Experiences in Russia 1931

A DIARY

FOREWORD

This book is written in the form of a diary. Most of it consists of interviews with Russians in every walk of life, - the object being to obtain a cross-section of public opinion about the things that are transpiring in their country's remarkable experiment in practical Socialism. No attempt has been made to reach conclusions, and the reader may from his own opinions.

The Author.

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PREFACE

IN 1932 Russia finds herself in revolutionary chaos compared with which the shots and terror of 1917-18 were but dramatic episodes. This is the revolution of the Five-Year Plan which is changing the whole life of the country even more than the initial seizing of power by the Bolsheviks fifteen years ago. The aim of this new Communist Party set before it. These new rulers of Russia, having issued a challenge to the age-old rights of private property, are attempting to build up a State where the good of the community, and not the private profit of the individual, shall be the guiding motive, where classes shall disappear, and where all shall receive according to their needs and give according to their abilities. Throughout the centuries, philosophers have talked of such a State, but up to 1917 their arguments were based upon pure theory. Today, however, the ideas propounded by Socialist thinkers are being put into practice. How do they work out in real life*?*

It was in quest of an answer to this question that I was permitted to accompany the author of this diary to Russia in the autumn of 1931 when the Soviet citizens were in the very thick of the struggle to build up Socialism. I believe the author's approach was as non-partisan and open-minded as possible for any one reared under a regime of Capitalism.

With a knowledge of Russia and the Russian language, it was possible to get off the beaten path, to talk with grimy workers and rough peasants, as well as such leaders as Lenin's widow and Karl Radek. We visited vast engineering projects and factories, slept on the bug-infested floors of peasants' huts, shared black bread and cabbage soup with the villagers—in short, got into direct touch with the Russian people in their struggle for existence and were thus able to test their reactions to the Soviet Government's dramatic moves.

It was an experience of tremendous interest and value as a study of a land in the grip of a proletarian revolution.

GARETH R.V. JONES.

Experiences in Russia 1931

OFF FOR RUSSIA

First Day

A trip to Russia by a Soviet boat may justly kindle the imagination in this hectic year of 1931 when that country is the cynosure of the remaining five-sixths of the world. Much we have read, much heard—now we shall see first hand what it all means.

Jones and I embarked from London on the Soviet steamer Rudzutak at 7:30 p.m. We had expected to get a good meal on board, but got only tea, served in a glass mug, and bread, cold ham, sausage, and cheese. The boat, a 5,000-ton cargo and passenger steamer, was neat and clean; the lounge and dining saloon were nicely decorated. Quite a surprise!

The passenger list, though lacking in brilliance, looked promising in variety, a party of scientists on tour, another group of some sort, an English Co-operative Store delegation, and many Russians (assorted flavors).

In roaming about the boat we discovered a "Lenin Corner" in the crew's quarters, where stood a fine bust of Lenin himself, and also several photographs of various Party leaders and generals. A piano, a ping-pong set, and a radio completed this scenery. Nearby, a bulletin board was plastered with Communist propaganda and amazingly true statements regarding the present world depression.

As a matter of interest, I have copied a translation, made by Jones, of this wall newspaper. The paper is the work of one of the crew and illustrates the sort of propaganda of an unintelligent nature found everywhere. Of course, it is quite typical, and the sheer quantity of such similar stuff must have a great influence on the workers. It was titled:

"Two Worlds — The World of Capitalism and The World of Growing Socialism."

Here is Jones's translation:

"August 1st is the International Red Day of the struggle of the revolutionary proletariat against the dangers of imperialist wars and the threats of attack on the U.S.S.R.

"August 1st is the eve of a deepening of the world economic crisis and of an unprecedented embitterment of conflicts between Capitalist countries, and especially between the systems of building Socialism and decaying Capitalism.

"A world economic crisis has gripped all Capitalist countries. The fundamental features of this are a violent cutting down of production, a sharp decline of the internal markets, together with the impoverishment of working masses by a colossal growth of

unemployment, and a tremendous cutting down of the foreign markets. Wages have been cut, the working day lengthened, and millions of peasants have been ruined through a fall in the price of agricultural products, high taxes, and rents. The attack of Capitalism on the workers' standards of living has led to increased mortality, suicides, and crime. The world bourgeoisie is struggling, with the active help of the Social Democrats, to guarantee a way out of a crisis at the expense of the working masses. They are organizing terrorist Fascist bands, and threatening the workers' revolutionary organization; are depriving the workers of the right of assembly and press; are shooting unemployed and strikers; and are suppressing peasant movements.

"While in Russia"— etc., etc.

A glowing picture of the accomplishments of Communism followed.

Second Day

The sea is very rough today, and this 5,000-ton boat is not like the Berengaria! Sick as a pup! Stayed in bed and slept and cursed our luck. Couldn't do anything else — awful sissy!

Tonight we learned that the boat will put into Hamburg for at least twenty-four hours to load a cargo of German machinery. This will delay everything badly — fed up!

This same boat has just brought from Russia, to dump into England, 2,000 tons of butter, which will undersell the English or Danish product by thirty percent. Dumping?

"No," say the Russians, "we sell at the highest price we can in any market in order to obtain foreign credits."

HAMBURG

Third Day

We were supposed to arrive at Hamburg at noon, but did not dock until 2:30, and then had to wait two hours for the police to come aboard, before any passengers were allowed ashore. Finally, we asked the captain if we could disembark, to which he casually remarked:

"Oh yes, the police have been here an hour!"

Jones reported a conversation with a sailor he found loafing in the "Lenin Corner." This sailor had been a member of the Party since 1926, and said that about sixty percent of the crew were of the Communist Party.

"What will Russia be like in ten years?" Jones asked.

"Stalin doesn't say."

"Isn't Stalin's speech opposed to the principles of Communism?" Jones inquired.

"Oh, no! came the response. "You see, we have Communism for years and years — twenty, fifty, a hundred, or two hundred years. We are now only entering Socialism. When Communism comes, all classes will have disappeared, and all will be able to obtain everything they want. There will be complete equality. We are working toward that; we must now be sure to act according to the doctrine. 'He who will not work, shall not eat.' So, if a man doesn't work, he is not to have money nor bread nor anything else. We started off in the beginning with equal pay, but it gave advantages to the lazy man, so we soon abolished that.

"There are still classes in Russia. The Kulak still exists. There are still bourgeois producers. They must be stamped

Another conversation between two sailors concerning the old and the new army was translated by Jones as follows:

"It was much better in the Czarist Army than it is in the Red Army now," said one.

The other retorted hotly:

"No, no, it was three times worse!"

Contradictory opinions of this kind are rather puzzling.

A further conversation with another sailor revealed some interesting facts about the crew of the boat. The captain has only administrative power, and the ship is really run by a committee of three men, the president of the committee, who may be an ordinary sailor; the captain, and the secretary of the Party "cell," or organization on the boat. The captain and first mate are "civil servants," while other members of the crew are in the category of "workers." The former are better educated, receive higher pay, and can get better things for personal use. The peasants are in another category. It is possible to move from one category to another. If the civil servant is a member of the Party his maximum wage is 315 rubles per month, but there are only two million Party members in Russia out of a total population of 160 million.

Jones asked whether he, a schoolmaster's son, would be eligible for Party membership.

"Yes," was the reply, "as neither your father nor yourself has exploited the workers. On the contrary, your father has been educating the people. A preliminary probation period is, of course, necessary—six months for a worker, maybe two years for others."

The seaman said:

"Trotsky was too much under the influence of foreigners. He was a valuable man in his time, but now we have no further use for him. Trotsky stood for a 'world revolution' as the only means of putting Russia into a Communistic state." He also maintained that the peasants, being in the majority, were the mainstay of the government. Stalin, on the other hand, stands for the national idea of Communism in Russia first, and his policy is to work with the minority group, the city proletarian.

"World revolution is bound to come," the sailor continued. "Everywhere there are strikes and discontent.

He added that before long Russia would become absolutely independent of the rest of the world.

"But Russia will always have to import goods," said Jones.

"No," declared the sailor, "Russia is going to be self-sufficient. She will import for five years or so and then stop. We will soon be able to make all the manufactured goods we need. We do not like the campaigns carried on in England against Russia. The English Socialists are traitors, tools in the hands of the bourgeoisie. They are merely opportunists. The English people have not suffered and hungered like the Russians, or they would not be so easy in dealing with their exploiters. The time will come when they will believe in a bloody revolution." Jones asked this same fellow a few questions regarding lotteries in Russia.

Jones: "What good is the winning of a lottery to a man in Russia.

Sailor: "The winner might invest the money in a Five-Year Plan Loan, receiving interest of six to nine percent. He could win a prize of 2,000 to 20,000 rubles in Obligations and receive interest."

Jones: **"**But that would make him a Kulak or petty bourgeois."

Sailor: "Yes, he might buy a house or a car, but he would have to sacrifice fifty to seventy percent of the prize to the State in the form of taxation. He would no longer be able to get tickets to buy food at the cheap rate. His food would cost five times as much."

An English Co-operative member interrupted at this point with the remark that, "It is a case of 'the pot calling the kettle black', when Russia upbraids other nations for exploiting the workers, because Russia's method of dealing with winners of lotteries is nothing more than an exploitation."

The sailor continued:

"In the beginning, educated people joined the Party for their own profit. They were useful at first as educators to speed up production, but then later they were removed by the 'Chistka,' which is the Russian method of periodically removing the inefficient. The word literally means 'cleansing'."

Another member of the group remarked:

"I remember when Lenin came to my factory. He was just an ordinary little man. He looked like a muzhik [peasant] and spoke simply. He came to the factory and asked people to show their hands. Some wore diamond rings. He shouted to them, 'You swine! You have been exploiting the workers'."

Jones and I took the ferry to the city of Hamburg and went to a restaurant located on the Lake Alster. It had been well known for decades as a gay meeting place for "diners out," but tonight it was deserted.

A talk with the head waiter revealed the seriousness of the political situation. Fortunately, the referendum to dissolve the Prussian Parliament had not been carried, but there was still considerable Communist unrest. Several shootings had taken place in Hamburg, and there had been a street fight in Berlin, when thirty-seven were severely injured. An offer of a 20,000-mark reward for the capture of the Reds who had murdered three Berlin police officers was blazed across the first page of the newspaper.

One could not fail to be deeply impressed by the tense atmosphere, charged with the rumblings of anarchy and revolution.

Fourth Day

I spent the morning and early afternoon in Hamburg writing letters and visiting the art gallery, where there was a fine display of Rembrandts. We also saw some of the city's modernistic buildings. Rather good, I thought, and quite original, but with a little too much of the German tendency toward the grotesque. There were amazing elevators in one apartment house, consisting of an endless, constantly moving chain of compartments into which one stepped and went up or down.

The boat was supposed to sail at 5:00 p.m., but did not leave until 5:00 a.m., so we went ashore for dinner. It was grand to get away from that boat! We seriously considered flying, since we were already two days late, but we gave up the idea out of consideration for our families, and the added expense.

Fifth Day

We awoke this morning to find ourselves sailing slowly through the Kiel canal, with flat farming country and sparsely scattered houses on both sides.

I spent the morning reading, and talking with a Scotch Communist. He was one of the most radical men imaginable, but in spite of my laughing at some of his absurd statements, he always maintained a sense of humor. I learned that he had been a member of the Communist Party for ten years, and for nine years had been out of work. He hailed from Glasgow. This was my first real contact with a devoted Communist who knew quite a bit about his Marxian philosophy. I was amazed by the ridiculous radicalism expressed in this statement:

"Al Capone and Jack Diamond are tools of the bourgeois employed to break strikes and intimidate workers."

An atheist too, he believes that "religion is the opium of the people."

I asked him how it was that Christ and His teachings had been remembered two thousand years. He replied that these Christian beliefs had been fostered by the bourgeois to dope the workers with superstition, and to keep them confused.

Further views on religion were expressed by him and a Mrs. Bromley, a working woman of London. They object to what they call the insincerity and outward sham of the Catholic Church in particular, and claim that the higher authorities get good salaries and live a life of exploitation and secret vice. They ridicule what they call the ceremonial hokum, and decry the custom of paying money to the priest when one marries. Furthermore, the Catholic religion, in their opinion, removes opportunity for free choice and free thought; the child must be confirmed at seven, must learn as the Church teaches, under penalty of damnation.

We talked of great men. Comrade Reid, the Scotsman, believes that Lenin and Marx are the only truly great men of the past or present, because they have constructively aided the proletariat.

"But what about a person like Queen Elizabeth?" I asked.

"All such characters are but details of history, the product of their economic environment," he replied.

"What about a man like Edison? I inquired. "Did he not benefit humanity and the civilized world?"

"No," he declared. "Edison was exploited by the bourgeois, too. But unconsciously he abetted the rationalization of the Capitalist world by his inventions, and in so doing his work caused greater unemployment, and consequently helped to destroy Capitalism."

The Communist mind feels that to benefit humanity it is only necessary to help the proletariat, and his outlook is therefore as narrow as my question was broad.

We discussed war with Soviet Russia. Our friend, the Clydesider, felt that war is the only way out of the crisis. He is not afraid of a bloody revolution. You cannot expect the bourgeois to voluntarily relinquish his present advantage without a struggle, in his opinion.

"Why, Hoover and Lloyd George are plotting war with Soviet Russia," declared Reid. "Would not America and England like to own the Soviet oil fields, their timber, their other material resources? Certainly! And what are all the campaigns against Russia's 'dumping,' 'convict labor,' and 'religious persecution' but the beginning of a war of intervention?"

"But," queried Jones, "has not history shown by the example of Napoleon's march on Moscow, and the 'White' Intervention of 1918 that Russia cannot be conquered?"

"Ah, now there are airplanes and poison gas," came the reply. "And why are the nations arguing today? Why is there more money spent on weapons now than in 1913?"

Not much else happened today, only a five-hour delay in the Kiel canal while we took on oil. They say we will not dock for three days.

Sixth Day

We had a beautiful sunny morning with a smooth sea.

I enjoyed an amusing talk with a Russian who had been a contractor in Chicago for twenty years. A most amusing old chap he was, with Communist ideas. He had lost most of his money in Chicago banks that had closed.

"All that money of mine," he said, "was taken by bankers and given to Fascists and Germans. The Capitalist is like a tiger—beautiful, but just try to deal with him!

"In America, if you steal a million dollars, the government pats you on the back and says 'good boy', but if you steal fourteen cents, you get fourteen years! American schools are bad; children learn to whistle and spit and say 'my old man'—they show no respect for their families!"

I read and wrote until tea time, after which I started a casual talk with the Scotch Communist. Three hours later we quit, having gathered fifteen or more persons into the argument. Said our friend:

"Economic freedom is the ultimate aim of Soviet Russia; there is no freedom in bourgeois countries, because the bourgeois control the press and the right to assemble.

"We must have in England a Cheka [political police] more ruthless than in Russia.

"The Soviet Government's first obligations are to the working class of the world. Therefore, if any of the treaties or undertakings signed by the U.S.S.R. clash with the interest of the proletariat, these treaties will be immediately repudiated."

"Do you believe the Soviet Government would abide by the German and Italian treaties of the present if they turned out detrimental to the proletariat?" we asked.

"Of course not. At present they coincide with our interests.

"World revolution is inevitable; each country will apply voluntarily for membership in the U.S.S.R. Germany is to be next. In India, the task of the British

Communist Party is to fight for the freedom of the workers and the peasants against bourgeois governors.

"The present belief is that Capitalism itself will bring about its own downfall. Russia does not believe in sending money abroad, and is quite right in concentrating on the Five-Year Plan. Its success is the best propaganda. The workers of the world will see Russia a brilliant success and proceed to establish a Communist state.

"There have been three periods in the progress or decline of Capitalism, according to the Russian outlook. These periods were:

"1. 1918-23 - Period of upward tendency.
"2. 1923-28 - Period of temporary stabilization.
"3. 1928 -Period of rapid and final decline.

"The contradictions in the Capitalistic system are necessarily increasing. Rivalry for world markets, which are steadily contracting, will lead to war. This conflict will end in civil war and revolution. The present period of world Capitalism is the period of wage cuts, oppression in the colonies, and unemployment.

Changing the subject, he said:

"Bourgeois doctors are all superstitious; they do not know their jobs; they don't tell you what is wrong with you. They ask how you feel, give you medicine, and then look in a medical book to learn what troubles you. They take no interest in the patient, and work only for the bourgeois who pay them."

This evening we again had an argument, a considerable number of saloon passengers, both Communist and non-Communist participating. But the revolutionaries were so numerous and so unreasonable that they might have swamped me, had it not been for the timely arrival of Joneski. Then we flayed 'em!

Seventh Day

It was very nice and sunny this morning as we lay, with several others, on the forward deck taking a sun bath.

I managed to get into conversation with a Labor M. P. who was interested enough in Russia to make a trip there with a friend. It is strange how sane and conservative he seemed after my talks with the Communists, although this type of Laborite is generally considered a radical Socialist. It was rather a relief to hear that there is still some hope for Capitalism. He said that Communism is dying out in England, where they can claim only 2,000 Party men. It does not flourish in England, he believes, because Communism is contrary to the fundamentals of British character and tradition; and also because of the British workers' hatred of theory, and of their desire for self-government. If they want Communism in England, they can get it by the ballot. Then the British have an intrinsic love of law and order, and a hatred of violence, and finally a feeling for family unity and morality. It is not unfair to say that Communism destroys the former deliberately, and tends to weaken the latter, he feels.

A discussion and explanation of Communism by our Scotsman tonight brought a retort from the Labor M. P.

I soon found that the Communists consider all Labor M. P.'s as traitors to the cause of the proletariat, on the theory that beneath the guise of Labor they further the ends of the Capitalist. The resulting debate was a real battle of the classes. Each of the warriors was housed in a rhinoceros hide of righteousness, and armed with the mighty sword of oratory and the dagger of invective. Cut and slash as they might for nearly two hours, no blood was drawn. Then someone yawned, and someone else said it was bedtime, anyway.

Eighth Day

Nothing extraordinary happened today. I wish we would hurry up and get there. The service on this boat has been typically Russian. No one has touched our cabins or made our beds since we came on board at London. When we speak to the officers or crew, we generally get a surly reply. Our steward walks around the dining room at breakfast unshaved, unwashed, and collarless; by lunch time he usually looks a little better. I shall have no regrets when we disembark tomorrow.

I heard a rather radical expression from a Communist, but it was quite typical of the Party's uncompromising attitude.

"There is no use drenching the Trade Unions in words," he said. "We must drench them in blood!"

I think a little soap box oratory of this sort in America would do much to suppress any Communistic tendency.

Our Scots friend said gaily on sighting Leningrad:

"There is the Soviet Fatherland; Fatherland of the workers of the world, and the envy of the Bourgeoisie!"

And we all had a good last laugh together!

It was dark when we entered Leningrad Harbour; small cargo boats steamed by us showing only their red and green lights. Beacons flashed, boats whistled; it might have been any port, but it was Russia — and the beginning of a great adventure!

After a long delay we moved up the river. Although it was after midnight, the wharves on both sides were loading and unloading, mostly grain, lumber, and machinery. Winches droned, cargoes thumped, men shouted, arc lights spluttered overhead they were not idle, those Russians.

It was 2 a.m. when we finally docked, but we were not allowed to disembark until the next morning.

LENINGRAD

Ninth Day

We were met at the dock by an In-tourist man this morning. He took us through the Customs before anyone else — courtesy of the port for Lloyd George's former secretary! (Jones.) Our interpreter also appeared — a charming young lady of about twenty-seven, very intelligent, with excellent command of English and French. She had been with George Bernard Shaw when he visited Russia.

A new Ford touring car was waiting at the curb for us, and we tore away at a breakneck pace over very bumpy cobble stone streets. Somehow we arrived, without killing anyone, at the Hotel Europe, Leningrad's best. Here we were fortunate to have a room with bath.

This morning we drove about thirty-five miles in a charabanc, with some other Americans, to see a Soviet sanatorium, and the famous Winter Palace. This sanatorium is for sickly children from four to twelve years old, and provides free medical attention and supervision for workers' children. It was in excellent order and quite clean.

The amazing thing was the amount of Soviet propaganda on posters everywhere about the institution. The children had helped to make these posters with pictures cut from magazines, and some of the lines we read were

"Let us carry out the Five-Year Plan in four years." (This in big red letters).
Another was titled "Defenders of the U.S.S.R.," accompanied by pictures of guns, battleships and soldiers.

Another said: "Children of the whole world are one family," this thought being illustrated with pictures of children of various races and nationalities.

Another poster said: "The Shock Brigade work is our method; the Five-Year Plan is our aim."

The Shock Brigade is a group of enthusiastic and efficient workers who go to factories or farms to speed up production by their own energetic labor and superior ability. They are often accompanied by a considerable amount of ballyhoo, in the form of banners and posters, proclaiming their accomplishments and urging the "boys" to fight hard for the "Pyatelatka" (Five-Year Plan). Frequently, however, their strenuous efforts result in breaking machines through careless handling and over-speeding.

Jones managed to talk with the parents of some children at the sanatorium. It was visiting day. One little girl was called Elimira, the name being derived from "Electrification of the World," as well as being an old Russian one. A little boy had been at the sanatorium twice, and didn't want to go home, although his parents were allowed to see him only once a month. I thought his attitude strange, but they did not

appear to mind it at all, and even seemed glad to have him out of the way and well taken care of. "I want to be an engineer when I grow up," said a little girl, aged eight.

We went to visit the ancient palace built by Catherine. Here were beautifully and richly decorated rooms in the Baroque style similar in magnificence to those at Versailles. A great contrast was the recent Czar's palace and quarters, bourgeois in taste and ugly in decoration. His bedroom had around eight hundred icons on the walls, and both he and the Czarina had had a most amazing display of junk, awful pottery, and religious relics, including a dried fish and some cheap wooden souvenir spoons from Mt. Athos. There were frightful, sentimental pictures everywhere, especially ones of the Annunciation, for the Czarina wanted a son badly.

Even here the Soviet had placed posters in the ante-rooms, some of which read as follows:

"Proletarians be ready for the aerial defence of the U.S.S.R."

"Soviet airships will be a great factor in the Socialist reconstruction,"

"On August 1st, let us be brave fighters for the Chinese Revolution."

These Communists never let a chance slip to put over their propaganda.

We returned to Leningrad and dined "on the pink slip" given to us by the In tourist, and entitling us to a first rate meal of caviare, soup, meat, and dessert. The same meal would have cost the casual diner:

Caviare 5 rubles
Soup 2 rubles
Meat 2 to 3 rubles, 50 kopecks
Dessert 1 ruble, 25 to 50 kopecks
Tea 50 kopecks

Total 10 to 12 rubles, or $5 to $6. Not exactly cheap!

A fine roof garden overlooks the city, and here one dines in luxury.

In reckoning in rubles, it should be remembered that there is an inflation in Russia, and that a ruble might be worth anywhere from ten cents to fifty cents, according to the place where you buy. In the private market, a ruble is worth about ten cents to twenty cents; in the Co-ops., it might be worth thirty cents to forty cents. In a bank, you receive two rubles for a dollar, but a speculator will give eight, ten or more for a dollar.

We "lunched" at five. Below us lay the roofs of the city, drab and dirty. But here and there a great cathedral dome stretched up from the undergrowth. Nearby shone the jeweled monument of a famous church. Its pointed turrets of colored glass flashed in the sun, while below, on the housetops, the radio antennae interlaced like the cobwebs of unkempt places.

So this was the famous Leningrad, home of the Czars, and center of the gay-lived nobility! Dilapidated, senile "droshki" (carriages) replace the bright, sporty carriages of bygone splendor. A muddy, rough, and badly kept esplanade along the river survives a once famous drive. Broken windows, dirty, scaly, and unpainted house-fronts remain the grim reminders of what was. Only the main street looks decent, for last spring three thousand painters were set at work to plaster and paint there.

The trains are filled to overflowing - packed. Everywhere there are long queues of persons waiting for their oil, soap, bread, or other food ration. Everybody must wait for what he gets. Even that is uncertain! The workers' Co-ops. sell cheaply, but one must have a card or pay five times as much - one does so in the private market. But there are few private traders left, an occasional street hawker selling vegetables, a barber, or a watch worker, or a baker. They are fast vanishing. Even the corner kiosk and the bootblacks are State managed. A shine cost me fifty kopecks.

Torgsin, the name given to the new State shops where one can buy only with foreign currency, is the latest development in cheap buying. Here one can buy food, cigarettes, and a few simple commodities, at a price comparable to American prices plus about twenty per cent. One article was quite cheap - cigarettes ten cents, but they were of an inferior quality.

A notable feature of the streets was the number of drunks. They frequently get into fights with the police. This evening a fine scrap occurred right in front of the hotel, when a drunk fell, and was knocked unconscious. They say the reason for so much drunkenness is the lack of food, for the Russian is accustomed to drink vodka with his meals. But taken without food, vodka is disastrously intoxicating.

The Russians show inconsistency by proclaiming in some of their posters that religion and drunkenness are enemies of the Five-Year Plan, while at the same time they sell to the people vodka which is distilled - at a large profit - by the State vodka trust.

The police here have just received new uniforms, and wear white gloves. Everyone is very proud!

Our guide, quite smartly dressed, informed us about the price of clothes. Russian-made silk stockings cost from twenty-three to seventy-five rubles per pair, and the shoes she was wearing cost one hundred rubles. The better dressed women buy materials in the regular Co- op. stores and then have them made into clothes by private dressmakers.

Tonight at the hotel, a little boy with fair hair and an intelligent face came up to Jones and asked him if he had any foreign money to sell,

"How much will you give?" he asked, when Jones said he would be willing to sell dollars for rubles.

"I'll give you a dollar for six rubles," said Jones, "but isn't it dangerous to do this?"

"Yes, it is dangerous, but 'nichevo' [It does not matter]!" and he shrugged his shoulders. "The G.P.U. are everywhere, but there you are!"

Strong with the idea of fate!

"Its speculation," said Jones.

"No, it isn't."

"Well, what do you do with the money; do you sell it?" asked Jones.

"No I go to the shops were foreigners buy, and there you can purchase things more cheaply by paying in dollars. Besides, in other shops you can't get anything much, but in the foreigner's shops you can get everything."

"Can you get butter at the coop's?" Jones inquired.

"Nyet" (No), he replied.

"Does your father make you do this?" we asked.

"No," he replied, "I thought of it myself [aged thirteen]. I watched the foreigners buy and I figured I could too, if I could get some foreign money. I've asked foreigners for it. I've bought clothes there too, - everything."

We gave him some chocolate.

"You can't get any of this quality here," he said. "Sometimes you can get chocolate of a kind, but you can't eat it - ugh! [with facial expression of horror] it's terrible, makes you ill!"

Asked about his school, he replied:

"We have in my class at school, thirty-six boys. There are only eight Pioneers. The others don't care about these Pioneers. They don't think them interesting. What they like is sport and fun. But higher up there are more Pioneers and Komsomols."

Pioneers are aged eight to fourteen years and Komsomols, fourteen to twenty-two. Both these groups are novitiates of the Communist Party.

"Do you believe in God?" Jones asked.

"Yes, I believe in God," he said. "My parents do, too. My father is a civil servant [employee], and my aunt is a sectarian, a Baptist. There are lots of Baptists. They took me to a meeting once. There were lots of people and workers there. I fell asleep! I am not interested when they talk so long, and not when they speak about politics. I like sport. In my class some believe in God, but they are a minority."

"Will the Five-Year Plan be a success?" we inquired.

"I don't know. I don't care what goes on in factories. I never read the papers. They're dull. I like the radio and cinema and sports magazines. Have you anything here to sell? I'll take this piece of chocolate back to my mother if you'll sell it to me."

We could scarcely persuade him to take the chocolate as a gift, for he wished to pay for it and a tin of beans, but he was most grateful, and although I could not understand a word he said, his face expressed his appreciation. He is coming back again tomorrow.

Tonight Jones translated a conversation with a typical Russian engineer and his wife. The statements are evidence a life in Russia today. The daughter of these people used to say the Lord' Prayer, but one day she came back from school and asked:

"Where is God? Show me."

"Now she says there is no God," said her mother tragically "I want my child to have a good education, and although I don't particularly care to have my little girl a Communist, I want her to join the Pioneers and the Komsomol so that she may have a good education. That's what most parents do with their children. It is easy to get married and divorced now and morals have declined. Nobody wants to have children these days. It is difficult to feed them. Abortions and abortions all the time - 75,000 last year in Moscow!" These are true figures, according to an American doctor.

"One-third of the man's wages," she said, "are given directly to the mother of his children, but mothers under eighteen years get nothing. All the children of girls fewer than eighteen must be given to State homes. That makes the girls more careful, but I don't find that they behave well here."

She also said that when the new marriage laws became effective, a lot of men who had been married twenty or more years left their wives and married young girls.

"Women of today," she declared, "say, 'If I love a man I'll live with him; if I get tired of him, I'll go to somebody else'."

Of religion she said:

"There are a good many believers left, but they are old people. They conceal their religion and hold secret meetings."

This woman also spoke of the manner and cost of living today. Butter in private markets costs ten rubles ($5) a pound (Russian pound, three-fourths of an English pound); eggs sell at ten for five rubles ($2.50), while in the Co-ops. they cost only seventy kopecks. In the Co-ops. one can buy one pound of butter per month, but not regularly; eggs, once a month, but not regularly either in the winter there are no eggs. Meat, mostly salted, is given out in Co-ops. at the rate of 200 grams, three times during the month. In the private market, meat is twelve rubles ($6) per kilo. The "worker"

gets more, 300 kilo. He gets 400 grams of salt fish per month. There is not enough bread, 200 grams a day.

Not long ago they opened "commercial shops" with higher prices. Shoes that were fifty rubles ($25) per pair there cost fifteen rubles ($7.50) in the Co-ops. But the Co-ops. hardly ever have any shoes!

It is almost impossible to get fats.

"The peasants," continued this woman, "are dissatisfied with taxes, etc. They were forced onto collective farms, and many were exiled. They cannot kill their own cows without permission. Peasants say of the Communists, 'Those devils.' And the killing of Communists still goes on! There is a lot of forced labour. In the forests of the North there is only forced labour.

"Last winter was very cold. The wood was rationed, and we had to go to the boat, and carry it home ourselves. The 'fuel' front is going badly, and so is transportation. One cubic meter of wood for all winter!

"For two months we have not been able to get soap except at the highest prices.

"Six people are living here in three rooms, but they are fortunate. Next door there are eight families in six rooms.

"My husband works ten hours at the office and then two or three hours at home. He is an engineer. Some workers labor seven hours, but most eight. The Russian worker and muzhik are accustomed to the knout [whip] and must be ruled.

"But youth believes in all this, and is enthusiastic for better days to come. All who have seen other days, however, are dissatisfied.

"Last winter there were a lot of arrests. There was hardly a big house in which someone was not arrested. Many persons were arrested and tortured to make them give up gold, foreign currency, and jewelry. They were given only salt herring to eat, and no water. Others were packed in a suffocating room, and when they fainted were pulled out and then put back in again, unless they confessed that they knew of the whereabouts of gold."

This same story was later verified from two other sources.

"Forced loans," she continued, "were secured by the government by compelling people to pay a month's wages. This sum was automatically deducted in instalments from each month's pay. The workers do not lend their money to the government. It is a gift. If you do not give when asked, you are put on the black list."

The following statements were made by men we encountered:

One worker said: "Everything is expensive now. In some places you have to pay two or three rubles for a meal. But I suppose we've got to do it to get machines. We get much less meat now than before the revolution."

A man at the hotel said: "I've been here twenty-five years. Those were the good times when princes and barons used to come here. Fine people they were! We get different people today." And he shook his head.

A Tartar waiter with shaved eyebrows said: "I used to get 200 to 300 rubles [$100 to $150] per month; now I get 60 [$30]. It is impossible to live, and we must support our children, too. I come in the third category. Look at the prices. Butter costs ten rubles [$5] per pound, and clothes and boots are impossible in price. The workers aren't satisfied either.

'The peasant hates the Kolhozi. What he wants is freedom to sell, freedom to call what he owns his own. He doesn't want to work 'in common.' Oh, they've had trouble in the villages. Force is what makes them join the Kolhozi. If you don't join, you are arrested or your house is taken away from you. The peasants aren't happy. And they get so little to eat! Much less than before the Revolution. Why, a peasant can't even kill his own cow. And if he has two cows, he is called a Kulak. It's terrible what they have done to the Kulak. There have been shootings, too [in a whisper]. They don't want the Kolhozi; they want to work 'on their own.'

"The Communists think that jazz is bad and bourgeois. It's silly. Why, people have to enjoy themselves, especially in times like these!"

Tenth Day.

This morning we paid a visit to Mr T, in charge of the Metropolitan Vickers Expt. Company of this district. He lived and had offices in a funny old back street, but his rooms were quite nicely fixed up. He spoke of his experiences with the turbine works for which he makes plans. The Russians like to try to improve the plans and call them original, but their paper designs do not work. The academic engineers are OK, but what they lack are real practical men and factory managers who can handle workers and situations. Any engineer who is really good has had to join the Party, but for the last six months Party men have not been so much preferred.

Mr. T. said that production figures are mostly correct, but there is often a tactful way of emphasis. The Putilov factory produced its turbine quota in especially fast time. But the quota is in kilowatts and now they make only two sizes, while Metro-Vickers probably produce a hundred sizes in England. Naturally it is easy to fill a quota in large units rather than in many small ones.

They are producing quantity, but quality is lacking. They love the excitement of quick work.

"Can they ever export manufactured goods cheaply?" I asked.

"If they want to," he replied, "they will, no matter what the cost may be. The possibilities here are so great that they will be able to produce and export - also import. The more they make, the more they want."

With regard to factory discipline, Mr. T. said:

"All the best workers of forty or fifty are drunkards. But if a man is frequently drunk at work, at the end of the month he will be given his pay in a huge model of a vodka bottle, in the presence of his associates. The shame often changes the man. Piece work rates help efficiency. There is now more personal responsibility and a man must pay for careless breakage.

We also visited Mr. R., of Stuart, James & Cooke Co. His work is a project trust for coal mining in the west of the Siberia district. He said the Russians follow plans fairly well, but they like to try to improve a tested and sure thing. They are also procrastinators.

A trust cannot work men more than so many hours, but the trust makes a contract job with a time limit requiring extra hours - then men get paid 600 rubles ($300 nominal) per month or more.

Contrasted with Mr. T.'s statement, Mr. R. said that the coal figures were decidedly inaccurate. Lack of food, especially meats, is responsible for low production at times.

"The system takes away initiative," he said. "Engineers are afraid to sign the drawings when something goes wrong. Skilled workmen are rushed through their courses and become engineers. Plans are presented to workers for OK. But that doesn't mean anything! The workers are pleased, and there are sometimes one or two intelligent questions."

He told us of arrests in Central Asia. Professors were arrested and jailed for not teaching a group of very dumb Uzbeks more rapidly.

The present clever saying of the day is:

"The *bourgeois gentilhomme* has now become the bourgeois Communist."

Our little Russian boy returned tonight.

"In the houses of most of my friends are icons," he said. "In the minority there are pictures of Lenin, almost none at all of Stalin. They don't like Stalin."

He spoke of the radio.

"We never listen to our Russian wireless," he declared. "There is nothing but dull talks on the Five-Year Plan. I only listen to foreign stations. We want fox trots! My mother can play sixty tunes and my sister one hundred. We dance on the sly. It is forbidden, but everywhere they dance. They say it is bourgeois!"

"What do the G.P.U. do if it is forbidden?" we asked.

"Oh, they dance themselves," he replied. "They only forbid it for show."

"Boys in our school have given each other American names," he continued. "I am Babe Joyce. Others are John Smith and John Simonson."

"But why American?" we asked.

"Because we love Americans," he said. "They are the most cultured. Was Sherlock Holmes a real, live man?"

We decided to go for a walk and our little friend was eager to be our guide. As we walked along the street, a police patrol came clanging by. Our friend said, as he shook his head:

"There is trouble for someone. The Solvovki [prison in the north] is full nowadays - it is hard for religious people.

"Oh, look, I am still chewing the gum you gave me! [He was chewing gum for the first time in his life!] I'll carry all your bags to the station, one by one, if you'll let me," he offered.

He took us into a side street and we walked up a flight of dirty stairs to the top floor. As bold as brass, he knocked on a door and said:

"Here are some foreigners come to see things."

Apparently that was sufficient introduction, for we were cordially received by the fair-haired wife of a worker - stout and pretty. I noticed there were icons on the walls of her room. In another section of the building, a young Jewish woman, her husband, mother, and a maid were living in two and a half rooms. The husband was a Party man, the wife was not a member. She spoke very good French, and so I was able to talk to her myself. She told us of her life and how content she was under the present conditions.

"Of course, we would like to have better quarters, but soon we hope to," she remarked.

She said she was twenty-eight, had married at sixteen and was devoted to her child. At twenty-five, she had taken up medicine, completed her course an4 would soon practice. It was possible to get all the books she wanted from the library, so she did not need to worry about the cost of text books. They were very cordial, and asked us to have tea with them.

"You must hear our phonograph," she said proudly, and to our greatest surprise produced a new American portable machine.

On returning to the hotel we saw quite a fight. A drunk and a policewoman were struggling. He had attempted to strike her. She blew her whistle and he tried to run away, but a policeman, who went after him, twisted him around and he fell heavily on his head, unconscious. He began to moan, a loud monotonous imbecilic moan. Policemen took him off in a droshki, but one could still hear his delirious wail as they drove away and until they went around the corner.

This, then, was life in Leningrad!

This afternoon we visited the famous Hermitage and saw some very fine Rembrandts, some good men of the Dutch School and some lovely old gold jewelry of the Eighth Century, B.C., from South Russia, with remarkable detail and fineness of work.

Tonight at 11:30 we took the train for Moscow, traveling first class.

At the station were crowds of people surging in and out, and many more sitting on their boxes and bundles, just waiting. It is always so in Russia; people often wait for days to get on a train, and if a Russian cannot get to his destination today, "Zavtra," or, as the Spaniard says, "Manana," will always do. So goes the philosophy of the East!

MOSCOW

Eleventh Day

We arrived at Moscow at 11:30 a.m. and were taken to the Metropole Hotel in a new Franklin sedan by our Intourist guide.

Following are remarks made by a foreign woman who had lived long in Russia:

"They don't quite rely on the Red Army this year, and leave was not granted to many peasant soldiers who wanted to go back to the villages.

"The morals are very low. Girls like those two there," pointing to two working girls in the street, "do not hesitate to live with men. If they have a baby they can easily have an abortion. Ninety percent of the people are indifferent to matters of this kind.

"The G.P.U is all powerful; there is one G.P.U. member in every house."

This statement, by the way, is probably an exaggeration.

This morning we went for a long auto ride out to Sparrow Hill from which one gets a capital view of Moscow and its four million people. Moscow gave me a pleasant surprise after Leningrad. Here the streets are well paved and kept clean; a modern watering truck runs about, sprinkling. The streetcars are crowded here, too, but there are many more automobiles. People are better dressed. The whole appearance of the city and of the people is better than we found in Leningrad.

We stopped to visit a barrack on our way back from Sparrow Hill. It was a place for manual laborers. Here a meal cost only thirty kopecks, but very poor food was served. In the bunk house there was a noticeably clean floor. Here was a definitely new note! The men laughed when we mentioned it, and explained that they had a system of fining a man one kopeck for throwing a cigarette or tracking mud on the floor.

We visited the remarkable Park of Culture and Rest, where the workers go in the late afternoon, and on their rest days for movies, sports, lectures, and swimming. About the park were radio speakers from which we heard:

"We must have more and more Shock Brigade workers."

This was followed by a song about "Shock Brigades."

Here was an avenue of bronze busts of the leading Shock Brigade heroes of the country. A flaming red banner read:

"We must know the heroes of the Soviet Union."

Another sign read:

"The Red Sport International is a militant organization of the International Proletariat."

It is amazing how everything here is directed toward the military!

Another poster showed a group of silk-hatted Capitalists seated around a table on which there was a sheet of paper bearing the word "Crisis." On the table was a sign reading, "The Hoover Plan." Towering above this scene was a great red figure of a worker brandishing a rifle.

[Hover Plan - Crisis – from Gareth's personal collection. © Nigel Linsan Colley. 2002.]

We returned to the hotel and went with Lady Muriel Paget to the British Embassy for tea, and there were entertained by Mr. Strang, the charge, and Mr. Walker, the first secretary.

I went to the movies tonight with Lady Muriel and a friend of hers, Madame Litvinoff, an English woman and the wife of the foreign minister. She would not come to the hotel with us because she had already been "called up" for associating too much

with foreigners. It was strange to see her jump onto a tram crowded with people when she started for home.

Twelfth Day

We visited a marriage and divorce bureau this morning.

Just as we were approaching the door an old priest in his long dark robe came up to an aged woman, who was standing by, and as she bent down to kiss his cross, he made the blessing sign over her. That was outside!

Inside, a girl of twenty was the clerk who took the necessary data. A couple seated themselves on chairs beside her desk - name, address, passport, one ruble charge, sign names; scratch, scratch went the pen. In five and a half minutes it was done - marriage in the Soviet manner. The contrast was striking - religion without; formality without religion within!

Three more couples were waiting. Next! A girl of seventeen wanted to be married, but that was too young. However, she had a doctor's certificate saying she was pregnant, so she could get married.

The average number of marriages per month is 400; divorces, 200. It was interesting that in the spring months the number of marriages did not increase. I said:

"In the spring a young man's fancy doesn't turn to thoughts of love in this country."

"Oh, yes," replied the clerk, "but they haven't time to get married."

Divorce is easier than marriage. Either party may, without consulting the other, secure a Divorce Certificate, with no trouble, from the ZAKS (the Marriage and Divorce Bureau). It has often happened that a man will one night tell his wife that he is going to get divorce papers, and appear at home the next night with the new bride! Then, due to the housing shortage, all three must live together until eventually somebody moves out.

We visited the old convent of Novodyevichi. It is now used as a museum to illustrate the emancipation of woman, her new social position as a worker, and her freedom from the superstition of the Church.

Just inside the door was a huge poster in color, a caricature of a grinning fat priest riding astride an old peasant woman who was on all fours. Dangling from a stick held by the priest was an icon which she was trying to kiss. The donkey and the carrot were not more ludicrous.

The graveyard here was in a horrible state, graves torn up, and grave stones lying about in great disorder.

At the entrance, an old woman in a shawl sold admission tickets and displayed a few miserable postcards. She had a much wrinkled face and a pair of sharp eyes. This was her contribution:

"The old ones still believe in God, but the young ones don't. I do, of course."

The "of course" was added because she assumed, no doubt, that her age had' already identified her with the believers.

"It is very sad for the mothers," she said, "because their children look down on them as a result of their religious beliefs and after reaching the age of thirteen or fourteen they will not have anything to do with their parents. Yet there are some young people who believe! The girls behave very badly today. They want to make me an atheist because of my job, but if they want to dismiss me, let them do it. We must speak quietly, for if the director heard me telling you I believe in God and that things are bad, he would dismiss me."

We ran into Colonel Cooper, the American engineer in charge of the Dnieperstroy dam, at the hotel tonight - a bit of a rough diamond, but a smart man, I guess. Quite a character!

Thirteenth Day

Red Letter Day! We breakfasted with Maurice Hindus, author of "Humanity Uprooted," this morning. A man of Russian-Jewish peasant origin, he can see with a clever mind, the general peasant situation in particular. For the future, he does not hazard a guess as to the trend of policy or the result. World revolution is impossibility, he believes.

"In America or England," he declared, "the bourgeois would give up private property only over his dead body."

He also agreed with Jones that the Third International had declined both in significance and in activity. The press does not mention it, there are no men of prominence in it, they are not sending funds abroad, and the foreign branches are declining in the number enlisted, he says.

"The peasants," said Mr. Hindus, "are not so well off from the point of view of food as in 1926, or before the Revolution; but they now have education, entertainment, and care for their children. They lived very well from 1920 to 1928 when the collective farm movement began. They joined this movement because they realized there was no future for them as individualists, and that they could only reach a certain level and then get knocked on the head. In many cases there was compulsion by threat of being called Kulak. It meant that personal accumulation was impossible in the future, but this also *meant* the unification of economic effort and, therefore, the collectives are far more productive than the individual farms. The Commune will be more productive than the Artel and will be the ultimate aim."

The "Commune" is the most highly Communistic farm organization; here practically all the possessions of the members are communized. The "Artel," on the other hand, is less highly communized, but the difference is one of degree only.

Mr. Hindus thinks that this year's harvest is not so good as that of the previous season. Exports of grain will be less, probably because they need more at home.

The cotton factories are not so successful as they should be, he believes. Cotton growing in Turkestan will be a huge project in the future, and Russia will be able to export a fine, long-staple product in quantity.

Mr. Hindus thinks exports will decline, due to home needs. At present, they are forced.

Mr. Hindus left us rather abruptly, but he was nice enough while here.

At 11 o'clock, we had an appointment to visit Louis Fischer, an American Jew of a Philadelphia family. Quite radical in his thinking, he has written a book on "Why Recognize Russia?"

Mr. Fischer said:

"Russia is a bull country. Exports and imports will not decline, I think. Resources are so tremendous that the country will produce more than the people need. We too easily under-estimate the country's productive capacity. 'In three years time,' a Soviet cotton man told me last year, 'we will be independent in cotton.' And they are already exporting

With regard to the attitude toward Germany, Mr. Fischer told us that someone in the People's Commissariat for Trade had said to him privately:

"My God, I hope Germany doesn't go smash!"

That is very significant and is seconded by Varga's report on Germany at a meeting of the Komintern. He said a crash in Germany would be disastrous, the reason for all this being 300 million marks in orders placed there. Magnitogorsk needs these machines vitally.

Mr. Fischer felt that the Komintern is declining. Nobody takes the Komintern seriously. The personnel now consists merely of revolutionary bureaucrats. They still want world revolution, but their method is different from the heyday period of 1923. Radeck said, "Revolutions aren't carried in suitcases," and they realize it. Moscow is not ready to sacrifice Russia for world revolution. Its hand is not going to be in every revolutionary fire.

"But why this constant talk and fear of intervention?" I asked.

"I think it is a very sincere belief, but quite a ridiculous one," said Mr. Fischer. "It is hard to understand. Everywhere, you see posters calling for the protection of the

U.S.S.R. against intervention. The world proletariat is therein appealed to, and this acts as a safety measure, the Soviets think."

In regard to imports, Mr. Fischer foresees Russian need of delicate machines, rubber, lemons, coffee, better quality clothes, medicines, and chemicals. Consumption of the finer manufactured goods will be greater. When this period of paying for capital imports is over, Russia will be in the unusual position of having practically no debts. There is a good future for exports of grain, oil, lumber, coal, and manganese.

"This country is starving itself great," said Mr. Fischer.

Shortly after this interview, we saw Walter Duranty, *New York Times* correspondent. Poor man! He has a hard time of it. Almost everyone who comes to Russia pays him a visit. He is known as the Unofficial America Ambassador, and though he is a very busy man, he is perfectly charming to everyone.

He spoke of the new attitude toward the technician, now that Stalin has said they must have their own technicians. Stalin didn't mean by this to exclude the old ones, but to advance any loyal workers, regardless of background.

Rudzutak, on August 12th, gave further interpretation to this when he spoke to the engineers and technicians, saying that "we must not look back on sabotage and treachery, but forward to future plans. It is how a man acts that counts." Mr. Duranty thinks this is a much healthier outlook, and it should go far to advance the plan.

The G.P.U. are changing their vigilant attitude and personnel, thinks Mr. Duranty. It follows from Stalin's speech. It is an unannounced change. Messing, who was severe, is now out; Menjensky has been ill for a long time, and he used to he a severe man; Yagoda, also severe, has been demoted to second in command; Akulof is now first assistant, and a mild man.

American engineers have said that there have been cases of sabotage where the Russian engineers remained silent, and afraid to report it, but things are now changed.

Peasants can now sell things in the private market, even though they belong to the Kolhozi.

Mr. Duranty believes the Party will, however, stick to the two Marxian principles:

(1) Production by the State and the corollary that no individual may employ others to make a profit for himself. (A servant is, however, permissible.)

(2) Only the workers have a voice in running things.

The newspaper correspondent agrees that there is a decline in the Third International and says also that the following factors are proofs of non-interest in a world revolution:

(1) Possibility of forcing an immediate World Revolution ended in 1923.

(2) Stalin emphasizes the "building" of Socialism in our country.

(3) World Communist parties have fought with the Soviet Third International.

(4) "World Revolution is inevitable one day, so why worry?" says Stalin. "We can only prepare the peoples' minds."

The foreign trade of Russia will depend on the policy of foreign governments, in Mr. Duranty's opinion.

Russia has shown herself ready to make offers for repayment on the principle of a further loan, (National City Bank case of $86,000,000) with a high interest rate of nine or twelve percent going to repay the first loan. She still repudiates the Kerensky debt.

The secret of Stalin's power has been a matter of recent comment. It is amazing how he put out Trotsky, a man of equal, but of a more fiery and self-assertive nature. Stalin has maintained his position and advanced his strength by a special technique - achieving by seeming to put aside. He cloaks himself with the authority of the Party when it makes declarations. Yet at the same time, those are always his opinions and coincide with his will. W. H. Chamberlain tells of an amusing incidental example of this technique. It seems that a foreign journalist put in an application to see Stalin when they were both at the same summer resort. The answer came back, "Stalin never gives interviews unless the Party commands him to do so." Thus does the "man of steel" identify himself with Party discipline and play upon the Communist rule that is opposed to any kind of self-assertive flamboyant leadership.

At the Dom Krestyanin (Peasant House) here in Moscow, we saw the Agricultural Exhibition which they use to educate the peasants when they come to town. Several years ago it was built to combine the functions of a boarding house, club, and free legal aid society for peasant delegates sent from the country with grievances. One huge poster was very typical. It was titled, "Religion is a weapon for oppression," and showed a huge Bible on the backs of workers. On top of the Bible was an ugly Capitalist in evening dress and top hat, and beside him, the Pope.

There are facts and figures everywhere at the Peasant House. Here is one of the announcements:

"In Artels, twenty-four percent clean their teeth. In the Commune, thirty-one percent clean their teeth!"

We visited a typical workers' club of the Caouchouc Industry today. Five thousand workers have the use of this club, which consists of various kinds of meeting rooms, devoted to first aid, mechanics, war material, music, and dramatics, and there is also a fine large theatre. Everybody must take the military training course, including the use of gas masks, arms, etc. Classes are all held after working hours, and are obligatory for Party members. Seventy percent of the factory workers are of the Party or Komsomoitsi. About nine half-hour classes, twelve times in thirty days, are required in the military course.

The fight against idlers is amusing in method and effectively carried on.

"We have a cemetery with real graves in the factory," explained the enthusiastic young man who took us around the club premises. "If a man is an idler or a drunkard, his name is put on a cross on a grave. And we cartoon the drunkard, with his name below the drawing. We use hypnotism to stop some from drunkenness, and effect cures."

This worker explained their motto, which is:

"No revolution can last unless it can defend itself."

"We must all be prepared to jump from our machines and seize rifles against foreign invasion," he said.

Fourteenth Day

I went with Mrs. Patterson and her son to see a Prophylactia for former prostitutes this morning. The girls are sent there after receiving hospital treatment. The authorities attempt to change their lives, furnish them work in a healthy atmosphere, pay them, and give them "culture." There are 120 girls in this Prophylactia. Their work consists of knitting cotton stockings by machine. Even here they have Shock Brigade workers who display red pennants with their records on them.

We had the privilege of visiting Madame Krupskaya, Lenin's widow, a woman of sixty years, most kindly, most simple, and fine. Unfortunately she would not speak French, only Russian, and consequently I could not understand what she said. However, I could tell by her expression that her heart was in her work in the schools, and that she was proud to tell foreigners of this work.

She had white, whispy hair, brushed closely back from her face, a slightly twisted mouth, and heavy prominent eyelids. One eye was a little bloodshot. Her smile, however, was indeed full of sympathy and love for children. Her speech was clear and simple, without hesitation, and logical to a remarkable degree. It was a wonderful interview, with a really fine person.

As she is at the head of the Primary School System of Russia, education was the subject she discussed. Here are points she made:

Education must teach the child and the worker everything about production. Upon production she laid great stress at all times. The children must learn about factories and mines and farms, and how to increase production, she explained. The workers must also learn, and then help others.

There is a great desire among workers to study, and in some factories practically all the workers go to evening classes.

Then these workers go out to the collective farms to teach organization to the peasants.

Factories have special connections with the Kolhozi, and workers go from the factories to the Kolhozi and give the peasants the benefit of their organizing abilities. The factory workers have learned how to work and organize in groups, whereas the peasant has only been accustomed to work for himself.

Thus the factory worker brings to the village his experience in working and organizing. He also brings cultural education. He teaches the peasant to read and write. This is essential, not only from the cultural viewpoint, but also in knowing how to run a collective farm. I t is necessary to keep accounts, to make contracts, to figure and to budget.

Then she spoke of the children and Polytechnical Education. Polytechnical Education is now the great motto. Its aim is to educate the children to become at the same time workers and collective owners of industry. Thus it lays great stress on the part the future citizen must play in production. Each school has an arrangement with a factory or collective farm. The pupil frequently visits the factory and learns about production by practical experience in handling machines. When the children go to the collective farms they learn about life in the villages, and they also bring culture to the peasant.

This summer, for example, 500 children went from Moscow to Crimea. They all worked four hours a day and thus helped to reduce the shortage of labor that was apparent everywhere in the Soviet Union. In their spare time, they went on excursions, bathed, played games; and then returned home healthy and happy.

Workers and peasants are everywhere learning to read and write. Some people of eighty are trying to learn. In Saratov, there was a Pioneers' crusade against illiteracy. The Pioneers visited every home and grouped the literate and the il1iterate. They put the illiterate to shame! They formed classes and taught them, and now Saratov has no illiteracy. In the villages, there are cultural centers, children's gardens, and libraries. Where there are many tiny villages, a central one is made into the cultural center.

"Of course, we don't teach religion in the schools," Madam Krupskava announced.

"A German pedagogue wrote and asked me if we wanted to set up children's towns where all the children would live together. I replied to him, 'No, that would be a mistake. The children should have relations with their families, because they must learn about life, about factories, and about workers.' Our idea is to have in the large new communal houses one floor devoted to the children. We must remember that in Russia nearly all the mothers work. They also want to learn, and to go to the cinema; so they are glad when they can devote their time to lessons while the care of children is taken off their hands."

We heard an amusing story of an American doctor's visit to the main hospital here. He was favorably impressed, except for the flies. He commented on them and received the excuse that they were a "relic of the Czarist regime."

Tonight, after an early dinner, from 8:30 to 10:00, we visited the famous Red Square and Lenin's Tomb. The huge square was lit by search lights, illuminating the ancient Kremlin wall, with the Red Flag (illuminated) flying atop. The tomb stands against the wall; simple and beautiful in red and black marble. A line of 1,500 people, two abreast, were waiting to enter. Within, two sentries stood motionless - one at each end of the glass topped coffin. There lies the great man in state. It was quiet, except for the shuffle of feet. We passed out, thrilled by the sight of the body of [a] man dead seven years.

Fifteenth Day

We visited a communal prison with Mrs. Patterson and her son this morning. Expecting a highly disciplined jail, it was a surprise to find the prisoners wandering around quite freely and casually in their cell blocks and the prison yard. Murderers, thieves, and miscreants of all sorts mingled together. The warden told us that they are very proud of their penological ideas. They have educational and manual training classes for the men, there are no uniforms, and the "trusty" receives two weeks' vacation every year. The whole place was far from clean, and we were very glad to leave after a brief inspection.

Mr. S., of Albert Kahn Inc., the great industrial architects, called at five and we walked home with him for dinner. He was very nice to us, and it was a most enjoyable evening. He lives with twenty-five other American engineers in some specially built apartments, the neatest houses I have seen anywhere. He and his wife share an apartment with another couple.

During a very good dinner, our host told us about some of his experiences. He has an office staff of 550, mostly very young boys and girls, and he is expected to turn out 700 million rubles worth of buildings with the help of his twenty-five American engineers. It is difficult to keep the Russians at one job - they want to learn everything before they know anything well. Their thirst for knowledge is tremendous.

Last November the workers got no pay for a month's work because of a change in the Soviet bookkeeping system.

They had a "Chistka" (cleansing) in his office, and two of his best Russian engineers went off to Siberia.

There is an amazing system for reporting inefficiency to the Workers' Discipline Committee, which is elected in the office. The method is simply to place a written charge (unsigned) in a box, and this leads to almost incredible extremes. Even the youngest girls will report an American engineer if they think he is not working.

The trouble is that there is no central authority outside of the Workers' Committee. Mr. S. cannot discharge a man if he desires. But he can keep order, at least, and when he leaves, "God knows what will happen!"

The office employees also go to the country to teach, or to dig potatoes; or to a factory to work on their "off" days.

"It's often a case of bluff all round," said an engineer, speaking of Soviet engineers and their estimates and projects. "They dare not say it can't be done, for, if they do, off they go to Siberia. Hence many figures are inaccurate."

In the case of signing drawings which he knows are not right, Mr. S. is always sure to have some trust chief OK them. For instance, recently they wanted him to OK the use of 100-foot rails, instead of the standard 60 - foot.

"But how can you transport them or ears?" he asked. "You can't get them around turns!"

Yet they insist on having the longest rails in the world!

The Soviets claim to build a flat brick arch lintel of six metres without a steel beam. Mr. S. figures that two metres only are safe. Yet they insist on the other!

They mix concrete flooring sixteen parts gravel, one cement, one lime, four sand. Any engineer knows the mixture is not right and will not last. But the Russians are short of building materials!

Here it is a case of a new method of attack; the engineer must save material, and not worry about wage costs. This is just the reverse of conditions at home.

Lack of co-ordination and planning are two of greatest faults. In the South, there will be a steel plant two and a half times the size of the one at Gary, Ind. Right now the American production manager has been waiting down there for four months at a $15,000-a-year salary and expenses, and even the timber is not cleared yet. Just today, Mr. S. had plans submitted to him for building a huge carburetor plant - bigger than the one constructed for Ford. But they want to locate it six miles from the railroad! All materials must therefore be trucked six miles. Mr. S. warned them, but the plant must go there!

At the cement plant they erected a huge new building, but at the last minute changed from American to some other machinery. Result - they have improper hook-ups, and must transfer them from the old factory to the new one every six months, so that they can say both are operating.

The difficulties of building are great. Mr. S. said he designed a steel sash, only to find it could not be made, owing to the lack of steel. Glass, too, is scarce. Window sashes, instead of being produced in lots in one factory, are often made individually on the job by carpenters. Consequently, costs are double those in the United States.

We went to a church service for a little while tonight, and enjoyed the beautiful singing. Quite a crowd of people attended - about 200. As usual, everyone stood up, and the priest walked through the crowd at certain times, swinging a censer. There was much bowing and scraping, crossing, and kissing the ground, with a great contrast between the poverty of the people and the rich robes and gold crown of the officiating priest. Lighted candles, much gilt work, and innumerable icons with lamps in front, completed the picture - side from the usual Russian smell!

Mr. S. told of the fuel shortage of last winter; it was serious, only the industries being allowed to have coal. But Mr. S. wanted to heat his apartment and knew the head man in a Moscow factory which had a lot of coal, although the plant was not operating; so he got him to send coal, a lump at a time, in sleighs at night, so that people would not ask questions. Then he had "two heats" a day. All the windows were sealed with putty, and the steam heat was turned on at about 5:00 a.m. and again at 8:00 p.m., each time for about an hour. The result was not an exactly even temperature.

Sixteenth Day

We passed a toy shop today having this amazing caption on a box of building blocks for children:

"A Mass Political Toy According to the Resolution of the 16th Congress of the All-Union Communist Party."

Imagine children with such significant political playthings!

Jones translated the following remarks by the servant girl (a peasant) of two old Russian noblewomen living quietly in Moscow:

"The peasants are terribly dissatisfied. They have been forced to join the Kolhozi; they want their own patch of land, their own house, their own cattle and pigs, and to work for themselves. My two cousins worked day and night. With their own hands they made bricks. They built houses, and what happened. They did not want to join the collectives and they were taken away to the Urals, where it is very bad. My other cousin had two cows, two pigs, and some sheep; he owned two huts. They called him a Kulak and forced him to sell everything. Only three hundred rubles did they give him. In the Kolhozi, nobody wants to work.

"In my village, I hear they have murdered two Communists.

"The peasants cannot kill their cows or their pigs without getting permission from the Natchalnik, the village boss. They were told that if they did not join the Kolhozi, everything would be taken from them. Many were sent to Archangel. They eat very little now; they used to have meat, but not now."

On the way home from this visit, Jones asked a worker in a restaurant if he now ate more or less meat than before the Revolution.

"Less, of course," came the abrupt reply.

Today is Sunday, but no one knows one day of the week from the other - business goes on as usual; for some it may be a rest day, that is all. It is a strange feeling, not finding one day in the week when people drop their daily tasks and rest.

We saw a fine sign today - for Sunday:

"Alcohol is the Friend of Religion."

I had a talk with Spencer Williams, of the American Chamber of Commerce here. He is a rather mild man, and it is a tough job he has these days. He gave us the following opinions and information:

"The Five-Year Plan is only a slogan not necessarily a schedule which must be fulfilled. "Stalin's new policy is merely a temporary phase.

"There is little private trade left in the country now; and next year there will not be any!

"Diesel engines are being turned out in quantity, but quality is lacking. Two or three boats on the Black Sea have proceeded at too fast a tempo, and, also, there is a general tendency for managers to be easy in making inspections.

"Labour has too high a turnover and is nomadic. Food and housing rumors fly about to the effect that better conditions exist elsewhere, so workers move off.

"A decline or rise in the exports of the U.S.S.R. will depend very much on the world crisis.

"Last year was the test year for agriculture. The Russians succeeded. This year is the test year in industry.

"Most of the orders for machinery are now going to England.

Later, a worker said:

"Only when we are dead will conditions be better. They are much worse now than before the Revolution. The peasants are very angry. We only get salt fish, but in the Kremlin they get everything."

On the way home through the park we passed a little girl, about eight years old, seated on a bench reading a book. It was titled "New Shock Brigade Workers."

Farther along, a man was just about to be "framed" by one of those ten-cent-on-the-spot-for-the-folks cameras. He was in overalls and cap, dirty of face and hands, and evidently proud of being a worker - the new philosophy of the "dirty shirt" as opposed to the "white collar."

We walked along a side street, entered an open gate to a courtyard, knocked on the dilapidated door, and asked if we might look around.

Here lived, in the greatest squalor, forty persons in thirteen rooms, and only one kitchen!

"Most of the people in this house are Communists," said the young woman who appeared at the door. "There isn't such a split between the young and old. We let the old believe in religion. My old mother is religious and lives in the country, but it doesn't make any difference to us."

In discussing the Loan, a window washer said:

"Plokho! Plokho! [Bad! Bad!]

I get 120 rubles a month. When the Loan came I was forced to pay a whole month's salary. Each month I pay twelve rubles to the Loan. It is voluntary, they say! And all the time there are new Loans! I don't want to waste twelve rubles each month; I can't afford it, but I have got to pay."

The following statements were culled from a conversation with two factory workers, one railway man, and a caretaker.

"Before the Revolution we could get everything, and cheap. We had plenty of meat, butter, eggs, and milk, and they were cheap. Now we have to pay ten rubles for a kilo of sausage. Before, it cost only thirty-five kopecks. We have had only ten eggs since January 1st.

"Moscow is the best place. In the provinces, it is far worse. And as for the peasants, they are worse off than they have ever been."

"There is no opposition left now. Bukharin wanted to give more food to the workers, but Stalin said, 'No, we must hurry up, quicker and quicker to industrialize.' It is dangerous to be in opposition."

"What about the figures they publish?" asked Jones.

"Figures!" the speaker exclaimed. "You can't eat figures! You see that tree there. It is not an apple tree, is it? But the Communists say, 'Tomorrow that tree has to grow apples!'"

"In our factory, we can't say a single thing. They say everything is voluntary. Voluntary, indeed! They get up a meeting, and pass a resolution by asking who is against it. Nobody wants to get into trouble by putting up his hand. If he did, they would say, 'Oh, you're against the government, are you?' You may disappear. Oh, yes, a lot have disappeared! They have been shooting people, too, and they have places in Siberia for the opposition."

"People do not like Stalin. He is too hard. I would say that only two percent of the population respects him."

"It is much worse for the peasants than for the workers."

"No, the Communists do not on the whole live better than the others."

"In our factory, if four of us are friends they put a Communist in between us to listen to our conversation. We must be very careful about what we say.

"Now, it is almost impossible to leave one factory for another. They make you stick there."

"It was fine under the NEP. [New economic Policy, 1921-27]. When we had private trade, those were the days. We ought to have private trade again."

"The Five-Year Plan is all on paper."

"The newspapers are terrible. One cannot read them. Nothing but industrialization, collectivization, and silly words like that."

Seventeenth Day

Fair weather again today. I wish I could go swimming. No exercise for weeks. We walked a long way to find Eugene Lyons this morning. He is the A. P. [sic –U.P.] correspondent in Moscow, and lives quite nicely.

"They are trying to raise the standard of living now," he said. "All the devices and announcements are in the same direction - toward the betterment of living.

"Russia does not want to dump. She has undersold because of the sheer necessity to secure foreign credits. The whole question could be settled by a large loan. Their new methods of finance are theoretically not justified, but they have found justification.

"This is a period of easing up, and a new deal for technicians. Shortage of labor is forcing the government to accept the aristocrats and old-regime engineers.

"Now, there is a complete absence of organized opposition. The Party has never been so unified.

"Coal production is planned to reach 140 million tons by 1933. If they do not do as well as estimated they put up the figures. This quota has been raised from 125 million just to give them more to shoot at.

"The Koihozi give more control to the government. Young people want the Koihozi."

Later today a somewhat drunken fellow came up to Jones.

"Oh, so you're from England, are you?" he leered. "That's the country we are feeding, that's where we are sending all our food. How can we live now? They are shooting workers and exiling them. We are forced to do everything. There is always a show of hands at meetings - If only we could vote secretly!"

We visited the private market this afternoon. This market, as the name implies, is not State owned, and as one might expect, there is a tremendous amount of second-hand stuff for sale, much of which is bought by peasants. The peasants are also allowed to come into town and sell their food if they wish to do so. Last year many of the old aristocracy were selling their jewelry and family heirlooms here, but although we visited the private market in Moscow on two different occasions there was practically no one selling anything of that character. This is, no doubt, due to the fact that those of the old aristocracy who remain are becoming afraid to show themselves.

There were hundreds of little booths, selling everything from vegetables to a balalaika, with crowds of people in the narrow passage ways between the booths. There seemed to be an ample supply of vegetables, but no meat. Many odd traders stood around, too. One woman wanted four rubles for a cake of laundry soap; another asked the same price for a pair of child's cotton stockings. Old clothes, patched shoes, anything may be found for sale at exorbitant prices.

"Where can we buy icons?" we asked.

"What's the use? They are only pieces of wood. Wasting money on wood, indeed!" replied a woman of forty, who had an old piece of fur for sale. And she laughed!

Another woman beside her added:

"Very few buy icons nowadays. What's the use of them?"

Many gypsies were there in colorful India print dresses. Most of them were women, fingering dirty packs of cards. Sharp of eye and cozening of smile, they try to tell one's fortune. Half-naked children and babies scuttle around them rags and tatters, dirt abounds - these, the gypsies.

I met a charming American girl in a Torgsin store this afternoon, and went over to see her later at her hotel. She hailed from Sheridan, Wyoming, and had been over here with her father for ten months. She had driven from Berlin to Moscow with two boys, and slept in haystacks on the way. Quite a girl!

Tonight Jones and I went to call on an old Russian gentleman. We walked miles, up dark streets and down dirty alleys, and finally discovered the building where he lived. We climbed several flights of dark, creaking stairs. We knocked on a dilapidated door. No one came. We knocked again. The door opened a few inches, and a bedraggled woman asked what we wanted.

"Is Mr. N. at home?"
"No, he is not here now."
"Could you tell us—?" we questioned.
"Well, you see, he has moved!" she interrupted.
"Oh—it is far away, quite far."
"But where?"
"Well, he has gone to the Urals, but not of his own accord," she replied.
Thus vanish the members of the old nobility.

Eighteenth Day

We dropped in to see Podoiski again today. He is the acting secretary of the Press Bureau, and a very brilliant and suave man, with a hard, steely eye. He had been getting some information for us.

We finally made an appointment to see Karl Radek, editor of the *Izveslia,* and quite a famous person in Russia. He belonged to the Trotsky "Right Deviation", and lost out in the Party machine when Trotsky fell. He is a man of amazing appearance, with great horn-rimmed glasses, coarse features, and a set of under-the-chin whiskers like the cartoons for Pat and Mike stories. He looks as if he had tied a piece of fur around his face from ear to ear. His English is atrocious, mostly on account of the inflection.

He spoke of President Hoover:

"A fine man, a good engineer, but he does not know men!"

This was a little surprising, but he may have meant that President Hoover is not conscious enough of the public's opinion and the attitude of his advisers.

"For the next twenty years we shall be absolutely occupied with our internal development and markets," he said. "The masses need so much! The peasants, also, want to have better clothing and commodities. Dumping is not done. Could we receive a higher price for our products we would be very glad.

"It is nonsense to say that Russia will be independent and self-sufficient. The more a country develops, the greater its foreign trade relations will grow. Thus we have every reason for peaceful relations, and for strengthening them. The needs of the country are growing. I believe relations with foreign countries will be better.

"There is a greater feeling of power in the country. It is an argument for a quieter policy. We are growing stronger in Russia. Every year more peasants realize that the tractor is better than the horse. We are stronger."

He paused with a display of considerable pride after these warmly spoken words, filled his pipe, and lit it.

"Now!" he exclaimed in his strange imperative manner.

He spoke of Soviet Russia's attitude toward various European countries.

"Does Russia want Poland?" he asked. "If things in Europe stabilize why should we have a common frontier with Germany? It would be worse to be next to a strong Capitalistic nation (Germany). If there is a revolution in Germany, how can Poland stand between revolutionary Germany and revolutionary Russia? Poland would probably revolt, too. We can wait and see.

"Germany! Every nation must be its own savior. A feeble revolution in Germany would be a great set-back for us. We would be obliged to help them. I do not think that a German revolution is a concrete possibility. First, because the German worker realizes that Germany's location between imperialist France and Poland would force him to fight, from the very first day, against intervention. Second, Germany is dependent upon foreign nations for raw materials and food. This was not the case with Russia.

"Before the war, France made Russia a tool against Germany by her loans to Russia. Now the situation is different. We can do without loans. We shall no longer be the tool of the policy of others.

"As long as two worlds exist there is always a danger. If Poland or Roumania attacked Russia it would have the support of other Capitalistic countries. The sharpening of the crisis in Poland gives an opportunity to adventurers. But on the other hand, war with Soviet Russia would be very difficult."

Radek's newspaper articles have been spreading the cry of intervention, but I think he himself does not believe in that theory.

"With the new Franco-Russian relations, will Russia's attitude towards the Versailles Treaty be modified?" Jones asked.

"At a time when the Versailles Treaty is crashing on all replied Radek, "it would be nonsense to think that Russia would defend it. The treaty will not be a basis for world relations.

"America and France have great resources; they will prosper at the expense of England and Germany. But the Capitalistic world cannot have general prosperity! The greatest danger for England is not English Communism but American Capitalism!

"Russia is the country with the worst propaganda. It is weak in spreading propaganda because foreign newspapers suppress it. But every Ford car makes propaganda for America. The Soviet government only makes propaganda when Litvinoff speaks in Geneva. I know of no evidence that we spread propaganda in America."

This is Radek's plan to improve American-Russian relations:

1. End the embargo and anti-Soviet crusade.

2. Mutual recognition is necessary. The political aspect is important.

3. America must drop the policy of America for Americans.

"We are a country like America," he said. "Without your help, development would go slower. But there is no power that can check us.

"Intervention would mean the destruction of Germany and Poland. We do not intend to intervene in other countries. History will decide which is the better system."

Nineteenth Day

We visited the Kremlin this morning with a group of Intourist people, and encountered an interesting man from New York, a Mr. Richmond, a book collector. I confess the Kremlin was a disappointment. The exterior is romantic in appearance, with all its towers and Byzantine domes sticking above the old brick walls, but the

interior is only a confusion of modern Renaissance plaster buildings, and some of the old 15th century churches, with Russian domes from which the gilt had been stripped.

Immediately after this, I ran most of the way, because of an appointment, to the office of S. O. Zuckerman, Chief of the Supply Department of the Narcomsnab (the people's food commissariat). He was a pleasant man, who spoke excellent English and proved very friendly. He explained the organization of his department, with its thirty independent units assigned to such industries as meat packing, canning, sugar, milk, butter, poultry - trusts. He said they had no program for the export of any of these products, but that they sold when they could, or when necessary to have valuta.

"We are exporting sugar, and shall continue to do so," he said. "Last year two million tons were produced; this year two and a half million. The 'vegetable front is much better than last year. Everywhere there is plenty. In fact, the vegetable program was overfilled. In one year, we changed the entire situation.

"Two years ago there were no margarine factories. Now we have two modern plants, and next year there will be nine more.

"There is now a shortage of meat and fats, for two reasons. First, the cattle stock is not so large as it should be. Second, the meat industry is not yet modernized."

He made no comment on the serious undernourishment of manual laborers on this account.

"When the canning industry is complete," he said, "it will be as modern as the American industry. Cold storage and refrigerator plants will be built. We are now building three dry ice plants sixteen new cold storage houses were put in operation this year. Eventually we will have some sort of refrigeration in every meat shop."

There's a pipe dream for you!

"You find private trade only in the villages, in the bazaars and on the streets," he continued. "The bazaar cannot supply the trade necessary. It is an abnormal way of trading. Private trade is hardly noticeable in volume, nor is there any wholesale private business. It will all disappear soon, and the State and Co-operative organizations will do everything. There is far less private trading than a year ago.

"Under the new system much responsibility is placed on the plant manager. Before, it was bad, and the State was expected to support a losing organization. Today if it is not OK, the manager is moved. It works wonderfully. No one will order more than he needs."

Canning Industry *(In millions of tins)*

Plan	**1931**	**1932**	**1933**
Meat	220	390	750
Fish	265	450	700
Fruit	60	110	260
Vegetables	205	375	855
Tomatoes	130	215	485

Mr. Zuckerman was kind enough to send us off in an auto, with an interpreter to see the president of the Torgsin stores concerning the purchase of the *"57"*. It was a lot of fun, and I arranged to send him samples, after giving him a fight talk through my interpreter. I also told Mr. Zuckerman that the prices charged for the goods in Leningrad were too high, and he said he would fix that, as he regulated such charges. I wanted Mr. Jdanoff, of Torgsin, to try some hot beans, and made an appointment to see him in an hour. Just as I arrived, with my hot tins, the rascal drove off in his car. Audible comment on Russian politeness and business ethics!

Here are a few more observations about Moscow:

There are many new restaurants, but prices are all very high. Meat dishes cost three to four rubles, and fish four to six. Jones and I had lunch at the Grande Hotel one day, and got a kind of beef stew for four rubles. We decided it was much cheaper at the Metropole where you pay in dollars. There you can get soup for fifty cents, meat and potatoes at $1.00 or $1.25, and ice cream (very good) at forty cents.

We had some laundry done. For washing a handkerchief I was charged fifty kopecks, and for shirts two rubles.

A bath at the hotel cost $1.50*,* without soap.

The Hotel Metropole is really a swell place, and quite typically there is a radio in every room, but no toilet paper anywhere. Of course there is no writing paper. Every night they have gypsy music with a troupe of eighteen women and six men who dance and sing. The gypsy group is rather picturesque, but only half are gypsies. There is a jazz band, too, that plays very poor music after 11 p.m.

We left Moscow tonight for Nijni. It was cold and rainy. The taxi cost $3.00

NIJNI-NOVGOROD

Twentieth Day

We arrived in Nijni-Novgorod this morning at about eleven and were met by Mr. Davis, of the Austin Company, who took us out to their building site in one of their cars. To our left lay the town of Nijni upon a hill at the juncture of the Okha and Volga rivers. Its Kremlin looked impressive in the distance. It took about twenty-five minutes on a very bumpy, cobbled road to get to Autostroy. Here the engineers have a street to themselves, with about a dozen houses in all. All the single men live in the club house, where we were bunked very comfortably.

The Autostroy layout is a large one, including a forge shop, machine shop, assembly building, and power house. Here Russia will build and assemble the Ford car at the hoped-for output of 140,000 per annum. The assembly building is truly remarkable in size, 1,800 feet long, with 600,000 square feet of floor space. It is of steel and glass construction throughout.

The labor situation, in which 30,000 are involved, is interesting. There is a very high turn-over - about 250 per day - due to the nomadic character of the people. Labour efficiency is very low, for it takes three or four men to do the same job that one man does at home.

There are many women employed to do both the heavy and the light work, and they can do it, too. The engineer told me that the women showed more aptitude than the men in learning their electrical jobs.

There is a minimum wage of three rubles per day, which applies to about twenty-five percent of the workers. The five-day week works badly against production, for a foreman or engineer may have his day off just when there is a big job to do. There the workers are, but no foreman or chief! All the Americans agree that this is a serious handicap.

We passed a crowd of 200 men and women digging ditches, but they did not look like the others; they seemed better dressed and less coarse.

"Oh, those are subbotniki [persons who work in factories, other than the ones in which they are regularly employed on their free days] who come up from Nijni every day by boat, 5,000 of them. They are working 'voluntarily' out here on their free day," explained Mr. Davis.

The methods of work are amazing. Carpenters use only an axe and a handsaw, but they are very clever with these two tools. They haul much dirt on little stretcher-like devices that two people carry, and then, of course, there is the ridiculous Russian wheelbarrow with its tiny wheel and very wide handles. On this job they use about 1,000 horse drawn wagons, mostly owned by Ukrainian peasants, who make the wagons themselves, except the wheels.

We visited the water intake and filtration plant they are building at the river, a very considerable engineering project in itself, for it will produce 60 million gallons per day.

Life at the club house where the fifteen single men live is very congenial. They are a jolly bunch, so we found meal-time very pleasant. The food was excellent, too, and everyone was extremely kind to us.

Twenty-first Day

Jones stayed in bed all morning today while I visited the "Mill of the Revolution" with Mr. Davis and Dr. Wells, a minister from Cleveland.

This factory for making Diesel engines was quite a surprise. It was apparently well run in every way from the casual viewpoint. The men were all busy, and work and materials were well organized. Here some 6,000 men are employed. The dining room was very fancy, with potted palms scattered around and a great red banner saying:

"Co-operation will increase control over social eating." I wonder how many understand what that means! The meal cost only thirty-seven kopecks.

A huge bulletin board near the entrance displayed the names of those workers who had received prizes from the government for good work. The prizes were not in cash, but certificates of loans to the government, on which the worker receives interest. It's easy! Win a prize and then hand it back to the government!

The children's nursery at this factory was one of the best. For thirty-three kopecks a day the child was fed two meals, and taken care of properly.

We also saw a nearby brick factory. Most of the brick is made by hand in a primitive fashion on a little machine which has a weight-like hammer to pound the clay into the mould, and then a plunger below to push the brick up out of the mould. The average man or woman can turn out 800 to 1,000 per day. The clay is mixed by a machine, however, and hauled in little mine carts by ailing old horses.

Jones gave us a break by getting up for lunch. This afternoon we saw the "Workers' City," which is to house 50,000. It is an interesting fact that originally all these people were to have lived in community houses with a common dining room, a crèche, a kindergarten, and a club. But now only 3,000 are to live there and the rest will dwell in three-room apartments. The community house plan provides for 500 to the house, the layout being as follows:

[The Plan has not been included.]

The plan for the rest of the city is rather good. It can be seen that there are large open parks between the house blocks and a school at one end, with no streets for the children to cross. Two hundred families are assigned to each house. The layout is like this:

[The Plan has not been included.]

The Workers' Club is a fairly good building, but the decorations are simply beyond words. The entrance hail has robin-egg blue wails, a grey ceiling, a brick colored baseboard, and a black and yellow balustrade on the stairs.

We went for a swim in the Okha this afternoon; my first and, as it turned out, my last swim in Russia.

We spent the day tramping. It was overcast and cool, but nichevo!

We came to a typical village of about 700 people, with one long muddy street, the usual wells at intervals making oases in the desert of mud. Crowds of small children were running about, in and out of the mud, barefooted and scantily clothed in dirty garments. Few older people were about, except some elderly muzhiks.

We stopped to talk with one group that was seated on a porch eating black bread and tomatoes. There was a bearded old man wearing a fur cap with ear tabs, and three boys in their teens. They smiled cordially as we said "Strasvuitze" [greetings] in answer to our query, the man said:

"This is a Co-operative where they grow vegetables for Autostroy. They took away our land - Plokho! They forced the individual peasants to join the Kolhozi by putting on heavy taxes. The peasant could not pay. The only thing he could do was to join the Koihozi. They do not give us meat, butter, or anything."

Jones: "Was it better before the war?" Old Peasant: "Yes, much, much better. There was everything then."

One youngster: "No! No! It is much better now!"

A sad-looking horse, unshod and badly fed, was tied to a rail.

"Is that your horse?" we asked.

"Oh no, it's the horse of the Kolhozi; I've been out looking at the potatoes," said one of the boys, evidently not caring at all how the horse looked, while the old man shook his head knowingly.

The next person we saw was an old man sitting on the ground, weaving baskets out of willow rods. He had a long grey beard, a tattered cap, and dirty felt boots; the latter, I feel sure, were never removed. Behind him a couple of old women sat gabbing in the cottage window. He shook his head and cursed softly as he said:

"Communists? No, there are no Communists in this village, but the Party is responsible for things as they are now. Most of us used to make baskets. The baskets were used in Astrakhan, and we were well paid. Now we make baskets for the Co-op. society here." Then he made a face.

Woman: "It's hard to feed my child. They don't give us meat, butter, or eggs."

Jones: "Can you sell freely? Could you sell eggs in Nijni if you wanted to?"

Woman: "But we haven't any eggs!"

We moved farther along the Street and sat down to rest. A group of children soon gathered around.

"We want our names down to be Pioneers," said one, "but they don't send an organizer. The chief of the Kolhozi is a non-Party man; he's a drunkard and takes the best horse out and has a good time. There are no Communists here. There were three or four Komsomoltsi (members of the Young Communist League), but they had a hard time. No one would attend meetings. Now they have gone. It is much better now than before the Revolution."

A young man of thirty came strolling up and sat down. It was his rest day from the factory.

"It's hard to live here now," he said, "but it is better than before the Revolution. Then these people used to make baskets for a Kulak [peasant money lender]

Now they make them for a Co-op. society. Before, there was schooling, but only for three years; now, it is for much longer. Before, the children used to make baskets; now, they are playing. Most young people work in the factory now."

An old peasant came along and said:

"They took away our land and nobody has more than one cow. Still that's not bad because we haven't enough to feed more than one cow."

Just outside this village we came to a milk-farm-to-be. There were 1,000 head of cattle in ten buildings, then under construction - adequate but nothing fancy. I saw them filling one of those underground silos, and was amazed at the silage they used - beet, turnip, and grass.

"But we are to have four regular silos, ten metres high, like those in America," explained the foreman with evident pride.

We were hungry and wanted to eat in the dining room there. It was so dirty and smelly, however, and there were so many flies that we decided otherwise and persuaded someone in the superintendent's office to heat some beans we had with us. A little soggy black bread that we bought at the Co-operative store tasted very good.

While we were eating, a little girl about twelve years old came and sat by us.

"In my class there are thirty-nine," she said, "five believers and thirty-four Pioneers. In the whole school there are one hundred children and only fifteen believers. I am a Friend of the Ossoaviakhim {Society for Chemical Defense and Aviation] and of the M.O.P.R. Society for Help of Revolution Abroad]. We visit the factories and the Red Army. We, also, handled rifles once.

"There will be a revolution soon in Germany. America and England will also have revolutions, and they will be much happier."

Jones: "What do you do in school?"

Girl: "We have four hours of school. The first is devoted to reading from revolutionary books."

Jones: "What do you learn about America?"

Girl: "Oh, that workers live very badly there. There are few Communists because they won't give jobs to Communists. But the workers will some day have it as it is in the Soviet Union. There is going to be war."

We passed on from here through fields of potatoes in rolling country and came at last to a charming little village. Many handsome trees grew in the middle of the street and around the houses. There was a little of the usual mud, but the streets did not seem quite so dirty here. A few squawking geese ran toward us as we entered. The place seemed deserted.

We sat down to rest in front of a house from which three garrulous women soon came and proceeded to tell us their troubles. The same story:

"Plokho! It is bad here now - not enough to eat; everyone is unhappy."

They shook their heads and sighed!

We went to the house of the priest. It was a simple cottage like the rest. He was not at home, but his mother asked us to come in and wait.

He came shortly, a tall, fine-looking man in his long robe, crossing himself twice as he entered the room. He seemed genuinely glad to see visitors and was most hospitable. I was surprised at the neatness of the house - curtains, flowers in pots, even fly screens. He had a little room of his own just off the tiny sitting and dining rooms, where hung a large icon with the ever-burning oil lamp in front of it. There were several others in the sitting room. Here lived a "lishenets" (man deprived of rights and bread ticket) in comparative luxury.

We sat and talked until tea time! He told us many things that had been outlawed. For him, life had not been easy.

"I spent two weeks in prison a little over a year ago," he said. "In our village a decree forbade the ringing of church bells the week before Easter. The villagers were angered and rang the bells anyway. They could not arrest the whole village, so I was arrested and put in a prison for two weeks.

"I do not know what the future will bring. Last year I had to pay 2,000 rubles in taxes for keeping my church open. Everywhere the priests and the churches are weighed down with taxes. And it is so hard to live! We cannot buy from the Co-operatives; we must rely on what the flock brings to us and on the private market in Nijni. But meat costs eight rubles a pound and tea eight rubles a quarter pound."

Here he was interrupted by his mother's cousin, who had joined our party. She was an ordinary peasant of about thirty-five, but could not keep still.

"It is terrible for the lishentsi.' My cousin was a trader before the revolution and owned his own house. In 1926, they took away everything he had. Then he went blind and now he lives with my sister in Samara. He has nothing, no boots, and almost no clothes.

"My brother was a priest and he could not pay taxes. So he was taken away to the North. We could write to him, so we made a collection in church and bought him some clothes and sent them to him. He wrote back to us, saying that he had been put in a prison cell with bandits. They beat him and stole his clothes."

Priest: "Do you know that in a village far away, the Communists came to take away the Kulaks, but the villagers collected their scythes and sickles and attacked the Communists. So they sent the Red Army soldiers to quell them. But the soldiers refused to fight! Finally, they sent Komsomoltsi with rifles and they shot many peasants. Some escaped and they came here and told us."

Priest's mother: "There is forced labour now, too. The subbotniki have to go to the Autostroy whether they want to or not. They send 4,000 a day and often there are no shovels and they are forced to carry earth in their skirts. Last winter it was terrible. They took seventy 'lishentsi', old and young, but mainly old, old people, and forced them to cut timber in the freezing cold. They made them sign papers to say they were dobrovolvo [voluntary]. They shivered and froze and the ice hung from their clothes; their feet were wrapped in rags. One woman had just had an operation and there was a large wound in her stomach. She went to the doctors, but they refused to do anything. So she had to work. She died!"

Priest: "I worked one and a half months 'voluntarily'. We call it 'obligatorily voluntary'. We got thirty kopecks per arshin [one cubic yard] and I could cut only two arshins per day. It was awful in the icy weather."

Mother: "In Moscow they are taking down the Church of the Redeemer. All are sad. In the street where I lived, a big five-story building collapsed and there were 250 killed, but the papers said there were only five killed and twenty wounded. Some Communists in our village are at heart believers. One called the priest some time ago because he felt ill and was dying. 'Do you believe in God?' asked the priest. 'Well, of course I do; otherwise I would not have called you here,' was the reply."

We asked the priest about religious publications.

"No libraries are allowed in the churches except the books for the service," he explained. "The penalty for distributing religious books or pamphlets is very severe. Only the Journal of the Moscow Patriarch can be published, and it is but a chronicle of events."

The young woman, who had kept quiet, was fairly bursting with some news. She bent low over the table and spoke in a loud whisper:

"They forced me to work in February and March. For a whole month they paid me one ruble, thirty-five kopecks, four pounds of bread, and seventeen little pieces of tea - I counted them. We had to sell our clothes to get food. Conditions were terrible."

She became very much excited, and nearly cried. Then off on another tack, she said:

"The udarniki [Shock Brigades workers] get better food than we do. They are about 10% active for the Five-Year Plan and ninety percent opposed to it - only they are afraid to say anything."

Obviously, this must have been an exaggeration, but it is significant that such an attitude exists among those supposed to be hundred percent Communists.

Priest: "What is wrong with George Bernard Shaw? Is he mad? He saw nothing at all. If only he could see one-hundredth of what the peasants are suffering. It is unbelievable that he can be so easily fooled. We were pleased to read the speeches of Sir A. Chamberlain in the House of Commons."

He suddenly changed his tone, his face became serious, his voice lowered, his eyes burned with emotion.

"We hope to have help from God - but also from foreign countries," he said. We are hoping for war. We read that the Pope wishes to have a crusade against Soviet Russia. That is fine! If there were intervention, the peasants would rise in revolt, but now there are no leaders, and all are afraid. Do not buy from these people who are crucifying Russia -- poor Mother Russia!"

After all this, we decided to take a walk. We strolled through the village, admiring the neatness of the cottages. An old woman with sad, care-worn features and usual peasant costume, without shoes, stood at her gate. We stopped to talk.

"And how is it with you, little mother?" I asked.

"Oh, it's terrible. How can one live without a cow? They are taking everything away, and do they pay for it? No such thing!

"Have you heard about the deacon? He was drowned in the lake behind the village. He came up three times, and then a 'russalka' seized him and pulled him down. Poor man! But then he was a little drunk. Oh. yes, there are a lot of 'russalka [water sprites] around here. They live in the water and on sunny days come out and walk on shore."

We walked into the Co-op. store to learn what it had and were greatly surprised to see a lot of lamb hanging up. It was only for children, we were told, but Jones said he was nine years old and I eight. As we were foreigners, the clerk smiled and gave us two kilograms for two rubles, fifty kopecks. We took this and some butter back to the priest, who was delighted.

There was a service in the church at 6:00 p.m., which we attended. About twenty-five women formed the congregation.

Back at the priest's house his mother was getting supper ready. She offered us some excellent cherry and apple preserves. Good cabbage soup with sour cream, boiled kasha [oatmeal] with butter, and some cream cheese with milk and sugar on it -all very good.

The young woman spoke again:

"I was wearing my little cross when I went to work in the factory. They told me to take it off. I said, 'I won't; it doesn't hinder my work, does it?' And now I wear it under my dress.

"I was a 'lishentka [deprived of rights] because I used to work in a monastery. My father was a peasant. I escaped from my village some months ago and came to work at Autostroy."

Jones: "Do they know that you are a 'lishentka?"

Young woman: "Gospodi bozhe moi Nyet!" (Good lord, no!)

Jones: "What about marriage and morals now**?"**

Priest: "Most people get married in the Church. Every mother has her baby christened in the Church anyway. Yes, there is a great number of divorces, and morals are certainly declining. God knows where it will lead!"

He had asked us to spend the night with him and offered his bed to us, but we said the floor was fine. They fixed sheets and pillows for us; it was quite comfortable. We slept well after the most interesting day of the trip so far.

Twenty-third Day

We were supposed to take a boat from here down to Autostroy, but after we had waited three hours, it sailed by our dock loaded with soldiers. We walked it two hours of stiff tramping. Ah, the vagaries of travel and Russian uncertainty!

Tonight being Sunday, Dr. Wells, the visiting Cleveland preacher here, conducted a simple little service - a few hymns, a few words, a little prayer. It made me feel a lot better. Somehow the value of the spirit "when two or three are gathered together," is brought home to one in a far off and also atheistic country. It was an ennobling evening!

Twenty-fourth Day

Poor Jones was sick today - a bit of a chill. I drove into Nijni this afternoon and saw the old Fair buildings, famous for one thousand years. The Fair is not held anymore -a great pity! In the private market, there were many people, buying and selling. Some excellent tomatoes were for sale - cheap, too! We visited the old Kremlin on the hill, and had a fine view of the Volga and the Okha and the flat countryside for miles around, dotted with church domes. The crumbling wall at our feet had looked out over this scene for a thousand years - a proud and wealthy town!

We saw in Nijni this evening, as guests of Messrs. Appleton and Jorgesson, "The Ace of Spades," and it was fair. The costumes were of the 17th century.

"Isn't it bourgeois?" we asked a man next to us.

"Yes, the Communists do not approve, but then the people like it tremendously."

Twenty-fifth Day

We were supposed to sail down the Volga yesterday and found today that we could not have done so – yesterday's boat had not sailed yet. We got on our steamer - a side-wheeler. It was supposed to sail at 11:00 a.m. It did - across the river, and it was nine hours later when we finally left Nijni. It was cold and rainy and there was no place to sit except on our bunks.

Jones struck up a conversation with a mechanic on the boat.

"I am a Party man," the stranger said. "There are only four of us on board and only six candidates, and we have a crew of forty-six. On some boats, there is only one Communist. Why? Because the boatmen are mostly of peasant origin and believe in things like private property. The peasants do not like the collective farms because they do not understand. A lot think they are something foreign and not truly Russian. They are superstitious, too."

It was difficult to get food all day, but finally by the use of some more cigarettes we got the lone waiter interested. The food was not good, although it was very expensive.

The boat was crowded in the third and fourth-class sections. Peasants with huge bundles, dirty clothes, and many babies lay around on every square inch of floor space. There must have been a thousand of them. Smell!

A doctor's wife on the boat said to Jones:

"Exiles? The peasants have been sent away in thousands to starve. They were exiled just because they worked hard all their lives. It's terrible how they have treated them; they have not given them anything; no bread cards even. They sent a lot to Tashkent, where I was, and just left them on the square. The exiles did not know what to do and many starved to death."

Although there were a fine comfortable lounge and a dining room forward, we could not get the steward to unlock them. He kept insisting that it was against orders to have them open before the boat left port. We finally wore him down with arguing and cigarettes.

So to bed, with rather grim prospects for this trip!

Twenty-sixth Day

Somehow we managed to get some eggs for breakfast, and also had some of that Florida grapefruit we brought along.

A Russian engineer opened a conversation with us:

"It's a good thing the engineers have been put in the first category since September 1st; we hope we will be better off now. I hope my child will be permitted to go to school. We used to be at the bottom of the scale; now we are equal to the factory worker.

"Forced labour? Of course there is. Nobody has any choice. I call my work forced labour because I have to go to work in the Urals.

"There are a lot of religious ones among the young who pretend they are Communists. I have a friend who joined the Party just because the majority of the people with whom he was working had joined. Very few are really sincere, I believe.

"Nationalism is very strong. Here the Tartars and other peoples hate the Russians. This has made local nationalism fanatical.

"The Russian intelligentsia is still longing for liberty. Lack of freedom here is degrading for a man."

It was nice and warm in the sun today, and we spent part of our time on the top deck. Suddenly we were aroused by a shout:

"Get back into your cabins!"

We all had to go within doors and close the windows while we passed under a railroad bridge on which were sentries with guns. They are told to shoot anyone standing on deck. All Russian railroad bridges have sentries to guard against sabotage. It gives one a funny feeling!

This afternoon we stopped at Kazan. As usual, the people swarmed down to the boat to get on. It seemed impossible that so many could ever squeeze on with all their huge boxes, and bundles, and children. The usual case of someone who gets left, or a child who gets separated from its mother makes each stop a drama and a tragedy. A group of gypsies created a furore and much amusement when they carted their pots and pans, and tent poles, and junk onto the boat, making much noise and many trips, scuttling on and off the gangway.

But we saw a real tragedy on the bank near our wharf, a group of about a hundred - men, women and children - sitting sullenly and gloomily upon the bank waiting - for exile! They were Kulaks, the hated and hounded Kulaks. It was a pitiful sight; I have never seen such a dejected group.

SAMARA

Twenty-seventh Day

It was nice and sunny again today.

We arrived at Samara after dark at about 9:00 p.m. It must be a half-mile tramp from the river to the hilltop where the town is inches of dust, and a tough climb. We drove three-quarters of the way with our heavy bags, and blew a fuse; so Jones went off to find a droshki. He returned forty-five minutes later. The big hotel was full, so we went to the Bristol, and found a group of German-American munition workers who were living there for eighty rubles a month, with food. They were glad to see English-speaking men again. A meal - served immediately - was very good, and cost us only one ruble, 75 kopecks.

'The following remarks on discipline were made by a man we encountered:

"The administrator is made responsible for his business. The captain of a boat is made responsible. The power of the captain has been made greater; the director of a factory has greater authority than formerly. Now they can dismiss a man. This was difficult until now, because of the Trade Unions. The Unions said: 'No, he has a big family, etc..' Until now a case of dismissal had to go before a court, and often several courts. The great task of the Trade Unions now is to educate the masses."

That means the power of the Trade Unions has been broken, according to Jones. Their work is now to carry out the Plan.

Jones: "Who is now the secretary, or the head of the Trade Unions?"

Party man: "I don't know. [Up to a year ago everybody would have known who held important position, according to Jones]. The role of the Trade Unions is now to help production and education, to prepare Shock Brigade workers, to mobilize the masses; and they cannot interfere if the administration dismisses a man.

"A director cannot take on a 'flyer' [worker who leaves his factory] now. A worker must have documents showing that he had permission to leave his work. The worker must remain in his factory. If I am a worker and want to leave my factory, the director can say 'No,' and I cannot go. But any reasonable changes - for family or climatic reasons are allowed.

"Now there is to be less centralization. Now Kazan is more independent. The Kazan administration used to wait for orders from Moscow, but now it acts for itself.

"We can now make use of our local supplies without permission from Moscow. Formerly, we had to wait a long time for action on our requisitions, and iron and supplies would remain idle in a port or in a factory. Now two local factories can exchange goods without permission from Moscow.

"There is no more direct paying between factories, the money goes through a bank, and factory accounts are settled by check. This is under the new cost-accounting system. Every engine driver must be responsible for the expenses of his locomotive. Every factory or institution must account for its expenses. If the director is economical he receives a premium; if he spends too much, he must pay a fine or sacrifice a part of his pay."

Twenty-eighth Day

Off to the Kolhoz today! It's a tough job for the "boys" riding "hard," as I found out from our half-hour trip to a neighboring town, which consisted simply of a station and fifteen houses. It was very quiet when the train had gone.

Russian trains have two classes of carriages, "soft" and "hard," the former having separate compartments with cushions for four persons, and the latter only hard wooden double-decked "shelves" throughout the car.

About a mile away, a tractor was threshing, and we could see the forks of the workers flashing in the afternoon sun; so we walked over. It turned out to be a State farm threshing unit, employing about thirty persons, mostly girls, who seemed amply able to do the job of pitching. They all but quit work when we came up, and pretty soon the engine coughed and wheezed and stopped. They had seen my camera and wanted to have their pictures taken.

A girl of about twenty-five said:

"When will there be an end to our misery? We have suffered and are suffering so much. We are hoping and hoping that there will be a war - then there would be a revolt [with meaning in her eyes]. They took away our cow for a whole week and it was shut up and not fed. Now we have nothing at all. Our land was taken away from us and we were forced to work here. They do not give us anything. We work twelve hours a day. It is a thousands and times worse than ever; we are actually hungry. We get a tiny amount of milk and not enough bread, only half a kilo a day, and no meat."

The continual use by peasants of the third person "they" in reference to Communists is a constant reminder that the mass of the people still feel that Communism is something extraneous and foreign.

"Those two," pointing to a man in a red shirt, on a white horse, and the tractor mechanic, "are Party members," the girl continued. "They have a good time."

"Red Shirt" was kissing all the girls, and ordering people about. The mechanic just stood and gazed aimlessly around.

The other girls told the same story.

We left the girls working away, and started out for a little village we could see at the foot of some gently rising steppes five or six versts (kilometers) away. We passed two wagons drawn by camels, and turned to watch their silhouettes against the orange sky. Then the stars came out. Walking through the dark streets, we came to a small house which had a bright light streaming from the window. Evidently there was someone about. We walked in, and found several bearded men huddled over account books and papers spilled in confusion on the table. They immediately jumped up to welcome us, and began asking questions. More and more collected until the small room was quite full - and very smelly!

They were much impressed by an old Cosmopolitan magazine we had, especially the illustrations:

"Kakaya krasievaya kartina!" (What pretty pictures!).

As usual, Jones talked and I tried to look interested. We met the president, a small, sharp-eyed young man with a little military cap, and also the vice-president, a jolly unshaven fellow with a big voice.

This was the Stalin Kolhoz, a village of 4,000 persons. The village Soviet had fifty-two members, of which about one-third were Communists. From all sides they bombarded us with such questions as,

"When will there be a revolution in America?"

"Is it true that the English want war?"

"Why not let the Soviet Union live in peace?"

"Aren't there thousands of workers dying in England and America?"

After a lot of this, we began to get pretty hungry, so the vice-president took us to his house for supper. It was just like any village cottage, one front room with an old oil lamp burning over a table, covered with a piece of dirty oilcloth. There were three chairs and a bench along the wall, a glass fronted cabinet with the family china, a bed in one corner and the stove - a large brick one - extending out into the middle of the room. There we met the "Madame" and five children, all very dirty, especially the two little ones. But while there was a lack of beauty and cleanliness there was nothing missing in hospitality. They heated our baked beans, and proudly produced a water melon and tea for us. Everybody spat the seeds on the floor, and then after a while somebody swept them into the corner.

Our hostess said:

"Oh, it is terrible! We used to have three cows, two horses, sheep, and ten chickens: now look around. The dvor [farmyard] is empty, and we only have two chickens. Now we only get half a litre of milk a day. We used to have as much as we liked; one cow used to give fifteen litres a day. That is why my children look so pale and ill. How can it get better when we have no land and no cows?"

Our friend the president came in to say goodnight to us, and, of course, stayed to talk.

"There were forty Kulak families in this village." he told us, "and we've sent them all away [proudly]. We sent the last man only a month ago. We exiled the entire families of these people be-cause we must dig out the Kulak spirit by the roots! They go to Solovki or Siberia to cut wood, or work on the railways. In six years, when they have justified themselves, they will be allowed to come back. We leave the very old ones, ninety years and over, here, because they are not a danger to the Soviet power. Thus we have liquidated the Kulak!

"In June and July we had a campaign against illiteracy; there were a lot of illiterates. We have liquidated the illiterates and now there is none at all."

Imagine that!

Well, about this time we began to feel pretty sleepy, and said so. Our friend offered us his bed, but we said we preferred the floor. So after carefully shutting all the windows, and seeing that his four children were adjusted in a filthy bunch of old

bedding on the floor, and ourselves likewise, he blew out the light. Well, folks, that was some night! In spite of tucking my trousers in my socks, etc., the flea and bug situation was very discouraging to any connected shut-eye.

Twenty-ninth Day

During breakfast, a pleasant-faced man, who had asked many questions the night before and impressed us with his keenness for the Party regime, came in. He went over and held a whispered conversation with the vice-president, and then came to where we were sitting and eating. His entire expression and attitude had altered. The gay enthusiast had become utterly dejected.

"It is terrible," he said, as he shook his head. "We can't speak or we'll be sent away. 'They took away our cows, and now we have only a crust of bread. It's worse, much, much worse than before the Revolution. But in 1926-27 - those were the fine years!"

Of course, I did not immediately understand what he had said, but his amazing change of face made it apparent that he was now telling a different story. It was an amazing reversion, but I think it significant that this is typical in many cases of enthusiastic supporters; they have many grave doubts and secret miseries.

This fellow took us around to the Soviet offices again. A number of muzhiks were standing about. They stared at us and one old man with a cap on the back of his head came up and greeted us.

"And how is it with you, tovarishch (comrade)?" we inquired.

"It is terrible in the Kolhoz," he whispered. "They took my cows and my horse. We are starving. Look what they give us - nothing! nothing! How can we live with nothing in our dvor? And we can't say anything or they'll send us away as they did the others. All are weeping in the villages today, little brother."

We turned to leave and he followed us out into the dark corridor. Suddenly he seized us both by the arms and whispered hoarsely:

"For God's sake, don't say anything."

It was really very exciting!

Outside, a horse was tied to a post - one of the worst kept and fed I have ever seen. Said our last mentioned friend:

"That was my horse once; now he belongs to the Kolhoz. I fed him well, and now look at him - scraggy and dejected."

One could see that he had once been proud of a good horse - now there was no one to take care of it, to have a personal interest in the animal.

Just then a boy wearing a red shirt came out of the building, grinned, jumped on the horse, and went off at a full gallop, using whip and heel. The old man followed the demonstration with his eyes. He said nothing, but looked very sad.

This scene impressed me so much that I mused over the thought that although it may be possible for the Soviets to do away with the incentive of money in their State, yet there can be no substitute for pride in personal possession. We shall see!

As we stood there, the rest of the group nodded and sighed.

"Oh yes, it is very bad!" declared one. Then a healthy looking young Komsomolka (member of the Young Communist League) joined the group. She wore a red bandanna around her head.

"Old wives' tales!" she asserted, jeering.

Just then along came the president, seated in a fancy horse-drawn rickshaw in which we were to see the farm. He had scarcely joined us when an old woman came hobbling up, wringing her hands and crying between outbursts of excited talk. She saw we were strangers and came to tell us her troubles.

"Oh, do something for me!" she cried. "They have taken away my cow. How can I live? Oh my! Oh my! They won't give me anything at all, and I am starving. Please, I beg, I beg of you. They say I can't get anything because I don't work, but I am ill. How can I work? And I have my little girl to feed! My dvor is empty and the land has been taken away. We are dying!"

She wept - the tears streaming down her face.

The young Komsomolka laughed, and shouted:

"Shut up, old woman! You ought to go to work."

"But how can I work? I am ill!" she implored with outstretched arms, and then burst into tears again.

"Well, don't come bothering us now, old woman," said the president of the Soviet. "We've got better things to do. Get off with you!"

The president climbed onto the front seat of our carriage and we into the hay-filled back, and away we drove.

"There has been a decree that only those who work can receive things," he said in explanation, "so the order must be carried out."

That was that!

He told us about their Kolhoz and the "otkhodniki" (peasants sent to factories):

"Here we have group piece work. We decide how many workers shall be assigned to threshing, how many to milking, etc., and send the unnecessary ones to work in the factories. We sent 130 men to the biological factory alone. Some go because they want to. The more machines we get, the more spare people we shall have to send to the 518 new factories to be opened this year.

"Last year we had 'uravnilovka' [equal pay] and a lot of people were lazy and said that whether they worked or not they got the same pay. But we introduced 'sdelshchina' [piece work] -this spring, and now they work far harder. We use a system of brigades with a brigadier in charge. Each person has a book in which the amount of work he does is put down daily, together with the credit he receives for that work in terms of 'work days'. For instance, cutting silage is only one-half a 'work day' in the book, because it is not a full-time job; other jobs receive more than a 'work day's' credit - e. g., a brigadier receives this, or a skilled worker, or one who has done a particularly good job that day. They are paid monthly advances on the basis of the number of 'work days' up to sixty per cent of what we figure the average pay should be, or about eighty rubles. Then the remainder of the profits of the farm are divided at the end of the year."

Probably not the profits!

"We had a Sect in our village," continued our friend, as we drove along through the fields in the warm sun, "but we sent the leader away, chased him to Siberia, where he must do hard work, work as hard as the batrak he used to employ. The villain was a Kulak. He said that the Communists wanted all the people to die. Imagine! And then he said that the Pope of Rome was soon to come, and that he would hang all the Communists!"

Very indignant he was after telling about this.

"We closed the church," he said, "and are going to turn it into a House of Culture. There will be films, meetings, plays. In it will be a branch of the Ossoaviackhim and the M.O.P.R. [Society for Help to Revolutionaries] too. We already have a branch of the 'Osso' here now, and we practise with gas masks in the village. Why? Of course, we must be prepared for war, tovarishch."

As we drove through the village, aged men took off their hats to the new boss - just as if he were one of the old landlords. It was not just a slight doffing of the cap, but a complete removal of it with a bow.

So we came to a Russian silo - dug out of the ground. A cutter and tractor were at work, and two women were carrying a large basket on handles between them, and transferring the silage from the blower through the whole length of it, and then tramping it down with their feet. It was really hard work, but they got credit for only half-time work.

"At first the peasants laughed at this machine and silo," said our guide. "They'd never seen one before. But now they work hard at it."

The peasant woman talked to us. It was the same story.

"How can we live," she asked, "on ten pounds of bread per month [womens' rations]

And clothes! Do you know I have been in the Kolhoz now for the second year and not a scrap of new clothes have they given us. It's worse - much, much worse than it ever has been. We did not want to join the Kolhoz. They forced us to. And they took away my cow ['And mine!' 'And mine!' they all chimed in] and now my dvor is empty. And they have taken away the horse! We can get only a half-litre of milk a day - no meat and no butter. It has never been so bad. Poor Mother Russia is in a sorry plight."

Jones found some more women working not far away. They all shrieked and talked and gesticulated at the same time.

"My Ivan," cried one; "how can I give him enough food?"

Then they showed us some grain they were cleaning.

"Look!" said one, "that's what they keep for us-rotten grain. All the best they send to Samara, and keep the worst for us. What's that? How long? Why mostly we work twelve hours a day, and on that sovkhoz [State farm] over there they often work sixteen. From here we drove far out through the fields to visit a threshing machine. As usual, there was much mechanical trouble with it

We returned to the vice-president's home, and then walked to a house they were using as a restaurant. It seated about fifty persons; as usual, flies were very bothersome, and it was far from being clean. Most of the diners were women, and they were eating a very thin shtchi (cabbage soup) with black bread. There was an uproar when we entered.

"Look exclaimed a woman. "Look what they give us! That's all we have. It is bad, no meat for us! And they took away our cows! The Kolhoz took everything! How can we work on an empty stomach like this?"

By this time the smell of the place began to get us, and we left, musing on the fine farm and factory kitchens that one hears about.

As we went out into the courtyard, an attractive old man of about seventy-five came up to us. He wore a blue Russian shirt, ragged trousers, lapti (shoes), and a blue cap which he removed as he bowed.

"Plokho! Plokho!" he groaned. "My dvor is empty. I used to have three horses and three cows, but they are gone now. It is getting worse and worse. It's a dog's life!"

A middle-aged woman, who heard all this, immediately shrieked:

"A lot of pity you deserve! You once had your horses and your cows, and little pity did you have for us 'bedniaks' [poorest class of peasants] then. I can't grumble. I

had no cow and no horse. My husband was killed when the 'Whites' were here. But I am better off now!"

It is this very poorest class among the peasants that has gained something by the Revolution, and it is significant that it is the only peasant group with a good word to say for the new regime.

It was time to go for our train. Another man with a horse drove up to take us. We piled in. "Wait! Wait!" someone shouted, and the driver ran off. He returned loaded with four fine water melons, which all insisted we should take.

Away we went at a spanking trot through the village! People waved, smiled, and waved again. We turned to watch the little cottages drop from view one by one as the rolling hills intervened.

At the station there was the usual wait - about an hour. Quite a large crowd collected around us, asking questions about America. And they told us how terrible it all was now and how much things cost. One said:

"The Trade Unions now do nothing to help the worker. They are only to educate him and to make him produce."

Just then along came our train for Samara, and we managed to squeeze into one of the cars.

Back in Samara we had a taste of Russian inefficiency when we went for railroad accommodations. We had to go to one office and find out what time the train left, and to another where there was a queue of twenty-five people, to get our railroad tickets. They won't tell you about train schedules at this latter place. We were told that it would be necessary to go to the station two hours before the train left if we wanted Pullman accommodations, which process required about an hour's time and much argument.

Now we wanted a bath, and no joke about it. Inquiry revealed that the fireman was out, and we were told that it would take three hours to get hot water anyway. I did not see why it should take so long, because there was a boiler beside the bath tub. So I yelled about until I managed to get some wood. Then I built the biggest fire I could and waited. Well sir, pretty soon I had a hot bath and when I called Jones to have his, he was absolutely amazed.

At about ten o'clock we picked up a droshki, piled in our four suitcases, and clambered in. Our train was supposed to leave at 11:00 p.m., but when we got to the ticket office to secure Pullman (oh yeah!) accommodations, we were told that it was five and a half hours late. It was too late and too expensive to go back to the hotel, so we cursed a few times, and found sitting space on the floor along with the rest of Russia. About an hour later, with Jones asleep, I heard a man announcing "Moscow - train!" I jumped a foot and woke up "bratushka" (little brother). We were in luck - this was yesterday morning's train, fourteen hours late, and two "soft" places available. I found myself in a room with a young American, his interpreter, and a girl, while Jones picked a couple of Asiatics. It was just plain filthy. The couch was an inch thick with

dust and the cover was all ripped and torn. There was, of course, no bedding of any sort. The floor was dirty, and we couldn't see out of the window because of the mud. Apart from that, it could not have been cozier!

Around 2:00 a.m., the attendant pushed open the door and told me to get up quick if I wanted to go into the compartment with Jones; so I moved and even got a "lower".

At 4:30 there was a great thumping at the door, and a woman and baby made triumphal entry, much to the discomfort of the natives - meaning us. I had to move again - from "lower" to "upper"! To say the least, it was disconcerting, because I had to clean everything off before I could think of sleeping. So to bed!

MORDVA

Thirtieth Day

If I hadn't written the day of the week, I should never have known what day this is. Everybody talks of dates, but no one ever seems to mention the day of the week. I am going Russian, I guess!

We were up at 7:00 a.m. to take a walk at the station - it was getting a little "high" in our room, with everything shut. Fortunately, the young American was better provided for traveling this way, and had a teapot, tea, and sugar. We contributed baked beans, spaghetti, and grapefruit. Then at the stations one could buy from peasants, soft boiled eggs, potato cakes (at one place), bread, tomatoes, and apples. Thus we lived for two days. Somehow I enjoyed it thoroughly!

This afternoon we entered the Autonomous Republic of Mordva and stopped at a station. Immediately, a bunch of ragged little lads, like the "homeless boys" of Moscow, came up to the train, begging for bread. They certainly were tough looking little characters.

"Bottles! Bottles! Have you any bottles?" they asked.

Many people gave them empty beer or water bottles.

An amazing contrast to this scene was afforded by some girls dressed in their native costumes, which were somewhat similar to those of Jugoslavia. But these were the more impressive because they were so fancily decked out in embroidered blouses and skirts, while around their hips they wore brass semi-circles, all embossed and glittering with coins; and dangling there from were long red fringes which they used after the manner of Dr. Traprock's sirens of the South Seas.

My new-found American friend, J.M., was a tractor service man who had been out in Central Asia for the last six months. He told some amazing stories about food conditions in that district.

At a sovkhoz at Kvarkinski, the only meat they had in six months was camel udder, he reported. They were even killing condors and eating them, food was so scarce.

"At Sinferople, the peasants had no meat," he said, "although the Kolhoz had quite a large herd of live stock. But no one was allowed to kill anything. One day a foreign delegation of Communists arrived from South America. Then they killed all sorts of animals to have meat for the occasion, and to impress the visitors. I have not seen potatoes for two months myself."

I asked him about the use of tractors and their treatment. It is significant that the same tractor which runs - before overhauling is necessary - for 5,000 hours at home, lasts only 1,500 hours here. The reason is the quality of the oil used. It is Russian and very inferior.

J.M. also said that even the machine tractor stations do not do the right sort of repair work. They replace the old pistons with much heavier iron ones, which reduce the efficiency of the motor to a large extent. Then a universal trouble is the shortage of parts. The Russians buy machines, but no parts, consequently, they have to spoil another engine to fix the first. "Fixing", to the Russian, is generally a strong arm policy with a sledge-hammer as the means.

"It is very difficult to make them machine-minded," he said. "On one State farm, when I was there, a prize was given to a certain girl for being the best tractor driver. But it was only because she kept the machine nice and clean. I looked at the motor - it was in bad shape. No foolin', the directors at these places do not know what they are doing.

"On most of the sovkhozi I visited, it was the practice to select a few peasants at random from the workers and imprison them for some slight trouble that was found in their work. They just wanted to keep up the discipline so that the rest might know they had better be careful."

Jim also told us of no less than six Russian engineers of his acquaintance who, prior to 1921, had worked in the U. S. A., but had come over here again. Now they were most anxious to get back to the U. S. A. Jim had with him a letter from one man to his son in Detroit. The boy had wanted to join his father, but the letter read in part:

"Even if you can't get a job and have nothing but some bread and butter and coffee, you are better off where you are."

I really believe that the average labouring man in the U. S. A., out of work though he may be, has more to eat than the average Russian peasant today.

The most surprising thing that J. M. told us was that he had been offered $300 a month salary to spread Communist propaganda in the U. S. A. He swears that it was a party man who made him the offer, although this is the only case of the kind of which I have heard. If such offers are frequent, then one can draw his own conclusions. It is not likely that they are numerous, however, particularly just now, because the Third

International is very quiet and Russia does not have enough money to spend any in that way.

MOSCOW

Thirty-first Day

Another day - on the rails!

Jones had an interesting conversation with a young woman on the train. It suggested what Communism is doing to the believer and the artistic.

"When I get back to Moscow," she said, "I am going to become a KomsomolkaI am a believer, but I won't tell them. There are many others like that, too. The reason for this deception is that it gives me a chance to go to a university and study more music. It is very hard for one to learn the piano these days, and I have been lucky. It is considered bourgeois, you know.

"I worked in a library in Moscow for a while and they were very particular about the books they gave out there. Children were not allowed to have books that described the happy life or the line living of the nobility before the Revolution."

Then the girl told us of the trouble the Communists had had in Central Asia:

"There were two villages that were violently opposed to collectivization. The people said they would not join. So the Communists came at night and set fire to the towns and thus entirely destroyed them. But many Communists were murdered, too!

"In school, I have to make reports and speeches," she added. "I learn my Communist phrases and sentiments, but I don't have to believe them, do I? Anybody can repeat things - and lots do!"

This I think significant of an attitude which I have long suspected among so many "ardent" supporters.

The following remarks by various other Communists on the train were rather amusing:

"In America nobody talks to the Negro and he cannot get a good position either. He is always being hanged."

"Communists cannot make speeches there either. Russia is the land of complete freedom."

"Why does the Disarmament Conference last so long? Because they are plotting war. Why has there been no answer to Foreign Minister Litvinoff's speech at Geneva?"

This speech was one asking for complete disarmament.

We arrived in Moscow at 5:00 p. m. and tried for half an hour to get a droshki that did not cost ten rubles, but it could not be done.

A bath and a good big dinner were in order and no mistake!

Thirty-second Day

We ran into Mr. A. Kahn here at the hotel, and found he had a letter for me from mother. I was sick as a pup today, so stayed in bed - alimentary canal damaged by sabotage.

My doctor told us some things about his profession:

"The doctors have an awful time of it now. We get only 130 rubles a month, and have to buy at the private market. The worker lives better than we do. I think in general the worker is better off now as regards housing, but his food, clothing, and shoes are much worse.

"Health on the whole is not so bad; but there is great general undernourishment. On paper, the medical attention for the workers is fine, but actually they must wait months for treatment. There are but few hospitals, and they ate overcrowded and dirty."

Thirty-third Day

We bought a lemon for one ruble, fifty kopecks (75c) for use in tea. It was an occasion!

We found an amazing title for a book today, "Against Mechanical Materialism and Menshevik Idealism in Biology."

This reminds me that the only non-technical book I have seen a person reading was in the hands of a man working a hoist at Autostroy. Between hoists he read "Gulliver's Travels".

Loafed today!

Thirty-fourth Day

We visited the caouchouc (rubber) factory. By great good luck, the director to whom we talked was a very smart man and happened to be on the Moscow Educational Planning Committee, so he could tell us about the schools. All universities and high schools are called V. U. Z. Then there are various types of educational institutions under V. U. Z., technical, scientific, pedagogical, economic, and medical.

I was particularly anxious to learn something about their approach to and teaching of history and economics.

"We have two principles or mottoes which guide our whole teaching of history and he said.

"First -History is the record of class warfare.

"Second - One's life decides one's knowledge. This means that the economic system under which a man lives determines his views on sundry problems and his activity.

"These two mottoes are the basis of all Russian education. It follows logically that the history of personalities plays no part, but only that of classes. For example, the bourgeois interpretation of the Crusades holds that these were mainly the influence of Christ, and one hears the names of great crusaders. The Communist point of view, on the other hand, is, first, that Jesus did not exist, and, second, that the real reason for the Crusades was economic - merchants sought markets in the east; feudal Europe was overcrowded and could not feed the people, so they sought expansion."

"But what of the great men of history?" I asked. "What about Peter the Great? Did he not greatly change?

"No, tovarishch," he replied. "Peter was the result of the modernization of Russia, of the growth of the bourgeoisie in Russia, and of the transformation of Russia to different times."

"Was Lenin a great man?"

"It was the Party that created Lenin, not Lenin, the Party," he replied.

We spoke of art.

"The motto, 'Art is a weapon of class warfare,' predominates," he informed us. "The role of the artist is to make himself a weapon of agitation. He should be a realist - give a true expression to reality. He should paint a priest with a red nose, and the fat Capitalist with a silk hat and gold in his hands. This for the sake of class warfare! If he is painting a picture of life before the Revolution, the artist should show, for example, a man beating his wife. Art should be agitation at all times."

"But what of the great artists of the past - Raphael or Rembrandt?" I asked.

"Raphael made a step ahead, but his motives were not sympathetic. They expressed their epoch and the feelings of the surroundings, which were Capitalistic. They were weapons in the hands of Capitalists."

This was all very disgusting. To pass art off like that! Well, it seems to me as though they are yodeling up the wrong canon, and it is certainly going to raise the devil with any normal artistic expression. They are rearing a nation of sign painters!

Our friend showed us around the rubber factory. It was very disorderly and unorganized. In one department, they were making bicycle tyres for export to Holland and India. They were marked in English. Most of the machine equipment was

American, and we were told that the rubber was mostly from South America. It is significant that since Stalin's speech, eighty percent of the workers have been put on piece work, which fact has greatly increased efficiency.

I ran into Cecil B. DeMille (stupendous performance, colossal settings, magnificent, etc.). I was, however, agreeably impressed. He is a pleasant, quiet-voiced person, not the expected flashy, yawping man I imagined. He said of Soviet films:

"Interesting, but of doubtful expression - a little backward and of course Russia is only learning how to use sound. Their two main weaknesses are their lack of individual characters, and the mawkish tragedy of the stories. They like to portray mass emotion and action exclusively, and thus destroy personality. American and European audiences do not like this."

This afternoon we got our Intourist guide - a man, thank God! - and left by train for Kharkov and the South. On the journey, we chatted with a white collar worker, who lived in one room with six other people. The nervous strain was terrible, he said; never a moment of privacy.

"All the workers in my house are discontented," he declared. "There are many false Communists who do not believe in Communism at all.

"I just threw my lottery ticket away. I was obliged to buy it. Usually, big Communists win, and you read in the newspaper that they have returned the prizes to the State for the sake of the Five-Year Plan. Legally, you are supposed to receive the prizes in money, but often you are pressed to give it to the "Osso" or M. O. P. R.

"Very many Russians will never forgive the Americans, British, and Germans for trading with the Soviets. They are trading with crooks. And they are crooks! All the best stuff is sent abroad - we starve."

This train was quite comfortable, for we were in a Wagon Lit, and right next to us was a dining car, with potted plants on the tables, and other decorations, including a decanter of vodka, half of which I drank in mistake for water. Nearly burned up!

Thirty-fifth Day

We arrived at Alexandrovsk tonight at 8:00 p.m. The train was punctual to the minute. There we were met by a car from Dnieperstroy. That was fine and we steamed out to the dam in about forty minutes. There I got the surprise of my life. Colonel Cooper and his men have superb houses, of the regular Florida brick bungalow type, set in fine gardens and with many trees around. We stayed with a Mr. Wilkinson in the house where Colonel Cooper lives. It was grand!

DNIEPERSTROY

Thirty-sixth Day

Mr. M., chief engineer, took us all over the dam. I had hoped to get some photos, but only yesterday the Russians began to prohibit the taking of pictures.

The dam is an amazing project in size and concept. Stretching from bank to bank, it is built in a graceful curve, three-quarters of a mile long. At each end are rock-crushing and concrete-mixing plants, through one of which we went; and then down into the power house, which is about two-thirds built, and contains all American equipment, with its nine turbines, each twenty-five feet in diameter, and developing 90,000 h. p. apiece - the largest in the world. They poured more concrete in three months last year than had ever been dumped before anywhere in the world, with an average of about 4,000 cu. yds. per day and 146,000 cu. yds. in one month. Eighteen thousand persons are employed on this job.

We went right down inside the turbines and saw how they worked. After much climbing of ladders, we eventually reached the top again and watched the steam derricks lower two-yard buckets down into the fills. Mr. M. explained how a dam like this is built by constructing a preliminary coffer-dam and then pumping all the water out of the center and building right on the bottom. We returned through the center of the dam, by way of a passage. Why this?

"It's a secret," said Mr. M., "but you don't generally build large runways through dams - nor those either" (pointing to small passages running out into the piers).

Evidently everything is all set for defence!

The purpose of the dam is two-fold:

First, to develop 80,000 h. p. for electric transformation, and second, by backing up the water and having locks at one side it will make the Dnieper navigable from the Black Sea to Kiev. The kilo-watts developed here will light a new industrial city of a million persons that is being built adjacent, and will furnish power for a large steel works, an aluminium smelting plant, and other industrial establishments there

.

I spent the rest of the day in bed with a stomach ache.

Thirty-seventh Day

Jones went out this afternoon to see a German Kolhoz not far from here. I was not able to go. There he talked with a Communist. Suddenly a man came up, slightly "buzzed", and interrupted with:

"Tell him the truth!" he shouted. "Why are you telling him lies? We are being oppressed. Nothing but taxes, taxes, all the time. How can we live? The truth! The truth!"

This fellow went off talking to himself.

There is only one member of the Party at the Kolhoz, because the Germans are religious. This Party man explained how they sent workers to the factory. The man who goes continues a member of the Kolhoz. If he earns 150 rubles there, he must give

from three to ten per cent to the Kolhoz. People do not mind going to work on the construction job, but nobody wants to go to the Donetz Basin.

One peasant said:

"They sent the Kulaks away from here and it was terrible. We heard in a letter that ninety children died on the way - ninety children from this district. We are all afraid of being sent away as Kulaks for political reasons. We had a letter from one, saying they were cutting wood in Siberia. Life was hard and there was not enough to eat. It was forced labour! They sent all the grain away from our village and left only 1,000 pounds. I heard that in a village thirty versts away they came to seize the grain, and the peasants killed three militiamen. They wanted to have enough grain for themselves instead of starving. The Communists then shot sixteen peasants.

"They force us to work on Sundays, although we are Mennonites and don't want to. They won't allow us to have Sunday Schools, or religious magazines. The Russians have lost their religion, but we Germans still stick to ours. A lot of people have gone to America - take us with you!"

Tonight we left Dnieperstroy by train to go to Kharkov. Our guide had secured train accommodations for us and so everything was easy.

Here we are in the capital and industrial center of the Ukraine. It boasts of the highest buildings in Russia - houses and government offices. Large industrial plants, with their adjacent apartment houses for workers, are being built here.

KHARKOV

Thirty-eight Day

We visited the offices of Stuart, James & Cook Co. today. Unfortunately, Mr. Cole was away, but we talked with several other men who told us of the present conditions in the Ukraine, where they are designing coal machinery. They reported bad epidemics of cholera and dysentery there now. Conditions are terrible at present and the food is worse than a year ago. They treat the workers like cattle.

"They think they can make skilled miners out of peasants," we were told. "It can't be done quickly. Those workers can only dig half a ton of coal per day. They are very inefficient. The machines keep breaking down and everything gets jammed. It's a swell mess! And, of course, transportation is terrible, too, which means they can't distribute properly."

This afternoon we went out to the new tractor factory, which is soon to be in operation and which is designed to produce 50,000 tractors per year.

Our first general impression was of a group of modernistic factory buildings rearing their heads above the mud which surrounds them. We went to the trade school in which a crowd of young, unintelligent looking muzhiks was learning how to handle lathes and machine tools. I'd hate to have the job of teaching those blokes.

After much fussing around we managed to get permission to go in and see the assembly and machine departments. American engineers were around, installing equipment, and they all told the same story, that the Russians had a great curiosity for machines and liked to take them apart without much idea of what to do then. Last week in the *Moscow News* appeared the picture of three tractors outside this plant -"the first ones turned out"- but they had been sent from Stalingrad just for that picture! It will be weeks before they can produce here.

Tonight we took a train for Kiev, ancient city of the East.

KIEV•

Thirty-ninth Day

Kiev was a bright spot, for there we got our mail. Our hotel was an old one of the most florid Baroque architecture. But we had a piano, a bathroom, and several sentimental statuettes of thwarted and unrequited love, etc. We had a great surprise at the Sports Park where they have a modern restaurant that makes you think you are in Europe when you get the food you know you guessed wrong.

Kiev is a charming old town, with its many ancient churches and handsome avenues of trees. Jones and I walked through a park, where we saw a fine flower bed with two numbers outlined in flowers - 1,040 and 518. What did they stand for? One thousand and forty machine tractor stations and 518 industrial plants to be opened in 1931. Say it with flowers!

Fortieth Day

We started for civilization at 11:00 a.m. I met a Mr. Spyer and his secretary on the train, and they were very pleasant. At 7 p.m. we reached the Russian-Polish frontier station at Shepetorka, and had an hour to eat in the little Polish restaurant there - much better food. The Customs were very strict. The officials looked into my small jewelry box and opened every letter, although no one spoke any English! Then we got on another train which took us to the Polish-Russian frontier town where we again went through the Customs. Here they made an awful fuss over Jones's Russian literature took it away from him and made us lock it up in a sealed suitcase for shipment to Berlin. A fine International Wagon Lit Car was available here for the night's run to Warsaw.

Forty-first Day

We arrived in Warsaw at 7:00 a. m. and drove around the town after breakfast for an hour, seeing things. Strange how much impressed one is with an average decently dressed person - after Russia.

Berlin tonight at 7:30! A tremendous thrill of freedom once again, and the pleasure of a really good dinner. Russian experiences begin to have an unimagined glamour and romance.

Our curses of Russian discomforts are now but inaudible murmurs, and our most unpleasant experiences have become the best of fireside tales.

But perhaps we are all wrong; perhaps others once doubted the glory that was Greece, the grandeur that was Rome!

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