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### A Great Miracle Wrought by Temperance in Russia

#### Emancipation of Peasants from the Tyranny of Vodka Has Transformed the Country. An English Lady Writes of Changes Wit- nessed in Year of Freedom.

(Rosa Newmarch, in the London Daily Chronicle.)

A very short time spent in Russia at this tremendous crisis in her moral growth might convince the most sceptical that the age of miracles has not passed away. Having recently been privileged to observe the working of one miracle among the Russian people, in city and in countryside, I gladly testify to what I have seen. Because I have visited Russia at fairly frequent intervals since 1897 I am not entirely incompetent to draw comparisons between social conditions past and present. Moreover, I am not an intransigent teetotalist, and do not write in the interests of any temperance society. The Czar's rescript forbidding the sale of alcohol throughout the empire was announced on August 1, 1914, simultaneously with the order for mobilization, when the passionate enthusiasm of the people for a war which they instinctively felt to be heroic inclined them to ungrudging sacrifice. Yet at the time it was believed to be only a temporary measure, beneficial to the assembling troops rather than to the masses in general. The fine attitude of the nation made it possible some weeks later to go a step further and close all the vodka shops for the duration of the war. Many who knew how deeply the gangrene of intemperance had eaten its way into the social life of Russia, thought that a reaction must inevitably follow the unquestioning docility with which this verdict of drastic eradication was first accepted. But as weeks and months passed by without the least sign of rebellion among the people, it became evident that the foolish and pessimistic dictum, so often used to excuse our apathy in the face of urgently-needed reforms—"men cannot be made virtuous by legislation"—had met with a complete and triumphant refutation. For there can be no doubt in the minds of those who see them that the Russian people are becoming established in the virtue of temperance.

**After The Czar's Rescript.**

I must confess that I went to Russia consumed with curiosity to see how the Russians were playing the game. Were they enduring this restriction on their self-indulgence merely as a necessary evil growing out of the war? Did they protest openly or in secret? Were the wage-earning classes sulky, and was there much exercise of ingenuity in order to evade the rigor of the law? Any secret doubts I may have felt before I left Britain were soon swept away by a wave of enthusiasm for the courage and sweet reasonableness of the whole people.

**Same Law For All.**

For the severity with which the enactment is carried out, and its impartial application to all classes, I was hardly prepared. I had expected that the trattiris and spirit shops would be closed, or turned into temperance bars, but it certainly came as a splendid surprise to find that those who frequented the most luxurious restaurants in the capitals were also required to share in the self-sacrifice of the masses. One of the first restaurants I went into was the famous Cafe de Paris, in Petrograd. It was thronged with men of all ages; prosperous business men, government officials, officers in military and naval uniforms, taking their midday meal. How indignant they would add have been a year ago if they had been told that their appetite would be as good and their digestive functions work as well without a glass or two of vodka with the zakouski and a bottle of wine with the more substantial courses! Yet how "fit" and cheerful they all looked! Clearer in complexion, trimmer in figure, brighter-eyed than formerly. And the hum of conversation was as convivial as of old, although the "Bromian drink from the vine's stream" was replaced on every table by a decanter of innocuous kvass, or a bottle of cool and sparkling Narzan, a natural mineral water from the Caucasus. I rubbed my eyes on beholding this first phase of the miracle.

**A Transformed People.**

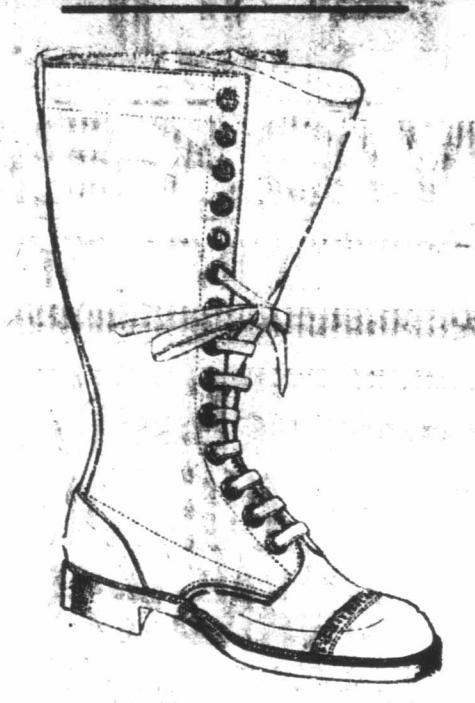
As with many modern miracles, the full significance of this one was not flashed upon me in a sudden and blinding glory, but was brought home through the simple things of life. First I noted the general air of well-being and physical freshness among the people; then I marked the transformation in the various classes with which I came in contact, and

even in certain individuals. Take, for example, the cab-drivers, the izvostchiks, a hard-drinking set of men in old days. Many a time when in the Varcarskoe Podvorye, in Moscow, I have watched them draw up in a quiet cul-de-sac, and make a midday meal of two salted cucumbers washed down by great gulps of vodka. The way in which they put the bottle to their lips, tilted back their heads, and let the stuff slide down their throats proved a long induration to the "fire-water" habit. Formerly the izvostchik was a good natured, bemused sort of creature, whose dirt and general stuffiness made his close proximity in the little droshky in which he rocked your over the cobble-stones an ordeal to the fastidious western nose. One longed for a hansom when the worst may be suspected, but not experienced. Yet recently I have sat in cabs behind well-washed necks and well-brushed clothes, and the hands that took my money, and occasionally deigned to give me change, were at least as clean as those of the average taxicabbers in London. In moments of expansion—after you have paid him—the izvostchik will sometimes drop a hint of his increased prosperity. If you remark on the fat leather purse he produces from beneath his queer blue cloth soutane: "We are all sober now," he will tell you with engaging candor and almost without a hint of regret, "and as today is a holiday perhaps, lady, you will not ask for change, out of this rouble."

**In Rural Russia.**

But where the great towns show wonderful signs of regeneration, it is in rural Russia that we witness the miracle in its most beneficial activity. The emancipation of the serfs in 1861 was not a greater boon for Russian than the emancipation of her peasants from the tyranny of vodka in 1914. A year's experience has transformed life in the villages. The Russian peasants are new men and—most hopeful sign of all—they are conscious of the fact. For a short time I stayed on a property in the Government of Jaroslavl, a considerable distance from any town or large village. Newspapers were not to be had, even at the nearest railway station, so when the day's work was done, groups of men from the neighboring hamlets came up to the house to ask for the latest news from the front. Our host, standing on the steps of the veranda would read out the last despatch from the Grand Duke. It was at the beginning of the steady retreat from the Carpathians, and of events which must have sorely tried their faith; yet the comments of these simple folk showed an unfathomable capacity for self-sacrifice and a firm confidence

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Men's 6 1/2-inch Ordinary Tongue Boots. Price \$3.00  
Boys' 10-inch Waterproof Boots. Price \$4.00  
Boys' 8-inch Waterproof Boots. Price \$3.60  
Boys' 7-inch Ordinary Waterproof Boots. Price \$2.40  
All Hand-Pegged and Hand-Sewn \$1.50 extra.

### F. Smallwood, The Home of Good Shoes.

that God would not allow the "accursed Germans" to overrun their dear country.

The people make no secret of their relief at finding themselves freed from the dominion of "Lord Alcohol." The difference to their earning and working powers is enormous. "At peasant to my host, "we begin to fertilize the fallows. Formerly we always met and spent a day or two drinking before we made a start. Of course it took another few days to pull ourselves together after this 'booze,' and so a week or more was wasted before we got the fertilizer spread. But now the job will be done in no time, you'll see."

One day my host met the village drunkard, a famous toper, who had never done a day's work in his life. He looked tidy and cheerful.

"How do you manage without vodka, Vassily Ivan'ich?"

"Quite well now, your honor."

"But didn't you miss it very much?"

"Yes, it was hard at first; but 'tis all right now. You see I've got a job. A bit of money in your pocket is a good thing. I don't think even if the vodka shops were open I should care to get drunk again."

And this is no isolated case.

### Regenerated Villages.

Walking through the villages on Sunday brought still more intimate revelations. Gone the unsavory heaps that on closer inspection proved to be human beings lying in more or less good-natured besottedness by their cottage door! Gone the unhappy, down-trodden women who had no consolation but to follow the evil example of their menfolk! Gone the half-starved, half-clothed children born and bred up in an atmosphere of alcoholism. My host and I, sitting on the steps of a barn in the one street that formed the village, watched the life around us, and exchanged occasional greetings with passers-by. A well-dressed family, father, mother and several children, walked past us. "Those," I thought, "cannot be peasants. They must be visitors from the town." But my host assured me they were peasants of the new order. A group of girls in bright cotton frocks went laughing down the steep path to the riverside—a great place for gossip. A fine young man in a yellow shirt came swinging along to the accompaniment of his harmonika, in haste to keep tryst with some Masha or Pasha in the next village. Older people sat out in front of their log-burnt houses, the forecourts of which were all tidy, while here and there someone had even found time to plant a few flowers. So this was a Russian village in 1915! Without dirt, smells, or mendacity, because without drunkenness.

### Strong Earthquake Shock at Messina

Messina, Sept. 24.—A strong earthquake shock occurred here last night at 9.15 o'clock. It caused a panic among the people, who rushed to the streets and squares. Many persons remained in the open all night, but no damage was done.

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With our equipment we are enabled to guarantee every satisfaction and ensure prompt delivery.

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- 500 Dozen BLACK PEPPER, at 19c lb.
- 450 Dozen ELECTRIC PASTE, the best Blacklead on the market, 48c dozen.

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