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J. Fletcher Pace, Mgr. Arcadia Branch

Address Your Order to: Arcadia, DeSoto County, Florida

The Little Reporter

[Original.]

It was Saturday night in St. Petersburg. On the morrow the subjects of the white czar were to march to his palace to present a monster petition. In the office of the Fatherland the managing editor sat alone. The night force had not yet reported for work. A footstep was heard climbing the stairs, and presently a boy not more than fourteen years old came into the office.

"Are you the editor?" he asked.

"Yes, sonny. What can I do for you?"

"I thought that since there's to be trouble tomorrow you might need extra help."

"You think that you'd like to march at the head of the petitioners and receive the first fire of the troops?"

"The 'Little Father' will not let his soldiers fire on his people."

"Sonny, the people are deceived. This time tomorrow our streets will be drenched with blood."

"Well, my mother needs food, and I must make it for her any way I can. Shall I march with the petitioners tomorrow and send you copy?"

"You have worked in a newspaper office before."

"Yes."

"Come around in the morning, and I may find work for you to do in the office."

The next day the name Ivan Ivanovich was entered on the rolls of the Fatherland. It was Sunday morning, and the excitement in the office was intense. The managing editor was in no good humor. Every reporter on the paper had sent in some excuse for not appearing for service. Little Ivan, while carrying copy upstairs to the composing room, passing the sanctum heard his chief threatening to discharge every mother's son of them. The boy went in.

"Why can't I go out to report the march of the petitioners?" he asked.

"Get out of here!" snarled the editor. "Am I reduced to sending children out on assignments?"

The boy went on his way, and the editor went on growling at his reporters.

An hour later the children of the "Little Father" commenced their march. With a priest as their leader, without the slightest show of force, like a flock of sheep, they were going as humble suppliants. Walking in the throng was Ivan Ivanovich. He had taken a pencil and paper and, leaving the office without permission, hurried away to fill the gap left open by the nonappearance of the reporters. On marched the people, unopposed for a time, but presently a ray of bristling bayonets appeared in the distance, and an officer was sent to order the petitioners to halt.

"We are going to see the 'Little Father' to tell him of our wrongs. He doesn't know how his subordinates treat us. We are going to tell him."

The people, consisting of men, women and children, kept right on in the face of death. The little reporter, who had fallen behind while writing his report of the march, saw a boy about his own age running toward the rear. Ivan called to him and asked where he was going.

"I'm going to get out of this. The troops will fire with ball cartridges."

"Hold on a bit," said Ivan, and he wrote a few more words. "There it is," he added, "with ball and cartridges." Since you are going, please take that to the office of the Fatherland."

The boy grasped the message and sped away. Ivan crammed his pad and pencil in his pocket and pushed through the crowd to the front. Just as he

wriggled between those facing the troops there was a sound of many explosions, and a moment later the crowd where the boy stood looked like the edge of a field of grass over which the first sweep of a scythe had passed.

Half an hour later a surgeon took hold of the limp figure of a boy and, holding him up, asked:

"Are you hurt?"

"Yes, I am. I fear I shall not be able to get my copy in to the office. I haven't even written it out."

"Never mind your copy. If I can save you"—

"You can't, and since you can't you might save my copy for me."

The surgeon looked at the boy in amazement.

"I've sent an account of the march and had just come up in time to be in at the firing. I've written some notes for them to fill in at the office if I can only get them there. Can't you find a messenger for me, doctor?"

Meanwhile the managing editor of the Fatherland had picked up hearsay reports as the petitioners began to march and was sending them through the presses. A boy came in and laid a paper on his desk.

"What's this?" he asked.

"Ivan said it was copy." And he told how it had been given him by the young reporter. The editor listened, astonished, then sent the copy upstairs, with the order to "kill" what had gone before. Later a man came in with another batch of copy, or, rather, blood stained notes, on the firing on the people by the czar's troops. The editor filled it out himself and sent it to the printers.

Pathetic as was the story, more pathetic was the last arrival from the front at the office of the Fatherland. It was the body of the little reporter on a pushcart, sent in by the surgeon who had picked up Ivan. It was carried up to the editorial sanctum and laid on a writing table. There, covered with flowers, it was visited by hundreds who had heard of the boy's heroism.

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Arcadia, Florida

Notice for Publication.

Department of the Interior, Land Office at Gainesville, Fla., June 4, 1906.

Notice is hereby given that the following named settler has filed notice of his intention to make final proof in support of his claim, and that said proof will be made before clerk circuit court at Arcadia, Fla., on July 19, 1906, viz: William H. Allen, of Moffitt, Fla., Hd 36848 for the sw 1/4 of section 7, tp 35 s. r 26 e.

He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land, viz: Budd Summeralls, of Moffitt, Fla., J. I. Whilden, of Moffitt, Fla., Henry Walker, of Zolfo, Fla., Marion G. Carlton, of Zolfo, Fla. W. G. ROBINSON, Register.

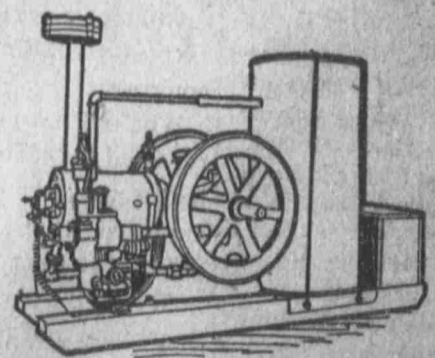
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