

**April 14.**—All day we have been travelling through the Urals, every now and then getting a fleeting glimpse of some beautiful panorama of mountain, valley and river. The mountains are all thickly wooded with evergreens. Did I mention our passing yesterday Mt. Blaogdat, which is composed of solid iron and copper ore, hence its name, "Blaogdat," which means "the gift of God"? Late in the afternoon, we left the main railway line and travelled about 60 versts north on another branch to a little factory town similar to Lala. Here large glass-works are located. Many of the workmen are German or Austrian prisoners of war. Indeed, what cannot but impress the casual observer is the fact that, apparently, everyone works but the Russian men. It is women who do all the rough work about the railway yards, carry coal and wood, clean coaches, clear the tracks of snow, and, indeed, so far as I can see, even the maintenance-of-way "men" are women. This is less true in Siberia than in European Russia, and possibly can be explained, in part, by so many of the men having been called to the colours. Nevertheless, I have yet to see an important station where three or four hundred men in civilian clothes were not lounging about the platform. I have not, in this diary letter, mentioned the "refugees." They are to be seen at almost every station, sitting on bundles of household goods, apparently quite content or resigned (I do not know which) to sit for hours without shifting position. All ordinary travel, except the express to Vladivostok from Omsk semi-weekly, is done in box-cars, fitted up with stoves, and holes cut in the sides for ventilation. The passenger coaches are all either used for military purposes or as dwellings by railway and government officials, or have been destroyed or taken away by the Bolsheviks. It is expected that Perm will be reached to-morrow morning.

**April 15.**—At 6 o'clock we arrived in the important city of Perm, a town which took place in December last that tremendous battle which ended in the utter rout of the Bolsheviks. The Reds left 30,000 prisoners and enormous booty, including 300 railway engines, in the hands of the Siberian Army. Our train was brought to the "down town" station of Perm, for there are at least three huge railway stations, all of them in excellent condition. The whole station building was decorated with evergreens following Palm Sunday. I took a very short walk in the morning, and 1 o'clock our train was transferred to another point in the railway yards in order that General Knox might inspect a factory in which guns are being manufactured. There were several hospital trains in the yard and many hundreds of wounded Russians. They did not appear to be exceptionally well cared for, but probably the best is done under the conditions which prevail. At 3 o'clock we left for the West to visit the Headquarters of the Central Siberian Corps, under Lieutenant-General Popelyaev and reached the railway station where he was located at 7.30. The H.Q. are some score versts behind the Front, so we were not under fire. General Knox inspected a remarkably fine guard of honour, who in bearing, training and equipment were a pleasant contrast to the usual Russian troops such as we see behind the lines. The evening was spent by the Generals in conference and at midnight we left again for Perm, somewhat to our disappointment, as we hoped to get right up to the front. Colonel Clarke has been ailing for some days and it was decided that he had best be taken back to some place where he could have attention by an English-speaking doctor. His illness will probably hasten our return to Omsk.

**April 16.**—It was decided that we should leave Perm at 11.30 a.m. and Major Cameron suggested that perhaps I would like to take a walk for a few hours in order to see the city. I did not fail to act on his suggestion. Perm, in normal times, must be a very neat, attractive city. There are many splendid buildings and they are not, as in Siberia, huddled up with wretched hovels. The shops have little in them, but the Bolsheviks who were hurried away did not have time to make the usual thorough job of their looting operations. Prices are extremely high and the caterers on the train are very eager for our return, even to Omsk. With meat at the equivalent of 80 cents a pound, bread 50 cents a pound, they cannot make much profit. Such shops as there were had special Easter displays of toys, ornaments, novelties, etc., as well as liberal quantities of bread covered with a special chocolate icing with various designs. Adjoining the main street, Sibirski Prospect, there were two huge schools, or academies, a very fine city hall and numerous churches and government buildings. In one of the churches there was a military church parade and a battalion of soldiers were receiving holy communion preparatory to Good Friday. A great many troops were drilling in the various squares and open spaces. The streets are very dirty, but that could only