

8 LITTLE GRANDMOTHER OF RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

friendless and famished, while all through the long summer days the entire population strong enough to work was in the fields, where they would have to toil till the night fell. The little children, dirty, emaciated, would be quarreling in the mud or dust, eating from the same dish with the dogs, and even the pigs. Every Sunday I would see the peasants going into our church, praying with fervor, pouring out their tears, and giving their last kopek in the name of God that there might be a better life in the next world, since that was their only hope of happiness.

"From the age of eight, how to find justice was the question that troubled me."

Yet the Verigos treated their serfs with much more consideration than most Russian landowners. Her father never had a serf flogged. Their serfs appreciated the difference, and constantly boasted of it. "We belong to the Verigos!" they would say with pride. When Katya, in conversation with the neighbors, referred to the contrast between the condition of her father's serfs and theirs, she would be cut short with the retort, "Well, your estate is a republic!" Yet even among the Verigos there was not a really warm and friendly feeling toward the peasants, except on Katya's part.

The selfish desire to grab everything, which often shows itself in children at one stage of their development, was unknown to Katya. Her tendency was to give away everything that came into her hands. If she were given some crisp delicacy, fresh from the oven, she would immediately present it to one of the servants. If she got a new toy, she passed it on to some peasant child before the day was out. Often