

VERIGIN.

Archbishop Leader Arrives at Winnipeg.

En Route to His People From Siberian Exile—Cannot Yet Tell Whether Canada is a Free Country or Not.

Happy Re-union With His Sister Anna—In a Hurry to See His Mother—The Man Who Spent Fifteen Years as a Russian Prisoner.

(Winnipeg Free Press, Dec. 23.)

For three hours before the train from the east pulled in yesterday afternoon, a number of people patiently promenaded the platform awaiting its arrival. One of them—a woman—had been there since early morning. She was awaiting her brother, whom she had not seen for fifteen years. She knew nothing of the congestion of traffic along the C. P. R., and so kept steadfast watch lest the train might get in before its advertised time, determined, no matter when it arrived, that her brother should find someone there to meet him.

When, at a little before 3 o'clock, the train drew in, there alighted from one of the front coaches a tall, quiet-looking man, carrying a black leather valise studded with nickel bosses and ranged in curious design. A dark blue gabardine reached half way to the knees, over his trousers were fastened close-fitting, dark-grey leggings, piped at the edges with black cloth. His headgear was a black fedora. Around his neck he wore a long cord, fastened to which was a heavy silver watch and a richly-chased gold pencil. Alongside the watch pocket was a fountain pen, secured by loops of the cloth.

The traveller was Peter Verigin, newly come to Canada after fifteen years of Siberian exile. The woman awaiting him was his sister.

In the crush of Christmas travel it was some time before those looking for the new arrival could find the object of their search. Accompanied by Interpreter Harvey, who had gone east to meet Verigin, and by Ewan Ivan, Paul Plandin and Simon Eshben, three Doukhobors who had been directed by the communists to extend to the Doukhobor leader welcome on his arrival, Verigin walked eastward along the platform.

A HAPPY REUNION. His sister saw him, standing half a head taller than the average, and ran towards him, followed by the other waiting Doukhobors, with joyful cries. Verigin dropped his valise, took off his hat, opened his arms and cried "Anna!" He kissed his sister and the others, and quietly walked on toward the immigration buildings, being introduced on the way to H. P. Archer, of Swan River; Immigration Agent Crear, of Yorkton—both of whom have been for days in the city awaiting his coming; and to the village where his mother was. "I may not be a star in Canada," he said, "I see no reason why I should not be a good citizen."

On the party arriving at the immigration buildings, Verigin was shown the room set apart for his use. Here he spent a little time chatting with his sister and friends, including after his mother—who is 86 years of age, and who lives at Potertravsky Village with his sister, whose full name is Anna Vasilievna Verigin. Then, after the baggage had been packed away and the foregoing domestic enquiries made, the party moved downstairs to Acting Commissioner Mr. Moffatt's office.

Mr. Moffatt greeted Verigin warmly, welcoming him to the west in the name of the dominion authorities. In answer to his enquiries as to his voyage, Verigin said it was a long journey—good, but rough. He had sailed from Liverpool after crossing Europe from Moscow to Warsaw, and thence to England.

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Then he realized that perhaps he might be taking up too much of the commissioner's time. "Shall I see you again, yes?" he asked. "You are perhaps now too occupied."

Being assured on this point, Mr. Moffatt asked him concerning his visit to Canada. "I cannot talk much business," he said. "For I had not seen the Doukhobors. Of myself I knew nothing of their troubles—only of what I had heard. They told me the people would not take up their homestead lands."

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Mr. Crear told him that this was entirely false. Pointing to the Free Press representative—who was the only newspaper man present at the interview—Mr. Crear told Verigin that he had accompanied the pilgrims throughout their wanderings, and personally knew of the facts in connection therewith. "Is that so, yes?" said Verigin. "I shall have much to ask him."

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It was evident that he would make no statement as to his future actions, or the counsel he would give the Doukhobors, who for months have been anxiously awaiting his coming, till he had personally familiarized himself with every phase of the situation. Mr. Moffatt, indeed, and wisely did not attempt to draw from Verigin any statement. "You will know all about the troubles the government has had with the Doukhobors," he said, "when you get among them. In such a small space, soon after they were told to march into a building, they were told to go to the limits of their walks extended, that it was a mistake, they said, they were surrounded by soldiers. They fired a volley, wounding many of the soldiers and killing two."

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