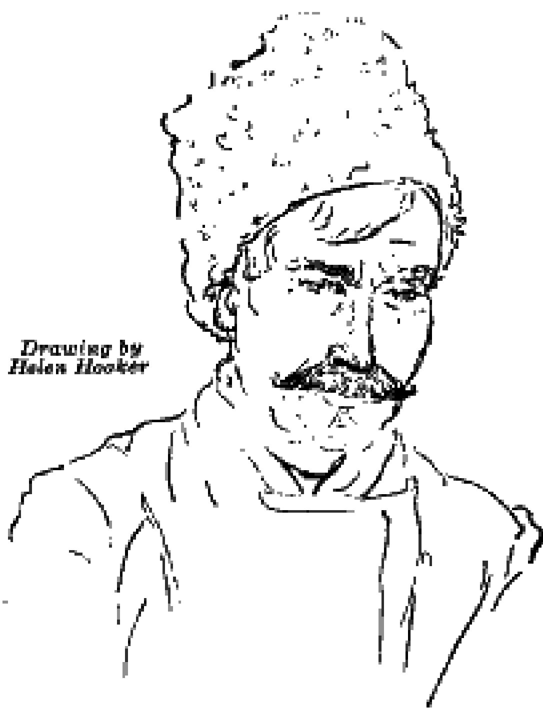


Drawing by Helen Hooker

Two Girls Set Out to See Ikons—And End Up As

Prisoners of the Cheka in RED RUSSIA

A sketch of the Cossack who drove the author and her sister under arrest to Soviet headquarters. At right, Ikon of the Virgin of Bogoliubov, sold them by a museum

EARLY in the morning I was up and out. It was heavenly to be in the sun again.

We visited the cathedral by daylight to enjoy its frescoes and shrines from the artistic point of view. It was the most sumptuous interior I had seen in all Russia. A little gray nun was in charge. She had been in the Pokrovski convent until it was closed. We asked about the priest who had conducted the much-disturbed service a few days before, and told her what a sympathetic personality we had found him.

"Why don't you go to see him? He is so kind and would love to receive two foreigners," she said.

We decided to go, and she made a rendezvous for us at eight o'clock that evening.

I tuned up my camera and started off to photograph everything in sight. We walked down to the prison at the edge of the village. However grim it may be inside, the outside is a glorious sight. There are several churches inside, but the crimson walls, the white battlements, hid them from view. The red entrance tower was frosted with white arches and trimmings. Helen gave a pleased whistle and lost no time in taking out her sketch pad.

Soldiers were buzzing about and looked at us curiously. I took pictures conspicuously as I did not wish to appear to be doing it on the sly.

A soldier shook his finger at me. "*Nelzya!* (Mustn't do it!)" he said.

I carried on a bit in my simple way and thought I had got away with it.

He asked Helen who she was and what she was doing. She told him, but he thought it queer. He said nothing more and walked on; so did we.

We walked back in the shadow of the red battlements, and wondered about the people inside.

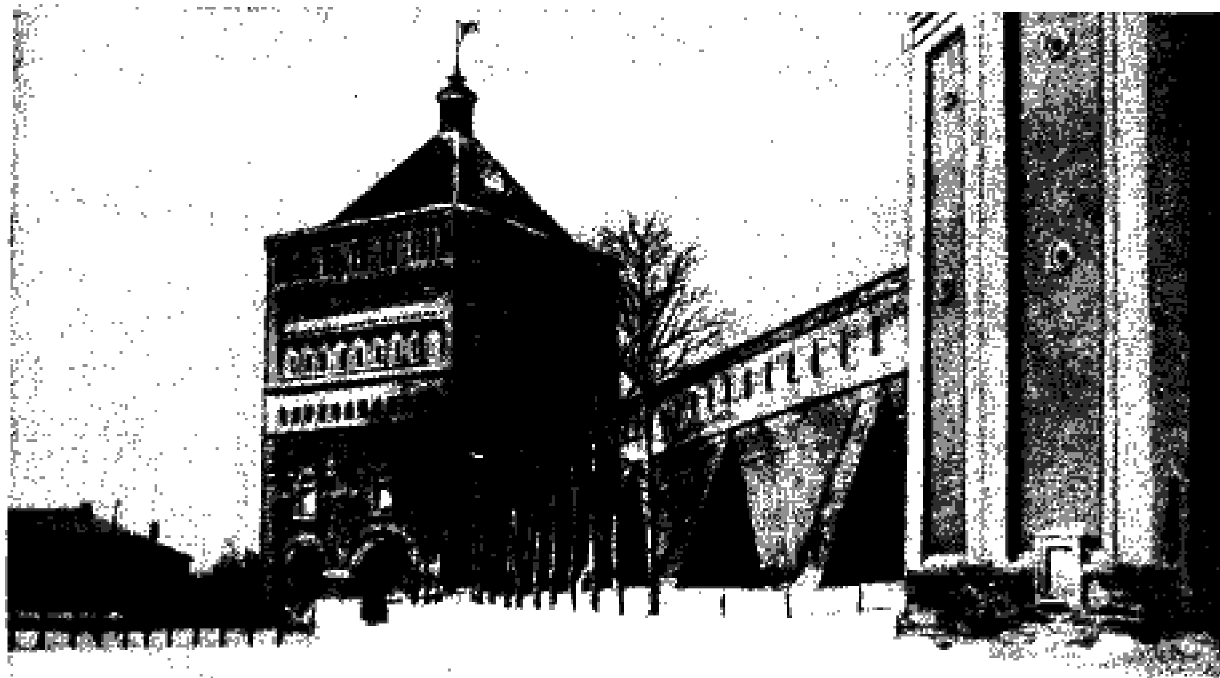
For a convalescent I was being pretty energetic, but could not bear to leave a stone of Suzdal unexamined.

We were leaving at the crack of dawn next day and hoped to catch the noon train from Vladimir to Moscow. I trembled at the thought of a bath. What did our friends in Moscow think had happened to us? We were expected to lunch with the Finnish Minister three days before. The wires were down, and we could not communicate with him.

One of the photographs —the Rizopolozhensky

By

Adelaide Hooker



The Spassa - Yefimsky Monastery at Suzdal converted into a prison. "Why did the citizenesses paint and photograph the prison?" the secret police asked

I went to the Red Army Home. This is a new building, but I think they caught some old air somewhere and let it loose in there when the building was opened. I went into only one room, where four soldiers were sitting on their cots. They were in uniform, one of quite a high rank. He was dumb. Shell-shock, I imagine. One had both legs gone. One was entirely bedridden, and the fourth had half of his face shot away. It was ghastly. There was no furniture in the room. The man who took me up brought a stool, placed it in the center of the room, and motioned me toward it. He pointed to me and said to the men by way of explanation, "*Amerikanka!*" He picked up a pail of water from the corner of the room and walked out.

There was only one candle to give us light. I was an exhibit, and so were they. A queer experience. We all smiled and talked a little—the usual things. Their spirit was wonderful and heartrending. They glowed with the most genuine enthusiasm for the Soviet government that I had heard in all the six months I was in Russia. They lived in a condition which we would consider squalid, and had nothing but the deepest appreciation for it. Their bodies had been broken and torn in the service of an ideal, and now they were reaping the benefits therefrom. But what benefits!

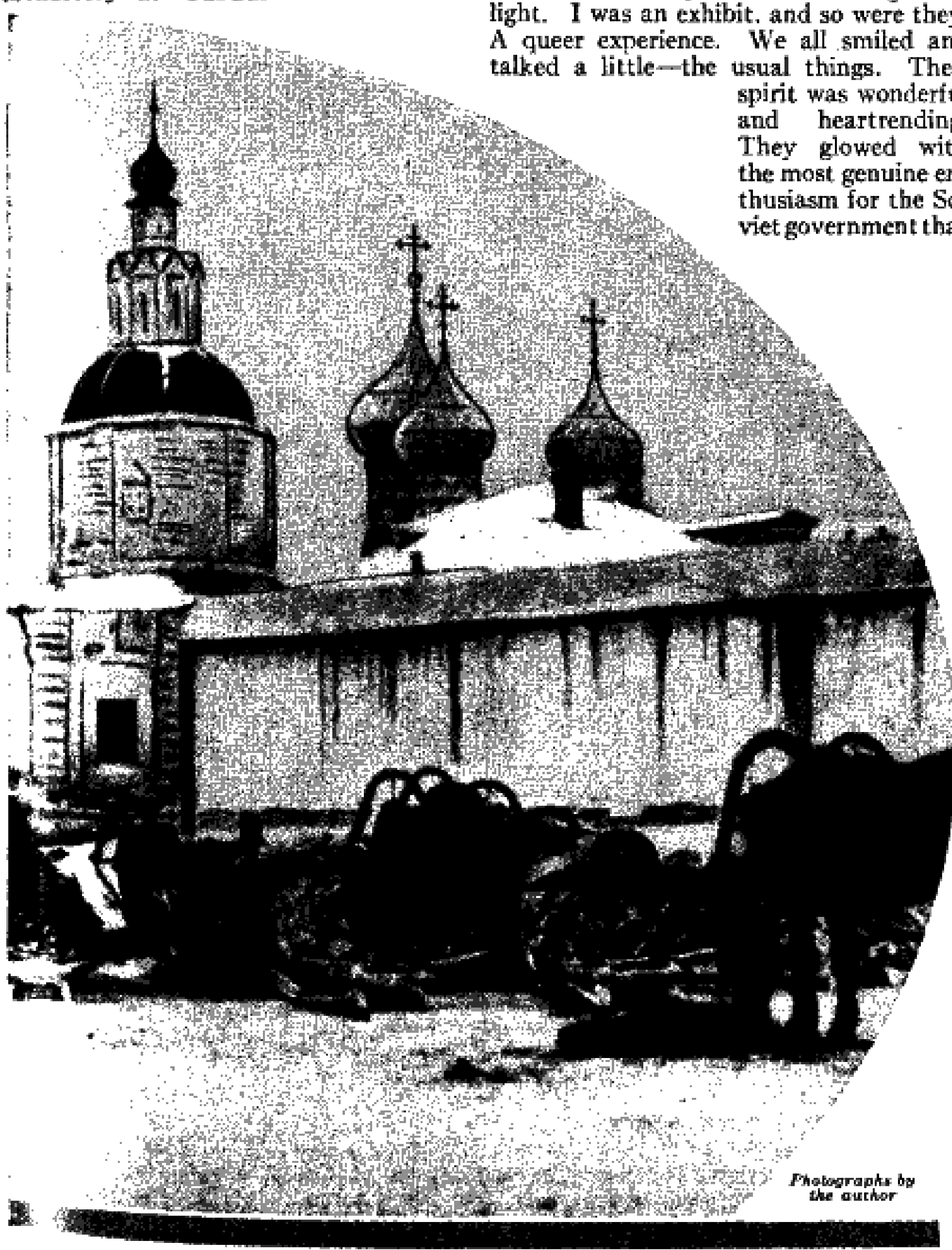
They hoped we would soon be rid of our Capitalist slavery so that our wounded soldiers would also be cared for. I had to smile inwardly. My usual patriotic eagle began to flap his wings, but I calmed him. If a world of illusion and misinformation could keep these pathetic creatures happy, who was I to prick the bubble? I only hoped that all the veterans were as happy as these. If they are, it is one more proof how much more satisfying is a life wrapped in idealism than one of materialism. And yet, paradoxically, materialism is the Bolshevik ideal!

I rose to leave and shook hands all around. The dumb officer, who had several medals, clicked his heels and bowed. His eyes said what his tongue could not.

I met Helen, and we went to our rendezvous with the Archiyerei. We hoped no one followed us, as Russians who are not Communists are sometimes nervous about visits from foreigners. It often means a visit from the G.P.U. afterward. Several people in Moscow begged us never to telephone from the hotel, because they did not want it recorded that they had even been called by foreigners. It does make one feel rather like forbidden fruit or a secret sin.

The Archiyerei opened his door and welcomed us in. He was a tall, gaunt man with gray-streaked hair hanging about the shoulders of his long, black robe. His black eyes were sunken deep in his cheeks, and though he smiled in a friendly manner, he was subconsciously apprehensive. He asked us to be seated, and if there was anything he could do for us. We were interested in the Russian Church, I said, and had so enjoyed his beautiful service that we wanted to call and talk to him.

I think it was as painful a visit as I have ever made. He never quite trusted us and was very guarded in his answers to our questions. It is hard to talk for the Church without talking against the Government. Accordingly our interview was most unsatisfactory. He was fidgety and ill at ease every minute and asked us eagerly about Christianity in (*Continued on page 228*)



confiscated by the Cheka Monastery at Suzdal

Photographs by the author

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BRILLO

Prisoners of the Cheka

(Continued from page 43)

America and the rest of the world in order to avoid our questions. Finally we gained his confidence sufficiently so that he gave me a little theological book, and Helen a rosary from Solovetsky Monastery in the White Sea. This is the most dreaded prison of Russia nowadays—an ice-bound island which is a living death. Countless numbers of the Russian clergy are living and dying there—bishops, archbishops, and Metropolitans. They are now detained permanently at what used to be one of their holiest shrines.

As we left, I turned once more and said "Tell me, *Batushka* (Little Father—the common form of address for the clergy), what do you think will come of it all?"

His thwarted and hopeless face twitched nervously. He seemed dazed. "We may hold services, but we may teach nothing to the little ones. It seems as if vengeance from Heaven is descending upon us for some cause. I think we must have sinned horribly, horribly!" Then quietly, "I think the world is coming to an end."

The door closed, and we were out in the snow. Under the shadow of the cathedral I was on the verge of tears. How could any human being exist with so little hope?

The day was not yet ended. "Do you realize," I said to Helen, "that we have to leave at six tomorrow morning in order to catch the train for Moscow, and that we have to report to the G.P.U. before we can leave here?"

"Oh, mercy, that means we'll have to go and wake them up now!" she answered.

We trudged back down the long main street to the office.

A few Muzhiks were still stumbling along in the snow while their horses pulled log-piled sleds. The wind was driving against us, and a heavy snow storm set in. It was a hard pull, and we were tired.

We reached the G.P.U. building and started up a hideously slippery staircase to the second story. There was no faint ray of light when the outer door had swung closed, so like suppliants we crawled up on our hands and knees to avoid falling. At the top I felt the wall carefully all over for a bell. There was none. I pounded. No answer. I pounded again and waited. It was twelve o'clock, the cathedral bells were booming.

The door opened a crack, and a rather unkempt young man in a disorderly uniform looked out. I apologized for disturbing him so late, but explained that we wanted to leave early and remembered that we must have his permission.

"You will return here at seven in the morning," he said disagreeably.

"Seven is too late," I answered, "we shall miss our train at Vladimir."

"That does not matter; there are trains to Moscow every day. Come here at seven," he said.

"But, please, citizen, it is very important for us to return tomorrow."

He finally sulkily compromised on six-thirty, and we crawled backward down the slimy staircase again and home to our lair for what was left of the night.

AT SIX, the old watchman waked us, and we packed—if so pretentious a word may be used for our simple arrangements. We dropped our films into our leather boots, now replaced in service by felt, and strapped them to the knapsack of painting materials. We had paid our bill the day before, and our *isvoschik* for the trip was waiting at the door with his sled and two enormous, sheepskin *shubas* which he had borrowed for us. Borrowed—yes—for a ruble's rent.

"We shall be right back," I told him. "We just have to stop for a moment at the G.P.U."

I had a bit of a swagger as I said those three letters. It sounded so important and "in" with the government, and I took pleasure in seeing the *isvoschik* cross himself mentally.

We slithered up the stairs again and were admitted to the officer's apartment by a pale, sloppy-looking woman. Three children were asleep on a shelf over the brick oven, as per Russian custom.

"Please be seated," she said wearily. "My husband has gone out, but I suppose he will return soon."

WE waited five—ten—fifteen minutes. It was exasperating! We had so little time. He was evidently determined not to see us before seven. I watched the woman wake and dress the children. They slept in their underclothes and had only to put on shoes and dresses. The oldest, a boy about nine, fetched a small basin of water. Three little faces were washed in this basin with the corner of the mother's apron, and three little heads were combed under protest. Tooth-brushing was an unknown rite. Greasy fried potatoes were brought in a pan, and each child was given a tin spoon. They gathered about the pan and gobbled. The youngest got very little in the fray.

Quarter past—half past seven. "Did your husband say *when* he would be back? Did he tell you that he expected us here?" I asked.

"He said nothing, citizeness. He never tells me anything," she answered with a patient, hang-dog look.

I indulged in a little cussing under my breath while Helen tried to be philosophical.

The door opened, and in walked our *isvoschik* with a beaming smile. "He is waiting for you at your room," he informed us.

We were distinctly peeved, but returned to our lodging. On the way I tried to prepare a few appropriate remarks for the officer, but realized it might be safer to control myself.

He was standing at our door in full uniform, a small, unimpressive man with an ignorant face and all the unpleasant characteristics of small-town officials.

"We have been waiting an hour at your house, but we still hope to catch our train. When may we leave?" I asked as politely as possible.

"You will leave very soon, but you will leave with a military guard," he said in a brief manner. "Please step in here." He pointed to the office across the way.

"Heck, we are in the soup!" was all I could think, and my mind whirled.

Yakov, the beady-eyed, and nice Sergei Alexandrovitch were sitting at their desks. Sergei looked distressed. Yakov was obsequious to the officer and offered him his desk. He sat, but left us standing.

"*Boomashki!* (papers!)" he said from force of habit.

"You know very well that our papers are in Vladimir, citizen," I answered.

"Did you photograph the prison yesterday?"

"Yes, it is one of the most beautiful architectural relics of ancient Russia."

"That does not interest me," he snapped. "Give me your purses!"

We complied, trying not to show on our faces the horror that was in our minds. In those bags, by chance, were two photographs which might get us into serious trouble. The officer opened my bag, and with kaleidoscopic speed my mind reviewed some past events.

We had left Berlin for Finland in August, expecting to spend three days there and three weeks in Russia. I already had a visa, but my sister's had been delayed. I left word for it to be telegraphed to Viborg, in Finland, where we could get it on our way to Leningrad. Arriving at Viborg we found no visa, sent a telegram to Moscow begging speed, and repaired to the Russian monastery of Valaam to await its arrival. Valaam is the last of the Russian monasteries. In the late reshuffling of boundaries it was annexed to Finland, though none of its inmates speak a word of that language. But it was lucky, because the eight hundred monasteries within Soviet borders have been closed

Prisoners of the Cheka

and the unfortunate monks and nuns routed.

We planned to stay only overnight, but were so swept away by the fascination of Orthodox mysticism and the natural beauty of this island sanctuary that we remained for five weeks. We spoke not a word of Russian, and the monks spoke nothing else, but somehow we got along beautifully.

One day, when we planned to move to a larger room, I heard the name "Vyroubova." I pricked up my ears. Not Anna Vyroubova surely, who was the last Empress' confidante, who had lived with the royal family for fourteen years preceding their exile. I had read her Memoirs five years ago and had been so interested in her as a character, and the historical aspects of her story, that I had then and there vowed to come to Russia at some future time. It never occurred to me that she was still living, but through our interpreter I discovered that it was actually she whom they were talking about. They were offering us the room which she had occupied when visiting the monastery.

TO make a long story short, we left the monastery with a letter to Madame Vyroubova, and great curiosity about her. Such varying portraits of this woman had been handed down to posterity by historians of the revolution! She is painted as a hysterical neurasthenic with a thirst for power; as the mistress of Rasputin and his accomplice in poisoning the Tsarevitch, in order that he might afterward make miraculous cures on the little boy; as a stupid and credulous mystic; as pretending to be the Tsarina's friend, while she carried on an intrigue with the Tsar; as chief hostess at Rasputin's drunken debauches—and even as the ultimate cause of the whole Revolution.

We found her living in a small apartment with her mother. She had become a nun, but lives at home, because there is no Orthodox convent in Finland to which she can go. However, she lives a convent routine at home, practically never going out. She is so lame from a train accident that she can hardly take a step without an expression of pain coming over her face, but with all this she has the calm and serenity that go with the mystic nature. We saw her several times and became warm friends. She speaks perfect English and supports herself by giving lessons in six different languages.

She seemed to us a charming woman, deeply religious, cultivated without being really intellectual, and perhaps a victim of the tragedy of circumstance. The intrigues attributed to her were proved to be unfounded gossip when she was tried by the Kerensky Provisional Government, but the tragedy remains. It was not the things she did, but the things she left undone. Chance had placed her in a position of unofficial influence and power which would have baffled a far-seeing statesman. Her influence was with a Tsarina, and the Tsarina controlled the will of the Tsar. But Anna Vyroubova was a mystic, even credulous, if judged by our Western point of view, and mysticism was no weapon against the gun-powder of the Germans or the Russian social unrest caused by war-famine. Rasputin fell, the Empire fell, and in Finland this woman in her early forties, looking far older, lives in constant fear of her life, and prays. She is the last living member of the Tsar's intimate family circle.

When we saw her for the last time she said, "God bless you and protect you from harm on your dangerous trip, but whatever you do, never mention my name while you are in Russia!"

She gave us snapshots and presents which we shipped to Berlin the day before "crossing the bar." However, in Leningrad, we met an old friend of hers, and this lady gave us two small, faded photographs of her. We were very nervous about these photographs and kept them always in our bags so they never could be discovered in our luggage.

You see my train of thought. The contents of my bag were carefully laid out and listed. There were twenty-four headings. The incendiary material was a shoestring, a pencil sharpener, a tiny copy of Goethe's "Werther," my two gold fillings raped by the caramel, a list of addresses, and other insignificant papers. I felt badly about the addresses of Russian people being discovered, because I knew that if we got into any serious trouble those people would most certainly be investigated, and might be anyhow. That is why Russians are afraid of foreigners.

Last of all, my inner leather wallet was brought to light. It contained money, my letter of credit, and a few little photographs. The former was counted and returned to the wallet—also the letter of credit. The photographs were all of Helen or me for passport purposes—except one. The officer looked at it a minute, and I tried to keep a stiff upper lip.

"Who is that?" he asked.

"My aunt in America," I answered.

He looked at it again and put it back in the case with my money. "You may have back your money and photographs, but I will keep the rest of your papers."

I must have turned scarlet or white from relief, but he didn't notice, and turned to Helen. She was questioned in the same way, and when the incriminating photograph appeared, had such ingenuous conviction about "aunty" that I am sure the officer formed a mental picture of that good lady sitting on the front porch at home, rocking, knitting, and humming "Dixie" to herself. With money and photographs safely in our hands, we were escorted back to our bedrooms and there searched by one of the peasant women whom we had seen and spoken to during our sojourn. Whether she was a regular member of the G.P.U. or had just been commandeered to serve at the moment, I do not know. I rather suspect the latter, as she was too stupid to find anything and did not look very thoroughly. We might have had bombs in our bloomers, and she wouldn't have run across them. We were told to wait in our room until the officers were ready. We were to be driven back to Vladimir to the State G.P.U.

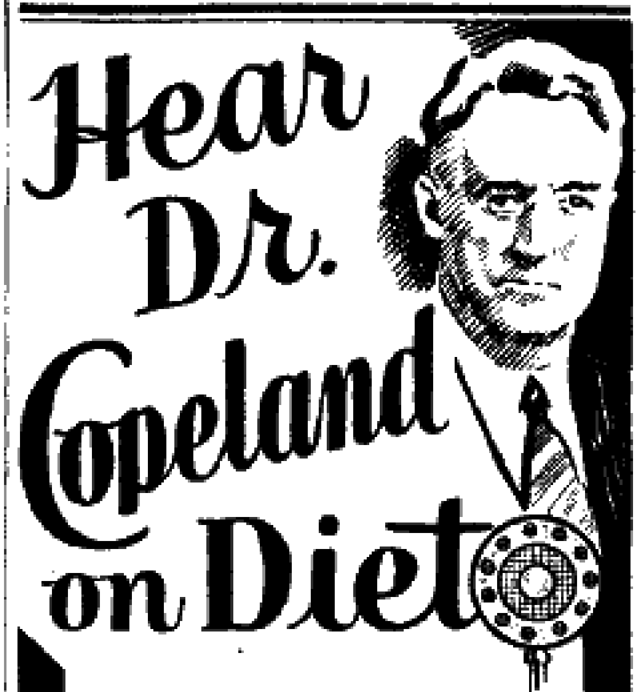
AT last in our room alone! I did not know whether to laugh or cry. "You took one photograph too many, and I painted one picture too many, and here we are!" said Helen.

"But we've got to lose those Vyroubova photographs somehow!" I whispered. "Suppose the Vladimir G.P.U. should feel called upon to search us again. They might recognize her there, you know."

"But I can't bear to lose the photographs," answered Helen, and I agreed with her.

The officer opened the door and sternly told us to bring our things and come back to his office with him. We bade a shaky farewell to our nice, crippled friends, whose eyes were staring with surprise and excitement. They were torn between a quasi-affection and interest for us and a pride in the smartness of the local G.P.U., at being able to catch two such wicked spies. Sergei Alexandrovitch seemed grieved and disillusioned about us, but beady-eyed Yakov looked secretly glad. That easy falseness to a friend is a trait which we found very unattractive in New Russia, but it is a result of continual terror and is excusable, perhaps, on that basis.

At the G.P.U. office, an imposing figure was sitting at the desk. A man whom we had not seen before, a perfect Russian type, but of a distinctly better class than his colleague. He was short with a dapper uniform and a beard like Tut-Ankh-Amen's. He looked most efficient and told us to be seated in the ante-room. I started talking baby talk with one of the children of the other officer, who wandered in on its way to school, but I was soundly reprimanded and told to sit down like a naughty three-year-old. The officer asked if we had any personal effects besides



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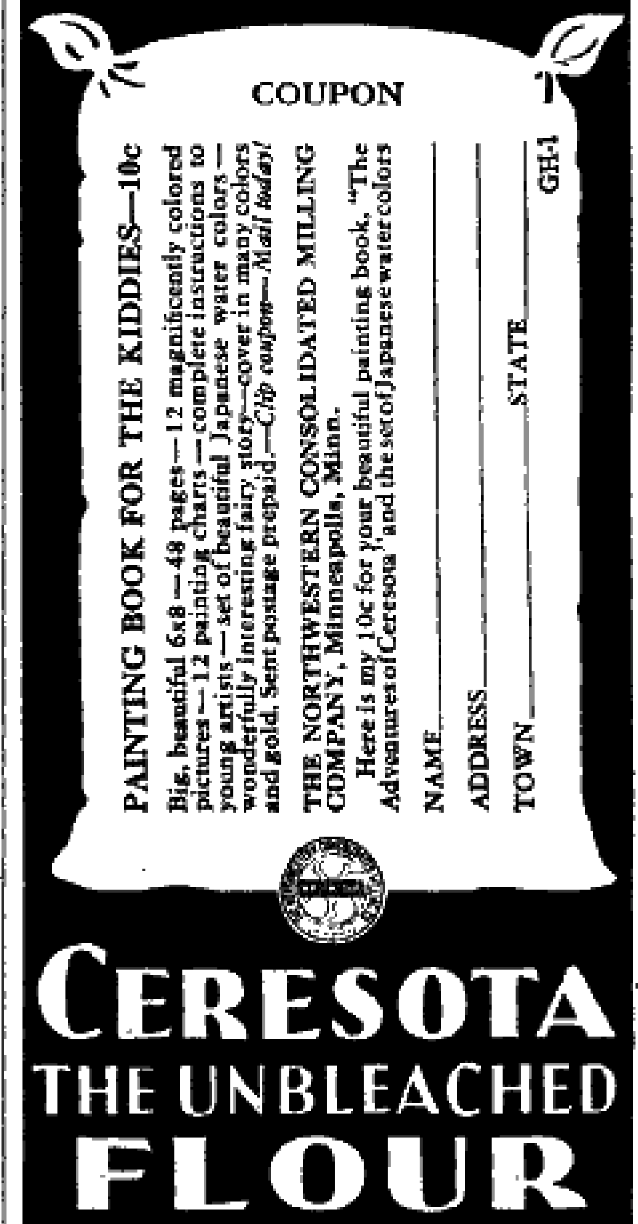

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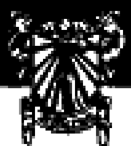

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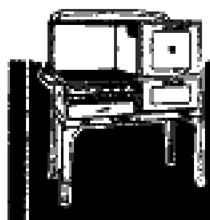

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Prisoners of the Cheka

those in his hands and if we had given him all of our films. Helen pleaded guilty to a few more films in her boots, and was told to go down immediately to the sleigh and fetch them. She was just outside the door when this new high official whispered quickly to the young soldier guarding us:

"Go quickly down with her and see that she throws nothing away. I'll watch this one meanwhile."

I couldn't help smiling. Until this moment I didn't really believe that they were all taking it so seriously. I thought it was more or less a matter of form and that we just happened to be the goats. But I could see now that we were really suspected of some shady doings. It was rather fun to be thought such a menace, and no end flattering. Helen returned with the vigilant soldier at her heels, and the rest of our films joined the group of black evidence on the table. More scribbling, and talking in an undertone by the two officers—more affidavits and protocols produced—and finally a lengthy document of fine handwriting was brought out for me to sign.

The idea that perhaps I was expected to sign my own death warrant occurred to me in a romantic moment. So with sweeping gestures and a reproachful air in the grand manner I said:

"How can you expect me to sign something that I can not read? Surely you would not ask that of a prisoner!"

The document turned out to be merely a form of receipt for our papers, so I signed, and it was placed in my hands to be delivered to the authorities at Vladimir.

THE bearded gentleman came out and talked to us for a few minutes. It was a delightfully false situation—he trying to find out all he could without asking direct questions, and we trying to act as if we were at a pink tea.

"So the ladies are interested in archæology?"

"Yes, indeed! You have such beautiful old buildings in this country!"

"Do the ladies find them so? What cities have you visited?"

"We've been to Novgorod, Leningrad, Moscow, Vladimir, so far, but we expect to go up to Yaroslavl later and then to Kiev."

"And do the citizenesses take photographs and paint wherever they go?"

"Indeed we do!" (Strained girlish enthusiasm all over my face!)

"And how did the citizenesses happen to come to Suzdal without permission of the Central Government at Moscow?"

"We have never asked permission to go to any other town. Your own Government guidebook says that Suzdal is an interesting place and says nothing about a required permission. The Communist director of the Vladimir museum recommended our coming and also mentioned no permission."

"Yes, yes! But why did the citizenesses paint and photograph the prison?"

"Because it is the most beautiful of all the beautiful buildings at Suzdal, don't you think so?" Here we tried a little mild feminine charm, but it was a flat failure.

"Very interesting, very interesting," he replied curtly, stroking his black beard. "Your sleigh is waiting. The *isvoschik* will drive you to the G.P.U. in Vladimir."

He placed the receipt in my hands, bowed abruptly, and turned away.

"How nice of him to trust us to go there by ourselves!" I thought.

On reaching the door, however, I saw our sleigh ready and waiting, and behind it another with two soldiers sitting stiffly on guard. A leather bag with a padlock was brought down—our pathetic little belongings—and delivered into their hands. Off we started with our convoy close behind. On the main street it was a bit humiliating. Everybody stared, and we did not know whether to bow and smile like visiting royalty or to bury our faces in the robe. As we drove past familiar houses, we

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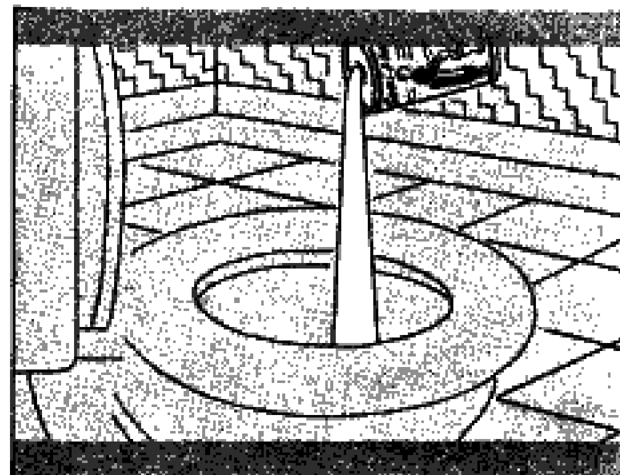

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found ourselves very ball-and-chain conscious. We had arrived in Suzdal free agents and were leaving as political prisoners. At least it was a new sensation. We took one last look back at the domes and towers rising on the white horizon. Again I had that terrible feeling of loneliness at leaving a Russian town, in no way alleviated by the fact that we had had several unpleasant experiences there.

"But just think," Helen groaned, "all those nice people imagine that we are spies or criminals or something. I can't bear it! And we never had a chance to say good-by to that sweet Luka Petrovitch! The minute we get out, we must write to him. Probably he will think just as badly of us as the others do."

But we never have got around to writing, and I suppose they still tell in Suzdal about the two *Amerikankas* caught red-handed in a contra-revolutionary plot. Certainly the G.P.U. will not bother to enlighten them.

THE long drive home was different from that on the way out. We were enjoying mental agony instead of physical, but the beauty of the trip was eternally diverting. The sun was dazzling on the white waves. When we reached the village where the tea oasis was, we noticed the whole population walking up and down in the center of the road.

"What are they doing?" I asked the *isvoschik*.

"It's a holiday, and that is the way they celebrate. Don't they do that in America?"

I couldn't remember ever having seen it.

We had tea without our criminal status being discovered, but when a magnificent, red-bearded peasant began the usual railing against the government, I was careful to argue pro-Communist with him.

The beauties of the last lap of the drive were entirely spoiled by the returning anxiety over the Vyroubova photographs. We thought of tearing them into infinitesimal pieces and scattering them along the road speck by speck, but knew that if we were seen, we would be in much hotter water than we were already, so we did nothing.

The golden domes of Vladimir appeared on a high bluff ahead, and before long the sleighs drew up at the monastery which we had failed to enter before. We were glad to get in any way at all. At the gate I hesitated. Should I pay for our sleigh or let the government? I finally decided to do it, as we had engaged the man before there was any government interference, and I thought they would probably give him considerably less than I had promised. So I took out ten rubles, but then the soldiers stood aside, expecting me to pay for their sleigh as well.

"What! do you think I invited you to come?" I roared at them, and they did look rather sheepish as they paid their own way.

We were ushered into a dingy room which was pleasantly warm. Around the room sat other criminals, but we were busy peeling fur coats and warming our stocking feet on the stove and did not pay much attention to them.

An idea came! I asked piteously if we might go to the wash room. A boy led the way, and once behind the locked door we made quick work of those photographs! We returned to the waiting room feeling ten years younger each.

In a few minutes we were called to the "dread tribunal"! A soldier came for us, and as we went out I caught sympathetic glances from our companions. They were simple horse thieves and murderers, and would be given a so-called "People's Trial," but we were political prisoners. Death is often the punishment for a political crime in Russia; for other crimes, according to Marx, mild punishment only. The other day a man cut up his wife and her mother in tiny pieces and packed them in a trunk, because he was afraid to tell them that he wanted to marry another woman. When some blood trickled out of the trunk in the Moscow station, he was arrested. He pleaded guilty on trial, and the Soviet government shook its finger at him, saying, "Naughty!

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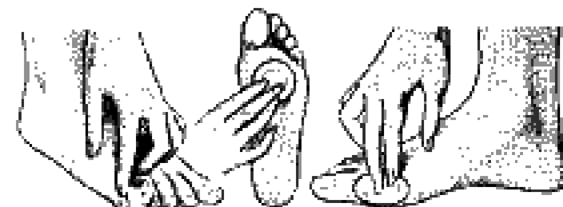

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They did not walk with us. It might not have looked well. They bowed and turned in the opposite direction.

"Have you *ever* seen such heavenly eyelashes?" whispered Helen. "I never have!"

But their manner was what puzzled us. Whatever the rugged and sterling qualities of the Bolsheviks, whatever kindness they show, distinction of bearing is quite foreign to them. But this older officer had it to burn. We decided that he must have come from a cultured family of the old school and had suffered a political rebirth. But there was one catch. He spoke no languages except Russian.

We arrived at the hotel, relieved, but dead with hunger and weariness.

The chambermaid nearly fell over with surprise. "We thought you were frozen to death somewhere. We knew you couldn't be alive so long without your passports!"

"Are our things all right?" I asked.

"Yes, indeed," she answered. "The G.P.U. had your room sealed up two days after you went away. You will find everything just as you left it."

It was nice to know of their precautions, and interesting as well to realize that their telephone call to the hotel in our presence was merely a gesture.

We brushed our teeth at the icy pump which served for the hotel's ablutions, and ordered a samovar. The stove had been lit in our room, and it produced a peculiar nauseating gas which was a relief from the stable odor which had been prevalent there formerly.

I was called to the telephone. What could it be?

"Good evening. I am speaking from the G.P.U." It was the voice of the older officer. "Did you find everything all right at the hotel? Are all your things in order?"

"Yes, indeed, thank you so much."

"I wanted to tell you that there is a *kino* theatre here in case you have nothing else to do."

"Oh, thank you! You are very kind to tell us, but we are so tired that I don't believe that we could keep awake at the *kino*."

It wasn't exactly an invitation, but—I had a feeling that if we went, we would find the G.P.U. in the lobby. Helen was played out, but I could have kicked myself afterward for not going. I didn't realize the opportunity until it was too late. They would have had such fun collecting information for the government, and perhaps a little for their personal enjoyment. And I would certainly have had a unique experience.

WE were up bright and early in the morning and went to the bank. I showed my letter of credit and asked for one hundred dollars. It was an industrial crisis. All the clerks looked at the letter and shook their heads. They called the Comrade Director and the Comrade President. These people also shook their heads. A conference was held. Nobody could read English. Several blank forms were produced for my inspection. They would be glad to give me the money if I would show them which form to fill out and how to do it. There were pink ones and blue ones, green ones and purple ones. I picked out a pretty pink one without regard to what was printed on it, and between us we wrote a few hieroglyphics on it. I got the money and appreciated being taken at my face value.

We went on to the G.P.U. and found our two friends waiting. They were reading some letters which were among our papers and seemed to be highly amused. The letters were from a monk at Valaam and were in extremely religious style. We had carried them with us also, in order that they might not be found in our luggage.

I told Ivanov (the older officer is so-called for rhetorical convenience) about our visit to the Russian monastery in Finland, and how we had loved it.

"Are you *sektanti?*" asked Petrov (the younger). This is the word used in Russia for all Protestant sects.

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In using advertisements see page 6

A skidding rug on the hardwood floor of his home was the cause of a broken leg that laid up a young Indiana business man for several weeks . . . *From an insurance company's files.*

A SLIPPING RUG CAUSED THIS —

A broken leg is no joke; several weeks in a wheel chair is no vacation . . . Skidding rugs cause thousands of serious and fatal injuries every year. RUG-STA will make your rugs safe to live with. Simply brush this harmless liquid on the backs of rugs, where it forms an invisible, slip-proof film when dry.

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RUG-STA does not harm fine rugs nor mar floors . . . Sold by hardware, paint, and department stores. ¼ pt. 65c; ½ pt. $1.00; 1 pt. $1.50. Write for a free booklet. Addison-Leslie Company, 29 Bolivar St. Canton, Massachusetts.

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21 Beautiful Christmas Cards and Folders
Costs You 50c Sells For $1.00
WE PAY ALL SHIPPING CHARGES

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Mrs. Finch of Virginia made $575. Mrs. Miller of New York made $450. This is what they say: "Everybody thinks they are wonderful." "I found your assortment the most attractive on the market." "Could easily be sold for $2.00 a box." "Your Christmas Box Assortment sold like hot cakes."

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100 hand-engraved $13.50 including two sets of envelopes
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Write for Samples

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Prisoners of the Cheka

"We belong to no church—have never even been christened—but we believe in religious freedom and can not understand the persecution here in Russia. Certainly the abuses in a religion should be corrected, but the fundamental idea is good and should be encouraged rather than desecrated."

A long discussion followed of the pro's and con's of religion and its misuse in Russia.

'Why, the abbot of this monastery weighed fifteen *poods* (two hundred fifty pounds). That was what was considered an ascetic, and one of the chapels that weren't used for services had a luxurious wine storehouse behind the altar. The wine was no sacramental wine, either. Bah!" Ivanov shrugged his contemptuous shoulders.

"The mysticism of Russia," I said, "was the most beautiful thing in the land, and you are trying to kill it."

"Beautiful to the foreigner, perhaps, but look where it has led Russia," he said. "Look at the royal family—look at Rasputin—look at Vyroubova—did you ever hear of her?"

Helen and I were frozen to our seats.

"Vyroubova—I remember, I read her book," I said, vaguely reminiscent.

I looked up and met his eyes, which seemed utterly innocent. Our friends in Moscow afterward told us that we were credulous fools to think that those men didn't have a written report in their desk as to just how often we had been to see Vyroubova in Finland. I don't know and never shall.

"Is Vyroubova still living?" I asked.

"Yes, I think she is in Finland or France. You should read her diary."

"I have heard of it, but heard also that it was a falsification," I answered.

"The published one was falsified," Petrov said quickly, "but the real one is in the G.P.U. archives in Moscow."

"If you will make us members of the G.P.U., we'll go and read it," said Helen.

PETROV went into an inside room and brought out some old prints and photographs.

"Look at that face!" he said. "That is Dmitri Pavlovitch. That is the type of face that ruled in Russia."

I thought discreetly that the type was certainly no worse than that ruling today, but said nothing.

"Look at the Tsar's face—absolute degeneracy." He slapped the picture with the back of his hand.

"I don't agree with you. That face is weak, but not degenerate. You may think that we are contra-revolutionary, after all, to talk this way, but it is not true. The whole world knew that Russia was badly governed. We rejoiced in your revolution, but when you Bolsheviki carried it to such bloody extremes you lost the world's sympathy. You didn't have to kill the Tsar and those four little girls. They could have been exiled."

They both shook their heads.

"If they had lived, there would always have been a rallying point for the upper classes," said Ivanov, and I rather agreed with him on thinking it over.

"Here's Nikolai Nikolaievitch," he said. "Now, he was a man! You know he was head of the Tsar's army, and when he was going off to fight the Germans the Tsar sent for him to come for Rasputin's blessing. The Grand Duke sent back word that he could fight better without Rasputin's aid. He saw things as they were. He just died in Paris, poor fellow!" There was real sorrow in Ivanov's voice.

Next we took up "freedom," and all of us agreed on something—they two, that there was none in America, and we two, that there was none in Soviet Russia.

"How can you judge American life when the only American writers you know are Upton Sinclair and Sinclair Lewis? We read the Russian aristocrats' impressions of Bolshevism, but we also read Marx and Lenin."

"BAKED BEANS, YOU'RE A FINE DISH *with* SAUCE LIKE THIS"

"Don't think it's the baking alone that makes you such a treat, good beans. Not at all. It's the sauce you're with . . . the A-1 Sauce. There's nothing that flavors beans quite so deliciously as a sprinkle of this thick, savory table sauce. It makes them much more appetizing . . . why even more digestible. Because A-1 Sauce is a perfect blend of delicate spices and seasonings . . . the flavor that makes baked beans tastier than ever before."

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Check those you need and send stamps, check or money-order (not cash) to Good Housekeeping Bulletin Service, 57th Street at 8th Avenue, New York.

$20 a week from HOME MADE CANDY

THAT is what Bertha Jenkins of Cambridge, Mass., makes through Lewis candy methods in spare time. Start at home. We teach you recipe secrets, furnish professional candy-maker's outfit, tell you what to make, how to sell. You can be successful, like hundreds of others. Write at once for FREE BOOK. Lewis Training Institute, Dept. 2421-CF (A Division of Lewis Hotel Training Schools), Washington, D. C.

"Surely Lenin's works are not allowed in America!" interrupted Petrov.

"Yes, they are!" said Ivanov. "She's right. But we Communists may read anything we like, citizeness. The censorship is only for the others."

"Do you think there will be a Communist revolution in America?" I asked.

"*Boodit!* (There will be!)" they both answered with smiling assurance.

"*Nye boodit!*" we answered just as assuredly. "The American workmen don't want it, and besides, we had a revolution in 1775 against oppression."

We discussed the relative merits of our revolution and the Civil War, but they didn't consider them apropos at all. But it was interesting to hear and realize how much they knew about the history of political upheavals.

"It is your bourgeois class that must be exterminated, your property owners," said Ivanov.

"Then you will have to exterminate most of the population of America. Our workers are bourgeois."

They shook their heads, tolerant of my obtuseness.

"I see you have no understanding of Marx, no ideology," said Petrov sadly.

"Perhaps not, but before we go, let us wish you every success with your social and cultural work; and if your political system should prove better than ours, America will be the first to want to profit by it, just as you are profiting by our industrial ideals. However, we do not think that the manifestations of prosperity here have yet proved that your system is better than ours, and until they do we rather think that you should discontinue your efforts to tear down our government."

Ivanov smiled and I continued:

"And if ever we should change our government, we should wish to do it without the blood of innocents running in the street. Can you possibly wish to see duplicated in a happy, prosperous country what has occurred here between 1917 and 1921?"

"Lenin says there can be no revolution without bloodshed!"

THIS is the impasse in the Bolshevik mind, and when it is reached a discussion automatically ends. We stood up to go.

Ivanov said kindly: "After you have been in Russia a little longer, and speak the language better, won't you come back and see us again? We are so interested in hearing about America. We want to hear if you can explain to us an excuse for the lynching of negroes, and we can tell you a great deal about Communism. You must know how beautiful it is!"

We promised to return, if possible, and he continued,

"I hope your trip from Suzdal was not too cold and that the government sleigh was comfortable."

"We didn't come in the government sleigh; we came in one we had engaged before," answered Helen.

"But the soldiers paid for it, didn't they?" he asked quickly.

"*Paid* for it! They certainly did *not!* They even expected us to pay for theirs!"

Ivanov looked surprised. "That was entirely wrong! I shall have the money sent to you in Moscow." He took out a pencil and paper for our address.

I interrupted. "Never mind about the money, but will you do us a favor? We have worked hard over those photographs, and they are important to us. After you have had them developed and taken out the ones of the prison, won't you forward them to me in Moscow?"

He hesitated, then he wrote down the address I gave him.

"Thank you so much!"

We moved toward the door. I turned back for a parting shot.

"It will be nice for us then, because now the Soviet Government will have to pay for developing them, and we won't!"

How I MADE UP *for* JOHN'S *Shrunken* PAY CHECK

How a little Home Business Brought Independence

"They've cut our piece rate again," John said bitterly as he gloomily ate his supper. "I've been working at top speed and then only making a bare living, but now—"

It had been hard enough before, but now—with John's pay check even smaller—I feared it would be impossible to make ends meet.

Idly I fingered thru the pages of a magazine and saw an advertisement telling how women at home were making good money every week in their spare time supplying Brown Bobby greaseless doughnuts.

"Why can't you do the same?" I asked myself. "Why can't you do what others have done? Investigate!" I did. In a few days I received details of the Brown Bobby plan. It seemed too good to be true because it showed how I, without neglecting my housework or little Jimmy, could easily make money.

Well, to make the story short, I went into the business without telling John. I passed out sample Brown Bobbys to my friends, gave out a few samples around restaurants, lined up a couple grocery stores. In my first week I sold enough Brown Bobbys at an average profit of 15c a dozen to more than make up for John's cut in salary.

When John brought home his next pay check, he threw it down on the table and said gloomily, "I'm sorry, honey, but it's the best I can do."

"It's not the best you can do, darling," and I almost cried when I told him of the money I had made selling Brown Bobbys. It was the happiest moment in my life.

Inside of three weeks John quit his job at the factory to devote all his time to Brown Bobbys. Now we are dissatisfied with our former income.

Women interested in making extra money regularly every week in their spare time are invited to write for details of the Brown Bobby plan to Food Display Machine Corp., Dept. 499, Chicago, Ill.

Food Display Machine Corp.,
Dept. 499, 500-510 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.
Without cost send me details of your Brown Bobby Plan.

Name ....

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The **Sift-Chine**
(SIFT-ING MA-CHINE)

Not an ordinary flour sifter, but a sifting machine. Highest quality—built to last for years. One hand operates—quickly—easily. Permits constant stirring while sifting. Double screen—one operation sifts contents twice. Avoids scattering flour. Eliminates lumpy baking. Approved by Good Housekeeping Institute, Modern Priscilla Proving Plant and other Bureaus. Used and endorsed by foremost food authorities, home economic experts and demonstrators. Highly polished finish. Also furnished with handles in Green, Red, Yellow or Blue. Money-back guarantee. At dealer's or postpaid for..... $1.00

"Just Squeeze the Handle"

★ *Look for this Map of India on the package of tea you buy.*

INDIA TEA

Luxury in Tea at a modest price

INDIA TEA costs no more than "plain Jane" teas . . . and it brings to you the peak of luxury in tea flavor. Next time you buy tea, see that the Map of India is on the package of tea you buy! It is your guarantee that you are getting genuine India Tea.

THE UNEXPECTED GUEST . . .

is welcomed at all times by the hospitable housewife who uses The Settlement Cook Book. With the deft hand of the magician, she can transform a simple family meal into a company dinner—easily and quickly, she prepares an intriguing appetizer, some fluffy muffins, a savory salad with a piquant dressing, a new and unusual dessert—and presto! Dinner is served!

The Settlement Cook Book

By Mrs. Simon Kander

with its 2,675 recipes, tested in a home kitchen, is rich in suggestions for building interesting menus, inexpensive and well balanced. No household is complete without it.

White washable oil-cloth binding, handy index . . . . wherever books are sold or send check or money order direct.

PRICE **$2.50**
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THE SETTLEMENT COOK BOOK CO.
474 Bradford Ave. :: Milwaukee, Wis.

In using advertisements see page 6

Save PENNIES AND SPOIL THE CAKE

A WOMAN will pay fancy prices for strictly fresh eggs; she will pay a few cents more a quart for Grade-A milk; she will buy the best flour, butter and sugar and then *save* a few pennies by buying a cheap vanilla extract, or even a vanilla substitute.

The raw taste of cheap vanilla substitutes, or the insipid flavor of weak vanilla extracts will spoil the costliest materials. It is far better economy to pay a few pennies more for the vanilla and get the true extract. If you ask your grocer for Dr. Price's Vanilla Extract you will get true vanilla—famous for its quality for more than 75 years.

Like all good things it takes a long time to make Price's Vanilla. Weeks to extract the essence from the sun-cured vanilla beans; months to age it to the proper mellowness. Because Price's Vanilla is the true essence, it has the delicate bouquet of an orchid; it has a deliciousness that makes cakes and cookies, custards and puddings, ice creams and candies so delightfully good. It is real economy to pay a few pennies more for Price's—the true Vanilla Extract.

★ DR PRICE'S VANILLA

The Price Flavoring Extract Co.
237 E. Superior St., Chicago, Ill.

Gentlemen: Please send me your FREE recipe book, "Delicious Desserts and Candies," as advertised in the Sept. issue of *Good Housekeeping*.

Name ____________
(Print name and address.)

St. or R.F.D. ____________

City ____________ *State* ____________

Prisoners of the Cheka

Both officers laughed.

"What are the pictures?" Ivanov asked.

"All the churches of Vladimir and Suzdal, and about six photographs of the prison."

Again he hesitated. "Oh, take them all," he finally said. "The Soviets can not afford to develop them!"

He helped us put them in our knapsack with the papers, and on the desk remained only Helen's beautiful red and white watercolor. She looked at it questioningly and then looked at him.

He shook his head and then turned it over. On the back was written in large, red letters, "This picture is not to go out of the Soviet Union."

"I can do nothing."

"Then give it to the Suzdal Museum with my compliments," said Helen.

We were out in the street again and rushed to the museum, where good Comrade Selezniov was most glad and surprised to see us. He told us he had worried to death about us. I returned his scarf to him, a bit the worse for wear, and he gave me as a souvenir a copy of his collection of anti-religious poems.

Our time was getting very short—in fact, we had only five minutes to catch the train. A sleigh was waiting outside, and all hands of the museum piled it high with holy robes, and a few old ikons which we had bought as well. I think they all thought we were mad. Somehow or other we climbed on to the pile ourselves and started down the hill at breakneck speed.

HALFWAY down I yelled, "*Brrrr!*" which is Russian for whoa! I had forgotten the most important ikon. "*Abratna! Abratna!* (Back)" I called, and we turned on one runner to gallop up the hill again.

A boy was standing in consternation with the object, and I grabbed it as we turned again on one runner. It was just like reaching for the golden ring on the merry-go-round. Down the hill again like thunder! The train was in.

I rushed to the ticket office. You can not get tickets on the train in Russia. I got out to the platform and saw our driver and three porters heaving ikons and robes on to the car, while Helen looked for me up and down, wild-eyed. I swung on just as the train started, and scattered tips behind me.

The beautiful things were piled up high in the snow and mud on the platform, and we hadn't the energy to move them. I looked up at the platform of the adjoining car. I couldn't believe my eyes. There, with a scornful grin, stood the G.P.U. officer from Suzdal—the one with the black beard who had appeared from nowhere to take charge of our case. He had a cigarette in the corner of his mouth and was most amused, watching our struggles.

"Why, how do you do?" I said with a mixture of surprise and embarrassment.

"How do you do? May I assist you?" he answered.

He helped us kindly to drag our heavy loot into the coach, and somehow at the end of half an hour it was stored up on the third-class shelf.

We had to stand in the murky air at first. The place was jammed. We finally got seats, and I maneuvered across the aisle from the G.P.U. man. I wanted to get into conversation with him. Opposite him was a nice-looking young soldier. I tried to think of an opening, and a weak one sufficed.

"I beg your pardon, citizen, but could you tell me the names of the two G.P.U. officers in Vladimir?"

"I'm sorry I do not know them!"

"But you sent us to them!"

"Yes, but you see I do not live in Suzdal. I have never seen the Vladimir officers. Why do you want to know their names?"

"I want to send them a book about America."

"Just send it 'G.P.U., Vladimir,' and it will reach them."

"But have you never been in Suzdal before?" I asked. Something had occurred to me.

"No," he answered. "I was just there for a few days, on special business."

"Oh," I said smiling, "foreigners there!"

He grinned. "No, it was not that. It was something else."

I looked at him and wondered. Perhaps we had been followed the whole time.

"Well, citizen, we are not prisoners—at least, I don't think we are. In Vladimir they didn't find us as dangerous as you did. I suppose you still think we are contra-revolutionary spies."

He pooh-poohed the idea.

"They gave us back all our films, too!" I added maliciously.

"Including the prison ones?"

"Yes, yes, *da! da! da!*"

He was distinctly peeved.

"Well, what do you think of Soviet Russia, citizeness?"

I groaned at the thought of another political discussion, but it was inevitable. It was impossible to tell this man anything. He knew it all. He received my answers to all his questions with scornful amusement. It was decidedly irritating. I told him that Italians working in gardens in America get five or six dollars a day.

"Now, think of that!" he answered sarcastically, and turned to the soldier across the aisle. "The actual average wage of the Italian laborer in America is a dollar and a half a day!"

"You don't believe what I tell you because you don't wish to, but the facts remain." A few minutes later I added: "Whatever may be our disagreement of ideas, we are all terribly interested in your experiment, and though we think our own system better, we wish you every luck with yours and hope that you will be able to carry it out with success."

I didn't think I could say much more, and was sincere in my wish, but it hit the wrong chord.

"Hope! citizeness, hope! You *are* kind. Do let me thank you in the name of the Soviet Government!"

I WAS unable to cope with this continuous sarcasm directed against my friendly comments. I settled back into a coma. The wheels groaned and crunched in the snow. I dozed for an hour or so.

"Citizeness!" It was the voice of the officer.

I looked over wearily.

"Let us play!" He sounded friendly and a little sorry for his former attitude.

He leaned forward in the aisle and held out his two hands, palms up. He wore octagonal glasses, and his black eyes pierced through them. I didn't understand.

"Look!"

He turned to the soldier opposite him, and for a second they played that game where you place your palms on those of your adversary, and he tries to slap the backs of your hands before you can get away. Then he held out his palms to me. He had tiny hands, as soft as a child's, but they slapped mine every time. The whole car watched. We played and laughed for a quarter of an hour. He completely outclassed me.

"Now, which has the better government, Russia or America?" he asked.

I engaged in a combat with the young soldier and beat him as badly as the officer had beaten me.

"You are wrong!" I turned laughing to the officer. "The Russian Secret Service is better than the American, but the American People's Government is better than the Communist Dictatorship!"

I settled back in another coma. Helen was asleep in her corner. It was almost dark in the car. The wheels droned on.

[THE END]