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Free Russia

THE ORGAN OF THE ENGLISH

"Society of Friends of Russian Freedom."

Registered as a Newspaper for Transmission Abroad.

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CONTENTS.

Finland.—Vyshnegradsky's Prophetic Vision.—The Foreign Office Report upon Russian Agriculture, II. (by S. Stepniak).—Notes and Meetings.—The History of Russian Liberalism, II. (Turgenev and Herzen).—Patriotic Timidity.—A Vindication of Autocracy.—The Peregrinations of a Disciple of Tolstoi.—A New Light on the Cholera Riots.—Letter to the Editor.

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Communications with regard to the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom should be addressed to the Honorary Secretary (Mr. W. Mackenzie), 24, Redcliffe Gardens, South Kensington, London, S.W.

The Annual Meeting of the Society will be held on December 6th next. The place and hour will be duly announced in the daily papers.

THE final blow has been dealt to the Finnish autonomy. In Helsingfors, an imperial *ukaz* was published "reforming" the Finnish senate in the following manner. The special commission of the senate acting as the Finnish "executive" between the meetings of the Diet, is abolished. The Senate will henceforward have no right to discuss any subjects but such as will be submitted to it by the Russian governor-general. Finally, the office of senator will no longer be the exclusive privilege of born Finns. By the very imperfect, essentially monarchical constitution of the Grand Duchy all the senators are nominated by the Tzar, the only guarantee of their faithfulness to the interests of the country being that they had to be all of Finnish birth. Now, by the September *ukaz*, this guarantee is abolished, and Russians settled in Finland may be made senators. The significance of this measure needs no explanation. The Finnish autonomy has been destroyed *de jure* as well as *de facto*. The senate is transformed into a simple bureaucratic commission, appointed by the ministry from its own *chinniks*; a position inferior to that of the Russian zemstvos, into which the elective element enters to some extent, whilst Finland, without the slightest provocation on her part, will be as official-ridden as the rebellious, indomitable Poland. Let us hope that the Finns will not be slow in coming to the conclusion that after so much patience and

forbearance on their part they have no choice but to follow the example of the Poles. Not in openly rebelling, for they are not strong enough for that, but in joining hands with the Russian opposition and in working with might and main to overthrow a regime which is the very embodiment of oppression and tyranny in every relation of life.

WE beg to call the attention of our readers to the letter upon the cholera riots which we publish in another part of our issue. This communication throws a new light upon these popular outbreaks, of which we have hitherto had only the official version. The events to which the letter refers happened several months ago; but the mental condition of the masses which it describes are the same, and one has rarely an opportunity to get an insight into the real feelings of the masses. The story of the peregrinations of one of Count Tolstoi's followers will also contribute its share, we hope, in showing that keen interest for spiritual things which characterises the modern Russian peasant, and accounts for the vast sectarian movement going on in Russia.

WE hear from St. Petersburg that the career of the former Minister of Finance, Mr. Vyshnegradsky, closed with a scene that has never been witnessed at the councils of the Russian Tzars. The old minister, whose brain was put to such a severe strain by last year's exceptional work, and who has been much worried by the underhand struggle with his colleagues, especially with General Vanovsky, the Minister of War, who always stood in the way of his attempts at economy,—was suffering from what is called "mental exhaustion." At the council his mind suddenly gave way, when, after stormy debates, General Vanovsky succeeded in getting the best of him, and won the Tzar's approbation to a project of his, involving new and heavy expenses. Mr. Vyshnegradsky rose, and, amidst general stupefaction, began to address the Tzar and the council as if they were representatives of the Russian people in Parliament assembled. Some time passed before the amazed audience understood what it all meant, and the doctors were summoned. We give the story for what it is worth.

There is wisdom in insanity, and there may be prophecy in mental aberration. The idea of a Russian Parliament has probably often crossed the mind of Mr. Vyshnegradsky, and, the fact might come to light in such an unexpected way. Indeed, it seems to be forced more and more to the front, as the only possible solution of the crisis. The financial difficulties of the Russian government begin to assume such proportions as to clearly foreshadow state

bankruptcy. Last year's famine tells heavily upon the budget. The deficit is enormous. In Mr. Vyshnegradsky's forecasts for the current year it was expected to be heavy; he reckoned upon 25,000,000 roubles deficit for ordinary receipts, with an addition of 53,500,000 for extraordinary ones, making an imposing total of 78,500,000 roubles. But in reality the deficit was almost double that amount: the first six months gave a deficit of 89,000,000 on the two items. There is not a shadow of a chance that the receipts of the remaining half-year should fill the gaps left by the first half.

Trade is in a very depressed condition, especially the corn trade, which is the main prop of Russian economical life. Owing to the uncertainty caused by last year's prohibition of the export of corn, there is no demand for it now. According to the Odessa papers, from the opening of the navigation up to September 1, only 13,000,000 *pounds* of corn were exported, which is 49,000,000 short of last year's export. The official *Financial Messenger* quotes a general shrinking of the exports. For the first six months of the current year, its total value was 166,000,000 roubles, which is one half of last year.

Alarmed by these symptoms, the government withdraws all the prohibitive measures, the threatening dearth of crops notwithstanding. But it is in vain. The traders have been scared away, and do not come. The freight prices are rising rapidly. A short time ago freight from Odessa to London stood at 6 to 7 shillings a ton. Now it is 13 shillings, and there are no ships to be had even at so high a price. They have been sent by their owners to other parts offering greater security. This means the development of foreign corn trade at the expense of Russian.

In the interior the agricultural prospects are growing gloomier with every month. The autumn drought has destroyed crops in the enormous plain stretching from the province of Tambov down to the Caucasian mountains, and from the river Oka to the lower Volga. Many provinces,—the northern Caucasus, a considerable part of the province of Saratov and almost the whole of the province of Voronezh,—present an uninterrupted dry desert over which clouds of dust are driven by the wind. The same drought has had a very disastrous effect in the provinces of Kherson, Kiev, Podol and Bessarabia. From all sides comes the same dreary account of misery, so often repeated that it sounds like the monotonous refrain of a funereal song.

Petitions for relief are pouring in upon the ministry just as they did last year, and the imperial relief fund is exhausted. Where is money to come from? How are both ends of the budget to be made to meet? The subsidies, it must be remembered count double in a

budget, like the seats won or lost at the elections. A province or district which needs relief at once absorbs the money of the state and keeps back the taxes due.

Of the many plans for raising funds the expedient of issuing paper money has found most favour with the present government; six issues have been ordered since last year. This is undoubtedly an easy way, but a dangerous one too, which cannot be resorted to indefinitely. With the 200,000,000 roubles interest on foreign loans to be paid in gold, the depreciation of paper money falls heavily upon the exchequer of the state, as it does upon the general industry of the country.

The only expedient left is trying foreign loans. But in the present condition of Russian finances and agriculture, foreign bankers will not advance money to Russia. This is the all-important fact which the last week has brought to light. A new loan has been negotiated in Paris. It was a desperate attempt after the ignominious failure of the last loan of £20,000,000, and we are informed by the *Daily News* that it had *definitely failed*. "The new loan," says the paper, "was to be at 4 per cent., and Mr. Witte, the Russian Finance Minister, offered it to the French syndicate at the rate of 96. In the course of negotiations M. Witte went down to 90, but even this concession was in vain. It is expected that under these circumstances the Russian government will resume its almost hopeless efforts to obtain the money in Germany." Certainly such efforts will be hopeless.

But why will not the government try England? Provided the vision of Mr. Vyshnegradsky be prophetic, the Russian government could obtain anywhere as many millions as may be wanted, for nobody can doubt the resources of Russia.

S. STEPNIAK.

Foreign Office Report on Russian Agriculture and the Failure of the Harvest in 1891.

IV.—*The Political System.*

THE true, fundamental causes of the bad conditions of Russian agriculture lie not in communal land tenure, but in the social and political system, which is based upon the pitiless and reckless exhaustion of the farmers.

Mr. Law's report presents a faithful picture of this monstrous system, of which the tax-collector and the publican-usurer are the two integral parts. We need not dwell upon the familiar details. But we cannot pass over

some very suggestive remarks of Mr. Law's, which go far to refute some of the inveterate popular prejudices. On page 18 we find an interesting comparison between Russian and Jewish usurers. After surveying the ruinous effect of usury in Russia proper, Mr. Law remarks: "In the western provinces of the Jewish Pale the Jew usually takes the place of the Russian *koulák* (usurer), both as a spirit dealer and as a money-lender, and much of his unpopularity among his Russian neighbours may be attributed to this fact. It is, however, curious that in the Jewish provinces the rate of interest for small loans is far lower than in the rest of the empire. The Jewish population, though as a whole very poor, includes more small capitalists among its number than are to be found among the Russians, and their competition among themselves, for the profit of money-lending, effectually keeps down the rate of interest."

This is the best rejoinder to the arguments which the Russian government is used to bring forward to screen the real causes of the Jewish persecutions—racial and religious bigotry and the greed of the officials.

We note also with pleasure on the same page another remark tending to exculpate the Russian peasant from an often repeated charge of general drunkenness. Mr. Law explains how, owing to the bad arrangement of the liquor traffic, the article sold is of the most fiery and poisonous description; the result being that a small quantity produces intoxication. "This," he says, "helps to create the entirely erroneous impression that the ordinary Russian peasant is a heavy drinker. As a matter of fact statistics show that the consumption of spirits per head of population is not large in any part of Russia, and it is smallest in those very provinces of the black soil, where the people have the worst reputation for drunkenness. In Penza, Tambov and Saratov, three governments of the black soil, the consumption of spirits is from 0.57 to 0.59 gallon per head. In the governments of Vladimir and Tver, where there is a considerable development of manufacturing industry, the consumption is from 0.65 to 0.78 gallon per head. In the Baltic provinces, which have a comparative reputation for sobriety, the consumption is from 0.70 to 0.78 gallon per head, and in some of the western provinces it reaches 0.99 gallon."

V.—The Story of the Famine.

Mr. Law's description of the character and dimensions of last year's famine is the best we know of. It is entirely devoid of anything sensational. Not a single harrowing description. It is all figures. But figures are sometimes more eloquent than the most graphic illustrations, and certainly much more characteristic of the general condition of the country.

The failure of crops in the 16 black soil provinces resulted, as the reader may remember, in a deficit of food for the enormous number of 35,000,000 people, the quantity of bread stuffs produced being full 175,000,000 short *pounds** of the minimum required. The problem which the government and the country had to face, was to find means to feed this huge mass of people. And the important thing is that this problem was somehow solved. The government assigned for the relief 120,667,000 roubles, or about £12,000,000, which at the minimum rate of 12 *pounds* per annum, or 1½lb. a day, was sufficient to feed only 7,500,000 people. Thus 23,000,000 of the needy inhabitants were left unprovided for.

How did these 23,000,000 hungry people pull through the winter? The fact is that they were fed somehow, for although there was much sickness and death from insufficient food, *cases of actual starvation were rare and quite isolated.*

It is admitted that there must have been in the famine stricken provinces a reserve fund of corn preserved from former years. The highest possible estimate of this reserve stock is 51,000,000 *pounds*, sufficient to feed the 3,000,000 of urban population, and another 10,000,000 of destitute peasants. This leaves a deficit of 13,000,000 people unprovided for. Of these public charity had to take charge. The Tzarevich's fund gave £1,250,000, the United States a large donation in kind and in money amounting to £60,000, and England, up to July 1, £40,000. Allowing the total of the minor contributions to be equal to these two put together, we have the result that public beneficence supplied 2,000,000 needy peasants with food for the winter months. Full 11,000,000 people remain unprovided for. Private unrecorded beneficence could alone meet the necessity of these sufferers. But private charity had more to do than that.

The 51,000,000 *pounds* of reserve stock kept over from past years by landowners and rich peasants could be converted from a potential food into an actual food for the needy, partly by private beneficence also, and partly by the efforts of the needy peasants themselves who pledged their future work, and prospects to get relief for the acute distress of the terrible winter. Then the former calculations are made with the assumption that there was no useless waste, no defect in the arrangement of the relief; that every grain of corn, every penny reached its destination. This was not the fact, as everybody knows. A considerable reduction has to be made in the number of persons supplied from all the above mentioned official channels, and this deficit had once again to be put, to a great extent, to the charge of private beneficence.

* A Russian *pound* is equal to about 36.7 lbs.

Now, private beneficence could not accomplish all this. And the explanation why hunger has not swept away millions of people instead of isolated hundreds, can be but one: the peasants who received from any source whatever the normal rate of relief, the poor one and one-third lb. a day, did not consume it all, but shared that modest allowance with two, or perhaps more, of their suffering brethren.

This is the conclusion at which Mr. Law arrives and which has been expressed by all who have come into contact with the people during the late terrible ordeal.

Last year's famine will remain, as Mr. Law says, a testimony, both to the devotion and humanitarian spirit of the Russian educated classes, and to the endurance and charity of the peasantry. At the same time it is quite evident that the amount of the above-mentioned pledging of the people's future work and prospects must have been very considerable and very detrimental indeed.

VI.—*The Prospects of the Future.*

But what is the outcome of so much effort, sacrifice and suffering? What are the prospects of next year and the year to come? This is the question, the answer to which most of the English will want to hear from such a witness as Mr. Law. And they will find a reply which is as explicit as it is reliable.

The economic prospects of Russia are, according to him, very gloomy. He mentions the fact of the reduction in the area of land sown, the deficiency of seed, which fell short by 25 per cent. as compared with the average (p. 26). He proves by figures the terrible destruction of horses and cattle, and the disastrous effect of this upon agriculture. As to the prospects of next harvest, on the strength of the last statistical returns, he points out that in five provinces which suffered last year and are now once more stricken with failure of the chief crops it will certainly be very hard next winter, and in five others the suffering will be only a degree less. This means another famine.

We give neither the list of these provinces nor the figures, because the reader will find both in our last issue and previous ones.

We will conclude this long summing up of a very brief work by expressing a hope to see some day from the same pen a more extensive work upon Russian agricultural conditions. We do not expect to agree with all the author's opinions, but we are sure that such a work from an impartial Englishman is greatly needed just now, Mr. Mackenzie Wallace's excellent study being already out of date.

S. STEPNIAK.

The History of Russian Liberalism.

II.—ALEXANDER HERZEN AND TOURGENEV.
THE LIBERAL REVIVAL OF 1855-63.

THE Liberal revival which followed the collapse of the military régime of Nicholas I. after the disastrous Crimean war, is one of the most interesting periods in modern Russian history. Its study is of peculiar importance just at the present time, which presents the spectacle of the collapse of another system, brought about this time by internal causes. A most valuable contribution to the better knowledge of this not very distant but little studied epoch has been made by the publication of the correspondence of Tourgenev, and some other less renowned members of the liberal party, with Alexander Herzen, the great Russian writer and exile, whose name is still remembered by the elder generation of English politicians, as that of the editor of the famous "*Kolokol*," (the Bell), the first Russian liberal paper, which was published in London in 1855-64.

This correspondence, although of a private and confidential nature, is devoted entirely to politics, and it gives us a faithful picture of the political aspirations and various currents of political thought then existing among the more advanced of the Russian educated class. Professor Dragomanov, whose name is familiar to the readers of FREE RUSSIA, has rendered a good service to the Russian cause by publishing and editing this important correspondence. The little volume is of an absorbing, almost painful interest for modern Russian readers, as it shows how slow has been our boasted progress for the last twenty years. The questions which occupied the men of that time are but a slight modification of those which are discussed nowadays, and the blunders and errors of judgment which were committed then are the same against which we have to take precautions now. But the errors of our predecessors were grosser and more evident, and are useful as a warning to the people of our day.

Alexander Herzen is the central figure around which the rest are gathered,—some of them inclining to one extreme, some to the other.

We are introduced in the opening of the book to a typical representative of official liberalism, a man of remarkable dialectical power and forcible logic, whose motto is: everything by the government and through the government, society and the press being viewed only as possible assistants to the wisacre whose function is to think and act for the good of the nation.

This is a certain Ch—— in whom it is easy to recognise a well-known figure in the Russian municipal administration,

Kavelin follows suit to Ch—— as a representative of the timid, half-hearted liberalism, which, from an utterly unfounded apprehension that in Russia a constitution might turn to the advantage of the educated class, preferred to postpone it, maintaining in power "for a time," the existing bureaucracy. Of course this tendency could result in nothing but the maintenance of the autocracy as it is.

Alexander Herzen's views are a study in themselves. With all his broad European education, remarkable perspicacity and strong good sense, he could not avoid some of the fallacies characteristic of the old slavophil as well as of a certain section of modern revolutionists, who postpone freedom for the sake of democratic reforms, forgetting that there is no highway to democracy except through freedom.

We will not dwell upon the description of the interior evolution and struggles of these parties, for this would tell but little to our English friends. We will pass on to the most important part of the book—the letters of Tourgenyev, whose name and position give to these documents a peculiar interest, both political and biographical.

The great novelist appears to us here for the first time as a politician, and one of unusual perspicacity. In the confusion of tongues of that stormy epoch, his voice alone sounds like that of the wisdom of age. His faith in the Russian people was as great as that of his friend Herzen, and his democratic sympathies were as sincere. But he was equally distant from Herzen's slavophil aberrations as from the bureaucratic superstitions of his opponents. He stands out as a firm, far-sighted upholder of the pure European idea of political freedom and of European forms of political life.

In his letter to Herzen, of November 8, 1862, he writes: "Though an enemy of mysticism, you bow down with mystical reverence before the *monshik's* sheepskin, hoping that from its folds some new, unheard of form of political life will fall upon the wondering world. You have overthrown all the traditional idols; you do not believe in any. But is impossible to live without worshipping something, and you have built up a new temple to this "unknown god," that you may once more be able to pray, believe and wait. History, philosophy, statistics, do not count for you. You close your eyes to the irrefutable fact that we Russians belong, by language and race, to the European family, 'genus Europaeum,' and consequently must, by the immutable laws of social physiology, pass through the same phases of development. I never heard of a duck which could breathe with gills as a fish. But because you are morally exhausted, because you want to put upon your thirsty tongue a drop of fresh water, you fall back

upon the possibility of such a miracle, and you strike out at all that must be dear to every European, and consequently to you: at civilisation, lawfulness, and the revolution itself."

Tourgenyev hated the shallow, slavophil antithesis between the "West," beautiful from the outside, and rotten within, and the "East," which is ugly without, but beautiful within (let. XLV. 9). He rightly saw in this tall talk the germs of stagnation and quietism. For him the solution of Russia's difficulties lay in the introduction of Western political forms. And he proclaimed what twenty years of schooling has taught us, that "the only (we may now say the chief) support for a living, real revolutionary movement in Russia, is to be found in the educated minority."

With the strong political good sense manifested throughout all his correspondence, and with his warm political sympathies, the great Russian novelist had in him the potentiality of a conspicuous political writer. At one time he contemplated entering upon a political career. But his natural timidity stood as an insuperable obstacle to it. He remained a sympathiser and confidential assistant of Herzen. He was a regular contributor to the *Bell*, its thoughtful counsellor—almost an unofficial member of the editorial staff. In one letter he advises that the paper should deal gently with the Grand Duke Constantine, because "he is fighting as a lion against the party of serfdom, and would feel keenly any unkind word from you." (Letter to Herzen, Jan. 1, 1861). Another time he recommends a more moderate tone with regard to Alexander II. (Jan. 7, 1858).

In both cases Herzen follows the advice. And when, in September 1860, Alexander II. lent his ear to the reactionary party and struck alliance with the Emperor of Austria, it was by Tourgenyev's advice that Herzen attacked him in a virulent article.

Tourgenyev kept the *Bell* well informed upon all important facts that came under his notice, and his letters contain a number of striking illustrations of the unique power which Herzen's organ acquired at one time in Russia. In the letter of Jan. 7, 1858, we find a curious anecdote about some Moscow actors, who, being wronged by the administration in money matters, sent in a deputation to Gideonov, with whom rested the decision. But Gideonov would not hear of it. "Then," said the deputation, "we shall be obliged to complain to the minister." "You won't get much by that," answered Gideonov. "In that case," said the deputation, we have no choice but to complain to the *Kolokol* (The Bell). Gideonov flew into a passion, but finished by yielding to the demands of the actors. Still more abundant are the proofs of the attention which Herzen's paper commanded at the Court of St. Petersburg. It was read by the Tzar and by the Grand Dukes;

the courtiers of the Emperor came to pay court to the great exile. But this attention and influence were not lasting, being based upon the short-lived liberal tendencies of Alexander II. The official world followed its master's example, thus creating the fictitious impression of power, which vanished as a dream when the Tzar turned his back upon liberalism. And at the same time the tempting prospects of directly influencing those in power, made the paper sometimes forget the real sources of its strength.

We look with greater hopefulness upon our own time, when liberal ideas spring from the soil in the teeth of all the government's efforts to suppress them. Of this we shall speak in our next issue.

Notes.

THE Australian mails carry news very slowly—not less than three months are necessary for an exchange of letters; yet if the news be good we may forgive the slowness of its arrival. And the news that has recently reached us from New South Wales is undoubtedly good. Our readers may remember that Mr. Volkhovsky was commissioned by our Executive Committee to correspond with a gentleman of Polish extraction, V. Charlinsky, now civil engineer in Sydney, upon his scheme for carrying on our propaganda there. Mr. Charlinsky has now replied in a long and cordial letter, promising to do everything in his power to promote the cause of Russian Freedom in Australia.

Referring to the attitude which ought to be, and, in fact, is taken by the Poles towards the Russian struggle for liberty and self-government, Mr. Charlinsky quite rightly says that it is in the interest of tyranny to keep alive the animosity between the "conquered" and the "conquerors," each of which classes forms a danger to its existence; and then proceeds as follows:—"The fact is that the two nations (Poles and Russians) do not know each other, as the only information about Poles and Polish affairs which reaches Russian ears (or rather the ears of the general mass) is that circulated by the government or its tools; while the Poles, in the absence of a free Russian press, can judge of Russian opinions on the Polish question only from the utterances of the Souvóvins, Katkovs, Aksákovs, Galitzyns, or Meshchévskys, and therefore expect no more justice from a Russian people's parliament than from Pobyedonostséy's, Delyánov's, or Apoukh-tin's. With rare exceptions, the opinion prevalent in Poland is that it is not the business of the Poles to concern themselves with what they believe to be an entirely and exclusively Russian question. Of course Polish socialists think differently," but not all the Poles are socialists. Our friend has his own view upon the relations which should prevail between the general mass of Poles and Russians. "I love Russia and its people," he says, "although I consider myself as thorough a Pole as a Pole can be; and to me it is clear that the day of Polish freedom will not dawn before the sun rises over nations free from Kamchatka to Lisbon." Would that these views and feelings might spread widely among Polish nationalists!

George Kennan's book ("Siberia and the Exile System") is being "simply devoured" in Sydney, says our Australian friend. "There is only one copy in the School of Arts, and I know people," he adds, "who put their names down eight months ago to get it, but have not had it yet." The book is sold at six guineas a copy (!) Mr. Charlinsky expects to find a good agent for the sale of our literature in the person of one of the best booksellers in Sydney, and he is certain to enlist a good many people in the ranks of the friends of Russian Freedom, and obtain a number of subscriptions to the Society's funds. We have been fortunate enough to acquire a promoter of the cause of Russian Freedom even so far off as Tasmania. A lady from there, Mrs. E. Ursula Holden, being on a short visit to London, became acquainted with the aims and work of our Society, and is already busy collecting subscriptions for it. In a few weeks she will return to Tasmania, and is most earnestly determined to appeal to her fellow-citizens, in the name of international brotherhood, for help to the Russian cause.

All this is most encouraging. While FREE RUSSIA is published in three different editions—in London, New York and (in German) in Zürich—and read in the United States, in Canada, in New Zealand, in the Transvaal and throughout Europe, the literary and editorial work for all the three editions is done in London and, consequently, the expenses implied by it are borne exclusively by the mother society of Friends of Russian Freedom. Besides, considering propaganda the main object of the society, its committee fixed the price of the periodical very low, which means that its price does not cover half of its expenses. It is, therefore, only fair to expect that the members of the American and Colonial F.R.F. should share in the expenses of the mother society, not only by means of subscribing to the paper (1s. 6d. in England, \$1 in America yearly), but also by becoming *members* of the English society (yearly membership fee not less than 5s.), or sending in special donations to the general fund. All money to be addressed to Dr. Spence Watson, Bensham Grove, Gateshead, England.

On September 24th, 25th, 26th, and 27th F. Volkhovsky lectured respectively in Moston, Manchester (for the Ancoats Brotherhood), Northwich, and the Whitworth Institute in Darley Dale, on his experiences in Russian prisons and exile life in Siberia and his escape to freedom. At all these lectures (which were very well attended, so that in Ancoats, for example, some people went away without obtaining admission for lack of room) a sale of our cheap literature was carried on, which brought in to the funds of the Society in all £2 2s. 3d. During November Volkhovsky will lecture on the same subjects: On the 8th, in Birmingham; on the 10th, in Bexley Heath, near London; on the 14th, for the Tyneside Lecture Society, in Newcastle-on-Tyne; the next day in Hawick; and on the 21st, for the Birmingham and Midland Institute.

Lecture List.

The ladies and gentlemen whose names appear in the following list have, with the approval of the Executive Committee, consented to lecture *gratis* on the subjects opposite their names, under the auspices of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom.

Clubs, associations, societies and similar institutions, or sympathisers with Russian Freedom, desirous of securing the services of any of these ladies or gentlemen should communicate with the lecturer direct.

J. C. SWINBURNE-HANHAM, 18A, Goldhurst-terrace, South Hampstead, N.W. Subject: "The Present State of Russia."

Mrs. MALLET, Albemarle Club, Albemarle-street, Piccadilly, W. (not on Thursday or Friday). Single Lecture: "Russia and her People." Three Lectures: "Russia and Siberia (1) Geography and Climate;" (2) "Early History;" (3) "Late History." "Land System—Present Condition—The Mir, the Commune." Three Lectures: "Russian Martyrs;" (1) "The Peasants;" (2) "Administrative Exiles;" (3) "The Stundists." A Course of Nine Lectures, devoting *two* to the subject of Administrative Exiles.

E. R. PEASE, 276, Strand, W.C. Subjects: "The Story of Russian Nihilism." "England's Interest in Russian Revolution."

G. H. PERRIS, 115, Fleet-street, E.C. Subjects: "Russia's Place in Modern Europe." "The Personnel of the Russian Revolutionary Movement." "The Episode of the 'Terror.'" "The Coming Crash in Russia."

Miss ADA RADFORD, 1, South Hill Avenue, Harrow. Subjects: "Russian Freedom." "The Russian Revolution."

H. ROBERTS, care of FREE RUSSIA, 3, Iffley-road, Hammersmith, W. Subjects: "The Russian Nihilist Movement." "The Russian Peasant and his Future."

GEORGE STANDRING, 7, Finsbury-street, E.C. Subject: "The Russian Revolutionary Movement."

WILLIAM W. MACKENZIE, Hon. Sec.

Meetings.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.—The October monthly meeting was held on the 5th ult.; present, Dr. Spence Watson (in the chair), Mr. E. J. C. Morton, M.P., Mr. William Thompson, Mr. Rix, Mr. Pease, Mrs. Webb, Miss Helen Webb, M.B., and Mrs. Human; also Mrs. Spence Watson. A letter was read from the Rev. George M. S. Lester, offering to promote the objects of the society in Brisbane, Queensland. It was agreed to give Mr. Lester every support. The list of the ladies and gentlemen who had agreed to lecture on behalf of the society was read, and it was moved by Mr. Pease, seconded by Mr. Thompson, and carried, that the lecture list be printed in FREE RUSSIA and marked copies sent to clubs and similar institutions. The Treasurer reported a debit balance against the society. Mrs. Webb reported that a large number of subscribers were in default. It was agreed that the Secretary be requested to send out a printed statement, accompanied by a short letter, to all subscribers of 5s. and upwards who have not paid their subscriptions within the year, calling attention to the position of affairs, asking them to increase their subscriptions and get additional subscribers. Other business was transacted and the meeting adjourned.

DULWICH.—The Ladies' Discussion Society, which meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month to read and discuss papers on social, political and literary topics, had for its subject on September 28th: "Russia and the Exile System." Mrs. Skey referred to the despotism of the administration, the suppression of intellect and hard restrictions placed upon

knowledge in the public schools, in regard to both male and female students. Miss E. Watts Phillips read a paper, and, after touching upon Russia's past history, the present reign of cruelty and arbitrary rule, and expatiating upon the horrors of the exile system, declared that the two things Russia needed—must have, and in time would have—were a free press and a representative or constitutional government. She averred that, to help the bringing of this about, it was the special duty of England—she enjoying both these blessings—to give heartfelt sympathy and aid to the Russian people. "Let us recognise," she concluded, "that Christ did not die for us alone, but for all the world, making us one vast family. A national brotherhood is great and holy, but there is a yet higher, nobler and holier still—the universal brotherhood. The oppressed are holding out their hands to us—the free. Shall we refuse to grasp them? I, for one, say 'No!'—a hundred times 'No!' Remember, in the eye of God, they are those of our brothers and sisters." The discussion was continued by Mrs. Bell, Mrs. Cochrane, Mrs. Jessop, Miss Phillips, Mrs. Preedy and Mrs. Reade. The question of FREE RUSSIA was also considered, the unanimous feeling of the meeting being that of heartfelt sympathy with hopes for the success of the cause which it advocates.

Patriotic Timidity.

THE *Figaro* of September 24 contains a report of a curious conversation held by a French traveller, M. Jules Huret, with a Russian manufacturer, a man who is supremely satisfied with the present Russian *regime*, which he considers admirably suited to the tastes of the Russian people. The peasants, according to him, are "meek naïve creatures, as ignorant as children, their minds being fed solely with the idea of devotion to God and the Czar." They are "quite used to penury and privations, and want only a little *vodka* (cheap whiskey) to feel quite happy." The workmen of the towns are in every respect like the peasants. "The men earn on the average only four roubles (eight shillings), and the women 2½ roubles (five shillings) a week. They work from 13 to 15 hours a day, and nobody complains."

The government is as wise as it is paternal. Bad masters (those who wish to squeeze out of their men more than 15 hours' work a day, paying them less than five shillings a week) are held in check by the officials. That is very humane. The workmen are kept in order by laws rendering participation in strikes punishable with imprisonment for terms not longer than eight months. That is very wise. "Big manufactories, in order to be prosperous, must be ruled upon a monarchical principle, and the master must have his hands free." As to the stability of the existing *regime*, it is beyond a doubt.

When asked about the possibility of revolutionary ideas gaining the ear of the working class, this gentleman laughed outright, and told anecdotes illustrating his workmen's simplicity of mind. On the question being raised of the possibility of the workmen wishing the hours of labour to be shortened, he laughed still more heartily, and forthwith related another anecdote showing their stupidity. No stauncher supporter of law and order and the Holy orthodox Church could be imagined. Yet,—and here is the point of the story,—when the French journalist asked his permission to reproduce their

conversation in the papers, the good man was frightened to death.

"Oh, please sir, do not do that, or you will expose me to I do not know how many unpleasant things.....We are not in France here." Thus he let the cat out of the bag. Like a true Russian subject, he thought that *any* expression of opinion, no matter of what nature, is a dangerous thing, and that the only safe thing for a man to do is, as Shchedrin puts it, to take example by the bull, upon whose innocent bellowing no one can put a suspicious construction.

Autocracy Vindicated.

WE have received from Paris a copy of the vile organ of the French antisemites, containing an article entitled "England the accomplice of the Nihilists," which is quite in keeping with the general character of the paper. It is a vindication of the Tzar, and we will quote some passages from it for the amusement of our readers.

"It is no secret for anyone," says the worthy author, "that the usual intrigues no longer satisfy England's hatred of Russia. Formerly she contented herself with sending out arms to Circassian and Polish rebels. Now she openly supports a Prince and a gang of adventurers who have usurped (*sic*) the supreme power in Bulgaria."

But England does far worse things than this.

There have been rumours of an attempt against the Tzar's life at Skiernievitzy. This beautiful specimen of a newspaper affirms that the attempt was actually made, and that England was its instigator, as "it is in the interest of England to create disturbances in Russia."

"On the eve of the 1st of May did not she (England) furnish the French anarchists with dynamite bombs to throw at the troops, in order to make the Tzar believe that our country is in a state of perpetual revolution?"

After this statement we are not surprised to learn that England has undertaken to "subsidize the Nihilist committees" which have their head quarters in London, and has founded a "Society of Friends of Russian Freedom," whose "avowed" object is to serve English interests in Asia.

The personal abuse with which this charming production is interlarded, we leave to the reader's imagination.

The Peregrinations of a Disciple of Tolstoy.

IT is nearly a week now since I came to Grayvoron (province of Kursk), and I have not yet written to you, my dear friends. I did not wish to write only a few lines, just for the sake of writing, and to describe my journey well I needed a little time to rest. The

*ouriadnik** arrested me on July 18, in the afternoon. He was very amiable and very obliging, probably he feared some scandal; that is to say, that perhaps I should have to be carried through the street by force, or perhaps he was afraid lest I should beat him. However, neither happened, and I went with him without any resistance. At first he took me to the *stanovoy* in Byelopolye, where he asked for directions concerning me, but what they were I do not know. On the way from Byelopolye to Ryechki, we talked about life in general, and the *ouriadnik* maintained that all we do leads to nothing but rebellion. After a long discussion he asked me: "Well then, is not even the Tzar put there by God?" In answer to that I read to him the third temptation of Jesus in the wilderness; he understood, but began a cautious reply, to the effect that what is said in the Gospel could not be true, that there could have been no temptations for Jesus, since he was led into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit. I was very much astonished that an *ouriadnik* could philosophise in this sophistical way, and began to question him, but unfortunately got no more subtleties out of him. When we reached Ryechki it was evening, and there I was left to pass the night in an unfurnished *volost*; everywhere were rubbish, bricks and plaster; the *dessiatsikie* made for themselves a bed of planks, but I had to sleep on the rubbish—it was very uncomfortable and rough, because I had nothing at all to cover it with. Next morning, at 7 o'clock, we started without having had any breakfast, and reached the police-station at Soumi at about 12 o'clock. The *ispravnik*, with official politeness and severe gravity, informed me that he would send me on according to his own judgment, then rang the bell and told the soldier who came in to take me and keep a watch upon me until further orders.

I was conducted to the barracks, where the soldiers received me amiably and even respectfully; it appeared afterwards that most of them took a great interest in "our religion" as they call it. What especially interests them is that this religion should change the lives of men and destroy the evil which comes from the present social organisation and disorderly life. I am very sorry that I was not able to talk to the soldiers more; but in 15 or 20 minutes the *ispravnik* ordered me to be sent to the soumi *volost* with another young man (who had no passport). We were accompanied by two soldiers, who on the way asked me about their doubts with feverish haste, the distance from the police to the *volost* being very short. The soldiers took leave of me very kindly, wishing me all sorts of good things. In the Soumi *volost* I was received almost as an acquaintance, but very

* Village constable.

seriously and cautiously; I was immediately locked up, and they evidently did not forget that I and M. V. had said not very pleasant things to them when we came to see Nicholas in prison. The *starosta* and the *starshina* (chief of the volost) were not present, but the clerks came in and talked to me ironically, calling me a preacher, the proclaimer of a new God. But their satire went no further than this, as they did not know what else to say, and moreover I cooled them down a little. After that they did not try to be ironical any more, but when they passed the window of the prisoners' room, where I was sitting, only bowed politely and went their way. Besides myself and the young man, there were two more persons in the prisoners' room, arrested the day before; a girl about 16-17 years old, sentenced by the *volost* to a week's imprisonment for tarring somebody's gate,* and a boy of about 10, who went about the town with beggars. The parents of this boy had lived together without being married for years, and now the mother had found another husband, and the father another wife, so that the boy was left without a home. The mother did not want him, and the father could not take him, because his new wife would not acknowledge the child as hers, and so the poor boy wandered about the town with beggars or with other such little thieves as himself. The day before my arrival he was caught in the town and brought to the *volost* in order to be sent to his birthplace, (where it appears he had no relations whatever). But in the night the boy crept through the iron grate and went back to the town; in the morning of course an alarm, "a prisoner escaped!" The *starosta* went on horseback in search of him, and passed nearly all the day in riding from one village to another, whilst the boy was found without his assistance in the town among the beggars and brought again to the lock-up. When I was brought to the *volost* from the police, I found there a crowd of employees of the *volost*, passing the time by making fun of the little prisoner, who stood, looking at them from under his eyebrows. The scene reminded me very much of big dogs worrying a small kitten.

In the evening the *starosta* returned, and on being told that the prisoner had been found, flew into the room, dragged the boy from the bed and began to thrash him, accompanying the punishment with appropriate exhortations, and justifying himself by declaring that he might have got into gaol himself through that rascally boy. The scene was a very disagreeable one, and I was going to interfere when the *starosta* noticed my presence, and, recognising me, evidently felt ill at ease, or was perhaps afraid that he had gone too far in the presence of witnesses; anyhow, he left the boy,

and addressing me as if to excuse or justify himself, said that the prisoner was a scoundrel, and had put him, the *starosta*, into a most awkward position. When I replied that the boy was quite a child, and that it was ridiculous to call him "prisoner," the *starosta* murmured something, but seeing that I did not agree with him, went out of the room swearing. After this operation, swellings came out on the poor boy's temples, and he cried and sobbed for a long time.

In the evening both I and the other prisoners grew hungry, and I decided to ask for something to eat, without giving money. I asked first, then the other prisoners followed suit, but it turned out to be no easy thing to get anything to eat. Probably the officials were used to such requests, and nobody even listened to them. At last I decided to give some money to buy bread for me and for other prisoners, but even this was not so easy. They refused, on the pretext that the shops were a long way off, and that they had nobody to send. I do not know whether I should have had anything had I not called from the window to all the passers by, and drawn their attention to the unkindness of starving people. The persons whom I addressed evidently felt awkward, but they all seemed to be ashamed of pitying us, and hurried away from the window, shrugging their shoulders. At last there came up a very small boy who was employed in the clerk's room. He began talking to the little prisoner with childish friendliness, and even started a game with him. It was so natural, and so unlike all the surroundings, that I looked on with peculiar enjoyment. I asked this boy to go and buy bread for us, and he immediately consented. No light was given to us in the evening; the *parasha* was brought in, and we were told that we should not be allowed to leave the room during the night. As soon as it grew dark, and we lay down, we were instantly attacked by such an enormous number of bugs that it was quite impossible to sleep. Several times I struck matches, and looked at the walls and the benches; they were all literally swarming with vermin. It was horrible. In fact, none of us could get any sleep the whole night.

From the Soumi *volost* I was taken to the next village under escort. My guards had probably been ordered to watch me very closely, and not to talk; for when the younger, who was rather inquisitive, tried to begin a conversation, the elder checked him severely, and told him to mind his business.

The Soumi *ispravnik* forwarded me on from Soumi, under escort of the village police, sending with me a packet addressed to the *ispravnik* of Grayvoron, and an open letter of instructions, stating that I was to travel under the strictest watch, and with an escort of not

* A great insult among the peasantry.

less than two strong men. Such severe instructions made a corresponding impression in all the *volosts* and villages, and everybody suspected me of being a great criminal as—so they said—this was the first time any one had been sent with such instructions. If you take into consideration my tall stature and strong build, you will not be astonished to learn that even two *dessiatskie* were afraid to escort me, and often asked that a third should accompany us. Moreover, the *dessiatskie* were always given a rope, in order that on the way they might be able to tie me and lead me by the rope. That is picturesque, is it not?

It is true they did not bind me. They felt somehow a little reluctant to do it, but they accompanied me with great fear, and always declared that they could not know what I had in my heart. But they behaved differently in different places. The Great Russians have a more confiding character than the Little Russians, and in the Russian villages of the Kursk province, only the authorities were afraid of me, whilst the escort paid no attention to the dreadful instructions, and everyone was willing to escort me quite alone.

The peasants of the *volost* and especially the *dessiatskie* who had to accompany me, always asked why I was sent under such strict guard, and I did my best to explain it to them. My explanations were received in various ways; some agreed that everything I said was true, but the majority showed a kind of mistrust—they could not believe that anyone would be sent under such strict guard to live in Grayvoron for such a thing.

I remember the first Russian village, at which I arrived on a week day. All its population, except old women and little children, was out in the fields haymaking. We went to the village hall, but there was no one to be seen. After some minutes a lot of women from the neighbouring houses came in and formed a crowd. These women offered me food and brought a whole dinner. While I was eating, there appeared in the hall from somewhere or other two old men, and soon afterwards the clerk came. Having read the paper which was sent with me, he stopped an old man who was driving a cart with corn, and told him to take me to the next village. The old man reluctantly consented, but the clerk looked again at the paper and found that it would be quite impossible to send me with only one man, and that an old one. In the meantime came the *starosta*, and a discussion began as to whom else they should send with me. They wanted another old man to go, but he refused, saying that I might kill them both on the way. Then the curiosity of the public awoke and they wanted to know why I was being sent to Grayvoron with such a strict paper. I told them in a few words, but the people did not understand

at first, so new was it to them. The women overwhelmed me with questions. "Then you think we don't need even the churches?" "Where then would you prepare for the sacrament? where then would you consecrate the apples on the Saviour's feast?" "Then you don't even think the wells ought to be consecrated?" asked one woman. At the same moment someone else asked about the images of the saints. "How is it then, do you not believe in the holy images?" I answered that I not bow down to the *ikons*. After that the women began to sigh and groan and looked at me with mingled fear and curiosity. "In that case you worship idols, you are pagans," said an old peasant. I asked him, "what is an idol?" At first he was embarrassed, but presently said that it is the same as the devil. I asked: "What is the devil?" None of them could reply to that question. I began to explain it myself, and they approved of the explanation. Only some of the women made a disturbance, and would not listen to any explanation; but the others stopped the noise and listened with curiosity, some even showing that they agreed with me. Just then a middle-aged peasant passed the village on his way to fetch corn. The *starosta* stopped him and told him to take me and the old man to the next village. He at first refused, but the other peasants began to explain to him something about me and urged him to take me on and to inquire into the details of the matter on the way,—evidently they took a great interest in my explanations.

On the way he did not allow me time to breathe; he questioned me constantly and made me read the gospel to him. He approved of everything I read and told him, and in the end became a zealous partisan of the teaching of Christ. I have seldom met such enthusiastic people. As soon as we came to the next village, he began with great animation to repeat everything I had said to the first peasant he met with. I was astonished to see that he remembered not only the sense, but even all the expressions I had used. Afterwards, however, I noticed that Russians catch up much more easily the form than the substance of a thing. The new hearer listened quietly to the end, but was in no way moved and rather threw cold water upon my propagandist, who became quite disheartened, and tried to defend me, but as he had repeated everything I had said and had nothing of his own to say, he could not add anything and was obliged to remain silent and melancholy. I think he was discouraged, too, by the fact that I did not take his part, but remained silent. He even appealed to me to explain, but I did not comply with his request, partly because he had already said enough, and partly because I was anxious to know what the others would say. The Russians

are an inquisitive race. As soon as the people noticed that someone was in the village hall, they began to drop in to hear the news. They would come, look, listen a little, and go about their business. To everyone of them my advocate explained with great animation the teaching of Christ. But no one else received it with such earnestness, and all were more or less sceptical. That cooled him down and even made him sad.

Evening fell, and the people came back from the fields; there was quite a crowd in the hall; many of them were rather tipsy (they had evidently been "on the spree"), but among them were some who had already heard my story. Discussions and questions arose. My advocate tried once more to arouse sympathy with my teaching and began to preach with great animation, but at the most interesting place he was interrupted and informed that he knew nothing at all about the matter, that the gospel had nothing to do with it, but that I had simply sold my soul to the devil, who rewarded me for it with money. Everyone began to talk at once. The noise was indescribable. One of the crowd, brandishing a pitchfork, shouted that such people as I ought to be strangled at once, to rid the earth of them. "I'd give him a good licking with this pitchfork—yes, and I'd run it through him,—that I would!"

One moment I thought that the people were going to tear me in pieces, so threatening were their cries, but when I looked more closely at their faces, I saw that it was only talk, and that the men were not only not angry, but even good natured. After that the whole thing seemed to me to be comic, and I held my tongue and awaited the end of the stormy scene with curiosity. In five minutes the noise stopped, all the people became quiet, and some asked me quite composedly how could I make up my mind to forsake my God and sell my soul to the devil. I began to question them in my turn, and when they could not answer my questions, I answered them myself. The end was that all of them listened quietly, or asked questions without any more noise. They took leave of me quite amiably, and repeated all the time: "Well, God knows about it all; we are ignorant people, we grow up like the grass, how should we understand it all?"

I intended at first to describe to you all my impressions of the journey, and then pass on to the town of Grayvoron; but now I see that this would need too much time and space, and I want to send this letter as soon as possible, so I will write shortly.

On the 23rd, at one o'clock in the afternoon, I was brought to the town of Grayvoron, and taken straight to the police station. The next morning I had a swim, and afterwards went for a walk about the town and its environs. I returned to the police station about 11 o'clock in the morning, and was told that the *ispravnik*

had asked for me. I went to him; he turned out to be a good-humoured looking old man, and not at all imposing. After reading the papers concerning me, he asked, "Why did not you wish to choose a place of residence for yourself? It would have been much better for you!" I answered that I thought it best not to choose any place.

"Then where do you intend to live? If you would like to go anywhere, you can always do so. I will give you a passport." I replied that for the present I did not intend to go anywhere, but would remain in Grayvoron. "What will you do here?" "I don't know." That was the end of our conversation. The *ispravnik* then sent for the police-sergeant, and told him to find work for me if I should be in need of it, and if I should want lodgings to show me some decent place where I should not find drunkenness or vice. I was quite astonished at the considerateness of the *ispravnik*. I remained a few days in the police barracks, and now I have a lodging for which I pay one rouble a month. I have a nice large room. My landlady is a widow with one little girl 11 years old. She has another boarder who occupies the room next to me. He is a retired captain of about 35 years of age. He talks to me constantly about the saints, who, according to him, were all generals, or, at least, colonels in the Russian service: only a few of them belonged to the clergy. But now enough of this letter. Next time I will describe all my Grayvoron adventures. This little town is quite in a wilderness, the nearest railway station being 50 versts away. I hope for news from you; all the people here are strangers, so I feel very lonely. I should like to read, but it is very difficult to get any books here, if not quite impossible. Ask all my acquaintances and friends who read this letter, to write to me whenever there is anything interesting. I will write to them in time. I forgot one more thing: when I was staying in the police barracks the *pristav* of the town police sent for me, and announced that I am placed under his surveillance by the Grayvoron police. He gave me a paper to read, which stated that I am banished from the Kharkov province, for propagating the pernicious doctrines of Stundism, and that he has directions to watch lest I should propagate these doctrines in Grayvoron. The *pristav* then put on an important air, and gravely said: "I must warn you that if you attempt to propagate your doctrine here, it will be the worse for you."

I, taking a serious tone in my turn, replied that I shall be the same here as the Soumi district. The *pristav* at first looked embarrassed, then bethought himself and said: "I only warn you; the rest does not concern me, only if it should be proved that you are propagating your doctrine, you will be committed for trial." After that I left him.

The Cholera Riots.

(From our own Correspondent.)

SARATOV,* OCTOBER 3rd (15th).

I WRITE you as an eye-witness of what was going on in our town during the troublous "riot"-days, and I assure you that if you had been in my place and were afterwards to read the description in our papers of the events you had witnessed, you would never recognise them. To begin with, all the rioting was represented as a mere outbreak of a crowd of brutalised savages who opposed medical men, as such, because they, the savages, thought it sinful to oppose God's will, or because they had conceived a superstitious, inexplicable terror of all medicine and all sanitary precautions. No one reported, and under our censorship no one could report, the legends which circulated among the peasantry about the cholera; but if they were reported, they—however fantastic in themselves—would show clearly that at the bottom of all the troubles lay the old, but, in Russia, always burning, agrarian question. One of the most moderate and judicious men engaged in the famine-relief work, who had crossed a large distressed district in various directions (and whom for obvious reasons I cannot name), derived from what he had seen and heard a profound conviction (which he expressed openly) that agrarian troubles are pending. This was before the cholera. The exhausted population, which had just gone through the martyrdom of the famine, aggravated by the tyranny of officialdom, was in an agitated, irritable condition. The irritation was so great that all the *Zemskie Nachalniki* (District Commanders) of the Saratov province left their headquarters in the country and sought refuge in Saratov. The provincial governor repeatedly ordered them to return to their post and duties, but they never obeyed him. The fact was certainly noticed by the peasantry and explained in the sense that the officials had something weighing on their conscience if they were so much afraid of the people. The first alarming news about the cholera added to the feverish condition of the people. The rumours of the embezzlements perpetrated by the officials to whom the famine-relief money was entrusted, and of the "coming" new allotments of land "granted to the peasants by the Tzar," began to assume new proportions. Just at that time the first clumsy, official steps were taken to meet the approaching calamity, and struck the people in a way that still more affected their excited imaginations. They seemed to have been seized not by kind-hearted and prudent friends, but by a band of brutal and shameless enemies, who were preparing to slaughter, in one way or other, as many citizens as they possibly could. In the hospital destined for the cholera patients, a large number of coffins were got ready, while there were as yet no patients. The police received orders to search the houses for the purpose of finding out those attacked by cholera, who were to be put, even if by force, into the cholera vans, which had a peculiarly hideous appearance, being without any windows or apertures and painted all in black.

After the legends, circulating among the people, only one more touch was needed, and this was given by the details above-mentioned. There were two main versions of the legends. One was as follows:—The officials and landowners had embezzled a large sum of money which was sent by the Tzar to buy grain for the people; then, on learning that the Tzar had sent the heir apparent to the famine-stricken districts to make an inquiry into the matter, the landowners and officials "introduced" cholera (others said: Spread false reports of cholera and pretended to take precautions against it). According to the other version, the Tzar, after the famine, came to the conviction that the peasants had not land enough; he,

therefore, resolved to take a certain portion of it from the landowners and bestow new allotments on the peasants; but as soon as the landowners and officials got wind of that they poisoned the wells, and in that and other ways tried to reduce the number of peasants, in order to diminish the amount of land which was to be expropriated from them for the benefit of the peasantry.

In the meantime the police, who had no real knowledge of the cholera symptoms, made a number of blunders which seemed to confirm the popular belief. Some policemen, on hearing that a woman was ill, entered her house and began to question her: whether she had a pain in her heart, whether her digestion was bad, whether her head ached, and so on through a whole list of what they considered to be choleraic symptoms. The woman, who was very old and had been bedridden for two years, answered every question in the affirmative, as everything seemed to pain her. Thereupon she was forcibly taken to the cholera hospital. And such blunders were not rare. The brutality of the police, together with the cowardice of some official representatives of the medical body, irritated the population more and more, and finally two new mistakes put an end to its patience. A drunken woman, being observed vomiting in the market-place, and a drunken peasant were taken as ill with cholera, and were locked up in the cholera hospital. When the man slept off the fumes of whiskey and realised where he was, he became mad with panic. By a heavy blow he smashed the window, and, jumping out, appeared in the market-place in a state of violent excitement. This was the last spark that set on fire the anger of the population.

The first hateful objects that met the sight of the infuriated crowd were the prisonlike cholera vans. These were destroyed at once, and on this occasion a driver and two men of the escort were killed. Then the operations of the "rioters" became more systematic, and I should like to call the attention of every reader to the character of the latter: it is most instructive. The first regular assault was directed, not against the cholera hospital, as was reported in the press, but against the *head-quarters of the police*. These were invaded and all the documents, the furniture, everything that was destructible, was torn or broken to pieces. Then the assailants went to the *residence of the provincial governor*. Here, however, troops were already assembled, and the crowd, being unarmed, turned to the hospital. In the hospital no one was injured. All the physicians, all their assistants, had fled beforehand; a single trained nurse was at her post, but she was not hurt. I should mention here that in the country round Saratov, where similar events took place, the peasants themselves warned the best doctors to take refuge somewhere before the riots began.

Three men belonging to the educated class were arrested during the Saratov riots: a lawyer, a veterinary surgeon and a schoolmaster. The lawyer had tried (and with success) to restrain the mob from deeds of violence by shouting: "Mates, let these scoundrels alone for now; they shall get what they deserve afterwards, but now let us go to the chemist's shop and bandage up the wound of one of our fellows!" (this referred to a *bourlak*,* whose finger had been cut off in the street fight). The two others threw themselves between the people and the troops, trying to prevent bloodshed. All the three were seized as "nihilists," and their further fate is unknown.

Some particulars of the Saratov riots are of the greatest significance, as they give hints upon the various possibilities that may be anticipated in case things come to a real popular rising in Russia. The two improvised chief leaders of the rioters—both *bourlaks*—of whom one, Kashin by name, is renowned for his enormous physical strength, displayed, on a small scale, the same presence of mind, courage and talent as military tacticians, as did similar leaders under Pougachov. When the rebellion in Saratov was quelled, the two leaders crossed the river

* Saratov lies on the Volga river. It is a city of 123,000 inhabitants, carrying on a large trade, especially in grain, fruit and fish. At the time of the great rebellion of Razin (1667-1672) and Pougachov (1773-1775) Saratov played a very conspicuous part on the side of the rebels. Now it is frequently called the capital of the large and wealthy country along the Volga.

* A man employed to tow a barge with a ope. Thousands upon thousands of these men tramp along the banks of the Volga, and there are always great numbers of them in Saratov. Their life is a most hard one.

and, from a large village on the other side, called Pokrovka, sent to the Saratov authorities a telegram, informing them of an uprising there, which had never taken place. Their aim was to weaken the military forces of Saratov by dividing them between that town and Pokrovka, and then to revive the Saratov revolt. Indeed, one battalion of infantry was sent across the Volga. This, however, did not sufficiently weaken the military forces in Saratov to enable the plan to succeed. Not less significant was the fact that, notwithstanding the suggestions of the civil authorities to send out small patrols, the military commander of the troops did not dare to do so for fear that in small bodies *the discipline might easily be broken*. Very different from that is expected to be the temper of the Don Cossacks. These privileged troops look down upon the peasants with contempt, and seem to be their bitterest enemies. When two divisions of them, which were mobilised in order to put down the uprising which had begun to spread through the country round Saratov, passed through that city, the Cossack officers expressed the apprehension that their subordinates would deal with the peasantry without mercy.

M. SARATOVETZ.

Letter to the Editor.

DEAR SIR,—I hear, from a friend, that it is an undoubted fact that ships, fitted with iron cages, are being built for the Russian government, upon the river Clyde. They are believed to be for the conveyance of political prisoners to Siberia by the Northern Seas. Might I ask you to give publicity to this statement, in order that it may if possible be contradicted.

Yours truly,

"DAYLIGHT"

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THE SECOND

ANNUAL PUBLIC MEETING

OF THE

Friends of Russian Freedom

WILL BE HELD IN THE

WESTMINSTER TOWN HALL,

CAXTON STREET, VICTORIA STREET, S.W.,

On TUESDAY Afternoon, DECEMBER 6th, 1892, at 4 p.m.,

Dr. R. SPENCE WATSON in the chair.

W. P. BYLES, M.P., E. J. C. MORTON, M.P., J. ALLANSON PICTON, M.P.,

The Rev. CANON SHUTTLEWORTH, Miss ISABELLA FORD,

HAROLD FREDERIC, SERGIUS STEPNIAK, FELIX VOLKHOVSKY,

And others are expected to take part in the proceedings.

All Members of the Society and sympathisers are invited to attend. Invitation Cards,
which are not necessary for admission, can be obtained of the Secretary,

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The Society appeals to the enlightened men and women of all countries, without distinction of nationality or political creed, who cannot witness with indifference the horrors perpetrated in the Empire of the Tsars, and who wish a better future for the masses of the Russian people. Further contributions to the funds and further work are needed and will be welcome. Membership is acquired by sending to the Treasurer an annual subscription of or exceeding Five Shillings. Members are entitled to receive *Free Russia* post free.

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The Annual Meeting of the Society.—Expected "Reforms" in Russia.—A New Clandestine Paper.—The Prison-Ship Affair (by S. Stepniak).—Mr. H. Frederic's "New Exodus" (by H. M. Thompson).—The Russian Peasants (by S. Stepniak).—Traits of the Russian Court.—Branch Work.—Reviews.—Lecture List.—Meetings.

All MSS., Letters to the Editor, Advertisements, &c., should be addressed to the Editor, FREE RUSSIA, 3, Iffley Road, Hammersmith, London.

Advertisements received up to the 25th of each month will appear in the next issue. Advertisements in the English, American and German editions at reduced rates.

Communications with regard to the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom should be addressed to the Honorary Secretary (Mr. W. Mackenzie), 24, Redcliffe Gardens, South Kensington, London, S.W.

London, December 1, 1892.

THE second annual meeting of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom will be held on December 6th, at 4 p.m., in Westminster Town Hall. Dr. Spence Watson will take the chair.

For about three years a body of devoted men and women, assembled at the call of the eminent Newcastle leader, have carried on the arduous task of fixing upon the Russian question as much of the attention of English-speaking people as is possible in our feverish time. Through all difficulties the work has been carried on uninterruptedly, and this alone gives us now a stronger position than we had a year ago. Certain social works are like newly-planted trees. If one sees them not withering for a long time, but keeping green outside, one may be sure that they are striking out roots into the soil. The Russian cause has unquestionably struck deeper into the English soil within the last year. More people know of the existence of our society and understand its aims. The public sympathy with our work has grown and the circle of men and women who have made the cause of Russian freedom their own has widened. It is widening daily. The great calamity which struck the Russian people in the course of last year and the vast work of collecting relief have contributed much towards bringing before the public notice the abnormal and most deplorable interior conditions of Russia, and have called forth that feeling of international brotherhood which is the foundation of all good work done for Russia from outside.

As to the practical manifestations of the extension of the pro-Russian movement abroad, we must mention, in the first place, the strengthening of our American branch, which now not

merely reprints FREE RUSSIA, but re-edits it to some extent, and has funds enough to secure the continuation of the issue for about two years in advance. There are fair prospects of the foundation of an Australian branch of our society.

At the last annual meeting the Secretary announced a forthcoming German edition of FREE RUSSIA. In the course of last year ten numbers of the German *Frei Russland* appeared in Switzerland, meeting with a most cordial reception among all the advanced parties of Germany. No formal German branch of our society has been founded as yet, but we have been fortunate in enlisting a number of prominent men in Germany who are in thorough sympathy with our objects and line of action, and who have staunchly supported us on many occasions. To them we owe the failure of an attempted extradition, having rather the character of a kidnapping case, which two months ago the Russian spies tried to carry into effect in conspiracy with the Magdeburg police. The society has got a strong footing in Germany, and its position is sure to improve, which, we hardly need to say, is of very great importance, Germany being Russia's next-door neighbour. Yet, it must be confessed that the position of the German *Frei Russland*, as a periodical, is far from being satisfactory. In fact, it is more precarious than that of the English edition.

This brings us to the important point of considering the actual position and prospects of the paper in this country. For the two last years the main practical object of our society has been the carrying on of FREE RUSSIA. With the experience of these two years before us, we can conscientiously affirm that the publication has done a good work for the Russian cause. Though very young, as papers go, it has acquired a certain place among the thousands of periodicals trumpeting to the world in various tongues their various messages. Some of the largest English, American and Continental papers (the French excepted), numbering their readers by hundreds of thousands, frequently quote from our leaflet. Some of the articles of FREE RUSSIA have been reprinted in full up to seventeen times on the Continent, widening our circle of readers enormously. We have thus succeeded in realising, to some extent, our original plan of making our special paper a source of information which other larger papers should utilise and spread. We hope, as time goes on, to be able to realise this object more fully.

But the number of our regular subscribers is small in this country, as well as in Germany and America, and we do not expect it to greatly increase in the future. There is unmistakeably a certain general and permanent interest in Russian things in this community. People

read willingly news about Russia in their own papers, and accordingly the editors will have such news. But the same people have neither time nor interest enough to regularly read a periodical devoted entirely to Russian affairs.

That is how and why it comes to pass that our paper, whilst honoured by such an unusual amount of attention, remains itself such a small affair. It is like a sort of ferment, the action of which can in no way be measured by the quantity in which it is introduced.

In another part of our present issue the reader will find an article upon the building of ships with iron cages. The case proves to demonstration that a small quantity of ferment will occasionally produce a good deal of fermentation.

There is nothing contradictory or discouraging in the fact that our paper, parts of which sometimes reach millions of readers—presumably having some influence upon them—cannot be properly supported by the few thousands of regular subscribers who get it in totality. No paper having any special cause to champion and any mission to fulfil has ever been self-supporting. The anti-slavery papers, the missionary papers, the organs of the peace and arbitration societies,—all papers of the nature of *FREE RUSSIA*—have been and are supported on principle by those who sympathise with their object and believe in the usefulness of their work.

It seems to be a law of social life that all the best, most humane ideas, feelings and aspirations, which are to remould in the future the opinions and institutions of the community, should be harboured for a long time among minorities, as infinitesimal when compared with the community, as the ferment with the grape-juice that it turns to wine.

FREE RUSSIA needs funds. It is expected that more than one speaker at the coming annual meeting will make an appeal for them, and we hope that it will meet with a response.

ONE still hears occasionally the opinion that the revolutionary outbreaks in Russia have imposed a policy of reprisals and reaction on the government, which otherwise might be inclined to make some concessions to the spirit of the age. The revolutionists, on the contrary, maintain that no concessions have been made by the Russian government, except under the pressure of the fear of some imminent outbreak.

Looking upon what is going on in Russia, it is impossible to deny that the evidence of facts is decidedly in favour of the latter view.

The disclosures brought about by the recent famine, and the light they have thrown upon the interior conditions of Russia, are of such a nature that the very paving-stones might under-

stand the necessity of broad and general interior reforms.

But there were no outbreaks worth speaking of, and the result is that we see now unmistakeable signs of the strengthening of the reaction in Russia. The man whose political views and religious intolerance bring us back to the Byzantine period, Mr. Pobiedonostzev,—whom even Mr. Stead could not digest,—has been appointed to the post of actual president of the state council, the Tzarevich being merely a figure head. We are informed from St. Petersburg that the position of the new minister of finance, who indulged in a good deal of talk about the necessity for some sort of general reform, is quite insecure. He may be turned out any day. Persistent rumours circulate in the capital about the imminent abolition of the trial by jury (for common offences, as political ones have long been tried by special secret tribunals). It is affirmed that the present minister of justice, Mr. Manassein, being against this "reform," Mr. von Pleve and Mr. Mouraviov have been proposed to the Tzar as possible successors to Mr. Manassein. Both, it is said, have consented to accept the post on condition that the "reform" be carried out by somebody else before they come to office. The post, it is said, has been offered to Likhachov (famous for his infamous exploits as a political inquisitor in 1873-1874), who has expressed his perfect willingness to accept the post on any condition.

IT is hardly surprising that, such being the state of things in Russia, the appearance of a clandestine revolutionary paper "The leaflet of the Narodnaya Volia," became "the event of the day," as our correspondent says, and according to the same authority, "is read with avidity both by those who endorse its programme and by those who do not." On account both of the time of its appearance and of its size and contents, this publication is worth noticing. It could be issued only by a well-organised and fair-sized clandestine printing office, and it has evidently been written by experienced and thoughtful men.

As to its programme, its main points are summed up in the following lines:

"There is only one way to restore life to Russia: first of all, we must have *political freedom*. It is absolutely necessary, in order that radical reforms may be made and energetic measures undertaken to render the peasantry and working classes prosperous, and to raise the standard of the masses. In addition to this we want some security for the possibility of permanent work in this direction; we want to become, in the fullest sense, educated workers ourselves; we want to live a full and free life, not a fictitious but a real social life, together with the working

population;—in short, we want educated society and the working masses fused together into one whole,—a free people. All this can be realised only by the efforts of the healthy-minded portion of educated society, supported by the workers and, to some extent, by the peasantry. The bitter experience of the past ten years has taught us how useless it is to expect anything 'from above.' Now instead of grieving for the lost 'dawn of our regeneration'—instead of looking mournfully backwards—we must set to work to renew our 'revival'; just such a revival as there was 30 years ago. Indeed, in the interests of the people, even an imperfectly successful attempt to reform our life 'from below'—out of the people's own strength, may be of more worth than freedom, granted as a gift from those in authority—it will at least lay a foundation for the *political independence* of the people.

"Perhaps some will say that we are running on too far ahead,—that we have not yet developed to this point: 'both society and the masses are so inert, and the government is so strong'..... Let us cast aside these everlasting sophisms. Russia cannot form the one exception to the general rule that a despotic government inevitably ends in a collapse when once the people rise. However gloomy may be the future of the Russian people, in any case the days of the autocracy are drawing to a close; time has made many breaches in its Chinese wall, and now so huge a crack has become visible to all men that it cannot be plastered up like the former ones. The only question now is how and when the liquidation of the government's affairs will take place, how and when the power will be handed over to the people. But the time depends mainly upon the action of the governed mass; it is not written down beforehand in the book of fate, and the conditions under which the transference of power shall be effected, will only be decided by the action of the living forces of society."

In conclusion, the paper says, what is now the watchword of the whole Russian opposition:—

"Historical conditions sometimes join together widely differing social groups, by forcing them into the same path in order to reach some common aim. This is the case with us; the revolutionary forces are bound together with the best elements of the liberal opposition, and even with those who are simply engaged in intellectual work. When once, by means of propaganda and agitation, the revolutionary elements of both educated classes and working classes can become fused into one solid whole, supported by help and sympathy from among the peasantry, they will be able to form a party strong enough to take upon itself the initiation of open warfare against the government."

The Moral of the Prison Ship Affair.

THE letter of our correspondent about the building upon the Clyde of prison ships for the transport of political exiles to Sakhalien, published in our last issue, has produced quite a stir in the community. The news made the round of the English press. Reporters were sent to inquire into the matter. One of them went to the Russian Embassy, and had there some amusing experiences, which we reproduce below. Others chose a better way to discover the truth. They went to various ship-builders. At first the conclusion to which most of the papers came was that the news had no foundation. One of the leading Scotch papers, the *N.B. Daily Mail*, gave the following summary of the case:—

"After a most exhaustive inquiry at every ship-building yard on the Clyde, we are able to give the most positive denial to the above report. No Clyde ship-building firm has had an order in hand for the building of convict steamers for the Russian government; nor do we believe that in the event of such an order being given out, any ship-builder on the Clyde would tender for it."—Ed. *N.B.D.M.*, November 10.

But the interest evinced by the public in this affair continued "increasing day by day," as the *Glasgow Weekly Mail* (November 19th), puts it. Further inquiries have proved that a convict ship, the "Yaroslavl", is actually being built at Dumbarton. It is, however, alleged that it is an ordinary convict-ship for conveying common-law offenders from Odessa to Sakhalien, a sort of maritime "barge," similar to those described by Mr. George Kennan as journeying from Nizhny Novgorod to Perm, and from Tioumen to Tomsk, only cleaner and more comfortable. We are quite willing to believe that. But political prisoners are transported upon the Siberian and Volga "barges," described by Mr. Kennan, in separate cells, side by side with those of the common-law offenders. They never form more than a small proportion of the passengers.

Now there is on Sakhalien a large and growing penitentiary colony for political offenders. They have all been transported to that terrible island in small batches by steamers from Odessa via Suez. The "Yaroslavl" is admittedly intended for such a service and will transport these political offenders.

There is no shadow of doubt about that. It is quite immaterial from an ethical point of view whether the politicals will be few or many—the majority or the minority of the passengers. We therefore consider the communication of our correspondent as fully confirmed.

Russian men, and perhaps women, the flower of their generation,—the same, the story of whose wrongs and whose unselfish devotion to their country's freedom moved to tears so many English readers of George Kennan's pages, will be dragged as slaves upon a deck that one moment was "English soil." During the several months of transit they will be kept in iron cages made by English hands. If, exasperated by some brutality of their temporary gaolers—against which "electric fans" and good accommodation are no security—they should rebel or mutiny, jets of scalding steam will be turned upon them (there is always such "accommodation" upon convict ships) through special taps manufactured in English workshops. All these are facts for English people to think over.

In an excellent paragraph upon this subject the *London Daily Chronicle* (Nov. 7) discusses the delicate question whether building slave ships for the Tzar "is or is not like taking blood money?" "During the last Russian scare," says the paper, "several firms of coal owners refused to coal Russian ships, and they received much praise for their patriotism. And if one should not supply the enemies of one's country, what about supplying the enemies of humanity? It is a curious point of ethical dialectics"—the paper concludes.

It is upon this point that we want to say a few dispassionate words. We do not propose to start an agitation to prevent—supposing this possible—the building of such ships in English dockyards. Still less do we feel inclined to inveigh against Messrs Denny and Brothers, the builders, or their workmen, who, according to the *Glasgow Weekly Mail*, "instead of having any aversion to building such a steamer, would be only too pleased if their employers could obtain a number of similar vessels to build."

It would have been an act of splendid *philanthropical* heroism if any shipbuilder had refused to build or if the workers of some shipyard had refused to work at a ship, on learning that it would serve to assist the Tzar in punishing the liberty-loving sons and daughters of Russia. But one can not claim from people heroism as a thing due, or feel bitterly against them if they do not show it.

The fact that men of such high moral standard and eminence among their countrymen as Dr. Spence Watson, Mr. Allanson Picton, the brothers Thompson, Miss Hesba Stretton, and many more, have given to the cause of Russian Freedom, their souls and their hearts, is for the Russian patriots an ample compensation for the scores of prison ships built in English yards.

The moral which we want to draw from the affair is this: the Russian government constantly receives help from outside, and help in

a much more substantial form than the one which gave rise to the present notice. The Dumbarton ship-builders will help the Tzar in transporting his prisoners to their destination. But they will not in any way help the Tzar in capturing these prisoners, or in maintaining his tyranny over the millions of the Russian people, as is done by every foreign banker who subscribes to a Russian loan, and by every man who consents to buy from the banker a Russian security. Financial assistance is not the only help the Russian autocracy receives from western states, but we will speak only of it.

Now is it possible to hope that the time will ever come when foreign bankers will refuse to subsidise the Tzar if they can realise high profits upon the loan, or that people will refuse to buy Russian bonds at the Stock Exchange, if they can "turn an honest penny" by the transaction?

No, certainly not. The Russian government will be supported most powerfully up to the last possible moment by foreign capital. It would be hopeless to try and idle to hope, to help the Russian people in a negative way, *i.e.*, by cutting off from their government that supply from without. Those who feel for the wrongs of the Russian people, and who are morally offended, hurt, indignant at the sight of any particular form of assistance given to the Russian autocracy, may show it in a positive way by working for the Russian emancipation. The support received by the autocracy from abroad, stands as a supreme justification of—and ought to stand a peremptory stimulant for—such a work, the possibility of which has been demonstrated by our society. Join it, spread it, and assist it to the full measure of your power, and you will bring your mite, no matter how modest, to the efforts of the Russians themselves, to remove a government which the *Daily Chronicle* has rightly stigmatised as an "enemy of humanity." S. STEPNIAC.

We have mentioned above that the *N. B. Daily Mail* sent a correspondent to make inquiries about the building of a prison ship on the Clyde. Here is his humorous account:—

"I went down to Chesham House, about mid-day. I walked through the two great iron gates into the court yard, but was rather forcibly reminded where I was by a big individual in livery, with a superfluity of powder on his pate and white gloves upon his hands, who clapped me on the shoulder and wanted to know my business. I told him that I wished to see any official who could give me some facts about the matter. He stared at me very hard for several seconds, and after ordering me to 'Stand there!' walked leisurely up to the entrance doors. I waited for some time, and was at last shown into the hall of Chesham

House—the seat of Russian authority in England. Some three or four more liveried servants—liveried almost to the fashion of a 'guy,' powdered and puffed, with brass buttons, frills and buckled slippers—were lounging about, and all watched me closely as if I was going to run away with something. One of them shouted to me 'On the first floor.' What that meant I scarcely knew, but up I went. After going a few steps I was told to go 'on the next landing;' and again 'at the top of the third flight.' At last I was shown into a waiting-room, which was elaborately furnished, and contained a rather clever piece of machinery which at first sight looked like an instrument of torture, but was really a reading desk. A gentleman, who would not tell me his name, came in and asked me 'What I came for?' I showed him the cutting from *FREE RUSSIA*, and this is his reply. I give it as it was said to me:—

"'Oh, no, no! tush, tush' we never heard anything of—but tush, tush, tush. I'm sorry you came up all these steps; but really it is—well, nothing. No, no; it's nothing."

"'But,' I said, 'is there any truth whatever in the statement? Will you give me a denial?'"

"'Why did you not ask the shipping company at the Clyde? Tush; no, no; I'm sorry—tush, tush. Good-day.'"

"I clambered down 'all those stairs,' wondering what that gentle "Tush" that the official used so freely really meant. Webster does not define it. Can you, sir? Afterwards I wrote to the Consul General for Russia, but he only 'regretted to be unable to give' me the information I wanted."

The paper continues:—

An exhaustive inquiry at all the yards in the upper reaches of the Clyde on Wednesday failed to elicit any confirmation of the above report; but the result of our reporter's visit to Dumbarton on Thursday placed the fact beyond dispute that a steamship, specially designed and intended for the conveyance of convicts, and contracted for by the Russian government, is now on the stocks in the yard of Messrs. Denny at Dumbarton.

There is nothing about her outward appearance to suggest the gruesome business for which she is being constructed. Indeed, external appearances would lead anyone looking at her to put the vessel down as an ordinary respectable, possibly commonplace, ocean-going steamer of about 6,000 tons. She has what the experts in nautical matters would call a figurehead or fiddle bow, and although not supposed to go very fast, is provided with a twin screw, not, however, of very much power. In the upper deck the vessel is got up in something like the manner of the ordinary class of ship, and it is only below that the real nature of the craft is revealed.

There, in the lower deck and under the lower deck, the spacious accommodation is all divided off into cells. These cells, it is quite apparent, are very numerous, for a large number of barred iron doors are being provided for them. As described to us, the doors resemble gates made of flat iron, and ribbed with tubes about 1 inch in diameter, and about 5 or 6 inches apart. "I don't think there's any accommodation in her for first-class passengers," said one of our informers; "but there is no doubt she is intended for carrying convicts from one place to another—wherever they are going to employ them. Whether she is to carry anything else but convicts, or to engage in any other traffic, I can't say." It further appears that it is no secret in the town of Dumbarton that the ship in course of construction is destined for service as a convict ship by the Russian government. The work is so far advanced that the ship will be launched in the course of a fortnight or so, and the people have all along regarded the matter with indifference, or as they would the acceptance by any builder of a contract for the building of a prison.

"The New Exodus."

By HAROLD FREDERIC (W. HEINEMANN, 1892).

THE subject of Mr. Frederic's book is the barbarities practised on the Jews in Russia—their forced migration from cities outside the pale of settlement to that territory, and the flight of something like a quarter of a million souls from the land of their birth to other countries unpolluted by the hideous cruelties practised upon them.

Mr. Frederic has himself gathered in Russia recent information on the subject, and his theme is accordingly treated with a good deal of authenticated detail.

The story is strikingly atrocious even to those who are accustomed to hear of the dealings of the Russian government with those who are offensive to them, but its main features are those with which we have become familiarised—fearful barbarities committed by officials in the name of a government entirely unable to restrain them even if it were inclined to do so, susceptible of mitigation by one means alone—corruption. No author has given instances of the hideous corruption that pervades the Russian bureaucracy more overwhelming than will be found in this book, which proves, moreover, once again how completely powerless to check the evils done in his name is the fountain-head of authority, the Tzar.

The passage in which this is best brought out occurs in a character-sketch of Alexander III., one of several of the most prominent personalities of the Russia of to-day, contained

in this volume. Mr. Frederic certainly has the knack of character-portraiture, and his portrayals impress one as being reliable as well as vivid.

"Alexander III.," says the author, "is a man of rather limited mental endowments and acquirements, who does not easily see more than one thing at a time, and who gets to see that slowly. . . . He has no idea of system and no executive talent. He would not be selected to manage the affairs of a village if he were an ordinary citizen. It is the very irony of fate that he has been made responsible for the management of half a million villages. He has an abiding sense of the sacredness of this responsibility, and he toils assiduously over the task as it is given him to comprehend it. Save for brief periods of holiday-making with his family, he works till two or three in the morning examining papers, reading suggestions and signing papers. No man in the empire is busier than he. The misery of it is that all this irksome labour is of no use whatever. So far as the real government of Russia is concerned, he might as well be employed in wheeling bricks from one end of a yard to the other and then back again. Even when one tries to realise what 'Russian government' is like—with its vast bureaucracy essaying the stupendous task of maintaining an absolute personal supervision over every individual human unit in a mass of a hundred millions, and that through the least capable and most uniformly corrupt agents to be found in the world—the mind cannot grasp the utter hopelessness of it all. The ablest man ever born of woman could do next to nothing with it; at least, until he had cleared the ground by slaying some scores of thousands of officials. Alexander III. simply struggles on at one little corner of the towering pyramid of routine business which his ministers pile up before him. Compared with him, Sisyphus was a gentleman of leisure.

"This slow-minded, mercilessly-burdened man knows very little either of the events close about him or of the broader currents of contemporaneous history outside. He had the customary elaborate education from which most princes mysteriously manage to extract so little benefit, and he seems to have got less of it than usual. He was a man grown before his elder brother's death pushed him forward as heir to the throne. A belated effort was then made to engraft upon his weak and spindling tree of knowledge some of the special fruits of learning which a future emperor should possess. He was docile and good. Some of his teachers established a powerful personal influence over him, the effects of which were afterwards to be of such terrible moment, but they accomplished little else."

Mr. Frederic's character-sketch of the Grand Duke Sergius will be of special interest to

English people just now, as telling them the kind of personage that is being received as their State visitor.

Our author's contribution to the story of modern Russia's misery is a specially dark one, and what makes the book even sadder reading than those of Kennan or Stepniak, is that he seems to have no confidence in the Russian people's eventually asserting itself and taking its place amongst the happier nations of Western Europe. His description of the Russian peasant—the moujik—is in sordid contrast with the idealisation of the same personage fostered by Count Leo Tolstoi—and also by some of the Russian socialists. The description of Mr. Frederic's moujik is, no doubt, founded on facts which he has himself observed. We are not for the first time confronted with the contrast between the realistic and the idealistic description of a nationality or of a class. Whether it be about the Celts of Ireland or of Wales, the negroes of America, the labourers of England, or the peasants of Russia, when it comes to an enumeration of sheer facts, the realist seems to carry things before him. But, after all, the position of the idealist is not shown to be so untenable as might at first sight appear to be the case. Indeed his conception is actually revealed from time to time, in bright exceptional characters which stand forth to measure the height to which their comrades may some day attain. Insight into the possibilities of attainment is of the greatest importance when we are looking forward to the future development of a people or a class. Probably Mr. Frederic himself would be the first to acknowledge this when it was a question concerning the Jews. In one passage he speaks of them as being "legislated" . . . "back into the vicious old circle of being forced to do certain things and then hated and abused because they did them." Is it not possible that in the case of the moujik also his environment is responsible for many of his undesirable qualities?

We may, perhaps, not feel bound to accept Mr. Frederic's view of the peasant as decisive. It resembles in its sombreness that of Mr. Lanin. The two writers are alike in regarding the moujik not only as very debased, but as *degenerate* even from the standard of pre-emancipation times. Perhaps they do not lay stress enough on the importance of the symptoms here and there to be found amongst the peasant class of the seeking after higher things. Of this the Stundist movement is a remarkable instance in point. HERBERT M. THOMPSON.

During December F. Volkhovsky will lecture—On the 11th in Leicester, on the 14th in Inverness, on the 18th in the Coliseum at Leeds, and, very likely, on his way northwards or back, will address a branch meeting in Edinburgh.

The Russian Peasants and their Detractors & Panegyrists.

THERE is a point in Mr. Herbert Thompson's article which is worth special notice. on account of its general interest, independently of the book to which it refers. As to the book itself, there is little to be added to the remarks of our contributor. Mr. Harold Frederic's book is certainly an important contribution to the literature of the Russian question. It gives more than it promises, and it has a permanent interest which we are not accustomed to associate with tourists' productions. As an exhaustive, graphic and perfectly accurate account of Jewish legislation in Russia, and of the past history and present position of this race in the empire, it is unique of its kind and may serve as a good book of reference even for a Russian. The author's comprehension and characterisation of the Russian bureaucratic despotism—the most salient feature of our present political system—is, as Mr. Thompson truly says, as good as can be found in English literature. The book would be an unimpeachable one if the author had remembered the first sentence of his own book.

"Edmund Burke confessed, over a century ago," thus opens chapter I., "that he knew not the method of drawing up an indictment against a whole people." Mr. Harold Frederic has learned that method as early as chapter III., with which begins an indictment against the Russian people which, to say the least, is the counterpart of Madame "O.K.'s" indictment against the Jews. Besides its philosophical inconsistency, it strikes the reader by a number of gross blunders which form a strange contrast to the carefulness and accuracy of other parts of the work.

For a foreigner going for a short trip to an entirely new country, it is absolutely necessary to apply to some of the natives for information and guidance. Most of the English travellers, like Dr. Lansdell, Mr. Henry de Windt and Mr. W. Stead applied to officials, and paid the penalty for doing so. But their description of Russian peasants is more true to the original: the officials had no reason to hate their humbler countrymen. Mr. Harold Frederic went to the Jews, who were able to give him a complete account of administrative despotism. But their description of the Russian peasants resulted, as was natural, in a most pitiful caricature.

I will not proceed in the easy task of refuting Mr. Harold Frederic's misstatements upon this score, for I want to say a few words at least upon the interesting point raised by Mr. Thompson himself.

There are two sort of pictures of the Russian

peasants, almost diametrically opposed to each other. Whilst some persons will proclaim the Russian peasants to be besotted savages, utterly unfit for civilisation, others will assert, on the contrary, that the Russian peasants, owing to peculiar historical and economic conditions, have developed qualities that fit them to evolve the highest forms of social life.

Which of these pictures is the true one? Mr. Thompson is puzzled, and tries hard—I will not say to reconcile them, for that is impossible—but to explain how men, observing the same subject, could have come to such contradictory conclusions. Now, if Mr. Thompson is perplexed, readers with less pronounced sympathies will be still more so.

Personally I am rather a partisan of the enthusiastic view of the potentialities of our peasantry. But I can very well put myself in the position of an impartial outsider, and I would say to Mr. Thompson and all those who feel puzzled before the two conflicting pictures: Dismiss them both if you like, and stick to the plain and secure axiom that men by nature are pretty much the same everywhere. There is much of the savage in the Russian peasants. Granted. But are not the peasants of other nations savages as well? The testimony of novelists is the most important in deciding this question, because they alone paint for us men in their completeness.

Let us take the novelists who have given us types of common English farm labourers, male and female. Take George Eliot. Do not the farm labourers represented in "Adam Bede" partake more of the nature of oxen than of men? And the rural heroes and heroines of the admirable little story of Mrs. Margaret Woods, "A Village Tragedy," are they any better?

Now let us pass to the continent, and take for guides Balzac's "Les Paysans" or Emile Zola's masterpiece "La Terre"; are not the French peasants we meet there a low race of cruel, egotistic savages, wallowing in loathsome vices? It is difficult to imagine anything less promising as a material for civilisation. Giovanni Verga's Italian peasants are just as bad. And yet all that the civilisation of these countries has produced has come originally from the soil, from these savages, whom the cities have transformed into fully developed men and citizens. Why should we not extend the same hopefulness to Russian peasants?

S. STEPNIAK.

Traits of the Russian Court.

WE have received from our St. Petersburg correspondent a very interesting communication about the history of the Novo Znamensky villa, which we particularly recommend to Mr. W. Stead, for it offers a striking

though somewhat queer illustration of the much-extolled parental kindness of the imperial couple. We shall be very reticent and omit all strictly personal details of this scandalous story; the private affairs of the Tzar's family are of no interest for us. But when paternal connivance at a son's peccadilloes leads to the embezzlement of public money and to the robbing of afflicted invalids, then it becomes an offence against the common weal.

The Empress Maria Alexandrovna (wife of the late Emperor), who was a great philanthropist, bequeathed a capital of £100,000 (we will use the English equivalents for all Russian values) to be spent in founding a free hospital for the poor. In 1883 a special commission was appointed to decide upon a practical plan for carrying out the trust. It was composed of the leading practitioners and medical authorities of St. Petersburg, including the late Professor Botkin, Professor Eichwald, and others. The commission decided upon the plan of building a model hospital for pulmonary diseases. But they could not agree upon the choice of the locality. Some of the members proposed the Crimea, others the province of Podolia, others again suggested St. Petersburg. These various projects were submitted to the Emperor, but none of the three received the imperial sanction. The affair dragged on for five years. In 1888, the Tzar Alexander III, resolved to hand over this capital, with the accumulated interest—£140,000 in all—to the committee in charge of the Russian institutions for the blind.

This imperial favour to the blind was reported, we may remark by the way, by K. K. Grot, the Russian delegate, at the international Congress of the representatives of European institutions for the blind (which was held in that year in Cologne), and the Congress sent to the Tzar a telegram, couched in most respectful and enthusiastic terms, expressing its gratitude for such benevolence to the blind.

The subsequent history of a considerable part of this sum is worth telling, for it may interest not only the blind, but also those who have eyes to see.

Whilst communicating to Mr. Grot the Tzar's decision to transfer his mother's gift from the consumptives to the blind, the Empress expressed a desire that £30,000 of the sum should be immediately spent in buying a villa called Novo Znamensky, the property of a Mr. Miatlev, situated near St. Petersburg, on the road to Peterhov. This villa was to be bought with the object of transforming it into a blind hospital. Mr. Grot went to visit the villa, and then, in an audience with the Empress, informed her that the estate was not worth half the sum demanded by the owner, and that it could hardly be used as an institution for the blind. But the Empress stopped

his arguments by telling him "with her heavenly smile" that the affair was already settled, and that she had promised to Mr. Miatlev precisely the sum named.

There was a love-story behind this transaction (in which the Tzarevich was concerned), to account for the imperial solicitude for Mr. Miatlev's pecuniary interest. We need not dwell upon that.

The estate was bought, and the £30,000 were paid to Mr. Miatlev in full. But when the committee of trustees came to take possession of the property, they discovered that instead of the costly furniture which had been there, the house was filled with broken and utterly worthless rubbish. On making inquiries among the neighbours, they learned that on the preceding day the solicitous owner had come with 40 vans and taken away all the furniture, which, by the agreement, he was bound to give up, and had put instead of it the furniture they found, which he had bought for a low price at the second-hand furniture shops of the Shchoukin market. Only two things, a large billiard table, and an enormous vase in the garden were left behind because their size prevented him from carrying them away. These two valuable pieces of furniture, which however, were of little use to the blind, were left in the possession of the committee.

Having acquired a property which was utterly useless to them, the committee came to the conclusion that the best, or at any rate, the least ruinous thing for them to do was to get rid of the estate as quickly as possible. The house was not worth much, but there were 320 acres of land, which could fetch a good price, being near the capital. The estate was accordingly put up to sale at the price of £10,000, *i.e.*, at one-third of what had been paid for it. But for several years none would buy it even at that price.

At last an offer was made. The St. Petersburg municipality wanted a site for a new lunatic asylum. After some bargaining the municipality acquired the estate for the sum of £9,000. But when the estate was measured it was discovered that it contained only 160 acres. Of course it was not the committee which had cheated the municipality. It was soon found out that the provident Mr. Miatlev, had not only defrauded them upon the furniture, but upon the land as well. By some underhand way he had succeeded in getting from the surveying department an old map of the estate, drawn up in 1805, and had coucealed from the committee the fact that in 1840 one-half of the estate was sold. The committee of institutions for the blind did not verify the measure of the actual size of the estate, and in fact would hardly have protested against the fraud if it had found out the truth.

But the municipality was in a better position,

and the matter was discussed at a sitting of the Duma. The nature of the former transaction was known to all present, and the debates were remarkably tame and reticent. In view of the fact that such high-placed personages were connected with the affair, some members of the municipality were in favour of dropping the matter and losing one-half of the money paid. But the majority had courage enough to protest against such treatment of public funds. No one dared to suggest that the affair be brought before a court of law. But a resolution was passed to send in a memorial to the Tzar concerning the fraud which had been practised upon the town. The memorial was sent in, but the municipality got neither redress nor reply.

The story speaks for itself, and we vouch for its perfect authenticity, for we have received it from a most reliable source.

Branch-work.

I.

What can and what should a branch of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom do to promote the movement it represents?—such is the burning question of our organisation, and it is time to answer it, as practically as we can.

The first and most important function of every branch is, certainly, to enlist as many members in the ranks of the S.F.R.F. as is possible, and to supply them with the sinews of every organisation, without which no work can be carried on—with money. But next to that there is a vast field for the most various and useful activity of a branch.

Our Society has at present one main problem before it:—to disseminate authentic, genuine information about Russia, tending to arouse public feeling and public opinion against the present Russian misrule, and in favour of its being replaced in some way or other by a popular, representative government, based on liberty and justice.

A large circulation of a special literature, its introduction into libraries, clubs and various societies throughout the United Kingdom and the colonies; the introduction of Russian topics into the London and provincial press, and the arrangement of lectures and debates on Russian questions, and also of "indignation meetings" now and then when any shameful practices of Russian officialdom chance to come to light through the press; such is the practical interpretation of our first problem. It is easy to see that without the energetic collaboration and, to some extent, even initiative of provincial people this work cannot be carried on properly.

The Society publishes a monthly paper and different pamphlets. The branches ought to and could assist it vigorously in both. FREE

RUSSIA cannot properly combat the erroneous views concerning Russian affairs circulating in England, nor give exactly the information wanted, if its readers, especially the Branch Committees, do not send in their share of information and suggestions upon the matter, or do not raise questions upon any points that are not clear to them. The branches could also easily contribute a good deal to making our paper as interesting and lively as possible. We know, for example, that within the reach of the Edinburgh branch live two gentlemen: the Rev. Prof. A. F. Simpson, and the Rev. Dr. John C. Brown; both of whom, having been at different periods ministers to the Anglo American colony in St. Petersburg, could contribute most interesting reminiscences and other information upon Russia. Men who have been in Russia and have something to say about it are certainly to be found in many other places, and one of the problems of the branches should be to find them out and either to interview them or to induce them to write for FREE RUSSIA.

Nowadays the provincial press not unfrequently inserts original and very interesting articles on Russian questions, or news from Russia, which, in the interest of the movement, should be either spread further or contradicted and opposed. For an example we need only point to the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*. Now, people living in provincial places could easily make useful cuttings from their local press and send them to FREE RUSSIA (3, Iffley Road, Hammersmith, London, W.) The branches (and individual Friends of Russian Freedom) should also watch all the lectures, meetings, and other events in the locality (such, for example, as the construction of Russian floating prisons on the Clyde) and report them to FREE RUSSIA.

FREE RUSSIA is, however, not only a literary monthly paper, but also the organ of the organisation called the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, and, as such, it must concentrate all the news and suggestions concerning organisation and agitation about Russian affairs. All such notes or other matter intended to appear in the next number ought to reach the staff not later than the 20th of every month. But besides occasional notes the branches might send in to London regular accounts of the work done and the money collected and expended, to be read at the meetings of the Executive Committee (which occur on the first Wednesday of every month), and, if necessary, to be printed in FREE RUSSIA in extract or in full. Such communications would very much encourage, we are sure, the work everywhere. It is hardly possible to work in a desert (though among people, where no sound of any comrade is to be heard, no token of the efforts made or the progress effected is to be seen! Experience

shows that the pamphlets issued by our society are of great use. Being independent of the necessity of not exceeding the limits of a newspaper article, they can treat the subject chosen more fully than can be done in one number of *FREE RUSSIA*, and they are more readily preserved than a monthly copy of a small periodical. They always have a good sale at lectures and meetings, and thus bring in a little profit to the funds of the society, as their prices are calculated to somewhat exceed their expenses. A good portion of the matter contained in *FREE RUSSIA* during the 2½ years of its existence could and should be compiled, remodelled and published in pamphlet form, thus saving useful things from oblivion. This work could be done as well in some branch as in London, by any English amateur scholar of the Russian question. And if some branch should feel inclined to enter upon publishing on its own account, it could even print such compiled or original pamphlets, after their revision by the London Executive Committee. Of course they would be circulated by and prove useful for the whole S.F.R.F.

The amateur scholar above mentioned is a person upon whom many hopes may be built. It is he, or she, that is to popularise in the local press matter contained either in the latest number of *FREE RUSSIA*, or in a new pamphlet, or got from standard books on the Russian question; such as G. Kennan's "Siberia and the Exile System," Leroy-Beaulieu's "L'empire des Tzars," Stepniak's "Russian Peasantry" and "Russia under the Tzars," E. Noble's "The Russian Revolt," and the like. The literature about Russia in the English language alone is nowadays of considerable size, not to mention the French and German books; and the short "Bibliography," published by the society (to be had from the secretary for 1½d. post free), though far from being complete, can help such a scholar in his studies. The popularisation of the information gathered from standard works on Russia is a great thing, and it is the same hypothetical amateur scholar who must be expected to do it in the form of lectures for his or her locality. This is the right way to give to our propaganda a wide influence. Mrs. Mallet's brilliant success proves it most positively. By the way, lime-light illustrations for lectures on Russian subjects are very desirable, as they greatly help an average English audience to realise what Russian life is like, and are also an additional attraction.

The lectures can be given not only as a means of propaganda, but also as a means of obtaining the funds necessary for the work of the society. Experience has taught us that the best arrangement in that line is as follows:—The branch, or simply an energetic individual Friend of Russian Freedom (as was the case, for example, in Bedford, Alloa, Burnley, York, etc.) gets a

few sympathisers to guarantee the expenses of the hall, lighting and advertising, and also the expenses of the lecturer's journey and night's lodging. They make a charge for admission, and, after having defrayed the expenses, send the net proceeds, if any, to the Hon. Treasurer of the Friends of Russian Freedom. During the winter-season of 1890-91 the society derived from lectures arranged in this way and delivered by one lecturer only—F. Volkhovsky—about £80. As we have now several lecturers for the society besides Volkhovsky and Stepniak (see list in the present number), lecturing on this basis can be carried on still more successfully and on a larger scale, provided only that the branches and individual sympathisers with the cause of liberty show some energy and organising skill.

(To be continued.)

Reviews.

"QUEER STORIES FROM RUSSIA," by CAPEL CHERNILO (James Clarke and Co., 13 and 14, Fleet Street).

WE hail the appearance in England of a new and delightful writer upon Russia. Capel Chernilo (which means in Russian "a drop of ink") is the pseudonym of an author who, according to the internal evidence afforded by the book, must be a young man of English extraction, born or educated in the south-western region of Russia, where he has become imbued with the love of the country and its people and a poetical insight into the Russian character, and even acquired that sober simplicity and delicacy of style which we are accustomed to admire in the sketches of the best among our young writers. The book is a collection of short sketches, evidently taken from life. In most of them the scene is laid among the Stundists, the Russian Protestants of the Baptist branch. These are the best of the series. They tell in a simple, pathetic and truly artistic way of the spiritual troubles, adventures and experiences of these pioneers of Russian Protestantism. We see before us living men, and we are made spectators of exciting or touching adventures. The short stories of this series, entitled "A Sonnet on Official Paper," "Piotr Vorob," and "Osip Starichok" are small masterpieces in their way. The last may serve as a sample from the bulk: Its hero, though one of the retired Sebastopol heroes, does not look like a hero at all. "He was of rather ignoble stature—very spare and sharp and weakly; but his eyes were quick, and his eager soul seemed to make his frail body instinct with movement and fire." When young he was a wild, "harum-scarum," quarrelsome fellow. But the terrible tragedy of the war somehow sobered him down. He

became a good soldier. His colonel was a noble-hearted gentleman, and every man in the regiment adored him. "So when a shell fell near him it was thought not much of a wonder that Osip should rush forward to tear away the burning fuse." He lost his hand, and this put an end to all his soldiering. He retired to the village, married the girl whom he loved, and was soon left a widower with a little daughter, in whom all his soul was wrapt up. The daughter runs away with a lover, who forsakes her. Weary years of loneliness come upon the broken-hearted Osip, who is advised to seek relief for his sorrows at the holy shrines of the saints at Kiev. There he gets a copy of the Gospel and is converted to the simple faith of the Stundists. His grief is calmed, but he prays that his heavily-laden Vera may be comforted too. He goes to Moscow, and by a stroke of fortune meets her, though in utter degradation. He brings her back, converted, to the village, where she is received with the meek forgiveness so characteristic of the Russian peasants. They both end by becoming Stundist teachers. There are other sketches and stories in which "politics" play the leading part, such as: "Two Acts of a Drama," and others. But although sympathetic as to the idea they are not so good artistically. To sum up: For a long time we have not come across so unpretentious, charming and refreshing a book as this, and we hope to see something more from the same pen.

"FROM SIBERIAN LEAD MINES." Unpublished letters of a Russian Professor, Vasily Yaksakov, condemned to penal servitude for life, with the portrait and autograph of the condemned. Berlin: Siegfried Cronbach, 1892 (in German).

"**L**ORD defend me from my friends,—from my enemies I can defend myself." But how about enemies who take the outward appearance of friends? The above-named book has been quoted copiously by the English papers, and it is exciting enough for that. It contains a story of the wholesale flogging to death of men and women, of working in underground galleries from which the chained convicts do not emerge to the light of day for months. It tells of an attempted escape; of the killing of a sentinel, and no end of blood curdling horrors. Now, all this is a gross fabrication from beginning to end. There can be no doubt about the matter. The supposed martyr never lived, the adventures described never occurred. The autograph (in Latin! the authors probably not knowing Russian), pictures,—all are nothing but a shameless speculation upon the sympathy with Siberian exiles which the translation of Mr. Kennan's work has created in Germany. Let us hope this production will never appear in an English dress.

Ed.

Lecture List.

The ladies and gentlemen whose names appear in the following list have, with the approval of the Executive Committee, consented to lecture *gratis* on the subjects opposite their names, under the auspices of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom. Clubs, associations, societies and similar institutions, or sympathisers with Russian Freedom, desirous of securing the services of any of these ladies or gentlemen should communicate with the lecturer direct.

J. C. SWINBURNE-HANHAM, 18A, Goldhurst-terrace, South Hampstead, N.W. Subject: "The Present State of Russia."

Mrs. MALLET, Albemarle Club, Albemarle-street, Piccadilly, W. (not on Thursday or Friday). Single Lecture: "Russia and her People." Three Lectures: "Russia and Siberia (1) Geography and Climate;" (2) "Early History;" (3) "Late History." "Land System—Present Condition—The Mir, the Commune." Three Lectures: "Russian Martyrs:" (1) "The Peasants;" (2) "Administrative Exiles;" (3) "The Stundists." A Course of Nine Lectures, devoting *two* to the subject of Administrative Exiles.

E. R. PEASE, 276, Strand, W.C. Subjects: "The Story of Russian Nihilism." "England's Interest in Russian Revolution."

G. H. PERRIS, 115, Fleet-street, E.C. Subjects: "Russia's Place in Modern Europe." "The Personnel of the Russian Revolutionary Movement." "The Episode of the 'Terror.'" "The Coming Crash in Russia."

Miss ADA RADFORD, 1, South Hill Avenue, Harrow. Subjects: "Russian Freedom." "The Russian Revolution."

H. ROBERTS, care of FREE RUSSIA, 3, Iffley-road, Hammersmith, W. Subjects: "The Russian Nihilist Movement." "The Russian Peasant and his Future."

GEORGE STANDRING, 7, Finsbury-street, E.C. Subject: "The Russian Revolutionary Movement."

SERGIUS STEPNIAK and FELIX VOLKHOVSKY are also prepared to enter into engagements to lecture. Terms on application.

WILLIAM W. MACKENZIE, Hon. Sec.

Meetings.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.—The monthly meeting was held on the 2nd of November. Present, Dr. Spence Watson (in the chair), Mr. Allanson Picton, M.P., Mr. Fisher Unwin, Mr. H. M. Thompson, Mr. William Thompson, Mr. Pease, Mr. Perris, Mr. Rix, Mr. Mackenzie, Mrs. Mallet, Mrs. Webb, and Mrs. Voynich. The Hon. Treasurer reported a debit balance of £64. It was resolved to hold the annual general and public meeting on the 6th December; Mr. Fisher Unwin, Mr. Perris, Mr. Pease, Mrs. Voynich, and Mr. Mackenzie were appointed a sub-committee to make arrangements. Other business was transacted and the meeting adjourned.

BERMONDSEY.—Mrs. Mallet delivered a stirring address on "Russia and her Martyrs" at the Bermondsey Gladstone (Workman's) Club, on the evening of the 20th ult. The lecturer was well received. A large quantity of the society's literature was distributed at the meeting.

BEXLEY HEATH (KENT).—On November 10th F. Volkovsky addressed a Bexley Heath audience under the auspices of the local Free Lecture Society.

The Public Hall, holding 550 to 600 people was full, and the audience was exceedingly attentive. Rev. Laurence Fry presided. After the lecture on Exile Life in Siberia, a lively sale of F.R.F. literature was carried on from the platform, and two ladies (Mrs. Gill and another) enlisted themselves as members of our Society.

BIRMINGHAM.—The beautiful hall of the Midland and Birmingham Institute, holding 1,000 seats was packed on the 21st ult., when Mr. Volkovsky told the story of his of his experiences as a "political." The platform was occupied by Mr. William Harris, Councillor Martineau, Dr. Showell Rogers, Messrs. C. A. Harrison, Whitworth Wallis, Alfred Hayes, and many ladies. At the close of the lecture our literature was sold to the amount of £1 10s. The amount of some of our pamphlets on sale proved insufficient to meet the demand for them, and many of the audience took notes of their titles; in order to get them from our hon. secretary.

CROYDON.—On Monday, the 14th November, Mrs. Charles Mallet, as representing the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, delivered a lecture on "Russia and her People," at a meeting of the Croydon Socratic Society. The President of the Society was in the chair and there was a good attendance. An animated discussion followed Mrs. Mallet's lecture, and much interest was expressed in the subject.

EDINBURGH.—A meeting of the Edinburgh Branch Committee was held in the afternoon of the 16th ult., in the Bible Society Rooms, to discuss the question: What could that branch do to promote the pro-Russian movement in the locality. The two main points that were subjected to the attention of those present were the condition of our organ—financially and otherwise—and the approaching annual meeting of our Society in London. The wish was expressed that the branch should make some special efforts to clear off arrears of subscriptions to our treasury which occurred at the time of the general election, when, very naturally, people were utterly and exclusively absorbed in their own affairs, and also that the branch should keep more close connection with the centre, and contribute matter to FREE RUSSIA. Concerning the annual meeting, a suggestion was made to have the branch represented at it in some way or other. On this occasion Mr. James Clark made a contribution to the funds of the Society, and expressed the wish to have some back numbers of FREE RUSSIA for free distribution among the Edinburgh workmen, while Misses

Josephine and Anna Marshall, to whose activity in Edinburgh our society owes so much, promised to make new efforts to enlist more members in its ranks. A decision was made that another meeting of the branch should be convened as soon as possible, and its hon. secretary, Mr. D. W. Wallace, S.S.C. (53, George IV. Bridge, Edinburgh), promised to do everything in his power to have it soon and well attended.

GATESHEAD (near Newcastle-on-Tyne).—On Saturday, the 12th ult., a meeting was held at the house of our President and hon. treasurer, Dr. R. Spence Watson, to hear Mr. F. Volkovsky's account of his escape. The collection resulted in £8 9s., of which £3 have already been made use of to assist a Russian political suspect in his escape.

HADDINGTON (N.B.)—On Thursday, 17th ult., Mr. F. Volkovsky addressed a meeting in Carlyle House, convened by Miss T. C. Simpson, on his personal experiences. Mr. Dods, Mr. Ferme, Canon Waugh, Mr. John C. Brown, D.D., and many others attended, Miss T. Simpson being in the chair. Dr. Brown, formerly minister of the Anglo-American Church in St. Petersburg, then addressed the audience. A collection on behalf of the Society was made.

HAWICK (Roxburgh).—F. Volkovsky lectured on the 14th ult. to about 500 persons in a full hall, on his escape from Siberia. The Rev. D. Cathals, M.A., presided. Our literature was sold for £1 10s. The net proceeds of the lecture will be sent to our hon. treasurer.

KENSINGTON.—Mrs. Chas. Mallett lectured on the 16th ult., at Christ Church parish-room, on "Russia: her prisons and patriots, and the perils of escaped convicts." There was a large audience, and Mr. F. C. Frye, M.P., presided. Oxy-hydrogen illustrations were used.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—On the 13th ult., F. Volkovsky lectured to the Tyneside Sunday Lecture Society in the Tyneside Theatre, which was full. The text was: "How I escaped to Freedom." Mr. Ralph Young was chairman.

The hon. secretary of the S.F.R.F. (W. W. Mackenzie, 24, Redcliffe-gardens, South Kensington, S.W.) would feel obliged if persons lecturing on Russian topics—whether for the S.F.R.F. or otherwise—would kindly inform him beforehand of the place, time, and subject of their lectures for announcement in FREE RUSSIA, and also send in accounts of them after delivery.

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WITH THE PRESENT NUMBER

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and the Friends of Russian Freedom throughout the world may congratulate themselves on having carried on a regular propaganda for so long a period without interruption. Since so much work has been put into it, the task has become still more dear to those engaged in it. We hope that those who have not yet done so will renew their subscriptions this year.

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All Contributions and Subscriptions to be addressed to Dr. R. SPENCE WATSON, Bensham Grove, Gateshead

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Mr. GEORGE KENNAN'S LECTURE

On "Political Exiles at Siberian Convict Mines,"

AT

PRINCE'S HALL, PICCADILLY,

On MONDAY, JANUARY 8th, 1894,

The Chair will be taken at 8 p.m. by **DR. SPENCE WATSON.**

TICKETS, 10/6, 5/-, 2/6, and 1/-, can be obtained from the Hon. Sec., Miss G. L. Mallet, 132, Cromwell Road, S.W.; Mr. WATERS, 97, Westbourne Grove, W.; also at Prince's Hall, Piccadilly.

GEORGE KENNAN'S PORTRAITS on p.p. 2 and 3.

CONTENTS.

George Kennan in Tomsk (with two portraits) by F. Volkhovsky.—The Butchery of the Catholics.—News and Notes of the Month.—The Budget of the Russian Peasant.—The Stundists: The Story of a Great Revolt (by H. M. Thompson).—Savitzky's Affair.—Siberian Exiles in San Francisco.—Meetings.

George Kennan in Tomsk.

The feelings of a political exile somewhere in Siberia are very much like those of a soldier who, having been taken prisoner on the battle-field, is kept in captivity by a rough and arrogant enemy, who—he must admit—has far larger forces in the field than his own partisans have. The French prisoners of war in Germany must have experienced those feelings during the last Franco-German war. A heavy burden those feelings are. The prisoner feels himself always a stranger in his place of residence; he feels that an unfriendly eye is kept on him—either openly or secretly—but still kept on him; he cannot, so to say, take root in the place to which he has been sent, for even supposing it to be pleasant in itself, it is made obnoxious by his being forcibly tied to it. Those near and dear to him, those with whom he shared his hopes and sorrows, the dangers of the struggle and the delights of success, in the sacred cause, are far away. He knows that every soldier is badly wanted on the battle-field, yet he has to waste his forces here in idleness and inactivity! No cheering news, no word of encouragement reaches him. Quite the contrary; he may count far more securely on learning every now and then something which has been misrepresented and perverted about the noble fight.

Such were our dominating feelings, those of the political exiles in Tomsk in 1885, when the exciting and in every way unusual news reached us that an American traveller was in the town. An American traveller! A citizen of the great republic where everyone can talk and print whatever he likes; where everyone may appeal to the conscience and wisdom of the people; where the suffrage is freely enjoyed and where everyone considers his house his castle and that his personality and his body belong to himself! We have read a good deal about the Almighty Dollar and

the devastation which this greedy, cold and unscrupulous deity has made in the former Olympus and Pantheon of the Americans, yet we have read still more about George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Morse, Edison, Hawthorne, Farragut, John Brown and Abraham Lincoln, and those great figures and many others seemed always to look at us when we thought of the republic.

It will be gathered from this that our preconceived idea of an American was one rather difficult for a living specimen to satisfy. Yet the newcomer thoroughly satisfied us. He was very reserved, though without coldness; observant, easy and somewhat grave in demeanour, though altogether without affectation. His thin, sinewy figure, manly bearing and beautiful dark eyes bore the stamp of firmness and truthfulness, and impressed the observer as belonging to a man on whom he could rely. He never showed any sympathy with our "revolutionary" views, but he was always prepared to listen silently and without any preconceived animosity to what we had to say. And that was, in fact, all we were longing for. We believed so

fully in the righteousness of our cause, the blackness of our enemy was, in our belief, so obvious, that we only wanted the chance of bringing facts to light. We never had had that opportunity. Until then we had been talking either to acknowledged friends or to prejudiced enemies, but never to an impartial outsider, who would take on himself to bring the case before the tribunal of universal conscience. Now we met such a man. His name was George Kennan. No wonder that we were transported, that for a time we forgot all our griefs, and that later on we became tenderly attached to him. This happened the more easily as he never declined any invitation on our part, and proved to be pleasant, unceremonious and gentlemanly, and had for his



GEORGE KENNAN, IN 1885.

(From a Tomsk photograph.)

inseparable companion Mr. George A. Frost, that genial, open-hearted and exceedingly kind artist. They would call at our modest abodes with their banjo and drawings, would partake in the ever-seasonable and interminable Russian teas, cordially chat about everything on earth, and never decline to sing a song. Their visits never bore the unpleasant stamp of an explorer's investigation. The traveller never made any notes, the artist never sketched anything in our presence unless asked to do so. But when they returned to their hotel room, however late, they would not go to sleep. Mr. Kennan would take his note-book, Mr. Frost his album, and they would enter on paper the impressions and information of the day. Sometimes the work lasted till three or five in the morning! At that time we never suspected that; we learned it later on. At the time I speak of, if we called on Mr. Kennan at nine o'clock in the morning we found him already dressed, and we never imagined that a man so full of life and energy was sleeping night after night only some four to five hours.



GEORGE KENNAN, AT THE PRESENT DAY.
(From a Photograph by Russell & Son.)

Mr. Kennan spent over a week with us, and then went east. As soon as he left us a feverish activity began. We began to collect documents, to write reminiscences, and to exhort our comrades with whom we were in safe correspondence to do the same. Our conversations, very naturally, were full of the event, and our spirits rose.

Five months later, as I came to the Municipal Bank, where I served as clerk, I was told that some stranger, apparently "a Circassian," was asking for me, and had promised to call again. I was yet lost in conjecture when "the Circassian" appeared in person, and proved to be Mr. Kennan in his winter travelling dress. Indeed, his brownish weather-beaten complexion, aquiline nose, manly moustache, and firm look suggested the idea of a Circassian. I met him as one meets the fulfilment of his best hopes. After a hasty conversation we fixed a meeting, and I went to my work. But the results of my sitting over my

writing were not very great that afternoon, I must confess. Instead of thinking of the recovery of some debt, I was thinking of the man who had just visited me. He proved to be what he seemed to be! He had not forgotten us, nor had he changed his mind for the worse! And we were to see and hear still more of him!

The next week or ten days spent by Messrs. Kennan and Frost in Tomsk were again a refreshing and invigorating draught of happiness to us. Five months ago he had left us—a doubting, reluctant stranger, distrusting the real meaning of facts which he could not deny. He returned a man conquered by the overwhelming amount of evidence his own eyes and ears had given him, and who—so far as his personal sympathies went—had made his choice between us and our enemy. Not that he shared all our views. But he realised and acknowledged that we were honourable people fighting for a righteous cause, and that, were he in our position, he would probably act on the whole exactly as we did. He delivered his messages from our friends, told us heaps of news about our eastern comrades, and made our hearts leap with joy by his reiterated promise to plead the cause of truth before the conscience of the world.

The vast and commodious *tarantás* (wagon on wooden springs) of the two Americans was quite ready to receive its passengers and to start, the *tróyka* (three horses harnessed in a peculiarly great Russian way) occasionally clinging with their harness and bells, when I bade my last—at least, I thought it was my last—farewell to the man who became dearer to me than so many of my own race. We were alone in his hotel room. I held his hand and unconsciously lingered, reluctant to relinquish it. I felt as if I were going to lose a brother whom I had never seen before though I had known that he was living somewhere, for whom I had been longing for many years, had found at last, and, after a short meeting, had to part with for ever. . . . I knew he was going to do great things for the cause for which I lived, yet I could not banish from my soul the instinctive feeling that he was going to freedom and activity, while I had to remain in bondage and inertness.

"I wonder whether we shall meet again," I said sadly, never believing that we should.

"Why, it is not impossible," said Mr. Kennan encouragingly.

"But how? To escape?" And I shook my head doubtfully. (I was married and had children).

"Yes. Do not forget my friend B. in San Francisco. You have his address. If you apply to him in my name in need he will do anything for you."

"Very well. But even supposing I could escape, what would be my position? My health is ruined. How could I earn my bread?"

"O, you know several languages, you have education. You might for example, get a

position in the Washington National Library or Museum," my interlocutor said in his sober-minded, business-like, American way.

Then we embraced one another and exchanged kisses "in Russian," and I gave a deep sigh. I never expected to see him again, nor did I anticipate any other prospect for myself than to die in some Siberian waste.

But look how things have changed. I am writing these reminiscences in *London*, as editor of a monthly representing the English sympathy with and co-operation in the Russian liberation movement; I am writing it in anticipation of George Kennan's visit to Old England, where he is going to plead the cause of Russian liberation before the tribunal of universal conscience, as he has already done in the *New World*.

Let us work on, then, success will be ours.

FELIX VOLKHOVSKY.

The Society of Friends of Russian Freedom collects money for assisting Russian political prisoners and exiles to escape. Contributors to this special fund should signify, when sending their donations to the Hon. Treasurer, the special purpose for which they are sent.

The Butchery of the Catholics.

The English reader has already been informed through the daily press of the massacre in a church in the province of Kovno. With a heavy heart we have now to confirm the blood-curdling news, and to give some details which have not yet appeared in the English press.

Krózhe is a small place near the German frontier, in the district of Rossiëny, populated almost exclusively by one of the Lithuāniën tribes, the rest of the population being Poles or Jews. All the population are Roman Catholics with the exception of some Protestants among the Lithuāniëns, the only representatives of the Greek-Catholic creed being two or three Russian governmental officials. Nevertheless, the Russian government wants the Lithuāniëns to be converted to that creed, and therefore, last spring the Roman Catholic monastery in Krózhe was closed, all the monks forcibly removed to some other place in South Russia, and the funds belonging to the convent sequestrated and employed for purposes of Orthodoxation. The old church of the convent, built about three hundred years ago, was suffered to remain open for service for the moment, but the same fate awaited it in the near future. The carrying out of the plan might, however, present some difficulty. In olden times Krózhe was famous for its schools and for its college conducted by the Jesuits and other monastic

orders; consequently, the place was one of the strongholds of Roman Catholicism. In the middle of October last the news about the coming closing of the church spread in Krózhe. Then the population decided to watch the church. Day and night it was filled with people, and when the priest, Ranetzky, obeying the orders of the authorities, removed the holy sacrament to the vestry, they returned it to the altar.

On the 22nd of November (presumably old style, which means the 4th December of the new) the Governor of the Kóvno province arrived in person at Krózhe at 2 o'clock in the morning with a detachment of irregular cavalry (the so-called Don-Cossacks), which he took from the nearest borough Vornic. That gentleman, Klingenberg by name, is a German of the Baltic provinces, and behaved on this occasion as a real German invader. The church was surrounded by the troops, who charged with swords upon the people within. Over a score were killed and about a hundred wounded. The remainder fled in the direction of the river Krozhénta, but were pursued by the Cossacks, and a good number of the unfortunates were drowned. Over a hundred were arrested. All that time Klingenberg remained in Krózhe in person, and finally directed the Cossacks "to find and arrest in the neighbouring villages the escaped guilty ones," under which pretext ransacking began.

Whenever the Russian bureaucratic absolutism commits some bloody crime, it is anxious to persuade the world that it was driven to it by provocation. Starting from the hypothesis that since there was punishment there must have been some crime to punish, the Imperial government treats the unfortunate victims of its brutality and stupidity as atrocious criminals. So was it with the victims of the Yakoutsk butchery; so will it be on this occasion. The prisoners are to be "tried" by court-martial—rumour already says that over a score will be shot.

News & Notes of the Month.

Recently a Reuter telegram informed the English press of the discovery of a conspiracy against the life of the Tzar. Three small cases filled with dynamite are even reported to have been discovered, on the night of 5th December, in a boat on the Neva. Later on a Dalziel's telegram stated that "a body of Moscow police, assisted by a detachment of Cossacks, surprised a large meeting of conspirators which was being held in an isolated house a short distance outside Moscow. When the Nihilists found that they had been discovered, they set about offering a vigorous resistance. In the fight which ensued 15 of the police were wounded, but as it was evident they would be successful at last,

five of the Nihilists committed suicide to escape arrest; 22 succeeded in making good their escape, but the police were able to effect the capture of about 50 others."

A good deal in both telegrams is, on the surface, only the usual concomitants of the sensational news about "Nihilists." As political information from fully reliable sources travels from Russia very slowly, we could not yet have received either any confirmation or denial. This being so, the reader must not forget that reports about dynamite and attempts upon the Tzar's life are constantly circulated in Russia. On the one hand, they spring up very easily in that portion of the population (now a very considerable one) who, though taking no active part in revolution, would eagerly welcome any such attempt, and, on the other, by means of the police in order to prepare the minds of a credulous public, especially abroad, and to win approbation for any atrocities in the way of arrests they like to commit. As regards the reported arrests, this must be true. According to the Reuter's telegram, up to the present moment upwards of 50 persons have been taken into custody in connection with the affair, among them being several ladies, some of whom are mere girls, and a large number of officers.

One of the arrested, a medical student, is said to have been driven to confess by some torture or other. Other prisoners are also said to be tortured. To put ladies and children in solitary confinement is a usual thing during political inquiries in Russia. Mlle. Goukovsky, who several years ago committed suicide in Krasnoyarsk, was exiled to that town at the age of 14; the younger members of two families, those of the Levandovsky and Ivichevich, were also about that age when imprisoned with solitary confinement. As to torture, that confinement, together with enforced idleness and lack of reading, is, in itself, a torture which sometimes is made still more horrible by intimidation—giving false news about those most dear to the prisoner, or by exposing him or her to specially inhuman hardships, of which we have given some specimens long ago.* In 1890 two Polish workmen, Zelcer and Zalesky, were even flogged by the *gendarme*-Colonel Bielanovsky in order to extort some information from them.**

* * *

The radical Oukranien paper *Narod* (published in Austria) gives us some particulars about the arrests committed in October. At that period a certain Sviderski was put in prison—a young man who in the beginning of the eighties was exiled to Siberia, and who since then has

* See, for example, the article "Unpublished Facts" in the October Number of *FREE RUSSIA* for 1890, and especially the case of Yulovsky.

** *FREE RUSSIA* for March, 1891, pages 3 and 4.

returned to Warsaw, where he held a position. He carried on correspondence with a Miss Deish through his cousin Mlle. Rēbutovsky. He was arrested in St. Petersburg (others say at his headquarters in Warsaw), and after that the girls were kept under arrest; besides them, two other persons were arrested in Chernigov, a certain Andriévsky and an undergraduate, Novodvorsky. Deish was living with her mother at the local school for the daughters of clergymen, of which her mother was the head-mistress. When it was found by the clergy that Deish was placed under domiciliary arrest, her mother was deprived of her post and Deish imprisoned and sent to Warsaw with the others who were arrested.

The result of all this, we learn, is that Deish's mother, who was suffering from heart disease, is dying. Andriévsky was obliged to leave a wife and two children without any support, and Rēbutovsky, believing that she was the cause of all this disaster, went mad.

* * *

The Polish newspapers inform us that at the beginning of December rigorous searches were made in the trams of Warsaw. Women were asked to unfasten their dresses, and their pockets were turned out. All this was done in the search for some patriotic documents. At the same time arrests were made, part of the arrested being exiled to Russia, others being put into the Citadel. One of our correspondents gives us the name of one of the arrested—Imshenetzky.

* * *

In all the district post offices of Lithuania the following short but significant notices appeared recently on the walls in Russian: "No Polish speaking allowed."

* * *

Several Roman Catholic priests were recently subjected to punishment in Lithuania for various alleged offences. The following instance will give an idea of the character of the offences: The Rev. Vashkevich, priest of the Vilno Cathedral, was accustomed to assist at confirmation. On these occasions he had to address those confirmed, using a formula borrowed from the Roman Catholic Catechism, which, among other things, contained the following words: "And you have to spill your blood for the sake of your religion." These words were quoted to the authorities by some denunciator as an incitement to rebellion, and the priest, after a good deal of worry, was deprived both of his position and pension and confined in a monastery.

* * *

Next year there will be a Pan-Polish Industrial Exhibition in Lemburg, Galicia. The Russian government have forbidden Russian subjects of Polish extraction to take any part in it.

The Minister of Public Education is just now making his tour in the Baltic provinces. In all the educational institutions he has visited, as the Russian papers report, the main point of his inspection has been to discover what progress Russification is making. In Riga, the oldest of the middle schools exists at the expense of the town; its pupils are almost exclusively German, yet the teaching there now is conducted, under compulsion, in Russian. Among other things, the children were required by the Minister to show their skill in singing Russian songs and the official hymn "God Save the Tzar!" A third governmental seminary is going to be founded in the Baltic provinces to prepare teachers for primary schools there, well versed in Russian. The reader must not forget the fact that the population of these provinces is either Lettonian, Esthonian or German.

* * *

The Town Council of Riga has appealed to the Russian Senate against the order of the Minister of Public Education, that the examinations, for the purpose of giving certificates to women teachers in the town, should be held in Russian.

* * *

This month the Metropolitan of Kiev has called a convocation of the clergy of the diocese of Kiev to discuss, among other subjects, the question of combating the Stundists. This means that these unfortunate and noble people have, in the near future, new atrocities to face.

* * *

Our Siberian correspondent writes that two political lady prisoners, T. and R., have been kept now six months in the Irkoutsk Hospital of the name of Kouznetzov, which is the hospital for mental diseases. Both have lost their reason at the Kara Mines. Mme. R. is now better, and *therefore*, as the official rumour goes, will be returned to the convict prison. Mme. T.'s case is hopeless, and *therefore* she is also to be returned to the convict prison.

* * *

Our regular readers may remember that several months ago a few Birmingham Friends of Russian Freedom printed and published for the Society, at their own expense, the pamphlet "At the Mercy of every Official," by F. Volkovsky. Of the 1,000 copies which constituted the edition only a few scores are left, as that sketch of exile life (which originally appeared in the *New Review*) sold very quickly, and the demand for it is still great. Will not some other helpers in the Russian liberation movement take on themselves to bring out a new edition? This would meet an urgent need.

* * *

The new supplemented edition (with a plan) of the pamphlet "The Slaughter of Political Prisoners in Yakoutsk" is published at 2d., post free 2½d. Orders ought to be sent to the Hon. Sec. of the Oxford branch of the Friends of Russian Freedom, 64, Woodstock Road, Oxford.

* * *

The last collection of the Newcastle-on-Tyne branch resulted in £5 2s. 6d. The membership of the Cardiff branch is slowly but steadily increasing.

An encouraging feature of the Cardiff and Leeds branches is that their secretaries often have recourse to the local press in the interests of the movement. Both in the *South Wales Daily News* and the *Western Mail* the formation of the Cardiff branch and the object of the movement were explained at some length, and the activity of the Cardiff branch has already lead to a controversy in the *Western Mail*.

The *Western Mail* of December 13th, contains a letter by E. R. S. Morgan, calling on the too credulous and impulsive public to watch the Society narrowly. "Providence," the writer states in his picturesque language, "has broadly committed to the Russian nation, under the guidance of their Tzars, the difficult task of re-constructing, amid the snowy wildernesses of the remote and once unknown North, the old Eastern Empire." With this important mission the ignorant busy-bodies (of whom it appears the Cardiff branch of the F. R. F. is exclusively composed) are endeavouring to interfere. Mr. H. M. Thompson points out, in his answer, that the writer's frank distrust of representative institutions shuts him out from sympathy with those whose object is to help those Russians who are trying to secure such for their own people, and the corruption of whose present government is a sufficient criticism on a system which ignores representativism. On his part, Mr. Rothstein comments in the *Leeds Mercury* with an able pen upon every Russian topic which happens to come before the local public; upon Mrs. Crowford, who, in her address about women as journalists, attributed the liberation of the Serfs in Russia "to the impression made by 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' on the late Czarina and the Grand Duchess Helen" (!) upon the Franco-Russian turmoil, upon one of the pamphlets published by the London Russian Free Press, &c. We are glad to observe this, as it is one of the most effective ways of spreading truth about Russia among the English.

* * *

For the benefit of those who intend lecturing on "Siberia," Mr. Thomas Laurie has generously offered to lend gratis some thirty lantern slides of the most striking illustrations in Kennan's "Siberia." Any person lecturing under the auspices of the S. F. R. F. who wishes to avail himself of this offer should apply to Thomas Laurie, 28, Paternoster Row, London. Mr. Laurie only asks that those borrowing the slides should regard themselves as responsible for their safe return, carriage paid.

The Budget of the Russian Peasant.

A well-known Russian statician has made a statement before the Veronezh Statistical Board with regard to the budget of the average Russian peasant of that locality, drawn from his investigations in 67 typical households. This budget is of especial interest to the English student of economics, for although in the different provinces the items of expenditure might be found to vary, the total may be taken as representing fairly the expenditure of the Russian peasants as a whole.

A family consisting of eight members, of whom two are grown up workers, spends during the year per head £5 7s. 8d. and 5-6ths of a penny, or 8s. 11d. a month.

The expenses are of two kinds: a little over half of the whole sum is laid out on the household and

farm, the remaining sum is spent on goods, for which cash has to be paid. The expenditure of the latter half is as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
(1) Taxes, Rent, Rates, and expenditure connected with maintaining household and farm ...	1	4	4 4-5ths
(2) Food for cattle... ..	0	5	2 16-25
(3) Dress	0	4	5 1-25
(4) Whiskey	0	3	3 3-5
(5) Agricultural products	0	3	3 9-25
(6) Repairs	0	2	11 7-25
(7) Expenditure on stock	0	2	5 23-125
(8) Tea and sugar	0	0	11 19-25
(9) Fish	0	0	10 4-5
(10) Household goods	0	0	9 21-25
(11) Meat and dairy produce (if any)	0	0	9 3-5
(12) Tar (tar is used by the Russian peasant instead of grease for the wheels of his waggons, and for his boots instead of blacking on account of its cheapness)	0	0	8 2-5
(13) Horse shoes, nails and ironware	0	0	7 14-125
(14) Salt	0	0	7 1-5
(15) Petroleum	0	0	5 7-25
(16) Soap	0	0	2 38-125
(17) Ropes	0	0	1 124-125
(18) Medicine... ..	0	0	1 76-125
(19) Fuel	0	0	1 11-25
(20) Beer	0	0	0 3-5
Total	£2	12	6 7-25

These figures give more information to a thinking person than many pages of minute description or hours of burning haranguing on the position of the Russian peasant. He is so often charged with being lazy and unenterprising, but what can an agriculturalist undertake whose yearly budget is £5 7s. 8d. and 5-6ths of a penny per head, of which about one-fourth is taken from him in the form of taxes and rates? He is said to be improvident, yet we see that his expenditure in maintaining his household and farming are more than double of what he spends for his personal necessities. He is accused of being entirely given up to drinking, while in reality he spends on whiskey and beer under 4s. a year! Indeed, after one has gone carefully through the whole budget, noticed how much meat the peasant can have during the year, how much money he can spend in soap, and so on, one is surprised to see him work as he does work, and yet preserve all the faculties of mind and heart that characterise a human being.

The Stundists: the Story of a Great Religious Revolt.

(JAS. CLARKE & Co., London, 1893).

It is a matter for congratulation that the important letters describing the Stundist body which have recently been contributed to the *Christian World* are now re-published in the book before us. The interesting chapter on the same subject in Stepniak's "Russian Peasantry" was written five or six years ago, and the detailed accounts in the French writings of Leroy-Beaulieu and of Tsakni are not quite recent. The anonymous contributor to the *Christian World* has brought the history of the sect

up to to-day, and has given a clear and independent account of the whole of their interesting story.

Our author does not follow the authorities I have mentioned in considering the Stundists as one of a group of sects in revolt against the wooden formalism of the Russian Orthodox Church. One reads a considerable way through his pages before there is any mention of other kindred sects, such as the Dukhoborzy and the Molokane. His view is that the colonies of Suabian peasants planted by the Empress Catherine amongst the imaginative and impressionable peasantry of Little Russia have acted as a ferment in a susceptible environment. Doubtless, German influence has been all important in founding the sect and in moulding its ideas. Yet, if one loses sight altogether of the other religious movements amongst the peasantry which preceded it, one hardly obtains a complete view of the question, and one does not realise that there might probably have been a great religious revolt amongst the South Russian peasantry even if they had been uninfluenced by German religious thought.

It is clear that the Stundist sect came into being at a fortunate time. The years from 1858 to 1871 were as favourable a time for its inception as could be found, for these were the very years which covered the progressive and reforming period of Alexander II.'s reign. During the first nine years there was no persecution, and the new religion spread rapidly and obtained a firm grip on many of the people. The first arrest we hear of is that of the Ratushni brothers, which appears to have taken place in 1867. In this and the following year attacks on the idolatry practised towards the "Icons" or holy pictures (found in every household) began. "A number of prominent Stundists were arrested in consequence, but they only suffered imprisonment for a few weeks." The writer does not bring this part of his subject very prominently forward. We have no stories in his pages of processions of peasants trailing Icons at the ends of pieces of string in the mud to the church doors and asking the priests to take the idols off their hands. Up to 1870 the position of the Stundists in relation to the Orthodox Church had been something akin to that of the Methodists in relation to the English Church at the beginning of Wesley's mission. But about 1870 "the Stundists were gradually severing themselves from all connection with the Orthodox Church."

(To be continued.)

Siberian Exiles at San Francisco.

A short time ago five convicts landed at San Francisco, having escaped from the Russian penal settlement of Sakhalin. They appear to be ordinary and not political prisoners. At the same time, if their stories may be believed, they have been subjected to very unjust treatment. It appears now that they will not, as was at first supposed, be returned under the immigration laws. Since their arrival, however, five more convicts have arrived—four murderers and an alleged "Nihilist" and conspirator. These men have not been allowed to land, and the San Francisco Commissioner of Immigration confesses himself puzzled about the case. It is his duty, he states, to prevent convicts from landing; in an ordinary case he does not allow them to leave the

vessel that brought them, and requires the ship to return them *whence they came*.

But it seems that the convicts in question were not brought from any foreign port, but were picked up by the whaler in mid-ocean, and the law can hardly be interpreted to mean that the captain must have orders to return them to the same spot—and the whaler is not bound for any foreign port.

Mr. Stradley, the Commissioner of Immigration, does not regard the case as one to be dealt with under the immigration laws; it is a case, he says, for the State Department at Washington. He thinks the Secretary of State should communicate with the Russian government, and that action should be taken in the nature of extradition proceedings. Even if the common convicts should be returned under the immigration laws, if the Russian government wishes to recover the political fugitive it will have to apply for him under the extradition treaty.

Shall we have an example so soon of the working of the clause which makes an attempt on the Tzar's life a non-political and, consequently, extraditable offence. According to Kovalef's (the alleged conspirator) statement, he was arrested first in St. Petersburg for having placed, with 23 others, a dynamite bomb in one of the doorways of the palace.

We learn from the November number of the American edition of *FREE RUSSIA* that the American Friends of Russian Freedom would not be sorry if the Russian government claimed the political offender under the new treaty—that the American people may see in work a treaty through which it has given to the barbarous government of Russia, concessions it has granted to scarcely any other power. It might prove a fresh incentive for agitations in favour of its repeal. But they fear the Russian government may see the wisdom of keeping quiet on the subject.

In the meantime, a communication on the subject of the Siberian exiles, addressed by the Society of the American Friends of Russian Freedom to Secretary Gresham, has been forwarded by that gentleman to the Secretary of the Treasury, who is charged with the execution of the immigration laws.

Savitzky's Affair.

The reader may remember the incident concerning Savitzky's papers in Paris. To put it briefly, that Russo-Polish refugee left, after his death, some private papers which, it was supposed, if they should come into the hands of the Russian police, would endanger some people in Russia. Two different parties asserted their claims to those papers—Savitzky's grandmother, who was his next-of-kin and was present in Paris, and the Russian Consul, who claimed them on the ground of the Franco-Russian Treaty of 1874, according to which the Russian Consulate was entrusted with the safeguarding of property left behind by deceased Russian subjects. The French tribunal decided in favour of the Consul, to the general indignation of the press and public opinion; and now some of the French Deputies are even willing to make an interpellation in the Chamber and raise the question about the abrogation of the Treaty; yet, according to law and custom, they cannot do it unless Savitzky's case first passes through all the law-courts up to the highest.

There is hardly need to explain that the case is one of great political importance, as the arbitrary in-

terpretation of the Treaty of 1874 encroaches upon the right of refuge of all the Russian and Polish refugees in France, and gives to the Russian Tzar a new ground for persecuting his political enemies on French soil. Therefore the Russian refugees in Paris took the task of appeal on themselves and formed a committee to carry the thing out. Means are necessary for it, and the Committee has opened an international subscription to defray the heavy expenses of the cassation. Considering this matter to be one which cannot fail to appeal to the hearts and minds of the Friends of Russian Freedom, we thought it right to make it known to our readers. Subscriptions to the fund are to be sent to Mr. Peter Lavrov, 328, Rue St. Jacques, Paris, France.

Meetings.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the S.F.R.F. met on December 6th, at Mr. Rix's Rooms, Burlington House. Present: Dr. Spence Watson, in the chair, Miss Radford, Mrs. Arthur Sidgwick, Mrs. Voynich, Messrs. W. P. Byles, T. Fisher Unwin, Pease, Perris, Rix, W. Thompson, Stepiak, Volkovsky and Voynich. Alderman Mander, of Wolverhampton, was elected to the General Committee, and Mr. J. F. Green of Sidcup, Kent, to the Executive Committee. Mrs. Voynich informed the Committee that she was making enquiries and expected to receive further particulars of the Massacre of Christians in Lithuania.

OXFORD BRANCH (Hon. Sec. Mrs. A. Sidgwick, 64, Woodstock Road, Oxford).—On December 11th, the Secretary called attention, at a meeting of the Oxford Women's Liberal Association, to the recent intelligence in the *Daily Chronicle* as to arrests in Russia, among the students of St. Petersburg, and begged for suspended belief as to the accuracy of all such reports until the issue of the next number of *FREE RUSSIA*. In connection, she dwelt on the lamentable mismanagement of these same students, manifest in the reported matter of the "sympathetic" telegram to Paris—a thing calculated to enrage young people, on their private account, as well as those of them in special who felt for the woes and could estimate the intended effects of such a telegram on public opinion. Copies of the new pamphlet on the Stundists were offered on loan, for the use of the branch.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH (Hon. Sec. Miss E. Richardson, Wingrove House, Newcastle-on-Tyne).—The branch has secured Mr. George Kennan for a lecture, on February 5th, on behalf of the F.R.F. (independently of his lecture on February 4th, for the Tyneside Sunday Lecture Society). A committee meeting was to be held on December 20th, but the proceedings could not be reported in time to include it in the present number.

EDINBURGH BRANCH (Hon. Sec., D. W. Wallace, Esq., S.S.C., 53, George IV. Bridge, Edinburgh).—On December 12th, Mr. James Prelooker delivered a lecture on "Russian Life, Religion, and Politics," in the Oddfellow's Hall, Edinburgh, under the auspices of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom. Bailie Gulland presided, and the hall was well filled. Mr. Prelooker said that in Russia the government spent 60 times more for military purposes than for education. In this country education was compulsory, and military service voluntary; in Russia, the reverse was the case. The government did everything it could to hinder the education of the people. The Russian churches were wonders of art, but nothing more. Press censorship was one of the worst evils in the country. They took the soul out of a book, and left the bones. (Laughter.) If anybody wanted to see the misery of a nation he should go and visit a Russian village. Agriculture was, of course, one of the principal occupations, but it was in a very primitive state. According to the *Scotch Leader*, "the lecture, which was illustrated by limelight views, was very entertaining."

ERROR.—In last No., page 134, third line, read 1891, instead of 1892.

ENGLISH EDITION.

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THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF RUSSIAN FREEDOM.

THE English Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, founded in November, 1889, has for its objects to aid, to the extent of its powers, the Russian patriots who are trying to obtain for their country that Political Freedom and Self-government which Western nations have enjoyed for generations.

The Society appeals to the enlightened men and women of all countries, without distinction of nationality or political creed, who cannot witness with indifference the horrors perpetrated in the Empire of the Tsars, and who wish a better future for the masses of the Russian people. Further contributions to the funds and further work are needed and will be welcome. Membership is acquired by sending to the Treasurer an annual subscription of or exceeding Five Shillings. Members are entitled to receive *Free Russia* post free.

All Contributions and Subscriptions to be addressed to Dr. R. SPENCE WATSON, Bensham Grove, Gateshead

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Those marked with an *, form the Executive Committee.

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CONTENTS.

Russian Revolutionists and West European Anarchists (by George Kennan).—*What it is Aimed at* (by Dr. R. Spence Watson).—*Kennan's English Campaign*.—*Financial Account of George Kennan's Lecture*.—*The American Abrogation Petition*.—*A Cry of Despair* (a letter from a Siberian Exile).—*A Beneficial Attack* (by F. Volkovsky).—*News and Notes of the Month*.—*The Stundists: the Story of a Great Religious Revolt* (by H. M. Thompson).—*List of Subscribers*.

Russian Revolutionists and West European Anarchists.

In the January number of the *New Review*, published by Wm. Heinemann in London, there appears a double-headed article entitled "Anarchists: Their Methods and Organisation," in which an attempt is made to throw discredit upon the character of the Russian revolutionists by making it appear that they are all anarchists, and that they encourage and sympathise with the bomb-throwers of Paris and Barcelona. The second division of the article, which is signed "Ivanoff," is a direct attack upon certain Russian refugees who are now living in London, as well as upon the Friends of Russian Freedom, and is the work, apparently, of a secret agent of the Russian detective police, who is, or pretends to be, imperfectly acquainted with the English language, and who pays even less attention to the laws of truth and veracity than to the rules of grammar and composition. The statements made in "Ivanoff's" article are so absurdly at variance with the known history of the Russian revolutionary movement, and the biographical sketches of Mr. Stepniak and Mr. Volkovsky are so malignant, but at the same time such preposterous caricatures, that the article seems to me to deserve no other attention than a quiet smile of amusement. The question that it has suggested most forcibly to me is, "Can it be possible that this ridiculous fabricator of misleading statements, who does not even write grammatically the language that he uses, is the strongest champion that the Russian government can set in the field?" When I find in "Ivanoff's" article such statements as "The Nihilists have extolled (*sic!*) a crusade against state, religion, science, art, society, family, property and morals," or "Nihilism is an absolute denial of every branch of human civilisation;" and when I read such expressions as "The propaganda by the fact are advocated," "perform a search," "ovation of Prince Krapotkine" (meaning Prince Krapotkine's escape from prison), "institutions kept on deposit," &c., I am reminded of the epigrammatic saying of an American lawyer,

who remarked, in the course of a debate, that his opponents English style "made up in error what it lacked in obscurity." It is not my purpose, however, in this brief article, to point out "Ivanoff's" mis-statements of fact, nor to dwell upon his grammatical idiosyncracies. What I desire to do is merely to give my own impressions with regard to the character and aims of the men and women who in Russia have been nicknamed "Nihilists," just as in America, a few years ago, the members of a political party opposed to immigration were nicknamed "know-nothings."

In the course of my late visit to Russia and Siberia I made the personal acquaintance of more than five hundred men and women who were regarded by the Russian secret police as "Nihilists." Some were still at liberty in European Russia, some were in exile in Siberia, and some were in penal servitude at the mines of Kara. Among them all I did not find a single human being who could be called, by any stretch or license of language, an anarchist, nor did I find a single human being who would have approved—still less encouraged—such crimes as those recently committed in Paris and Barcelona. Most of the "Nihilists" whom I met in Siberia were simply moderate Liberals, and even the members of the extreme and radical fraction of the revolutionary party, known as the "Terrorists," declared to me, again and again, as they had already declared to Alexander III. in their famous letter of March 10, 1881, that they were fighting merely for a free representative form of government, and that if the Tzar would summon a national assembly, to be elected by the people, they—the "Terrorists"—"would submit unconditionally to the decisions of such an assembly, and would not allow themselves to offer violent resistance to any government that such an assembly might sanction." Men and women who make declarations of this kind can be called "anarchists" only by those who are grossly ignorant of their character and aims, or by secret agents of the Russian police in London, who try to get an honest and faithful dog killed by calling him mad. But this is not all. The Russian "Nihilists" not only have not sympathised with bomb-throwing and assassination outside the Russian Empire, but have gone out of their way to denounce such crimes. When the late President of the United States, James A. Garfield, was assassinated by Guiteau in the city of Washington, the columns of the "Nihilistic" newspaper "The Will of the People" (the organ of the Russian revolutionists) were bordered with black as a mark of sympathy, and the paper contained a leading article condemning the assassination as wholly unjust in a country where there are open con-

press, and where the officers of the government are chosen by a free vote of the people.

In conclusion, I can only say again what I have already said elsewhere, that, morally, the Russian revolutionists whom I met in Siberia would compare favourably with any body of men and women of equal numerical strength that I could collect from the circle of my own acquaintances. I do not share the opinions of all of them, but it is my deliberate conviction, nevertheless, that, tested by any moral standard of which I have knowledge, such "Nihilists" as Volkhovsky, Chudnofski, Alexander Krapotkin, Kohan-Bernstein, Charoushin, Klements, Natalie Armfeldt and Anna Pavlovna Korba represent the flower of Russian young manhood and young womanhood. General Strelnikof may say that they are "fanatics" and "robbers"; secret agents of the Russian police in London may call them "anarchists"; and Mr. Galkine-Wrasskoy may describe them as "wretched men and women whose social depravity is so great that it would shock the English people if translated into proper English equivalents"; but among these men and women, nevertheless, are some of the best, bravest and most generous types of manhood and womanhood that I have ever known. I am linked to them only by the ties of sympathy, humanity or friendship; but I wish that I were bound to them by the tie of kindred blood. I should be proud of them if they were my brothers and sisters, and so long as any of them live they may count upon me for any service that a brother can render.

GEORGE KENNAN.

What it is Aimed at.

It is interesting to hear what the defenders of the government of Russia say in the attempt "to make the worse appear the better cause." For this reason alone we will pay some attention to Mr. Ivanoff's article.

The article is of set purpose so vague, the charges which it makes so nebulous, the argument (save the mark!) so simply that of false suggestion, that it is not easy to bring the writer to any actual test. But happily I can find one of a little more importance. "In the issue of FREE RUSSIA of the 12th December, 1891, insults of the coarsest character are hurled at His Imperial Majesty." I suppose that in this country we are used to plain language about potentates, but the article complained of is really an extract from a German work upon "Russia under Alexander III," by a writer who is a panegyrist rather than a condemner of the Emperor. He certainly describes a man who has many admirable qualities, but who is by nature too stupid to grapple with the difficulties which surround him, or to find ministers who can do it for him. The language

which Ivanoff uses to characterise this article shows how completely unable he is to understand that in this country we are used to speak of kings and emperors as of other men, making due allowance for the greater difficulty of the strangely unnatural position in which they are placed, but recognising that their responsibility increases with the increase of their power for good or evil. He does not understand how we can hold that the very fact that even yet the Russian peasant for the most part looked upon the Tzar with superstitious reverence, and blindly expects his protection, is the strongest count in the indictment against a government which systematically abuses the blind trust reposed in it. It is this treatment of the patient, long-suffering people, their life-long suffering, their grinding taxation, their slow starvation, their systematic ruin, their brutal and violent mis-government, that create the great political movement of Russia of to-day, that send into prison and exile the flower of that country's youth, that lead refined and well-to-do men and women to sacrifice everything dearest to the natural man in the endeavour to bring about such a change, as shall make life tolerable (I might truly say—possible) for those who still turn from them to one who will not save.

The reader who knows that our object is to spread accurate information about Russian affairs, should readily understand that the anger which such an attempt arouses, only proves the existence of the need.

"There's none ever feared that the truth should be heard,
Save those whom the truth would indict."

But what further charges does this man bring against us? The sentences in which he formulates them are a curious muddle, in which he mixes up the "English Society" and "the Nihilist" with rather too patent an object. But what does it come to when all is said and done—"An appeal is made to humanity against the 'tyranny' of the Russian government on behalf of defenceless prisoners, who are represented as the victims of odious prosecutions and outrages." That is quite true, such an appeal *is* made; and why not? Ivanoff does not dare to say that these prosecutions and outrages are *not* odious: that the shooting down of exiles at Yakutsk, the flogging of Madame Sihida on her bare body, the imprisonment in solitary confinement of Volkhovsky for eight months, and his liberation without trial, besides six years solitary confinement before trial on other occasions, that the penal life of educated men and women at the Akatoui or Kara mines, are not odious.

Again, "Russians—so say the Nihilists—must struggle to conquer liberty, and if foreigners are unable to give them tangible support, it is still the duty of Russian patriots to call the attention of free countries to the call of liberty in Russia."

Again, *that* we believe and *that* we say; and why not? No country has won its freedom without struggling for it. It is to be won by the people of the country and not conferred on them by foreigners. But it is the duty of Russian patriots to call the attention of free countries to their cause; and it is the duty of the dweller in those free countries to remember the pit from which they themselves have been digged, and to let Russian patriots know, that in their struggle for freedom, all men and women who love liberty are with them in spirit.

Let me be very clear upon this point. I do not believe in violence, although I am unable to distinguish a greater criminality in the violent deeds of a certain section of Russian reformers, than in the violent deeds of the autocracy to which I have alluded. Violence begets violence. But I cannot sit in judgment, even upon these proceedings, until I have fairly estimated the political position in Russia. In a country where there is no idea of the governed being represented in government; where there is no power of remonstrance when wrong is done by that government; where men cannot meet together to discuss its actions; where the press may not speak for the oppressed; where the home instead of being the castle, is invaded without notice and with impunity, and the inhabitants searched; where men and women are arrested and imprisoned without knowing the why or the wherefore, kept long months in solitary confinement, and, without trial, banished; where, if tried, no jury of their peers is to give the verdict, no cross-examination of witnesses is allowed, no advocate is permitted freely to plead their cause; where publicity, the true safe-guard of the innocent, is banned; where religion, commerce, every means of communication, education, every item which goes to make up life, are in the absolute direction and control of the government; where the father loses his daughter, the wife her husband, without explanation or information, and every murmur is a crime; I can understand that in such a land under such a condition of Society, the men who look for better things, and aim at change are driven to imitate the government which holds out before them treachery, espionage and violence, as the instruments which it uses.

But to return to the article by Ivanoff and the charges he formulates against the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom. He says, "the readers of *FREE RUSSIA* are also informed that the opinion of foreigners is very influential in Russia and is dreaded by the Russian government."

Surely Ivanoff's article shows this is correct; but what a strange charge this is! Either his view is a true one and foreign opinion has no effect in Russia, and the government care

nothing about it, or our view is right, and the fact is as we state that foreign sympathy will encourage the faint-hearted and fearful to quit them like men and be strong, makes it dreaded by the government. Dreaded, because if once all the men and women who are opposed to the *regimé* dare to say so, the struggle is at an end. Even the autocracy of the Tzar must bow before the generally expressed will of the people. Without a blow, without violence, with resistless force, 5,000 persons with the courage and devotion of Madame Tzebrikova would overthrow despotism in Russia.

The subtle but guarded personal attack must be left to those who are attacked to reply to if they should think it worth while, but there is one aspect of this matter which I feel to be really serious.

The Tzar's government has succeeded in persuading the two great Republics of the United States and France to enter into alliance with it, an alliance which has for one of its objects the greater facility of obtaining possession of criminals who escape from Russia. Criminal is a wide and convenient word, and, the arch criminal is the man who wishes for freedom. Slowly but surely have these strange alliances been accomplished, and now the autocracy begins a further movement. England has made it her proudest boast that the exile and oppressed of all the people of the earth may find refuge with her. The suggestion that a political refugee, charged with complicity in violent measures against the then Emperor of the French, should be given to that potentate, hurled from office one of our most powerful ministries led by Lord Palmerston himself. Perhaps the Tzar's government have forgotten all this; perhaps they think that the free traditions of our free land have become obsolete; perhaps they dream that they can turn the violent actions of evilly-disposed men in neighbouring nations to account, in getting the doors of the last refuge left for their political refugees closed against them. Certain it is that a newspaper warfare has begun in the Russian newspapers, in some foreign journals, in English magazines, with this end in view. This is, indeed, to those of us who long for the full success of that great reform movement in Russia, which aims at obtaining for it such free and representative institutions as we have long enjoyed, not grievous but joyous. We have longed to have the other side of the case put forward that all men might be able to judge where the right lay. We longed that the attack against political right of asylum would be made openly, because we feared the insidious secret manœuvres of the unresting foe to freedom, and knew in this case also "in vain would snare be spread in the sight of any bird."

R. SPENCE WATSON.

Kennan's English Campaign

On the 8th of January George Kennan began his oral campaign in England, on behalf of the Russian liberation movement. We say "oral" because the one carried on with his pen counts now its seventh year, and has already made the round of the civilized world. But the impression conveyed, even by so able a pen as Mr. Kennan's, can never be so thrilling, convincing and over powering as when the same story is heard from the lips of the eyewitness, the charm of his truthful and noble personality being added to the effect of the facts given. This was fully realised by the large audience that gathered in Prince's Hall, Picadilly, when Mr. Kennan was welcomed in England and introduced to his first English audience by the Friends of Russian Freedom, represented by Dr. Spence Watson, as chairman, who was supported by the Countess of Carlisle, Mrs. Cobden Unwin, Mrs. C. Mallet, Miss Hesba Stretton, Mr. Poultney Bigelow, Hon. Gilbert Coleridge, Mr. W. P. Byles, M.P., the Rev. J. Page Hopps, Mr. W. Mackenzie, Mr. E. J. C. Morton, M.P., Mr. Felix Moscheles and others. Dr. Spence Watson in his warm hearty way, impressed upon his hearers how much everyone was indebted to Mr. Kennan for having unveiled the truth, concerning a subject until then utterly unknown and misunderstood throughout the world, and then called for the lecturer, who was received with deafening applause. For several moments Mr. Kennan was standing, unable to begin, until the thunder of cheering should subside. . . . We may be sure it was loud enough to be echoed—by this time especially—in (official) Petersburg. . . .

Then he began his story—"Political Exiles at Siberian Convict Mines"—a story of woe and courage, of base tyranny on the one side, and of unshaken, noble patriotism on the other. Half way through his lecture Mr. Kennan retired and returned with the dismal clanking of chains, and in convict dress: a pair of trousers made of coarse sacking, a shirt of the same material, a long, grey, shoddy overcoat of rough woollen cloth, a Tam o'Shanter cap of the same material and a pair of bad shoes, or rather slippers. He told the story of the articles he wore and said that dress, which was intended to be a dress of shame had become one of honour through being worn by so many of the best and noblest spirits of Russia.

It would be useless to repeat here Mr. Kennan's narrative: everyone may find the essence of it and the greater part of the particulars in his book, while that special effectiveness that depended upon personal delivery could not be rendered. Suffice it to say, that every word of the speaker stamped the hearts or minds of those present with the hot iron of truth.

The Rev. Page Hopps, whose open letter to

the Tzar we quote in another column, wrote it under the impression of what he heard from Mr. Kennan's lips that night. "Mr. Kennan," he said, "told us—and we have many very good reasons for believing—that in your Siberian prisons or mines are many of the finest and noblest spirits Russia ever produced—men and women who here would be our statesmen, teachers, reformers. It is this that specially commands our attention and sympathy. It is not the fault of the born statesman if he is pushed and beaten into stubborn but occult rebellion, nor is the reformer to blame if he is turned into a conspirator. What misery that patriotism should easily become a crime; that love of constitutional liberty should readily qualify for exile; that free speech and free writing should lead, not to honours, but to prison; that even honest history should be made next to impossible on Russian soil."

We are sure, this was the impression which every sincere listener to the lecture carried home with him.

An enthusiastic vote of thanks was unanimously awarded to the lecturer on the motion of Mr. S. Stepniak seconded by F. Volkovsky. Mr. T. Fisher Unwin proposed a similar vote to the chairman, being seconded by Mr. F. Mosheles and thanks were heartily given.

So with an enthusiastic and successful meeting in London, introduced by the English Friends of Russian Freedom, Mr. Kennan began his campaign. He began it at the right moment, as will be seen from Dr. S. Watson's and other articles in the present number; though the presence amongst the Friends of Russian Freedom of the most powerful English speaking advocate of the oppressed in Russia, would be enough at any time to muster their forces and double their enthusiasm. And indeed, at the first news of his arrival we see many of the best people stirring.

The editor of the *Christian World* suggests on January 4th, that ministers and clergymen would be doing a good work in announcing Mr. Kennan's lecture at Prince's Hall, on the 8th, from the pulpit. Mr. Alfred Webb, M.P., writes, deeply regretting his absence from London on the 8th, it is the greater cause of regret to him on account of the "scurrilous attack" which has just appeared—and he adds, an attack that "I feel sure will rather attract than alienate support and sympathy." The Rev. Stopford Brooke, writes: "I am happy to add my name, as in full sympathy with the Friends of Russian Freedom." Mrs. Stuart, on behalf of her husband, Professor Stuart, M.P., writes: "My husband will be most happy to have his name placed on the reception committee." Letters of sympathy were received also from the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, Mr. John Ellis, M.P., and many others. Since the 8th, Mr. Kennan, has gone from town to town to

preach the gospel of truth and humanity, on behalf of the oppressed in Russia. He has lectured in Leeds, Manchester, Birkenhead, Walsall, Liverpool, Wimbledon, Birmingham and West Norwood, and before his return will lecture at Finsbury Circus, Gloucester, at the Birkbeck Institute, at Cardiff, Plymouth and other places.

The reputation he won for himself in England not only as an able and just advocate of the oppressed, but for literary ability in the articles which appeared in the *Century*, in itself secures him an audience throughout England. From a private correspondent in Leeds, we hear: "Mr. Kennan spoke for 1½ hours to an audience of between two and three thousand. He was listened to with the deepest and most wrapt attention and at times many of his audience were in tears. It was a splendid success." And from another: "The Colosseum, the biggest hall in Yorkshire, was crowded—the audience was deeply moved."

There can be no doubt that Mr. Kennan's lectures in England will be a powerful factor in stirring that public opinion in England, which, made active through sympathy and based on facts and love of truth, is so dreaded by official Russia. Every lecture George Kennan gives strengthens the position of the Friends of Russian Freedom and the Russian liberation movement.

Financial Account of G. Kennan's Lecture on Jan. 8.

RECEIPTS.				£	s.	d.
By Tickets sold—						
Previous to lecture	...	...	...	36	0	6
Taken at doors	...	...	...	13	13	0
Sale of literature	...	...	...	0	14	6
Donations—						
A friend	...	...	...	£0	8	0
The Countess of Carlisle	...	...	...	5	0	0
Mr. John Ellis, M.P.	...	...	...	5	0	0
Mrs. Lyell	...	...	...	5	0	0
Mrs. Biggs	...	...	...	1	10	0
				16 18 0		
				£67 6 0		
EXPENDITURE.				£	s.	d.
Hire of hall, etc.	...	...	...	13	16	9
Printing	...	...	...	3	17	6
Postage	...	...	...	1	12	11½
Advertisements	...	...	...	2	10	3
In hand	...	...	...	45	8	6½
				£67 6 0		

From the above account it will be seen that Mr. Kennan's lecture was as successful financially as in other respects, and this, we may add, was largely due to the ready and effective help we received from those on whom such success must depend. In the preliminary organisation much help was given by

Mr. Fisher Unwin, Mr. Pease, Mr. and Mrs. Stepniak. There was no doubt that the public would be attracted by such a lecture; the question was how to make it widely known. This was effected in two ways, by the press, and by many of the Friends of Russian Freedom sending out handbills in their correspondence. Among those who assisted in this way were the Countess of Carlisle, Miss Esther M. Case and Mrs. Arthur Sidgwick, Messrs. P. H. Hood, Thos. Laurie, C. Rogers, J. G. Reid, and Renwick Seager. As to the press we owe thanks to the *Daily Chronicle*, the *Westminster Gazette*, the *Birmingham Daily Post*, the *Coming Day*, the *Jewish Chronicle*, the *Jewish World*, the *Christian World* and others for calling the attention of the public to the meeting. Our best thanks are due also to Messrs. Bumpus, Jones Evans, Lamley and Waters who undertook to sell tickets for us. At the lecture itself help was needed and readily and efficiently given by those who acted as stewards and sellers of literature. Invaluable assistance was given by Miss Hargrave, Mrs. Rix, Miss Roche, Mrs. Sparling, Mrs. Felix Moscheles, Mrs. Voynich and Mr. Fisher Unwin.

The American Abrogation Petition.

The American edition of FREE RUSSIA for December, contains the substance of a "draft of general petition," just issued by the Society for the Abrogation of the Russian Extradition Treaty, addressed to the President, Senate and House of Representatives.

Want of space prevents us from producing it, but the arguments of the petitioners are divided into two parts (1) those against any extradition treaty with the Tzar (2) specific objections to *this* treaty. They regard an extradition treaty between two countries as equivalent to a vote of confidence between those countries. Between the judicial institutions of the two countries in question no similarity exists.

They admit the evil of protecting malefactors of every dye, but in the present imperfect state of the criminal codes of most nations they feel it a lesser evil than becoming the accomplices of such governments as the Russian.

They regard the struggle for freedom in Russia as part of the general revolution which is gradually transferring the government of the nation, from the hands of the few, to those of the people. They do not feel justified in taking action which would be interpreted as taking side with the Russian government in this great struggle between it and the people.

Specific objections to this treaty. Fugitives if surrendered may be tried in Russia by court martial, on no greater evidence than is necessary for a committal in America. It includes *forgery* among extraditable offences, and so includes among extraditable persons all those who, unable to obtain a passport from the government, have forged passports.

It regards Art. III., which provides "that attempts against the life of the head of the

government or persons of his family shall not be considered political offences," as inexpedient, for it is treating political offenders as common criminals for purposes of extradition, whereas, neither in their trials or in their punishments are they treated as common criminals in Russia, for trial by jury is denied them, and capital punishment, abolished for common crimes, is awarded.

Out of the 34 extradition treaties of the United States only two have this clause, viz., those with Belgium and Luxembourg; States in which there is a free press and an independent judiciary. Again Great Britain and Switzerland have no such clause in any of their treaties.

Further, there is no safeguard that fugitives delivered may not be tried and punished for an act other than that which formed the ground of his surrender.*

N.B.—Practical steps are being taken by the Society for the Abrogation of the Russian Extradition Treaty to obtain signatures to the petition. One of the methods adopted has been to insert a blank page for signatures in every copy of the American edition of F. R. for Jan., which each receiver of that periodical is asked to cut out and having obtained signatures to send it to the Secretary.

A Cry of Despair.

This letter by a political *administrative* exile, was written to a friend in European Russia, whom we asked to communicate with its author. Our message was posted in London in October, 1892. There was absolutely no delay on the part of the intermediary, yet only in June, 1893, could the letter be answered from Kolymsk *by return of post*, and it took the reply six months to reach London! The exile's letter in itself is a real cry of despair of an intelligent, noble-hearted man, longing to be useful and to share in the toils, joys and sorrows of his brethren, who feels that he is gradually sinking into the swamp of physical degradation and moral and mental indifference. This is *worse*, a thousand times worse, than death! We would draw the attention of our readers to the fact that those whose fate is described here were not guilty of sharing in any terrorist plot. Their worst offence was sharing in propaganda and organisation for the purpose of propaganda. Perhaps a milder sentence might have been passed on some of them if the real offence in the eyes of the government had not been that they were Jews. In the January issue of the American edition of FREE RUSSIA another interesting letter from the same region is published, which, from lack of space, we reserve for next month.

Sredne Kolymsk, ** June, 1893.

It is now more than three years that we have been living in this forgotten and Godforsaken arctic den, beyond the boundaries of civilisation, shut away from all possibility of intellectual life. The post arrives regularly only once in three months. The punishment of exile to Kolymsk has evidently been abandoned for various substitutes of an equally unattractive character, but

*This is not only possible but probable as there is precedent for this breach of faith on the part of the Russian government, in some cases of which we will write further.

** A Siberian "Town" of 600 inhabitants (men, women and children included) under 67 deg. 10 min. of N. latitude and 174 deg. 50 min. longitude.

within the confines of our "Pleasant Fatherland." For over two years no new exiles have arrived here, and now more than a third of the forced dwellers in the place have left it, either for European Russia, or for some more inhabited part of Siberia. Others are to leave during 1893 and 1894. Only we long-termed and life exiles will remain, doomed to shiver here alone in an utterly desert land.

During the first period of my life here, I thought it would be an interesting work to send to my friends more or less detailed accounts of the peculiar conditions of life into which we, a little handful of Europeans, have suddenly been thrown; conditions to which we are as unfit to adapt ourselves as a little body of civilised travellers, shipwrecked on the coast of Greenland, would be to arrange their lives in accordance with the habits and circumstances of the native Eskimos. But most of my manuscripts never reached the persons to whom they were sent; and now even the desire to write them is gone. My own amazement at the extraordinary surroundings here has grown fainter and fainter. Life in Kolymsk sucks everyone down into itself. It seems to me now like a far-off dream, that somewhere in the world there are big towns, filled with people, with large shops, with houses in several storeys, with pavements on which great crowds of people go to and fro; that there are lands where the rivers begin to flow in February and do not freeze till November, where instead of snow-covered swamps, there are fields with thick, standing corn and grass; lands where there are woods and gardens, with green leaves on the trees, where the people live on bread and varied vegetable food. For us, reality consists of a perpetually frozen desert, covered with little hillocks and overgrown with stunted larches, which can hardly force their roots through the eternally frozen soil; a cold and filthy *yurt*†; hardly fit to be called a human habitation, even by people accustomed to the poverty-stricken cabins of the Russian peasantry; for food, rotting fish; for clothing, such rags as are left of our European dress, and rough native garments of half-cured skins; for the rest, solitude, silence and lifelessness. I think the ghosts that wandered mournfully along the banks of Acheron, lamenting aloud for their lost earthly life, must have felt what we feel, dragging out our lives alone on the banks of the river Kolyma. The utter lack of all aim or interest, forgetfulness of the past and indifference to the present, are steadily taking hold upon us all. There are only a few among our number who have had the courage and vitality to fling themselves head-first into the filthy swamp of local needs and desires, and to become defiled by it. These few have married native women (ugh! . . .) have provided themselves with fishing tools and nets, bring up families of

† Arctic savage's hut.

children, and, little by little, grow into the likeness of the natives among whom they live. All their thoughts are fixed upon preserving and defending their frail existence from the attacks which savage nature makes upon it from all sides. In the summer they catch fish—for that matter we all catch fish in the summer, more or less—and shoot birds and reindeer; in the winter they go into the *toundra*† to barter with the Tchouktches for skins and reindeer flesh; bring in provisions, chop wood, repair and improve their *yurta*, etc.

As for the rest of us, we live how we can, caring little for our material condition so long as we have food enough to get along with for a bit. The loathsome reality that surrounds us we push away from us and try to forget, and live on old memories and useless hopes for a ray of light in the future; or to speak more truly, do not live at all. We hardly ever read. We very seldom get a new book, paper or magazine, and never a foreign one. As for the old books that lie on our shelves, like rotten corpses, they have no longer any interest for any one. Every thing that has lain two or three years in Kolymsk is sickening to us, who loathe the very shadow of our surroundings.

Forgive this letter being so short; I would have written more in detail if I felt assured that what I write will ever reach you.

A Beneficial Attack.

The reactionary and semi-official *Moscow Gazette* (*Moskovskiya Vedomosti*) has dedicated several long articles to the pro-Russian movement in England, and though these articles are meant to strike a death-blow at the influence of the Friends of Russian Freedom, the only thing we have to say about them is: may the *Gazette* produce some more of the same kind in the course of time! The paper has indeed done good work for us. The very existence of the present Russian régime is based on keeping the people, to a great extent, unaware of what is really going on in the world, and the more closely any fact is connected with the people's grievances, especially political ones, the more essential it is, from the Government's point of view, to hush up the matter. Hence the rigour of the censorship, hence the Draconian laws about public speaking, hence the severity of the government towards any teaching not in accordance with its programmes. A subject, like the formation abroad of a society, which considers the present Russian bureaucratic absolutism, barbarous and inconsistent with the genius and love of freedom of the Russian people, and which is engaged in divulging and counteracting by legal means the crimes of that absolutism—such a subject is certainly one of those that are kept in Imperial Russia under the governmental thumb. No periodical would be suffered to touch on such a question, unless its object were to condemn the whole enterprise, and to proclaim the present Russian misrule to be the best in existence; if it ventured to do otherwise, the whole edition of the paper or review would be confiscated before being put into circulation, and the representatives

of the periodical would be charged with high treason. Having thus no opportunity of treating the subject conscientiously, the independent Russian press very naturally passes it in silence. The clandestine press, certainly, speaks without reserve, but its circulation is always limited compared with that passed by the Censor. But fortunately for the good cause the *Moscow Gazette* thought it proper to use its privilege of moving about unhindered in the prohibited field; and so it stepped forward and announced to the surprised Russian newspaper-reader the fact, that during the last "three" (really more than four) "years the attitude of the English has changed greatly in favour of the Russian opposition and against the present Russian régime, so much so that it has become possible to found a society with the aim of "actively helping the Russian liberation movement by winning public opinion for it by means of free agitation, first in their own country and then among other civilised nations."* "That is not all," says the paper. "The society is headed by a committee, among whom there are ten Members of Parliament and many persons of note"—and the paper goes on to enumerate the names in order to prove to its readers that the Society is not to be looked upon as something insignificant, but that it is full of life and importance. "The Society has collected by subscription a good sum of money for the necessities of the cause it is promoting, and has had already an alarming success." The *Moscow Gazette* "cannot understand 'how on earth' one of the most prominent English politicians has been won to the pro-Russian movement in England, yet there can be no doubt about the fact that the President of the Liberal and Radical Association of Great Britain, Sir (!) Robert Spence Watson, took the formation of the society up very warmly. That, however, was only the beginning." The reactionary paper fully agrees with Stepniak, whose pamphlet it quotes, when he tells us "that there was a time when the English Liberals were (by misunderstanding) the most reliable and sincere friends of the Russian Government in the whole of Europe, but that that time is gone, and now we find in their ranks our most ardent supporters." "As the reader will see, the blow to official Russia is indeed a heavy one!" exclaims the *Gazette*.† To complete the good work, the reader, who becomes interested in the propaganda carried on on behalf of the Russian Liberation, is informed that he can get some specimens of that literature without crossing the Russian frontier—pamphlets and periodicals published in London "are imported into Russia owing to the assistance of some friends and protectors in Russia," says the paper.

It is, perhaps, the turn of our reader now not to understand "why on earth" the *Moscow Gazette* chuses to do all that propaganda for us. Yet it is easily explained, and that in a most encouraging manner. It means that the danger to bureaucratic absolutism in Russia, from the already aroused public opinion abroad is considered by the supporters of Russian official tyranny to be so great and formidable that they are obliged to risk the discussion of the subject. Therefore, the organ of the Russian reactionaries undertook a crusade against the whole movement. But as blundering is the inevitable fate of every blind or insincere defender of an iniquitous and hopeless case, the *Gazette* began by trying to make people believe that

* *Moskovskiya Vedomosti* of Nov. 27th (Dec. 9th), 1893.

† *Moskovskiya Vedomosti* of Nov. 28th (Dec. 10th).

† Arctic swamp.

Miss Hesba Stretton, for example, the Rev. Charles A. Berry or Mr. H. C. Stephens, M.P., are working for anarchism with the purpose of creating difficulties for the Russian Government, and thus compensating their nation in the future for the defeat, in 1885, by General Komaróv, of the Afghans, directed by the English against Russia. This would do splendidly for a joke, but no reasonable man could possibly take it in earnest. He will pass with a smile the amusing drum-beating and trumpet-blowing of the *Moscow Gazette* performed in a deserted field, and gratefully take notice of the information given by it. As to the impulses spurring the English to assume a certain attitude in the struggle between Russian patriotism and Russian official misrule, the reasonable reader will turn for information elsewhere. He may find it, for example, in the open letter addressed to the Tzar of all the Russias by the Rev. J. Page Hopps in the columns of the *Echo* of Jan. 10th.:-

"Do you ask what all this has to do with us?" writes that member of our General Committee. "Why we, here in London, should sit in judgment on your filthy and malignant prisons, and deplore the loss to Russia of many of her least selfish and brightest spirits? You would not ask that if you knew our point of view—if you could see in us, not English men and women interfering with a foreign Government, but simply men and women who feel increasingly how much stronger are the ties of humanity than the ties of nationality. We are feeling, as never before, the profound truth of the ancient saying, 'God hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth,' and we are striving, with exceeding longing, to believe and apply the universal prayer, 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven.' Your prisoners are our brothers and sisters, and we sympathise with them, and plead for them, on the ground of our common humanity. Forgive me if I put our case too warmly, if I write too strongly, when I put this on record, that, as human beings who have inherited much from past sufferings and toils, we protest against the blasphemy against God which is shown in turning any portion of His world into hell, and the blasphemy against man which is shown in condemning human beings to drag out life amid the horrors of hopeless and worse than brutal filth and misery.

"And now, Sire, though I just now partly disclaimed it, allow me to write as an Englishman. I know that in many respects we are by no means so free from the beam or the mote that we can afford to peer closely into our brother's eyes; but our fathers long ago worked out their salvation from all that against which we now protest elsewhere; and we have earned our right to our protest."

That is what an Englishman has to say upon the point. Another, may be, would couch it somewhat differently, yet the essence, that *homo sum et nihil humanum mihi alienum esse puto*—that brotherly, irresistible longing to see others enjoy what we consider beneficial to ourselves—would be the same. It cannot be otherwise; a child would understand that. It is inconceivable only to those whose covetous hearts and narrow minds have reduced their feelings and ideals to the dark nutshell of their own limited natures, or whose profession it is to see high treason and intrigue everywhere. The worse for them, but none the worse for the good cause.

The present number of *FREE RUSSIA* was completed when we received from Russia two clippings from the widely-read but never-believed Russian

daily *Novoë Vrémyä* (*New Times*) accompanied by a letter, in which a Russian, speaking not only on his own behalf, but on that of a number of people, says: "We feel disgusted with those articles, but it is hardly possible to say anything upon the subject in the Russian newspapers, and even supposing something might be introduced, it would be of necessity weak and colourless. You, on the contrary, can easily make everything clear."

We are very sorry the message reached us too late to be treated in the present issue of *FREE RUSSIA*. We are too much pressed both for time and space. Next month, however, we shall have as good fun about it, as literary flowers with so strong an aroma as that of the *Novoë Vrémyä* do not fade away in a month or two. F. VOLKHOVSKY.

News & Notes of the Month.

The news about an attempt on the life of the Tzar and also of a fight between the *gendarmes* and some revolutionists, surprised at a meeting near Moscow, was circulated some time ago in the English press. Our Russian correspondents now most positively deny both.

* * *

One of the most rigid adherents of practical Christianity as preached by Count Leo Tolstoy—Prince Demetrius Khilkóv—did not baptise his two children (three and four years old). This was reported by his relatives (who are orthodox bigots and courtiers) to the Tzar, and by his personal order Khilkóv and his wife were robbed of their children. Several *gendarmes*, headed by the children's grandmother, came to the house of their unfortunate parents and took the little ones by violence to be brought up in the orthodox creed. Khilkóv, as a true adherent of the doctrine of non-resistance, did not try to resist the kidnappers by main force. We should like to know, however, how, on such an occasion some of those would act who cannot find sufficiently strong language in condemnation of using force against outrages and atrocities by violence, under any circumstances? It is very instructive to note that the young Russian girl from whose private letter we take the information, though a "Tolstoyist" herself, does not seem to be very lenient in a case like that. Among other things she writes: "What can be more revolting, cruel and inhuman (I do not say brutal, because brutes have a more highly developed feeling of equity in that line) than such an act, the very idea of which makes one's heart sink within one. It seems to me," she writes, "that the very stones must cry out against such an act, emanating from and signed by a man who is himself the father of a family. . . . Imagine that it was you who were robbed of your child, the only reason being that you do not agree with other people's opinions which are forced upon you, and you have no wish to dissemble and lie."

We get more and more confirmation of the butchery of the Roman Catholics in Krózhė. The number of those whose death was caused, including the drowned, is now estimated at 60. The number of the wounded is almost a hundred, and here is something new in connection with the horrible affair. We are informed that as soon as the rumour of the massacre reached St. Petersburg, the director of the department of foreign creeds (ministry of internal affairs) Prince M. R. Kantakouzen was despatched to Lithuania to make an inquiry into the matter. The present Governor-General of Lithuania, Orhzevsky, was somewhat troubled about it. He did not mind the massacre, but he did not like the universal scandal, which might result in bringing him into disgrace at St. Petersburg. He therefore tried to improve the prince's frame of mind and temper by showing him the cheering prospect of acquiring an enormous estate for a comparatively trifling sum, which, besides, he had not to pay at present. The estate in question was one called Loochay, formerly belonging to the Polish Count Mostovsky, and mortgaged in the Vilna Bank for the sum of £30,000. As Catholics are not allowed now to acquire any land property in Lithuania, it was to be sold to some orthodox Russian, and so it was, to a high official for the sum of £35,000. But as soon as General Orhzevsky noticed that Kantakouzen did not object to pleasant prospects, he ordered the estate to be sold to the prince for £30,000 (that is simply both the debt and the property to be transferred to him), at the same time pledging himself to the other official to secure him in the course of time a still better job.

* * *

Our Cacassian correspondent writes, that in December last (old style) serious disturbances took place at the ecclesiastical seminary in Tiflis. The institution was closed and all the undergraduates sent under guard to their respective homes in the country. Some special official was commissioned and is now on his way from St. Petersburg to Tiflis to investigate the case. The claims of the undergraduates show pretty clearly the reasons of the disturbances. They are as follows: 1, the present despotic rule in the school (practiced by its inspector and his assistants) must cease; 2, two assistant inspectors are to be discharged, as by their depravity they demoralise the pupils; 3, books and periodicals both in Russian and in Georgian which are permitted by censorship for general circulation must not be denied to the undergraduates; 4, teaching of the Georgian language must be introduced into the course of the seminary. So, besides some special local grievances, it is again that stamping out of light and the tendency to Russianise other nationalities that forced the youths into protest instead of leaving them to their studies!

We are informed that Mr. Harry de Windt has gone to Saghalien island, and has a commission from the Russian government to lecture in England next season on Russian subjects. This is an interesting piece of news. We shall see what he has to say. As to his expedition to Saghalien, we hope it will result not only in a big tract about women, neckties and the *cuisine* of the island, as was the case with Mr. de Windt's Siberian travels.

* * *

Some time ago the English papers announced that about forty Knights of the Military Order of St. George (much revered in Russia) were poisoned at the royal table, during the annual great dinner given by the Tzar in the Winter Palace to all the knights of that Order. Now we are informed from a reliable source that the illness of those unfortunates was very like cholera attacks, and the reason of it was of a kind hardly to be expected at a royal dinner. It is an open secret that the lower tables at royal dinners, at which the less distinguished guests are seated, are served abominably; and whereas all St. Petersburg uses filtered water, at the Winter Palace unfiltered is chiefly used for the sake of cheapness. This time the meat of the lower tables was said to be worse than ever, and this rotten stuff, together with the water, produced an effect which proved more disastrous to the poor heroes than all the fire at Sebastopol, Shipka and Plevna.

* * *

The eulogizers of the present Russian government have made an unpardonable omission in not mentioning the fact that now-a-days its rule is based on science. To correct that mistake we will communicate to our readers an interesting document we have just received which proves that even espionage and police supervision are no more called so, but are known as "statistical researches." The short official note we are alluding to reached us from Germany, and runs as follows:—

Legation Imperiale de Russie,
*** (town) Dec. * 1893
Jan. * 1894

The IMPERIAL Mission, wanting some statistical information concerning Russian subjects studying in the state of ***, has the honour of respectfully asking Mr. So-and-So to call within the next few days at the offices of the mission between 1 and 3 p.m., Sundays excepted, and to bring the passport and certificate which he had had to produce for the local educational authorities.

Secretary of the Mission ***

Now, as the comment added to this document explains, the "statistical information" in the matter amounts to a careful examination of the passport (to see if it is a forged one, and if not—whether its term has not expired), to questions tending to ascertain the amount of "political trustworthiness" of the student, etc. In Berlin the "statistical researches" are practised on a still larger scale. Some of the young Russians studying there, were asked confidential questions, whether they would not like to enter—for due remuneration—the ranks of the "statisticians"; the lodgings of others were visited by the "statisticians" in their absence (if the "statisticians" could bribe or deceive the masters of the house), who would look through their papers. Science being international, some of these scientific people are in the service of the German police, and, as such, force their entrance into the lodging; but

they receive also a salary from the Russian authorities, and some of them very naively complain that they get only 500 roubles (£50) per year! We are sorry to say that the Russian students do not appreciate that kind of science, and some of them are so disgusted with its exploits that they are leaving Berlin for other places.

* * *

We are glad to say that with the beginning of the New Year a new Russian independent periodical sprang up. It is a monthly leaflet, *The Russian Working Man*, aiming at political and social propaganda exclusively among working people. The periodical contrasts the position of the Russian worker with that of the foreign one to the evident disadvantage of the former, and explains it by the fact that in countries like England, for example, "the government is in the hands of the people, while with us (in Russia) the people are in the hands of the government"; this state of things will last so long as the working people dare not cry out loudly about their rights and wants. The first and main claim of the people which he urges is that of political freedom, and as component parts of this freedom he lays especial stress on a National Assembly elected by the people, and on freedom of speech and the press. These rights must be used, in the first place, by the people in demand for land, for relief from the burden of taxes which at present ruin him, for schools, which shall in every part of Russia put an end to the ignorance of the people, and, finally, to begin a regular and open warfare with all the plunderers of the people, and with every injustice and evil on the Russian soil."

This leaflet is printed in Paris, but the address where it is to be obtained is 15, Augustus Road, Hammersmith, London, W., and the address to which business communications and contributions should be sent is 37, Bouverie Road, London, N.

* * *

A series of articles entitled "Russian Spies in England" has begun to appear in *Tit Bits*. The writer appears to know the subject about which he is writing, and we may state that the first article is free from exaggeration or sensationalism.

* * *

On Jan. 16th, at Bank Street Chambers a meeting of the members and friends of the Plymouth Branch of the S.F.R.F. was held to consider the following points:—

- (1) The election of a president and an hon. secretary in the place of the Rev. Binns and Mr. Gilbert Slater, resigned.
- (2) To consider a proposal to invite Mr. George Kennan to deliver a lecture, etc.

The business having been concluded, the meeting was adjourned until the 20th when Mr. Langdon H. Price, 1, Woodland Terrace, was elected chairman and Mr. John Adams, 14, St. Lawrence Road, hon. secretary. The meeting also took steps to confirm the arrangement already made with Mr. Kennan, who will give his lecture on "Political Exiles in Siberia," in the Guildhall, Plymouth, on Friday, March 2nd. The lecture will be fully illustrated by lime-light dissolving views.

* * *

On Friday, January 20th, at 8 p.m., a meeting of the members of the Cardiff Branch of the S.F.R.F. was held, at which the arrangements for Mr. Kennan's lecture on the 28th were completed, and a reading was given by Mr. H. M. Thompson from Mr. Harold Frederick's "The New Exodus," giving an account of the Jewish persecution in Russia. We call the attention of other branches to the successful efforts of the Cardiff F.R.F. to make their

business meetings interesting for the outsiders and the suggestive N.B. on their last circular notice: "Members are invited to bring friends with them to this meeting."

* * *

The correspondence in the *Western Mail* between the Rev. E. R. S. Morgan and Mr. H. M. Thompson, which we noticed last month, has been continued at some length. The following points appear to embrace the Rev. Morgan's objections to the work proposed by the Cardiff Branch: (1) That very few of its members are acquainted with the Russian language. (2) That "the time when the dignified patriotism of the senior House of Parliament alone prevents the Celtisation (and consequent disruption) of the empire" is not the moment to interest ourselves in the affairs of other nations. (3) That the Russian penal system is said by Dr. Lansdell (it is unfortunate, as the Rev. Morgan seems particular on the point, that the authority he quotes, as is pointed out by Mr. Thompson, had at the time of his flying visit to Siberia no knowledge of the Russian language) not to be as bad as it is painted. (4) That the Tzar is in reality tolerant of religious difference of opinion, the fact of the "bad times" which the Stundists are, by his admission, having, is apparently explained to the Rev. Morgan's mind, when he describes this creed as "Quakerism gone mad."

Mr. Thompson has answered every point as exhaustively as the limits of newspaper controversy allow. We would only add that the suggestion that the members of the Cardiff Branch of the S.F.R.F. should suspend its activity to watch with admiration the "dignified action of our senior House" is not likely to commend itself to them. Further, the argument, that within our times our English prisons were a disgrace to the country, will only act as a fresh incentive to those who are exposing those of Russia. To write of religious persecution in Russia at the present time and to ignore the treatment of the Jews and lightly to excuse that of the Stundists, is simply to call on the members of the Cardiff branch for a repetition of those facts which it is part of their privilege to make known to the country at large. With all good will to Mr. Morgan, who is evidently a sincere and frank gentleman, we cannot help wishing him, in case he enters another time in controversy on Russian matters, to make his luggage of information upon Russia equal to his zeal and sincerity, then he would not mention eight Russian universities instead of ten; he would not say that the Tzar is such *because* he is, in the first place, the head of the Russian Church, as he would know that before the abolition of the Russian patriarchat, by Peter the Great, the Russian Tzars were never regarded as heads of the Church, though they had been already for a long time potentates of Russia and the Russians with unlimited power: he would not make many other blunders which we have no room to mention in detail, and then, perhaps, the haughtiness with which he treats the supposed ignorance of his adversaries would diminish in proportion to his own augmented knowledge. We would, in any case, express our gratitude to him for making a stir on the question, especially as we learn that through the controversy many people in Cardiff have become, for the first time, interested in the subject.

The Stundists: the Story of a Great Religious Revolt.

(JAS. CLARKE & Co., London, 1893.)

At the beginning of the Seventies the Church began to *organise* itself. Presbyters of districts were instituted, a register of members was kept, and a common fund for mutual support was formed. In 1877-8 the weight of persecution began to be felt, and it is needless to say that when, soon after the beginning of the present reign, Pobedonostsev became supreme in all matters relating to

"religion," the crusade was carried on with the greatest cruelty and barbarity. Our writer remarks that "The nations of the West . . . do not seem to realise that they have at their gates a Power more intolerant of religious liberty than was Spain in her worst days, and persecutors as unscrupulous and narrow-minded as Alva and Torquemada. How can they know it? Russia works in secret; her methods are underground, and her victims are voiceless. There is no press in Russia, worthy the name, to report and denounce each case of persecution as it occurs. The trials of heretics are conducted with closed doors, the public being carefully excluded. Russians themselves do not know a tenth of what is being done."

The writer does not dwell at great length on the too-familiar story of the barbarities which are practised on the religious martyrs of Russia. An instance or two he gives—those recounted on pages 40 and 42 entitles him to the credit of sobriety of statement

when he observes that "Religious intolerance is just as rampant in Russia to-day as it was in England during the reign of the Tudors." When he goes on to say "It is only prevented from going to the extremes of personal torture and the public stake by the dread of Western opinion," he gives what is equivalent to an exhortation to all those engaged in studying Russian questions and enlightening public opinion concerning them, to continue in their course. Yet the case does not appear a hopeful one at the moment, for, as he remarks, since 1888 the policy of suppression has been supplanted by one of extermination.

It remains to state that the valuable volume lying before us is printed in excellent type for dissemination as a cheap book (1s. 6d.); it has a frontispiece and a good map of Southern Russia, showing the distribution of the Stundist body.

H. M. THOMPSON.

(Concluded.)

THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF RUSSIAN FREEDOM.

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Free Russia

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[ONE PENNY.]

THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF RUSSIAN FREEDOM.

THE English Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, founded in November, 1889, has for its objects to aid, to the extent of its powers, the Russian patriots who are trying to obtain for their country that Political Freedom and Self-government which Western nations have enjoyed for generations.

The Society appeals to the enlightened men and women of all countries, without distinction of nationality or political creed, who cannot witness with indifference the horrors perpetrated in the Empire of the Tsars, and who wish a better future for the masses of the Russian people. Further contributions to the funds and further work are needed and will be welcome. Membership is acquired by sending to the Treasurer an annual subscription of or exceeding Five Shillings. Members are entitled to receive *Free Russia* post free.

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CONTENTS.

Notes and News of the Month.—*The Finnish Parliament.*—*Some more Horrors.*—*Belligerent Impotence* (by F.V.)—*A Voice from Siberia.*—*National Character and the Stundists* (by F. Volk-hovsky).—*Help for the Stundists.*—*Meetings.*—*Lecture List.*—*List of Subscribers.*

News & Notes of the Month.

The Russian Ministry of Finance has recently published an account of the governmental intervention in the sugar trade. It is something worth noticing. At the end of 1892 the Russian beet-sugar manufacturers formed a "syndicate" which raised the price of sugar far above that existing abroad, and kept it up by exporting great quantities of Russian sugar at a low price. Seeing this, the present minister thought it necessary to come to the aid of the Russian population. The simplest and plainest way to lower the price seemed to be the lowering of the customs on foreign sugar. That, however, was considered to be "dangerous to the sugar trade in Russia," and therefore the minister asked, and on November 18th, 1892, obtained, the Tzar's sanction to buy foreign sugar at the government's expense, to import it and sell at the same exorbitant price to which it had been artificially raised, in order "to prevent the prices from further going up." Thus loads of sugar went to and fro, but the population bought their sugar as dearly as they did before. Why, then, was this trick played? Perhaps the reader will understand it, if we tell him that both export and import were carried on through the South-Western Railway Group, in which Mr. Witte is a large shareholder, and that the purchase of foreign sugar was transacted through the "International Bank," an especially patronised favourite of the late Minister of Finance, and apparently of the present one too.

The Russian *zemstvos* last autumn session manifested one depressing common feature—they are all more or less in debt, they all complain of having no money, and do not see where to get any, as the arrears weighing on the taxpayers are enormous. For example, those of the Nijni Novgorod province amounted about the 1st of January, 1893, to £128,600. Three of the district *zemstvos* of the province of Kazan are in debt, one to the amount of £13,500 (whilst its yearly budget amounts to £9,000), the other £11,882, and a third £13,329; and there is nothing for them but to get still further into debt. Some of the *zemstvos* are soliciting the government to enforce again the rule (which was abolished some time ago) according to which the *zemstvo* rates should be collected before the state taxes; others ask

for credit at the State Bank; others again implore the government for direct pecuniary help. But the government has to get its money from the same exhausted taxpayer from whom the *zemstvos* cannot get it. It is evident that there is only one outlet from this position: to apply to the people and ask them what is to be done. But the plainest things are exactly those the present Russian government is least apt to see.

* * *

The duties of the Russian "procurors" are twofold: (1) They are prosecutors for the Crown in criminal cases, and (2) they watch the legality of the proceedings of the other officials. The greater number of them care only for the first part of their duties, as to make one's self conspicuous in that way means promotion. But there are some who conscientiously try to do both. The radical Oukrainian paper *Narod* ("The People") gives us two instances, showing how the latter part of the "procurors'" activity is received in St. Petersburg. Last year the "procuror" of Poltava sent to the ministry a report of the illegal and cruel ill-treatment of the peasantry in the district of Zenkov, by the governor of the Poltava province, Tatishchev, but he was advised from St. Petersburg to keep quiet. The chief "procuror" in Kharkov, Zakrevsky, some time ago also denounced the local administration as acting illegally, but got no reply from St. Petersburg. Zakrevsky has now been appointed "Ober-procuror" in the Senate (in St. Petersburg), in order to remove him, without giving him offence, from the place where he was displeasing to the administration.

* * *

The compatriots in the United States of the Roman Catholic Lithuaniëns who were butchered in the Kovno province (see FREE RUSSIA, 1894, pages 4 & 18) have met the news with an outburst of indignation. The Lithuaniëns in the States number over 200,000, and have started an active agitation on behalf of their oppressed and ill-treated fellow countrymen and against the irresponsible Russian government. Church services in memory of the victims were held and largely attended in Chicago (Ill.), Shenandoah (Pa.), Plymouth (Pa.) and other places as well as many mass meetings. At one of them alone, 850 dollars were collected for the relief of the widows and orphans left behind by the martyrs of Krozhe, and it was resolved that an agitation should be started in Russia for the purpose of inducing the Lithuaniën youths to refuse obedience to the Russian authorities, when ordered to enter the ranks of the Russian army as recruits. No one can tell whether *that form* of protest will take root among the Lithuaniëns in Russia, but in any case we may be sure that the stir among their American compatriots will prove

stimulating and strengthening to the spirit of independence already aroused. The American Lithuanians are well organised, have four newspapers in their own language and maintain a lively and friendly intercourse with their fellow-countrymen in Russia.

* * *

The provincial governor of Kiev has ordered the local bookstore of the British Biblical Society to be closed for six months without giving any reasons for it.

* * *

A peasant woman of the Province of Vyatka, applied to a certain Teplyakov saying that she had been mal-treated by one of the elders of the village, he having taken her by the hair and treated her with great brutality. Teplyakov referred her to the *Zemski Nachalnik* Anissimov as the authority who should deal with such a case. The only answer the poor woman received from Anissimov was, that it was simply a joke on the elder's part. Teplyakov then framed a complaint against Anissimov, which she sent to the Minister of Internal Affairs. Speaking of Anissimov's activity in the province, T. said he had gained neither the respect nor confidence of the inhabitants, as he had only come there with the idea of "cramming his pockets and playing jokes." The result of this was that Teplyakov was accused before a court of having used offensive and abusive language about an official in an official document. He was found guilty and sentenced to imprisonment for three weeks. He appealed to the higher court, maintaining in his defence that he had had no wish to abuse or insult Anissimov; that what he had said was undeniable fact, and that in reality there were still graver charges to be made against that official. He told the court that during the famine Anissimov had ordered peasant women to weave carpets for him, and had paid for these with the money that had been entrusted to him for free distribution among the starving peasants. He asked the court to require Anissimov to give an account of this money. The Court of Appeal of Kazan sentenced Teplyakov to a month's imprisonment.

* * *

After that the reader will be pleased to learn that the *zemski nachalniki*, officials unknown as yet in the Astrakhan province will be introduced there in September next.

* * *

One of our friends, a Pole by extraction, helping the cause of freedom in Russia in every way he can, writes us: "It would do good to spread your publications among Poles in Posen and Galicia. In these provinces there is a great deal of prejudice against the Russians, and many Polish patriots unjustly hate the Russian nation, instead of confining their hatred to the Russian absolutism. . . . It is important to prove again and again that the *chinovniki*, though they are so numerous, are not identical with the Russian nation." That is exactly what we are trying to prove, and, it seems, not without avail. Some radical and widely read Polish papers in Galicia, like *Dziennik Polski* (the *Polish Diary*) and *Kurjer Lwowski* (the *Lemberg Courier*) seem to understand quite clearly, that the true friends of Russian freedom cannot do otherwise than wish for liberty, development and home rule for every nationality included in the present Russian

Empire; without the political predominance of any one over the others; accordingly, they help our propaganda. For example, we are glad to say, that beginning with this year, every Number of FREE RUSSIA is extensively and impartially reviewed in the literary supplement to the *Courier*, entitled *The Week* and thus becomes known throughout the Polish-speaking people. We have not yet such good friends in Posen, but we trust that we shall have in time. By the way, we should feel grateful if some friends of ours having connections with that country, would try to introduce FREE RUSSIA into the columns of the Polish press in Posen.

* * *

We all exult in successful agitation, but we do not always know at what price success is won, although we ought to, for it is both instructive and interesting. Something of that kind transpired at the last meeting of the Executive Committee, when a vote of thanks was unanimously passed to Miss G. Mallet. It appears that in order to well advertise Mr. Kennan's lecture of the 8th of January to the public, Miss Mallet corresponded with 50 papers and sent out by post 6,000 handbills, enclosing them in her private correspondence and despatching them to friends who undertook to do the same. This system proved most effective and it would be good if others would do the same.

In the Finnish Parliament.

Just at present the Landtag of Finland is busy discussing the new project for the Finnish penal code. Before the project was submitted to the Landtag, a short speech of the Grand Duke's that is of Alexander III. was read. Among other things it said that the project was submitted to the Landtag in its "final form." This sentence created considerable stir in two of the four chambers of the Landtag. One of the members of the Chamber of Nobles, Mr. Haartman said that after a careful examination of the subject he had come to the conclusion that this sentence must be attributed to an imperfect translation into the Swedish language, otherwise he was entirely at a loss to understand the Imperial speech, and therefore, when considering this project, he paid attention only to the project itself and the introduction, in which no such words were to be found.

Then, proceeding with his speech, he gave his comrades to understand that in case they had to publish the code in the form in which it was submitted to them, they should at the same time publish their alterations of it in a supplementary form. This, however, would be extremely inconvenient, and he would suggest to the parliamentary committee that they should find a way out of the difficulty.

Simultaneously with this speech another was delivered in the Chamber of the Commons by the retired General Neovius. "In the Imperial speech," said that gentleman, "the code is submitted to the Commons in its final form. It is impossible to suppose that this is meant to in any way restrict the constitutional right of the

Commons to discuss, alter, or reject the Imperial proposals; therefore this expression can only be considered as a pledge on the part of the government that it will not, in case the Commons alter or revise, make fresh propositions of the same kind as it has done before, and that there will be no delay in obtaining the royal sanction for this code, the enforcement of which the Commons expects with ever increasing eagerness."

At the conclusion the speaker expressed the hope that the parliamentary committee would accept the same view of the subject.

Some More Horrors.

Some time ago a little paper in Vladivostok gave a few meagre hints of the horrors which were going on in some places in the Sakhalien Island. These scraps of alarming news, which perhaps only found their way into the press because in these remote places the censorship is not so skilled as at the centres, were at once picked up and largely reprinted in the Moscow and St. Petersburg press. This, may be, drew the attention of the authorities to this God-forsaken island. Now we read in the *Standard* of February 10th the result of a governmental commission on the subject as follows:—

The report is now to hand, and reveals a terrible tale of suffering and crime. Instances without number are recorded of merciless beatings and lopping off of fingers and arms by sabre cuts, whilst cannibalism under stress of famine was a common occurrence, murder followed by cannibalism being also frequently committed with the sole object of putting an end to the misery of existence at Onor, and instances are related where several convicts disputed before the authorities for the guilt of a murder.

During the whole of 1892 there was an almost continuous string of convoys with corpses of convicts passing from Onor to Rykovskaya the residence of the authorities, and the bodies were so mutilated, and presented so pitiful a spectacle, that the report says the spectators could not look upon them without tears. No inquiries, however were made, and the bodies were simply buried without ado. Neither of the two doctors living at Rykovskaya ever visited Onor. In 1893 a band of convicts was handed over to an inspector, who could neither read nor write, to construct a road from Onor to Rykovskaya. If any convict failed in his work he was at once put on half rations the next day, followed by a third of rations, and when he could work no more the inspector finished him with a revolver bullet, and entered his death in the books as from disease.

The principal author and encourager of all these atrocities is the convict Rhakov, who is a favourite of the commandant of the district, and has been made inspector-general. He has lately been recommended for good service, and he and all his colleagues have succeeded hitherto in keeping their misdeeds secret from the world. The above details are not, it must be noted, a convict's tale, but are taken from an official government report. Mr. H. de Windt will probably visit this prison amongst others, and it will be curious to see what impression it will make upon him.

Belligerent Impotence.

We had neither time nor room in our last issue "to make everything clear" about the *Novoe Vremya* articles, with which, as the reader may remember, the Russians who sent them to us "felt disgusted." But now we can do so, and we feel very grateful for them, as they make many interesting things quite clear. In the first place, they show how well Dr. Spence Watson's political keenness hit the mark when he at once pointed out that all these different attacks at the pro-Russian movement in the *Moscow Gazette*, the *New Review*, and elsewhere were one and the same plot of Russian officialdom against the right of asylum in Great Britain. When he wrote his article for the present Number of *FREE RUSSIA* he knew nothing about the *N. V.*, and now that paper not only confirms his surmise, but even shows the special plan adopted for the campaign. "In case of any international agreement against the Anarchist refugees, it is impossible to exclude the Russian refugees from their number, as there is no palpable difference between the former and the latter." These words are put in the lips of some imaginary Englishman. They are, in reality, only a revelation of the cherished hope of Russian officialism of bringing about "general measures of repression which would, in the end, hamper the agitation of the Russian refugees as well." That is in no way English, we are sure.

Here is something that represents the true English turn of mind better:—

Hitherto we have steadily refused to lend our aid definitely to the great phalanx of international police with which Europe is honeycombed, and which, we venture to assert, provokes quite as much as it overawes the red revolutionary movements of the continent. A world subjected to the arbitrary action of a great irresponsible police force, acting under secret instructions, and by methods absolutely at variance with democratic principles, would be a world which few freedom-loving English people would care to live in. We see from the example of Russia what this would mean.

That is from the *Daily Chronicle* of February 20th.

As to the ideas about "Nihilists" circulating in this country, though there are, certainly, many who have no definite idea about what they are, there are already many others who feel, and quite rightly, a very distinct difference between their principles and position, and those of other revolutionary parties. Here is what we read in the *Leeds Mercury* of Jan. 5:

Gentlemen,—I read with interest the leader in your issue of to-day, in which *Anarchism is distinguished from Russian Nihilism*. But the distinction is much greater than you express; it is rather a radical difference. The Anarchist, as his name implies, aims at the total abolition of all government in any shape or form; the Russian Nihilist, on the other hand, fights against a corrupt and cruel despotism, in order to obtain for the nation a constitutional, popular, and therefore strong, government.

If we cannot approve of the methods of the attacks of the Nihilist on an unjust and corrupt tyranny, we can sympathise with his position and object. His justification is the existence of a bureaucratic despotism, which, in order to preserve itself, keeps the nation in political, social, and intellectual servitude, and saps its best life by an elaborate system of oppression and jobbery. In Russia, owing to its size and its long periods of tyranny, open war against the "government" is impossible; but, with this difference apart, the Russian Nihilists holds the same position to the Russian "government" as the Netherlands rebel of the sixteenth century held towards Philip II. of Spain. . . . Yours, &c.—H. MARTIN.
25, Crimbles-street, Leeds, January 4th.

It is only natural that the *Novoe Vremya* correspondent, quotes Mr. Ivanoff as an authority. But he should not represent Mr. Ivanoff's writings as the opinions of the *New Review*. The Russian reader is accustomed to the fact that the Russian monthlies as a rule represent definite views upon every political and social question and would never insert an article which they could not sign as the expression of their own opinions. The correspondent ascribes the same tendency to the *New Review*, as the representative of a certain current in the English public opinion, though he knows very well that the English and American monthlies, as a rule, are not organs of a certain party or creed, but often publish opposite opinions side by side. For example, the *New Review*, which printed Mr. Ivanoff's article, also published F. Volkhovsky's "Sufferings of Political Exiles," while in its number for February the reader will find some pages from the pen of S. Stepniak in reply to Mr. Ivanoff.

Another point upon which the writer should remember the Ninth Commandment is his mis-statement, that "the work between the English members of the S.F.R.F. and the handful of Russian refugees is divided in this way: the English members contribute money, collect donations and carry on propaganda in the country, while the Russian refugees receive the funds and use them as they like without any control whatever." That is untrue from beginning to end. All the money collected on behalf of the Friends of Russian Freedom is exclusively in English hands. Dr. Spence Watson accounts yearly for every penny, the account is read at the annual meeting of the Society, audited by chartered accountants and printed in *FREE RUSSIA*.

The alarm produced in Russian official circles, by the success the truth about Russia has had in this country, is revealed by the *Novoe Vremya* perhaps in a still more striking manner than by the *Moscow Gazette*.

"In England the Russian revolutionists have won the protection of the government and the sympathy of society. Thus they were enabled to found in London the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, headed by a 'General Committee,' consisting of Members of Parliament and other esteemed English politicians. A net of 'local branches' and 'committees' is spread throughout England. In the metropolis, as well as in provincial centres, meetings and lectures are arranged and the collection of funds is going on uninterruptedly. The writer in the *New Review* points out especially the demonstrations organised by the 'Society' in Newcastle, Leicester, Edinburgh and London in honour of the refugee, Volkhovsky," etc.

Not everything is minutely correct in that gorgeous description of the good work done by the Friends of Russian Freedom, yet we could hardly expect a more splendid advertisement for it—especially in the gagged Russian press. We are very thankful for it indeed, and if there is anything to be regretted, it is only the fact that, perhaps, it will not be believed to the extent it deserves to be, appearing in a paper which has the deserved reputation of uttering truth only by way of mistake, and being written by a person who has since disclaimed the responsibility of what he had written. It seems the *Novoe Vremya* correspondent, when supplying the Russian reader with a picture of the English and their ways of thinking and acting—corresponding far more to the effect which it was to produce in Russia than to reality—never expected that that picture would become known to the English themselves.

However, a short note appeared in the *Daily News* of the 30th of January, giving all the fun of the *Novoe Vremya* trumpet-blowing to the English reader concerning England's harbouring and fostering "the common enemy, a lamentable fact which very poignantly grieves M. Souvorin, of the *Novoe Vremya*."

The London correspondent of the *Novoe Vremya* seems to have been so much alarmed by this, that he at once requested the editor, as stated in the *D. N.* of February 2nd, to say that the statements relative to the attitude of a section of the Liberal party towards Russian political refugees "were not his," but he gave them in his paper "as proceeding from an article in the January number of the *New Review*." That assertion was a little too bold, for it was not the writer in the *New Review* who ascribes to the English people the fear that Russia will repay them for their reception of her exiles by "backing the anti-English agitation in Ireland," but it was the pure fabrication of the London correspondent of the *Novoe Vremya*.

We imagine the English will be not a little amused at learning how easily they are frightened, and the tragic and solemn tone of the *Novoe Vremya* will be met with a smile. Imagine for a moment the Russian official emissaries "backing the anti-English agitation in Ireland," particularly at the moment when the Irish have accepted Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill, and especially if the agitators are as clever as those writing in the *Novoe Vremya*, the *New Review*, or the *Moscow Gazette* for the benefit of the Russian government!

F. V.

A Voice from Siberia.

The following extract from a letter written by a political exile in the Trans-Baikal province of Siberia appeared in the American edition of *FREE RUSSIA*:

"September, 1893.—To the citizen of the Free Country from a friend lingering in servitude in Siberia my greeting and respect. Since you left our forsaken country some changes have occurred in the conditions of our life. A new *ukase* came denying us the right to either call ourselves or add to our signatures the words '*political exile*.' We must now simply use the word *exile*—the same as common criminals. Some of our comrades protested, but they were forced to obey it. In Verkhoyansk we nearly had a new Yakousk massacre of political exiles. Our friend Lebedieff, living in a *oulous* (village) near by became insane. Our colony decided to send Bagryanovsky to him as a nurse. The chief of police (*ispravnik*) agreed to our proposition, but at the last moment, when B. was ready to go, changed his mind and stopped him. Bagryanovsky wrote a letter to the *ispravnik* in which he says: 'I do not know how to characterise your action, and for that reason I leave space for you to put in the proper epithet.' The *ispravnik* got angry, and decided to teach a lesson to the politicals. A few days later, while the exiles were sitting one evening in a house, engaged in friendly conversation, a mob of armed men suddenly broke in, and when asked what they wanted, they said they came by order of the *ispravnik* to search the

house and effect an arrest, but who was to be arrested the police did not know. It was only by the tact and clear-headedness of the exiles that a terrible slaughter was avoided, and all were arrested without bloodshed. The *ispravnik* at once sent a report to the governor of a revolt of the political exiles, stating that they had all been put under arrest. Although the judicial commission of investigation could not find any trace of criminal action upon the part of the criminal exiles, the indictment is still hanging over them. Do not forget your friends in Siberia. I am sorry I am too old to be able to start a new life in the New World; were it not for this I should throw off my chains and once more in my life take a full breath of pure and free air in a free country.

"FREEDOM."

National Character and Stundism.

"The Stundists: The Story of a Great Religious Revolt." Jas. Clarke & Co., London, 1893. Price 1s. 6d.

A good book only gains in its effectiveness if its weak point is clearly set forth. We trust, therefore, that we shall not be understood as trying to diminish the value of the excellent work mentioned, if we say that the author of "The Stundists," possessing a thorough knowledge of the subject he is writing upon, is not so well acquainted with the life of the Russian people at large, especially of the Great Russians, inhabiting the central and northern provinces of the empire. This, together with his enthusiastic devotion to evangelism, leads him, for example, to overestimate the virtues of the German colonists in Oukrainia and to underrate the character and abilities of the Russian peasant. There are Germans and Germans. Admitting gladly that many of them quite correspond to the unknown author's description, we decline to agree that as a whole, "it was in no stingy or superior way that these German pietists treated their Russian dependents," or that piety always prevented them from acts which can hardly be called Christian. Suffice it to say that there existed among those Germans a proverb—"Who drives with oxen is himself an ox"—a contemptuous allusion to the Oukrainien; and, too, whenever a horse-stealer was caught by them he was beaten in such a way that he never recovered, the blows being administered on a board wrapped in felt and put on the thief's back, so as to prevent any marks of the thrashing on his body. The author's mentioning the "German moneylender" (page 3) is also significant. It was not difficult for the German colonists to make their settlements in the "little paradises" of South Russia. They received from the Russian government 162 acres of land per head free of charge; they had not to pay taxes for a long period; they were fairly independent of the Russian bureaucracy, self-government being granted them as a privilege, and no recruits being raised among them, while the Russian peasant, who never got more than 40 acres, was harassed either by his "owner" or by the police, and had to give away everything he had, either in money, in produce, or in kin. The author

also attributes to the influence of Stundism that cleanliness, neatness and love of flowers and foliage (pp. 63, 66, etc.), which are the striking national features of the Oukrainiens (or Little Russians), and are suggested even by their national customs. It is the fashion with every young Oukrainien peasant to shave the beard, on the contrary of the Great Russian, to wear it; and the national colour for his shirt is white, while the Great Russian likes his red. Every Oukrainien peasant woman prides herself on having her hut whitewashed, and even the earthen floor cleanly smeared with clay. Flowers and trees play a very prominent and poetical part in the popular Oukrainien songs, and a Little Russian is inclined to plant a cherry tree, an oak, or a poplar near his house, while the Great Russian would cut down even the trees he would find at the place he came to settle in, not to interfere with the sight of a vast horizon.

A misunderstanding of the national character and ideas, both of Great Russians and Oukrainiens, leads our author to even graver mistakes than those already pointed out. It is a well known fact that Stundism is far more popular with the Little Russians than the Great Russians, though not to the extent our author seems to insist upon (p. 19). The explanation of the fact, according to our author, is that "the stolid, phlegmatic and somewhat stupid Great Russian evinced little or no sympathy with the Protestant tenets, and held stubbornly to his orthodoxy." The latter can hardly be said of a race which counts at least eight millions of sectarians of every description, while among the Little Russians there are very few except the Stundists. Among the Great Russians dissent from orthodoxy was always so strong that its influence was great in political movements both during the boyhood of Peter I. and under Catherine II., while the Oukrainiens carried on stubborn wars against the Poles to defend their orthodoxy. Nor are the characteristics given of the Great Russian by any means happy. The Oukrainien is certainly more slow, more phlegmatic, outwardly at least, than the Great Russian, his mind being of a contemplative turn. His religious feeling is more a longing for righteousness than anything else; he therefore does not pay much attention to the outward side of religion. The Great Russian is perhaps quicker; he has a speculative turn of mind, but his religious feeling, as a feeling, is not deep. For him religion is more a matter of speculation and formal conformity to a certain dogma. That is why the greater number of religious sects in Great Russia are based on some complicated and sometimes perverted interpretation of the Scripture or the writings of some saints. It is only natural, therefore, that a religious movement based exclusively on the longing for inward peace on the one side, and on the teachings of the Gospel *how to live* on the other, without paying any attention to ritual or to theological subtleties, was a real emanation of the Oukrainien national character, but not very much in accordance with that of the Great Russians. How far our opinion is right the reader can gather from the following:—In 1874 a young explorer made a tour in the Kherson province, going on foot, in peasant dress, from one Stundist village to another. He found that the nearer the place was to the Germans the more Stundism had the character of pietism, and the more the doctrine of salvation through faith was predominant; but the farther he went, that is, the more the Oukrainiens were left to their natural tendencies, the more Stundism became practical

Christianity, rather a school of good righteous life, and the more the doctrine of salvation by means of good deeds came to the front.

Were the esteemed author better acquainted with the life of the people at large, he would not talk so decidedly about "the folly of the Russian communal system of land tenure." The "folly" of a system which was adopted in some places by those very German colonists whom our author speaks so highly of—and adopted after they had tried the principle of personal property for centuries—cannot be so altogether foolish as it may seem to some people brought up in different surroundings and ideas. The Stundist does not keep to the system because he is an Oukrainien, who is far more an individualist than a Great Russian, because the past has not bequeathed to him that form of land tenure. But this proves nothing against the system. F. VOLKHOVSKY.

Help for the Stundists.

Neither the English Nonconformists nor the Friends of Russian Freedom have shown themselves indifferent to the sufferings of the Russian Evangelists. The wants of the persecuted are twofold—physical and spiritual. The *Christian World* deserves the credit of starting a Stundist Fund, by means of which, during the last two years, money has been distributed among Stundists whose homes have been broken up, or whose occupations have been taken from them, or who have been exiled. But side by side with the want of comfort the Russian Evangelists feel another hunger and thirst proceeding from the utter lack of suitable literature, especially in their own native language, which is different from the official and literary Russian. To supply them with such literature became the problem taken up by a handful of men residing mostly in Galicia (Austria). Such were Ivan Franko, a well-known Oukrainien novelist and poet (Austria, Lemberg, Bajki, Gluboka ulica, 7), Michael Pavlik, editor of the Oukrainien paper *Narod* (Austria, Kolomyja, Zamkova ulica), Michael Dragomanov, Professor of History at the Sofia University (Bulgaria), P. Koulisch, the translator of the Gospel into the Oukrainien language, and others. They have published some excellent little tracts in Oukrainien, such as "About the Brotherhood of the Baptists in Oukraina," "The Evangelical Creed in Old England" (about Wycliffe), "Tobias' Words"—the story of Tobias in verse, &c. For further publication of such literature a fund was started in Galicia by Mr. Ivan Franko, and our Society has already received a few contributions towards it. We should be glad to learn of some more, as the spiritual hunger of the Stundist is great, but hardly any food is provided. Contributions may be sent either through our Society or direct to Mr. Franko or Mr. Pavlik, to their addresses respectively.

Meetings.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE met on February 7th, at Mr. Rix's Rooms, Burlington House. Present: Mr. Herbert Thompson in the chair, Mr. J. F. Green, Miss Hargrave, Mrs. Mallet, Miss Radford, Mrs. Voynich, Mr. Mackenzie, Mr. Pease, Mr. W. Thompson, Mr. Perris, Mr. Rix, Mr. Fisher Unwin, and the Hon. Sec., also Mr. Voynich, Mr. Volkhovsky and Mr. Stepniak. (1) Letters apologising for absence were read from Dr. Spence Watson, Mrs. A. Sidgwick, Mr. Byles, M.P., Mr. E. Morton, M.P., and Mr. Allanson Picton, M.P. (2) Proposals were brought before the committee for sup-

plying provincial newspapers with articles containing information as to the objects and work of the S.F.R.F.; also for reprinting the letter written by Mdme. Tzebrikova to the Tzar, and for answering attacks on the Society that had recently appeared in several English and Russian papers, in connection with the withdrawal from the General Committee of the two Government Ministers, Mr. Arthur Acland and Mr. Shaw Lefevre; and on the motion of Mr. Herbert Thompson it was resolved that a Sub-Committee should be formed to consider the desirability of printing or reprinting pamphlets, and of supplying newspapers with information, and to decide the question of answering the special charges which had been made against the Society. It was resolved that this Sub-Committee should make a report to next meeting of the Executive Committee. (3) The Hon. Secretary reported that the sum of £43 9s. 6d. (including donations) had been cleared on Mr. Kennan's lecture on January 8th, and read letters from many M.P.'s and other distinguished persons regretting their inability to be present on that occasion. On the motion of Mr. Volkhovsky a vote of thanks was passed to the Hon. Sec.

LEEDS BRANCH.—We learn from the Hon. Sec., Mr. H. Rothstein, 87, Byron Street, that our branch there finds itself in a better position than it was a year ago. The Secretary has the co-operation of the Rev. H. Martin, whose letter is quoted in another column. In March a members' meeting will be held to elect a new committee, and the branch hopes to hold a public meeting, at which a lecture will be delivered, in April.

PLYMOUTH BRANCH (Hon. Sec., Mr. John Adams, 14, St. Lawrence Road).—Arrangements have been completed by the Plymouth Branch for Mr. Kennan's lecture on March 2nd. The subject of Russian Freedom has been warmly taken up by the Press, and the meeting, which is to be held in the Guildhall, is confidently expected to be a great success.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE BRANCH (Hon. Sec., Miss Laing, 33, Hutt Street, Gateshead).—On Sunday, February 4th, Mr. Kennan delivered a lecture on "Russian Political Exiles" to a deeply interested audience of more than 3,000. On Monday evening Mr. Kennan lectured on "Political Exiles at the Siberian Convict Mines," this time under the auspices of the S.F.R.F. Fewer people were present, but no less enthusiasm and interest were manifested. A vote of thanks to Mr. Kennan was proposed by Dr. Spence Watson and cordially seconded by Dr. Oliver. The financial side of this lecture is as follows:—Receipts: By tickets sold, £22 19s. 4d.; sale of FREE RUSSIA, 4s. 8d.; donation, 5s.—£23 9s. 0d. Expenditure: Hire of hall, &c., £3 4s.; advertisements, £7 8s. 5d.; printing, £2 5s. 6d.; balance remitted to treasurer, £10 11s. 1d.—£23 9s. 0d.—A committee meeting was held on February 8th, when it was resolved to arrange a short series of lectures on "The History of Russia," and to invite Dr. Spence Watson to deliver the first on "The Condition of the Russian Peasantry."

HASTINGS.—Through the kindness of Mr. Alexander Milne, a lecture upon Russia has been arranged for the 15th March, to be delivered at the University School, Hastings, by Mrs. Charles Mallet, with a view to the formation of a Hastings Branch of the S.F.R.F.

During the month of February, among others, the following lectures were delivered:—

On the 5th, by F. Volkhovsky, for the United Liberal Club, Hull. The president of the Club, Mr. James Reckitt, J.P., was in the chair, supported by other well-known Liberals of the place, and great sympathy to the cause was shown. The sale of literature exceeded 12s.

On Sunday, the 11th, Mrs. Mallet lectured at the Wandsworth Liberal Club.

On the 12th, F. Volkhovsky lectured for the Heaton Chapel Literary and Philosophical Society (near Stockport), Alderman Forrest being in the chair. Great enthusiasm was manifested, and warm speeches delivered in support of the pro-Russian movement. The sale of our cheap literature exceeded £1, and we may rely on having acquired some new F.R.F. on that occasion.

On Sunday, the 18th, Mrs. Charles Mallet lectured at Field Lane Chapel, Forest Gate, to an audience of 600 people, who evinced deep sympathy with the cause of Freedom in Russia and a hearty appreciation of the lecture.

At 8.30 the same evening Mrs. Mallet gave her lecture, "Russia: Her Patriots and Prisons" (illustrated with lime-light pictures), to the members of the Hatcham Liberal Club, by whom she was received with enthusiastic applause.

On February 26th Mr. Stepniak lectured to the North St. Pancras Women's Liberal Association.

But the most effective work in the lecturing line has been done by our eminent guest Mr. George Kennan, who has lectured during the last month in Cork, Newcastle, Lancaster, Sunderland, Wimbledon, London Inst., Birkbeck Inst., West Norwood, Harewood (near Leeds), Middlesbrough, Cambridge, Helibury, and to the London Ethical Society. The last lecture of the month—on the 28th ult.—was delivered by Mr. Kennan under the auspices of our Cardiff Branch in the large Park Hall. We may confidently speak of it as of an accomplished success, though no account of it could reach us in time to be printed, as we know both the powers of the lecturer and the organizing abilities of our Branch Secretary.

Lecture List.

The ladies and gentlemen whose names appear in the following list have, with the approval of the Executive Committee, consented to lecture *gratis* on the subjects opposite their names, under the auspices of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom. Clubs, associations, societies and similar institutions, or sympathisers with Russian Freedom, desirous of securing the services of any of these ladies or gentlemen, should communicate with the lecturer direct.

Mrs. MALLEY, 132, Cromwell-road, S.W. (not on Thursday or Friday.) Single Lecture: "Russia and her People." Three Lectures: "Russia and Siberia" (1) "Geography and Climate;" (2) "Early History;" (3) "Late History." "Land system—Present Condition—The Mir, the Commune." Three Lectures: "Russian Martyrs:" (1) "The Peasants;" (2) "Administrative Exiles;" (3) "The Stundists." A Course of Nine Lectures, devoting two to the subject of Administrative Exiles.

W. F. MOULTON, The Leys School, Cambridge. Subject: "Russia To-day and To-morrow."

G. H. PERRIS, 115, Fleet-street, E.C. Subjects: "Russia's Place in Modern Europe." "The Personnel of the Russian Revolutionary Movement." "The Episode of the 'Terror.'" "The Coming Crash in Russia."

Miss ADA RADFORD, 1, South Hill Avenue, Harrow. Subjects: "Russian Exiles," and "Russia and the Revolutionists."

GEORGE STANDRING, 7, Finsbury-street, E.C. Subject: "The Russian Revolutionary Movement."

G. L. MALLEY, Hon. Sec.

LANTERN SLIDES FOR FREE RUSSIA.—To assist those who purpose delivering local lectures on the subject there have been prepared 30 lantern slides of the most striking illustrations in Kennan's "Siberia." No charge of any kind is made for the use of the slides, but they must be returned carriage free and uninjured. With the slides is lent a copy of Kennan's "Siberia," 2 vols., with the descriptive passages marked. The Century Company having accorded permission to use these slides, they may be used without fear of infringement of copyright. Apply Thomas Laurie, 28, Paternoster Row, London.

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THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF RUSSIAN FREEDOM.

THE English Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, founded in November, 1889, has for its objects to aid, to the extent of its powers, the Russian patriots who are trying to obtain for their country that Political Freedom and Self-government which Western nations have enjoyed for generations.

The Society appeals to the enlightened men and women of all countries, without distinction of nationality or political creed, who cannot witness with indifference the horrors perpetrated in the Empire of the Tzars, and who wish a better future for the masses of the Russian people. Further contributions to the funds and further work are needed and will be welcome. Membership is acquired by sending to the Treasurer an annual subscription of or exceeding Five Shillings. Members are entitled to receive *Free Russia* post free.

All Contributions and Subscriptions to be addressed to Dr. R. SPENCE WATSON, Bensham Grove, Gateshead

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CONTENTS.

Arrests in Russia.—*Lectures.*—*Alexander III.'s Justice.*—*A Horrible Tragedy.*—*The Political Claims of the Russian Liberals (continued, by F. Volkhovsky).*—*News and Notes of the Month.*—*A Philosophy of Solidarity (by S. Stepniak).*—*The Annual Meeting of the S.F.R.F.*—*List of Subscribers.*

Arrests in Russia.

The whole English Press reports arrests throughout Russia, and reliable private information confirms the fact. What does it mean?—such is the question every lover of liberty asks him or herself. To this question the *Standard* correspondent replies:—

Those who pretend to be well informed declare that this is the death-blow to the revolution which was being carefully prepared. All the most respectable, most earnest, and most influential of the old Revolutionary Party are now either arrested or in hiding, and it will be hard for the rest to attempt anything for many years, if, indeed, the Revolutionists may not be considered already crushed. The celerity and avoidance of publicity, with which what was certainly considered a formidable organisation has been annihilated, prove how thoroughly the police have the matter in hand. The public press, and, indeed, the public itself, fears to whisper what is happening in its midst.

Yes, such is the answer of those who *pretend* to know and to understand the position of things, but not of those who really do so. True the lawless and shameless government of the Tzar, which is always at war with its own people, has lately become greatly alarmed at the evident fact, that people in Russia grow more and more alive to their duties as citizens. This is the more apprehended, because this revival is not confined to a handful of impractical hot-headed, though noble young souls, but comprises various classes of society. "I have just heard of a large landed proprietor, near Luban, having been arrested," says the *Standard's* correspondent, and names in a later telegram a number of persons occupying a certain position among their fellow-citizens, such as Mr. Chermak, Director of the Statistical Bureau in St. Petersburg, with his assistant, Alexandroff and his wife; Mr. von Struve, of the Finance Ministry; Mr. Yegoroff and Mr. Orloff in the Nobility Bank; M. Saklajensky, Professor of Natural History; Dr. Sutchinsky and a fashionable dressmaker, Kernajetskya; in Orel, among others, an Inspector of Taxation, M. Valter was arrested, and also the chief engineer of a railway, M. Korolyoff; in Baku even an orthodox priest, M. Sokolovsky, was seized.* The aims and modes of action of

* Our own correspondent adds to these names some others, of which we may mention: a graduate of the St. Petersburg University, Miklashevsky, Doctor Zvyaguiév, and journalist Nikolaïv. In Toulá and the Crimea also arrests were made. In Moscow the number of people seized exceeds 100, mostly from among engineers and undergraduates.

all those people were so peaceful, moderate and reasonable, that not only in England, but even in Germany, nay in a country like Austria, they would be regarded as indisputable and beneficial to the community at large. The arrested called themselves "Friends of Political Liberty," says the *Standard*, and, as the *Daily Telegraph's* correspondent states:—

Endeavoured to propagate their ideas by means of spoken and written discourses. One secret printing press of miniature dimensions has been found. *The character of the society is rather literary than political, and it eschewed all violent measures.*

But that was what the Russian government feared most, as such aspirations and methods are exactly those that are understood and favoured by people in general, and will certainly be supported by foreign sympathy throughout the world. So the police spared no efforts to misrepresent the character of the new movement in Russia, to circulate false reports, and the *Daily Chronicle's* St. Petersburg correspondent fell into the trap, when telegraphing over a fortnight ago, that bombs were prepared to be thrown in the Kazan or Isaac cathedrals, though, by the way, the Tzar never visits those churches, having a cathedral of his own in the Winter Palace. But on the 15th inst. he had more reliable information and wired, "I hear from other sources that the majority of the students who have been arrested . . . are neither anarchists or nihilists, but revolutionists, who are anxious to substitute for the present régime one more in accordance with those existing in other countries on the Continent."

The Tzar's government understands perfectly the nature of the danger that threatens it, and is evidently resolved to administer a "death-blow" to the aspirations of the people. The methods adopted are the usual methods of the government: imprisonment, insult, lawless arrests of young men and girls, of which further particulars will be found in other columns. Side by side with this the Russian embassies and consulates, both in Europe and America, are showing signs of increased activity, trying on the one hand to keep under supervision those young men and girls who are driven by the reaction raging in their own country to seek education in foreign lands, and on the other to undermine the efforts of the Russian political refugees to help their brethren in Russia by means of a free press. Lately the news reached us that several Russian medical students in Paris, of both sexes, when going to Russia for their holidays, were searched on the frontier, &c.

But what, with all its atrocious unscrupulousness and fiendish cruelty, can the Russian government attain in the end? *Nothing, that can shake the movement at its foundation*—that we say with the profoundest conviction and full knowledge of Russian affairs. Homes may be

ruined, victims killed by inches, wives robbed of their husbands, parents of their children, brothers of their sisters. But will all these official crimes really reduce the number of people who feel acutely, that the present position of things in Russia is insupportable, and who are convinced that a *habeas corpus*, political freedom and representative government *must* be got by any means or at any price? Quite the contrary. What, after all, can the Tzar and his government do? They can and will exile a large number of malcontents and put others under police surveillance, without removing them from their homes. That, of course, means misery and vexation for those concerned, but *politically* it means simply transferring the element of disaffection from one part of the empire to another. Already there is hardly a town in European Russia where there are not a number of people on whom the police have to keep an eye. That number is increasing daily, and will increase still more, and this makes it impossible for the police to carry out the supervision effectively. To impede a movement is not to annihilate it, and the English correspondents speaking of "how thoroughly the police have the matter in hand," are too quick in drawing conclusions from insufficient evidence. With few exceptions the correspondents see in such matters only what is on the surface. No political organization—which in Russia is of necessity clandestine, however peaceful—can admit them into their confidence. Thus they may know the number of persons arrested, and their names; but whether those persons are really those who are the most dangerous to the government, whether the police committed blunders by arresting friends among the enemies, and how many still more formidable champions of liberty and justice are at work, unnoticed by his Majesty's spies, is unknown to them.

Now, as people who have chosen to openly acknowledge ourselves *Friends of Russian Freedom*, and who have already done something in that capacity, we enjoy the privilege of knowing something of what is behind the scenes. And we are happy to announce that notwithstanding all the official terrorism displayed lately in Russia, independent Russian literature is still finding its way into the empire of the Tzars, that the further development of its underground work in Russia is in full swing, notwithstanding spies and intimidators, that the demand for an altogether independent clandestine periodical is so great, that, very likely, within the limits of a year it will be created, and finally that that awakening of Russian society to their civic duties, which finds its outlet in open, "legal" endeavour to spread education, and to increase the welfare of the peasants, is still going on unabated; this may

be gathered even from the gagged Russian newspapers and reviews.

There is only one way in which the Russian official terrorism can do much harm to the Russian liberation movement; it may force it from a peaceful method into a violent one. If this happens, the responsibility for all the reprisals that may occur will rest entirely and exclusively with the Tzar's government. Let that not be forgotten.

Lectures.

Just at present the secretaries of various clubs and associations are making up their lists of lectures for the coming session. We call their attention to the following lecture list in the hope that they may avail themselves of it. The lectures are given gratis with the approval of the Executive Committee. Secretaries anxious to secure the service of any of these ladies or gentlemen should communicate directly with the lecturer.

Mrs. MALLEY, 132, Cromwell-road, S.W. (not on Thursday or Friday.) Single Lecture: "Russia and her People." Three Lectures: "Russia and Siberia" (1) "Geography and Climate;" (2) "Early History;" (3) "Late History." "Land system—Present Condition—The Mir, the Commune." Three Lectures: "Russian Martyrs;" (1) "The Peasants;" (2) "Administrative Exiles;" (3) "The Stundists." A Course of Nine Lectures, devoting two to the subject of Administrative Exiles.

W. F. MOULTON, The Leys School, Cambridge. Subject: "Russia To-day and To-morrow."

G. H. PERRIS, 115, Fleet-street, E.C. Subjects: "Russia's Place in Modern Europe." "The Personnel of the Russian Revolutionary Movement." "The Episode of the 'Terror.'" "The Coming Crash in Russia."

Miss ADA RADFORD, 1, South Hill Avenue, Harrow. Subjects: "Russian Exiles," and "Russia and the Revolutionists."

GEORGE STANDRING, 7, Finsbury-street, E.C. Subject: "The Russian Revolutionary Movement."

Mr. Thomas Laurie, 28, Paternoster Row, London, offers to anyone desirous to make use of them for lecturing, 30 lantern slides from the most striking illustrations in Kennan's "Siberia," together with a copy of the book in which the corresponding descriptive passages are marked. No charge of any kind is made for the use of the slides, but they must be returned carriage paid and uninjured.

G. L. MALLEY, Hon. Sec.

Alexander III's Justice.

The Russian Senate was founded by Peter I. as a stronghold of legality. In one of the ukases addressed to that body, that monarch wrote: "It is useless to make laws if they are not to be observed." But as legality and unlimited power are mutually exclusive, the senate never was altogether what it ought to have been, and still less is it so in our times. This applies mainly to its first department, whose province was to judge all state officials of a certain rank, against whom charges had been brought. Here

is a striking instance which occurred a little more than a month ago. On the 18th of April last the first department of the Russian senate pronounced its judgment in the case P. V. Nekludov, governor of the Orel province. He was charged with having unlawfully flogged a number of peasants, who had declined to comply with the orders of the police. Several women and old men died from the effects of the cruelties imposed upon them. The first department found that the said doings of Nekludov contained all the essential features of a crime, and that according to law he ought to be arraigned before a court, but taking into consideration that the arraignment would involve a preliminary enquiry, during which the peasantry of the province of which Nekludov was governor would be questioned in the capacity of witnesses, "which is not desirable," and that finally the Ministry of Internal Affairs had taken no steps against Nekludov as an indicted person, the senate resolved to reprimand the governor Nekludov. As, however, this resolution is not in strict conformity with the law, therefore before its enactment the sanction of his Imperial Majesty is to be obtained through the Minister of Justice.

This is what is called justice and legality in official Russia. We know, however, that above all institutions and officials there is an omnipotent Tzar, whose omnipotence is justified, if ever, when it enables him to redress any wrong and error committed by his servants. So may we not be sure that after having had the whole shameful business reported to him, Alexander III. stopped it and showed that there was justice in Russia?

The fact however is that to the report of the Ministers of Justice his Imperial Majesty most graciously answered: "I am very glad." We leave our readers to decide what it was he was glad about. We can't.

A Horrible Tragedy.

(A CORRESPONDENCE FROM KIEV.)

The commander of one of the regiments quartered in Kiev, Tregoubov by name, was distinguished for his roughness and insolence in his relations with the officers of his regiment, not to speak of the soldiers. This led to many protests on the part of the officers, addressed to Tregoubov by the officers in a body. This, however, lead to nothing, and the officers then sent in a collective complaint to the commander of the local troops, General Dragomirov, asking him either to transfer them, or Tregoubov, to some other place, as it had become impossible for them to serve with him. According to Russian law, the official against whom a complaint is made is asked to give his explanations to the authorities, for which purpose the complaint itself is communicated to him, and this Dragomirov

did. Tregoubov immediately suspected the paymaster of the regiment to be the instigator of the complaints, and planned a revenge. He asked the paymaster to lend him £300, knowing very well that the man had no money of his own, but, trusting his commander's word, would lend him government money. But as soon as he got it he arranged an inspection of the funds, and the lack of the £300 was discovered. The paymaster was indicted, but the next day he was found dead. He had shot himself, leaving a letter addressed to his comrades, in which he explained the whole mean intrigue of Tregoubov. Under the impression of the horrible news the officers gathered in a body and discussed the question. They came to the conclusion that there was no justice for them by legal means, and passed a resolution unprecedented in the annals of the Russian army—a resolution to kill the commander of their regiment. They drew lots, and the lot fell to the young adjutant of the regiment, who went to find Tregoubov and shot him on the spot.

Dragomirov was summoned to St. Petersburg to explain, and the whole tragedy created the greater sensation as the Tzar was expected to come to Kiev. It is expected that the whole regiment will be disbanded.

*The Political Claims of the Russian Liberals.**

It will be easily understood that the injustice, arbitrariness and insincerity with which Alexander II. and his government treated the Russian Liberals, strengthened the position of the revolutionists. The latter proclaimed the government hopeless, a government that could not be trusted; and the manner in which the peaceful and loyal class of society was treated, that very class to which it applied itself in difficulty, justified the uncompromising attitude of the revolutionary party in the eyes of many, who before thought differently. Among other reasons, we find here the explanation of the enormous activity the revolutionary party developed, notwithstanding the comparatively small number of its acknowledged adherents; an activity which culminated in the death of Alexander II.

That tragedy raised again a burning question for the peaceful citizens of Russia who cared for the welfare of the community. They wanted to put an end to the deplorable internal struggle, they wanted to remain loyal to the Tzar and to do their duty as citizens; but they felt that neither was possible so long as the government clung obstinately to bureaucracy, and autocracy and suppressed aspira-

* For the first article on the subject see the preceding No. of FREE RUSSIA.

tions towards liberty and self-government. At the same time they had no earnest trust of the government's good faith or grasp of the political situation. That is evident from speeches that were delivered in some of the *zemstvo*-assemblies, convened soon after the 13th of March, 1881.

In the Novgorod *zemstvo* one of its members, N. N. Nechayev, delivered a speech in which, among other things, he said: "Hardly can we doubt, that it is our duty to speak out on this occasion. True, the literal meaning of the '*zemstvo* statutes' does not grant us that right. But it is impossible to be guided only by the literal meaning of the law at a moment of such historical importance as the present; we have to elevate ourselves and to see what is the spirit of the law. According to the '*statutes*' we are empowered to deal only with *local* interests. But it is impossible to separate the welfare of the Tzar from any local interests! Is not his welfare the most urgent interest of any locality and any person? The historical moment we are living through, is a horrible one! Look around you, account to yourself for what is going on, and you will find it impossible to be silent.

"We have before our eyes a long series of endeavours to fight the evil purely by means of police measures, without any co-operation with society. The utter uselessness of such a struggle and the impossibility of obtaining any real success on that path is now-a-days evident to everyone. There is no going further on that path, it is also impossible to listen to appeals to reaction, as that would mean renouncing the great principles which were bequeathed to us by the late monarch. So only one path remains open: society must be called upon to take part in the struggle with the evil, *then* there can be no doubt about the issue."

The Samara *zemstvo* was still more explicit and far less hopeful.

On the 18th of March, 1881, its president † proposed to present Alexander III. with an address, in which the feelings of grief at the sad end of the late Tzar, as well as congratulations on his own accession to the Throne were expressed. But the deputy, Zhdanov, opposed the motion. "During the last few years," he said, "we have presented five similar addresses; none of them led to anything, nor did they really express anything, *because all that was in fact weighing on our souls was unrevealed and still remains so.*" He was supported by two other speakers. The deputy Năoumov said: "We do not know what awaits us.‡ It is better, therefore, to keep silence." The deputy

Noudatov said he now considered it a question whether he was right in signing the preceding addresses. "Did we ever mention in them the over-burdening of the peasantry with taxes, the crushing of labour by capital, the lack of safeguards to personal liberty? No; we never did! Well, then, it is better not to say anything at all—to be silent."

[The motion of the president was declined almost unanimously.]

We are unable to mention here all the *zemstvos* that at that time expressed themselves in favour of representative government and political liberty, as the publication of the accounts of the sessions were dependent upon the permission of the governor of the province. We know, however, that the *zemstvos* of Ryazan, Taurida and Kazan, also the *douma* of Kazan and the nobility of Samara were among them.

F. VOLKHOVSKY.

(To be concluded.)

News & Notes of the Month.

The author of the Krozhe butchery, the governor of the Kovno province, Klingenberg, was, as will be remembered, summoned to St. Petersburg to explain. It seems that his explanations proved satisfactory to the Tzar, as he was invited, among others, to a court ball at the last carnival, at which the Tzar addressed a few words to him. The latter is generally regarded as a special sign of favour.

* * *

Our readers know already how much the Russian judiciary has been mutilated, since it was remodelled to some extent on rational principles, in 1864. The new minister of justice N. V. Mouraviov made a rather sensational start; he instituted, with the sanction of the Tzar, a committee to systematize those innovations which had been introduced into the judiciary system, at the same time to suggest measures for its improvement, by giving it a certain harmony "which would equally secure the interests of order in the country, and the lawful rights of individuals." We called this a sensational start, because Russian society would like to understand this step, as one taken with the aim of bringing back the Russian judiciary, at least to its original improved state, and to introduce this improved state into the whole of Russia. Whether it will be so is, however, a question. On the one hand the minister's invitations to participate in the work of the committee, addressed to several high officials, well known adherents of the rational principles of 1864, and to members of the bar and universities, would seem to point to a liberal direction being given to affairs, but on the other hand, in an opening speech, the minister explained at some length, that the

† The presidents of the *zemstvo* assemblies are, according to law, the marshals of the local nobility, which is often not in accordance with the wishes of the assemblies.

‡ That is, what the attitude of the central government towards the *zemstvo* will be.—ED.

questions of the jury and of publicity were not open for discussion by the committee, thus giving countenance to the mutilation of those principles already perpetrated.

* * *

A very big book was recently published by the Russian government on the occasion of the World's Columbian Exposition, for the glorification of its economic policy. It is called "The Industries of Russia: Manufactures and Trade." Among other things it contains a picture of the position of the Russian factory-worker, which, though unable to conceal altogether its wretchedness, makes every effort to make it look bright. Not a little emphasis is put into the description of the protection exercised by the factory-inspectors, officials created under the ministry of N. Bunge. We are glad to be able to contrast with it a statement of the *Novoe Vremya*: a paper which, certainly, cannot be suspected of lack of good will to support the government in everything. In its issue of April 19th, it states that as soon as the inspection of factories was instituted, the factory-owners raised a clamour against the inspectors "for their 'meddling' with what the factory owners regarded as their 'private business,' such as the feeding of the working men on putrified victuals, lodging them in filthy dens, employing them in unhealthy premises, where the people had to work for 14 or 15 consecutive hours. However evident the real reason of complaints made by the factory owners against the inspectors was, yet it must be confessed with regret, that the effect aimed at was produced. *The inspection of factories, though not abolished in a formal way, was practically put in an impossible position.* On the one side it was as if the inspectors were asked to maintain justice and law in the mutual relations between the factory-owners and the hands (for which purpose they were appointed); on the other hand they were required not to embarrass the employers, not to interfere with their relations to the workers without dire need *for fear of impressing on the minds of the working people perverted ideas.* It goes without saying, that being put under such conditions, *the inspection of factories was gradually transformed into mere red-tapism with only formal duties.*"

* * *

The 20th of February was the 75th anniversary of the St. Petersburg University. The Russian papers reported in due time such little commemoration of the event as had taken place in the "higher" and more or less official circle. But it never mentioned a word (because it couldn't) of an informal but certainly more hearty banquet on the occasion, which had a sad ending. It transpired only lately. A number of undergraduates asked the Prefect of St. Petersburg, General von Val, for permission to have a tea party to commemorate the anni-

versary of their *alma mater*. This was not permitted, but a *dinner* for 100 or 200 persons was allowed to be given (the clever general knew that the advanced young Russians are, as a rule, pretty poor). The admission to dinner was by ticket, and its promoters took the greatest care that only people with good established reputations should be admitted. Some professors of the university and litterateurs were also invited. But the police also took some care to outwit the students, for the purpose of having their own people in the banquet room. So they replaced all the waiters of the restaurant where the party took place with spies, and had that very night a "nice" report of the proceedings—whether true or embellished did not matter. The very next morning a charge was brought against the initiators and some of the participants of the banquet. It included three points: (1) The banquet was not a regular dinner, and the number of participants exceeded the number allowed, as there were about 600 persons present; (2) a professor of the university delivered a speech in which he urged the undergraduates to pay attention to the needs of the people, and especially of the peasantry, and to try to bring light into their midst; (3) an undergraduate, Talalaëv, invited those present to make a subscription on behalf of the starving strikers and their families at the factory of a Voronin.

An undergraduate, Bartold by name, was at once exiled to Novgorod by administrative order for two years, Talalaëv was imprisoned, and as the police thought they had not got from him all the information about his doings they wanted, they imprisoned his brother, a boy of thirteen. Owing to his parents' entreaties, the child is now liberated, but his elder brother is still kept in prison.

That is the Russian *official* way of commemorating events connected with popular progress and national enlightenment.

* * *

The *Standard* correspondent informs us that on the occasion of the late arrests in St. Petersburg, a lady-dressmaker and several of her apprentices were stripped naked. No doubt the pretext was that they were to be searched. Private intelligence confirms the fact.

* * *

On March 30th, 1892, an undergraduate of the Moscow University of the mathematical faculty, Paul Korotkevich, was arrested on the charge of taking part in political propaganda, and kept in solitary confinement until he died, on the 7th February, 1893, from consumption, without ever having been brought to trial. That is what is called by the Russian government preliminary imprisonment.

* * *

In May, 1893, another young man expiated by death the unpardonable guilt of being a

patriot. A law-student of the Moscow University, Nicolas Karatygin, was arrested in May, 1890, at night, when travelling in a train of the Moscow-Yaroslav railway, and after a year's preliminary detention, was imprisoned without trial in the so-called Cross Prison for two years. His term had nearly expired when he fell ill. His relatives implored the officials to liberate him, in order that he might be put under the best medical care. This, however, was denied, and the young martyr died on the eve of the expiration of his trial. This case (as alas, so many others) may be fairly regarded as a death sentence carried out by administrative order.

The English reader will be interested to learn that according to Russian law, whoever wants to establish a Free Library must apply for a special permit from the governor of the province; who has also to sanction the rules of the institution, which he alters in any way he likes. In case such a library is to be established in a building connected with a school, the Ministry of National Education must also be asked for a permit. If granted, the permission involves these two rules. (1) That no book can be placed on the shelves without a special permit for it. (2) That in no case readers may be admitted to read within the precincts of the library, and that books may be given out only on specified days and at certain hours, which do not clash with lesson hours. According to the paragraphs 175 and 158 of the statutes concerning censorship, no person can start a library, book store, reading room, printing office, or any institution for the reproduction of letters or images, without a special permit: in St. Petersburg from the Prefect, in Moscow from the Governor-General, and in all other places from the respective governors of the provinces.

But even under such Draconian law the best Russians at the present time are trying to do something to increase the means of enlightenment throughout Russia. A private society for the promotion of elementary knowledge in St. Petersburg has recently issued a pamphlet in which the *via dolorosa* of anyone who would like to establish a Free Library, is made as easy as it can be under the circumstances, by minute explanations of how and to whom to apply, and what steps to take to safely pass all the Scyllas and Charybdis. That pamphlet, we expect, will do a great deal of good.

The epilogue of the great demonstration which took place in Warsaw on April 17th has begun. All the arrested are now divided into four classes. Those regarded as organisers of the demonstration (Zielinski, Michalowski, Kozubowski and a fourth whose name is unknown to the public, all four being medical students), will be sent administratively into exile for five years, to a small town in the Akmolinsk province in central Asia. The second class includes students who had already taken part in manifestations on other occasions. These are expelled from the university, with the deprivation of the right of entering any other for five years, and to exile for the same period into European Russia. The third and fourth sections include townspeople, of whom those who were already entered on the lists of the secret police, are to be punished more heavily than those

who were not suspected of that crime yet did participate in the demonstration. It is not yet known what exactly awaits them.

We are informed from Shanghai that there are only two booksellers' shops there, Kelly and Walsh, Limited, and Brewer; both of these have been approached in past years by people anxious to distribute independent literature in Russian, and both having displayed the books entrusted to them on their counters were very courteously requested by Russian officials to withdraw them, which they did. We are rather surprised at the readiness of people, who seem to be of English stock and under the protection of the British Flag, to comply with such a request, however courteously made.

In the Autumn a lecture or lectures will be given in Worcester on Russian Literature, by Mrs. (Mildred) Berkeley.

A charming anecdote is circulating in St. Petersburg. It is said that two gentlemen were passing a clever policeman stationed at a corner of the Anichkov Palace (the present Tzar's residence in St. Petersburg), who was of course instructed to take notice of anything concerning the Tzar. Continuing their conversation, one of the gentlemen said, "I assure you it is true, you know yourself he is stupid and a coward." "If you please gentlemen," said the policeman, "come with me to the police-station." "What do you mean?" they said, in surprise. "Why should we go to the police-station?" "Why" retorted the policeman, "We all know very well who it is who is stupid and a coward, you have to account for it, come along if you please."

A Philosophy of Solidarity.

"The A B C of Social Science," in three volumes, treating of Greek, Roman and Modern Western civilisation, by N. Flerovsky (V. V. Bervy). Published by the Russian Free Press Fund, London. (In Russian).

Some time ago we spoke in the pages of FREE RUSSIA of the arrival in this country of Mr. V. V. Bervy, widely known in Russia as the author of several books on social and philosophic subjects, which had a deep influence upon his contemporaries. Forty years of exile was the price he had to pay for his noble efforts, and now, at the mature age of 65, when his enemies seemed to have grown tired of molesting him, he has abandoned his native land, his family, a good situation, and voluntarily expatriated himself, in order to join once again in the hard struggle for Russian liberty and a better future. Mr. Bervy's recent contribution to the opposition literature is a book on philosophy and ethics, which ought to serve as a basis for the practical conclusions of our democrats and socialists. The ardent lover of freedom is always discernable through the dialectical subtleties of the philosopher.

The broad and original idea which Mr. Bervy puts at the foundation of his philosophical doctrine is that of the intellectual kinship of the whole universe. According to him, the whole world, the inorganic as well as the organic one, possesses in different degrees the elements of *thought* which men have proudly attributed to their own species only. *Thought* is the inspiring principle and propelling force determining the progress of the organic world as much as that of human societies. By a subtle reasoning process Mr. Bervy intends to prove that progress in nature is the simple manifestation of logic. We will not follow him in this domain, in order to dwell more fully upon the application of his doctrine to sociology,

which seems to us the most brilliant and important part of his work. The author's social philosophy is but the broadening of his philosophy of the inorganic world. Thus the principle of solidarity, which is the cement holding human societies together, is manifested, according to him, in the lower order of creation—in plants, for example, by the tendency of the cells to form organic wholes. Life is the growth of solidarity, death, its decay: the aim of all organic consciousness, resistance to the decay of the solidarity of its parts. Similarly men, who are cells of the body social, have a natural tendency to form organised solid bodies, called tribes or states, according to the size and maturity of the social organism. Speech plays in the body social the part of nerves in organic bodies, transmitting sensations and allowing them to be evolved into thoughts and stimulants for action. It is only through speech that an organically solid human society can be formed and its progress secured. This progress, according to our author, is summed up in three words—development of solidarity. In the origin of human societies this solidarity was obtained at the expense of freedom. It was based upon the development in the masses of the instinct of obedience, and upon the subjugation of the weak to the strong. But side by side with this form of solidarity based upon exploitation, humanity evolved the family, in which solidarity is based upon an opposite principle—the work of the strong for the weak, and the easy and voluntary sacrifice of egotistic interests for the good of the whole. The struggle between these two principles is the corner-stone of the evolution of human societies. The author shows how it determined, and was bound to determine, first the transformation of the primitive despotic political organisations into self-governing free political organisations. Then he shows how the moral growth of humanity and the better conception of men's individual happiness is bound to determine a further step in the evolution of solidarity, and lead to a higher form of social organisation. When individuals can no longer separate their own happiness from that of their neighbours, no part or section or class of society can remain in conditions unsuitable for the full and harmonious development of its members, just as a living body cannot feel healthy unless all its molecules and parts are performing their functions naturally and unrestrainedly.

The propaganda of the idea of brotherhood and solidarity is just the moral principle which is of the greatest importance for the Russian youth; especially at the present day, when the whole enormous machinery of the Tzar's government is working for his demoralisation. This makes the book a most welcome one.

S. STEPNIAK.

The Annual Meeting.

The Annual Meeting of the English Friends of Russian Freedom, was held on May 3rd, at the Ideal Club, 185, Tottenham-court-road, at 5.30 p.m. Dr. Spence Watson presided, and there were present: Mrs. Spence Watson, Mrs. Arthur Sidgwick, Mrs. P. W. Bunting, Mrs. W. Voynich, Miss Armstrong, Miss G. L. Mallet, Miss M. Hargrave, Mr. Allanson Picton, M.P., Mr. Fisher Unwin, Mr. J. F. Green, Mr. H. M. Thompson, Mr. E. Pease, Mr. Stepniak, and others. The report of the Executive Committee was read and adopted. Speeches were delivered by Dr. Watson, Mr. Allanson Picton, M.P., and Mr. Stepniak.

In a speech of some length, Dr. Watson pointed out that this meeting was one of particular interest on account of the attacks that had lately been made on the Society, both in the English and Russian press. The Committee of the English Friends of Russian Freedom was too well known for it to be necessary to refer to the accusation brought against it of participating in dynamite plots. Such attacks were a cause rather for congratulation than condolence, they showed that the work of the Society was having its effect, and that the Society was making itself feared by the enemies of freedom in Russia.

Mr. ALLANSON PICTON spoke about the special work entrusted to the sub-committee for the help of political exiles, of which he is chairman, and supporting, Dr. Watson said that the accusations lately brought against such a body as the Committee of the English Friends of Russian Freedom would be simply smiled at.

Mr. STEPNIAK thanking Dr. Watson for his speech bore witness to the fact that the English Friends of Russian Freedom had become a household word in Russia, that the news of their efforts to arouse English public opinion was carrying encouragement into the hearts of the Russian lovers of freedom.

[For lack of space, the annual report of the Executive Committee, together with the treasurer's reports, is held over until next month.]

THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF RUSSIAN FREEDOM.

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[ONE PENNY.]

THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF RUSSIAN FREEDOM.

THE English Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, founded in November, 1889, has for its objects to aid, to the extent of its powers, the Russian patriots who are trying to obtain for their country that Political Freedom and Self-government which Western nations have enjoyed for generations.

The Society appeals to the enlightened men and women of all countries, without distinction of nationality or political creed, who cannot witness with indifference the horrors perpetrated in the Empire of the Tsars, and who wish a better future for the masses of the Russian people. Further contributions to the funds and further work are needed and will be welcome. Membership is acquired by sending to the Treasurer an annual subscription of or exceeding Five Shillings. Members are entitled to receive *Free Russia* post free.

All Contributions and Subscriptions to be addressed to Dr. R. SPENCE WATSON, Bensham Grove, Gateshead.

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CONTENTS.

A Constitution for Russia (by F. Volkovsky).—News and Notes of the Month.—A Good Political Lesson (by H. M. Thompson).—Further Mutilation of the "Mir."—Letter to the Editor (by Jaakoff Prelooker).—Meetings.—List of Subscribers.

Friends of Russian Freedom! It is a critical moment for the question of liberty in Russia! Public opinion must be stirred to watchfulness and sympathy with the reformers. Make every effort to increase the funds and the staff of workers for the good cause.

For the Committee and Branches of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, see front page.

A Constitution for Russia.

We have received a document of great importance. It is no less a thing than the project of a constitution for Russia, of which many copies are now circulating in that country, and, presumably, will unite in the pursuit of one object many patriots and aspirants towards liberty. It is the production of a mature mind, of a man of erudition and of a practical politician, it may be of several. The author or authors had evidently in view, not only the creation of a governmental machine that would work well, but also one which, leaving in existence but making more independent all the present state institutions—the Council of Ministers, the State Council and the Senate—might have on its side their present *personnel*. As the introduction to the constitution says, "it does not deny, but, on the contrary, is imbued with those leading ideas concerning the Tzar and the People, which are dominant among the masses; at the same time it is thoroughly democratic, giving ample scope and fair play to every heroic endeavour of the individual in Russia, the working force of progress, rather than the associations and corporations alien to Russian life; this is not all, the individual is protected against any possible arbitrary aggression on the part of the representative institutions themselves." The basis on which the whole edifice of the unalienable rights of the citizens is built up is the law courts. All the judges from the justices of the peace up to the senators, are not only not removable, but cannot be promoted without their own consent. The appointment of judges is in the hands of the courts themselves, except that of the senators who are appointed by the Tzar, who has to choose each time from three candidates recommended to him by the Senate. The control of the elections is in the hands of the district courts. The Senate is the supreme court of cassation and sometimes a court of appeal, it also controls the legality of the

proceedings, both of the elective bodies and the government; it finds the indictments against Members of the National Congress collects the statistics of the population for the purposes of election. The promulgation of laws is entirely in its hands. The Attorney-General and the Comptroller-General are dependent upon the Senate.

At the head of the state is a hereditary monarch who rules through a ministry, responsible before the Chamber of Deputies which may find an indictment against them. He appoints the Prime Minister and his colleagues according to the latter's recommendation. He nominates the members of the State Council. He is the head of the army and navy. He may veto any decision of the Chamber of Deputies, but the budget passed by the Chamber with whatever alterations can be vetoed only as a whole, not in parts.

The *permanent* representative bodies are of two kinds: provincial *Sejms*,* and the imperial Chamber of Deputies. Each deputy to the first is to be elected for 75,000 inhabitants, while to the Chamber one deputy represents 300,000 inhabitants. The functions of the *Sejms* and the Chamber are analogous in their main lines to the English House of Commons, but the provincial bodies deal only with affairs concerning their own provinces. The government is to be represented in the *Sejms* by delegates from the Ministry. The Imperial Budget is of course framed by the Ministry but it cannot be carried out without the sanction of the Chamber, which has power to reduce the expenditure but may not increase it. The Ministry is obliged to present the budget at a fixed time, in order to allow ample time for discussion. The bills may be introduced by the government, by any member of the Chamber, and even by outsiders. In cases of disagreement between the higher governmental institutions or between the Chamber of Deputies and the Monarch, a new institution is called into life, and this is the original feature of the constitution. It is called *Zemsky Sobor*, which may be interpreted as National Congress. It is simply a plebiscite organised into a national body. It is to be summoned by a manifesto of the Tzar and only for the purpose of answering "yes" or "no" to certain questions, questions which are to be stated in the manifesto itself, together with a full written statement of the decision arrived at, from each of the disputing parties. No law sanctioned by the Emperor can be proclaimed except by the Senate, which, if it finds the law unconstitutional, submits the question to the Emperor who either annuls his sanction or summons the *Zemsky Sobor*. No law

* The provinces that are to be formed for this purpose must consist of several present provinces; Poland, for example, is to have one Legislative Assembly (*Sejm*). Finland preserves its autonomy.

which puts on the citizens any new duties or taxes, or restrictions of right, or punishments, or which is retrospective in its action, can be carried into effect, except with the consent of the *Zemsky Sobor*.

The candidates for the *Zemsky Sobor* are bound to make a written public statement of how they intend to vote at the ensuing session, and if the elected deputies do not keep their promise their vote is annulled, the votes being compared with the previous pledges by the Senate.

The suffrage is direct and universal. One man one vote, the only limitation being age, which must be 25 to give the right of electing to any of the representative bodies. *Habeas corpus*, freedom of speech, of the press, of conscience, of occupation or mode of life, of changing the place of residence or nationality are to be introduced.

There are two serious and significant innovations for Russia: the first is that any citizen may prosecute an official for an offence committed while on duty, and the other, that no official is allowed to plead "not guilty" because ordered to do so by a superior officer. If to all this we add that the utmost care is taken to safeguard the independence, both of the citizen and of the representative bodies, it will be seen that the scheme, though not free from some weak points, has been seriously and carefully thought out. As an instance of a weakness we may mention the Council of State, which has really nothing to do but to put into shape those laws which have been decided on in principle by the National Congress, a function which could be as easily performed either by the Ministry or by a committee created by one of the representative bodies. Since, however, the authors of the project had the idea of maintaining all the existing higher state institutions, this was inevitable. All who remember the earlier attempts to create a representative government for Russia will notice that the projected constitution recalls, by the idea of the *Zemsky Sobor*, to a certain extent, the schemes of Koshelev and other Slavophiles. But their vague, sentimental and practically meaningless idea of the "direct connection between the Tzar and the People" receives in the new project a real and thoroughly democratic meaning, and thus ensures the sympathies of very different sections of Russian society.

The project is preceded by a short note on the present political situation in Russia, and its weighty language, together with what we know of that situation from different sources, leads us to believe that it puts the present state of things in Russia in the true light. To give our readers an idea of it, we cannot do better than quote the following:—"Two questions are now before the Russian people: (1) Is a constitution necessary for Russia? (2) Is a constitution

possible in Russia? The first of these questions is a question only in form; in fact, it has been already solved in the mind of the Tzar, whose daily experience reminds him of the necessity of a constitutional government for the regular course of state administration. It is solved in the minds of an overwhelming majority of statesmen in power, and only the inveterate custom of bureaucratic insincerity seals their lips. It is solved in the minds of Russian society and all its representatives, the press, the *zemstvo*, and town deputies with only insignificant exceptions. It is solved even in the minds of the uneducated classes, of the masses, because the discontent with the existing arbitrary rule, which pays no attention to law, is universal, and the thirst for freedom and justice is growing. And, finally, it is no longer a question for the revolutionists, who in times past denied the importance of constitutional government to the welfare of the people.

True, different classes of our society represent that constitution to themselves differently, but this touches already on the second question—that of the possibility of a constitution for Russia, because at a particular time in a country only one constitution is possible, namely, that which answers to its social and political peculiarities. Very, very soon a constitution for Russia will be universally discussed, because everyone is already thinking of it. The time is coming when the stones will cry out. Prince Meshchersky† will propose a constitution of his own make, Witte and Yermolov‡ of theirs, Pobedonostzev of his. But in our country neither a landlord, nor a *bourgeois*, nor a clerical constitution is possible, because the middle ages have not bequeathed us those classes of the population, which in Western Europe maintain a landlord or a clerical constitution, while capitalism has not yet had time to place the people under the yoke of the *bourgeoisie*. The educated class (*intelligentsia*), as a devoted champion of the people, must propose a system of constitutional government, which shall be founded, not on the longing for privileges of this or that particular class, but on the idea, pure and simple, of the general welfare of the whole people, on a just combination of different interests existing in the country, and on the necessities of the state as a whole."

Whatever its weaknesses, the project answers to this ideal in its main purpose, and its appearance is certainly an event of great political importance.

F. VOLKHOVSKY.

† The editor of the reactionary paper *Grazhdanin*, which advocates privileges for the nobility.

‡ Ministers of Finance and Agriculture respectively, who are supposed to represent Liberalism in the present Ministry, but who are strong supporters of Protection.

News & Notes of the Month.

The whole press is full of items about Alexander III., his successor, and Princess Alix of Hesse, and we are not going to repeat what is already universally known. We will rather call the attention of our readers to that side of the matter which was not been touched upon by others. The political importance of the present moment for Russia is felt by everyone, but not everybody sees clearly where its importance lies. Most people ask questions about the personal character of the young prince who is going to reign in Russia. They overlook this: At the time of Nicholas I. the personal character of the Russian autocrat was nearly everything, because not only the bulk of the population, but even the overwhelming majority of the ruling class, were an inert passive mass; while the bureaucratic machine, through which the autocrat ruled, was unimpaired by any "innovations" or liberal ideas. This is altogether different now. People who are awake to the consciousness of their rights are to be seen in Russia everywhere now, and a good portion of the officials themselves are eager to exchange the existing system for a better one. The routine, and only that, protects the old régime from being broken up. Under such circumstances every personal change on the throne is that magic "Sesame" which breaks the spell of the routine, sets to work unusual feelings and thoughts, and unites disorganised people. The more so under the present circumstances. The scarcity of news from Livadia, the youth of the heir to the crown, the mystery surrounding his marriage, the difficulties of the question of succession, the evident anxiety displayed by the whole imperial family, and the strictest prohibitions even to the governmental papers to say anything about the Tzar's illness and the questions connected with it—all this has led people to discuss openly questions which formerly they were not allowed even to think of. This fact is of the greatest moment, and *here* lies the importance of the coming personal change. *It is an opportunity for the political feelings of the Russians to come to the surface—to speak out.* * * *

All readers of the Russian press have been struck recently with the signs of a revival of social activity. New schools are being instituted, libraries for the mass of the people founded, and popular lectures arranged. Meetings of societies, founded years ago with the permission of the government, whose proceedings until recently were formal and colourless, have now become lively and interesting, and burning questions are discussed. It would be instructive to give the English reader a complete picture of this revival, but our limits of space forbid this, and we must content ourselves with giving from time to time a few facts.

There is a rule in the Russian universities that every aspirant for a degree must make a public defence of the thesis which he has submitted to the faculty in which he wishes to graduate. As a means of obtaining a degree this public defence is only a formality, but as proof of the interest taken by the public in this subject as well as of the popularity of the man, it is often very significant. On the 15th of October last Professor N. M. Korkounov, as candidate for the degree of Doctor of Law at the University of St. Petersburg, defended his work entitled "The Ukase and the Law." The debate took place in the largest hall of the University, which was densely packed with the public anxious to hear the discussion. A large majority of those present were graduates of the University and other higher educational institutions. Professor Korkounov is well known in Russian juridical literature, as are also his two official opponents, one of whom, Professor Sergeyevich, is likely to play a prominent part in official circles, having been recently appointed Secretary of State. The whole debate was simply a series of compliments paid to Professor Korkounov by his opposers, who pronounced his work excellent. Subsequently, amid a scene of great enthusiasm, the degree was conferred. The significance of this will be apparent if we remember that the subject of Professor Korkounov's work was really the burning political question of the day in Russia. The ukase and the law are, in fact, two essentially opposite forms of power; the ukase representing the personal will of the government, which may arrest at any moment the operation of a law, either by abrogating it, or by substituting a fresh law without the usual formalities, or by modifying the working of the existing law. Professor Korkounov is on the side of the law, which explains his popularity.

Our regular readers will remember the name of Gregory Elisseyev,* who, as a journalist, played so prominent and beneficial a part in Russian progress for many years. In Russia he was always looked upon as one of the prominent champions of progress and liberty, and it may be regarded as a sign of the times that a bust has lately been erected on his tomb. The unveiling of this memorial took place on the 13th of October last, and was attended by a dense crowd, among whom were the most brilliant representatives of Russian literature in St. Petersburg.

On the 12th of October last the 75th anniversary of the Reformed Ecclesiastical Academy in Kiev was celebrated. The graduates of the Academy received from the students of the Ecclesiastical Academy in St. Petersburg a congratulatory telegram. To this the graduates of Kiev replied on the following day in these terms:—"Hearty thanks, brothers, for your affectionate greetings and recollection of us. May this exchange of greetings be the beginning of a more effective and significant union between us!" Union between all the progressive elements in Russia is exactly what is most wanted at the present moment.

The director of the higher educational courses for women in St. Petersburg recently resigned on the ground of ill-health. A Mr. Rayev has been appointed to succeed him. This man was the initiator of the project for placing all the primary education of the country in the hands of the orthodox clergy. Admission to these courses is very much restricted;

* See the article about him in F. R. for May, 1891.

only 115 girls were admitted at the last examination, a large number of candidates having been rejected although there was plenty of room in the college. An additional duty has been assigned to the tutoresses of visiting the girls at their own homes, but some have declined to do this on the ground that it was introducing a system of espionage.

* * *

A large number of those who were arrested on political charges in April and May last (see *FREE RUSSIA* for June, p.p. 46-47), are still languishing in prison, although it was impossible for the authorities to establish the fact of "a criminal connection" among the suspected people. Many new arrests were made, especially in Warsaw. In September the following persons were, among others, incarcerated in the Warsaw citadel: Shablovsky (editor of a periodical), Shmourlo (doctor of medicine) Poplavsky, Glasko (journalists), Petroussinsky (chemist), Pototzky, Vernigora, Stroujedzky (officials), &c. On October 18th, at night, an undergraduate of the Medical Academy, Basil Hizhnyakov, was arrested in St. Petersburg. On the same night a great number of people were searched in Kharkov and many arrested. Among the latter our correspondent mentions two gentlemen, Syedin and Sinitzki, and a lady, Olimpia Cnakay, employed in the railway service, and several undergraduates. About 80 Poles were recently seized in Odessa. A young man, Saharov by name, was arrested in Nizhni Novgorod, and detained in solitary confinement for the only reason that he entered into conversation with a soldier of the army, which aroused suspicion. The amount of annoyance and misery caused by this lawless hunting of intelligent citizens is beyond description. After having taken into custody Dr. Schmourlo, for example, the gendarmes made a trap of his home and seized and searched all the patients who came to visit him for medical advice. The St. Petersburg undergraduate, Maluga, detained for several months in the House of Preliminary Detention, committed suicide. Pototzki, in Warsaw, attempted to do the same. A Mr. Natanson and his wife, as well as some other prisoners, are seriously ill. The well-known writer, P. Nicolaev, was lately released on bail, but in such a condition of health that it is a question whether he will live.

* * *

Some English papers have printed the news of about 30 students of the Technological Institute in St. Petersburg having been arrested lately, for "being implicated in a nihilistic plot." The fact of the arrests is true, but the explanation given is inaccurate. The real cause was as follows: The common dining room in the Institute was for scores of years under the management of the undergraduates, and thus served practically as a kind of club. This was found undesirable from the governmental point of view, and the hall was taken from their management under the pretext of repairing it; when, however, the repairs were done, the dining room was not returned to the students. This led to some meetings of the young men, which proceeding as usual was interpreted as "rebellion," and 17 undergraduates were expelled from the Institute.

* * *

The trial of the victims of the butchery at Krozhe (see *FREE RUSSIA* for Jan., 1894, p. 4 and October p. 83) was concluded on October 10th. Four of the accused were sentenced to the mines for 10 years; three to exile to Siberia, and many to different terms of

imprisonment. So inconsistent with equity, however, was the application of the penal law to their doings, that the court itself resolved to intercede in their behalf with the Emperor, asking to replace hard labour in the mines, for four of the sentenced, with imprisonment for a year, and to "pardon" all the rest.

A Good Political Lesson.

"THE PEASANT STATE: AN ACCOUNT OF BULGARIA IN 1894," by Edward Dicey, C.B. (John Murray, 1894).

Does the endowment with free political institutions bring forth the ability to use them or should such privileges be withheld until those for whom they are claimed are already fully fitted to wield them? There is a difference in the whole mental attitude in regard to political affairs between those who would answer the first, and those who would answer the second of these questions in the affirmative. It is not far removed from being that essential difference which divides those who put their faith in democracy from those who regard it with distrust.

Most readers of *FREE RUSSIA* may probably lean to the former opinion, but few would deny that if faith in the educative effect of the possession of political rights were acted upon blindly and recklessly, the results might be disastrous.

The crucial question of Russian politics is a problem dependent for its solution on the judgment of how far the principle may be applied in the circumstances existent in that country. The anti-democrats ask what prospect there is of success for the introduction of a constitution in a country where from 80 to 90 per cent. of the inhabitants are of the class that were enfranchised from serfdom only about 30 years ago, and where a large proportion of these are still illiterate? The democrats express confidence that if free political institutions are bestowed, the peasants will prove themselves worthy of the trust placed in them.

A political laboratory seems to be wanted, where the experiment may be tried on a scale less vast than the dimensions of Russia would necessitate.

It is here that, for those who occupy themselves with Russian politics, the especial interest of Mr. Dicey's book on Bulgaria lies, for in Bulgaria, seemingly, the experiment desired has actually been tried for us under conditions sufficiently like those of Russia to make the historical lesson extremely valuable.

Bulgaria, like Russia, is essentially "a peasant State." It is true the peasants who form the great bulk of the nation have not been subjected to three centuries of serfdom, but on the other hand they have been for four centuries under the Ottoman yoke. Their communal institutions and their religion are like those of

the Russians, and ethnologically they seem to be almost identical with the inhabitants of the southern parts of the empire, for they are described as being of Slav stock, dashed with an admixture of Tartar blood.

The general resemblance of their characteristics as described by our author (Chapter VI.) to those of the Russians is striking, though it is rather curious to observe that they appear to be less like the Oukrainians of South Russia (to whom racially they are nearest akin) than to the inhabitants of Great Russia.

The earlier chapters of "A Peasant State" give an historical sketch of Bulgaria, which is very good reading. They also give a description of the aspects of the people and of village life, and again the strong resemblance to the conditions extant in Russia is evident.

There follow several chapters of particular interest as throwing light on the problem before us. These describe the constitution, the Prince, the estates of the realm and the ministry. Mr. Dicey describes the constitution as being a mixture of absolutism with democratic institutions. The powers of the Prince are certainly very extensive, but on the other hand the democratic political rights secured are so important that were they bestowed in Russia they would be accepted as a very fair instalment of what is demanded by the reform party in that country.

There is universal manhood suffrage. There is a one-chamber parliament (the *Sobranje*) to which all citizens not less than 30 years old are eligible for election if they can read and write. One deputy sits for every 20,000 electors. "The members of the *Sobranje* are guaranteed absolute freedom of speech, and are not liable to arrest or trial during the session of parliament without the previous consent of the chamber."

"The parliament thus constituted possesses absolute authority to pass laws, to impose taxes, to provide the funds required for the administration of the state, either by loans or by taxation, and to discuss and modify the budget." On the other hand the Prince has the right of veto, and our author remarks: "No provision is made, on the one hand, for the contingency of the Prince refusing to sanction the laws passed by the *Sobranje*; or, on the other hand, for the eventuality of the *Sobranje* refusing to provide the funds demanded by the executive as necessary for the service of the state."

Mr. Dicey's book is not one that can be compared in solidity with such works as Mr. Bryce's on the American Constitution. It is not so much a standard manual, as a series of articles which might have been contributed to a good London daily paper by "Our Special Commissioner." Still his cautious and unenthusiastic temperament, his evident endeavour to give a trustworthy account of what he saw, and

the pains he has taken to investigate his subject, make his book authoritative on the state of modern Bulgaria. What account then does our author give of the results of bestowing such political institutions as these on Slav peasants? The book itself must be read for a complete answer; it gives on the whole a very satisfactory one. In the main the constitution is worked fairly; the worst thing we hear of in the course of the book, and it is certainly very serious, is the tampering with the results of the poll at elections, but the author is of opinion that if the returns were falsified to the extent of going seriously against the wishes of the electors on any question in which they were really interested, the irregularities would not be tolerated. Amongst the officials there is no corruption that can for a moment be compared to that which is rampant in Russia, though Mr. Dicey considers that the standard maintained is not so high as in English public life. Commerce and industry are growing with healthy steadiness, the finances of the country are not only sound, they are regulated with almost excessive caution; the army is efficient: "If the necessity should arrive, Bulgaria could at once mobilize an army of 100,000 men, well provided with arms, ammunition, and means of transport, and ready to take the field at very brief notice." "The men are well fed, well clothed and well housed." Justice is administered efficiently, and though foreigners still have the right of taking their cases to the consular courts they often prefer the native tribunals.

The most striking chapter in the book is perhaps that on public education, which opens with the sentence: "The desire for education amidst the Bulgarian peasantry amounts almost to a passion." The *Sobranje* votes about one-seventh of the whole of the nation's expenditure for public education, which is gratuitous and compulsory up to 12 years old, with a further gratuitous course (if desired by the parents) up to 18 years old. The whole country is well provided with primary schools, and some of the secondary schools (that, for example, at Philippopolis) are such that any country might regard them with satisfaction. The schoolmasters are paid well in comparison with other professions in Bulgaria, and the pupils who attend the schools treat their studies with the seriousness of the Scotch or German school-boy or girl.

This is what has been attained for education under the Bulgarian constitution. It will be remembered that under the Russian autocracy those who can read and write or, indeed, even those who have the chance of going to school at all, are still quite a small minority. Can we wonder then, that whilst the Bulgarian peasant is making steady progress towards a life of comfort and plenty, in Russia the consumption of corn and textile fabrics has considerably

diminished during the last 15 years? Russia is exporting more grain than it used to do, not because it is producing more, but because it is *consuming less*; whilst the average holding of the peasants in land is three-quarters of what is used to be.

On the whole then, the results of the political experiments in Bulgaria give considerable grounds for encouragement to Russian reformers.

H. M. THOMPSON.

Further Mutilation of the "Mir."

With the institution of the *zemsky nachalniks* one might have thought that the self-government of Russian village-communities was sufficiently ruined, and that there was not much left to be abolished, as all the resolutions passed by the peasants at their village meetings were put under the control of and could be arbitrarily stopped by those officials. But recently the intelligence has reached us through the Russian papers, that the Tzar's government wants to go further, and intends to abrogate the right of every peasant-householder (consequently taxpayer) to participate directly in all communal affairs by discussing them and voting at the communal meetings. Instead of the old system, the management of the communal affairs is to be placed in the hands of a few representatives, elected by the householders. At the same time women are to be deprived of their rights as members of the community.

To enable our readers to understand better the meaning of the proposed plan, we must remind them that the Great Russian *mir*, or its Oukrainien equivalent *hromada*, has existed and worked very satisfactorily from time immemorial. We must not forget either that its jurisdiction, though limited only to members of one community, is exceedingly wide and deals with a large number of subjects. The communal meeting elects the communal judges and communal officials; it imposes the communal taxes, and decides at what rate householders should be assessed for the provincial or state taxes, imposed on the communes by the *zemstvos*, or the central government; it fixes the duties of different members of the commune in the village fire brigade; it determines the order in which different villagers have to lend their horses for official purposes or to go themselves on some duty imposed on the community by the higher authorities; it decides upon the way in which the defaulting taxpayers under its jurisdiction are to be dealt with in order to make them pay, which sometimes means forcing them into service or into work for the benefit of the communal exchequer; it deals with quarrels between different members of the village, nay—between members of the same family; it has

even the right of excluding any member from the commune as "vicious," after which the state sends him to settle in Siberia. One may fairly say that nine-tenths of the life of a Russian peasant are dependent upon the decisions of the communal meetings. This shows at once its essential difference from any other merely legislative body. While a legislative assembly has to deal with general questions and measures which do not and cannot take into consideration the idiosyncracies of each separate person and his or her position, the communal meeting works at least as much at the best adaptation of general measures to individuals, and at the reconciliation of jarring personal interests. It is not difficult to see, therefore, that direct participation of every member of the commune in its communal meetings is the best possible way of dealing with its affairs, and that the creation in its stead of a small communal council, even though elective, would simply mean placing the individual interests of the majority at the mercy of an insignificant minority.

Why, then, all this projected tampering with an institution, which was created centuries ago by the necessities of life itself, to which the population has become accustomed and which has survived all other historical changes? There is only one logical key to that riddle: it is always easier to keep in the grasp a small body of men, than a large one, and this is in the interest of bureaucracy as well as of autocracy.

(To be concluded.)

Letter to the Editor.

DEAR SIR,

Having been abroad, I only the other week came across the September number of *FREE RUSSIA* containing a severe criticism of the Russian costume in which I appear at my lectures. You are right in stating that the elements of my dress are borrowed from various Russian nationalities, but you are not right in declaring that the "pointed cap is altogether fantastic," nor that I "introduce features of doubtful taste" into my "evenings." The cap I copied from a Kirghiz tribe, and as to the good or doubtful taste with which I arrange the decorative part of my lectures, British audiences are quite qualified to judge for themselves, and I have the satisfaction of knowing that my lectures have been highly appreciated in every respect both by representatives of the press and by eminent men of this country.

I can explain the appearance of the incriminating paragraph in *FREE RUSSIA* only by some misunderstanding on your part, and trust you will do me justice in inserting these lines.

Yours in the sacred cause of the liberation
of our native country,

October 14th, 1894.

JAAKOFF PRELOOKER.

20, Thirlestane Road, Edinburgh.

[It is just because Mr. Prelooker's lectures "have been highly appreciated in every respect" by British audiences, that we think it is his duty to call things

what they are, and not appear in a motley costume representing various nationalities and call it Russian. We are in no sense unfriendly to Mr. Preelooker, and consider the subjects of his lectures so important that their effect should not be spoiled by any inaccuracy.—ED. F. R.]

Meetings.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom met at 276, Strand, on Wednesday, October 3rd. *Present:* Mrs. Mallet, Mrs. Voynich, Messrs. Allanson Picton, J. F. Green, Pease, Rix, H. Thompson, also Messrs. Stepniak and Volkhovsky. Dr. S. Watson occupied the chair. The minutes were read and also letters regretting their absence from Mrs. Sidgwick, and Mr. Wm. Thompson. Mr. Volkhovsky made a report to the Committee about the international hunting of Russian refugees, and proposed that a meeting should be held in conjunction with the Personal Rights Association and some of the socialistic and other societies for the purpose of bringing this question before public, to point out the danger of the existence of any sort of alliance for the purpose of banishing refugees between the police of the various European countries. He then asked permission to introduce Mr. Selitreny, who gave a very interesting history of his sudden banishment from France, after he had peacefully resided there for 10 years. At the suggestion of Mr. Allanson Picton, it was resolved that the London press should be urged to bring before the public the facts about the recent banishment of Russian refugees from the various countries of Europe, and it was agreed to defer considering the proposal of holding a public meeting until it should be seen whether or not the question was taken up by any of the leading London papers.

DERBY.—A public reading of striking passages from G. Kennan's book, "Siberia and the Exile System," was arranged in the town by some Friends of Russian Freedom on October 25th. The reading was illustrated by 30 lantern views, kindly lent by Mr. T. Laurie.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.—S. Stepniak lectured on October 22nd, for the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society, on Russian literature. The large hall was full and the audience very appreciative.

WORCESTER.—On Tuesday, October 2nd, Mrs. Rowland Berkeley read at the students' meeting her first paper on Russian novelists. Her first essay dealt with Gogol, Goncharov and Tourgeniev, and we are glad to learn that though "Smoke" and "Virgin

Soil," are the best known of his novels in this country, Mrs. Berkeley considers them to be inferior to some of his earlier works, his short stories among them. According to *The Worcester Herald*, "Mrs. Berkeley has done her criticism so sympathetically and with such intense appreciation of the ethical and literary qualities observable in these works, that she has invested her pen-pictures with striking vitality. We not only wish to read these writers for ourselves; we already feel that through the medium of her description their heroes and heroines are living characters, whose acquaintance we have made, thanks to her introduction, and with whom we desire to have more intimate relations." Those whose "appetite was whetted by her description of their contents" will be pleased to learn that Tourgeniev's "Rudin," "Liza" and "Fathers and Sons," either were or are being published by Mr. Heinemann in an excellent translation from the original Russian, by Mrs. Edw. Garnett.

During November the following lectures are to be delivered by Mr. F. Volkhovsky: on the 1st (at 8 p.m.), at the Leighton Buzzard Institute, "Exile Life in Siberia" (illustrated by lantern views); on the 4th (3 p.m.), at Forest Gate in connection with the Field Road United Methodist Free Church, "How I Escaped to Freedom"; on the 13th (8 p.m.), at the New Somerville Club, 231, Oxford Street, "The Story of My Life"; on the 15th (arranged by Mrs. Macdonald and other Friends of Russian Freedom), at Derby, "How I Escaped"; on the 21st, in connection with the St. George's Church, Bloomsbury, "How I Escaped."

Will other lecturers kindly inform us of their coming lectures in time to be advertised?

Circulars explaining the aims and the work of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom to be had from the Hon. Secretary.

Minimum membership subscription 5/- yearly, including the receipt of "Free Russia" post free; but all donations are received with gratitude.

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THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF RUSSIAN FREEDOM.

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THE English Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, founded in April, 1890, has for its objects to aid, to the extent of its powers, the Russian patriots who are trying to obtain for their country that Political Freedom and Self-government which Western nations have enjoyed for generations.

The Society appeals to the enlightened men and women of all countries, without distinction of nationality or political creed, who cannot witness with indifference the horrors perpetrated in the Empire of the Tsars, and who wish a better future for the masses of the Russian people. Further contributions to the funds and further work are needed and will be welcome. Membership is acquired by sending to the Treasurer an annual subscription of or exceeding Five Shillings. Members are entitled to receive *Free Russia* post free.

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CONTENTS.

Our Edinburgh Branch.—Interview with Dr. Spence Watson.—Bishop Phillips Brooks (by S. Stepniak).—Distress in Russia.—Branch Work.—Meetings (Secretary's report) and Reviews (by S. Stepniak).—"Misha and Vania," by Shchedrin (Saltykov) concluded.

London, February 1, 1893.

ABOUT this time last year, all the Russian papers were flooded with articles upon the famine and with correspondences from the distressed provinces. Relief committees were sitting in all the principal towns. From the pulpit the priests made appeals to public charity and the officials were invited and encouraged to set the example. Famine was the subject of the day.

Awakening, though somewhat late, to the consciousness of the extent of the calamity, the government understood that it was in its own interest, both financial and political, to obtain material help from whatsoever source. The zemstvos, the municipalities, the private citizens and the press were called upon to take their part in the common efforts. Individual and collective initiative was allowed freer scope last year in the country of the Tzar than ever before. And the result was that the terrible calamity did not produce one hundredth part of its possible effect.

Although the number of destitute persons in the 16 famine stricken provinces reached the enormous figure of 34,000,000, we have heard very little of anything like actual starvation: That is the testimony of the Russian and foreign observers and participants in the great work.

Now again Russia is in the deadly grasp of a new famine, which is not so extensive as that of last year, but unfortunately only the more acute. It could be foreseen long ago, and it was long ago announced in our paper. It is no longer denied by the government, which has published a list of 20 provinces where relief will be needed. According to a very moderate and cautious estimate, no less than 10,000,000 peasants are left without means of subsistence, and they will require at the lowest estimate £10,000,000 (£1 per head. Russian peasants are accustomed to short rations!)

Whence is this money to come? The state exchequer is exhausted by the heavy drain of last year, which exceeded £16,000,000. One would think that after the recent great success of the frank and harmonious co-operation of all the living forces of the nation, the natural thing would be to resort with more heart and boldness to the same method. But what is going on in Russia is quite different and very surprising indeed. The government has changed its tactics and is now wavering and hesitating, trying to

hide with one hand what it discovers with the other.

The *Official Messenger* publishes this year's agricultural returns, showing that of the 16 provinces which suffered last-year none has a normal harvest, some of them having but one-half, one-third, and one-fourth of the average returns (*Official Messenger*, No. 264).

This means famine in the full sense of the terrible word. The thing is as clear as if it were written on the sky in letters of fire. There is evidently some influence in high quarters making for publicity; but other influences of an opposite nature get the upper hand. Our St. Petersburg correspondent tells of the scandalous efforts of the government to hush up the famine, to prevent the press from speaking about it, to discourage practical attempts at assisting the sufferers.

We call the attention of our readers to this communication. Its truthfulness cannot be doubted for one moment. The press and society in Russia are silent, indifferent, frivolous, as if the Russians were so many savage beasts, insensible to everything except their personal comfort; as if they did not know or care that by their side are millions of their unfortunate, starving brethren. But they do care, they do know and think about it.

It has been proved again and again that the famine of last year was due mainly to the general ruin of the people caused by misgovernment of every kind, the inclemency of the sky being only the last drop which made the cup overflow. The thinking men have learned this by heart. But to those who were in the habit of thinking little or not at all it was still possible to represent the calamity as the result of the blind forces of Nature. Now it is no longer possible. One famine after another, with the prospect of a third one; this is the work of men and not of Nature. That is why the government has taken alarm, prohibited the formation of relief societies, and sent to the press these shameful warnings—"Not to excite public opinion!" "Not to exaggerate the calamity!" As if the danger lay in men subscribing too much, not too little and taking their duties too seriously!

But murder will out.

If news of such absorbing interest cannot be communicated to the public through the ordinary channel of the press, it will be spread privately by people writing and talking to each other. And there are public spirited men of such high positions that the government dare not silence them by force. We publish the letter of one of them, Count Bobrinsky, a marshal of nobility in the province of Toula. Whilst all around keep silence from fear, one such voice spreads far and rings out clearly.

Now, what will be the feelings and attitude of educated Russia, the Russia which takes an

interest in public affairs, when it realises that the present government has not only caused these sufferings of the people, but out of cowardly selfishness, knowingly and cynically prevents them from being alleviated? What will be the attitude of the people themselves face to face with starvation? Will their patience stand that test?

Public Meeting of the Edinburgh Branch.

THIS meeting was held in the saloon of the Royal Hotel on Friday, January 13th at 3 p.m. The Lord Provost presided, and was accompanied to the platform by Dr. R. Spence Watson, president of the Society, Newcastle-on-Tyne; Bailie Gulland, chairman of the Edinburgh branch; Bailie Walcott, Professor Simpson, of the Congregational Theological Hall; Rev. Dr. Adamson, Mr. James Durran, Mr. James M'Intosh, S.S.C., Mr. D. W. Wallace, S.S.C., secretary of the branch; and Mr. Ryness, a Russian immigrant. The Lord Provost said he had doubts as to whether anyone outside of Russia could do much to forward the movement for greater freedom in that country. He believed that if any people would be free they must depend chiefly upon themselves. At the same time, sympathy and aid could materially help those struggling for freedom, and it had been the proud boast of this country that they had been ready to give sympathy and support whenever it had been required.

Dr. SPENCE WATSON, who, on rising to speak, was well received by those present, began by explaining the motives and objects of those who founded the Society. Referring next to the condition of Russian affairs in general, he explained that the area of discussion was so vast that he could refer only to three points: (1) The religious question, (2) Finland, and (3) the peasantry. The Greek Church is not only a very absolute Church, but the Tzar is its head and master in a very emphatic sense, though the Canon of the Church may proclaim him its elder son. Dissent, or at least attempts at proselytising, is very severely dealt with. The sect of the Stundists is probably not 40 years in existence, but it already numbers several millions and is increasing with great rapidity. There is nothing political in their constitution and indeed they are particularly loyal. Though not socialistic but individualistic they regard property as a sacred trust, and are ever ready to assist others in distress, yet this sect is persecuted with intense ferocity, they are imprisoned, flogged, ironed, deprived of civil rights and exiled to Siberia; but this treatment, so far from destroying the Stundist faith or even driving it below the surface, only increases their numbers, and it may be that

from this very persecution there may proceed the solution of great difficulties of the Russian people. Finland has a constitution of its own, which was guaranteed by Alexander II. in 1863 and the present Tzar in 1882. Its population of some 2,000,000 occupies a country where nature places almost every difficulty in the way of human advancement, yet has been overcome by this remarkable people. Their system of education is thorough, universal, and practical. They have solved the land question and the temperance question. They have been only too successful for Russian ideas, and their independence is being seriously tampered with. Their educational system, customs, free press, and post office have all been interfered with during the past six or eight years, and it now seems as if Finnish liberty would soon disappear entirely. The peasantry: The great movements now in progress in Russia start from the land question and the emancipation of the serfs. Had the emancipation and kindred movements been carried out as conceived there would have been no Russian question today. The serf was not a slave, and the idea was generally held that the land was no man's property. Before the emancipation the serf gave as a rule three days in the week to the cultivation of his lord's land and three days to his own. There was a popular saying from serfs to landowners: "We are yours, but the land is ours." Now the State peasants pay an average of 98½% of the produce of their lands in taxes while other peasants pay an average of 198%.* The peasant has thus to find labour elsewhere, and in an ordinary year can do it. But in a bad year the work is not there to be done, and he is driven to borrow on the security of his labour, which he hypothecates by documents of a very stringent character, and at what is practically ruinous interest. In 1861, when the emancipation was effected, there were no agricultural proletarians in all Russia, but at a congress of farmers in Moscow, held six or eight years ago, the chairman stated there were then 20,000,000 who had been ruined by excessive taxation and usury. This growing distress resulted some 20 years ago in great numbers of men and women of the upper classes going out to the people as political propagandists, giving up all they held dear, and having prison, and possibly death as the goal before them. These are the facts that impelled us to originate our Society. It has already produced some effect on the Russian government, but far more than that, it has cheered the hearts of many in that country, and even in the most distant parts of Siberia.

Professor SIMPSON, of the Congregational

* This seems absurd, but yet so it is. The peasants often pay *more* than they get from the land, which they have no right to give up. They make up for the deficit by winter work in towns and home industries.—[Ed.]

Theological Hall, formerly minister of the British and American Congregational Church, St. Petersburg, followed, and spoke of the difficulty of getting at the real facts. The court circles could not be trusted, and one must go to the people themselves and to their writers to see what is actually being done. He strongly defended the aims of the Society in affording encouragement to a downtrodden people.

Mr. RYNESS, a Jew, explained briefly the difficulties placed in the way of his obtaining an education and entering the legal profession in Russia. After successfully overcoming these he was only permitted to practice for 2½ years, when the revival of the May laws ousted him. His father had to leave Russia and pretend to abandon his family to evade confiscation of his property, and he himself, after finding life intolerable in Russia, joined his father in England.

Rev. Wm. ADAMSON, D.D., moved that "This meeting heartily sympathises with the work of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, and invites all lovers of liberty to help the Society by subscribing to its funds, circulating its paper, and seeking to arouse in this country a protest against the cruelty and despotism of the Russian autocracy."

Rev. James DURRAN, M.A., seconded, and the resolution was adopted unanimously.

Votes of thanks to Dr. Watson and the other speakers, which were heartily given, terminated a most successful meeting.

Interview with Dr. Spence Watson upon "Free Russia."

(From the *Scottish Leader*, January 14th, 1893.)

A QUARTER of an hour before his train started from Waverley Station for Newcastle yesterday afternoon, Dr. R. Spence Watson, who founded the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, was surrounded by a host of friends, all eager to shake hands with so distinguished a Liberal. Dr. Watson was in high spirits, for, as the Lord Provost observed, judging from the attendance at other gatherings held in the saloon of the Royal Hotel, the first public meeting of the Edinburgh branch, of which Bailie Gulland is the genial and energetic president, had proved a great success. Having only a few minutes to work upon, the time spent in friendly intercourse proved no less trying to the nerves of the interviewer than to the patience of the waiters who bustled about laying tables for a large company that were immediately expected. At length Dr. Watson was disengaged, Bailie Gulland introduced the *Leader* representative to him, and all three adjourned to the drawing-room. Dr. Watson

seemed to feel very lightly the discouragements met during the early days of the movement in this country. "I first thought of the matter in 1889," he said, "through becoming personally acquainted with Stepniak and Krapotkin, later on with Volkhovsky, who joined the Russian colony in London at the end of 1890. I discussed with my Russian friends what should be done, and in December 1889 I sent out circulars explaining our objects and asking for funds. For all our trouble," he added, with a laugh, "we received only seven replies and 30s. in subscriptions."

"Far from being discouraged I wrote to a few friends, held a meeting in London which attracted the attention of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and then started the Society. But it was still uphill work, for the members at first consisted only of Mr. Byles, M.P. for Bradford, Mr. Burt, my wife and myself."

Then as to future work? "All I expect is that the Society will enable us to publish our monthly *FREE RUSSIA* on a more extended scale, and with the freshest information on the situation in Russia."

Your paper circulates in Russia notwithstanding press censorship?—"It does. You see," he pleasantly observed, "we know what it is to be enterprising. How does it get into Russia? Ah; that I cannot tell." And here a very agreeable reminiscence seemed to flash across his mind. "Our paper circulates all over the world. We send it to the missionaries in Lebanon, to New Zealand, Paraguay, Natal, and Johannesburg. In Johannesburg we have a great force of supporters; and we have societies in Germany and America."

"It is true our funds are small, but we have no large subscribers, and there is all the more reason for enlarging the circle of our friends. It takes a great deal of money to enable a man to escape from Siberia—£100 perhaps. Several of these exiles we would be very glad to rescue, if only we had the means. Our publication penetrates even the arctic regions of Siberia, where there are no more than three postal deliveries in the year. We find that these exiles—many of them connected with the highest families in the land—are comforted and gladdened by the assurances of sympathy in Great Britain, and it arouses in them an ardent desire to escape."

"How do we manage it? There again you are coming to close quarters. One of the refugees now in London recently escaped from Constantinople where, the Russian Embassy was trying to arrest him. Kielchevsky was the last who escaped from Siberia. He came over to this country just over two years ago. The idea of coming to England first entered his mind upon reading one of the original circulars we sent out. This incident is of some interest as showing that our literature really reaches the quarters

for which it is intended. In Siberia that circular was multiplied under great difficulty by thousands.

With a remark as to the credit which attached to Edinburgh in having the first society formed out of London, Dr. Spence Watson left for the Waverley Station in company with Bailie Gulland.

Bishop Phillips Brooks.

WE receive the melancholy news of the death of Phillips Brooks of Massachusetts, the great preacher, and one of the earliest members of the American branch of our society.

In Anglo-Saxon countries the clergy hold a position for which there is no equivalent on the continent. Having no spirit of caste, no general organisation to which the plurality of religious tenets would form an insuperable obstacle, the English and American clergy do not hold aloof from the political and social interests of the country, do not view great national issues from a selfish class point of view, and therefore always can keep in touch with the progress of the time. Only in England and America we find clergymen mixed up with, even sometimes leading, intellectual and social movements of diametrically opposed character, including those which the majority of the community still recognise as hostile and ruinous to established views and institutions. And this apparent carelessness for class interests, this putting the duties of the citizen above those of the member of a certain class, has secured to the clergy as a body an influence which the Catholic Church was able to possess only when helped by universal ignorance and superstition.

The late Bishop Phillips Brooks was not an extremist, in America at least, for in other countries he would have been considered as an extremist and even revolutionist. But he was the best and noblest representative of that broad humanitarian spirit which has preserved to the church its vitality on both sides of the Atlantic.

I do not intend, however, to speak here of the vast influence of the eminent preacher and writer upon the thoughts of his generation. My object is to say a few words upon his connection with the movement of which FREE RUSSIA is the organ. I am indebted for the honour of a personal acquaintance with the late Bishop Phillips Brooks, to Mrs. Daland, the gifted author of "John Ward the Preacher." She took a warm interest in the foundation of our American branch, which was then organised in Boston, and being an intimate friend of Phillips Brooks, invited him to one of the early meetings in connection with the movement, which was held in her house.

Phillips Brooks was not a bishop at that time, and being a new comer I knew nothing of his

position in Boston and in the States. To me he was simply one of the Boston clergymen. But it was impossible not to be struck by his majestic appearance, his noble, manly face, in which energy seemed to struggle with frank, hearty benevolence that had not a trace of priestly benignity, and the surprising brilliancy and quickness of his intelligence, which he revealed even in the questions he put. We had a long conversation upon general Russian topics, which was led almost entirely by him. He showed an interest in everything: in the Russian religious movement and its possible bearings; in the agrarian laws prevailing among our peasantry; in the peculiar position of the bureaucracy and the Tzar; in the character of Russian literature and the periodical press; in the woman question. He professed to be quite ignorant about Russia, but to me it seemed as if he already knew everything and asked me only by way of confirmation. His quick mind ran in advance of my explanations. He guessed from the first sentences what would follow, and surprised me by the remarks and suggestions of a fellow student of the subject and not of an attentive listener.

Later on I went to hear him preach, and my early impressions recurred to me. Those who have only read his sermons and not heard them cannot have an idea of that torrent-like rush of thought, which strained to the utmost both the elocutionary power of the orator and the attention of the listeners. And yet there was not a word too much or too little, not a sentence which was not beautifully finished, not an idea that was not made perfectly lucid. It revealed a mind of surprising resources and flexibility, resembling those wonderful electric machines, the creation of modern inventive genius, which make I do not know how many thousand vibrations in one minute, each as precise and well defined as the other.

After an hour's conversation Phillips Brooks said that he had got more information than if he had read several books upon Russia. Very likely he had, and the credit of it is due certainly to him and not to me.

A few days afterwards his election as Bishop of Massachusetts took place. I did not think that in his new position Phillips Brooks would have time or indeed would care to have his name associated with a movement against which so many prejudices stand. But my Boston friends, who knew him better, were of a different opinion. Acting upon their advice, I wrote to him.

The next day the waiter of the small hotel where I had put up surprised me most agreeably by announcing Phillips Brooks, who came himself to ask for explanations on certain points.

We had another talk upon the practical objects of our society, the importance of enlisting on our side American public opinion and the influence of foreign agitation upon

Russian political emancipation. He took with him some of our literature, and a day or two later he wrote to Mr. F. Garrison a letter saying that it gave him particular pleasure to join the society.

He has a full right to the name of one of its initiators, and we can claim him as ours. The society was then at its beginning. His great name was one of the best guarantees of its duration and success.

He is dead now, together with two other men great in mind and heart: Lowell and Whittier. But their memory will always remain associated with the new society which stands as a pledge of true sympathy and goodwill to the Russian people, and will contribute its mite to secure for them a better future.

S. STEPNIAK.

Distress in Russia.

COUNT BOBRINSKY, a Russian Marshal of nobility, has addressed the following letter to the *Russian Gazette*, giving a vivid picture of the terrible position of the peasantry in the Government of Tula: As an inhabitant of Bogorodetzsk, in the Government of Tula, I deem it my duty to call your attention to the distress prevailing at the present moment, and considerably exceeding that occasioned by the bad harvest last year. Misery, sickness, and in sundry places actual famine are again in our midst. Last year our district suffered from the effects of a severe economical crisis. Owing to the efforts of the government and of the Zemstvo, and to the timely aid of private individuals, who contributed more than one million roubles in relief, the distressed population, numbering 173,000 inhabitants, has been saved from the effects of impending famine. Nevertheless, the sacrifices made did not suffice to prevent the complete ruin of the inhabitants, who have spent all their savings and their stocks of cereals. The economic effects of this visitation have been such that the rich have become poor, and the poor become beggars. To add to this distress, signs were already apparent in the spring of the present year that the harvest would again prove a bad one. The drought prevailing during the summer effectually destroyed the weak growth of both winter and spring sown wheat. In one word, we find ourselves face to face with the consequences of a bad harvest under much worse circumstances than last year, when the distribution of government loans began only in December, while this year such distribution began as early as September. There are several thousands of artisans from towns and country districts who are not entitled to these loans, and the burden of whose support devolves upon private charity. To crown all, typhus and epidemics among children are appearing. The scene presented on a walk through any part of the district is

ghastly in the extreme; a heartrending spectacle meets one's gaze at every turn. Cold, damp huts, with mouldy walls, the snow falling through the apertures of the roof, the thatch having been used as fuel, the flooring coated with mud; while on the top of the spacious stove lie huddled together five or six individuals in the paroxysms of typhus fever, unattended and without even bread or milk. And all this with several months of winter weather still before us.

[From our St. Petersburg correspondent.]

HUNGER and misery among the peasantry in several provinces (Voronezh, Toula, Orel, Kazan, Samara and Bessarabia), are still more intense than last year, though the region affected is not so large. The whole character of the famine is convincing a constantly widening circle of people that, without radical reforms, without transference of the burden of the taxes from the peasants to the better off classes,—even the most successful harvests will not remove but only postpone the final bankruptcy. The government itself begins to understand this, but dares not approach the important measure of reorganizing the taxation, for fear of stirring up the reactionary noblemen; the income-tax question is therefore put off, and the government is making poor experiments with taxes on houses, which will not patch up all the holes in the exchequer. Altogether the authorities are in a state of constant fear and distrust everyone, the result being that all their committees for improving the state of things in Russia are working languidly, without a clearly defined system, and do not know themselves what they have to do, or rather, what to undo.

The government is especially distrustful of the zemstvos. In spite of their activity in organising the relief last year, the right to continue the work has now been taken from them and the government has appointed to the task three quite unknown and inexperienced generals.

The press, terrified with the punitive measures adopted on the pretext that the papers exaggerate facts, is afraid to print anything concerning the famine. The public at large, not finding in the papers any direct statements about the famine, disbelieves it altogether, and with its usual apathy concentrates all its energy on its private affairs. From this cause public charity, which greatly increased during last year, has now shrunk almost to a cypher, and if anything is done in that direction it is done very quietly and stealthily, in fear of being caught and treated as criminals.

Here is a fact: in Moscow there existed a specialist paper, the *Juridical Messenger*, which had the reputation of being the best paper of

its kind, and was exempted from preliminary censorship. Quite unexpectedly the editor, Mr. Mourontzev, received a communication in which it was said that, by order of the Tzar, his paper must be subjected to preliminary censorship. No reasons were given for this punishment. The motive can, however, be guessed from the following facts. About a year ago two senators, Messrs. Artsimovich and Se-meonov, were invited to appear, in their quality of land-owners, in the famine-stricken provinces, before the Tzarevich's committee. Artsimovich by his evidence put himself into opposition to the opinions of the committee, which considered the chief cause of the famine to be the poor harvest. He tried to prove that the causes lie much deeper and are chiefly the economic ruin of the peasants, the small allotments, the heavy taxes and other like defects which have arisen from the attitude of the government and bureaucracy towards the peasantry. These opinions were met with vehement protests from the majority of the committee, but especially rude was the behaviour of the minister Dournovo, who expressed disbelief in even the truth of the witness's data. After the sitting Mr. Artsimovich sent to Dournovo a number of the *Juridical Messenger* containing an article of the well-known statistician Krasnoperov, on the economic misery of the peasantry of the Saratov province; data taken from this article had been used by Artsimovich in his evidence.

This same article of Krasnoperov, a year after its publication, became a cause to punish the review. And this is why papers dare not publish facts concerning the famine and generally discuss questions of internal policy.

Take into consideration that there is not a single large paper in Russia which has not already *two* warnings on its head, so that one single superfluous word which does not agree with the government's views at the moment—and the paper is doomed. The unbearable situation of the press is still further aggravated by the fact that warnings are not annulled by amnesty or by lapse of time. One Moscow paper, the *Russian Gazette*, received its first warning about fifteen years ago, and the second one only last year, for a mere trifle, only an erratum. Everybody knows that the mistake was a pretext for the minister of the interior, who wanted to punish the paper for printing the first article of Count L. Tolstoi, which attracted public attention to the famine.

REPLY TO A CORRESPONDENT.—Of course the name of one of the supposed candidates for the office of minister of the interior (FREE RUSSIA December 1892, p. 4), has been misprinted. The man famous as a "political inquisitor in 1873-4," could be but Zhikharev, the Saratov *procureur* who directed the inquiry. We thought such an explanation unnecessary for Russians, and we apologise for the omission.

Branch Work.*

II.

EXPERIENCE shows that an overwhelming majority of people in this country, however ignorant about Russian affairs, and therefore sometimes holding the most erroneous views and prejudices upon the subject, are quite open to reasonable argument and appeals to good feeling. The difficulty is to get their ears or eyes for a moment's attention in a matter so utterly strange and unpopular as the Russian internal and international questions. Those who form our branches ought therefore to take the utmost care and make the greatest efforts to bring people into contact with Russian matters as much as possible. It is more easy to induce people to listen to a speaker, than to make people read upon a subject, interest in which has not previously been forced upon them by meeting interesting people, looking at a stirring picture, listening to a beautiful, melancholy Russian melody, or to a thrilling lecture. Yet, if those people who make a regular custom of reading were to meet with our publications more frequently, we may be sure that the truth would become more widely spread and our work would get more active support from new proselytes. The splendid work done in this line by Mr. Herbert M. Thompson, of Whitley Batch, Llandaff, Glam., is most interesting, edifying, and suggestive of imitation. Mr. Thompson printed a short circular offering to send FREE RUSSIA gratuitously for a year to any free libraries which would care to have it put in their reading-rooms in a conspicuous place. He then sent out a large number of copies of this circular to free libraries and some clubs. Applications arrived from about 150 of them. He then paid the yearly subscription for that number of copies to the funds of our society. Knowing, however, how easily a small leaflet gets torn and lost, if not especially protected, Mr. Thompson presented each of the above-mentioned libraries with a card-board case to keep FREE RUSSIA in. On the inside of the case was printed a short bibliography of the more widely known books upon Russia, and, to make the study of the subject still more easy for anyone caring to take it up, a special column was provided for the pressmarks under which such of these books as the local library possessed could be found. We know that in some places, in Leeds for example, these marks were carefully inscribed by some of the *readers*. We know also that some of the libraries, after receiving FREE RUSSIA for a time free of charge, finally became regular subscribers.

Certainly the branches should make a point of leaving no club, no library, in their locality without our publications.

* For the first article see FREE RUSSIA December, 1892

This is, however, not the only means of enlarging the circulation of our publications and of ensuring their being read. *FREE RUSSIA* and our pamphlets are sold not only at all the lectures arranged by the F.R.F., but even at many lectures got up by other societies, institutes, or persons, but touching upon Russian topics. Such associations and persons never object to having our literature sold either at the doors or from the platform, and this is quite natural. The fact is that after an interesting lecture on a Russian subject people are very eager to learn something more in the same line, and to prevent our cheap publications from being sold at the close of the address would mean to rob the audience of an opportunity they eagerly look for. Indeed the Tyneside Sunday Lecture Society, last season, after having sold several hundred copies of *FREE RUSSIA* at F. Volkhovsky's lecture, asked for more and carried on the sale next Sunday (to the extent of 1,500 copies more) at Sir C. Dilke's lecture which was in no way connected with Russia. Every year, on the 1st of May, a number of volunteers among the F.R.F. sell thousands of copies of *FREE RUSSIA* and our pamphlets in Hyde Park.

All these examples show that with a little enthusiasm and a good deal of perseverance, the sale of our literature by the branches could be carried on to great advantage. The branches ought to have always in stock bound sets of *FREE RUSSIA*, plenty of copies of the last number, pamphlets, and other literature, and to use every opportunity to sell them. We note for example that on the 16th of December last, Colonel Browne, Royal Scots Fusiliers, Maryhill, delivered a lecture in the Ayr Town Hall, on "Russia and Great Britain in Central Asia." Supposing the place had been within the reach of a group of Friends of Russian Freedom, here was a splendid opportunity to push forward the work. Colonel Browne did not, it is true, make any distinction between official and non-official Russia, between the government and the people. He simply took *the "Russia"* that was gradually approaching India by swallowing up new territories, as the only one existing, and recommended against its absorbing policy the only remedy he, as a military man, knew,—the increase of British troops in Asia. But it would cost only a few remarks made by one of the audience after the lecture to show that the greediness of the Russian imperialism is a burden to the Russian masses themselves (as the military expenses of the empire are exhausting their means), and that, therefore, the aggressive policy will change at once as soon as a representative and democratic government succeeds the present one in Russia. If such a debate could not be raised, in any case attention could be drawn to the most important side of the question by our

literature, which, we may be sure, would find in Colonel Browne's audience willing buyers. Indeed, not only lectures about Russia, but any meetings could be used as opportunity for selling our literature at the doors. We know that the committees arranging some meetings will not under any circumstances permit anything to be sold within the doors. But the street belongs to everyone.

On some occasions free distribution of literature leads to more effective results than selling. Our friends should be told, therefore, that the executive committee has passed a resolution to the effect that the back numbers of *FREE RUSSIA* which are in stock at our office (3, Iffley Road, Hammersmith), are to be disposed of free of charge, as specimen copies. Our readers know that the greater part of the contents of our periodical is of permanent interest, and therefore good reading for those who take an interest in the Russian question. Anyone who would care to distribute these back numbers among people likely to read them can obtain as many copies as they wish by applying either to the hon. sec. or simply to *FREE RUSSIA*, 3, Iffley Road, Hammersmith, London, W.

We should like to call the special attention of our friends to what has just been said about the permanent interest of matter contained in *FREE RUSSIA* since the paper's first appearance in June, 1890. The amount of information, which cannot be derived from any other source, contained in various numbers of the paper, the light thrown on Russian life by the combined effect of its different articles is such that no person who really cares to learn whatever can be learned about Russia, no secretary of any branch, no active friend of Russian freedom can do without reading the whole of it, number after number. This is made very easy now, as complete sets of *FREE RUSSIA* for the years 1890, 1891, 1892, are bound in volumes, provided with indexes, and sold at a moderate price at our office. And we should recommend to all our branches to pay special attention to this. Apart from the purely political side of our paper, we will point to the fact that it was the first, and so far, the only one to introduce to English readers one of the greatest talents in Russian fiction—M. E. Saltykov (Shchedrin); that its back numbers contain such specimens of his genius—a genius as great as that of Swift—as "The Fool," "The Deceitful Editor," "The two Generals," and "Misha and Vania."

The publications of the S.F.R.F. are circulated, among other things, on the same commercial principles as any other publications, *i.e.*, they can be entrusted to agents, booksellers, newsmen and private persons—on commission, for a certain discount. *FREE RUSSIA* has every month its post bills printed (with its contents),

and these are sent out to all the agents. Experience shows that many of the latter neglect to use them properly, and do not make any effort to push forward the circulation of our organ and pamphlets, or to make them known to the public. Now the branches would do a very good service if they would not only secure for us good agents in their locality, and organise, if possible, a sale in the streets through newsboys, but also visit those agents now and then and control the whole business of selling in their locality.

Special efforts should be made by the branches and generally by our friends in the provinces to get paid advertisements for insertion in *FREE RUSSIA* or in new pamphlets. We must not overlook the fact that our literature is circulating not only in this country but also in America, and that, for example, the pamphlet "The Flogging of Political Exiles," is now printed in its fourth edition and seventeenth thousand, while "The Slaughter of Political Prisoners," after being issued four times, in all to the amount of 26,000 copies, is now out of print. Thus, our publications are a very good medium for advertisers to reach the public, and on their part it would be no charity but "business" to give advertisements. On the other hand everyone knows that *all* the periodicals derive their financial stability and prosperity more from advertisements than from any other source. Look at those published for the support of certain principles, the religious, temperance and trade papers, they all exist and develop their activity on the financial basis given them by paid advertisements. We ought to have recourse to the same means so far as it is in conformity with our principles, and our friends in the provinces should "make a point" of getting them for our publications, inasmuch as our charges for them are not at all heavy and as our advertisement columns show that people acknowledge them a good medium. For all particulars about this matter people should apply to our hon. sec., Mr. W. Mackenzie.

(To be continued.)

Meetings.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.—The Executive Committee met on January 11th, 1893; present: Dr. Spence Watson, Mr. Herbert Rix, Mr. E. R. Pease, Mr. G. H. Ferris, Mr. H. M. Thompson, Mr. Mackenzie, Mrs. Webb, and Mrs. Voynich. The minutes of last meeting were confirmed. A letter was read from Mrs. Human resigning her membership of the Committee on account of her leaving for abroad. The meeting accepted the resignation with regret, and instructed the hon. secretary to thank her in the name of the Committee for her services. Permission was given to bring out a German edition of the pamphlet "A journey under arrest." The advisability of establishing a branch of the Society at Leeds was considered, and it was

resolved to give every assistance to the friends working there in that direction. The hon. treasurer reported a debit balance of £52. Other business was transacted and the meeting adjourned.

BRISTOL.—S. Stepniak lectured in St. James's Hall, on January 9th, on "The Russian Revolutionary Movement," for the Sunday Society. The hall was well filled.

BURNLEY.—Mrs. John Brown and some other Friends of Russian Freedom living in Burnley, held a private meeting last month, at which it was decided to have in that town a lecture on some Russian topic on March 22nd. All willing to help in the enterprise should communicate with Mrs. Brown, Bank Parade, Burnley, Lancashire.

EDINBURGH.—On January 13th the Edinburgh branch of the F.R.F. held their first annual public meeting. The reader will find a detailed account of it in another place of the present No.

LEEDS.—During the last month several private meetings were held in Leeds, by some local active supporters of the Russian liberation cause with the purpose of making the work there permanent. It was decided to hold on February 10th, a large public meeting in one of the best halls in Leeds. Invitations to speakers and others are already sent out. S. Stepniak and F. Volkovsky have promised to attend the meeting. All willing to help the initiators should communicate with Mr. F. Rothstein (not Kotstein, as was printed by mistake in the January No. of *FREE RUSSIA*) of 13, Lady Lane, Leeds.

LONDON.—On January 24th, F. Volkovsky gave a personal narrative of his escape from Siberia to America, in the large schoolroom of Finsbury Park Wesleyan Institute, to an enthusiastic audience. Mr. W. Bagley, of Knottingley, Yorks, came from there specially to take the chair for the occasion, and Mr. James Kent, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Institute, was also on the platform. Our literature was sold at the doors, and the hon. secretary's annual report for 1892 of the work of the Society and also back numbers of *FREE RUSSIA*, as specimen copies, were distributed free.

NEWCASTLE.—Our members and friends know already from the Hon. Secretary's annual report that a branch of our Society was recently established in Newcastle-on-Tyne for that town, Gateshead and the surrounding district. The officers to that branch were elected at a meeting held on November 16th, Miss Mabel Spence Watson being in the chair. All present, with one exception, formed themselves into a committee with power to add to their numbers. It was decided to ask several local ladies and gentlemen known to be interested in Russia to join the committee. Miss Wallace was appointed Hon. Treasurer of the branch and Miss Coulter (13, Bloomfield Terrace Gateshead) Hon. Secretary. It was resolved to use every means to increase the membership of the branch and the circulation of *FREE RUSSIA*.

SALFORD.—S. Stepniak lectured on January 23rd, for the Local Lecturing Society on "The Russian Political Crisis." The hall was full and the lecture lasted about three hours (on account of the questions).

STRATFORD (Essex).—On January 22nd, F. Volkovsky lectured in the Stratford Town Hall for the National Sunday League. The subject was "How I Escaped from Siberia to Freedom." The audience was very good and attentive. A sale of our literature was carried on at the doors.

UPPER NORWOOD.—On January 25th, Mr. Volkhovsky lectured for the U. N. Literary and Scientific Society on "The Story of My Life." Mr. Conan Doyle presided and spoke both before and after the lecture, expressing his strongest sympathy with the Russian liberation movement. He asked the lecturer to enlist him as a member of the S.F.R.F. The custom of the U.N.L.S.S. did not allow the sale of any literature, but many specimen copies of *FREE RUSSIA* and of the annual report were distributed free.

Lecture List.

The ladies and gentlemen whose names appear in the following list have, with the approval of the Executive Committee, consented to lecture *gratis* on the subjects opposite their names, under the auspices of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom. Clubs, associations, societies and similar institutions, or sympathisers with Russian Freedom, desirous of securing the services of any of these ladies or gentlemen should communicate with the lecturer direct.

J. C. SWINBURNE-HANHAM, 18A, Goldhurst-terrace, South Hampstead, N.W. Subject: "The Present State of Russia."

Mrs. MALLET, Albemarle Club, Albemarle-street, Piccadilly, W. (not on Thursday or Friday). Single Lecture: "Russia and her People." Three Lectures: "Russia and Siberia (1) Geography and Climate;" (2) "Early History;" (3) "Late History." "Land System—Present Condition—The Mir, the Commune." Three Lectures: "Russian Martyrs:" (1) "The Peasants;" (2) "Administrative Exiles;" (3) "The Stundists." A Course of Nine Lectures, devoting two to the subject of Administrative Exiles.

W. F. MOULTON, The Leys School, Cambridge. Subject: "Russia To-day and To-morrow."

E. R. PEASE, 276, Strand, W.C. Subjects: "The Story of Russian Nihilism." "England's Interest in Russian Revolution."

G. H. PERRIS, 115, Fleet-street, E.C. Subjects: "Russia's Place in Modern Europe." "The Personnel of the Russian Revolutionary Movement." "The Episode of the 'Terror.'" "The Coming Crash in Russia."

Miss ADA RADFORD, 1, South Hill Avenue, Harrow. Subjects: "Russian Freedom." "The Russian Revolution."

H. ROBERTS, care of *FREE RUSSIA*, 3, Iffley-road, Hammersmith, W. Subjects: "The Russian Nihilist Movement." "The Russian Peasant and his Future."

GEORGE STANDRING, 7, Finsbury-street, E.C. Subject: "The Russian Revolutionary Movement."

WILLIAM W. MACKENZIE, Hon. Sec.

MEETINGS FOR FEBRUARY.

5. Mr. Volkhovsky (for the National Sunday League), Bermondsey Town Hall, S.E., at 7 p.m. Subject: "How I escaped from Siberia to Freedom."

6. Mr. Volkhovsky (for the Cloughton Church Institute), at Birkenhead. Subject: "In Russian Prisons as a Political Suspect."

9. Mr. Volkhovsky (for the Barrhead Mechanics Institute), Barrhead, near Glasgow. Public Hall. Subject: "The Story of my Life."

9. S. Stepniak, Walton, near Manchester, on "The Russian Revolutionary Movement."

10. Public meeting in Leeds on behalf of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom. Speakers to be announced later on.

12. S. Stepniak, in Manchester, on "Civilisation, East and West."

15. Sergius Stepniak will speak on "Russian Literature," at a "Special Gathering of the Cemented Bricks" and their friends, at Anderson's Hotel, Fleet Street, London, E.C.

26. F. Volkhovsky (for the Sunday Lecture Society) at St. George's Hall, Langham Place, at 4 p.m. Subject: "How I Escaped to Freedom."

28. F. Volkhovsky (for the Mutual Improvement Association), Worthing.

Besides these, public meetings on behalf of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom are likely to be held during February in Preston, Plymouth and other places.

The Hon. Secretary of the S.F.R.F. (W. W. Mackenzie, 24, Redcliffe-gardens, South Kensington, S.W.), would feel obliged if persons lecturing on Russian topics—whether for the S.F.R.F. or otherwise—would kindly inform him beforehand of the place, time and subject of their lectures for announcement in *FREE RUSSIA*, and also send in accounts of them after delivery.

Bibliography.

Russia under Alexander III. and in the Preceding Period. By H. Von Samson-Himmelstierna. Translated by J. Morrison. Edited by Felix Volkhovsky. T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1893.

THIS is one of the most engrossing books upon Russia which have been published for a long time. One must not look to it, however, for a deep and searching study of Russian political life, institutions or literature. The book is essentially sketchy and personal. But as a series of personal characteristics it is the best thing we have upon modern Russia. It reads like a novel, and it reveals that side of Russian life upon which hardly anything has been hitherto written: Russia's intellectual development; the working of those interior, invisible forces, moulding the minds of the progressive minorities, which slowly shape the history of nations, no matter what is the form of government under which they live for the time being.

The author is quite right in saying that "the recent political history of Russia is so intimately connected with the literary movement in that country that the one cannot be understood apart from the other." The second part of the book, which describes some of the most conspicuous "party leaders," is therefore the most suggestive. The men are introduced to us with their individual peculiarities, their domestic history and their surroundings, all of which gives an insight into the life of Russian literary and political circles, and to some extent an idea of the intense intellectual activity which is going on under the apparently stagnant surface.

But the part of the book which is sure to attract most attention and make it vastly popular is that which is devoted to the description of the Russian

Court. The book opens with a characterisation of Alexander III., first as grand duke, then as heir apparent, then as Emperor. We are introduced next to the Imperial Family—all of the grand dukes and duchesses who have played any part in politics, and to the principal minister holding the reins of the state. And I hasten to add that on the part of Mr. Himmelstierna this is not pandering to popular curiosity about high-placed personages. He has had an exceptional opportunity of observing the Russian Court, and what he says about it is fresh and original, being evidently taken from life. The portrait of the Tzar is the one that is worked out most carefully and even artistically. (FREE RUSSIA gave extracts from it some time ago.)

It is, of course, eulogistic, as one may well expect from so ardent a monarchist as the author, but it is correct in its main lines, and we are spared the sickening nonsense of certain journalists who gauge kings from a nursery standpoint. Very interesting, though not so elaborate, are the characteristics of the minor stars of the Russian galaxy—the dukes, duchesses, and ministers.

Having to deal with so many political personages, Mr. Himmelstierna could not help giving some of his own political views upon Russia. This is the weakest point of the book. The author does not know much about the general conditions of the country, and blunders upon this subject rather frequently.

The value of the book has been considerably enhanced by the careful and laborious notes of the editor, who has also supplied to it an excellent and comprehensive introduction.

On Sleigh and Horseback to Outcast Siberian Lepers.
By Miss Kate Marsden. London: The Record Press.

In May, 1890, an English girl, Miss Kate Marsden, came to St. Petersburg and sought and obtained an audience with the Empress upon a very extraordinary errand. She wanted to devote herself to assisting lepers, those of Siberia in particular.

There are many forms of philanthropic enthusiasm, and the one exhibited by Miss Marsden is certainly of the highest, amounting to real heroism. Leprosy is the most loathsome of the many mysterious ailments which affect the children of men. And it is undoubtedly contagious.

But Miss Marsden braved everything. She went to the Siberian lepers; she visited their stinking dens; she spoke to them; she distributed relief among them. For one moment, which they will not forget till the end of their miserable existence, she made them feel that they are not wholly outcasts from the race. Now she is collecting funds to build for them a hospital, or rather a home, for there is no cure for the fatal disease.

Why, it may be asked, should the civilised world be worried for the sake of a handful of far away savages, when there are so many people in need of help at its own threshold?

Miss Marsden's answer is that there is always someone to take care of our own unfortunates—at least to think about them; whilst these poor creatures are altogether without the pale of human sympathy. Hers, in fact, is the frame of mind of the kind-hearted Scotch preacher, who would have his congregation to "pray for the poor devil, for there was no one in the world to pray for him."

The book which Miss Marsden has brought out

must not be considered as a piece of literature; it is an instrument to the fulfilment of a mission. But it is well worth reading for itself, being a very vivid and graphic summary of the experiences of an intelligent, observant, and sympathetic traveller, whose eyes and heart were keenly alive to the manifold suggestions of an extraordinary experience.

I will note one aspect of her book: the views she occasionally expresses upon Russian general conditions. She went to Siberia with a definite object, from whose pursuit she would not permit herself to swerve. But she could not help seeing much more than she meant to have seen, and she would not have made her book thus interesting if she had abstained from speaking of experiences outside her mission. For instance, she saw the Siberian prisons, about which so much has of late been written. She is very reticent upon this point, lest she should give offence to a government which, to her, was really considerate and kind. But she cannot help letting out the truth now and then, and to a public distracted by the flagrant contradiction between the descriptions of Mr. George Kennan, on one hand, and Dr. Lansdell and Mr. Harry de Windt, on the other, her book will be of very great value. Her path, to a great extent, was Mr. George Kennan's own, and she reluctantly confirms his statements.

I refer the readers to her account of the Tiumen gaol (p. 34); those of Tiukalinsk (p. 24), and Ekaterinenburg (p. 49), and especially that of the "black holes," called *etapes* (p. 57); the last containing some valuable hints as to the shamefaced lies which the official will use to deceive more confident and less careful travellers. But I will not dwell on this subject in deference to Miss Marsden herself, who almost implores her readers not to use her book as a *point d'appui* for an attack on the Russian government.

S. S.

Misha and Vania :

A FORGOTTEN STORY.

From the Russian of SHCHEDRIN (Saltykov).

(Concluded.)

The reference to his sister cut Misha to the quick. He suddenly cowered down as under some weight: his little pale face grew as white as paper, and fresh tears glittered in his still wet eyes.

"You know she appeared to the mistress," Vania went on.

"It's not true," gasped Misha, in a scarcely audible voice.

"She did! Yes, really! Matryona told us that she saw the mistress run out of her bedroom all white in the face, like a dead woman!"

"It's not true! She's alive!" maintained Misha, choking with sobs.

"No, she isn't then, I know! She's drowned; that's as sure as twice two's four! What should she appear to the mistress for, if she hadn't drowned herself?"

"It's a lie! It's a lie!" shrieked Misha, who was just on the verge of a hysterical fit.

"Why, there you go again, you little silly! What's the use of blubbering about it? You know we're coming to the same!"

Misha relapsed into silence; he was evidently thinking over the past. He was calling up in his memory how Olia, when she passed him, used to pat his cheek and say: "Well, my little rascal!" He remembered how Olia once put on him a clean new shirt, and said: "There, my Mishoutka, that's for you!" He remembered how one day Olia had run out into the servant's hall, with no colour in her face, and with tears streaming from her eyes; he remembered her voice, entreating for mercy in a strangled, agonised shriek: "Oh! little mother, Katerina Afanásyevna, don't.....Ivan Vasilich.....little father!"..... He remembered how Olia's long fair plait fell from under the scissors, and how Olia writhed and struggled.....

"Don't cut it.....oh, don't!" suddenly rang in Misha's ears the well-known imploring voice, so clearly, so distinctly that it suddenly forced upon him belief in it. He became in a moment convinced that Olia was really dead, and that it was she—she in very deed, who appeared to the mistress and terrified her at night. He even fancied that she was here, beside them, this very moment—that she was calling him.

"Olia is here!" he said, in a terror-stricken voice.

"That's a story—she isn't," answered Vania, shuddering, none the less, and instinctively glancing round.

"She is. She is, really!" persisted Misha.

"You're a little booby. I tell you there's nobody. And why should she appear to us? Don't you know why ghosts come? They come to torment people, and what should she want to torment us for? We never did her any harm, and Olia was always kind..... yes, she was a good, kind girl."

"Olia was kind!" Misha repeated mechanically, with a loving glance at his companion.

"Wait a minute, — I'll look round the corners," Vania went on, as though with the sole desire of soothing Misha; but it was quite evident that he was really anxious to calm his own terrors as well.

He got up and looked first under the table; then went round the room, even feeling in the corners; and finally peeped through the doorway into the dark passage outside. No spectre was to be found anywhere.

"There you see, there's nothing!" he said, sitting down again in his former place.

"Olia was kind!" Misha repeated dreamily.

"That's why everybody was so fond of her. Do you remember how Stepka took on when she was lost? They say Stepka wanted to marry her."

"Was that what he was sent to the police-station for?"

"That was it.....Stepka went to the mistress and said: 'Katerina Afanásyevna,' says he, 'you'd best send me to be a soldier,' says he, 'for I won't serve you any more!'"

"Well, I never did!"

"And the mistress said: 'No, Stépoushka!' says she—'I won't send you off for a soldier—I'll make you be my shepherd,* till you rot away alive!' And she's done it too."

"Why wouldn't she let him go for a soldier?"

"Why, because she's a devil, my lad."

"Is it nice to be a soldier, Vania?"

"How should I know? Anyway it must be better than living here—it's a dog's life here!"

Misha once more pondered in silence. He wanted to suggest to Vania that it would be better to become soldiers than.....but there he checked himself; he was afraid of making Vania angry, and also of appearing a coward in his eyes.

"I'll tell you what, Mishoutka," suddenly exclaimed Vania.

"What?"

"Let's go round and look at the rooms."

"For the last time!" flashed through Misha's brain.

"All right, Vania," he said.

Vania snuffed the candle and took the lead.

"The drawing-room," he said, entering the first room.

"The drawing-room," Misha repeated after him.

"Say good-bye now, on all four sides," said Vania, authoritatively.

Misha bowed to all the four walls, Vania going through the same ceremony.

In like manner they went through all the rooms, repeating their farewell salutation everywhere. At last they reached the furthest room, where stood a large double bed.

"Damn them!" said Vania, and not only omitted to bow in all directions, but even spat on the floor.

"I know what!" he exclaimed; "let's have a 'limmi-na-tion and light all the place up! The old hag won't be in for a long time yet."

"Oh yes, we must light up!" said Misha, and a smile of infantine delight flitted over his little face.

It was easy to see that Misha's was a sensitive, delicate, artistic nature: he loved fresh air and brightly-lighted rooms, and moped in the dark, stuffy entrance-hall. It was also easy to see that Vania knew of this tendency in Misha and was anxious to cheer him up somehow.

They made a really brilliant illumination. Misha expressed a wish to play the part of master of the house, and Vania agreed to be the visitor. But guest and host had only just

* An exceedingly trying and lonely position in Russia

sat down with their feet on the sofa, and the host was just making the usual polite inquiry as to the visitor's health, when there was a loud ring at the outer door. Visitor and host rushed at once to put out the candles, but their haste only delayed them, and a second ring followed, even louder and more impatient than the first.

At last the candles were extinguished somehow, and the children rushed to the door. Before he opened it Vania could hear that his mistress was pleased to be angry.

"It's those scoundrelly boys again!" she was saying in a furious tone: "I'll give it to them in a minute!"

"Don't be upset, my dear!" said Ivan Vasilich, persuasively; "perhaps Nikanór Afanásich has come on a visit."

At this moment Vania opened the outer door. Is my brother Nikanór Afanásich here?" was the lady's first question.

"No, ma'm."

"Who lighted the drawing-room candles?"

"Nobody, ma'm."

"You little wretch!"

A violent blow felled Vania to the ground.

"Who lighted the drawing-room candles?" she repeated, attacking Misha, who was standing still, more dead than alive.

"N-no-o," he whispered, almost inaudibly.

"Will you *never* leave us in peace?" cried Vania, suddenly, in a wild, unnatural shriek, and, springing to his feet, he flew at Katerina Afanásyevna, before anyone could interfere, tearing her nose and mouth with his finger nails.

Katerina Afanásyevna half fainted. It was no easy task to drag Vania away from her, for he had become, as it were, petrified, and had grown stiff all over. She was led away into her bedroom, Ivan Vasilich remarking as they went: "Really, little mother, you ought to be above getting upset by these clowns." Vania was carried into the kitchen. He shed no tears, but only uttered shriek after shriek: his whole nervous system was thoroughly and profoundly shaken, and he had lost all control over himself, so that these piercing, frantic screams were quite mechanical and out of his power to prevent. All the servants, frightened and distressed, crowded round him, rubbing and chafing his limbs. At last the paroxysm passed over, and the moment the screams stopped, Vania sank into a heavy sleep.

Whether Katerina Afanásyevna was really hurt, or whether the servants told her of the condition of frenzy into which Vania had fallen, in any case no arrangements were made that night for the punishing of the boys. The only order given was that they were to be kept in the kitchen. Misha lay down beside Vania, but for a long time he could not close his eyes: the coming day stood before his over-excited imagination, distinct in every detail, and full of

the most frightful tortures. He saw before him heaps of whips and rods, and Katerina Afanásyevna, with her face, as it were, on fire, and snakes twining about her head, opening their jaws and darting out tongues of flame. Vania moaned in his sleep now and then, and all the servants lay around sleeping heavily. Terror laid hold upon Misha.....

"Don't cut it off! Oh, don't!" rang in his ears, and his sister's image passed before his eyes, as though a living form, not only in the old gingham dress she used to wear, but all white and transparent, all glittering with a wondrous light.....

At last, about three o'clock, he fell asleep.

At four Vania waked him. For a long time Misha lay looking at Vania with bewildered, misty eyes, unable to realize where he was and what was happening.....

"It's time!" Vania whispered.

Misha started, but still could not understand.

"Get up!" Vania insisted.

Misha mechanically rose and dressed. The two children went out into the porch. The shock of the cold air rushing upon them brought Misha, to some extent, to his senses. Vania had a pair of scissors in his hand; he hastily took off his page's frock, and began cutting it to pieces.

"Nobody shall have you!" he whispered in a brooding, savage way.

Then he took off his boots, and poked the scissors through the upper leathers in several places.

Misha stood looking on, and suddenly a passionate longing for life surged up in him. He clutched at his throat with both tiny hands, writhing and weeping desperately.

"Cry-baby! Go back and go to sleep again," said Vania.

"No, no," gasped Misha. "No, no, I'll come.....I will.....I....."

"What's the use of blubbering? Didn't you see.....last night?"

They left the house and climbed over the garden railings. There was no one in the street, and all the town was wrapped in dead stillness. Trezorka, the watch-dog, sprang towards them with a friendly whine, but Vania shook his fist, and the dog, after wagging his tail two or three times, ran back to his kennel. The morning was damp and foggy rather than cold; a heavy cloud seemed to hang over the streets, as though darkness, solid with sharp, needle-like motes, had taken possession of the air. Vania, having nothing over his shirt, felt cold.

"I tell you what!" he remarked;—"I was a duffer to cut up my frock."

Misha made no answer; altogether he acted, as it were, passively. Life seemed to burn and burn within him, like a hot stream, struggling vainly to free and assert itself.

Presently they came to the hollow where they had agreed to carry out their project. Vania had chosen it as a spot where no one would be likely to interrupt them or to find them soon.

Vania climbed down into the hollow and walked on in front; his courage had not forsaken him, but none the less the sweet, persuasive voice of life cried aloud in him too, and though he laughed, an intolerable longing swelled and raged in his heart. He walked on, sharpening the knives one against the other, but the sound they made seemed to him harsh and dismal; he felt, as it were, all on fire within, and yet his thin, starved body shrank and shivered under the raw, damp cold..... Misha followed him, still in a kind of dull stupor.....

* * * * *

At daybreak the watchman, quietly asleep in his box, was aroused by some peasants. Passing by the hollow they had heard moans, to which they respectfully called the attention of the guardian of the public peace.

"Help! Help! Oh, help!" suddenly rang through the air as they spoke.

The men descended into the hollow, where they found the two children, one in his page's frock, the other in his shirt. Vania was quite dead, but Misha still breathed. He had drawn the knife several times across his throat, but timidly and feebly, with a shaking, unsteady hand.

The longing for life had conquered at the last.

For want of space the promised article upon the trial of the spy and "provocator" Hendigery, and that upon the persecution of the Stundists are postponed till next number.

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[ONE PENNY.]

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CONTENTS.

G. Kennan in London.—The Censorship in Finland.—The American Treaty.—Russian Chronicle.—Death of Two Refugees in Paris.—Notes and Meetings.—Bibliography.—The History of Elisey Sukach, by G. Lazarev (continued).

London, June 1st, 1893.

WE have for our readers very good news: Mr. George Kennan has arrived in this country to arrange for a lecturing tour next season. For all those who have been in any way touched by the great wave of sympathy for the Russian cause it will surely be a great, we might say a unique, pleasure to welcome a man who has given them so many high and noble emotions, and who, almost single-handed, has wrought a revolution in the ideas and views of the English-speaking world as regards Russian affairs.

As to us who are more immediately connected with the practical side of the pro-Russian agitation, we have been looking forward to this visit as an event which is sure to have a lasting and beneficial effect upon the work we are carrying on here, and, indeed, will probably give it a new aspect.

There is nothing so powerful, so fascinating and so interesting as an individuality. Books and articles may be all very well; but nothing can equal the effect of a personal address when the speaker has the rare and enviable gift of throwing into his speech his individuality: the fire of his conviction, the spell of his sincerity and the spontaneous sympathy which carries away audiences.

The *Century* articles of Mr. Kennan and, later on, his book, have had as much influence upon the minds of his contemporaries as anything that has been penned by any man. But it has been by his lectures that he has fanned to fever-heat American sympathy and indignation and has educated his fellow-countrymen to better sentiments and better understanding of the Russian rebels.

At the present juncture, with the extradition treaty before us, we cannot help remembering that all his splendid efforts have not succeeded in affecting the government clique in America—the professional politicians. But we need neither wonder nor be discouraged at that. This class of people is not liable to be influenced either by reason or by sentiment. The attitude taken by the American people with regard to the treaty shows that Mr. George Kennan's work has been fruitful indeed.

For many years we have looked forward to Mr. Kennan's visit to England, being fully persuaded that, as a lecturer, he will stir the people of this country as profoundly as he has stirred his fellow-countrymen on the other side of the Atlantic, and we rejoice that this expectation is on the point of being realised.

PUBLIC opinion is a force which grows *motu proprio* with the growth of general education. It is gaining strength even in Russia, notwithstanding political despotism. It asserted itself during the last famine, and recently the government thought fit to make a concession to it by granting the permission to discuss and comment upon the measures which were about to be brought before the state council. But very soon it appeared that by the freedom to comment the government understood the freedom to praise. Any unfavourable criticism was resented and visited by administrative reprimands and punishments. The press of Finland took the permission to comment and discuss in good earnest, and here is the official statement which has just been received from the Governor of Finland by the department of the censorship for that country:—

"The periodical press of Finland has lately contained objectionable articles, in which, in connection with criticisms of individuals, the autocratic power and the Orthodox faith are touched upon." . . . After a few severe remarks upon the "laxness" of the Finnish censorship, the communication ends as follows:—"At the present moment I will say no more, but I consider it necessary to warn the chief department that, in case of the censors or the editors of newspapers permitting in future any laxity in this respect, I shall be constrained to apply to the guilty persons the punitive powers entrusted to me by imperial authority. The editors of all papers must be informed of this warning."

WITH regard to the extradition treaty, Mr. George Kennan says:—"The feeling against the treaty seems to be very strong throughout the country, and I think we shall be able to get a bill or a joint resolution through both Houses of Congress next fall, directing the President to take such action as may be necessary to have it abrogated. At any rate that is what we shall try to do. It never could have been ratified by the Senate in the first place if we had had any intimation that it was under consideration. Unfortunately it is the invariable practice in our country to discuss foreign treaties in what is called 'executive sessions,' that is, in secret, and nobody knew that this one had been revived until we were suddenly informed that it had been ratified."

These words sum up the situation. The Americans as a nation are only legally responsible for the passing of the treaty. But morally they are not responsible. The passing of this obnoxious treaty was a trick played upon them as well upon the liberty-loving Russians.

Now, as the American people are the rulers in the land, we may feel confident that before long they will get their will recognised and

registered by their politicians. In the meanwhile we have to briefly record the most salient manifestations of American sentiment in this matter. Quite an anti-extradition literature has been created within a few weeks, numbering among its authors men of such eminence as W. M. Sadler, Dr. Felix Adler and George Kennan. Great and representative meetings have been held in all the principal cities of the union: New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, Buffalo, Milwaukee and others.

The Chicago meeting, which may serve as a sample, is described by the *Chicago Times* in the following terms:

Could the "American house of lords" have heard the censure—even execration—heaped upon it yesterday afternoon, at the Central Music Hall, it would be a long time before it ratified another extradition treaty. Prominent and eloquent speakers called the extradition treaty with Russia, recently ratified by the United States senate, "a compact with the devil," "an agreement to turn every United States official into a slave catcher for the Tzar of all the Russias," "a repetition of the infamous fugitive slave law of 1851." In tones trembling with indignation orators pledged themselves to resist by force, if necessary, the enforcement of the treaty. All the while an audience of earnest men and women, who filled the hall from stage to gallery, applauded to the echo. In fact, it was one of the most enthusiastic crowds ever assembled within the walls of the Central Music Hall."

The echoes that reach us from all the other places are the same. And there is no counter-demonstration, no manifestation in support of the unfortunate resolution of the Senate.

In the face of such a demonstration one can safely affirm that the treaty, even if it be finally passed, will never have any practical application. The Russian government will never dare to apply for the extradition of political offenders. The treaty is obnoxious on account of its moral effect as a solemn recognition, on the part of the Americans, of the outrageous claims of Russian autocracy. There is every reason to hope that before very long Mr. Kennan's expectations will be realised, and that public opinion will force the government to drop the treaty. But if this be not realised in the immediate future, the next best thing would be, we repeat it, *to obtain from the State legislatures separate votes of censure, such as have been passed by the assemblies of New York and Ohio, published in our last issue.*

THE Russification policy is in full swing. The closing of those schools in which the native language of the oppressed races is in use; the imprisoning of Catholic priests for the crime of teaching the history of Poland to their pupils without using the text-books specially manufactured "for the Poles" in St. Petersburg; the criminal prosecution of Jewish schoolmasters for teaching children without the permission of the authorities, and of parents for sending

their children to be taught; the compelling of Stundists to give up their children to be educated in the Orthodox Church;—all these are characteristic features of this crusade. The government is introducing the Russian language into the schools of Poland, Lithuania and the Baltic provinces, and forbids the use in those schools of the native languages of the races for whom, as it would seem, the schools exist. A subsidised reactionary paper, the *Kiev Word*, edited by a professor of the Kiev University, Mr. Antonovich (the economist, not the historian), considers that it would be a good thing (in order to keep the borders of the empire in a proper state of submission to the centre) to transfer all their higher educational institutions to Central Russia. That is to say: The Universities of Warsaw and Dorpat and the Polytechnicum of Riga should be removed to Tula, Kaluga or Riazan—assuredly a wondrously bold flight of truly statesmanlike thought.

STRIKES are strictly prohibited in Russia, constituting a criminal offence, for which men are liable to exile and worse. Yet there is a very interesting and general strike now going on in all those Russian towns to which the right of the so-called municipal self-government has been extended. In 1870 the two capitals of the empire were granted the privilege (afterwards extended to other cities) of electing municipal councils to manage public works, superintend primary education, public sanitation, &c. This municipal right, never extensive, has recently been curtailed in such a way as to make the municipal council entirely dependent upon the administration. Having no other means of protest, the Russians have started a sort of strike, refusing to take any part in the comedy of this sham self-government. We can observe the results of the new "edicts for towns" as shown in a whole series of municipal elections which have taken place lately throughout the whole of Russia. These results speak for themselves; they are astonishingly similar from Perm to Tiflis, and from Finland to the far east. We give a few of the figures. It is true that the new edict has greatly diminished the number of persons having the right to vote; but of this diminished number many chose to take no part in the balloting. In Kaluga, instead of the former 2,000, only 436 persons voted. In Tiflis, Batum and Poti the number of votes was less than half of the former figure; in Kutais and Erivan it was one-quarter; in Baku the number of votes was actually one-fortieth of what it was before. In St. Petersburg, out of 6,000 voters only 1,167 appeared; in Kharkov, out of 1,813, 475 appeared; in Odessa less than 500 persons took part in the election, and so on. Almost everywhere the number of candidates elected was much smaller than that stated in

the edict. In Odessa, for instance, instead of 75 candidates, not more than 38 were chosen. In Kherson the entire staff of the former municipal council refused to vote. In Rostov-on-the-Don and Taganrog the number of candidates elected diminished by 76; in Nizhny Novgorod, instead of 60 candidates, only 37 were elected; in Saratov, 58 instead of 80; in Nikolaev not more than 29 persons were elected in all; in Moscow, 140 instead of 160, etc. In commenting upon these facts, almost the whole of the Russian Liberal press attributes them to the curtailment by the new "reformed" edict of what measure of independence the municipal council possessed under the old edict. "Feeling themselves," says the *Nedelia*, "to be less the owners of their towns than formerly, the inhabitants hold themselves aloof from municipal affairs, as from matters no longer concerning them."

Death of Two Refugees in Paris.

THE Polish and Russian colony in Paris has lost, within a short time, two members—Savitzky and Heiman—who deserve more extensive notice than space allows us to give to them.

Savitzky was one of the most gifted and promising members of the Polish Socialist party, into which he enlisted at the age of 18. For the crime of "personal acquaintance" with a prominent revolutionist, L. Varinsky, he was exiled for four years to Siberia, after which he went, to complete his studies, to Paris. In a very short time he became one of the most proficient students of Professor Faraboeuf, whose letter, read at his funeral, shows that the famous scholar had learned to appreciate both the mental gifts and the moral qualities of his pupil.

Savitzky was cordially loved and respected by his compatriots as well as by the Russians, among whom he had many intimate friends. He was full of hope and energy; he was in the flowering time of life. And yet he cut with his own hand the thread of that life, because, after having undertaken the ungrateful task of exposing a traitor, whom others were inclined to let alone, he was publicly insulted by him. A sensitiveness, before which one stands amazed and perplexed, unable to unravel the mystery and subtle psychology of this terrible self-immolation, yet wondering and respectful. The sense of honour is a high and noble one, even in its exaggerations. The loss of such a man becomes the more painful the more one thinks of it. Savitzky's Russian friends have just issued an excellent pamphlet, relating his biography, giving some salient traits of his character, and recording in detail the tragedy of his death. The touching figure of this chivalrous young man will be long remembered among his fellow-workers in the struggle, and may teach them that over-indulgence in matters of treason is sometimes the worst form of cruelty.

The short life of Heiman—who died at 26—is typical of the lives of those Russians who dare to meddle with politics. Arrested in Rostov (on the river Don) when only a lad of 17, on the charge of having harboured a political fugitive and having

been in correspondence and personal relations with some members of a section of the "*Narodnaya Volia*" ("People's Will") party, a clandestine organisation, he was originally sentenced ("by administrative order") to exile to a northern part of European Russia (province of Vologda). But just at that time the imperial order for confining political exiles of Jewish extraction to the province of Yakutsk was issued, and Heiman became one of its first victims, being sent to that wild part of North-east Siberia. When the persecution of the "politicals" of Yakutsk began under vice-General Ostashkin, and it became evident that some tragedy was imminent, Heiman came to the town from the country for the sole purpose of sharing their fate. Before his eyes women were bayoneted and a dying man was hanged. The sentence passed on him on this occasion comprised imprisonment for a certain term and then exile still further north—to Verkhoyánsk. At last, after seven consecutive years of either imprisonment or exile, he was allowed to return to European Russia; but no sooner had he returned than a new charge awaited him, of approximately the same character as the former one. This time he succeeded in getting across the frontier before he was arrested, and came to Paris. But he carried from his prison the germs of consumption. The medical authorities who treated him, unanimously declared that his disease took a fatal course simply because of the exhaustion of the organism, caused by imprisonment and exile life.

Notes.

AT the Hyde Park May-Day Demonstration, at which some of the members of the FREE RUSSIA staff are regularly invited to speak, the managers organised a sale of the paper and pamphlets of the Society as well as of the Russian literature published by the Russian Free Press Fund. Instigated by Russian spies, some roughs made an attack upon the stand, destroying a considerable quantity of literature, making off with a part of the money obtained from the sale (30s.) and maltreating the sellers, among whom were two women. One of them, a girl of 18, was handled so roughly that she had to be taken to an ambulance.

On being informed of the occurrence, two of the M.P.'s on our committee, Messrs. Allanson Picton and Byles took the matter up. Mr. Byles wrote a letter to the *Daily News* and Mr. Picton put to the Home Secretary a question in the House of Commons, calling his attention to the negligence of the police in maintaining order. Mr. Asquith, who was informed of the matter beforehand, and had made inquiries of the police, replied that he was informed that no such disorder took place on May 7th in Hyde Park, no persons were maltreated, no young girl was hurt and no ambulance was called into requisition. But several witnesses saw the scattered remnants of literature on the ground, and the name and address of the girl, Miss E. Dover, was taken down in the ambulance, where several persons saw her. The affair is now in the hands of the Personal Rights

Association, and, we hope, will soon be brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

* *

We have received the following particulars about the stopping of the imperial train upon the Kursk Kharkov line:—The crowd of peasants was so large that the soldiers stationed along the line could not repel them, although they used both bayonets and rifles. A reinforcement of Cossacks, which was sent in haste from the nearest post, refused to charge against the peasants, and this decided their victory. They took possession of the line, removed the rails so as to make the progress of the train impossible, and when the Tzar was bound to stop they laid before him their various complaints against the governor of the province of Ekaterinoslav, General Shlippe.

Meetings.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.—At a meeting of the Executive Committee, held on 3rd May, the Rev. Professor Shuttleworth was elected a member of the General Committee. Mrs. Webb's resignation, as a member of the Executive Committee, was accepted with regret.

PLYMOUTH BRANCH.—Attempts have been made from time to time to introduce into the local press articles bearing on Russian subjects, with various success. In accordance with a resolution passed when first the branch was formed, steps were taken by the officers to arrange a meeting for working men, which finally came off on May 19th, in a room lent by the Gas Workers' Union for the purpose. The proceeds of the collection and profits on sale of literature almost exactly balanced the expenses incurred in advertising.

A lecture was given for the S.F.R.F. by Miss Ada Radford, in Plymouth, in May. There was a good attendance. Miss Radford gave an account of the experiences of Russian exiles, and of religious and political persecution in Russia. She touched upon the censorship, the corruption of the officials and other grievances of Russia, and explained the aims and character of the S.F.R.F.

Bibliography.

The Economics of the Russian Village, by S. A. HURVICH, Ph.D., Columbia College, New York.

The Russian rural statistics are unique of their kind, for they present the summing up of most detailed researches made by hundreds of men, devoted to their work, who have gone from house to house, taking down every particular as to the economic conditions of each peasant family.

Mr. Hurvich's book is the reflection of these investigations, and partakes both of their merits and of their defects. It is a painstaking, conscientious work, which will be of great value to the students of modern Russian life. One may call it a histology of rural Russia. But it will hardly be of use to the general reader.

Poland, by W. R. MORFILL, M.A.—T. Fisher Unwin, 1893.

Like all Mr. Morfill's works, the present volume gives, in a light, readable form, an excellent and perfectly reliable summing up of the external events of the political history of the kingdom, both in the

time of its greatness and independence and in the period of its subjection to the Muscovite rule. A faithful record is given of the Polish political constitution and the changes it underwent in the course of time; but one gets no glimpse of the life of the people who had to pass through all these changes. The book is beautifully illustrated and has an appendix upon the history of Polish literature, on which Mr. Morfill is, perhaps, the greatest authority among non-Slavonic scholars.

Squire Hellman and Other Stories, by JUHANI AHO.—T. Fisher Unwin's Pseudonym Library.

These are Finnish peasant stories, by an author who in himself is a study—a former ploughboy who has become the first novelist of his country. The sketches are remarkable for their simplicity, truthfulness and freshness, and, for one who is familiar with the types of Russian rural life, they have an additional and unexpected interest, showing the universality of certain types, which the Russians are used to consider their own. Squire Hellman, with his coarseness, overbearingness and cowardice, might stand for a full-blown Russian *kulak*. The story is full of interesting traits of local life.

The Revisor, by N. V. GOGOL, translated by Syke.—Walter Scott.

N. V. Gogol is the greatest of Russian prose writers, greater even than Turgenev and Tolstoi, and "The Revisor" is, perhaps, the greatest of all his works. The Russian theatre has no other comedy which is equal to this one. This is an opinion which in Russia is no longer regarded as open to discussion. But we are not sure whether such will be the verdict of the English. There are works which are so eminently national as to be often a blank to foreigners. Anyhow, the lovers of Russian literature would do well to try. Mr. Syke's translation is excellent: few Russian works have appeared so well fitted with their English dress.

RUSSIAN SUBJECTS IN MAY MAGAZINES.

The magazines this month show us that English interest in Russian subjects increases with the growing facilities of obtaining information about them.

Our First Ambassadors to Russia.

In the most interesting article in *Macmillan's*, Julian Corbett tells us something of the beginnings of our intercourse with Russia. This article throws more light on the characters of the English ambassadors to Russia in Elizabeth's reign than on the court and courtiers of Ivan the Terrible. But we learn that the beginning of our negotiations with Russia was the result of an attempt to find the north-east passage to Cathay. The history of our negotiations at this time is the history of concessions made by Ivan and of the monopoly granted to the Muscovy Company, which finally broke up the trade monopoly of the Hansa. Elizabeth's ambassadors, we find, were placed in positions of danger and difficulty by her characteristic policy of alternating haughtiness and concession. But she was so far helped by the diplomatic powers of Jenkinson and the bullying powers of Sir Jerome Bowes that cordial relations were established between the two courts, which lasted unbroken for 300 years. It was proposed that the tricentenary of this friendship should be celebrated. Mr. Corbett points out that it was celebrated by the Crimean war.

The Russian Occupation of India.

Captain Younghusband's article in the *Nineteenth Century* purports to be a memorandum written by

a Russian officer for the information of his own government. It is occupied entirely with the means of occupying Afghanistan as a step towards the final occupation of India.

The Memoirs of a Female Nihilist, by Sophie Vassiliev.

Mrs. Mona Caird writes an introduction to the "Memoirs of a Female Nihilist" in the *Idler*. She has shown us before powerfully enough the influence on the characters of women of the false ideal of self-sacrifice for its own sake. This makes her a fitting person to introduce to us a character whose self-sacrifice is the inevitable outcome of devotion to a cause—the cause of the Russian people. Of the memoirs themselves, one number only being published, it is early to speak.

The History of Elisey Sukach, the Stundist.

II.

Next Sunday all the villagers, old and young, went to church. Sukach's wife, Marya, went with the rest, to offer a candle to St. Nicholas the miracle-worker, in gratitude for her husband's conversion to the right way. Sukach went too, but with an unquiet heart.

The priest had been waiting for him some time; he could not get on without Sukach; the censer fire was not lit, the candles were not placed,—nothing was ready.

Sukach came forward; he listened in silence to the priest's stern reproof, and then, with a practised hand, set about his usual duties. He lighted the candles, kindled the censer fire and sprinkled in the incense; and all the while a secret voice seem to whisper to him: "What for?" He could not refuse to fulfil his customary duties during the service, for that would have been to declare war against the orthodox church, confess his new faith and enter at once upon a struggle against ancient routine, prejudice and ignorance, and, moreover, against all the power of the Russian police despotism. To do this was beyond his strength; he was not yet prepared for such a struggle. He kissed the priest's hand when giving him the censer; but he did it with a sense of disgust. He no longer moved proudly about the church, as he used to do, watching the people draw aside to let him pass; he stood still unless absolutely obliged to move. That persistent question: "What is it all for?" would give him no peace. When the congregation left the church, he did not go to ring the chimes, and the bells, rung by some unpractised hand, jangled and clashed, as though they would harmonise with Elisey's disquiet thoughts. He listened in gloomy abstraction to the dissonance of their brazen tongues. "What use is it all?" he murmured involuntarily.

"What's the matter, Elisey, are you ill?" asked the priest; and several of the neighbours remarked compassionately that he "looked like a ghost."

"A man may leave even the service of God's house when he's ill; there's no sin in that." Elisey answered not a word.

He grew stranger with every day. He worked from morning till night about the house and yard; he mended the harness, carried out the manure, swept the yard and repaired the fence. He even engaged himself for a week, with his horse, to plough for a neighbouring farmer. Then he went to the bazaar and bought some glass, which he put into the broken windows. The neighbours looked at him in amazement.

"Elisey's come to his senses" they said. "That's a long sight better than neglecting his children to fiddle after the priest."

The shiftless, ruined "Elisey the psalm-singer," whom, for all the precedence given to him in church, the neighbours had openly despised, now began to gain in their opinion when they saw that he could take thought for his household, his wife and his children. They gave him friendly help in building a new winter shed for his cattle, lent him their horses to bring in poles and branches, and gave him straw for the roof.

"Elisey's wrong in one thing though, mates," remarked one of the neighbours;—"he's quarrelled with the priest and left off working for him altogether; that's quite right, I always told him so. But why has he given up going to church?"

And, indeed, Elisey had quite left off going to church. As soon as the people started for church on Sunday mornings, he would go to the cottage of his fellow-believer, Grigory, and the two would sit in the barn together and talk over their doubts and difficulties.

Should they declare themselves Stundists? It seemed a fearful risk; the mass of the people are still so ignorant, so superstitious; indeed, the two converts knew from their own past how powerful prejudices are. If they were to confess their faith publicly, their life would be made unbearable to them by everyone, especially as the priest would encourage the people to persecute them. For that matter, the priest had met Elisey in the road and had flown at him with abuse and threats: "Have you forgotten God; that you do not come to church? Anybody would think that you had gone over to the accursed Stundist heresy! Do you want to be hanged, you and Riaboshapka on the same gallows, eh?"

The two friends thought of the words that Riaboshapka had quoted: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there will I be among you," and they remembered how the preacher had told them that this was the true church. And here were they a "church" of themselves. They decided not to confess their faith publicly until, at least, they had prepared their wives.

(To be continued.)

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THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF RUSSIAN FREEDOM.

THE English Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, founded in November, 1889, has for its objects to aid, to the extent of its powers, the Russian patriots who are trying to obtain for their country that Political Freedom and Self-government which Western nations have enjoyed for generations.

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CONTENTS.

Fearful Persecution of Stundists.—The two great Republics in Alliance with the Tzar.—Honoring Peter Lavrov.—Correspondence from Paris.—Bibliography.—George Kennan at Barnard's Inn.—Meetings.

July 1st, 1893.

WHILST the English papers announce the severe sentences of imprisonment, expulsion and exile passed upon the Protestant pastors in the Baltic provinces, for ministering to their newly-converted Russian brethren, we get from the interior of the empire terrible, blood-curdling news about the abominations perpetrated upon the peasants who have embraced Protestantism and are known as Stundists.

For some time rumours of these outrages reached us from various sources; but they were too horrible to be believed. Now they are confirmed by authentic letters from the victims, giving all names, dates and details, which cannot be reproduced in full without an offence to decency.

In the province of Kiev, the district of Skvira, in the village Babenez, the village authorities, with a view to the "extirpation of Stundist heresy," kept the male members of the Stundist families at work, not only by day, but often by night as well. Whilst the men were absent the zealous servants of the Orthodox creed broke into their unprotected houses, destroying their property, ill-treating the children, and torturing and committing the last outrages upon the women, unless they consented to cross themselves in the Orthodox fashion. The village Starosta and Starshina (elders), with the badges of their authority on their breasts, were leading and directing the drunken band of burglars and villains, and these abominations went on week after week.

Unable to get a hearing from local officials, the Stundists resolved to make an appeal to public opinion. They wrote letters to Russian public and literary men, whose names they could get, and sent a copy of their letters telling of their martyrdom to some American Quakers, whose addresses they succeeded in obtaining.

These harrowing documents have been sent by the Americans to the Russian Minister of the Interior. An inquiry will be probably instituted, but it will be of little use to those who have suffered. The date of these letters is September 14th, 1892. About nine months has elapsed since the perpetration of these outrages, and all the time these unfortunate people have been at the mercy of their tormentors.

Is it not time that some step should be taken to prevent or remonstrate against these barbarities due to the systematic incitement to religious intolerance on the part of men like Pobedonoszeff and companions?

TWO recent facts, very different in their importance and bearing, but equally revolting, have had a similar effect in awakening the public conscience of the countries where they occurred. The one was the handing over to the Russian authorities of the papers of Savitzky, the Polish refugee and Russian subject, whose tragic end in Paris was mentioned in our last issue. The other is the promulgation in America of the Russian extradition treaty, which thus becomes a law of the land.

The virtual delivery to the tender mercies of the Russian police of all the unfortunate people whose names may have been mentioned in Savitzky's correspondence provoked a storm of indignation in the Parisian press, and has stirred profoundly French public opinion. For the first time since the unfortunate Franco-Russian alliance came upon the field imposing protests were made against the constant sacrificing of the honour and dignity of the Republic to the problematic advantages of an insincere friendship between the two governments.

The promulgation of the extradition treaty between the Russian Tzar and the United States took nobody by surprise, and proved that the few bits of information about it smuggled into the press were perfectly correct. Article 3 declares the attempts against the Tzar or any member of his family and "accessorship thereto" to be necessarily now a political offence, and therefore extraditable.

To complete the list and to make extraditable the few Russian political refugees who may not be "accessories" to the previous offences, there is Article 6, referring to the fabrication of passports, "counterfeiting of seals and dies, impressions, stamps and marks of state and public administrations, and the utterance thereof." As has been already mentioned in these pages, in consequence of Russian passport regulations, there is not a single political refugee who has not been guilty of such an offence. All and each of them can be therefore claimed by the Russian government.

But the manifestation of public disapprobation of this scandalous treaty—to which its promulgation will give a new impetus—has been so great and unanimous that the treaty was converted into a dead letter before it was officially announced. It is doubtful whether the Russian government will dare to ask the extradition of any political offender, and if it did, it would only hasten the abrogation of the treaty itself, which is a question of time. In a democratic country a law which has been so emphatically condemned by public opinion will not stand long, and it is not unlikely that together with it will disappear the practice of "secret sessions," which will be a decided improvement in the American constitution, and will render impossible in the future the repetition of similar blunders.

Correspondence.

[From a Paris correspondent.]

YOU know, I presume, that the Tzar and Tzarina for some time past have been busily seeking a wife for the Tzarevich. At one time the Greek princess was the presumptive bride; but the conduct of the Tzarevich during the famous journey round the world and the closer acquaintance which the Greek royal family had the opportunity of making with their intended son-in-law brought this prospect to an untimely end. The projected alliance was dropped. It is rumoured that in searching for another bride—a task which, for certain special reasons, is accompanied with some difficulty—the Russian court was contemplating an alliance with the Princess of Parma, and to this effect some unofficial overtures were made to the father. The old duke showed himself much gratified by the honour, but replied that his children were born Roman Catholics and will die in that faith. The match could not be brought about, because all the princesses marrying into the house of Romanoff have to embrace Orthodoxy. At the same time, the Russian court heard that the same princess had accepted the hand of the Prince of Bulgaria, and I am told that the news of such a preference caused such an outburst of anger on the part of the Tzar that some rash action against Prince Ferdinand and his small principality has been feared. What is certain is that the announcement of the alliance caused at the court of St. Petersburg utterly unwarranted displeasure, of which Pobyedonostzev tried to take advantage in the interests of his "Orthodox" policy, and it needed all the influence of the Russian diplomatic body—by whom Pobyedonostzev is most cordially hated—to bring the Tzar to a more peaceful frame of mind. The French ambassador, whose influence is considerable, rendered good service to the Russian Chancellor in this case. Yet the Franco-Russian alliance, of which Mr. Flourens is the mainstay, was imperilled for one moment by the indiscretion of some French papers at the time of the Panama trial. Baron Morenheim, the Russian minister in Paris, was accused of having pocketed a large sum of money for helping in the sale of the Panama bonds in Russia. The accusation is believed by those who ought to know. It is asserted that there are documents proving it in the hands of the rival ambassador who was the inspirer of these accusations, (it is *not* Count Hoyos, the Austrian minister, as has been rumoured in Paris). Neither the personal reputation of Baron Morenheim nor his financial position are such as to incline people to disbelieve the charges. The Baron is impecunious, always on the look-out for money to borrow, and over head and ears in debt, which have been twice paid by the Russian government,

thanks to the favours of the Tzarina, who is the special patroness of the Baron. However this may be, the Tzar was very indignant at the mention of the Baron's name in connection with the Panama scandals, and informed his ambassador that he would be recalled if this newspaper campaign be not speedily stopped. Baron Morenheim, knowing who was at the bottom of the attack on him, went to his rival and made up the quarrel. The newspaper campaign was stopped and the matter was in a fair way of being hushed up when M. Ribot, who is not over-fond of the Russian alliance, made from the tribune of the chamber a speech which added fuel to the fire. The scandal was great, and the insult to the Russian ambassador too evident. The French government hastened to make up for it by an apologetic letter to the Tzar. But the Tzar would not be pacified, and Mr. Giers wrote under his dictation a reply, in which it was mentioned that when last year an affront was unwillingly offered in Berlin to his ambassador, Count Shavalov, the German Emperor made, by way of reparation, a personal visit to the Russian Embassy, and that the Tzar expected President Carnot to do no less. To this M. Devel, who had taken the post of M. Ribot, replied that President Carnot is not like the Emperor William, who, as a young man, may sometimes act upon a first impulse, whilst a man of M. Carnot's age must keep up his position. The Tzar was, naturally, not satisfied with such an explanation, and this caused a diplomatic *refroidissement*. But I do not think it will last long: the Russian government is in such need of cash, and France is so rich.

Bibliography.

RUSSIAN SUBJECTS IN JUNE MAGAZINES.

With Tolstoi in the Russian Famine.

The figure of Count Tolstoi is already familiar to English readers. Jonas Stadling, in his article in this month's *Century*, confirms our idea of him; but the larger interest of his experience lies in his descriptions of the famine-stricken district in which Tolstoi and his family were organising relief. It is the old tale of criminal indifference of the greater number of the upper classes, the old charge of exaggeration with which, all the world over, people excused their folded hands in times of distress. In the face of such a great evil and of such discouragement, individual effort often seemed useless, yet the work done by Tolstoi, his family and outside helpers was so organised as to give it the fullest efficiency. The peasants were not only kept from starvation at the moment, but an effort was made to feed their horses, to provide them with seed, and to educate their children. But those who are

working to alter the political and social conditions of the Russian people are preparing to strike, not at the effects, but at the root of the evil. On the causes of the ever-recurring famines, on the future condition of the Russian people, the writer is silent.

The Rev. W. Mason Inglis gives us in the *Gentleman* a graphic description of Cronstadt, the impregnable seaport, and Peterhof. He contrasts the quays at Cronstadt with the medly of miserable, half-starving peasants waiting to be hired, with the luxury and beauty of the summer retreats of the aristocracy and merchant princes at Peterhof. He ends with a tribute to the kindness and courtesy of the Russian officials, and remarks significantly: "We found them most anxious that we should form a favourable impression of their interesting country."

"Miss Hesba Stretton at Home."—*Sunday Magazine*.

It would be arrogance to attempt to find a reason for a special *ukaz* of the Tzar, but it is interesting to learn that "Jessica's First Prayer," by Hesba Stretton was ordered by Alexander II. to be placed in every school in Russia. Not less interesting is that Alexander III has revoked the order and condemned the remaining copies to be burned. Has an unorthodox tendency been discovered in this simple and pathetic little story since Hesba Stretton's name became conspicuous among the Friends of Russian Freedom?

On June 14th, the Paris colony of Russian exiles and students gave a banquet in honour of P. L. Lavrov on the occasion of his 70th birthday. The hall of the Palais Royal was crowded with Russian and foreign guests, among whom were French, German, Poles, Roumanians, Austrians, and Finns. For over 40 years Peter Lavrov stood in the front rank of the champions for the enfranchisement of the masses of the Russian people from economic and political tyranny, and his name, as an author and thinker, is associated with all the phases of Russian development. One of his earlier books, bearing the modest title "Historical Letters," marks an epoch in Russian intellectual history, whilst the extensive work of his later days, now in publication,—the "History of Thought"—marks an epoch in socialistic literature. His long and important services in the common cause have called forth, on the occasion of his anniversary, enthusiastic recognition. Congratulatory letters and telegrams were received from all parts of the world, including the chief intellectual centres of Russia, from which places, as a matter of course, the messages had to be drawn up in secret meetings and conveyed clandestinely.

Numerous speeches were delivered, and Lavrov's own address, calling the younger generations of Russians to the struggle for socialistic ideas, produced a deep impression.

"I came home at two in the morning," writes one of the guests, "and could not get to sleep until five, so excited I was. I do not remember ever being in such a fever."

Mr. George Kennan in London.

On the evening of Saturday, June 10, in the quaint old hall of Barnard's Inn, the Executive Committee, in the name of the Society, gave an "At Home, to meet Mr. George Kennan" during his brief sojourn in London. The gathering was large and enthusiastic and thoroughly representative. Amongst those present were Mr. Allanson Picton, M.P., Mr. Byles, M.P., and Mrs. Byles, Mr. Lough, M.P., and Mrs. Lough, Mr. William Allan, M.P., Mr. E. J. C. Morton, M.P., Mr. Webb, M.P., Hon. Gilbert and Mrs. Coleridge, Mr. Walter Crane, Professor and Mrs. Murison, Rev. Mr. Hunter, Mr. Moy Thomas, Mr. E. J. Glave, Dr. and Mrs. Kempster, Mr. Richard Stapley, Mrs. Mallet, Mrs. Astley Cock, Miss Hesba Stretton, Miss Isabella O. Ford, Miss Helen Webb, Miss Lee, Miss Honor Morton, Mr. Jeffs, Mr. and Mrs. E. R. Pease, Mr. H. M. Thompson, Mr. G. H. Perris, Mr. Maynard Leonard, Mr. W. F. Moulton, Dr. Todhunter, Mr. George Standring, Stepniak, Volkhovsky, Tchikovsky, and Krapotkin. The reception was an unparalleled success, and Mr. Kennan was heartily received. Mrs. Stepniak and Mrs. Eustace Hartley dispensed refreshments from Russian samovars.

No small share in the success of the gathering must be ascribed to the excellence of the musical menu provided by Signor Angelo Mascheroni, as chef, and Mr. S. A. Hertzberg, as general manager. The several courses were not brought in as a continuous repast, but were served up at intervals during the evening. One could thus enjoy the various musical *plats* without being in any way compelled to remain in one part of the room for more than a few minutes at a time. This arrangement worked most harmoniously and seemed to please every one, more especially as the free circulation of the guests—all eager to exchange kindly greetings with numerous friends, and in particular to welcome Mr. Kennan—kept the rooms in a delightfully cool condition. Il Maestro Mascheroni first played with much piquancy a valse de concert of his own composition (on a Winkelman grand, by the way), and shortly after Signor Ago Chilveri used his fine voice with great effect in "A Soldier's Song." Two pieces, "For all eternity" and an aria from Boito's "Mefistofele," were given by Mdle. Paulina Biancoli, of the Covent Garden Opera, whose charming and brilliant soprano was the theme of general admiration; and Signor Aramis thoroughly deserved the hearty applause with which his rendering of songs by Tosti and De Lara was received. Mr. Francis Lloyd was listened to with marked attention while he sang with much delicacy a pretty song called "Lovely Spring," by W. Colnen, and last, but not by any means least, the well-known contralto, Miss Grace Damian, laid us under a heavy debt of gratitude for the pleasure afforded by her most artistic interpretation of Mascheroni's "Land of Yesterday" and Siebel's song, "Le parlait d'Amor" (Faust).

During the course of the evening Mr. ALLANSON PICTON, M.P., in the absence of Dr. Spence Watson, said he had come to the meeting with considerable difficulty; he had, in fact, been on the stump in Hyde Park—(laughter)—but he would on no account have missed it, for interesting as all the other occasions of the gatherings of the Society had been, the interest of this occasion far surpassed all others,

and urged him to make the utmost endeavours to be there as soon as possible. It was their great honour to have with them that night Mr. George Kennan—(cheers)—whose book on Siberia and the Siberian prisons had been, he would venture to say an epoch-making work—(cheers)—making, as it did, such an impression on the feelings of the civilised world that will never be effaced. The evidence of impartiality which that book contained, its judicial temper and the anxiety which was manifested to know and speak nothing but the exact truth impressed the minds of all nations. Without prolonging his own words, however, he would read a letter from their President, in which he apologised for what must be a great disappointment to himself, his inability to be present. He writes:—

Newcastle-on-Tyne, 9th June, 1893.

Dear Mr. Mackenzie,—I greatly regret that I cannot be with you to meet Mr. George Kennan. For those of us who are interested in the work of our Society it will be an important meeting. Our very existence is due in large measure to the flood of light which Mr. Kennan let in upon the condition of political exiles in Siberia, and to the deep interest aroused by the account of his personal examination into the system. Just when we are pained by the conclusion of the Extradition Treaty between the free Government of the United States and the despotic Government of Russia, and chiefly pained because of the serious discouragement which it must be, not merely to the Liberal party in Russia, but to the believers in democratic government everywhere, it is well that we should be reminded, by the presence amongst us of Mr. George Kennan, of how deeply the world is indebted to American citizens for their splendid exertions on behalf of freedom in their own and in other lands.

Yours faithfully,

ROBT. SPENCE WATSON.

Before asking Mr. Kennan to be good enough to address the meeting, he would wish to add his own expression of opinion to that of the President that the Extradition Treaty just concluded between Russia and the United States must be explained by accidental circumstances altogether apart from the feeling of the people. (Hear, hear.) He had reason to believe that the people of the United States, if they had understood the provisions of that treaty, would have scouted it. The Americans were quite as much in sympathy with a great people struggling to be free as the English could pretend to be, and he was sure that the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race would go hand in hand in an alliance with those who were struggling for the establishment of human rights and justice. (Cheers.)

Mr. GEORGE KENNAN, who was received with loud cheers, said:—Ladies and gentlemen: Friends of Russian Freedom: It gives me the greatest pleasure and satisfaction on the occasion of my first visit to London since I returned from Siberia to receive such a welcome as this, and to see such gratifying evidence of the interest in the cause with which I have been more or less identified. When I passed through London in 1886 there was no Society of Friends of Russian Freedom in this or in any other country. At that time three of the Russian refugees who are here to-night were then in Siberia. One of them had just served out his term of penal servitude at the mines and was on his way to Yakutsk, and to Felix Volkhovsky I had just said good-bye in the Western Siberian city of Tomsk, as to one who was a dying man, as I never expected to see him again. Since then seven years have elapsed, and now I find in London the large and strong Society of Friends of Russian Freedom. I find half a score of lecturers engaged in the work of awakening

public opinion to the true state of affairs in Russia. I find everywhere an intelligent comprehension of the Russian situation, and a warm feeling of sympathy with the struggle for freedom and liberty, and I find a free Russian press publishing regularly political and other pamphlets by the thousand in the Russian language for circulation in the empire of the Tzar. For this great change in the aspect of affairs between my two visits to London I heartily congratulate you. I should be proud and glad if I could feel that I had any considerable share in bringing about this great change, but as a matter of fact I have had very little to do with it. The awakening of public opinion in England in connection with Russia has been very largely the work of this Society, and particularly of your President, Robert Spence Watson, Stepniak, Edward R. Pease, Volkhovsky, and many other members of the Society. For myself, I have done what I could in my own field. When I visited the political convicts in 1885-6, I said, "If I live and get out of this country in safety with my notes and papers I will devote the rest of my life to making the civilised world acquainted with your wrongs and suffering," and I have kept my promise. (Cheers.) Within the last six years, I have written 35 magazine articles and reviews dealing with those banished strugglers in Siberian prisons, and have delivered 500 public lectures in all parts of the United States, from Maine to California, and have been told here to-night many times that my book has touched hearts and made more impression than any book they have read for years. If that book has touched your hearts it is because the book has first touched my heart. (Cheers.) If, when I went to Russia, anyone had told me that at my age and with my experience there was yet in store for me the strongest emotion of my life I should have laughed; and yet that statement is perfectly true. I was more moved and stirred by what I saw in Siberia than by anything that had happened before in my life, and many pages of that book were written with tears in my eyes, alone in my room. It is not my purpose to make an extended address to-night; I have neither the time nor the strength for such. I merely wish to express my cordial appreciation of the honour you have conferred on me by enabling me to be present at this meeting, and to say a few words of encouragement about the movement. Many people ask me—amongst them a Russian Princess travelling in America—what is the good of such efforts, the effects of which are only like the ripples made by a stone thrown into the ocean? Such people I remind of the mighty man slain by a pebble taken from the brook and thrown by a stripling. (Hear, hear.) The work in which we are conjointly engaged, namely, co-operating with brave and noble spirits in Russia to obtain independence and freedom—and freedom moves with great slowness—may seem to such people hopeless, but we are not discouraged in that we do not exactly see its effects. When a party of sappers and miners begins to work at the base of an impregnable fortress, the casual spectator may say, "What are the results of your labours? You have been investing the fortress for months, yet the walls are as impregnable as ever." Yes, the walls may seem to stand firmly, but the building is undermined, and it is only a question of time when the castle will tumble into ruins or be blown into the air. This is the case in Russia, and we are undermining it with ideas—(cheers)—and the Government in Russia knows that it is more difficult to dispose of ideas than dynamite.

In Russia a school teacher asked for a definition of the word "idea." At last one little girl said, "An idea is what is opposed to the Government." (Laughter and cheers.) The answer may not have been entirely satisfactory to a professor in an English university, but it is accurate for Russia. (Hear, hear.) There ideas are what are opposed to the Government, and there is an attempt made by the Government, therefore, to keep all ideas out of the Empire, for they realise that they are dangerous, and do not allow them to cross the border. About a year and a half ago the United States Government sent two of its officers of immigration into the Russian Empire to investigate the condition of the Jews, to find out what was the cause of the large and increasing immigration into America. They devoted three or four months to that careful investigation, and reported to the Secretary of the Treasury at Washington. Three weeks ago the Russian Jews' Committee here in London, wishing to make the Tzar acquainted with the state of his Empire, and with the state of the Jews, sent 200 copies of this report to the Tzar himself, to the ministers of the Tzar, to the governors of the Russian provinces, to all the members of the Council of the Empire, and to all the high officials. Do you suppose these reports were allowed to reach their destination? No. Every copy of the whole 200 was seized and returned to the Committee in London, marked "Prohibited." Thus you can see that the Russian Government is more afraid of ideas than of anything else; and it not only keeps them out, but excludes every person in possession of ideas. Several of us—Mr. Harold Frederic, Dr. Kempster, and Colonel Webber—have been officially barred out of the Empire, and our names are on the black list at all the frontier stations. All our reports and articles are blacked out or returned, our private letters are destroyed, and we are forbidden to set foot in the country. But we consider this the highest distinction that can be conferred on us by the Russian Government, and I think I express the sentiments of my other friends when I say that we would rather be barred out of the Empire for defending the oppressed and the persecuted than to be entertained by his Imperial Majesty at the Court of Russia and to be decorated with the Russian Cross of St. George. I have been asked some times since I came to London what we have accomplished with our lectures and books and Friends of Russian Freedom. It must be remembered that all the streams of tendency in Russia are underground, and it is difficult to estimate their force; and, in the second place, it is extremely difficult to get any accurate information out of Russia. But I can tell you some of the things we have accomplished. We brought about the abolition of flogging of women in Russia. (Cheers.) It had long been the custom to flog women in Siberia, but the publicity we gave to the flogging to death of Madame Sigida at the mines of Kará, and the criticisms made on the matter by the foreign press, induced the Government to propose a law for the abolition of flogging for women, which has been promulgated and carried out. We have been instrumental also in the creation of an atmosphere outside Russia, which every Russian feels directly he leaves his country and travels. (Cheers.) Before, he would never have expressed any disapproval of the acts which we condemn, but in England and the States he feels that there are certain features of his Government—such as judgment without a sufficient trial—which are repugnant to the ideas of all free peoples.

And this Russian goes back with his ideas a little modified, and they exercise an influence greater than we can imagine. And this atmosphere of hostility to oppression is not confined to England and the United States, for from Austria, Germany, Holland, Turkey, the Cape of Good Hope, Australia, New Zealand and Java come expressions of sympathy in our work. But even if I could not tell you what good we had accomplished in working for the Russian cause, the fact that I am fighting with the bravest and noblest spirits of Russia in their struggle for freedom, and the fact that if the oppressed think of me as their champion in the outside world—these are enough for me. (Cheers.) Most of you are familiar with the massacre of the political exiles at Yakoutsck. All of the survivors of this tragedy were tried by court martial for "resisting the police" and found guilty. Three were hanged, and most of the others were sent to the mines at Kará, in the remotest part of the province. (Shame.) One of those condemned to death, Zotoft, wrote in his cell the night before he was hanged, a little note, in which he said, "We are not afraid to die; but try to make our deaths count for something. Write it all to Kennan." If it please God to spare me, that appeal shall not be in vain—(loud cheers)—their death shall count for something; and if I live all the English-speaking world shall know the story of the atrocious crimes that stain with blood the pages of Siberian history. (Cheers.) A certain Russian Princess, who was travelling in the United States, said that Mr. Kennan's work in carrying on an agitation against the Russian Government was merely a drop thrown against an ocean. That may be so; but if the Princess has been brought up in the orthodox faith, as she ought to have been, she will doubtless remember the story of the giant and the little stone thrown from the brook. (Hear, hear.) Whether I succeed or not, I have the satisfaction of knowing that I will lighten the hearts of many prisoners, and give sympathy and encouragement in many lonely Siberian settlements. I would rather know this—I would rather know that an exile thought of me when he ascended the scaffold, that, when he was dying, with his last breath he should say, "send it to Kennan; let Kennan know," than I would wear the Imperial purple. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. ALLAN, M.P., said that the struggle for liberty that was going on in Russia seemed to him one of the greatest spectacles the world could present to the human mind. Here were a great despot and a great people,—the people crying out as of old for their bonds to be removed; the hard iron autocrat, the great white Tzar, doing all he could to crush the people. The battle of liberty and freedom, as the history of the world showed, was always slow, and no good thing had ever been won without suffering. The people of Russia having set themselves to clean this Augean stable of an autocratic system of government in Russia, would accomplish it, no doubt; but they would suffer, and many grand men and women would tread the dreary way of death to Siberia. He did not wonder at the deeds of the revolutionary party in Russia. (Hear, hear.) Were he in the same position as the bitterly wronged and oppressed, had he a mother or a father sent to Siberia, to undergo such things as they had heard of from Mr. Kennan, he did not know what methods he would not employ to have revenge upon the authors of his friends' sufferings. (Cheers.) They had met that night to express their sympathy with those who had the Russian cause at heart, and he begged to assure them that he was with their cause. (Cheers.)

Mr. BYLES, M.P., said that after the eloquent speeches they had just heard he would not detain them by attempting to translate their aspirations for freedom for the oppressed into any words of his, but would address himself for the moment to the practical part of the matter. He was a member of the Committee of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, but outside the Society there were a great many who sympathised with the movement who were unacquainted with the work and methods of the Society. To any such who were there that night he wished to say that the operations of the Society were mainly conducted through a small monthly newspaper, published in England, and America. They were, in short, the "sappers and miners" referred to by Mr. Kennan, and were endeavouring to undermine the big strong citadel of Russian government by the circulation and introduction of Liberal ideas through their paper FREE RUSSIA. But unless people could be got to read them it was no use publishing. The difficulty was to obtain for it distribution and circulation, and the most practical help which could be given by persons was to get themselves put on the subscription list to the paper, and by communicating with the Secretary, Mr. Mackenzie, it would be possible to get it sent them every month, as many copies as they wished. All that was necessary was to send him 5s., or any larger sum they might desire to send. Lectures were also given by friends of the Society, and by these agencies they believed the Society was doing something, if only a little, in the

cause of freedom. (Hear, hear.) On behalf of the Committee he was indebted to those ladies and gentlemen who had taken the trouble to come, but he was sure they would feel themselves amply repaid by having come into contact with such a man as Mr. Kennan and almost all the leaders of the movement for Russian freedom. (Cheers.)

Mr. PICTON desired to thank Mr. Kennan and the other gentlemen who had spoken to them, and to express his indebtedness to those who were present. He felt sure that their enjoyment of the evening would be all the greater for what they had just heard. (Cheers.)

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.—The monthly meeting of the Executive Committee was held on June 10th, Mr. H. M. Thompson, presiding.

HAMPSTEAD.—A drawing-room meeting was held on the evening of June 13th, at Lawn House, the house of Dr. and Mrs. Arthur H. Thompson, and was well attended. Mr. Felix Volkhovsky delivered his lecture on "The Story of My Life," and many of those present were evidently impressed by the facts placed before them. Short speeches were delivered by Dr. Arthur H. Thompson, Mr. Herbert M. Thompson and Dr. Herbert Smith. Four new members were enrolled in the society, and 10s. 3d. was received for literature sold.

Owing to the reduction in the size of our paper want of space compels us to omit "The Story of the Stundist" and other matter.

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THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF RUSSIAN FREEDOM

THE English Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, founded in November, 1889, has for its objects to aid, to the extent of its powers, the Russian patriots who are trying to obtain for their country that Political Freedom and Self-government which Western nations have enjoyed for generations.

The Society appeals to the enlightened men and women of all countries, without distinction of nationality or political creed, who cannot witness with indifference the horrors perpetrated in the Empire of the Tzars, and who wish a better future for the masses of the Russian people. Further contributions to the funds and further work are needed and will be welcome. Membership is acquired by sending to the Treasurer an annual subscription of or exceeding Five Shillings. Members are entitled to receive *Free Russia* post free.

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All MSS., Letters to the Editor, Advertisements, &c., should be addressed to the Editor, FREE RUSSIA, 3, Iffley Road, Hammersmith, London.

Advertisements received up to the 25th of each month will appear in the next issue. Advertisements in the English, American and German editions at reduced rates.

Communications with regard to the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom should be addressed to the Honorary Secretary (G. L. Mallet), 132, Cromwell Road, South Kensington, London, S.W.

THE FUND OF THE RUSSIAN FREE PRESS was founded in the Summer of 1891 by us, the undersigned, with the contributions of certain Russians holding lawful positions in Russia. Its object is to supply the need of a Free Press, which is so much felt in Russia at the present time. The publications of the Fund will appear in independent occasional pamphlets, and will refer either to current events or to general questions.

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CONTENTS.

Notes of the Month.—*A Russian Philosopher in London (by Stepniaik).*—*The Empire of the Tzars and the Russians (a review by Herbert M. Thompson.)*—*Bibliography (by A. R.)*

Notes of the Month.

The flogging of taxpayers, which is a universal panacea for insolvency in the rural districts, cannot very well be practiced in towns. Here the police have had to apply to other less drastic methods. In Tambov they hit upon the amusing, though hardly legal, expedient of taking from the inhabitants of a poor ward the taps of all their somovars (tea urns) thus depriving them of their favourite drink; the possibility of making tea otherwise than with a samovar would never occur to a genuine Russian. About 80 taps were thus brought in a sack to the police office. The trick had its effect, and in a few days the poor people, who preferred to be without bread rather than without tea, brought in their coppers and redeemed their taps.

In Berdichev a paper has been started in circumstances which are characteristic of the Russian provincial press. It is edited and published in Berdichev, printed in Jitomir and submitted to the censor living in Kiev. Thus the readers cannot have news before it is a fortnight old. The case is common enough in the provinces: regular censor's offices existing only in the seven university towns. No wonder that under such conditions the provincial press cannot make much headway.

The island of Sakhalien has become of late the favourite penal colony. To transport the convicts to that place, ships are now being built upon the Clyde. We have now, some official news as to the barbarous treatment of the convicts in that God-forsaken place. The exploits of the superintendent Khanov were such, that about 20 men inflicted upon themselves severe bodily injuries, chopping off their fingers and toes, in order to be removed, as incapacitated for work, to another place. Others escaped to the forest, lying in the middle of the island, with little hope of ever reaching the main land, facing the horrors of death by starvation, merely to escape for a few days from their hard task-master. Near Onor the authorities arrested a vagabond, and found in his provision bag a piece of a man's body. The inquiry showed, that he was one of a party of four, the other three having been killed and eaten by their starving companions.

Cholera, which broke out once again in Russia this autumn, is abating in some places, whilst it is increasing with alarming rapidity in others. It has almost disappeared in Nijni Novgorod, Rastov upon the Don and Simferopol. But it is on the increase

in St. Petersburg, where the number of cases reaches an average of 60 per diem, and the increase is also noticed in the provinces of Vilna, Voronej, Kazan, Kursk, Mogilev, Moscow, Tchernigov and the land of the Don Cossacks.

* * *

The relations between Russia and Germany are approaching a very critical point, and the future cannot be called otherwise than gloomy. The representatives of the two countries are meeting just now in Berlin to discuss the commercial treaties; and it cannot be said that they meet in a spirit of conciliation.

A very strange thing occurs in Russia just now: Autocracy is a form of government so entirely out of date and the middle class has grown so much in power that the government has tacitly acknowledged its influence, making only a show of absolute independence. But in the absence of any legal means for the expression of the public opinion of the bulk of the nation, only a very small section of the nation—the upper middle class, the millionaires, the stock exchange jobbers, the plutocracy—alone have the power of asserting their will, their great wealth putting them above the restraint imposed upon the bulk of the citizens. Thus the unwillingness on the part of the government to listen to the voice of the nation brings about the subserviency to a clique of self-seekers who would not hesitate one moment in inflicting upon the country the worst calamity if it may turn to their private advantage.

The Russian government does not wish and cannot wish to have war with Germany. Yet, in obedience to the promptings of that aristocracy of the market, it is rushing headlong into a policy which may bring about at any moment a military conflict. The seriousness of the position is increased by the noisy demonstration of French hostility to Germany, which the forthcoming arrival of Russian naval officers in Paris gives occasion to. For a long time European peace has not been in such danger as it is just now.

A Russian Philosopher in London.

The Russian colony in London can well be congratulated on the addition of a new member, Vasily Vasilievich Bervy, an eminent Russian writer and philosopher, who came over to England with the special object of publishing here some of his most cherished works, which could not see the light in the dominion of the Tzar. Mr. Bervy's opinions are not those of a "Nihilist." He stands and has always stood somewhat aloof from the general movement, having created for himself a position and views apart.

But as a staunch opponent of the iniquitous régime prevailing in Russia and a champion of a brighter future, V. Bervy is a man of no party. He is one of the most striking figures in the glorious list of Russian men who have devoted their lives to the struggle with the powers of darkness.

V. Bervy is now 64. The best part of his long life—full 26 years—were spent in exile and in

solitary confinement, 32 prisons having seen him within their walls. Yet V. V. Bervy has committed no act which could be considered a breach of law in any civilised country. He is above all a thinker, an earnest seeker after social and philosophical truth.

But such men are an eyesore to the Russian government and Mr. Bervy was hunted down and persecuted in a way that would have broken and crushed a man with less spirit.

Mr. Bervy was, for the first time, implicated in a "political" affair and arrested when he had already reached the mature age of forty, in circumstances characteristic both of him and the ways of Russian bureaucracy. In 1862, a year after the emancipation of the serfs, the thirteen representatives of the nobility in the province of Tver, with Europeans and Bakunin at their head, sent in a petition, respectfully asking the Tzar to grant free constitution to the country. The terms of the demand were as modest and humble as could be desired. But the government was alarmed at the step and resolved to make a salutary example. The thirteen noblemen were arrested and conveyed to the fortress of S.S. Peter and Paul.

The Russian code strictly prohibits all "collective" petitions in general, which are regarded as akin to seditious demonstration. In case of a general grievance, all those concerned or implicated are expected individually to petition the Tzar upon it, the right of personally applying to the Master being supposed to be the birthright of his subjects. The nobility, moreover, was granted by Catherine II. the right of sending to the Tzar through their marshals in special cases collective petitions, a right which had not been withdrawn at that time.

The Liberals of Tver did not secure the mediation of the "marshal" of their province. But this was the only point of transgression against the forms of law. They could not be so severely punished for that as the government wanted them to be. Then Count Panin resorted to the following trick: There is in the code of law a paragraph concerning the wilful miscarriage of or disobedience to an order given by the Tzar in person. It referred to oral orders that may be given by the Tzar to his officials, and the penalty was from five to ten years' penal servitude. Now, since in Russia all laws are the emanation of the Tzar's will, and can be viewed as his personal orders, Count Panin conceived the brilliant idea of punishing the 13 Liberals of Tver on the strength of this paragraph. It was not only absurd but simply a flat and stupid joke like a witticism borrowed from a primer. Yet the servility of the Russian court is such that nobody dare to protest against the absurd interpretation of the law, and the 13 noblemen were on the point of being condemned on the strength of a judicial joke.

Mr. Bervy, then a very successful official in the

ministry of justice, knew, as a matter of course, of the extraordinary piece of jugglery of his chief, and resolved to expose him and to save the 18 petitioners, with whose object he, of course, was in full sympathy.

To this effect he wrote a memorandum which he sent to all whom the matter might concern: to the members of the judicial profession, to senators and to the marshals of nobility all over the country. This caused a great sensation, and so soon as Count Panin's design was brought to light, it could no longer be carried out. The ridiculous indictment against the 18 petitioners was withdrawn, and they were not tried at all. But it can hardly be said, that they derived much advantage from this; since there was no law severe enough to be applied to their case, they were punished without any reference to law by administrative order, all the 18 being exiled, some to Siberia, some to the northern provinces. Mr. Bervy, their champion, was treated in a very oriental fashion: he was declared to be out of his mind and locked up in a mad-house, where he was kept for eight months and then exiled to Astrachan, the authorities having evidently discovered that there was too much method in his madness.

From this epoch, Mr. Bervy was a marked man. The police did not let him alone for the next 40 years. On suspicion that he had taken part in the efforts of a secret revolutionary society, to organise a peasant insurrection upon the Volga, Mr. Bervy was arrested in 1868, a few months after his arrival in Astrachan, he was sent off under escort to Kazan, which was the centre of the organisation, and kept in prison for another eight months. "No proofs of his guilt being forthcoming, he was exiled to Siberia," so runs the official document referring to his case. This is not a joke, or misprint: people are exiled in Russia by administrative order on suspicion. They fare much worse when the police can bring some evidence in support of the charge.

Mr. Bervy was settled in Kusnetzxy district (province of Tomsk) and after two years was removed to the chief town of the province. In 1866, Mr. Bervy had to undergo another "removal," inflicted upon him for no comprehensible reason, and possibly with the benevolent object of improving his position, which did not prevent it from causing the hapless exile and his young wife most excruciating sufferings. Mr. Bervy was told off from Tomsk to Vologda, a town a few hundred miles distant from St. Petersburg, and enjoying a comparatively mild climate. But it is full 8,000 miles from Tomsk, and this distance, Bervy and his wife had to make on foot with a gang of common criminals by *étapes*, a journey which at that epoch, seemed to have been something even more terrible than it is described as being in Mr. Kennan's book.

Even now, after the lapse of 27 years, Bervy and his wife cannot speak without a shudder of

their terrible experiences. The *étapes* where they had to spend the nights after the march were simply dung-hills swarming with vermin, which covered the walls, floor, ceiling and every inch of space. Sleep was rendered impossible by the incessant torture caused by the parasites penetrating under the clothes, filling the ears and hair and covering the face. And Mrs. Bervy had her first-born baby, nine months old. The family spent six months in these shocking conditions. After the first few days the bodies of the child and mother were one large sore. The baby could never grow into a strong child, and the health of both the parents was permanently injured.

In Vologda the family stayed only for two years. They were then removed once more, this time to Tver, which is a much better place. The fact is that during this period Bervy wrote several of his books, which made him one of the most popular men in Russia. His study upon the condition of the labouring class in Russia marks an epoch in the growth of democratic and social ideas. His "Primer of Social Sciences" was at one time in the hands of every earnest Russian student. A whole generation was educated upon these books, and the government understood the danger of making a martyr of an author who had already acquired such an influence over the minds of the young generations.

In 1870 Mr. Bervy was forgiven his unknown and undefinable offences, and allowed the liberty of settling wherever he liked, with the exception of the two capitals. He chose Nijni Novgorod, where he got a good situation in the railway administration, and could, after eight years wandering, enjoy some rest.

But Mr. Bervy is one of those indefatigable missionaries of freedom whose energy and vital power seem to increase in proportion to the efforts to crush them. Soon after his settlement in Nijni Mr. Bervy, then a man of 50, forfeited his freedom and prospects of future tranquility by writing for a clandestine printing office a pamphlet entitled "How to live according to the law of nature and justice." It was an impassioned plea for equality and abolition of all class distinction and all tyranny, but there was not a line in the pamphlet that could be construed as an incitement to crime. No civilised government would raise any objection to the free circulation of this pamphlet. In Russia the young people who published it and spread a few score of it among the peasants and artisans of the towns—Dolgushtin, Domokhovskiy, Papin, Plotinkov and others—were punished with penal servitude for terms varying from eight to 15 years, and one-half of them have succumbed by now to the horrors of solitary confinement and the hardships of Siberian prison life.

The authorship of the pamphlet having been detected, Mr. Bervy was arrested and dragged from prison to prison and then from one place of exile to another for full 14 years, having to suffer with

his family indescribable misery, being often on the verge of perishing from want.

Yet he went on writing his many literary works and carrying on the oral propaganda of his views among the people, where accident had thrown him. It was during this period that he completed the two concluding volumes of the "Primer of Social Sciences" which he considers the chief work of his life.

Few of his books could be published in Russia. As for the "Primer" the thing could not be thought of. It is with the object of shaking off the fetters of the censorship and speaking out freely what he values more than his life, that Mr. Bervy resolved at the age when most people look for rest, to face the privation and loneliness of an exile's life.

We can fairly expect much from his pen, which his old hand wields with a power and swiftness which would put to shame younger rivals. His "Primer" is to appear before long in the Russian language. Now he is engaged upon his autobiography, intended both for the Russian and English readers. He is an indefatigable worker, being able to sit at his writing desk 10 hours a day regularly and this with a diet that is a positive puzzle for a physiologist. He is a vegetarian and advocates an extreme simplification of life, in which he leaves Tolstoi and Edward Carpenter far behind. For the last 15 years he has eaten only once a day a plateful of rice boiled in water, with one glass of red wine the physicians have prescribed to him on account of his weak health.

S. STEPNIK.

The Empire of the Tzars and the Russians.

By ANATOLE LEROY-BEAULIEU.

Part I.—"The Country and its Inhabitants," translated with annotations by Zénaïde A. Ragozin.—(G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London.)

It is to be regretted that we have had to wait ten years before receiving even the first instalment of the translation of this very important book.

The existence of Mr. Mackenzie Wallace's "Russia" by no means abrogated the necessity of making accessible to English readers its French brother-work, for, in the first place, it is a *younger* brother, and gives information 10 or 12 years nearer to being up to date; and, in the second place, the scope of the two works is by no means the same.

True there are chapters scattered through Mr. Wallace's book that touch on most of the main subjects of which M. Leroy-Beaulieu treats in this first volume. But the former book is too much of the nature of an interesting series of letters from a newspaper correspondent to compare favourably either for completeness or system.

atisation with its French companion. Of the subject of the first four books of M. Leroy-Beaulieu's work (viz., "Nature, Climate, and Soil," "Races and Nationalities," "National Temperament and Character," and "History and Elements of Civilisation") we may say that the treatment is much more thorough and satisfactory than that accorded by the English book. To the exposition of the subjects of the seventh and eighth books, however ("The Peasant and the Emancipation" and "Mir, Family, and Village Communities"), the remark would be less applicable; for these questions were specially studied by Mr. Wallace, and very fully treated by him.

It is an omission in the volume before us which it is difficult to excuse that nowhere is any indication given to the reader that the work of which it is the English version appeared some 10 years ago. This, in writings concerning a country where the political conditions change as often and as rapidly as they do in Russia, is a matter of the greatest importance. The editor's notes, it is true, do something towards giving recent information, and there appears to have been some very slight attempt at revision of the text, but this has been so superficially done, that it would have been almost better to leave it alone. On page 583 an author's note gives dates so recent as 1887, 1889 and 1890, and in one other place in the book the date 1886 is mentioned, but I think these are the only two instances where reference is made to dates included within the last decade.

On page 5 the population of the country is given as 90,000,000 (it is evident from the context that it is intended to include Siberia), on page 42 the contemporary computation of 115,000,000 is given.

But the real importance of the *date* of the writing lies not so much in discrepancies of this kind, as in the writer's attitude of mind towards the Russia of to-day.

The book is on the Russian "prohibited list," and I suppose that is to be expected, as it contains occasional passages like the following:—"This faculty of adaptation, confined until now to private life, to external politeness, to arts and sciences, can" (*sic*) "any day extend into novel spheres such as government, institutions, public liberties" (page 192). But in spite of such occasional lapses into speculation the book is on the whole so sturdily loyal to its conception of a faithful, and in the main well-intentioned government, that did the censorship possess a grain more of liberality or of intelligence than it actually exhibits, the governmental authorities would welcome M. Leroy-Beaulieu's book into Russia as one of their best friends.

It is this attitude of mind on the part of the writer that makes it so important to know when the investigation which his book represents took place. It is harmonious with the ideas of the

first half of Alexander II.'s reign, the period of reform which saw the emancipation of the serfs, the establishment of the *zemstvos*, the relaxation of the press law, censorship, &c.

One cannot help suspecting that the author was brought less intimately into contact with Russian affairs during the second part of that reign, the period that witnessed the lamentable reaction which undid so much of the good previously done, and culminated in the assassination of the monarch who had earned his title of "Liberator" when he had reigned 15 years, but had done a good deal to lose it when he had occupied the throne for 26.

However that may be, we know at least that M. Leroy-Beaulieu's book appeared so early in the present reign that it can necessarily take no account of the intenser obscurantism by which it has been marked. In its pages we have no introduction to Pobedonostzev, Procurator of the Holy Synod, and chief instigator and director of the religious persecution.

But whatever the bent of M. Leroy-Beaulieu's views may be in regard to Russian political questions, he always treats them in a broad philosophical way, which obviously endeavours to be fair, and to see matters from many sides.

We can hardly say as much for his translator and editor Mr. Z. A. Ragozin, the naïve querulousness of whose copious notes is often in amusing contrast to the declaration in his preface that "very rarely, very respectfully" he has offered "some slight objection to the views of the author."

Certainly we are left in no doubt about Mr. Ragozin's inclination to defend Russia-as-it-is through thick and thin. Yet he has not the excuse of having written 10 years ago when he demands admiration (note on page 186) of Russia for respecting the autonomy of Finland! or when he claims for it in the same note "scrupulous respect" for the religion of "alien subjects" and gives as an example the treatment of the Hebrews! The note on the next page which speaks of the "mild, unobtrusive, uninterfering Orthodox Church" might really be an excerpt from Mr. Botkine's recent article in the *Century Magazine*.

But it would be easy to be unjust to Mr. Ragozin. His jealousy for Russia-as-it-is evidently springs from the genuine love for his fatherland, though he has yet to learn that true patriotism is better employed in trying to remedy the evils of one's country than in denying their existence.

For the rest, I have no doubt that his claim to have given a perfectly faithful version of M. Leroy-Beaulieu's work, even when he most disagreed with it, is well founded.

The translation is in many respects a good one. One discovers indeed a good many slight errors in construction and grammar which betray the work of a foreigner, and moreover of a foreigner who has lived in America, but they are for the

most part unimportant. We can forgive him, too, when he tells us (page 95) that "the Slavs are no more Asiatic than we are, or if they are it is only in the manner and degree that we are ourselves."

Turning once more to the actual contents of the book I should like to draw attention to the particular excellence of some portions, *e.g.*, the description of the physical geography of the country contained in Book I.; the insistence in its third chapter on the *youth* of Modern Russia, too, is interesting. It points out that like the United States or Australia it is in reality a country *but quite recently colonised*. [The population 100 years ago was estimated at about one-quarter of its present number, in 1815 at little more than one-third, not much more than one-half in 1851]. This is surely a very hopeful feature, for with quite changed conditions, may not quite fresh developments be anticipated?

Book II. is ethnological and exhibits immense skill in forming from such complex and confusing material so clear and vivid a picture. The bearing of this book on the vexed question how far the Russians may be considered European, how far Asiatic, is most important.

The remaining books are not less excellent. In the fourth chapter of Book III., the subject of which is "Nihilism," a singular instance occurs of the tendency which I have noted in our author to put as good an interpretation as possible on the acts of the government. The regulations which have been introduced into the higher education establishments, enforcing the study of the classical languages to an inordinate degree to the exclusion of many subjects which the students are more eager to follow, is explained by Mr. Stepniak and others as being a deliberate attempt to render education barren in order that intelligence (which is likely to find itself in opposition to the government) may not be fostered. M. Leroy-Beaulieu says on this subject (page 205): "the coarse and repulsive realism so obtrusively apparent in Nihilism, so perceptible in the Russian schools among the majority of students, could not fail to attract the attention of enlightened minds and the government. Against the unwholesome bent of the young and of the national mind a remedy had to be sought for, a counterpoise, primarily in the education of the young." . . . "Lacking better means, recourse was had to classical studies, but in vain. Literature and the dead languages being the studies most disinterested, most removed from actual preoccupations, were thought to be the best corrective to the exaggerated naturalism of embryo Bazarofs. Under the influence of Katkôf and his *Moscow Gazette*, the ministry of public instruction, directed by Count Tolstoi, has been long at work, striving to subject the entire young generation to this classical discipline and through that to a sort of idealistic gymnastics or drilling."

Which of these two views receives support from

other features of the policy of the minister of "education?" Is the non-provision of adequate school accommodation, and the *discouragement of the efforts of the zemstvos and others* to provide in this respect for a growing population, characteristic of an enlightened educational policy, or of one determined to stultify and restrict education?"

In Book VII., very full particulars are given of the manner and conditions of redeeming the lands for the liberated serf, and light is thrown on some of the subsequent economic troubles by the explanation of how ill-estimated was the redemption price in different regions. It is shown that the peasants received very unequal treatment.

It is seldom one can close a volume of 580 pages on so solid a subject as the country of Russia and its inhabitants with the consciousness that one has not found a single one of them dull, and (in spite of the thoroughness of its research) the happiness of having experienced no sense even of heaviness in any portion of it. Yet such is the result of the remarkable vitality which infuses Mr. Leroy-Beaulieu's writings. He has the faculty of making every fact he relates pregnant with meaning by exhibiting its correlation to other facts, and without any tedious amount of recapitulation or iteration, he contrives to keep the larger aspects of his subject before the reader's eye, even while treating of its details. It is no small thing to have work of such solid value presented in so attractive a form.

HERBERT M. THOMPSON.

Bibliography.

RUSSIA AND THE SEPTEMBER MAGAZINES.

The Balance of Power in Eastern Asia.—(Blackwood.)

The author of this paper comes to the same conclusion as Colonel Bell: that Russia will devour China in parts as she can digest them. Russia, we are told, presents "a combination of aggressive energy such as has perhaps never been witnessed on the face of the earth." This aggressive energy is accounted for by the writer by the "fanatical ambition of the military and official hierarchy, and the cultured class; backed by a vast ground substance of patriotic protoplasm." China can only oppose Russia with an antiquated military system and with an official manhood "enervated by mileniums of literary examinations." The conclusion is obvious. Given the fixed purpose of Russia, the independence of China, unless supported by some strong western power, is doomed. Yet does one point in this paper want further consideration. The Russian political system, the writer tells us, being an anachronism is doomed; but he dismisses this point by saying that a change in the political system in no way affects the question of aggression, and yet surely the component parts of the extraordinary "aggressive combination," of which he writes, the "ambitious military and official hierarchy," as well as the "ground substance of patriotic protoplasm," are the products of a despotic monarchy—and of a despotic monarchy only.

Russian Jewry. Part I. By Hall Caine.—(*Pall Mall Magazine*.)

The expressions of sympathy of Herbert Spencer, Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Spurgeon with the Russian Jews were received in Russia, we are told, with derision; if I may venture to say so, I doubt whether Mr. Hall Caine's article would be received with pleasure. We are to know both sides and he is to tell us where the Russians are right in this matter. Alexander II. once said that the Jewish question in Russia was to be solved in the same way as the Jewish question had been in England and France, and yet, since 1882, Hall Caine says, "Only a race

of heroes would have withstood the treatment they have received." An analysis of the accusations brought against them by the Russians seems to show that in cleanliness and business matters their Christian competitors are not, in a marked degree, superior, whereas in purity of life they are inferior. A.R.

In our last issue a misprint occurred in the article "Pleasant yet Regrettable News from Russia," the statement that copies of FREE RUSSIA had been reproduced by hectograph in Warsaw being incorrect. It should have read "in Moscow."

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Miss G. L. MALLEY, Hon. Sec.

CONTENTS.

Notes of the Month.—*The Franco-Russian Festivities* (by S. Stepniak.)—*Bibliography.*—*Robberies by Cabinet Ministers and Grand Dukes.*—*"Legality" according to official views.*—*Mrs. Mallett's Lecture and Dr. Spence Watson's Lecture at Leeds.*

Notes of the Month.

A terrible catastrophe has occurred on the Baltic. On September 20th, the ironclad *Rusalka* went down in a comparatively calm sea with 165 sailors and 12 officers, not a single man escaping. A subscription has been opened for the benefit of the families of the victims, and an official inquiry has been instituted. The papers allow themselves to cautiously hint that the disaster was due to the unseaworthiness of the ship, which was built in 1867, and had been used for heavy artillery service. These surmises are but the expressions of a fact universally known. The *Rusalka* was pronounced unseaworthy by its captain, M. A. Yenish, and all the officers. Yet the Admiralty, in order to "hush up" an unpleasant fact, ordered her to sail. When the catastrophe occurred an order was given to inspect all the warships of the Baltic Squadron, and three of them were found unfit for service. The papers received strict orders not to mention the matter. This is the usual method of the Russian administration.

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As is the case every autumn, the papers are full of complaints about the insufficiency of schools to satisfy the needs of the population. Here are a few eloquent facts. At the Mining Institute, for 80 vacancies there were 280 well-qualified applicants; at the Institute of Roads and Railways there were 75 vacancies and 600 applicants; at the Institute of Civil Engineers, 45 vacancies and 800 applicants; at the Technological Institute, 120 vacancies and 600 applicants; at the Institute of Forestry, 40 vacancies and 800 applicants; and so on. The overcrowding is as great in secondary schools, and hardly less in the primary schools.

So great is the need for education that if any society or body of well-qualified private teachers were to start twice as many schools as there are now, the affair would be a success even from a financial point of view. But unfortunately there is no room for private initiative in that line in Russia. The government alone has the monopoly of education, and keeps it jealously, inventing every now and then new prohibitive clauses to hamper private activity in that domain.

Very curious are the two recent inventions of this kind: Ukazes of the Minister of Public Education, published on October 20th, establishing that men wishing to obtain certificates as

private tutors must show that they have not received *too much* education themselves. Men with University degrees, for example, are not allowed to have this certificate, which is granted only to those who are ignorant enough not to be feared by the government.

Another ukaze of the same date, referring to ladies' schools, imposes a new restriction upon the rights of the pupils in colleges licensed and controlled by the government but supported by private individuals.

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But if the government objects so much to letting the Russians take care of themselves, it shows on the other hand a touching paternal solicitude for its "little children."

In Odessa, in the middle of harvest-time, the "elders" of the neighbouring districts were summoned to the town and compelled to leave their fields at the crucial moment of the year in order to be present at the performance of a play in which the virtuous conduct of a rural official was represented.

The governor of the province of Vologda has issued a circular note to his district commanders, which is a production unique in its kind. The governor completely forgets that the peasants have been emancipated since 1861, and have therefore become legally recognised citizens. He wants to apply to them methods of patriarchal despotism, which bring us back to the times of serfdom. He wants the salutary rod and other paternal punishments to be kept over their heads to prevent them—from what does the reader suppose?—from ruining themselves by extravagant expenditure.

"It has come to my knowledge," says the circular, "that the peasants, owing to their want of foresight, are inclined to spend the money obtained by the sale of the products of their farms upon things perfectly useless for their modest households, and serving only to foster their conceit and pride. I therefore think it advisable to propose to all the village communes to prohibit by their votes such careless expenditure, and to inflict effective punishment upon the transgressors."

To make the execution of such an order more certain, the all-powerful district commanders are enjoined "not only to insist that such votes should be passed, but to point out to the peasants that such extravagance will lead to the increase of severity in the collection of taxes, and will be considered a sufficient reason for the refusal of subsidies in case of famine."

This means the total enslavement of the peasants, and an absolute prohibition of their disposing of their own goods as they think fit. Freed from the nobility, the peasants are now transformed into bond-slaves of the State. The above-mentioned circular does not scruple to say so quite plainly.

"Moreover" (thus runs the conclusion of this

interesting document), "all officials having to deal with the peasants should repeatedly remind them that they are given the land exclusively in order that they may be enabled to live and to pay taxes to the government. August 19, 1893."

Fortunately, these intended beasts of burden of the State have already some feeling of their human rights.

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In the light of this plea against the popular extravagance, it is suggestive to read the result of the inquiry upon the insurance against bad crops. The government came forward with a proposal to the zemstvos to introduce obligatory insurance against bad harvests. To this project the congress of landowners of several provinces, sitting now at Saratov, replied *almost unanimously* by a negative, and the reasons were given as plainly as could be desired. "The insurance," said Mr. Yumatov, the representative of the zemstvo of Saratov, "can be applied only against occasional and incidental misfortunes. It is impossible," he went on, illustrating his idea, "to insure a house which is burned down regularly every year. Now, the peasants' farming business is with us in the same position as that house which is regularly destroyed by fire. It has reached such a condition that failure of crops has become the normal thing." Another member of the congress, the tax inspector (*i.e.*, a government official), supports the opinion that no new burden can be imposed upon the peasants, and makes the following statement: "However good the harvest may be in some places, there is always a failure of crops in others. *On the average the supply of crops is 86,000,000 puds (over 28,000,000 bushels) short of what is the minimum of food necessary for the population.*" There is little room for "extravagance" with people constantly kept on starvation diet.

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The practice of convening "congresses" and inquiring into the wishes of different classes is a very characteristic and—we do not hesitate in saying—a very encouraging token of the present policy of the Russian government. There have been congresses of representatives of almost every large branch of manufacturing industries, from the distillers and sugar refiners down to the tobacco planters. Quite recently Cabinet ministers, on their periodical journeys across the country, got up dinners and parties at which now the "landowners," now the "merchants," were asked in the Tzar's name to speak freely about their grievances and give expression to their aspirations. The result of these inquiries, it must be confessed, was not very satisfactory. The privileged people asked for more privileges, and the protected for more protection. The great grievance of the country is the dire misery of the peasantry, who form 86 per cent. of the population. Is it not clear that it is to them first of all that the question ought be put? It is

for them to be the first to speak of their grievances and devise means for the removal of them—through their representatives, of course, as 86 millions of people cannot be assembled at any dinner table. The thing is plain, but the plainest things are precisely the most difficult to understand, requiring something more stringent than logic to fit them into some men's heads.

The Franco-Russian Festivities.

A strange spectacle is offered by Republican France just now. On the hundredth anniversary of the great Revolution, just at the time when the France of 1798 was celebrating a victory over the "hordes of slaves, traitors and allied kings"—as is sung in the "Marseillaise"—the whole of the "Grande Nation" throws itself upon its knees in a fit of servile enthusiasm before the only tyrant still surviving upon European soil, because, after a long hesitation, he has deigned to send to them as guests a batch of his officers and soldiers. If each of these men had in his turn been actually the saviour of France, they could not have been awarded a more "super-human reception." Flags, demonstrations, illuminations, endless cheerings—all that goes without saying and is easily got up in a country so fond of noise and show.

But on this occasion the French went to much greater lengths in their extravagance. It has been calculated that over 100,000 francs have been spent in presents to the officers and soldiers, whilst at the time of the famine of 1891, when England and America came forward with such generous assistance to the people, the "friendly" France gave them not a brass farthing. All public business is forgotten for festivities. There are no more party politics in the chamber or outside. The French are not ashamed to say: "In the middle ages there was the truce of God, Now there is the truce of Russia." They ought to say, "the truce of the Tzar," because Russia counts for nothing in this scandalous currying the favour with despot.

When two eminent Frenchmen committed the unpardonable act of discourtesy of dying out of season, the first idea of their countrymen was to send them to the dogs. Only on second thoughts was it resolved to grant them something like hasty public funerals.

When the squadron arrived in Paris, the excitement reached its climax, culminating in manifestations so extravagant and comical that soothing laughter comes in irresistible to mitigate the depressing feeling of disgust. On the Place de la Concorde the French ladies for a whole mortal hour tormented the squadron with their kisses. An English morning paper told us, a few days ago, the story of a French woman

who committed suicide in honour of the Russian guests. She placed herself on the bridge over which the Tzar's envoys had to pass. When they appeared she shouted: "To see them and then to die!"—threw herself into the Seine and was drowned. She was dressed like an harlequin, in a jacket of French colours and a dress of Russian colours, and when they undressed her at the Morgue it was found that her undergarments were made of Russian and French flags sewn together. This good lady with her underclothing made out of two flags may stand as an emblem of modern France with the "Marseillaise" and "God save the Tzar" twisted into one.

What does it all mean? Has the corruption of the "fin du siècle," when all the bases upon which society rest have been shaken in France, and people have no more faith in any existing institutions or prevailing principle,—has this corruption made the French insensible to anything but the dictates of the grossest selfishness? or have the French gone mad, like that good lady in patchwork underclothing who threw herself off the bridge? A little of both.

We do not for one moment believe, and we do not suppose that the thinking men among the French believe, in the possibility of a frank and cordial alliance between Republican France and the Russian autocracy. Russia is passing through a most serious political crisis, the nature of which cannot for one moment be mistaken. The French can, if they choose, overlook the political side of the question, for they need not greatly fear the strengthening of the reactionary elements in their country and in Europe through Russian influence. In stretching out the right-hand of friendship to, and even in falling at the feet of, a ruler who embodies the principle of tyranny, they are merely repudiating their national institutions and principles, and lowering themselves morally in the eyes of the civilised world. There is no more "substantial" interest for them at stake.

But it is altogether different with the Tzar, who, on account of supreme considerations of domestic safety,—cannot possibly overlook the political bearing of the alliance, and the difference between the two powers, whose rivalry is the curse of our time. He will always keep a warm place in his heart for the semi-autocratic Germany. Of course, France, with her milliards as a dowry, is preferable to Germany, with her prohibitive tariffs. But at any moment the Kaiser may turn round, and then the Tzar is sure to turn round too and throw over the unpalatable and unreliable Sauculottes.

If Russia is attacked by Germany, the Tzar will be glad of any assistance. But he will not move if France alone is in peril, and will and must rejoice at every event which strengthens the position and authority of the German Emperor at home. Consequently, all through this protracted flirtation, the Russian Tzar has maintained the reserved attitude of a reluctant

lover, and France, the not very dignified one of a lady of a certain class who tries to seduce him by all means, fair and foul, from lending him money and putting on this wonderful underclothing to hunting down Russian political refugees, and handing over their papers to the Russian police.

It is ridiculous for the French to believe that they can so overcome the Tzar by flattery as to make him forget his own interests. If he should really enter some day into a formal alliance with their Republic, it will be out of fear of an imminent danger from Germany, and he will throw them overboard the moment the danger shall have passed over. Such an ally is more dangerous and fatal than a pronounced enemy. The thing is self-evident. The hidden perils and the folly of the French infatuation have been pointed out in French literature by most competent and authoritative men. The French are too clever not to understand the thing. But they do not mind it at all, and go on as before; and the reason is this: The French do not mean to go to war for the sake of the two lost provinces. All the big talk about the *Revanche* is a huge humbug—*de la blague*—in which nobody believes.

The only danger of a war between France and Germany lies in some untoward incident like the Echnaebel affair, in which none of the parties will have the moral courage and authority to offer apologies. That is the opinion endorsed by all competent persons, and recently expressed independently almost in the same words by two very reliable witnesses. Sir Charles Dilke (see his book and interview in *Black and White*), who is perhaps the best authority on questions of foreign politics, and Mr. Emile Zola, who surely knows his countrymen as well as any man living.

The Franco-Russian Alliance, like those cheap tin swords which officers wear at Court balls, is good enough for peace, and it is actually meant for peace. It is a big diplomatic demonstration. The French are tired of and annoyed at their isolated position and almost total exclusion from the sphere of diplomatic influence. They enjoy the idea of snubbing Germany. The Tzar possibly wants to snub both countries. But what he still more wants is money, of which he is very much in need, and he knows that Republican gold does not smell of liberty. That is the significance of the whole farce, and the point where the real interests of the parties meet.

Good luck and good appetite! But why all this flunkeyism? The Frenchmen have something so very substantial to offer that they surely could retain a more dignified attitude. It is a common principle which holds good in diplomacy just as in a country fair, that to drive a good bargain one must not show one's cards and must keep cool and self-possessed. By so completely throwing themselves away, the French spoil their own game with the Tzar. We need not mention that they permanently alienate the sympathy of Russian public opinion which counts

for something and has a hidden influence everywhere, even in Russia.

Here is a very suggestive detail of the reception: "The Toulon correspondent of the *Times* must be credited with one of the most striking pieces of news concerning the Franco-Russian festivities. According to his experience, as soon as the Russian sailors—officers and men alike—were allowed on shore, a large number of them made their way at once—where? Strange as it may sound, the answer is, to the booksellers. And there they laid in a stock of literature prohibited in Russia which the Toulon bookseller had specially procured from Geneva. This literature consisted of Russian translations of well-known modern treatises on Sociology, Democracy, Political Economy, and Socialism. We wonder how the Tzar will relish such a planting of seed for his Siberian garden," says the English paper from which we borrow these lines. And we wonder on our part whether the French understand the meaning of such a fact as this.

If among the chosen messengers of the Tzar many are prompted, say, by curiosity, to read revolutionary literature, one can well surmise that the subversive ideas have a strong hold over the bulk of the Russian thinking people. What a feeling of disgust and contempt the adulation showered upon the Tzar will produce among them! Yet the future belongs to these people and not to the autocracy.

Pas trop de zèle was the maxim of practical life preached by one of the astutest of French politicians. Unfortunately, his countrymen are very little able to follow this wise rule. They are too excitable, too easily carried away by the irresistible craving to shout louder than anybody else, and become, be it for one single moment, exponents, interpreters, and echoes of the crowd. The original aim is lost sight of. The crowd shouts, cheers or yells, as if possessed, for the mere enjoyment of the thing. This tendency works both for good and for evil. The French have a passion for democratic equality, but for individual liberty they have none. Some of the most shocking and tyrannical police laws date from the French Revolution, and in the course of a century nobody has raised a voice of protest. Yet at one time the French were intoxicated with the idea of liberty, and became its champions and prophets for the whole continent. Now they have become intoxicated with Tzar-worship. Calculation for the basis—mania for the crowning of the edifice.

It is a pleasure to note that there was one small group of people—the Paris Socialists—who have had the civic courage to protest against the universal aberration by issuing an "appeal to Russian sailors," couched in the spirit of liberty and true patriotism. It is written partly in French, partly in Russian, and contains some excellent articles upon Russian domestic policy and upon the alliance.

Between the somnolent indifference of American and the hysterical excitability of French republicans, the cause of Russian freedom abroad is in an evil plight just now.

We conclude by calling the attention of our readers to the speech of our Chairman at the Leeds lecture of Mrs. Mallet, in which are pertinently pointed out the duties of the English in this predicament.

S. STEPNIAK.

Bibliography.

RUSSIA IN THE OCTOBER MAGAZINES.

The Russian Jewry (Part II.), by HALL CAINE.

In the second part of his paper on the Russian Jewry, in *The Pall Mall Magazine*, Hall Caine points out that in Russia, more than in any other European country, the Jew preserves the characteristics of a purely religious devotee. He gives, in a graphic manner, instances of his child-like, and often fanatical, faith. The Russian Jew still looks forward to the fulfilment of the hope held by his race for 3,000 years, and has shown his fanatical belief in it by founding a Society—"The Lovers of Zion"—whose object is the colonisation of Palestine. The result of Hall Caine's investigation of the subject of the Russian Jew is, that he states that those who throw doubt on the sincerity of his religion are either actuated by intolerance or blinded by ignorance.

Villages and Villagers in Russia, by FRED. WHISHAW.

In this article Mr. Whishaw describes Drevno, a Russian village, only an hour's drive from St. Petersburg. The village, the notice told them at the entrance, contains 47 souls, that is 47 responsible men. The points of interest to the social student are rather lightly touched on: the communal village life, its primitive and apparently satisfactory method of land ownership, and the family life taking us, for comparison, back to the patriarchs. The tumble-down state of the village, the mud in the courts and street, and the stupidity, idleness, and drunkenness of the Russian peasant, are dwelt on at length. One is left, after reading this paper, with the feeling that the tendency to drink too much is stronger in the Russian peasant than in any other, and that that is the root-evil. Yet Mr. Whishaw mentions that the government's chief source of revenue is the public house. "Education" he tells us, "is making great strides. Light is stealing gradually over the land." If this is so, the public-house will lose its ascendancy, but there are other institutions as venerable that will not stand if the day of light and education is at hand. A. R.

Robberies by Cabinet Ministers and Grand Dukes.

The "Leaflet of Narodnain Volia," a revolutionary paper published secretly in St. Petersburg, throws a lurid light upon the corruption prevailing at the court of the Tzar, whose great ambition is to put down bribery and peculation.

The most important ministry from a government point of view—the Ministry of War—is corrupted through and through. Last March a

fact was discovered which produced a positive panic. The famous new armaments on which, during the last three years, 20,000,000 roubles a year have been spent, have given a melancholy result: all the new rifles are absolutely worthless, and the net loss of the Ministry amounts to 87,000,000 roubles. Everything has to be begun over again. To understand the causes of the disastrous results of the armaments, one must know to what degree of depravity higher military circles have attained during the ten years' administration of Vannovsky, the present War Minister. The corruption reminds one of the days of Nicholas I., when there was not a single general or colonel who was not a bribe-taker.

Theft and misappropriation of funds have reached such proportions in the regiments that many parts of the army actually lack ammunition and necessaries. Similar facts have been discovered during the last six months in the course of inquiries made in the military district of Moscow.

The corruption begins high up in the scale. The Grand Duke Vladimir, commander of the troops for the St. Petersburg district, stole the greater part of the money subscribed by the public for the erection of a church on the spot where Alexander II. was killed. This fact was proved at the trial of the Secretary of the Academy of Arts. Vannovsky and General Sofiano are accused of having appropriated to themselves the lion's share of the 87,000,000 roubles which were swallowed up by the armaments.

General Baranok, sent over to inspect the Turkestan army, was poisoned at a dinner given to him by the governor of the province. General Vrevsky, and although the autopsy proved unmistakable traces of poison, the affair was hushed up, and General Vrevsky remained at his post.

In March last, a trial with closed doors took place in St. Petersburg. M. Abaza (Member of the Council of State), and M. Vyshnegradsky (formerly Minister of Finance), were accused, the former of having gambled on the Stock Exchange on the fall of the rouble and having lost a sum of 1,150,000 roubles, and the latter of having made good Abaza's sudden losses out of the State bank. According to the indictment, Abaza, in October, 1892, bought £100,000 worth of English gold, settling day to be on November 1, depositing as guarantee £10,000. After a fall of the rouble amounting to 15 per cent., he gained £15,000 of net profit. Encouraged by this success, and counting upon a new fall of the rouble, he commissioned the banker, Raffalovich to buy on November 18th, 1892, £1,000,000 worth of English gold, giving a deposit of £25,000. But the rouble, after the sudden fall which followed the prohibition of the exportation of cereals, rose again as suddenly so high that the loss exceeded the deposit. Nevertheless, Raffalovich and Abaza,

hoping the rise to be only a momentary one, continued gambling.

In January, 1893, the loss exceeded by £90,000 the sum deposited as guarantee. Raffalovich, frightened and discouraged, closed operations, paid the losses incurred, and demanded from Abaza the reimbursement of the £90,000. Abaza applied to Vyshnegradsky, who ordered the State Bank to pay the sum to Abaza.

There the matter rested, until M. Witte was called to the post of Minister of Finance. Discovering the trick, and fearing that the officials in control might also unravel the mystery of the £90,000 which had been paid, without any justification, to somebody unknown, Witte drew up a detailed report of the whole intrigue, and submitted it to the Tzar. The Tzar called a special commission to inquire into the case. Filippov (State Comptroller), Solsky, Pobiedonostzev (Procurator of the Synod), Vannovsky (War Minister), and Vorontzov-Dashkov (Court Minister) sat as commissioners.

The truth of the accusation being fully proved, the commissioners drew up a report, which Filippov submitted to the Tzar. But the Tzar stopped the prosecution, remarking: "Abaza and Vyshnegradsky are dead to me, and I have nothing to do with dead men"—as if the point in question were the Tzar's personal opinion about them! Many thieves would like to have the sponge passed over their acts on this principle.

"Legality" according to Official Views.

We borrow the two following incidents (which may serve as a fair sample of the dealings of the Russian police) from the "Materials" published by the colony of Russian refugees in Paris:—

"In Kharkov, in the beginning of this year, the police arrested a student of the Technological Institute, who had behaved in a rather disorderly manner, and knocked him about fearfully in the police station. The student, at the advice of the director of the Institute, complained to the procurator. A few days afterwards the student was suddenly called up before the governor, whom he found surrounded by his entire suite, and by the police officials who had inculcated (with their fists) respect for authority. The governor sternly addressed the student: 'Do you still maintain that they beat you?' 'Yes.' The governor then asked the police-superintendent: 'Is the story true?' 'No, it is quite impossible.' At this the governor turned upon the student: 'And so you have dared to circulate false reports against the police! To undermine the respect due to the law and its representatives! Apologise instantly to the policemen whom you have insulted and I will pardon you.' The student refused to apologise. 'Ah!' remarked the governor ironically, 'you wish the matter *legally* settled? Very well, then, in virtue of the powers conferred upon me by law, you will be exiled within 24 hours.'"

Another very characteristic incident occurred last year in Odessa. The university professor Rennen-

kampf drove up in a cab to the door of his house, which stood close to a certain bridge, across which, on account of certain repairs that were being done, it was forbidden to drive. The policeman on duty supposed that the occupant of the cab intended to drive across the bridge, and, therefore, refusing to hear any explanations, dragged Professor Rennenkampf from the cab and began to beat him with his fists. The professor naturally defended himself, but at the policeman's whistle several more policemen ran up and, with pushes and blows, dragged the "scoundrel" to the police-station, where his identity was discovered. The professor complained to Bunin, the chief of police, but without result. On this Professor Sergievsky, who had come to Odessa to conduct the state examinations, offered to go to the prefect of the town, Zelenoy, to lay Rennenkampf's case before him. To Sergievsky's naive remark that the Russian law does not permit anyone to knock his neighbours about, Zelenoy replied that, as a matter of principle and without going into the matter, he was convinced that Rennenkampf was the person to blame;—professors and students were as a class inclined not to respect the law; but, all the same, he would send a statement to Rennenkampf's house. And indeed a statement was sent. It ran as follows:—"Your affair with the policeman has been investigated, and he has been found to be in the right, and therefore has been given a reward of 10 roubles." Rennenkampf then went to St. Petersburg to complain of Zelenoy to the Minister of Public Instruction. But the matter ended in a dismal failure. Delianov sent to the prefect a telegram stating that "there is no other way to treat such persons as Rennenkampf."

Leeds and the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom.

On October 18, Mrs. L. T. Mallet delivered a lecture in the People's Hall, Albion-street, Leeds, under the auspices of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, her subject being Russia; her Peasants, Patriots, and Prisons." Dr. R. Spence Watson, President of the National Liberal Federation, occupied the chair.

The CHAIRMAN said this question of the freedom of the people of Russia was one which should appeal to all freedom-loving Englishmen, and especially in a year like this, when strangely enough, the two great Republics of the earth—the United States of America and the Republic of France—had entered into a direct alliance with the despotism of Russia. And that alliance was not with the Russian people, but was with the Russian autocracy, at whose door, and he said it advisedly, more crimes against its own leige subjects could fairly and justifiably be laid than at the door of any other Royal family which they had seen, at all events, in modern times. They would willingly hold out a larger, firmer, and stronger hand to the exiles in Siberia, but that depended entirely on the assistance which they could get from English people. That assistance had not been great so far, and one reason was that many people said they had their own work to do at home, and that Russia was a long way off. Yes, they had their own work to do at home, and it lay heavily upon all of them, but he would venture to say that it was impossible to discharge these duties fully and faithfully unless they remembered those higher duties

which they owed to their common humanity. And in all humility he would say that the men and women who had taken up the cause of freedom of Russia in this country were not the men and women who neglect their duties to the family and to the State to which they belonged. (Applause.) Most of them could look back on struggles of freedom when they did not ask questions as to geographical situation. When they entered into the movement of freeing the slaves in America, if anyone had told them their children's children would see slavery in the United States, they would still have gone on working cheerfully, but they had had to teach their own children what slavery in the United States meant. (Applause.) They had seen a United Italy, a freed Hungary; one place after another on the continent of Europe they had seen throwing off the shackles of tyrannical government, and though they might not live to see Russian freedom achieved, their children, he trusted, would have reason to be thankful that their parents did what they could to destroy the very blackest plague spot which at present existed on the face of the earth. (Cheers.)

Mrs. Mallet then delivered her lecture, which was illustrated by limelight views. It dealt with what she termed the martyrdom of the peasants, of the Nonconformists, and of political prisoners of Russia. The martyrdom of the Jews she could not touch upon, but it was not the least. Mrs. Mallet graphically described the terrible sufferings of the Dissenters, and of political exiles, the only crime of many of whom was that they sought to educate their fellow-countrymen. Not the least thrilling portion of the lecture was that which described the lot of the peasant in a country where, the Imperial revenue is largely derived from the sale of a strong spirit, the use of which is therefore encouraged to the utmost extent. The ignorant peasant, Mrs. Mallet continued, was entirely at the mercy of the landowner, and when, in the winter, as inevitably happened, the former had to mortgage his next summer's crop, he was charged 1,200 and even as much as 2,500 per cent. It was estimated that in 37 provinces of European Russia the peasant paid 92 per cent. of the produce of their fields in taxation, and the consequence was that they lived on bread made out of acorns; sometimes ate grass, and she herself had tasted two winters ago bread made of chaff, grass-seed and clay, which produced violent headache and nausea, but which the wretched Russian peasants were at that time glad enough to get for their starving children.

Votes of thanks to Mrs. Mallet, on the motion of Mr. Latchmore; and to the Chairman, on the motion of Mr. J. R. Ford, terminated the meeting.

The "Riga Church Gazette" contains the names of over thirty Lutheran pastors who have been fined, imprisoned, or dismissed from their posts during the last twelve months for administering the sacraments, according to the Lutheran rites, to people who were of the Orthodox Church. The pastors in their defence state that many Orthodox Russians went over to the Lutheran Church, and it is with these persons—who are officially Orthodox, but in reality Lutherans—that the present troubles have arisen. It may be remarked that every attempt is being made to strengthen the Orthodox Church at the expense of the Lutheran in the Baltic provinces. Substantial advantages—mostly in the form of grants of land—are offered to the Lithuanian peasants, who abandon the Lutheran faith for the Orthodox. All, however, who leave the Greek Church are liable to fine, imprisonment, or transportation.

ENGLISH EDITION.

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THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF RUSSIAN FREEDOM

THE English Society of Friends of Russian Freedom, founded in November, 1889, has for its objects to aid to the extent of its powers, the Russian patriots who are trying to obtain for their country that Political Freedom and Self-government which Western nations have enjoyed for generations.

The Society appeals to the enlightened men and women of all countries, without distinction of nationality or political creed, who cannot witness with indifference the horrors perpetrated in the Empire of the Tsars, and who wish a better future for the masses of the Russian people. Further contributions to the funds and further work are needed and will be welcome. Membership is acquired by sending to the Treasurer an annual subscription of or exceeding Five Shillings. Members are entitled to receive *Free Russia* post free.

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CONTENTS.

George Kennan's Coming Lecture. — Political Revival in Russia and Support Abroad. — News and Notes of the Month. — Good Work in Cardiff. — Robbery Again? — "The Union." — The Russian Free Press in London. — High-class Education in Russia. — Victims of the Franco-Russian Festivities (from our Correspondent at St. Petersburg). — Meetings. — Letter-box. — List of Subscribers.

London, December 1, 1898.

George Kennan is going to visit Old England after Christmas, to tell those who would like to hear him what he has seen as an eye-witness in Siberia and what he has learned from official and unofficial sources about Russian misrule, and the Russian struggle for a brighter light and a better day. He will be in London in the beginning of January, and his first lecture here will be on behalf of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom. The keen interest of the subject will be intensified by its treatment. Mr. Kennan will give us his personal impressions—the impressions of a man standing outside the contending parties.

The brilliant abilities of the accomplished lecturer and his world-wide fame as an author will, in themselves, attract crowds of eager listeners, and they will not be disappointed, however numerous, for in Toronto Mr. Kennan spoke to 4,000 people, in Chicago to 6,000, and was heard by every individual on account of his beautiful deep voice and careful articulation. To the Friends of Russian Freedom who had the privilege of meeting Mr. Kennan in June last, at the reception given to him by the S.F.R.F., the charm of the noble and powerful personality of the Siberian explorer will be an additional attraction. Those who are anxious to see and hear well must have early information on the matter. It is the pleasant but serious duty of the Friends of Russian Freedom to provide this information. We expect them to spread the news about the coming lecture as widely as possible, and later on to sell tickets. Kennan's public statement here of what converted him from a sincere friend of the Russian "paternal" government into its unflinching foe is an event in our movement. His influence on English public opinion has already made itself felt. The extent of the success of his lecture depends upon the energy with which the F.R.F. set to work to make his presence amongst us known.

The lecture will take place on the 8th of January, at 8 p.m., in Prince's Hall, Piccadilly. For information, tickets, &c., apply to the Hon. Secretary, Miss G. Mallet, 132, Cromwell Road, South Kensington, London, S.W.

The contents of the present number will prove once more that the pro-Russian movement abroad was called to life by a real necessity proceeding

from the present political situation of Russia, and based on a sound basis. Our St. Petersburg correspondent shows us that the trick of the Franco-Russian festivities was aimed at internal politics as well as external. The government of the Tzar cherished the hope that Russians, bribed or misled, by the attitude of republican France, would forget the best blood of Russia spilt by the Tzardom; would forget the misery imposed by it on the Russian peasant, and the clutches in which it holds the Russian genius, and join the French in their shouts "Long live the Tzar!" When the Russian government saw, however, that this was not the case, it tried, at least to make things appear as if it were so, and thus to strengthen in Europe and America the belief in the popularity of the "paternal government" at home. These tactics, however, will not answer, for there are organisations in countries, where freedom of the press and freedom of speech are among the mightiest factors of life, watching events in Russia, and they will not suffer truth to be put under the official cloth.

The foreign work—in England, America, France and elsewhere—on behalf of Russian liberty is, however, only a factor in the liberation movement going on in Russia herself. But whatever progress in that line we may notice is a great encouragement to us, and so are certainly the facts given further on in our article upon the Russian Free Press here and in Russia. These things show that the spirit of independence is slowly but steadily growing in Russia, that people who were slumbering are awakening to their civic duties, and that the interest in political and social questions is becoming keener and keener, and this notwithstanding the danger to individuals, such interest implies in the empire of the Tzar. This awakening means that soon we shall hear of some new victims of official ferocity. The army of humanity will have to expose the crimes and to come to the aid of the sufferers. We must, then, draw up our forces and strengthen our position beforehand. Admirable work has been done lately by the Cardiff and Oxford branches of our Society, and by single champions like Mrs. Mallet, as will be seen in another column. But we want *all* our branches to do such work, and all our allies to double their efforts. Friends of Russian Freedom! Organise meetings and lectures, support and spread your paper, support your General Fund, support your Political Exiles' Escape Fund, support your Stundist Fund!

All contributions and subscriptions to be addressed to the Hon. Treasurer and President, Dr. R. SPENCE WATSON, Bensham Grove, Gateshead.

LECTURES DELIVERED BY MRS. C. MALLET.

Birmingham, October 16th; Sheffield, October 17th; London (Pioneer Club), October 26th; North Lambeth Liberal Club, October 29th; Bedford, November 3rd; West Norwood (Reform Club), November 5th.

News & Notes of the Month.

The autumn session of the *district zemstvos* is over. So far as the results are known, a very interesting feature is revealed. Notwithstanding the latest curtailing of their powers by the government, notwithstanding the fact that the government has tried to pack them with its own representatives, and has encouraged the putting out of light; notwithstanding the bad position of their finances, due to the economical exhaustion of the population, the *zemstvos* have increased their budgets for primary schools. It is most noteworthy that the peasants, so far as they are represented in the *zemstvos*, are invariably supporters of every measure tending to found a new school, a library, &c., and are doing themselves whatever they can in that direction; for example, many of the village communities in the province of Orél, a province which suffered severely from famine, have assigned 50 roubles each for founding free libraries in connection with the *zemstvo* schools, and 15 roubles each yearly for their new acquisitions. The results attained in primary education through the efforts of the most liberal *zemstvos* are astounding, if we take into consideration all the difficulties put in their way by the central government and the bureaucracy. In the province of Tver, for example, according to the account of the school board read at the last session of the district *zemstvo*, nearly all the peasant boys old enough to attend school (over 95 per cent.) and one-third of the girls were attending school. The expenses of the Tver district *zemstvo* for primary education amount to one-fourth of its whole budget. This amount would be far larger were not the *zemstvos* compelled to spend an enormous percentage of their income on the exigencies of the police, quartering the troops, &c.

Some astounding figures about the Russian finances! We borrow them from official sources: It was expected that direct taxes would bring in, in 1891, over 140½ million roubles, but in reality less than 110½ millions could be raised; if to these arrears we add that portion of the old ones that was expected to come in, but in reality did not, the total sum of arrears for the year 1891 will amount to 21·6 per cent. of the yearly sum of direct taxes imposed. Observe that all these arrears showed exclusively the economical exhaustion of the peasantry (about 85 per cent. of the whole population), as the landlords both in the country and in towns have paid all the direct taxes imposed on them (they are not so heavy as those weighing on the peasants), and even raised a somewhat larger sum than was expected. The above-mentioned 21·6 per cent. does not represent, however, *all* the arrears in direct taxation. Besides this sum there was a far larger one left from preceding years which was not expected to be raised in 1891, but still was to be squeezed out of the unfortunate peasant

at some future time. Adding this sum to the arrears of 1891, we find that the whole sum of arrears in direct taxation up to the 1st January, 1892, amounted to 66 per cent. of what was to be paid. During the year 1892 those arrears increased still more, namely, to 116,857,242 roubles, which means 82½ per cent. of the proposed income from direct taxation that year!

There can be no arrears on the peasants in *indirect* taxation; that is a matter of course. But the government of the new Pharaohs of Russia, after having reduced people to starvation on a large scale, lend them money or grain. This debt of the peasantry amounts at present to 168 million roubles. Now add to the above-mentioned sum the rates paid by the peasant to the *zemstvos* and to his community—his tithes, his private debts to the usurers of every description, and the inevitable expenses connected with sending the recruits to the army—and you will get an approximate idea of the financial burden weighing on his unfortunate shoulders (indirect taxation excluded).

And here is an illustration of how, under the paternal government of the "Little Father," these millions of arrears are to be obtained from the peasant. One of our correspondents writes from the Oufa province: "From X*, which is one of the poorest villages in the vicinity of Zaiusk, district of Menzelinsk. The villagers live exclusively by agriculture, but as for three consecutive years the crops failed, and this misfortune was followed by a new one—the cholera—no wonder that they were much in arrears and nearly starving. As to the peasants' starvation, the police do not mind, but the taxes must be got at any price. So a military force was sent to X, and all the villagers unmercifully flogged. The order was carried out on such a wholesale scale, so brutally, and was at the same time so utterly useless—for nothing could be got out of the unfortunate people, even by humiliation and cruelty—that one of the neighbouring landlords, General Grévé, at once, and on his own accord, set off to St. Petersburg to put the matter before the ministry. Will he be listened to? Hardly. But even if he should be, we may add, that we must not forget how many villages in the Empire are treated in the same way where there is no General Grévé to go hundreds of miles to St. Petersburg in their defence.

If the reader does not like illustrations from unofficial sources, we will give him one from an official one. The *Messenger of Riga* informs us that one of the departments of the Imperial Senate held a sitting recently on an important

* It was impossible to decipher the name in the manuscript; the locality is, however, indicated quite sufficiently to make the verification of the fact possible.

question—Who was to flog the peasants? This would not be credited of any other European country, but in Imperial Russia, especially now-a-days, it is most natural. The Senate had to decide *who was to flog the peasants*. Must it be the members of the peasant tribunals themselves, or the police? The honourable function was awarded to the police.

* * *

A private message received by us confirms the sad news, which has already appeared in the English press, that about 80 persons have been arrested recently in Warsaw for political reasons.

* * *

Some time ago the Radical paper *Naród* ("The People"), published in the Oukraïniën language in Galicia (Austria), but read and supported also by Oukraïniëns within the boundaries of the Russian empire, made public a secret official memorandum of the General of Gendarmes, Novitzky, residing in Kiev. This memorandum, contained a denunciation of, and an attack upon, the Oukraïniën patriots, of whom the *Naród* is partly a representative. A copy of the issue in which the memorandum appeared was sent by the editor to General Novitzky, and now he is informed that Novitzky went mad. We quite understand that for an ambitious man like Novitzky, who is accustomed to revel in his omnipotence and cunning, the idea that among those nearest to him there is someone who betrays him on behalf of his victims, may be maddening. The editor of the *Naród* thus concludes his note: "We learned the fact with rather mingled feelings. Yet if we take into consideration how many more hundreds of people that savage mind might have ruined, we have to thank fate for its having been put out. It would be difficult even for official Russia to find another Jack-Ketch for Oukraïniën patriotism like General Novitzky."

* * *

In the same (21st) number of the *Naród* we find some very interesting details about the Oukraïniëns, recently arrested in South Russia (see *FREE RUSSIA*, August, 1893, p. 101). Among other things they are charged with having contemplated the secession of Oukraina (South Russia), for the purpose of annexing her to Austria—an utterly fantastic charge. They cannot, in fact, be charged even with getting books prohibited in Russia, as books were sent them by a native of Galicia without their knowledge, just to try whether he could manage to introduce into Russia some specimens of books of different and partly opposite tendencies. The only thing they might have been "reasonably" charged with is that they did not denounce themselves and one another after they had received the books. But in Russia it is a sufficient reason for an arrest if the authorities expect to wring out of the victim some interesting confessions by means of solitary confinement and worry.

The most powerful of the living Russian novelists of the younger generation, V. G. Korolenko, is pretty well known throughout the English-speaking world, as his "Blind Musician," "Sanghalieu Convict," "Makar's Dream," "In Two Moods," and other stories full of warm feeling, mastery of art and wit, have appeared in English, on both sides of the Atlantic. Last summer the eminent writer visited the Chicago World's Fair. On his way home he wanted to stop at Odessa, but he was at once visited by the police, who told him he must not do so, but proceed at once to Nijni-Novgorod, which the police chose to consider Korolenko's acknowledged place of residence.

* * *

Some interesting particulars are given us by one of our St. Petersburg correspondents as to the present customs of the Russian Censorship. Some periodicals are persecuted far more than others. The monthly *Russian Wealth* is regarded especially as a black sheep. Since it came, about two years ago, under the management of liberal editors, it has become necessary for them to provide twice as much material every month as is actually required for the publication, because they know that at least a half of what is sent in will be rejected. The way in which the censorship is exercised may be gathered from the following instances:—A novel of Mme. Bezródnaya was not allowed to appear, the only reason being that one of the characters in it, a peasant, is represented as having been tried and unjustly committed. Another purely historical article on Ferdinand V. of Spain was suppressed, no reason being assigned. Did the censor himself wish to imply that there was a similarity between Ferdinand V. of Spain, the persecutor and bigot, and Alexander III., the father of all the Russians?

* * *

Yet the action of the Censorship in regard to "Russian Wealth" has not met with the approval of at least one member of the "Central Board of the Press." This member, one Pozniak, was lately appointed on the strength of his reactionary writings, and has proved his fervour by reproaching the Censor of "Russian Wealth" for his mildness.

* * *

But the censorship no longer confines its powers to suppressing what it does not approve of, lately an innovation has been introduced by the "Ministry of the Household," and the editor of a recent encyclopædia, Professor Andreëvsky (now deceased), was forced by it to introduce, under the letter A, an article on Alexander III., the production of a "literary" official, containing views on the Tzar's character remote from his own.

* * *

Intelligence has reached us that the existence of the "Society of Friends of Russian Freedom" is well known in the Baltic provinces, and that the Russian police keeps an eye on its movements.

We expect this intelligence to encourage our friends to fresh exertions, at the same time warning them to keep an eye on the police.

* * *

The well-known American Dr. Salter, who has been lecturing to the London Ethical Society, has just left England. It will be remembered by our readers that he was one of the foremost to protest against the Extradition Treaty, which has now become law. We learn from him that the Americans who regard that Treaty as a blot on their national honour are preparing to make a fresh crusade against it. At the same time news reaches us from Mr. Goldenberg, our Russian correspondent in America, that the Russians in America are preparing for the same conflict. These preparations show us that neither the Americans themselves nor the Russians in America are hopeless as to the abrogation of the Treaty.

* * *

Our Oxford Branch is doing admirable work. The number of members now exceeds 50. It was decided at a committee meeting of the branch to issue a new and revised edition of the pamphlet "The Slaughter of Political Prisoners in Yakoutsk." This edition will contain new and interesting facts, a carefully drawn up plan of the house in which this crime was perpetrated, and a letter, never before published, from Hausman, one of the victims, to his little daughter. In doing this the Oxford Branch has met an urgent need. This pamphlet has long been out of print, and it is the one which is most constantly asked for. The Oxford Branch is further engaged in preparations for a concert, to be held in memory of the famous Russian composer, P. I. Tchaikovsky, just deceased.

Good Work in Cardiff.

The Cardiff branch of the S.F.R.F. is only a newly-born babe, yet it has already over 40 members and its first steps promise steady growth and useful activity. This is not surprising if we take into consideration that its Hon. Sec. and Treasurer is Mr. H. M. Thompson and its Chairman the Rev. Canon Thompson, D.D. The annual subscription to the branch is fixed at 2s. 6d.; to both the branch and the parent society, 7s. 6d. Up till now the money received, all told, is about £12, including £2 subscribed "for the Stundists."

The objects of the branch are: "To promote knowledge of the political and social condition of the Russian people; to aid and encourage by every legitimate means those who are struggling to obtain political and religious freedom for Russia; carefully to watch the international relations between England and Russia, so as to guard against the possibility of any such calamitously false step as the recently concluded extradition treaty between the United States and Russia (in consequence of which many of the Russian political refugees in the United States are no longer secure)." And the privileges of a member, as stated on his ticket, are as follows: "Free attendance at all lectures and meetings promoted by the Cardiff branch; advice concerning the literature of the subject, and access to many of the important books; monthly receipt of the publication called *FREE RUSSIA*; but principally, becoming a helper of the cause of freedom in that part of the world in which it is most abused." It is a happy feature of the Cardiff branch that at every branch meeting a paper,

especially written for the purpose, on some Russian subject, is read.

At a meeting of the branch, held on October 26, officers and committee were appointed. It was agreed to invite Mrs. Mallet to deliver a lecture, and also to raise a guarantee fund so as to secure a lecture from Mr. George Kennan in three or four months' time. Mr. Rees Jones kindly said that he and his friends would be responsible for £10 of such guarantee. The Secretary made a statement concerning the books and other literature available for members of the Society. An account of the Stundist sect was read. Later on Mrs. Mallet's lecture was fixed for December 7, and Mr. G. Kennan's for February 28.

Robbery Again?

The Scotch reporters have already rendered good service in unveiling some of the doings which the Russian official world tries to keep in the dark. We mean the tracking of the Russian steamer built on the Clyde for the transportation, in cages, of convicts (political ones among others) to the Saghalien Island. Now we want from them, or from some Friend of Russian Freedom a new service. A Russian steamship of the so-called Volunteer Fleet, of the name of Tambóv, is, at the present moment, lying in some Scotch harbour "for repairs." There is something decidedly mysterious about those "repairs," and, therefore, we should like to find out, not only that harbour, but also the truth. The mystery is this:—When starting from Russia many months ago, Tambóv was inspected by the engineer of the Volunteer Fleet and declared seaworthy. When the steamer arrived at this island a telegram was received from the Russian Ministry of Marine declaring the ship unseaworthy and ordering it to stop in England. All the passengers were to be transmitted to an English steamer, which meant that a round sum of money was to be paid by the Volunteer Fleet administration. Then an English engineer inspected Tambóv and . . . proclaimed her seaworthy (without any repairing being yet done)! Notwithstanding that decision, however, a new order from the ministry came, namely: The steamer must wait for the arrival of an official engineer, sent by the ministry. . . .

Now, the reader will say that after the horrible fate of the ironclad *Roussalka* ("The Mermaid"), we can only be glad to see how much caution the Russian Ministry of Marine displays when human life is at stake. Our Russian correspondent is, however, of a different opinion and gives two very different reasons for the actions of the ministry. He thinks that both the engineers, who declared Tambóv seaworthy, were right, but that, on the one hand, the expenses for the "repairs" were to be defrayed by the government which might prove as profitable, as the "repairing" of the *Roussalka*,* while on the other the Volunteer Fleet is a dangerous rival to the Russian Steamship and Trading Company in which the present minister, Admiral Chihachov and some other prominent persons are large shareholders. Admiral Chihachov was for many years managing director of that company, before he was called to the ministry.

Will anyone in this country, who knows anything about the inspection of the Tambóv and the transmission of her passengers, undertake to enlighten us?

* Rumours are spread in St. Petersburg to the effect that 15,000 roubles were lately assigned for her reparation, of which 11,000 stuck to official hands before reaching their destination. So that was the price of the 177 lives lost by its going down.

"The Union."

A very interesting specimen of clandestine literature, not only circulated but also *produced* in Russia, is lying before us, the March No. of the periodical "The Union" (*Soiz*) for the present year. It is evidently the production of some very young people who are short of means. The copy before us is only a hectographed one of half foolscap size, containing 41 pages. In its "Letterbox" we find the confession that the secret society issuing it has got neither a sufficient quantity of type nor money for voluminous publications. But as we know very well that the whole Russian revolutionary movement of the last 20-25 years began in the same apparently poor way, this does not discourage us. On the contrary, the contents of the publication show some features that are very promising. Besides the usual contents of such periodicals—a list of the arrested, exiled, imprisoned, &c.; chronicles of events of the kind that are not permitted to appear in the ordinary press, revolutionary songs, satirical poems, leaders on "What to begin with," and so on—there are articles which show a tendency of special value, articles whose object is to unite the different groups of advanced Russians—the social-democrats, the partisans of the "Will of the people," the *Naródniki* (literally the democrats) and others—into one large revolutionary union. The periodical proposes to convene clandestine conferences of representatives of different secret circles and societies, and thus to pave the way for a pan-Russian secret congress of representatives of revolutionary organisations, at which a common platform may be adopted and a common plan of action worked out. Another encouraging point is the fact shown by "The Union" that notwithstanding all the means used by the Russian government in order to alienate those working for the Russian liberation outside Russia from those working inside, they do not, as a matter of fact, lose sight of one another, and manage to help each other. The group represented by "The Union" does not confine its propaganda to the publication of that periodical, but issues also separate pamphlets and books. Among the pamphlets we find "The Yakoutsk Slaughter, a translation from the English periodical *FREE RUSSIA*." We find also in an early No. of "The Union" a list of recent Russian publications produced abroad. Now, if we take into consideration that neither members of *FREE RUSSIA* nor any member of the Russian Free Press Fund have any direct communication with "The Union" people, nor are they known to each other at all, it becomes evident that whatever is printed abroad on behalf of the Russian liberation movement finds its way where it ought to go, even by channels unknown to both sides.

Let us work, then on our side with renewed energy; they will work on theirs.

The Russian Free Press in London.

At midsummer, 1892, five Russian refugees, of whom four were residing in London and the fifth in Paris, established in the English capital a little Russian printing office, and a book store for circulating publications prohibited in Russia. The institution was founded in the most modest way possible, by means of a few pounds entrusted for the purpose to the before-mentioned five refugees, by some lovers of freedom residing in Russia, and this fund was called "The Fund of the Russian Free Press." The 1st of July, 1892, must be considered its official birthday. There is no need to explain to the English or American reader the power of and necessity for a free press, but a word must be said about the means by which its productions have to reach the Russian reader, hungry and thirsty for truth and enlightenment, notwithstanding the official Arguses and the draconian laws that try to keep him as far from these things as possible.

There are two different ways of getting at that reader. One, which we will call the natural one, is by working independently of any organisation or designed plan; the other is by working through special channels, which have to be elaborately arranged at great risk to those who nobly take upon themselves to smuggle the literature in, for the sake of propaganda.

The efficiency of the first way is founded on the fact that there are plenty of Russians throughout the world who have not broken up their intercourse with their native land. Some of them are living abroad temporarily for business purposes; thousands driven out of their country by official tyranny, are to be found as settlers in Europe, America, Asia, Australia and Africa. Some of them still keep up correspondence with their friends and relatives in Russia, by means unknown to the Fund of the Russian Free Press, and having been emancipated by the new political life in which they now share, they cannot help communicating every now and then with their near and dear ones something of what reaches them of the proscribed stock. In addition to the Russians settled abroad more or less permanently there is a large body of them who only visit the wide, wide world, outside the pale of censorship. Official statistics tell us that not less than 60,000 so-called "foreign passports," *i.e.*, permits to Russian subjects to leave the country, are issued yearly by the Russian administration. Supposing that only half of that number come across the independent Russian literature abroad, we have 30,000 persons who are taking home yearly a portion of its contents, to be discussed there, either amicably or inimically, but in any case they are spread. As a matter of fact, the overwhelming majority of those readers are more or less friendly to the ideas circulated by the inde-

pendent Russian literature. It is true they hardly ever venture to take them over the frontier in the form of printed leaves, but they smuggle them in as well in their brains, where, fortunately, no search can be made by the most cunning of his Imperial Majesty's paid scoundrels.

Everyone understands that neither the routes nor the means by which the clandestine literature is smuggled into Russia through the so-called "underground railway" can be made public. Suffice it to say, that the Fund of the Russian Free Press has a special sum of money, which has been until now sufficient to maintain the "railway" in working order, and though at times damaged seriously and blocked in certain directions, it has never for long ceased working *altogether*. We are sorry to say that there have been already three victims of the Tzar's inquisition among men who generously and courageously worked for the Fund of the Russian Free Press as smugglers on the "underground." One of these was enabled to escape the clutches of the police by means of some money collected for the purpose at Dr. S. Watson's house some time ago.

Now that the main thing is explained, the reader will understand better the significance of the following numbers:—

During the first 18 months of its existence the F. R. F. P. sold of its own and other people's publications prohibited in Russia and gave away free of charge	12,776 copies 291 „
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Total ...	13,067 copies
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Which makes a yearly average of 8,711 copies. Now during only *six months* of the present year the number of copies put in circulation was 9,410, which makes the yearly average more than double. This is a good testimony of the revival of the spirit of independence in Russia, which becomes still more significant if we add that just during the last few months the underground importation of clandestine literature into Russia has steadily developed, being called into life by the increased demand from Russia.

The publishing department of the Russian Free Press Fund is also steadily developing its activity. It began with very small pamphlets and now issues compact volumes. The seven publications issued up to the present touch upon the present political situation of Russia ("What is to be done?" by Stepniak), the question of agitation abroad (by the same), the Jewish question ("A Jew to Jews," by Khassin). A good deal of material, too, is given for the better understanding of the Russian liberation movement ("The Biography of P. Dombrovsky;" "A Queer Girl," by V. Korolenko; "Underground Russia," by Stepniak; and "The Constitution of Count Loris-Melikov"). Strange to say, "Underground Russia," originally written in Italian and translated into nearly every European language, was never before printed in Russian, and is now for

the first time revised and remodelled by the author for the use of his countrymen. As to the "Constitution," it created quite a sensation, as it revealed documents which showed how exaggerated the hopes were, and how inaccurate the knowledge of facts concerning the so-called period of dictatorship of Loris-Melikov at the end of the last reign. An extensive work by the eminent Russian writer and stalwart fighter for truth and justice, B. B. Bervi, is now in the press, and is to appear shortly. It is a critical history of modern European civilisation, beginning with the 13th century. A similar survey of the ancient civilisation, of which the present work forms the continuation, was published by the author in Russia over 20 years ago. The Russian censorship having stood in the way of the rest being published, the new tract was to be printed here. It forms, however, a complete work in itself.

In the meantime, material of a transitory but momentary keen interest is sent in from Russia, it becomes evident that the R.F.P.F. must take some steps to meet the ripening demand in Russia for having news and notes of the moment spread by means of print. This demand seems to be the most burning exigency of the moment, and let us hope the answer to it will soon assume some definite and practical shape.

High-class Education in Russia.

Near St. Petersburg there is a high-class boarding school for girls, called "Smolny," where 500 daughters of the nobility receive their mental food. The appointment of the Principal rests with the Empress herself, and the lady who has lately been appointed has not failed in her appreciation of the institution of which she has been made head.

The enthusiasm of the girls for their school and their devotion to their head found a natural vent in a poem, the first line of which ran:

"Here we find a peaceful home."

This apparently harmless poem was suppressed by the Principal of the "Smolny," on the ground that it was derogatory to the institution of which she was the head to be compared to "a home."

Victims of the Franco-Russian Festivities.

(FROM OUR ST. PETERSBURG CORRESPONDENT.)

For a long time the Russian government has tried to obtain from Europe and America the sanction of public opinion, for the system which at home has to rest on the sanction of bayonets.

This time the hopes of the government were far higher than ever. It hoped that the younger generation and the public generally, being bribed and carried away by the sympathy of Republican France, would forget the past, and join in the cry "Vive le Tzar!"

It was certainly, very difficult to get an outburst of

unrestrained enthusiasm, from a body of people trained for generations to regard every such outburst as punishable with imprisonment or exile. But the government found means of getting out of the difficulty. The enthusiasm was partly ordered, partly forged.

An enthusiastic telegram in the name of the undergraduates of the Technological Institute was sent without the undergraduates knowing anything about it. The authorities went so far as to place a notice on the wall, saying that the telegram had been sent "by order." The same trick was played on the Mining Institute.

But in the University of St. Petersburg, the head applied to six undergraduates, asking them to send and sign an enthusiastic telegram to the students in Paris, in his name and the names of "the undergraduates," and with the inevitable "God save the Tzar" at the end; endeavouring thus to give the impression that the telegram, in reality sent by only six undergraduates, was representative of the whole body.

The undergraduates got wind of this, and a disturbance arose. They were anxious to stick to their only political right, the right of being silent. A meeting was held, and while the minority was in favour of sending a new telegram the majority was against sending any. No lectures were given for the whole day.

The opposition went to the head of the University; he assured them on his honour that according to their wishes no telegram would be sent.

Next day the undergraduates learned that they were cheated. Once more there were disturbed meetings, speeches and clamour. The head of the University appeared, and this time played the still more dishonourable part of a spy. Under the pretext that he did not know that the majority was against the telegram (which by the way had been already sent), he suggested to the opposition that they should sign their names. Everyone knows in Russia, that to do this is to risk one's whole career. Nevertheless, 60 of the young men ran this risk and gave their signatures.

Rumour says that one of these young men is

already arrested, and there can hardly be a doubt that there will be other victims. This was our share of the Franco-Russian festivities.

P. SMIRNOV.

Meetings.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE met as usual on the first Wednesday in November, by kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Rix, at Burlington House. Present: Mr. Fisher Unwin, Miss Hargrave, Mrs. Chas. Mallett, Mrs. Voynich, Messrs. Byles, Periss, Rix, Adolph Smith, H. Thompson, W. Thompson and S. Stepniak. Letters of regret for absence were read from Dr. Spence Watson and Mr. Mackenzie. Mr. Hobhouse, of Merton College, Oxford, wrote to propose Mrs. Arthur Sidgwick as a member of the Executive, in his place; and Mrs. Sidgwick and Miss Radford were elected to the Executive Committee. It was also resolved to invite Mr. C. Algernon Swinburne to join the General Committee. The Committee assented to the retirement of Mr. Stepniak from the editorship of FREE RUSSIA, for the space of four months on account of pressure of work, and also to the resignation of Mrs. Voynich, to whom a vote of thanks was accorded for her valuable services as sub-editor. Mr. Volkhovsky and Miss Ada Radford were asked to take their places for the time being. The Committee received with much pleasure the announcement of the formation, by Mr. Herbert Thompson, of a Cardiff branch of the Society of Friends of Russian Freedom.

We have received a most interesting book—"The Stundists: the Story of a Great Religious Revolt" (James Clarke & Co., 13 and 14, Fleet-street), which we would recommend to all interested in the subject. For lack of space we reserve a more detailed notice until next month.

Letter Box.

BORMAN (Russia).—Thanks for materials, both in MSS. and in print. Please send more. Use the same address.

THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF RUSSIAN FREEDOM.

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All Contributions and Subscriptions to be addressed to Dr. R. SPENCE WATSON, Bensham Grove, Gateshead. Individual contributors are alone responsible for all statements in their communications.

All MSS., Letters to the Editor, &c., should be addressed to the Editor, FREE RUSSIA, 4, Stamford Brook Road, Hammersmith, London.

All Communications with regard to the Society, Advertisements, &c., should be addressed to the Honorary Secretary (G. L. Mallet), 132, Cromwell Road, South Kensington, London, S.W.

Advertisements received up to the 25th of each month will appear in the next issue. Advertisements in the English and American editions at reduced rates.