

**RUSSIA'S MESSAGE:  
THE PEOPLE  
AGAINST THE CZAR**

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Russia's message: the people against the Czar by William English Walling

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# RUSSIA'S MESSAGE

The People Against The Czar

BY

WILLIAM ENGLISH WALLING



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## PREFACE

*I have not written historically for the benefit of the academic student, nor sought to dwell on the picturesqueness of those sections of Russia and aspects of Russian life that are most strange; I have not dwelt on personal experience, as the situation is too large to be presented in all its aspects in any personal narrative. I have sought rather, through the personal acquaintance with a majority of the most important leaders of all parties and elements of the Russian nation, to put myself in the most immediate contact with the inner ideas and spirit of the great struggle and to present this struggle to the reader as seen through the eyes of its leaders themselves. Finally, I have written not for the casual reader or for him who draws from this tragic and inspiring situation a mere interest in the chances of the fight or in its melodramatic aspects.*

*The greater part of two years I have spent in Russia in order to gain a rounded view. My attention was first drawn to the absorbing interest of this great struggle by Polish and Jewish Russian exiles met while I was living among them in the University Settlement in New York. Leaving the United States shortly after the massacre of January 22, 1905, I spent several months in London, Paris, Geneva, Cracow, and Vienna among leaders of the revolutionary parties of all factions and races. Within a week after the Czar issued his October Manifesto I was in Warsaw, and a few days later in St. Petersburg, where I at once met Witte and the chief members of his ministry, and at the same time put myself in touch with the most conspirative of the revolutionary organisations. I spent the larger part of my time in that country from this date until the opening of the third Duma. Near the close of my last visit the press of the United States, and the leading European countries, announced the arrest of myself and wife and her sister and our detention for twenty-four hours in prison through the acknowledged mistake, or perhaps in consideration, of*



*the Russian Government. It is not true, as was suggested then in a few papers, that the Russian Government made either a direct or indirect request through the American ambassador that we should leave the country. We had wished to follow Russian events closely only until the meeting of the third Duma, and we left St. Petersburg on the day on which we had previously arranged to go. It was explained by the Russian political police that our arrest was due to our friendly relations with certain revolutionists. I have certainly had such relations with hundreds of leading persons of this movement, as with an almost equal number of their opponents.*

*To some extent I made use of articles that I have written for various magazines — particularly the Independent. I have also made some use of articles published in Collier's Weekly, the Outlook, the World To-day, Charities, the American Federationist, and Moody's Financial Magazine.*

*Realising the immensity of the task that lay before me, I have confined my attention in the present work largely to the Russian part of Russia, leaving aside entirely all Asiatic Russia, the Caucasus and the Baltic Provinces, Poland, and Finland. The Polish and Finnish situations are of such exceptional importance in relation to the Russian that I spent several weeks in visiting both countries, but I have not made them a part of my work.*

*One feature of the book needs perhaps a special explanation. The crimes of the Russian Government are so monstrous and so manifold that I have quite despaired of giving any satisfactory picture of them as a whole. In my first chapters I have dwelt at some length with this subject, but I have devised the economical measure of taking the Jews as my central theme, not because I consider that their persecutions are any worse than other peoples' in Russia, nor because they are more important than other nationalities, as for instance the Tartars or the Poles, but because they have themselves been selected by the Government as the centre of the whole persecution system. In other parts of the book I have tried to portray not merely the central feature but the whole situation.*

*If I had cared to burden my work with footnotes showing the source of all my information I could readily have done so; but this would have increased very largely the bulk of the volume, besides interrupting the attention of the average reader, interested rather in the*

*facts themselves than in the source from which they come. I am prepared, however, to give my authority for every detail, just as much as if I had been writing a history or a scientific sociological work.*

*I owe little to writers of books and much to active leaders in the movement. Of these I have met hundreds. It would be impossible in a few pages to mention even their names. To a few persons, however, I am especially indebted. Among the foremost are: Prince M——, who introduced me to the Czar's ministers, Witte and the rest, as well as to several of his most important generals and who kept me for the whole period of my visit in close touch with the situation in court circles and the ministry; to Mr. David Soskiss, the able correspondent of the London Tribune; Mr. Harold Williams, correspondent of the Manchester Guardian, a valued friend of the Constitutional Democratic Party; to Madame Turkova, one of the most active and important leaders of that party; to the Countess Bobrinsky of Moscow, one of the organisers both of the Constitutional Democratic Party and of the Peasants' Union; to Professor Milyoukov, whose high personal qualities are appreciated even by his severest critics; to the poet Tan (Borgoraz), a founder of the Peasants' Union and of the National Socialist Party and an active leader in all the most revolutionary but non-partisan movements; to Aladdin, the most active and valuable, if not the most influential, of the Labour Group; to Volkovsky, Tchaikovsky, Gershunk, Chisko, Sbidlovsky, and Madam Breskbovskaya, founders of the Socialist Revolutionary Party; to Isaac Hourwich, Nabum Stone, and James M. James, leaders among the Russian Social Democratic Party in New York; to Vladimir Simkbovitch, of Columbia University; to Prince Dimitri Hilkov, one of the most gifted and popular leaders of the whole revolutionary movement, and most of all to Bielevsky, Staal, and Mazurenko, founders of the great Peasants' Union.*

*I have selected these names somewhat at hazard and do not wish to imply that the list of those to whom I am most indebted is exhausted. I cannot leave the question of my indebtedness without expressing my gratitude to other prominent Russians with whom I have had only single long interviews or brief meetings. Among them are Tolstoi, Gorky, and Korolenko; the conservative leaders, Gutchkov, Maklakov, and Michael Stachovitch; the Social Democratic leaders, Parous, Dan, Lenin, and Alexinsky; the brilliant leaders of the Polish*

*Socialistic Party who make their headquarters at Cracow — not to speak of innumerable others, especially Duma members, editors, elected members of local government boards, and active organisers of all the popular parties, labour organisations, and of the Union of Unions.*