

Petropavlovsk. Dec. 15th 1927

3.16

Dear Marnie & ~~Spide~~!

Today is Sunday. The other day the first serious fall of snow was felt here, when waking up in the morning, the doors & windows of all the houses here were blocked up by the snow. It was necessary to clear a hole first to climb through, and then begin clearing some of the snow away. To walk down to the shop was not an easy matter. The snow in some parts is 6- to 7 ft. deep, and below it the ground was a bit slippery, so that each step had to be taken very carefully in order not to roll over. I did roll once or twice, but one makes no fuss at matters like that here. It is quite a common thing to slip down on the snow, get up & continue your way. One man, who was on the steamer with me from Vladivostok, (he lives here 2, or 3, years) knowing that I lived a long time abroad & in London, looking at my plight in measuring the deep snow cried to me "what oh! there are not London streets for you or they? how do you live it? I had to confess that I did not care very much for it, but hope I shall do so when I get more used to the place. Curious enough it is not at all cold here as one imagines. Of course a few miles (50- or 20) away to the north, it is said the frost reaches now 25 degrees, but here, it is quite nice. I have not once yet put my warm, fur coat on, am still wearing my London coat & a trilly hat or ordinary cap. In about a fortnight from now, soon after Christmas I am about to set out on a journey in dog sledges. The journey will in all probability take about 2, months. It all depends of course on the weather. At times, I am told, when a "Purga" (a violent snow storm) overtakes one on the road, there is very little chance of moving any where. And if one is caught by such a snow storm away from any living place, as the villages on this holy island are so scattered, & so few, and far between that oft. you can't help but find you have to stop for a day - 2, or 3, in the snow covered - never-ending space, until the "Purga" ends. All the time, you feed yourself & your dogs on the provisions taken beforehand.

It sounds rather interesting, does it not? But as I so often said, "all things like that, look very nice on pictures". Give me a nice soft bed, a fairly warm room & blankets or quilt to cover myself with, and I will gladly give all this adventure. I know Vera would like it very much. No doubt there is something to remember. When I tell people here that I lived over 20 years in London, they look at me doubtfully & surprised. They can not understand what silly motive brought me out here. Surely I must be touched...

The other day I visited a "Cinema", oh yes we have a "Cinema" here you know. The picture shown was about 5 years old, but still this did not very much matter. I thought then of "Stalls" Cinema in Holborn. Surely it was a bit of a change. Yes, life goes on here as well, there are people, some who like myself, came over for various reasons. Some, because they expected to get on here better, others, who are sent here to work, and so people are just as every where else. Some of them get used to the quietness and say that they could stand no town life any longer. I have not yet got acquainted with the life of the natives. That I shall see & learn on my tour shortly through the villages. Although I have read a great deal of the life & habits of the various tribes round about this place, which stretches over a space of something like 1,182,000 square versts (a verst is about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an English mile) I am reading now books about the life of "Chukchis" "Auliat's" "Coreans" "Eskimos" and a dozen or so more tribes. How they live, work & etc. in their huts & howels, what they eat, how they work & etc. I shall become a "Chukchee" myself soon. Though here in this little town life goes on pretty well the same as in other parts of Russia.

Now, this is the last Steamer leaving this harbour for Vladivostok for this season. They are rather later this year. Generally the last Steamer leaves this harbour the end of November, but this season the weather kept fine & they sent me more Steamers. So there I am taking this opportunity of sending you this last letter, which I hope you will get - alright. Of course you can not - possibly get - this before about the middle of Feb. still there you are, I am taking all chances & sending you this. I have sent you a wire on arrival and another one when I received your last 2 letters I hope you did get - those.

I do not - know as I have got any thing more to say.

I shall have a great deal to tell you all when we meet at last.

I hope you will all keep well & have altogether good luck in this coming new year, and we should meet well together.

Find love to you Vera, Olga,
and darling Nilda
Always yours Papa

Petropavlovsk. Dec. 18th 1927

Dear Mamie & Children!

Today is Sunday. The other day the first serious fall of snow was felt here, when waking up in the morning, the doors & windows of all the houses here were blocked up by the snow. It was necessary to clear a hole first to climb through, and then begin clearing some off the snow away. To walk down to the shop was not an easy matter. The snow in some parts is 6 to 7 ft deep, and below it the ground was a bit slippery, so that each step had to be taken very carefully in order not to roll over. I did roll over once or twice, but one makes no fuss at matters like that here. It is quite a common thing to slip down on the snow, get up & continue your way. One man, who was on the steamer with me from Vladivostok, (he lives here 2. or 3. years) knowing that I lived a long time abroad & in London, looking at my plyte in measuring the deep snow cried to me "What oh! these are not London streets for you are they? how do you like it? I had to confess that I did not care very much for it, but hope I shall do so when I get more used to the place. Curious enough it is not at all cold here as one imagines. Of course a few miles (50- or so) away to the north, it is said the frost reaches now 35. degrees, but here it is quite nice. I have not once yet put my warm, fur coat on, am still wearing my London coat & a trilby hat or ordinary cap. In about a fortnight from now, soon after Christmas I am about to set out on a Journey in dog sledges. The journey will in all probability take about 2. months. It all depends of course on the weather. At times, I am told, when a "Furga" (a violent snow storm) overtakes one on the road, there is very little

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I do not know as I have got any thing more to say.

I shall have a great deal to tell you all when we meet at last.

I hope you will all keep well & have altogether good luck in this coming New Year, and we should meet well together.

Fond love to you Vera, Olga, and
darling Hilda

Allways Yours Papa

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