

**THE NEW ERA SERIES.
VOLUME THREE. WHAT
I SAW IN RUSSIA**

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The New Era series. Volume three. What I saw in Russia by George Lansbury

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GEORGE LANSBURY

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The New Era Series

(VOLUME THREE)

WHAT I SAW IN RUSSIA



WHAT I SAW IN
RUSSIA

BY

GEORGE LANSBURY

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Dedication

WITH FEELINGS OF GREAT RESPECT AND LOVE I DEDICATE THIS LITTLE BOOK TO THE MEMORY OF MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS WHO THROUGHOUT PAST AGES HAVE KEPT ALIVE THE PRINCIPLES OF LOVE AND COMRADESHIP ; OF THOSE SAINTS AND MARTYRS, OF ALL THE CHURCHES AND NO CHURCHES, WHO LIVED AND DIED WITHOUT SEEING A GLIMPSE OF THE DAWN OF A NEW DAY, BUT WHO, THROUGH FAITH, REMAINED STEADFAST TO THE END. AND I DEDICATE IT, TOO, TO MY COMRADES OF TO-DAY, ESPECIALLY THE YOUNG, WHO ARE DESTINED TO SEE NOT ONLY THE DAWN BUT THE FULL NOONDAY SUNSHINE OF THE NEW DAY. I WOULD SAY TO THESE LATTER : " BE TRUE TO ONE ANOTHER, BE FAITHFUL IN SMALL AND GREAT THINGS, CULTIVATE LOVE OF THE BEAUTIFUL AND THE GOOD, HATE DARKNESS AND INIQUITY, BUT, IN HATING THINGS, KEEP YOUR MINDS FULL OF LOVE FOR MEN AND WOMEN. REMEMBER ALWAYS THAT GOD AND HUMANITY NEED YOU, AND THAT THE GREATEST, THE CLEVEREST AMONGST YOU, ARE CALLED, BECAUSE OF THEIR TALENTS, TO BE THE FOREMOST IN SERVING AND GIVING TO THE COMMONWEAL."

PREFACE

LIKE everyone else these days who goes to Russia, I am writing a book. I have no apology to offer for inflicting yet one more story about "Bolshevism" on a long-suffering public. I am sure that, with the exchange of prisoners, and the return to England of hundreds of men and women lately detained in Russia, my book will not be the last.

A word of explanation is due as to how I came to get into Russia, at a time when Labour leaders and others were refused permission or passports to enter that forbidden country. The facts are quite simple. Last January, peace was about to be made between Esthonia and the Russian Soviet Republic. The "Daily Herald" numbers amongst its friends members of all the delegations in London representing the border States of Russia. We had specially championed the cause of Esthonia in the pages of the weekly "Herald." I thought it would be a good

thing to go through Scandinavia to Dorpat, see the peace signed, and, if possible, enter Russia with the returning Russian delegates. Nothing was certain; I had no sort of understanding with anybody as to whether I should be allowed to enter Russia or not. I asked for a passport to Scandinavia and Finland and secured the necessary "visés" before leaving England—except the Finnish, which, I was informed, could not be given for two weeks. I did not ask for a passport to Russia for the quite simple reason that neither the British nor any other Government had any power to issue such passports, since no Government in Europe at that time had officially recognised the Soviet Government. There was no mystery about my journey. I travelled like any other newspaper man, saw everybody of importance in each country through which I passed, and tried to learn all there was to learn about conditions. My intention was to be away from England three weeks or a month. I was away nine weeks, every day of which brought me knowledge, understanding and experience. I want to put on record my deep debt of gratitude to the Ministers and other Government officials, both British and foreign, with whom I came in contact.