

clothes. Through the walls we heard the endless jangling of fetters, the moaning of women, the cries of sick babies. On the walls were a mass of inscriptions, names of friends who had gone before us, news of death and insanity, and shrewd bits of advice for outwitting gendarmes. Some were freshly cut, but one worm-eaten love poem looked a century old. For along this Great Siberian Road over a million men, women, and children have dragged, two hundred and fifty thousand since 1875, people from every social class; murderers and degenerates side by side with tender girls who were exiled through the jealous wife of some petty town official.

"You keep asking me for scenes and stories. But you see we were thinking of our dream, and did not notice so much the life outside. Did any die? Yes, one by typhoid. Our officer rushed the sufferer on at full gallop, until his delirious cries from the jolting vehicle so roused our protests that he was left in the Irkutsk prison, where he died. Were there any children? Yes, one little wife had a baby ten months old, but the rest of us did all we could to help her, and the child survived the journey. Friends to say good-bye? Ah, let me think! Yes; as we passed through Krasnoyarsk, a student's old mother had come from a distance to see him. Our officer refused to allow the boy to kiss her. She caught but a glimpse, the gendarmes jerked him back into the vehicle, and they galloped on. As I came by I saw her white, haggard old face. Then she fell by the roadside.

"On reaching the Kara mines I found that the hard-labor year was but eight months, and that my forty months in prison had been taken from my forty-eight month sentence. So, having stayed ten months, I left Kara—as I then hoped—for ever. I was

taken to Barguzin, a bleak little group of huts near the Arctic Circle. We arrived in February—forty-five degrees below zero. I began to look for work. Seeing a few forlorn little children, I proposed a school. The police agent forbade me, and showed his police rules from St. Petersburg, which forbid an exiled doctor to heal the sick, or an exiled minister to comfort the dying. No educated person may use his powers to improve his hamlet. Many politicals have hired out to the Cossacks at five cents a day.

"Here were three young students, 'administrative' exiles, exiled for life without a trial because suspected by some gendarme or spy. We decided to escape, and searched two years for a guide to lead us a thousand miles to the Pacific. We found a bent old peasant who had made the journey years before. With him we set out one night, leading four pack-horses. We soon found the old man useless. We had maps and a compass, but these did little good in the Taiga, that region of forest crags and steep ravines, where we walked now toward heaven and now to the region below.

"Often I watched my poor stupid beast go rolling and snorting down a ravine, hoping as he passed each tree that the next would stop his fall. Then for hours we would use all our arts and energies to drag him up. It was beautiful weather by day, but bitterly cold by night. We had hard-tack to eat, also pressed tea and a little tobacco. So we walked about six hundred miles; in a straight line, perhaps two hundred.

"Meanwhile the police had searched in vain. The Governor had telegraphed to St. Petersburg, and from there the command had come that we be found at any cost. The plan adopted was characteristic of the System. Fifty neighboring farmers were seized (in harvest time), and