Share it nicely between you, now,' he said with a grin; 'we shall be there soon.'

He closed the door, and all the rest of the way we took turns striking matches for the others to see to eat. We were not exactly cast down; Abramoff even attempted a feeble joke, and Anna Michailovna laughed and said: 'Well, people, there is only one thing for us to do, and that is to visit my brother-in-law. He will take us in till we can raise some money. You are both of you decently dressed, and we have some extra things too, though ~~the~~ small bag is not much for three of us. But I must have a new hat, for I certainly can't travel far with this shawl over my head.'

'If we only knew how we could get on from here,'

I said. 'Abramoff, have you any money? I have about one hundred roubles with me.' Fortunately he had some too, and we knew we could get through on that.

The train finally stopped. The door of our van was opened, and the brakesman again appeared. 'Now you can get out,' he said; 'that is, if you *can*. May I help you?' For we were stiff with sitting and could hardly move. It was broad daylight, and we had been in the van for five hours.

The brakesman took us over to a shed and hid us behind a string of empty trucks. 'Wait here,' he said; 'they can't see you from the station.'

We sat on a log, looked at each other for a minute, and then simply *shouted* with laughter. 'I've been through a great deal in my life,' said Abramoff, 'but I can assure you I never "came by goods" before.'

Presently the brakesman came back, carrying his kit of tools. He took us across the station-yard and into the street beyond without our meeting a soul. At a little cottage down the lane he stopped, and said: 'My brother-in-law lives here. I'll take you in and you can rest awhile.' We went into a pleasant room where a tall, dark man was sitting with two small boys about eight and ten years old.

Our guide called out: 'I have brought you company to-day. These people have escaped from Genitcheck, where the big strike is on. You know

what *that* is like when the men get drunk—nobody's safe at all. Our friends here want to go on with the next passenger train.'

'I'm glad to see you. Sit down, won't you? My wife has just gone for some milk. She will be back directly and give you something to eat.'

We were not sure what our friend in Genitcheck had told the brakesman, so we had to be very careful and talk simply on general topics. The wife soon came home, and gave us bread-and-butter and tea, questioning us all the while as to who we were, what we were doing, etc. I left Anna Michailovna to answer, which she did very well, telling as much of the truth as she could.

'You aren't Jews, are you?' said our host. 'I thought you might be because you ran away. There are so many people who are down on the Jews.'

When we had eaten they took us into the next room and asked us to lie down. Our host was station-master, and, judging from his house, he had a very comfortable berth. When they had left us, I said: 'I shall go up town now and buy you a hat, and find out when our train goes. I think that is the safest, for I'm not as well known as you. I will be back directly.'

The shops were just opening when I got into town, and I soon found what I wanted, looked up my train, and hurried back to tell them we should leave in two hours. I found them all at breakfast—the

brakesman, his sister, and her husband, all sitting about, open-mouthed, listening to Anna Michailovna. The only words I could catch were, 'How hard it is on us poor working people.' 'Canvassing again,' I thought; 'she never forgets the cause.'

My entrance broke the spell, and the brakesman said with a sigh: 'Yes, we poor devils have to work for our daily bread, and pretty poor pay we get too. Look at me, now: I have a wife and four children—six of us to feed. They live in town, and I'm always on the road. I try to save, but it costs so much to live. The children are growing up, too, and I would like to send them to school, so that, at least, they might know a little more than their father. Oh, but that would be splendid!' he continued, turning to Anna, 'if our schools were free like those places you were telling us about, and we could only get a little better wages.'

'Ah yes,' chimed in the station-master, 'it's hard work to get along.'

Finally we had to go. We said good-bye, and thanked them heartily for all their kindness. I took the satchel, and we set off for the station.

'Where shall we go?' said I.

'I think we had better look up Matwei Ivanovitch first,' said Abramoff.

Matwei Ivanovitch Podjarin was a city official and a good friend of ours in a small town about seven hours away. It was through him that we

were to hear from Maximoff. He received us kindly, and heard the story of our escape; then he said: 'I think perhaps you had better not stay here. It's not that I mistrust Maximoff, of course, but he may be arrested at any moment, and then they will find my address and lock you up.' We agreed with him, and decided to go to Anna Michailovna's sister, whose husband was a physician in a distant town. The trip was long and hard: forty hours by rail, half a day by water, and finally a drive of sixty kilometres.

Mme. Nikolajeff was overjoyed to see us, but her husband hardly seemed to share her pleasure.

'Now we'll have a delightful summer holiday,' said Anna Michailovna the next day. 'You can't call this place a town; it's nothing but an overgrown village. We'll have a good country rest and a change.'

Here we loafed and rested for a solid week. We ate and slept and took long walks, simply vegetating for a while. We had no news as yet from Maximoff, and could get nothing from the papers, for they had suppressed all accounts of the strike. We were most uneasy, too, about the Andreeffs, and telegraphed to Matwei Ivanovitch asking him to look them up.

Faintly at first, then stronger and stronger, came the longing to rest—just *once*, without a thought of danger. Anna Michailovna often said: 'Oh, to

go abroad and feel that we are safe ! We could join the Petroffs and be so happy all together. And then, when the past was forgotten, we could come back, fresh and strong again for our work.'

Soon after our arrival I had written to the man who had charge of the rest of my money—only a few hundred roubles now. I knew I should have to wait some time for it, as my friend was often called away ; and, even if he were at home, he must write to Moscow and have the money forwarded to me. But when I saw how nervous and tired they were, and heard Anna Michailowna's pathetic wish to go abroad, and heard her beg Abramoff to ask his publisher to advance the cheque for his work, I decided to telegraph and ask my friend to lend me the money himself.

It was high time we all left, too. None of us could sleep, and our nerves were badly shaken. Presently came a registered letter in care of the doctor. We all hoped it was the money we expected, but it was only a report from Matwei Ivanovitch. Maximoff had been arrested the very night we left, Andreeff and his brother were both in prison, and they were hunting for us all along the line. We had better move on as soon as possible.

'The devil!' said Abramoff ; 'those fellows are deucedly quick ; now we shall have to hustle.'

I went to the station and telegraphed to my friend,

sending at the same time another message to Abramoff's publisher also. Then we waited. The money might come at any moment. Days passed; we nearly broke down under the strain. Even Anna Michailovna, usually so calm, was restless and excitable. Finally, after three weeks' delay, my money came, and, wild with joy, we went off to order the carriage for our trip.

We were to start early the next morning, so we sorted our clothes and laid all our papers in a hamper we meant to store for safe keeping. Laughing and joking, we tossed our things about the room.

'We're off!' said Anna with a cheer. 'Thank the Lord we have money to go abroad at last, and I hope we shall stay there a good long time.'

'It won't last so very long,' said I, 'but that doesn't matter; we will soon find work and earn all we can possibly need.'

Before dinner we took a long walk, and came back hungry and happy. Even our host was happy now, for we were leaving to-morrow, and he would be rid at last of his anxiety. We had been sitting on the veranda, and went in for our last cup of tea, and then we were to finish our packing.

It was about nine o'clock at night. The two sisters were having their final talk, and the doctor sat reading and occasionally joining in with our chat. I had carried the hamper with our papers into the other room, and was just dragging out our trunk,

when the door opened and the cook appeared, saying some one wanted to see the doctor. Before she had finished, however, a soldier stood in the doorway and said, 'Keep your seats, please; the Lieutenant is coming.' Then, with a smart flourish and a military stride, a very young officer entered the room, and, staring at each in turn, he picked out Mme. Abramoff, saying: 'You are Anna Michailovna, are you not? What is your family name?'

She answered calmly: 'My name is Sokolova.'

'Is this your photograph?' he asked, showing her a picture.

'Yes,' she said.

It was fearfully still in the room; none of us had moved since they came in. I stood by the trunk, Abramoff leaned against the door, the doctor looked up from his book, petrified with terror, and his wife was pale and trembling. Only Anna was cool and composed; she even smiled a little.

'Whose house is this?'

'Mine,' answered the doctor, jumping up.

'Your name is Nikolajeff, and you are the doctor for the Semstvoe here?'

'Yes.'

'Have you a brother or a cousin named Ivan Petrovitch or Nikolai Michailovitch?'

'No,' said our host, trembling with terror.

'Very well, thank you, that will do. But *you* are under arrest,' said the Lieutenant, turning to

Anna. 'Now I must search the house, and, doctor, I shall ask you to show me your sister-in-law's things.'

We all followed into the next room. For a moment he paused before the basket with our papers. Fortunately, a pair of my trousers lay on top.

'Whose things are those?' was the question.

I quietly answered that they were mine.

'Oh, I beg your pardon, then I need not disturb them,' said he politely, and he passed on. The search lasted an hour and a half. A few printed pamphlets and some manuscripts were found among Mme. Abramoff's things, and all these were brought into the sitting-room.

The Lieutenant sat down and wrote out his report. Abramoff and I tried to get a few words with his wife, but each time the officer interrupted us.

'I forbid your talking with my prisoner, please. I will ask you to step back, gentlemen.' When the report was made out, we all had to sign. I was not quite certain which name I should use. I had two passports with me somewhere, but in case the officer wanted to see my papers, which should I come to first? Finally I wrote my name at random, and trusted to luck for the rest. 'Where is this gentleman from?' said the Lieutenant, turning to the doctor.

'He's from—*that* gentleman?—this gentleman is from Kasan. He is in the 'university there,' stammered the doctor.

'Oh, is he?' said the Lieutenant.

Abramoff came next, and struck us dumb with horror by writing out his name in full—Ivan Petrovitch Abramoff.

The Lieutenant caught his breath at that, and said: 'And where is *this* gentleman from, if I may ask?'

'He is from Kasan, too. He is a medical student, and I have taken him on as my assistant in his vacation.'

'H'm! From Kasan, you say, eh? Then that doesn't tally with my orders. I thought he was from the south. Are the horses ready?' he asked the sentry.

It was still as death in the room. The officer pulled out a cigarette-case and began to smoke; then, coolly puffing in our faces, he stared at us impudently in turn. 'I know how deucedly unpleasant it must be for you,' he said, turning to the doctor, 'to have your sister-in-law mixed up in things that are not at all fit for ladies.'

'Young man,' said Anna calmly, 'you have arrested me, but I draw the line at being preached at. I'll thank you not to criticize my actions; I'm the judge of those myself.'

The officer blushed and begged her pardon.

The orderly appeared, and announced that the carriage was read. 'Put your things on, madame,' said the officer. 'The men will help you get ready.'

'Can't I, at least, say good-bye to my sister?' asked the doctor's wife.

'Yes, but you are not to hand her anything.'

So, watched by the lynx-eyed men and their commander, the two sisters took leave of each other. The officer bowed himself out, the doctor went with him down the steps, we heard the quick clatter of the horses' hoofs, and when we went out they were gone.

Abramoff suddenly rushed off like mad without saying a word. I went back to my room, and the doctor paced the floor, and began to lecture his wife. 'The disgrace of it! Such people! To have to put up with a scene like that! That's the sort of family you have! Why, we came near being arrested ourselves.'

'Don't worry,' I said, coming in. 'We shall leave to-morrow at the very latest. Possibly to-night, if we can get the horses. You can't think we deliberately planned this unpleasant surprise for you. It's an accident that may happen to anyone.'

Abramoff came back breathless, saying: 'I've been to order the carriage. They'll be here directly, and we'll start at once.'

We threw our things together, and the doctor

said: 'What shall I do with this stuff—these infernal papers?'

'Whatever you please,' I answered.

Suddenly Abramoff walked up to him, and burst out: 'You're a sneaking, white-livered cur! If you hadn't been afraid that I'd put a bullet through your head, you'd have given us all away to that officer whom you trembled before.'

The doctor answered calmly: 'I did what I could for you. I told him you were both from Kasan; that probably saved you from arrest.'

'Nonsense!' said Abramoff; then he muttered something, stalked into the next room, and began to throw his things into the trunk. I followed soon, and found him there staring out into the darkness down the long road where his wife had gone.

'The carriage will be here soon,' I said. 'Try to be a little patient, old fellow.'

'Yes, patient! How *can* I be patient now?' he said with a sob. We stood there awhile together, and I laid my hand gently on his shoulder.

The carriage came at last. We put our things in, said good-bye, with many thanks and real regret to Mme. Nikolajeff, shook the doctor's hand, and I added, lightly: 'You'll try to forgive us, won't you?' but Abramoff pushed me away.

'That'll do! I won't have you beg that fellow's pardon.'

It took us six hours to reach the landing. We

left our luggage on the pier, and started for the waiting-room. As we passed the window Abramoff nudged me, and whispered: 'Look! If there isn't our little Lieutenant!' Sure enough, there he was all alone in the station. So we went on to the third-class waiting-room, and found there was a steamer leaving every twenty minutes for Jaroslavl. 'Probably Anna Michailovna went over on the last boat with the two guards,' said Abramoff, 'and the Lieutenant has been ordered in another direction.' The boat soon came in, and we went into the third-class cabin, noticing that the Lieutenant still sat in the waiting-room.

Towards noon we landed, and drove directly to the station. The assistant station-master here was a friend of ours, and met us with the news that Anna Michailovna was there.

'What do you mean? Here at the station?'

'Yes, they have put her in the train already. She starts in about an hour. They are probably taking her up to Moscow.'

We sat there in the waiting-room, not daring to go out on to the platform for fear her guards might be the same men who had arrested her, and would recognize us.

Finally Abramoff said: 'I can't stand it any longer; I simply must go.' I knew just how he felt, and we went out together. Up and down the platform we paced, when suddenly a head appeared

at one of the windows ; it was Anna Michailovna. We stopped, and saw her try to raise the window, but the guard interfered. Somehow finally she managed it. She leaned out, nodding and smiling to us as if to say : ' Thank you. Thank you *both* for coming.'

Just before the train started we succeeded in crowding up to her window. We held her hands in ours, and she whispered to me, looking at Abramoff, her soul in her eyes : ' Take care of him, won't you ?' then she was off. It had all passed so quickly we could hardly realize what had happened till the train was far away in the distance.

## CHAPTER XXI

### FLIGHT

WE stayed with friends in Jaroslavl, not having money enough to go abroad, for we had given half of our small fund to Anna Michailovna. Then, too, we wanted to hear the result of her trial, and to find out if all our other friends were still in prison. We had enough money for one of us to leave, but Abramoff was in such a condition that I could not send him off alone. He had gone from the wildest despair to a state of utter apathy.

We soon heard that we alone of all our band had escaped arrest, and felt it was high time we left the country. But it took a long time to establish communication with Anna Michailovna, and to let her know that we were safe.

As a matter of precaution we went about from place to place, sleeping to-night with one of our friends, and to-morrow with another. Abramoff could only go out at night, as his marked features made him so very conspicuous. One day I had gone to see a woman who was leaving for Charkoff. We knew

that Anna Michailovna was there in prison, and this friend was to bring her news of us. On my way home I met the station-master, who said: 'There are some queer-looking men in town to-day; I think they are spies. I should leave if I were you.' On my return I found Abramoff tremendously excited. 'What do you think?' said he. 'A man has just been here, and asked if I knew a fellow named Abramoff. I told him as coolly as you please I'd never even heard of such a person.'

We sent a trusty man to the station to see if our friend could get us out of the town, and he sent word that we were to come to his office late that night. Here he told us it would be the height of folly to try to leave the place next day. We should wait till the police had made their search, and matters had quieted down a bit. In the meantime he would take care of us. So he led us down the line to an empty van that stood on a siding. 'And now turn in and go to sleep,' he said. 'They'll never find you here. To-morrow I'll let you out early before anyone comes, and I'll lock you, in my inner office through the day. You won't have to put up with it long, for I think I can find a good safe place to send you. I'll tell you about it to-morrow.' Next morning he called us early, and took us to his office, where he told us of his plan. A friend of his lived not far out in the country, and he was arranging for us to stay there for a while.

Four days and four nights we lived like this, but we soon grew accustomed to it, and it was not bad. One morning, though, we had a horrid fright. We were awakened by the bump of a backing engine, and felt ourselves slowly sliding down the track. 'We soon calmed down, however, for we found they were only shunting the trucks to another line.

When we finally started our friend gave us minute directions as to where to leave the train, and how to reach our place of destination, etc. He put us in a first-class carriage, and the guards treated us with the greatest deference; they had probably been told we were high officials. Early next morning we were landed in a small town, where we took a carriage, and arrived at the end of our journey before eight o'clock.

Our host received us most cordially, and when we handed him our letter of introduction, he said: 'Les amis de nos amis sont nos amis!' He was a man of about forty, with grizzled hair, friendly eyes, and a most winning manner. His wife, a sensible, comfortable little person, very round and very rosy, immediately bustled off to get us something to eat.

After breakfast our host, Leontieff, said: 'I'm going to take you to my apiary; it's not far from here, and you will be safer there. Of course, you will take your meals with us. Make yourselves

thoroughly at home, and let me know if there is anything we can do for you. My library is always at your disposal. To-day I shall let my son Kolja show you over the place.'

We started off with Kolja, a clever lad of fourteen, and on the way he told us that he was in school in Petersburg, and only home for his vacation. 'My father used to edit a paper in Petersburg, but it was suppressed by the Government, so he left town, and he's trying model farming out here now. I wish I could always stay here myself; there's not much fun at our old school.'

We soon came to the little clearing in the woods where the apiary stood. There were several small cottages scattered about; the beekeeper lived in one, and the others were used for storage. Kolja showed us the one we were to have, and here he left us for a while. We wandered about in the garden and watched the bees. Finally Abramoff said: 'Ah, but it is good to be here. So quiet and so restful; no one would ever think of looking for us here, I'm sure'; and he drew a long free breath.

Presently Kolja, who had been playing with some of the peasant children, came over and took us back to the house. 'Peter will see that everything is in order for you,' said he. 'When we have company we always have to put some of them over here.'

We had very few things with us, only the bare necessities, in fact, and no hope of having our

trunks forwarded either, so I asked our host if he could send to town and buy us a small stock of fresh linen. We had to count the pennies now, and for the first time in my life I knew what that meant.

Leontieff simply knew that the police were on our track, but never asked us any questions. It was enough for him to know that we had been concerned in some political affair. 'Don't stay and brood in your rooms all day,' he said. 'You need companionship and variety. Spend the afternoons and evenings with us. You must meet our friends. We can easily find names to introduce you by, and no one ever wonders at our having guests.'

We trespassed a long time on their generous hospitality while we waited for news from Charkoff, and made our plans for crossing the frontier. I also had to arrange about the money for our flight, and at one time thought seriously of applying to my uncle, but I dropped this scheme as far too dangerous. We enjoyed our stay tremendously. Our time was spent in walks and drives about the estate, and long discussions with our host and hostess mainly on books or philosophy. In the evenings we read aloud or had some music, and the neighbours often came in, so we soon felt thoroughly at home and at our ease.

Only poor Abramoff had days of fearful depression. He would stay in bed then and refuse to see

anyone. I simply brought him his meals and let him alone, for I found it was the safest plan to humour him. Leontieff and his gentle wife were so kind and sympathetic. They knew his wife was in prison, so they bore with his moods and bitter restlessness with the greatest of tenderness and understanding.

At the end of three weeks our friend the station-master came out to see us. He brought bad news from Jaroslavl, and advised us to leave as soon as possible. Our letters from Anna Michailovna, on the other hand, were encouraging. She was well, and begged us not to stay on her account, but go abroad directly. We had no word yet, however, from our friends on the frontier, and without good passports it would be impossible now to leave the country.

As the days wore on Abramoff's condition became more and more alarming. I did my best to divert him. We took long walks, and I theorized about our work for the cause, and tried him on all his special hobbies—the Rotation of Crops, the Destruction of the Timber, the Education of the Peasants, and all that sort of thing. But he paid no attention to my monologues, or else gave me some irrelevant answer. He was literally dead to the world. Our hosts tried hard in their kindly way to cheer him up, but he grew more and more surly, and said one day 'he would rather not go there any more.'

Peter might bring him his meals—that is, if he ever wanted any.’ And so we let the poor fellow have his way.

We waited in vain for letters, and I finally resolved that if they failed to come in the course of a week I should try crossing the border without them. Abramoff was already beginning to have hallucinations. Several times in the night he’d wake me, saying: ‘Do you hear that? Listen! There’s some one coming. Don’t you hear the wheels? Now they’re ringing the bell.’

I would jump up and run out, but there was nothing to be heard. Then I would try to soothe him. ‘You know, if they *did* come for us they’d have to stop at the other house first, and Leontieff would surely send Kolja over to warn us.’

‘Yes, but I heard it plainly,’ he would say. ‘I have very sharp ears.’

Then we would go out on to the hill, where we could see the main house. All was quiet. Nothing was moving on the long stretch of road, and he would go back to bed pacified. He would have these attacks several times in a night, and soon my own nerves began to jangle under the strain. I looked for danger in every sudden noise. Clearly there was no alternative; we must get away, or else we should both go mad.

At length we got a message, and finally we were free to go abroad. Abramoff pulled himself to-

gether ; he was really almost gay. We bade these dear Leontieffs good-bye, and thanked them earnestly for their unfailing kindness. 'If you ever pass this way again be sure you come and see us. If you ever need money, or we can do the least thing to help you, let us know. By the way, how about your money now ? I'm not a very rich raan, but I've always enough for my friends.' We thanked him heartily, and said we had enough, but would surely call on him in case of need.

Before leaving I looked over our slender wardrobe, and asked Leontieff if he thought we should pass muster. He said we were all right, and we started off on our journey in his comfortable waggon with a pair of good stout horses. As we rounded the first corner we turned to wave at these good old friends, and then the peaceful little place disappeared from our view.

We reached Jaroslavl at midnight, and found our friend waiting to take us to his office, for we had to wait for our other train. He gave us a number of letters and some addresses that might be useful on our trip. 'You'll go as far as Moscow on these passes ; you're employés, you understand. From there you'll have to pay your own way. Don't worry about Anna Michailovna ; I'll keep in touch with her, and let you know whatever happens. And remember, now, whatever you need at any time, just let me know.'

We made the trip to Moscow in a first-class carriage, and alone. It was most comfortable, and Abramoff simply expanded, almost seeming his old cheery self. 'Thank the Lord, we're out of danger at last,' said he. 'Do you know, if we were to be arrested now, if I thought I should have to stay even overnight in prison, I believe I should go mad. You must remember I have had two years and a half of solitary confinement. I really don't think I could stand any more. I think I have lost my nerve.'

That was the first I had heard of his former imprisonment, but naturally we knew very little of each other's early lives.

'I was at college,' he told me, 'and belonged to a little debating society; politics and social questions were our usual topics. By some mistake we were all arrested; they declared we boys were a band of conspirators, and I had seven months of arrest on suspicion, and then came my sentence: two years of solitary confinement.'

'How did you ever live through it?'

'Oh, in the usual way. At first I had no books, but later they let me read, and that made it easier. Then when I went to Petersburg to serve my term of solitary confinement, that was very much worse. But you can get used to anything, of course. I was usually up at seven, and at work by half-past. I was put to making cigarette-boxes, and when I had

done my allotted number—and I soon became quite expert—I had the rest of the day to study French and English. I asked for books and dictionaries, and soon learned to read quite fluently. Of course, I can't pronounce correctly, but I can read and translate easily, and that is quite enough for my present purpose.'

'And you were two years in that prison?'

'Yes. That's not so very much. But I was well and strong when I was arrested, and that close confinement upset my nerves. Then this erratic life of ours since then and the constant strain of apprehension have broken me down completely. But we shall all be better soon when we get abroad. I shall be well and strong again. You are not so sound yourself as you used to be. I shall be glad enough to live a life of peace. Oh, if Anna Michailovna were only with us now! But perhaps she'll be there soon. Who knows?'

We had to wait a few days in Smolensk, and here I looked up a man to whom I had a letter. He was absolutely trustworthy, and had often helped our people across the border before. So I determined to put Abramoff in his care, and he would see him safely abroad, while I myself went to interview our publisher in Moscow.

'See him personally,' said Abramoff; 'writing never does any good. Tell him we need the money badly, and ask him for more work. We can't live

abroad without means, and we must always remember that Anna Michailovna may join us, at any moment, and then there will be three to support.'

So I went to Moscow, and had a satisfactory interview with the publisher. We were to have at least four or five books a year to translate, and we could live on that easily. The publisher was very sorry he could do no more for us, but the censorship was so severe that his field was exceedingly limited. I asked him whether it would be wise for me to go to Petersburg, and see the editor of a paper there, but he advised me not to, as there had been many political arrests there lately.

From Moscow I went on to Rjäsan, where I had an interview with our friend from Jaroslavl. 'Why didn't you write?' asked he, when we met. 'You risk so much by coming here to see me.'

'Oh, it's not so dangerous for me as for Abramoff. I'm not so striking-looking. But I want to consult you about two things. You know we have all the apparatus for a press stored away in a good safe place. I want you to see about getting it into the hands of some of our people. And then, too, I wish you could make arrangements for getting Anna Michailovna out on bail. I will move heaven and earth to raise the money for it.'

When we had arranged the details of these plans I went on to look up Basobrasoff, the friend with whom I had left Harlamoff's papers—poor

Harlamoff, who had died that summer in the Crimea.

I had often planned to use his papers to establish my position in society. My other passports had been simply clever forgeries, but these would secure me from any suspicion, and I could then only be arrested for some crime I had committed under my new name. I could live abroad where I pleased, even in those countries where a foreigner has to show a passport, and, if necessary, could eventually return to Russia and settle down in safety.

Basobrassoff was in a position to help me easily with my plans, and he put himself absolutely at my disposal. Then I burned all my old papers, and he took me up to the Chief of Police, and introduced me as Harlamoff. 'I've a great favour to ask,' he said to the Chief. 'My brother and I are shipping wheat abroad, and are having trouble with it. Neither of us can leave just now, and we want to send Harlamoff to see about it. I should like to get him his papers without the usual red tape. He is our local travelling agent, and has no foreign pass.'

'Ah yes,' said the Chief, 'but that is rather difficult, you know. He has to prove an eight months' residence in the district to get a passport. Has he registered here?'

'Lord, no! How could he, when he's on the road

all the time? 'We never expected we'd have to send him abroad.'

'Let me see your papers, please. Yes, they're all right. Only you're not registered yet. Now, if you'll give me your affidavit, Mr. Basobrasoff—just a few lines will do—that this man has been in your employ over a year, I think I can get you the pass.' My friend made the necessary deposition, and in half an hour they handed me a requisition for a foreign passport for a certain 'Harlamoff, travelling agent for the firm of Basobrasoff.'

When we got home my friend said: 'Now, I shall be in a pretty mess if you are ever caught. I have gone bail for your respectability. But I'm not sorry; they can't touch *me*. Now you must go up to town to get your papers. Have you money enough?' I had to admit I hadn't, and gladly took what he lent me.

Arrived at the capital of the province, I went directly to the Governor's office, handed in my requisition, paid the official tax, got a receipt, and was told to call for my papers *to-morrow*. 'But my business is important,' said I. 'I must have them to-day. Can't you make them out now?'

'Hardly,' answered the man. 'We close at two, and I doubt if the Governor will be able to sign anything more to-day.'

'But there is so much at stake,' I said. 'I should

be tremendously obliged if you could get them for me to-day.'

He saw I was in earnest, so he finally said : 'Come back at two o'clock ; perhaps we can manage it ; but we're making a great exception in your case, you know.'

Promptly at two I appeared at the office, and was hugely delighted to walk out a few moments later with my passport in my hand. That same evening I took the train for Warsaw, and from there through Alexandrovo direct to Berlin.

A strange feeling came over me as I stood on the platform in the little frontier town—a mixture of regret and indifference. I had never grieved at being cut off from my family, and most of my associates in the past few years had made very little impression in my life. My pleasantest recollection was of the genial smiling Ossip Ivanovitch, and a few other men of his stamp. The friends who were really close to me, whom I jokingly called 'my family,' were all in prison now, or in exile, like Abramoff and the Petroffs. I felt there was a genuine bond between us 'Brethren in the Cause,' but apart from these I had not a single tie in Russia, except the gentle wife of my first employer, Kudrin.

We had kept up a desultory correspondence, and I had seen her once again on a flying trip through Moscow. She never ceased urging me to give up my dangerous life, and settle down to a solid career.

She knew, of course, that I was using a false name, but suggested I should begin at the foot of the ladder, and found a family for myself, making my new name an honour to the profession. She wrote and spoke always in the same old vein: 'Such a useless sacrifice, such ill-judged efforts! The finest bloom of our intelligence laid upon the altar, and thousands of precious lives offered up in vain! But the day has not yet come for Russians to be free. Our poor down-trodden people are not yet fit to rule.'

Her letters touched me, but amused me too, for though she argued against us, her own words showed she felt that we were right, but they also proved her love and care for me, her great anxiety lest I should come to any harm. My one longing had been to see her, and to say good-bye, but I suppressed it, simply sending word that I was leaving Russia. Fortunately her answer reached me before I started, and this was the only gentle memory of the old days that I took with me on to foreign soil.

These thoughts passed through my mind as I paced the station platform. But soon I took my seat again, the train steamed out, guards' uniforms and faces changed, we passed the frontier, and came into a new free country.

In Berlin I stopped at a small hotel near the station, planning to spend as little money as possible

till I found Petroff, who was here in town and desperately ill. At last I found him in a hospital waiting for an operation, his poor little wife bravely waiting with him.

I was horror-struck at the change in him. 'I'm a very sick man, old fellow,' said he. 'I'm afraid I shan't ever get well.'

'Oh, you'll be better after your operation,' I said, to cheer him; 'it won't take long then to get you upon your feet again.'

'I'm afraid not,' said he; 'I'm too far gone. I've had this trouble for a year, and the doctors tell me it's a tumour. But I think I'm not strong enough now to stand the operation.'

His wife spoke up. 'You mustn't talk, dear; you know the doctor wants you to be quiet. Of course you'll get better. Don't be discouraged. You don't think,' she added with pathetic bravery, 'that if it were really serious I could be so cheerful, do you?'

I stayed awhile, and told them of Abramoff and Anna Michailovna. The latter I said was with her husband. I had to tell that lie for fear of exciting him, for he loved Anna Michailovna, and admired her tremendously. 'Thank God you're all here at last,' he said, 'safe and sound. Now I shall have to get well myself. We know a lovely little place in Switzerland, don't we, dear? So peaceful, so sheltered, and so cheap. We can go there, all five

of us, and rest and loaf, and then be ready to get into harness again and go back to Russia when they need us. What's the news from Russia?' he suddenly asked. I told him of the strike in Genitcheck, and his eyes blazed as he said: 'Ah yes, it's a long, hard struggle, but we'll get there yet. It has cost so much already, and so many lives must still be sacrificed before we are fit to be free.'

'Now, that will do,' said Mme. Petroff. 'When you're better you can talk as much as you like, but now you must say good-bye to Nikolai. By the way, what's your name now?' she asked suddenly.

I smiled. 'Just at present my name is Harlamoff.'

She took me out, and when the door was closed the poor little woman broke down completely, and told me sobbing that her husband's case was hopeless. 'I shall try to be cheerful as long as I can, but I can't keep it up much longer. He has been like this now for seven months. I tried to comfort her, but she only said: 'Oh no; I'm used to it now. I only wish, though, *he* might be spared the suffering. When it is all over I shall go back to Russia and try to forget. Work is the best for that.'

This pitiful interview depressed me fearfully, but as I could do nothing to help them I decided to leave for Cologne the next day. I travelled fourth class, and found it most entertaining.

Meeting many new German types, and hearing so much of their affairs, I became so interested that we arrived at Cologne—an eighteen-hour trip—almost before I knew it. Here I spent the night on a bench in the station, and the next morning got up early and started off—fourth class again—for Herbestal, where I took my train for Brussels. I had telegraphed ahead to friends there, but was not sure whether Abramoff was there or in Paris now. No one met me at the station, so I left my luggage, and started out to find Ivanoff, the man to whom my letters had been sent.

I found him conveniently located, and as I meant to stay some time in Brussels I took a tiny attic room in the same house, and so began a new chapter of my life. It was a snug little room, just cut to fit my purse, with one good-sized window, a chair, a bed, a washstand, and the smallest table I ever saw, and it cost exactly seven francs a month.

Abramoff was not in town just now, but had gone for a few days to visit a friend in Liège.

## CHAPTER XIII

### WORK IN BELGIUM

Now for the first time in my life I was thrown entirely upon my own resources. I no longer had an income, and must depend upon my personal efforts. I had been in business before, to be sure, but that had been mainly as a blind. I had work enough on hand, but a translation takes a long time, and I should get no money for it till it was quite finished and turned over to the publishers. I counted on spending forty francs a month, so the money I had would probably last me three months, and by that time I should surely have finished my translation. It would be hard work, of course, but at least I was sure of my future. Besides earning my own living, I meant to devote some time to the study of the Labour problem abroad, and fit myself for further usefulness if I should ever again go home, for the main purpose of my life was still the betterment of Russian conditions.

I settled comfortably in my new quarters, and sent word to Abramoff to come and see me. It

was fully two months since we had parted. He was surprised at my shabby little room, and said : 'What's this for ? This is a new departure for you. Do you think you'll be able to work here ?'

'Why not ?' I said. 'It's cosy and quiet, and that is all I want. Since I've been with you and Anna Michailovna I have learned to be content with small things.'

Abramoff seemed much better. He stayed for tea, and I told him how I got my passport, what I had done about the press, and how I had arranged that we should be kept in constant touch with Anna Michailovna. But I could not convince him of the possibility of getting her out on bail. Then I asked him how he had made his trip.

'There is not much to tell,' he replied. 'After I left you I went straight through to the border, but there, unfortunately, I was delayed four days in a little frontier town. The traffic was too light, on account of the Jewish holidays, for me to risk the crossing. I was certain to be spotted.'

'They had given me two travelling companions—a young workman and a man who smuggled campaign literature into the country. The long strain of waiting finally wore on my nerves, and I tried to find out from these men how they were going to get me through. But they merely said : "Wait and see." And fancy ! When the time came we marched right up to the inspectors, and simply

passed them by. First came the workman, then I followed, and they absolutely didn't challenge us at all. But when the third man passed they asked him for his papers. Fortunately he had a passport good for twenty-eight days. You see, they were old hands at the game, but I was simply amazed at their cool cheek. It was by the merest chance that they failed to ask us two for our papers, and then we should have been in a nice fix. I had nothing but my own passport, and it would have been madness to show that, for there were warrants out for me everywhere, and they had probably telegraphed my description to all the frontier towns.

"The leader of our party went up into the little village, coming back presently with two huge packages, and then we all got into the train again. My companions were to leave me at the next station, and get the books back into Russia by another route. We were just congratulating ourselves on our lucky escape, and joking a bit about it, when a Prussian official looked into the compartment and said: "How far are you going?"

"Oh, not very far," replied the workman.

"What have you in those packages?"

"Books."

"Aha! Contraband books, I suppose. Show me your papers, please." I sat nearest the door, and handed him mine. He looked them over, and said: "These are only good in Russia. You will

have to go back. You can't travel in this country with those papers." I got out, and while he was examining the passes of the other two I managed to slip off up the street into the village. But what to do next? That was the question. Fortunately my companions soon hove in sight, each with a package under his arm. They told me the man had searched the whole train, declaring I must be on board, and in the confusion they themselves had escaped.

'We took a carriage here and drove to the next station, where my companions left me, and I bought a ticket for Königsberg, looking out carefully for spies at the station. Just before we reached Königsberg the door opened, the man came in to examine my ticket, and I heard a voice from the platform asking: "Is he a German? How far is he going?" The guard answered: "Yes, he's a German. He's only going to Königsberg." Then he closed the door, and I was saved. You see the man at the frontier had probably telegraphed down the line.

'I travelled without stopping from Königsberg, through Berlin, and on to Brussels. But I had no one here to help me settle, and it was all so noisy that I went out to Liège to visit a friend there, and now I think I shall stay a little longer. It is quiet there, and I can rest, for I find I cannot work much yet. I'll come back to town when I feel stronger.'

I was now quite settled in my new life. I had

my work, visited the galleries, and went to lectures in the University. My friend Ivanoff was studying engineering, and it was through him I met most of the Russian students, of whom there were a great number here. We went about together a good deal, and usually shared our suppers—in his room, of course, as it was larger than mine. But I dined by myself generally in a little cabman's restaurant near at hand.

I had been in Brussels about a month now, and was delighted to feel that my translation was so nearly finished that I could go out more among my own people. The Russian colony here interested me tremendously. I knew they were for the most part very poor, and struggling against all sorts of obstacles for the mere love of learning. The greater portion of them were Jews, against whom all Russian Universities are barred, and I met the wildest idealists among these men. I had already looked into the deplorable condition of the Jews in Russia, and had many friends among the Jewish Socialists, whose spirit of self-sacrifice and initiative I admired immensely. Here in Brussels I was especially struck with their pluck and their endurance. Most of them were studying either medicine, chemistry, or engineering, fitting themselves for practical work when they went back to Russia. But in their leisure hours they all interested themselves in the Social problem.

One evening, coming down to Ivanoff's room, I

found him in the midst of preparing supper. He said he was too busy to introduce me to the tall, clever-looking fellow of about thirty sitting there by the table, so I introduced myself, and he told me his name was Mühlmann. Soon he began to ask me questions, but not caring to have anyone in Brussels know my record, I answered very carefully. I was not going to risk my precious new passport, nor get myself into any unnecessary trouble.

When he finally began to push me too far, I said : ' I've not asked *you* any personal questions, have I ? I don't see what right you have to catechize *me* like this.'

He made no answer, but left presently. And as he went, he shook hands, saying : ' I'm sorry I asked too many personal questions, but I had a reason for it. I am not in the habit of having anything to do with people whom I do not know all about.'

' Your reason is rather remarkable,' was my answer ; ' and I should like you to know that I am not in the habit of letting people ask me impertinent questions without telling them just what I think of them.'

When he had gone Ivanoff said : ' What's the matter with you to-day ? I never saw you so rude before ! Don't you know that Mühlmann is a famous agitator, and a very important man in the Russian colony abroad ?'

' That's nothing to me,' I answered. ' He

needn't ask me impertinent questions. What's the use ? If he doesn't trust me, he can keep out of my way ; and if he *does*, and wants to know me, he will judge me on what I am, and not on what I tell him of my past life.'

'Don't get so excited ; the whole thing doesn't amount to much, anyhow,' said Ivanoff.

'Has he been here long ?' I asked.

'He has been abroad about a year now. I can't tell you his real name, but he got away from Siberia by way of China. He was exiled there for eight years, and soon after arriving he escaped with one of his friends. It was a mad, daring sort of a thing, but they got through safely, and are settled here in Brussels now. Thanks to his connexions in the party at home, he has been doing great work here. He is a sort of leader in the colony.'

That same evening we went down to the club to a political rally. On the way out we met Mühlmann, who smiled as he shook hands, and said : 'Have you forgiven me yet for asking you all those questions ?'

'I have nothing to forgive, of course,' I said, 'but I simply thought it was not very discreet.'

Later he asked : 'You are a great friend of Abramoff, aren't you ?'

'Yes,' I said ; 'how did you know that ?'

'Oh, that is *my* secret,' he replied, smiling. 'Now I know all about you ; you were the one who worked with Petroff and the Abramoffs.'

'We will talk this over some other time,' I said hastily, as I went off with Ivanoff.

The following day I heard how he had obtained his information. A friend of Anna Michailovna had seen me with Ivanoff at the meeting, and asked Mühlmann for my address. He had simply put two and two together. He told me she had left for Switzerland, and he had not been able to tell her whether it were really I, nor where I was now living. I then explained my reasons for not wishing to be known in Brussels, and he agreed with me perfectly.

'How long do you mean to stay?' said he.

'That depends upon whether we can get Anna Michailovna out on bail, and how long it takes; and then it depends somewhat, too, upon Abramoff's condition.'

After this misunderstanding was settled I saw a good deal of Mühlmann, as we both had frequent letters from friends in Russia, and often met to exchange the latest news.

I had sent off my translation, and my first remittance from the publisher was so prompt and so munificent that I felt comparatively like a millionaire. Abramoff now came back to town, so I left my little room and went to share his quarters.

Our club meetings in Brussels were mainly social, and confined themselves to local affairs—the library, the students' fund, etc. Occasionally Mühlmann

gave us a talk on the political situation in Russia or the Socialists' work among the people. He was a member of the Board of Students' Aid, and was also its treasurer, and I often helped him with his work in this department.

The University of Brussels had attracted a great number of Russians, though many were soon discouraged, and went on to study in Germany or Switzerland. There were about sixty in the whole colony, and the richest among them—there were not more than four or five of these—had an income of a hundred francs a month. Then came the men who lived on sixty or seventy, and finally about fifteen students, who had no more than forty or fifty. The scheme was co-operative, each paying monthly dues, which amounted to sixty or seventy francs, and the balance was collected by entertainments and subscription. But most of the money raised went to support the cause in Russia, and only the smaller portion was spent in the colony.

Out of this fund two scholarships were supported. One was held by a young fellow who had been arrested at college for some trifling offence, and after his imprisonment had come abroad to finish his education. The other had been given to a mechanic from Moscow, who had been selected because of his heroic conduct in a strike. He had read a little French and German in his spare time, and was pathetically eager to learn. When the strike was

over and he was in danger of arrest, his comrades made up a purse, and sent him abroad, promising him a monthly allowance as long as their work held out. But as they were all soon arrested, his money stopped, and the colony in Brussels took over his maintenance as a matter of honour. He was not in the University, of course, as he had had no schooling, but he was a regular and most zealous member of an evening class for the Belgian workmen. He finally got a position in a brass foundry, and it was touching to see how conscientiously he turned up every Saturday night to pay his dues.

One evening at the club Mühlmann proposed a plan. 'There are ever so many of us here who really don't understand the conditions in Russia at all. Why not start a series of lectures on the Russian Commune, and the economic status of the peasant and the working man in our country? We could train some of these fellows here to be splendid reform leaders. We might suggest a course of this kind in the new Sociological College. They teach you all about the Labour movement in Belgium, and the importance of developing international commerce—have courses in Parliamentary Law, and Constitutional Government, and Continental politics in general—but nothing ever about the great questions of State in Russia. Our Russian scholars who lecture here have a two weeks' course on purely scientific or literary subjects, but the great and

burning topics of the day are never even touched upon.'

We both thoroughly approved of this scheme, but told him plainly that we could not pledge ourselves to help just now, as most of our time and all our energies were devoted to the work of freeing Anna Michailovna. Yet, after Abramoff had flatly refused, he finally persuaded me to give at least one lecture. My subject was, 'The Position of the Labouring Classes in the Russian Revolution of the Future.' The whole colony turned out, and their interest and enthusiasm was quite encouraging.

I pointed out that the workmen would probably be the leaders in our future revolutions, and that Russia would undoubtedly be indebted to the labouring classes for the reconstruction of all its institutions. Our duty was to help each little effort, and to make the workmen recognize that their strikes are simply a means to an end in the great struggle for their freedom.

I spoke of the work of the leaders of 1870 and the eighties—told of their futile attempts to gain a following among the peasants, and explained the causes of their failure. The moujik was not yet educated up to the idea of reform—he still clung to the soil; and the financial policy of the nation was of slow development—the organization of capital was in its infancy. There were but few factories, with a very small force of men in each, and work

among the employés was not carried on systematically. 'Revolutionists in those days were driven by, the stringency of the times and the short-sighted opposition of the Government to absolute anarchy and deeds of violence.

'Conditions in *these* days, however,' I continued, 'are very different. Much as we may admire *their* ardour and determination, *our* work must be along another line. We must educate the labourer for his great work; we must imbue him with the sense of his own power. This is no easy task; it demands force and resolution; but the results will be well worth while. We need no 'Terror.' Anarchy is simply a stain upon the fairness of our cause. We must work out our own salvation by a logical sequence of events, looking upon each struggle as a step forward in our progress towards the goal. So we shall yet live to see our country free, and I tell you, my friends, the workmen of Russia will be the strongest factors in the coming fight.'

We decided to give a lecture once a week, Mühlmann and I taking turns. Later we invited the labourer from Moscow to tell us—which he did most thrillingly—his experiences at the time of the great strike. These lectures gave rise to two small clubs, one, headed by Mühlmann, studying the Labour movement in Germany, and the other reading Karl Marx with me.

We had most lively discussions in these clubs.

Most of the members were young and inexperienced, believing fervently in the desperate campaign methods of the past. Only a few of the more enlightened took a calmer view of the situation, and grasped the full significance of the doctrine of Social Evolution. Some of our members were anxious to learn enough German to read the works of Marx, Engels, Bebel, Kantski, and others which had never yet been translated; so I drifted naturally into the position of teacher, and gave them German lessons three times a week.

This work suggested the idea of a students' league, and a mutual benefit association among the Russians in Germany, France, Belgium, and Switzerland. I talked it over with Mühlmann, but when Abramoff heard of it he said: 'You're eternally wasting your time and your strength in some new project. Why don't you reserve your force? You'll soon have need of it. You say yourself there is a chance of getting Anna Michailovna off, and who is to help her then? Our friends in Russia? *They* can't do anything. They don't even manage to get our letters through, and we've never had but one note from Anna Michailovna since we have been here. No, you are the only one. You know I can't go back to Russia . . . and, besides, that sort of thing is not at all in my line.'

Perhaps he was right, and I dissipated my energies too much, but it was part of my natural tempera-

ment ; an active life always spurred me on to fresh undertakings. I worked at my translations, wrote for the Russian papers, gave lectures, managed my little club, and still felt an irresistible desire for further activities. So, in spite of Abramoff's protests, I brought about the consolidation of the three Russian colonies in various parts of Belgium.

The wealthier classes studied in Antwerp, and the monthly dues of their association amounted to nearly three thousand francs ; while the poorer students settled usually in Brussels or Liège. By this combination, their funds were more evenly distributed, and the needier students reaped the benefit of the amalgamation.

But, like all small colonies—and, in fact, like all communities where people are shut off from their natural surroundings and their own work—cliques, quarrels, and misrepresentations soon grew up among us, and the old pleasant air of good-fellowship was gone. They all resented Abramoff's reserve, and could not forgive him for having refused to lecture. They knew he was clever, but thought he was proud, and called him an egotistical prig who was only taken up with his own affairs, and always fussing about his health. It only made matters worse when I took up the cudgels for him.

It was now the spring of 1900. My hard winter's work had told considerably on my nerves, and I felt it wise to take a holiday in the country with

Abramoff. My prison life, my existence under an assumed name, the constant precautions and excitements of these past few years, had left their mark. But our quiet country life soon put me on my feet again. I had friends in Belgium whom we visited, and as they were people occupying various stations in life, we learned to know the conditions of the country, not from books, but from actual observation.

The one thing that disturbed us now was our lack of news from Anna Michailovna. As Abramoff could not use his own name for fear of detection, and I did not care to use my precious pass lest it should no longer serve me if I ever went back to Russia, we had all our home letters sent to Belgian friends, and got our local mail in the ordinary way. One day, while we were out, word came that a registered letter had been received under our assumed name, and that we must personally call and sign for it. Both of us were known to the officials, and how to get that letter out we could not think. Finally we took a Russian passport that Abramoff happened to have, and added a few lines in French, describing the fictitious recipient of our letter, signing it in the name of the Governor of some Russian province. To our great joy this worked like a charm, and we went off in triumph with our letter, which, fortunately, contained a good substantial cheque.

We soon heard from our friend in Jaroslavl that Basobrassoff, the man who had helped me to get my pass, had been arrested. 'They got on your track,' he wrote, 'found out your trick, and arrested Basobrassoff for complicity in a plot. He was able to swear, however, that he knew nothing of your connexion with the revolutionary party, so they let him off with a severe reprimand. He told me the story as a huge joke, and wanted me to tell you to be careful. It will be absolutely impossible now for you to come back to Russia under that name.'

At our first reading we had overlooked a page of cipher in his letter, and we found finally we could not read it at all, as we lacked the proper key.

Most of our people used a code, as the old expedient of sympathetic ink was too well known to the police to be safe. But even so, you were never sure that your letters had not been deciphered and sent on by the authorities to disarm suspicion and to elicit further news. We had separate codes for our home and our foreign correspondence. To the uninitiated the letters seemed trivial enough; but certain words meant that special portions of the letter were in cipher.

After puzzling over it for some time, Abramoff at last came to the conclusion that it was in the code we had formerly used in Russia; and as he still had that old key, we were finally able to make out our news. Anna Michailovna, it said, had steadily

refused to give the name of the author of those manuscripts they had found in her possession. To her extreme surprise, after months of effort, the idea dawned on the officials that it might possibly be her own husband, and they had confronted her triumphantly with a specimen of his handwriting to prove their theory.

‘A brilliant piece of work,’ said Abramoff. ‘How could they have managed it? The police certainly know their business. They have made one clever guess in fully six months.’

Our only important news in this letter, however, was that my name was no longer good in Russia, and that I should probably soon be followed even here.

Abramoff's condition now took a turn for the worse. The doctor told us he could never be quite well, but said he could keep the disease in check if we took prompt measures. He was to drop all work at once, and this made him restless and moody. He grew despondent, and said he knew he was a burden, that there was nothing for him to live for, and so forth. I comforted him as best I could, but I knew how he longed and grieved for his wife. I loved her dearly myself, and missed her sadly, but had never lost the hope that some day I should succeed in getting her free.

Finally I fixed on the following plan. I had no work just now, but we had money enough to live for several months. Abramoff, of course, must abso-

lutely rest ; but the most important factor, both in his recovery and in our work for the cause, was the freeing of Anna Michailovna. So the best thing for me to do was to take a small share of our money, go to Russia, get into communication with her, and try to get her out on bail.

Political suspects who can find enough security are often allowed to be at large until their sentence is passed. The amount required varies from 3,000 to 5,000, or sometimes even 10,000 roubles. In the case of dangerous criminals, of course, this concession is not made ; but those who are let out on bail are allowed to travel to their place of exile at their own expense and without a guard ; and as their deposit is not returned until they reach their destination, in the event of escape (or even of unsuccessful flight) they forfeit their bail. That was the groundwork of my plan.

But Abramoff was obstinate. ' You can never do it. It is absolutely impossible,' he said gloomily.

' It is absolutely necessary,' said I. ' Don't forget that we need you both in our work—her energy and experience, and your great learning. And if I should be arrested in this attempt, it would be not so much for your sakes—and you know I love you both—but for the good of the cause. It would be simply another episode in the story of our great struggle.'

We considered all possible means of raising the

money, and concluded that, as the official investigation was over, they would be more likely now to set her free on bail. 'But how will you get there?' asked Abramoff. 'You can't simply walk back across the border and say you've come to live in Russia. You know you have no pass.'

I had thought it all out carefully. Not a soul should know where I had gone. We had a good friend—a Bulgarian—in whom I had implicit confidence. Through him I managed to get a Bulgarian passport which was *viséd* by the Turkish Consul. The owner of the papers was a teacher in good and regular standing in his own country. The only trouble was the personal description, which fairly tallied as to age and size, but not at all as to colouring.

'I should like to know how you are going to get over that,' said Abramoff.

'I'll see to that,' I answered. 'Just trust me.' And so I started off.

I stopped in Berlin long enough to make the few necessary changes in my personal appearance, and was soon turned out with jet-black hair and beard, and furnished with a bottle of atropine with which I was to darken my eyes just before reaching the border. I had arranged that a young student who was travelling with me, but not in the same compartment, was to telegraph back a preconcerted message in the event of my arrest.

Nearer and nearer came the frontier, and as we flew along I could feel my heart beat like a sledgehammer. 'Nonsense!' I thought; 'it is bound to succeed!' At the last station on German soil the carriage doors were locked, and an official passed through the train to examine our papers, mustering each one as he went. 'It is too bad that I cannot talk a little Bulgarian,' thought I, 'in case anything should happen.'

## CHAPTER XIV

### A VISIT TO RUSSIA

THE train puffed into the station at Alexandrova, and now we all had to file out for Customs inspection. How often I had stood here before, but under what different conditions !

My travelling companion strolled over, and stood where he could watch me. They carefully examined all my luggage, looking for contraband books, and the inspection was apparently over. An official called out the names of the passengers, and handed them back their papers. I was among the last to be passed, when suddenly I heard my strange Bulgarian name called out behind me, and at the same time they called the student's out in front. My heart stood still.

'Step in here a moment, please,' said an officer.

Cool, but prepared for the worst, I walked into the little office, where a number of constables were standing about a table and an officer sat at the desk.

'What is your name ?'

I told them, explaining that I spoke better

German than Russian. The officer, looked at me keenly. 'Here is your passport,' said he. 'What is your object in going to Russia?'

I told him I had been engaged there as a tutor.

Then they let me go, but my companion was still waiting for his turn. I strolled over to buy my ticket for Petersburg, and here I began to notice the effects of the atropine. I could only see the outline of my ticket, and was utterly unable to count my change. Finally I went over to the buffet, and ordered a glass of tea, drinking it very carefully. I had to feel for my glass, and was in mortal terror lest I should attract attention. But all went well, and I managed to get into my compartment, and heard my companion mutter as he passed, 'That is safely over, thank the Lord!' I nudged him to keep still, for there are often secret agents in the train, and I have known a number of cases where men had safely passed the border and been arrested in the station at Warsaw because they had boasted of their success.

It was now almost a year since I had left the country, and a strange feeling of sadness came over me as I stood on Russian soil again. We had to wait in Warsaw a few hours, and my companion sat with me in the empty waiting-room till his train came in from the south. Then he said good-bye, and I started off for Petersburg, where I was to see a well-known editor for whom we had done some work.

He was not there, but I was received by his assistant, who laughingly said : ' Oh, you are the fellow that Basobrassoff helped over the border ! You are famous in Petersburg now.' And, in spite of all my protests, I failed to convince him that I was not the devil of a lucky fellow and the prince of conspirators. He promised to publish our articles at once, however, and to send the cheque direct to Abramoff.

Now I looked up the few friends I still had in Petersburg, and asked them to help me. They were to let me know whether Anna Michailovna had yet been sentenced, and to start a ' fund ' in their literary club for the purpose of sending Abramoff to a sanatorium.

I spent two days in Petersburg, sleeping each night with my friends at an island up the river. From here I went to Leontjeff, our kindly host of a year ago, and in passing had an interview with my old friend the station-master. We arranged that he should forward my letters, and I begged him to see what he could do to help me raise some money. I had already written to the engineer whom I had formerly helped out of trouble, asking him to lend me a few thousand roubles.

When I arrived at the estate, Leontjeff and his whole family greeted me like one of themselves. This time I lived in the main house, and stayed about a fortnight. During these days we grew most intimate, and one evening he said : ' In 1881, after

Alexander's assassination, I was on the side of the Government. In point of fact, I felt they had not been severe enough with the agitators, and caused some dissatisfaction in one of our meetings by expressing myself to that effect. But the incessant pressure of the reactionary movement, more and more binding as it grew in strength, and the utter impossibility of any free action, have gradually made me almost a revolutionist myself. If this goes on much longer, you may see me at the barricades yet, with a red flag in my hands.'

'It is a far cry still to the barricades,' said I. 'Our good Russian citizens—most of them, at least—take it out in tremendous talk at their own cosy firesides; and now and then some of them go so far as to get excited over a glass of vodka, and shout, "Down with the tyrants!" Of course, these are all signs of unrest and fermentation, but it is a long way from action.

'The thinkers of the country? Yes, they are always ready to sacrifice themselves for the cause, and now they have the workmen on their side. You would be doing a splendid work if you would start a subscription for our campaign fund.

'And now I am going to ask you a great personal favour. You know, of course, that Mme. Abramoff is in prison. There is a possibility of getting her out on bail. I can raise part of the money, but don't know yet how much it will be. Could you let me

have the rest when I need it?' He promised me willingly, and then went on to speak of other things.

He was convinced that we could publish a Liberal paper abroad where the censorship was not so strict. I doubted, however, whether it would ever come to anything. 'You forget the inspectors,' said I. 'You know from your own experience that papers of perfectly good standing, but with liberal tendencies, have often been suppressed on one pretext or another. . . . They presumed to criticize, or else they published official news without a special permission, or possibly they aired an administrative scandal. Our good citizens are not supposed to know anything about the reasons for a strike, or the truth of the agrarian situation. Granted the fact that you *were* able to publish your paper, you would certainly have to smuggle it into the country. It would take a great deal of capital to back a plan like that, and a great deal of faith in the efficacy of the work. I personally would rather not work for the Liberal party, for I no longer believe in temporizing. If you want to do some good, support the only party that ever can or will accomplish anything—the Labour party.'

My letters were soon sent on from Jaroslavl, and brought me word from the engineer that he could lend me 3,000 roubles, and from the little town of

Pensa that I might see Anna Michailovna. She had been transferred to the prison there, and my friends had succeeded in procuring me an interview as her cousin.

I started immediately for the place, but had to wait there a while to go through the necessary formalities before I could see her. Finally at the appointed hour I went to the prison, where I had to show my Bulgarian passport, and was then led to a small office where a deputy sat at the desk. In a few moments Anna Michailovna appeared with a keeper. We had to weigh each word so carefully, for we knew the deputy was not as deeply absorbed in his papers as he seemed; there was no such thing as security here.

We spoke apparently of trivial things, but every word was deeply tinged with meaning for us both, and in her eyes and in her radiant smile I saw how glad she was to see me once again. She was her same old self, for prison life could never change her. It had told, however, on her health, and she spoke of the kindness of the prison doctor, who had ordered her two hours of fresh air and exercise each day. We finally succeeded in exchanging handkerchiefs, and in mine was folded a tiny cipher note telling her of Abramoff's condition. Our whole interview lasted not more than fifteen minutes.

Our friends had petitioned the Attorney-General to let her out on bail, and he expressed himself as

willing, but had referred the matter to the Ministry of State in Petersburg. I appeared throughout as her cousin, and had arranged with the different men who were to provide the money that on receipt of a cipher message they were to forward it directly. But our dismay was boundless when the verdict came from Petersburg: 'Investigations in the case of A. M. Sokolova have not yet been finished. She is on no account to be let out on bail.'

I hesitated now whether to wait till the examination was over, or to leave directly, and finally decided the latter was the wiser course; so I went to visit Mme. Petroff in Southern Russia. Her husband had died soon after I had seen him in Berlin, and she was now living under an assumed name, and working for the cause in Odessa.

On my way I stopped again in Jaroslavl, and impressed it upon the station-master that he must keep me posted as to every move in the case of Mme. Abramoff, for we might be able to save her yet in some other way. I asked him also to take charge of any money our friends might contribute for this purpose.

My meeting with Mme. Petroff was most affecting. She broke down utterly at sight of me, for it called up memories of her old happy days. But presently she controlled herself, and told me, beaming with pride, how well her work was going. She was canvassing among the workmen, and had set up a small

press as well ; but this she would now have to stop, as the police had got wind of it. She believed absolutely that the day had now dawned for Russia to be free, and threw herself with whole-souled ardour into her task.

I parted from her with a heavy heart, and shortly after our meeting heard she had been arrested. She was recognized as Mme. Petroff, and banished to Siberia for eight years, but died before her second year was out.

From Odessa I travelled to Petersburg, stopping at every large town on the way, for I had been charged by the Central Committee to investigate the progress of our work. Then I spent a fortnight in Petersburg, visiting first Leontjeff's brother, and finally staying with Leontjeff himself when he came up to town. Among all their friends I passed as a Bulgarian.

One evening in Petersburg, in spite of all my precautions, I met my uncle's old family physician. As he was about to shake hands, he stopped and stared at me, simply petrified ; but when he heard my Bulgarian name, he looked hopelessly puzzled. I could not leave abruptly, but felt his eyes on me wherever I went throughout the evening. He stayed an interminable time, and finally was urged to stop and dine, which he proceeded to do, though he had at first said he must leave very early.

In the course of the evening he made an oppor-

tunity to speak to me privately, calling me by my own name. 'I knew you directly,' he said. 'Don't be alarmed; you are safe with me. Your family all think you are dead. I met your stepmother the other day. She is very ill; I think she has not very long to live.'

I was much shaken at this news, and asked the doctor where she was, and if he could arrange a meeting for me. But he begged me not to try, saying she would not hesitate for an instant to hand me over to the authorities, since, according to her views, my 'crime' could only be expiated by entering the Church, or banishment to our estate. She had surrounded herself with a clerical train, and now sought to atone for her worldly sins with innumerable religious services. So I decided to write to her instead.

The doctor then told me about my uncle and my sister. It seemed so strange, just as though he were telling me the story of a mere casual acquaintance.

Finally the good man said: 'Who would have thought you could break so utterly with all your old traditions, and identify yourself so completely with this mob of agitators? I am amazed at you, and do not see why you chose this particular way of showing your patriotism; I am sure there are others. Ah well, youth always *did* go to extremes.'

'Doctor, you have known me since I was a boy,

and you know it was not simply love of extremes that drove me to this step. I had tried every other way already. But Fate ordained that I should go to prison, and there I struggled with this problem a long, long time. I knew that with my wealth, my birth, my position in society, and my vast estates I could be a tremendous power for good in the world; but I had learned, too, that each attempt to found a school, to establish a paper, or to stand between the peasants and their oppressors, was nullified by an iron-bound authority.

‘To be sure, there *are* honest officials even in Russia—but you must admit they have long since lost their high ideals. There are thousands of good citizens, too, who long for better days, but they simply retire to their estates, and dare not make a move to help. The reactionaries have the upper hand, and all their measures only tend to foster a general discontent and a smothered hatred for this stultifying system of bureaucracy.

‘Believe me, doctor, sooner or later will come a fearful explosion. Show me one true patriot, one thoroughly honest man in that whole clique which shapes our national policy. I love my country: I love this great people of ours; I believe in their future; I find them so strong, so simple, so wonderfully sound, and so naïve. Thousands of undeveloped possibilities lie dormant in them. But they need room—air—for expansion, and *that* they

can only get by an uprising of all the classes—call it a revolution if you like.

‘As for my part in this? Where can I do the most good? What class will most readily understand its needs—that it lacks the room to breathe and to expand? The working man! *That* you certainly must admit. At present we are working among these men, trying to improve their economic conditions, and make the political situation clear to them. Later we shall do the same work among the peasants, and, relying on the strong backing of the masses, we shall make our just demands of the Government.

‘Victory is surely ours, but it is a long way off. Yet I am convinced that I shall undoubtedly live to see a great, free, and glorious Russia.

‘*This* is the sphere of my highest usefulness; *this* is my home and my family. We are marching steadily along, inspired by our faith in Russia’s freedom, and we can endure imprisonment, and even exile, without losing hope. I started in the ranks filled with timid doubts, and hesitating between two duties, but overwhelmed with a desire to help on my fellow-men. And now I have taken up my task, I never mean to leave it. I hope to live and die for the cause of Liberty.’

The doctor was silent a moment, and then said gently: ‘I understand you, my boy, but it is not for *me*—I am far too old. Yet I can sympathize with you. Years ago there were many of us in those

ranks, but they were all wiped out. And yet perhaps you may succeed where they have failed.'

My friends now sent me word that Anna Michailovna would probably be transferred in February to her station in Eastern Siberia, though the length of her term was not yet announced. So my long journey had been all in vain.

I then looked up a Liberal paper, hoping to get work abroad for Abramoff and myself. 'I am afraid,' said the editor, 'we cannot give you any, since you are outlawed, you know. A few weeks ago the censor forbade our publishing letters from a Russian exile in Paris, and if we tried it again I fear they might stop the paper.' Yet, after trying a number of other editors, I found some who were willing to take our work, and who even gave us orders for special articles.

I now set about my preparations for leaving Russia. My papers had to be inspected and my passport signed for foreign travel. As I was unable to dye my own hair, and knew of no reliable hair-dresser in Petersburg, I trusted to luck, and went as I was to the police-station. I had to wait an interminable time, but finally the official fumbled over a huge bundle of papers and pulled out mine, which he proceeded to read with great deliberation.

Then he asked : ' Your name is Minakoff ?'

' Yes.'

He looked at the pass again, and then hard at me. I began to wonder what I should say if he challenged me, but fortunately that careful scrutiny was only his official manner, and I got off with no further words.

I rushed home, packed my things, and went to say good-bye to a friend. Leontjeff had put his carriage at my disposal, and I tipped the coachman well, and told him where to go. He was to take me there as soon as possible, wait for me, and then drive me home like lightning. The fellow grinned delightedly, and probably thought there was a woman in the case.

I knew my friend's house was under police surveillance, but I simply felt I must see him at all costs. So when we drove up I rushed through the courtyard, not stopping for the porter, tore upstairs, rang, went in and handed him a letter with some money, said a few quick words, and was back again in the street before the people had time to catch their breath.

As I jumped into the carriage I heard a man say, 'There he is!' But we were off at a keen trot, and I looked back to see the porter running after us, shouting: 'Wait a minute, please; I want to speak with the gentleman.' After we had gone some distance at that pace, I told the coachman to drive to the station, where Leontjeff had sent my trunks in charge of Kolja. The boy bade me good-bye

with tears in his eyes. We had grown very fond of each other, and I saw he idealized me tremendously.

In ten minutes I had left Petersburg behind me ; in two days I crossed the German frontier, and from there I travelled through, without stopping, to Brussels and to Abramoff.

## CHAPTER XV

### ANNA MICHAÏLOVNA'S RETURN

I FOUND the poor fellow in a most pitiable condition. Not one of my frequent letters had reached him, and his first news of all we had done was from my own lips. He had grown quite apathetic, and the only thing that roused him now or made him smile was my description of the interview with his wife, how she had looked, and everything she said.

He was so alarmingly ill that we felt it best to put him in a sanatorium, so I went with him to a place near Heidelberg, where we spent several months. I had my writing and translations to keep me busy, for now I not only had to support Abramoff and myself, but tried to lay aside a fund for Anna Michaiïlovna in case she needed it in her escape. Our friends in Russia kept us in constant touch with her movements, and they also wrote me that my old friend Leontjeff had lost his money in an unfortunate speculation ; so we could no longer count upon his help.

c After Abramoff's discharge from the sanatorium,

he came to live with me, and we did our work together, our main object always being the liberation of Anna Michailovna.

Political complications in Russia were now growing apace. A new branch of the Social Democrats was making great propaganda throughout the country. They called themselves the United Labour Party. In early days there had been a small circle of these who believed in the revolutionary principles of the seventies, and who had also investigated the question of the Labour problem, but their main interest was the agrarian question.

Now, in 1902, they had consolidated and called themselves the Social Revolutionists, their platform being a mixture of practical and theoretical socialism. In the meantime the Social Democrats themselves had gone through a process of evolution. In 1896 they held their first secret national conclave, but it was not till 1901 that they were really able to organize a national party. And now came a conflict between these two factions.

The Social Democrats were convinced it would be impossible to combine the interests of the peasant, the labourer, and the more intelligent classes into one solid unit, on the lines the other party proposed.

Finally, the Social Revolutionists, in 1902-1904, reverted to their old tactics of anarchy, subscribing to the most drastic methods in their campaign organs; and thus the breach was widened. The

Social Revolutionists celebrated each new dynamite outrage as a brilliant victory, and proclaimed these horrors as the direct results of their propaganda. The Social Democrats, on the other hand, stood strongly out against such terrorism, and after each attempt sought to make it clear to the masses that existing conditions in Russia could only be readjusted by organization throughout all classes.

We took a lively part in this controversy, and laid great stress in our articles on the harm such violence did to the cause. Although Government measures against them became more stringent, the Social Democrats struggled bravely along, and practically triumphed over the Social Revolutionists. Both parties had their campaign organs, and the Liberals also published a political paper abroad. They confined their propaganda to the members of the Semstvoe, the smaller land-owners, and the few broad-minded men to be found in the bureaucracy. They were not at all aggressive in their methods, and rarely roused themselves to action till an abuse was clearly intolerable. The Russian workmen, however, and the enlightened masses were never rallied to their standards.

We now heard that Anna Michailoyna had been sent to Siberia some months ago, and that she had been transferred from Irkutsk to a point much further north—Werchojansk. Often in the evenings we sat and pored over the map of Siberia, making

all sorts of plans to help her. It was a fearful way from Irkutsk to the town where she now was, and for a woman especially escape was almost impossible. Yet still we hoped, and counted on the time when she would at length be free. We had sent what money we could spare to friends along the line, so her avenue of escape was provided for, in case she made the attempt. We had carefully planned out each detail, even writing to friends in Berlin, Munich, and Heidelberg; but whether these measures had been of any avail we had no means of knowing. So our excitement and anxiety were unbounded.

One morning in April, 1903, we sat over our breakfast looking through the papers. Suddenly Abramoff glanced up and said: 'Did you notice that a constable and two policemen have just been promoted for arresting two escaped convicts from Siberia in Moscow?'

I took the paper, and read the notice. 'It is odd they do not say whether they were political exiles or not; it is an official announcement, so probably they were not criminal. But what are you afraid of?'

'Oh, I do not know, but I feel as though Anna Michailovna were one of those two people.'

I quieted him, saying it was not at all likely she would go to Moscow, as it was off her route. Besides, if she had gone through Ufa we should have heard. 'I think she is still in Werchojansk,' I said. But

nothing could shake him from his gloomy apprehensions.

'A few days later, as we sat at our work, there came a sudden knock, and a young student from Heidelberg appeared in the doorway, grinning literally from ear to ear.

'What are you doing here?' I said; 'it is not a holiday.'

'Oh, I just came out to see how you were; I take a day off occasionally. I am not interrupting your work, am I?'

'We are very glad to see you,' said Abramoff.

Just then the door opened again, and a woman appeared on the threshold. She wore a long cloak and a heavy veil, and stood there quietly a moment. Then she raised her veil, and looked at us with a smile. It was Anna Michailovna.

Abramoff turned and looked at her—*stared* at her, rooted to the spot, as though he had never seen her before. I took her hand and led her gently over to him, when suddenly he burst into a tremendous laugh, shook her by the shoulders, rocking her wildly to and fro, and shouted: 'No, it is not really *you!* . . . I say, you are not *really* here!' and then rushed madly out of the room.

'I must say I call that a pleasant reception,' said she. 'One of them simply stares at me, and the other shakes me till my teeth rattle, and then runs away.'

But now Abramoff came in again, radiant, shouting: 'Children, we will all celebrate to-day. The work can go hang! Now take your hat and coat off.' And he helped her with fumbling hands, hardly knowing what he did. He fussed over her things, looked at her tenderly, yearningly, came over and thumped me on the back, and then ran off to his room again. The young student sat there and watched us from his corner, simply beaming with delight.

It all seemed perfectly natural to me; I had expected it all along: I was *quite* prepared for it. Only now and then my eyes filled up, and somehow I had to swallow a great lump in my throat.

We went out to the very best hotel-restaurant in the town, where the head waiter eyed us askance; for Mme. Abramoff, in her poor, ill-fitting blouse and skirt, the little student in his threadbare coat, and we in our working clothes, were rather a strange-looking combination. Needless to say, we were a very happy party, and the meal was a pleasant one for all of us.

That evening Anna Michailovna told us about her escape, and when she had finished she said: 'Oh, now I am going to enjoy life. I shall go to Switzerland and revel in the scenery. I am wild to hear an opera again; I shall go to Paris and have all the music I want. I shall read and rest, and then when

I have had enough, we will all go back to Russia again and work."

"That is all very well," said I, "and that will come in time, but now you must go to bed and sleep." So we took her to her room.

Next day we all went in to Heidelberg and bought her an outfit, for she had come away with simply the things she stood in.

Gradually we heard more about her flight. "It was very simple," she said. "Last February they took me on to Moscow, and there I waited in a detention prison till they made up a gang of political exiles for Irkutsk. We were fourteen days getting there. They treated us fairly well, and the officers were uncommonly courteous. A number of criminal exiles were added to our party, two of whom especially interested me. The younger was barely twenty years old, and the elder not much more. They were charged with theft and manslaughter, and told me they had wanted money for the cause, and had raided a bank in Moscow to get it. I tried to interest the other prisoners in them, but it was no use.

"In Irkutsk I found I was to be sent on to Werchojansk. I can never tell you what a wonderful trip that was. Day by day we floated down the river on a barge, and at each little convict station the settlers crowded down to the wharf to greet us. They waved red flags, sang patriotic songs, and begged most pitifully for news of friends in Russia.

‘In Werchojansk I found a very large colony. It has the reputation of being the worst station in Siberia; most of the exiles there finally end in suicide or the insane asylum, unless they manage to escape. I had the luck to get away in time from that dreary, empty, frozen waste, and I cannot ever be grateful enough.

‘Of course, they all helped me to settle, and in a short time my rooms were quite attractive; I even had a rug on the floor. Every evening some one dropped in, and I soon set up a little “salon.” The life was really quite endurable, and yet I often longed for my old prison again, for there at least I had my daily letters. Not that we hadn’t occasional papers, but they were mostly three months old.

‘The summer passed pleasantly enough, and we were all quite sociable, but after a short autumn season the terrible winter set in. Then it seemed that I *must* get away. I talked it over with friends, but they all said, “No woman could possibly stand the trip. You must remember there are countless kilometres before you even reach the railway.”

‘One day, to my surprise, Andreeff suddenly appeared. He had been banished to Western Siberia, but, hearing I was here, had made his escape and come to Werchojansk. He had been so clever that the police never even suspected who he was. Their lack of vigilance in some respects

surprises me ; we all had cōntraband books, and even political pamphlets, though these, of course, never reached us 'till long after they were issued. Cut off from the world as we were, and dependent upon our own resources, our wits were tremendously sharpened, and we managed to hoodwink the authorities quite successfully in almost every case. And this is how I got away :

“ One of the hydraulic pumps in a neighbouring gold-mine got out of order, and the manager came to see if any of our men understood mechanics. Andreeff said he could fix it, but asked such a fabulous sum that the manager hesitated for a while. Finally, as he could find no one else, he had to come to terms, and now Andreeff went constantly to and fro between the town and the mine, making friends among the owners and the workmen. Presently he evolved this clever scheme, and it came out exactly as we had planned it.

“ One evening our little circle met, as usual, in my rooms, and Andreeff, who was going to the mine, had his sleigh waiting at the door. The coachman had been ordered to call for two large packing-boxes in the town, and when we all went out to say good-bye I was quickly bundled into one of these empty chests and a rug thrown over me. Then Andreeff jumped into the sleigh, the man started off briskly, and one of the women in my fur coat stood on the steps and waved us out of

sight, to make the neighbours think I still was there.

'We drove for four hours at a furious pace, and finally drew up at the superintendent's office. The boxes were carried in, and they pulled me out, stiff with cramp and half dead with cold. The superintendent—a good friend of ours—took care of me for two days. Then Andreeff drove up one night with a covered sleigh, they gave me the hat and coat I am wearing, and, snugly wrapped in rugs and furs, they hustled me out, and we started off. We stopped only when we had to change horses, and at each station Andreeff tipped the men heavily out of his earnings at the mine, and, besides, his connexion there smoothed matters for us tremendously. In eight days we were at Irkutsk, where Andreeff left me and I took the fast express for Russia.

'One evening in the train I was fearfully frightened. I was alone in my compartment at Tomsk, and a constable came in with a squad of men. For an instant I thought they had come to arrest me; but no, they were simply taking a prisoner on, and paid no attention to the woman huddled in the further corner.

'I crossed Russia, stopping always in the places you had provided, came safely over the border, and now here I am.'

'How did you manage at the frontier?' asked Abramoff.

‘ Oh, that was easy. I had letters to some of the smugglers there, and a party of us walked across the border. They all told me there was absolutely no danger, but I assure you I was frightened enough when the time came. It was a pitch-dark night, and I started at every shadow on the road and every twig that cracked under my foot. My companions were mostly Jewish emigrants bound for America ; I had never realized before the hopeless misery of our Russian Jews. I cannot begin to describe their pathetic servility and their anxious alarm, those poor, down-trodden outcasts among outcasts. I shall never forget that experience at the border.

‘ After the Jewish massacres the paternal Government advised them to emigrate ; but, when they want to leave, that very Government refuses them their passports ! Where could you find another such idiotic case of paradox as in our great country ? But to go back to my trip : we finally came to the boundary and had to wade across a little stream, and then, at last, we were safe in a free country. I can tell you I drew a long sigh of relief. How glad I was ! And now it is all over, and I am here at last !’

We stayed a month, resting and making plans, interested in every movement of our party at home, and finally growing eager to plunge into the work. Anna Michailovna wanted to start a press again in Russia.

'The party organs published here are excellent,' she said, 'and we can model ours on the same plan. But we must be more in the centre of things. It takes too long for news to come from Petersburg or Moscow, and by the time the papers are shipped back the occasion has passed.'

'We must get good passports, take a house, and set up a secret press. Andreeff, of course, will join us. Just now it seems especially opportune, for you have no idea what splendid work our people have been doing. The work in Southern Russia struck me as admirable; but they need more such papers as these men have established, and we must do our share.'

The Abramoffs now went to Switzerland, where Andreeff soon joined them, and they took a position on a Socialist paper where they could investigate the conditions and meet some of the party leaders. On account of my health, however, I stayed where I was. On one of our last evenings together Anna Michailovna and I had a long talk.

'It would be folly for you to go to Russia now,' she said. 'We shall go back, of course, but we will leave you here to make our foreign arrangements. We will certainly send for you when we need you.'

In the autumn of 1903 Anna Michailovna stopped on her way back to Russia and told me of her plans. I could well understand her impatience and

her longing to get back to the work, and was only sorry I could not join her now.

° ‘We debated whether I might not be able to help the cause more by writing for the foreign papers—especially the English and the French—than by secret propaganda in Russia. Anna Michailovna declared she felt my health had suffered so much from overwork that I could never stand the strain of imprisonment again ; I should simply go mad.

‘You see, you are different from the rest of us ; you were not brought up in this uncertain life. You have paid dearly enough already for your ideals ! You know, of course, what I think of your work, and yet I must candidly say it would have been better for us had you used your means and your influence to help the work on secretly and kept your old position. But for the present you are not strong enough to go on with this life ; you have worked too hard. Take a place on some foreign paper, and keep the world in touch with the real conditions in Russia. Later you can go on with the game ; but just now your best move is to wait. You and Abramoff must both now do your work ‘abroad.’

I had to admit she was quite right, but the thought that rankled was her suggestion that I might have done more for the cause if I had not abandoned my old life. Anna Michailovna could not understand the difficulties of such a situation : to be

outwardly friendly with the Government and to work in secret against it, would have been quite impossible for one of my temperament. I was not scheming enough, and the shiftiness of it all would have sickened me. No, I had decided for the best when I burned my boats behind me.

Now I was quite alone—Abramoff in Switzerland, and Andreeff and Anna Michailovna back in Russia. But one day came a letter from Rostoff, on the Don, with such good news that I could hardly wait to share it, and I hurried off to Abramoff to give him a surprise.

In Russia—in the very heart of that absolute monarchy, and under the iron rule of the mighty Plehve, a tremendous demonstration had taken place. A mass meeting of 30,000 people, with speeches on the political situation and attacks on our Government corruption!

It had lasted for days, the police, and even the Cossacks, powerless to prevent it, and thousands of curious citizens had driven out or streamed from their homes near by to hear what these men had to say. That was the direct result of our work, and it was the first time that a free word had ever been spoken to the masses in Russia.

Naturally the victory was dearly bought, and many of our leaders were banished for life to the mines. The Government was more stubbornly reactionary than ever, and Plehve again tried his

time-worn stratagem of inciting the people against the Jews to turn public attention in another direction. There was a change of policy toward political criminals as well. They were to be condemned behind closed doors, and to serve their terms in some prison or fortress in Russia itself, as escapes from Siberia had recently been too numerous.

In response to these measures our party declared open war upon the Government. Social Democrats were urged to write or speak, and give their testimony in public, freely denouncing the abuses of the prevailing system, and giving their grounds for joining our ranks. This step was for the instruction of the masses.

After a short stay with Abramoff, I went on to Paris to look for work on a paper there. The Russo-Japanese War had just broken out, and now was the time to disclose the *real* cause of that struggle—simply official greed—and to expose the barefaced lie of the clique who declared it was for Russia's aggrandizement. Thousands of pamphlets and handbills on this subject were distributed with great effect throughout the country.

Then, like a bolt out of a clear sky, came the news of a sensational assassination. Plehve, the invincible Chancellor, had fallen a victim to his own short-sighted policy.

In a short biographical sketch I described his tortuous and underhand nature, and the crafty

insincerity of his relentless policy. He had ground the people into the very dust, crushing out life and hope and any chance of betterment, and now one of his own victims—a single one among the thousands who owed their woes to him—had given him a tyrant's death. 'But can assassination further the cause of Freedom? The answer is incontrovertible, "Never!"' I then showed the motives for such a deed, but pointed out its utter uselessness; the Government simply appoints a successor, and the system remains unchanged. 'A real adjustment will have to come, but not through any scattered deeds of terror, and not till the masses are thoroughly imbued with the sense of their own limitations and organized into a full exercise of their undeniable powers.'

Events have since proved that I was partially wrong in this conclusion. The pressure of an iron Conservatism had lasted too long, and hate flamed high in all classes of society. There was no concerted action, but Russia was roused and shaken to its very foundations.

It was the autumn of 1904. I was in Paris and about to send for Abramoff, when he wrote saying he was going back to Russia. I understood his home-sickness, and knew how eager he was to help in the old familiar circles, but I myself was unable to leave. I had months of hard work still before me; though often when I felt the strain of writing

under pressure and the nerve-racking insecurity of my present life, I wondered whether it were worth while after all, and yet I soon dismissed this thought as cowardly and weak.

Anna Michailovna wrote occasionally. She was having a remarkable success with her paper, had organized strikes, founded clubs, and seemed so happy in her work. Presently, however, I heard in a roundabout way that she and her husband had both been arrested. The news came as a terrible shock, and I was on the point of starting directly to help them, but I had to abandon the plan. I wrote to friends, however, and had a most touching letter from Anna Michailovna. Abramoff was in the insane ward of the prison hospital, and she begged me to use all my influence to help her get him out. It was only a passing trouble, and he would get well with care, and she pleaded with me to come to their assistance at once.

In such a case, of course, we could not call on the party; they needed all their funds to help the active members, and quite right too. For the good of the whole was more important than the welfare of the individual. So I applied to a friend in Germany, and with his help raised about 1,000 marks.

My German friend was not in the least interested in political affairs, and asked, as he handed me over the money: 'When will this interminable struggle be over?'

'It has lasted now for forty years,' said I, 'not counting the earlier troubles. Thousands of brave men—not Revolutionists as yet—have devoted their lives to the uplifting of the masses. But the Government invariably restricted their activities and forced them to resort to other means. Driven to revolution, they grasped at anarchy, and simply destroyed themselves with their own weapons. Finally a strong reaction set in, and work advanced more slowly; progress became systematized, labour was unionized, and these small beginnings are now showing good results. The Social Democrats have been established as a party for fifteen years, and I am firmly convinced that we shall yet live to see the reorganization of our national constitution.'

'The conditions are frightful, I know,' he admitted, 'but you fanatics throw yourselves so blindly into the work. Do you ever realize where your labour agitations may lead you?'

'Of course the conditions are horrible,' said I. 'Thousands have died or gone insane in prison, have suffered and slaved in exile; but the moment they are free they struggle back to plunge once more into the work. You say they are blind! If you mean they fail to realize the truth of the situation, you misjudge them vastly. We hope to win over the masses, and accustom them to such ideas as Liberty, Equality, and Brotherly Love. We follow

the lead of the great labour movement abroad ; our fundamental principles are scientific Socialism, and we shall surely win in time.'

'That all sounds well,' said he, 'but you forget that the great mass of the people are ignorant peasants; easily led to excess. The papers are filled with tales of their murders, robbery, and criminal brutality. It seems to me that men of your stamp might serve the people better by identifying themselves with the Government. I don't mean under the present system necessarily, but a reformed Government that would help and not hinder justice.'

'No student of present conditions believes such a readjustment possible. There must be an evolution of the people themselves, and we feel our sole reliance in this movement of reform is the Russian Proletariat. What you say of the peasants is true in the main, but don't lay their excesses to the account of the Revolutionists. Our agrarian conditions are unendurable, and you cannot wonder that our poor peasants rise in revolt, or are easily incited to horrors. Though we have no proof, we have the absolute conviction that our Government itself commissions its secret agents to arrange these uprisings, in order to justify its own severity. This is known to be true in the case of the Jewish massacres and the racial conflicts on the borders of the Caucasus.

'Yet I tell you that when Russia once is free—

as it soon will be, without a doubt—the whole of Europe will surely reap the benefit.’

All signs from Russia now seemed to indicate that the righteous demands of the people could no longer be resisted. The Government had promised all sorts of concessions—but too late. The country no longer trusted them, and loud complaints were heard of the evils and abuses of the system. Their mistrust was not without foundation. Openly the rulers promised reconstruction, and asked for time and tolerance for the development of their plans. But in secret this little clique of high officials, in whose interests the prevailing system was preserved, agitated the Jewish question, roused the masses against the classes, and emphasized all social and racial differences, to impress the world that Russia was not yet ripe for reform.

But deeper and deeper flowed the tide of Revolution, and the long hard work began to show results. Well-drilled ranks of workmen stood together, and forced the Citizens' Alliance to make their politics more broadly democratic.

After our 'Bloody Sunday' of 1905, feeling in Russia at last ran high. The Government tried conciliation, but it was then too late. We Russians have proved ourselves capable of sacrificing everything for our ideals. The workman can starve, then work, and then can starve again, and nothing

now can stem the tide of this great onward movement—no threats and no concessions of the Government.

And I myself am forcibly drawn back into the vortex, to devote my energies and my experience, all that I am, to the sacred cause. At times I feel I can better help by standing aloof from the current; but then again the impulse comes to enter the ranks and fight the fight out with my working comrades.

I see the struggle before me as in a dream, and in my dream a well-known voice rings out: 'On, on to Russia! To march shoulder to shoulder with the brothers in our cause; to join the struggle—and perhaps to die!'

THE END

Telegrams :  
Early, London.

41 and 43 Maddox Street,  
Bond Street, London, W.1,  
September, 1907.

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dispersed. Lieut. Alexander's observations on the manners and customs of the natives are extremely curious and interesting.

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