

## DEMOCRACY ON THE RAILWAYS OF RUSSIA IS IN EVIDENCE; TWO KINDS OF CARRIAGES

(Negley Farson in Chicago News.)

Aside from the wagon-lits—the sleeping cars—in which only foreigners, nomen and high officials ride, there are two kinds of railway carriages in soviet Russia—"zhostky" and "myakhky." Hard and soft. You can travel in the wagon-lits if you are that sort of person, but if you really want to get down to bedrock—you must travel in a "hard". A bedrock, or rock bed, whose stoniness may be ameliorated a little by a palliasso, sheets and disinfected blankets, which you can rent from the train guard, the provodnik, for \$1.25.

But what of the people? Won't you have to sleep with smelly peasants? Yes, if you are traveling short distances, say merely overnight, you will. Your next shelf-neighbor very likely will be a gentleman in shaggy sheepskins, knee whiskers and a whiff. If you are traveling around Daghestan of the Caucasus he almost certainly will be provided with a useful-looking dirk. Things vary.

Coming up from Vladikavkaz in the Caucasus to Moscow, a trip of two days and three nights, the man over my head for the first two night was a red army officer. He was a fat, middle-aged man, slightly bald. He wore an impressive revolver and a field dispatch case strapped to his portly side. He never spoke, but when we reached Rostoff-on-Don he almost embraced me with his smile. "Home!" he gulped, and vanished from my sight.

A peasant girl came in and took his place. She brought in enough boxes and burlap baggage to fill a truck. There is never any deviation from that; a Russian can bring more assorted luggage into a railway car than any other human being on earth.

There is another characteristic almost standardized—the toilets—although there are degrees of frightfulness even there. You never know your luck. Going down through Daghestan, for instance, after being seasick for eighteen hours in the Caspian sea in a bunk full of fleas, I thought I would be a plutocrat for the moment and ride "soft."

The provodnik of the train was particularly rude to me when I asked for a single compartment, one with only two berths, for my wife and myself. He said he couldn't manufacture such things, the train was crowded, and we would have to take what we could get. But he did know how to use a broom, and the lavatory of his wagon was infinitely better than most of those in Moscow hotels. But still . . . Somerset Maugham said that when the toilet was introduced into China it destroyed all democracy. Well, when democracy was introduced into Russia it destroyed all the toilets.

The shadowy interior of a Russian "hard", with the great train rumbling through the night, with strange and often savage faces frozen as if in leath and bodies twisted out of shape, has a touch of horror about it. Souls defenseless in sleep.

The Caucasian sleeps with his dagger, the factory stenographer puts her handbag down inside her blouse, the business man uses his dispatch case for a pillow. It is almost like a morgue, with those grotesque forms stretched out on shelves. The great hairy Slavs of northern Russia, gaping jaws and beards, forms motionless under heaps of bed clothes, with no faces at all. And once, walking back through a "hard", I received quite a shock. I saw what at first might have been a monstrosity; for from the upper section of a blanket roll protruded the head of an old lady in a nightcap, while from its foot stuck out the four legs of a dog.

This life in a "hard" is true democracy if ever there was such a thing. There is no precedence. You take your place in line to wash your teeth in the morning, and will run with the rest of them to the "kipatok" to get boiling water for your tea. You eat the roast duck, chicken, melons, bread and things you have brought with you, or have purchased from the peasant vendors at the stations along the line. Or else you eat, when the train halts, at the station buffets. Seldom, very seldom, does any one attempt to establish "class" barriers in a "hard"—although I saw it happen once.

It was in a "hard" going south from Tiflis. A train employee, a signalman, pre-empted some fifteen seats to himself. He had done this by wedging his sectional bamboo line rod across the aisle. He was but a minor employee—with a very high opinion of himself.

"Engineer," he said to me and the mixture of Caucasians, Georgians and Turks, trying to get a seat. "Official."

My wife and I crashed the gate, however, being foreigners and so being interested in seeing what this person would do next. The others growled, and then, with that terrific complacency of the Russians, they retreated and wedged themselves in elsewhere. All except one old lady.

"What are those people doing there?" she demanded, pointing at us. "Am I not human, too?"

"Those seats are mine," said the pompous little rat. "I give them to whom I want. I am on official business."

"Official business!" snorted the old dame, suddenly kicking the barriers down. "Official business! Well, it's a good thing for you you are—or I'd give you such a clout on the ear!"

"Bravo!" yelled all the Georgians,

## RECORDS MADE BY TWO BIG COMPANIES

The recent high output records of New England Power Association and of Canadian Hydro-Electric Corporation, Limited—a subsidiary of International Paper Company—reflect both the continuous growth of these two companies and the expanding industrial activities in the respective areas served by them. Both of these organizations are the largest producers of electric energy in their individual territories, and have high rank among the great power systems of the world.

For the first eleven months of this year the production of New England Power Association was over 1,256,000,000 kilowatt hours, compared with 1,015,000,000 kilowatt hours for the corresponding period last year, an increase of 24 per cent. The output of the Association for the month of November of this year was 26 per cent greater than in November, 1927. About 52 per cent of the Association's output thus far this year has been from its hydro-electric plants. The extraordinary growth of the New England Power system is well illustrated by contrasting its present output, which is running at the rate of over one and one-half billion kilowatt hours a year, with that of 1910, when the output for the entire year was equal to only about seven days' peak production of the present system.

Similarly striking has been the growth of Canadian Hydro-Electric Corporation, Limited, in the electric power field in Canada. Less than two years ago the first of the plants of Gattineau Power Company, a subsidiary, came into operation, and today the stations of Canadian Hydro-Electric have a capacity of 642,000 horsepower installed and in process of installation. In the two years, three large hydro-electric plants and a storage dam have been built on the Gattineau River, power stations on the Ottawa River and its tributaries acquired, high tension transmission lines in the area lying between Ottawa and Montreal purchased, and the whole welded into a single coordinated power system. And in addition, a hydro-electric plant has been built at Grand Falls, New Brunswick.

The consumption of electric power by industries in the New England States and in Canada continues at an unabated rate, and business conditions are favorable.

In New England, industrial production is on a high level, prices are firm or advancing, and wage payments are the highest in fifteen months. With this strong undertone, business operations are expected to continue for some time at a high rate of activity.

In Canada, favorable reports of business conditions continue to be received from most sections of the country, some of the outstanding features being practically full-time employment in industry and the largest volume of distributive trade in the history of the Dominion.

## AUTO THIEF WAS KILLED AT BANGOR

Bangor, Me., Dec. 24—Driving a stolen car, taken a few hours before from in front of a Bangor theatre, Louis E. Duplisse, 25 of Old Town was instantly killed late Friday night when the car skidded from the road on a curve on the highway near Lincoln and crashed into a tree. A companion Clovis Cyr, of Bangor was not hurt. The car a new \$2,000 sedan was a total wreck. Cyr is under arrest.

Turks, etc.—most of them bearing knives. "Bravo!"

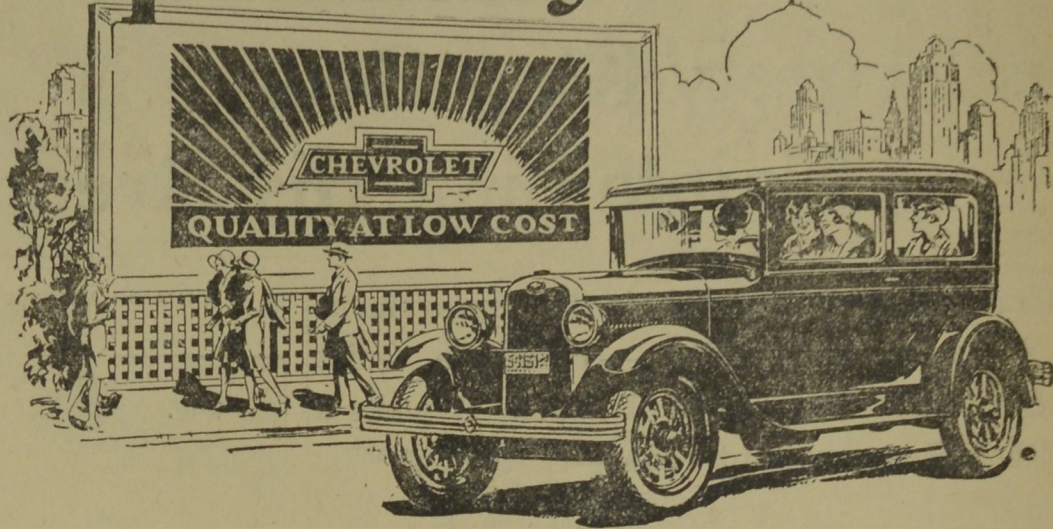
And we were quite a happy little community after that.

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