

whole life before him. She felt that it was only fair to put the matter frankly before him. She asked him if he was ready to expose himself to these tremendous consequences. He answered that he was not. "I am," she said; and she started out upon the undertaking without him.

She secured letters of introduction to such noblemen as had shown a wish to improve the condition of the peasants, and traveled about the country visiting their estates, and studying whatever they had done in the way of starting schools, coöperative workshops, and the like. She tried to impress upon them that the fundamental need was for the peasants to own the land; but she could not make the nobles see it. She also found that the heavy hand of the government was always ready to shut down upon even their mildest efforts at improvement. She came home feeling that she had gained nothing but experience and an added knowledge of life.

By this time the spirit of revolution was fairly awake. A Liberal named Nechayev had gathered together a group of revolutionists. They were discovered and arrested, and their trial in 1871 was the first great event in the long struggle for freedom. The procession of political exiles along the Great Siberian Road had begun. Meanwhile their revolutionary documents had been published, and were read by thousands of Liberals throughout Russia.

Catherine went to Kiev, and joined a revolutionary group.