

big town that is vigorous—not a Rome of the second century, or an Antioch—is a favouring environment for the liberty germ. And such movements as may hereinafter begin in Siberian towns will have, if not too radical, a support from the farming class which, in Russia proper, is almost wholly lacking. There the peasantry is a black mass in which the town-lighted fire must burn slowly; it is a mass of coagulated ignorance and superstition. And it is moulded by the old landlord class, who are not in any country good revolutionists. In the new Russia there are more settlers who own their lands—they are in conditions which encourage wide-awakefulness; and though the central Government endeavours to control everywhere the consumption of that dangerous drug, education, yet it cannot wholly refuse satisfaction to a strong appetite prevailing in a great distant province.

The cause of Reform in Russia will, then, I think, be something like this: In European Russia, violent explosions in cities, violently repressed by the dull strength of the moujik; in Asiatic Russia, stubborn resistance against class privilege and against official tyranny of the irritating sort; finally, steady demand for moderate reform in the direction of local (provincial) representative government, freed from bureaucratic veto-power, which now so largely stultifies the action of various elective bodies in Russia. Indeed it is not difficult to imagine these eastern provinces as being the seats of progressive, almost self-governing states, long before it will seem possible to yield reasonable quantities of reform to the older communities, made up as they are of a