

**RUSSIA'S EVANGELIZATION;  
A RECORD OF  
MISSIONARY EXPERIENCE  
AND ORGANIZATION WORK**

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Russia's evangelization; a record of missionary experience and organization work by N. F Höijer

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**N. F HÖIJER**

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# Russia's Evangelization

A Record of Missionary Experience  
and Organization Work

by

REV. N. F. HOIJER

For Forty Years engaged in Evangelization work  
Under 3 Czars in different parts of Russia

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and edited by

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With Foreword by

REV. JESSE W. BROOKS, Ph. D.



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## FOREWORD

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In connection with the organization of the First General Conference for the Evangelization of Russia, I have for several months been intimately associated with the Rev. N. F. Hoijer, who has in this Conference been introduced for the first time to thousands of English speaking Americans. Mr. Hoijer's work hitherto has been well known among our Swedish and other Scandinavian brethren and the literature pertaining to it has been mostly in the Swedish language.

On account of the large part he has taken in the pioneer work of Russian Evangelization during the past forty years certainly the time is now come when English readers should know more of the irenic spirit and of the high ideals that have characterized his life work.

The narrative given on the following pages is somewhat fragmentary but it may serve to introduce to American Christians a faithful missionary who is greatly beloved by all his associates and who has been one of the missionary pioneers of a great missionary century. That this may be so is the prayer of many of his friends who are now looking forward with faith and hope for the Evangelization of Russia's millions.

*Jesse W. Brooks.*



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It must be borne in mind that the people of Russia had no part in the renaissance and no share in the fruit of the Protestant reformation, which were such mighty factors in the development of the religious life of the rest of Europe.

The last few decades however have witnessed the beginnings of spiritual revival among the Russians, and already the Gospel has gained large victories in several places, such as could not be checked even by the bitter persecutions, which were started by the State Church and backed up by the secular powers over the so called "sectarians," and already in places there has been manifest the powerful moving of God's Spirit in cities and hamlets over the Tundras of Siberia, as well as the Steppes of South Russia. One of the vital things in this Evangelical movement was a careful plan of organization, which had for its aim to deepen the work and also to link together the small Evangelical Congregations for a united effort in spreading the Gospel. In this work the few Russian Evangelical Christians have been encouraged and assisted from abroad, especially through the efforts of a well known Swedish Missionary, N. F. Hoijer, whose life since 1880 has been devoted entirely to the service of the Russian Evangelical Mission. In the work of organization it has been insisted by Mr. Hoijer that the main part of the missionary work in Russia should be carried on by the Russian people themselves. The work may be aided and assisted and supported largely from abroad by Churches of countries, where the Gospel has already taken root, yet it must be in such a way that the Russian Evangelical Churches be themselves responsible for the support of the work of the Evangelists.



Lord Radstock with his two associates in the Russian Gospel Work—Col. Basli Paschkof and Count Modest Korff.



N: Odintzoff, (see page 31).



The first attempt to unite on a larger scale, the Evangelicals in Russia in a large and co-operative way in the advancement of God's Kingdom, was made in 1884. A Conference was called in St. Petersburg. The invitation to attend this was sent by two Russian noblemen, viz. Count Modest Korff and Colonel Basil Pashkof. These two leading men were soon after this exiled by the government for the Gospel's sake. A detailed account of this missionary conference is given in Swedish in the volume entitled "Twenty-five Years in Russia," pages 113 to 120. Two men who had been partaking in this conference of 1884 are now present with us at the Chicago Conference of 1918. The names of these two men are Rev. N. F. Holjer and Prof. M. A. de Sherbinin. The Manifesto calling the Conference contained these significant words:

"Remember, brethren, that Christ died, that he might gather together in one the children of God, that were scattered abroad and present them as one flock with one shepherd. Now may the Lord gather us around him to teach us to keep the bond of unity and peace."

Surely this Conference at St. Petersburg which was attended by delegates from the different bodies of Evangelical Christians from several parts of Russia contributed to the strengthening of the bond of mutual love and organic union. The delegates were edified and strengthened in their most holy faith, and they conferred regarding methods for carrying on the work. But their adversaries were not sleeping. The Conference lasted only a few days. The work had to be carried on largely in secret. The delegates were gathered in the homes of some of the leading people and wealthy Christian men, but suddenly spies were on their track and the delegates were all arrested. Some were imprisoned and some were exiled. Count Korff and Colonel Pashkof were ordered to leave Russia within two or three days after the order for their deportation had been issued by the Czar. This was in 1884 and it is to be noted that during the twenty-five years following among the numerous exiles to Siberia there were more than a thousand, who were banished because of their activity in propagating the Gospel. These were indeed dark days for the Gospel movement in Russia, and it

checked all efforts towards effecting any organization, however simple, among the Evangelical Christians.

However, soon after this, we find one of the active members of this Conference, Missionary Hoijer, in the Caucasus faithfully preaching the Gospel and at the same time trying to unite the believers and persuade them to draw closer to



Sarkis Hambarsumoff.

each other in order to do successful work. Upon his initiative a mission covenant was founded, with Tiflis the capital of the Caucasus, as headquarters. This was known under the name of the Oriental Evangelical Alliance.

Its first president was a veteran missionary Sarkis Hambarsumoff. After him Mr. N. F. Hoijer was the

leader of this movement for many years until 1890 when he was compelled to leave this province. This Oriental Evangelical Alliance not only consisted of several Evangelical Congregations but comprised believers representing several nations among whom the Armenians were very prominent. Hoijer himself had made missionary journeys into Central Asia, through Persia, Turkey, Turkestan, and the Fergan region, east of the Caspian Sea. He extended his travels even to the Chinese Empire. He was not only an organizer



Rev. N. F. Hoijer and Vassili Nicolayevich Evanoff.

of Evangelical Churches but also served as an opener of the trail and a promoter of missionary enterprise. Among the ministers, who took part in this Alliance, one of the most prominent was Sembat Bagdasarian who took a leading part and through whom the Alliance came in contact with the Molokans of South Russia. These people are in some