

no further than: "What is to be done?" So well he knows the turbulent races of his land! And you and I, before we go away from this place where history has been made, let us try to untangle the multiple threads of the problem. Petersburg has its Dream of liberty; outside the city, drunk with the Dream, goes shouting—men kiss each other and weep. Here, we may drink our tea, you and I, searching for what lies under the pageant and the experiment.

IV.

THE RED DREAM.

One fact should be held in mind: the revolution has been aimed not so much against the Tsar as against the bureaucracy. It was this extraordinary organisation which formed the nation out of chaos. The bureaucracy made Russia. Since Catherine's day it has exercised, in the name of the Tsar, absolute authority. It was strong enough to annihilate the efforts of two Tsars—one of whom said, "I shall live and die a republican"—to deliver their power to the people. The present popular movement has its roots far back in the past. The question now is, not whether the people will triumph, but how they will triumph. Are Tsar and people to triumph together; or is the sombre little idealist of Tsarskoe-Selo to be dragged down in the ruin of the bureaucracy?

Before the meeting of the Duma, he promulgated what he called the Fundamental Laws of the Empire. This was neither a constitution nor a charter. It was a declaration of what the Crown would yield and of what it would keep. It announced his supreme, autocratic authority. It gave him the power of veto on all laws voted by the Duma. It reserved to him alone the discretion of the foreign policy of the State and the right to declare peace or war. It declared inviolable the person, domicile, and property of the individual—save in certain cases foreseen by law. Lastly it decreed Russia "one and indivisible forever."

And with such phrases autocracy hopes to endite and canalise the rising tide of popular liberty. Surely it is a dream more visionary than that of Senik, longing for a condune of the Steppes.

The Duma is a ferment of men and ambitions. Hardly as yet has it fallen apart into organised parties. Those who have been elected to it represent the calmer thought of the country, for the will of the electors was expressed only in its second intention. In spite of this the whole tone of the Assembly is more democratic, more radical if you will, than is, for instance, that of the labour party of England. Many of the members would accept the Tsar as a constitutional monarch, but the great majority is openly in favour of a republic; the radicals want a United States of Russia, with a single chamber elected by the universal suffrage of men and women alike, and, in addition, they advocate a single tax on income. Farther to the left are grouped the independent working men whom the wretched Capon betrayed; and on the extreme left are the revolutionary socialists of Gorki and Minski, with Krutav's democrats. The aristocracy has abdicated; the bureaucracy has scattered in disarray; there is left only this Third Estate—in saffron and yellow boots—

Behind it is grouped the vague and obscure mass of the peasantry; they demand their own liberty and the land of others.

And the Conservatives? There are no Conservatives; they have gone down into democracy as into a cave where they may hide. The moderate men, the constitutional democrats who control the Duma to-day, will pass. In revolutions power moves always to the left. Sooner or later the red battalion will ride into power. And then there will be left neither Witte (who is less a man than a stratagem) nor Prince Paul, making himself little that he may be made great; the failed lawyers, too, and the grey professors will go their way—not, however, that dark and savage little printer from Moscow. Sooner will remain; he who wants "Everything!" In other words, revolution to-day means socialism; in Russia, as everywhere else, it is the great fact. Moreover, in Russia as everywhere else, socialism is a creation of the intellectual proletariat. It was born in the Muscovite world a generation ago. After the Turkish war bureaucracy asked itself why it had been so badly served—why its information bureau had failed; and some one answered "It is the lack of education? What's that?"

Education? What's that?"

"It's something they have in Germany."

"Ah, then, send to Germany and get some."

And all over Russia colleges and universities were established—in cities and towns broadcast. Generation after generation was given "education." But what was to be done with them? Thousands were fitted into the bureaucratic organisation; thousands more came clamouring—lean and hungry, intellectuals, too fine for the work of the fields, aye with ambition and discontent. No Russia had "education" and the revolution. The gaunt intellectuals went to the people. They taught the peasant the simple socialism of coveting the land of his neighbour and the land of the State. They gave the red hope to the black brigade of the factory towns. And they are the power that waits without, while in the Duma the academic Girondins cheer each other's speeches. It is of them that Roditchy speaks as the "Red Reserve."

The peasants want the land; the Poles want Home Rule; the Jews want equality; each race, each caste, has its own ambitions and needs. One and all demand a freedom greater than the world has known. And this poor little Duma has been thrown to them as one throws a worm into an ant-heap. It is the beginning, not the end. Surely never any nation was so charged with the elements of hate, of fearful hope, of lawless idealism. It is as though the social structure were sapped and filled with powder awaiting the first spark. What may come I know not, nor does any man; for in the darker ways of Russian life the eternal Anarches prowl and from one to the other they pass the word: "We are the dogs of revolution that know the bones of kings!" and recognise each other in the dark. What will be will be. The Tsar has opened the door not to reform but to the great social revolution; and throughout the immense Russias the Red Dream is spreading from town to town, from mir to mir.

In the "Congregationalist" is a curious story about rats, which seems to indicate that they will not remain where their company is not desired, if politely invited to change their quarters, though everybody knows that they are driven out with difficulty. Here is a perfectly true story which corroborates that one.

My house is supposed to be rat-proof, and was so when quite new, but at one time, more than 20 years ago, we had a large colony of rodents, greatly to our annoyance, and it was with us a matter of daily wonder where they found a weak spot in our defences among them. One evening a young lady from a friend's family, living in a large, fine house nearly a mile away, was with us, and the talk turned on rats, as we heard ours scampering up and down the walls.

The young lady said that none had ever been in their house, and she did not think there was any point at which they could enter. My eldest daughter, a great wit, said: "I've heard that, if politely invited to do so in writing, rats will leave any house and go to any other to which they may be directed, and I will tell ours that at your house they will find spacious quarters and an excellent commissariat."

At the moment, before us all, she wrote the most grandiloquent letter to the large family of rats that had, so favoured us with their presence, pointing out to them that at No. 65, Pearl-street, was a large, fine house which had never been favoured with the residence of any of their family, where they would find ample quarters and a fat larder. When finished, she read the missive to the company, and we had a great laugh over it. As an old superstition, she then put her hand upon it, and carried it into the attic, where it would probably be found by those to whom it was directed.

A few days later the young lady was at our house again, and burst into a laugh, exclaiming: "Our house is overrun with rats!" That recalled to us the fact that we had heard none in our walls. My daughter went to the attic, and the letter was gone. While they were talking and laughing over the curious affair, a friend came in, and, hearing the talk, said that two evenings before, in the bright moonlight, he saw several rats running down Congress-street, being the straight road to Pearl-street. We have never been troubled with them since, but I have not heard how it has been with the house to which our beneficiaries were directed.

Scientific and Useful

THE MAGNETIC KNIFE.

Most sailors carry a sheath-knife, and no fisherman is without one when a trawler goes to sea. But it is only just beginning to be recognised what risk to shipping may be involved in the practice. It appears that knives of a highly-magnetised kind are nowadays being sold in large numbers to seafarers, and that some of these instruments are so magnetic that if the wearer brings them within 18 inches of the compass-bowl he may deflect the needle fully two points either way. Quite recently there have been an exceptional number of fatalities to steam trawlers, and people are speculating as to how far the magnetised knife may be responsible for stranding attributable to deviation from the correct course. The matter is regarded as so serious that the secretary of the Grimsby Steam Fishing Vessels' Insurance Company has issued a formal notice to masters, in which he points out that, while they cannot always prevent these knives from being carried by members of their crews, they must stringently direct that no knife shall be worn by any person who is steering the vessel, or who is on the look-out in the bridge-house. A hope is added that manufacturers will see the importance of producing knives which shall be non-magnetic, and therefore incapable of producing the risks to which the circular draws attention.

FLYING SNAKES.

Although the alleged flying power of certain Malay frogs is now generally considered to be a myth, according to Mr. R. Sheldford, who recently read a note on the subject before the London Zoological Society, three tree-snakes from Borneo are stated by the natives (and native testimony has very generally at least, a foundation of truth) to be possessed of the power of taking flying leaps from the boughs of trees to the ground. The snakes in question, which belong to two distinct groups, are respectively named "Chrysopepla ornata," "C. chrysochlora," and "Dendrophis pietus." In all three of these, the scales on the lower surface of the body are provided with a suture or hinge-line on each side; and by means of a muscular contraction these scales can be drawn inwards, so that the whole lower surface becomes quite concave, and the snake itself may be compared to a rod of bamboo bisected longitudinally. By experiments on "C. ornata" it was seen that the snake when falling from a height descended not in writhing coils, but with the body held stiff and rigid, and that the line of the fall was at an angle to a straight line from the point of departure to the ground. In the author's opinion it is highly probable that the concave ventral surface of the snake helps to buoy it up in its fall; as it can be shown that a longitudinally bisected rod of bamboo falls more slowly than an undivided rod of equal weight.—"Knowledge."

DREAMERS HAVE NO MEMORY.

No one is ever surprised in a dream. A man dreaming is at one moment bathing in the sea and at the next moment soaring in a balloon, but the sudden and inexplicable change does not surprise him. Nor is he surprised to meet in the flesh friends long dead; nor is he surprised to find himself doing deeds that really are beyond him, as winning the love of notable beauties, or knocking out champion heavy-weights, or, if politically inclined, besting in debate Mr. Chamberlain or Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. No one, says a writer in "Popular Science Giftings," is ever surprised in a dream, and the reason is that dreamers have no memory. In real life, to be pursued through the streets by a lion would be astonishing, but this accident would be accepted in a dream as horrible but quite commonplace, the memory not being there to say that it is unheard of for lions to

pursue men in cities. In the same way, in dreams, men are not surprised to find themselves ballooning, because they do not remember that they were never up in a balloon before, and they are not surprised to find themselves conversing with dead people, because they do not remember that these people are dead. There can be no surprise without memory, and it is because men have no memories in their dreams that they then accept calmly and credulously the most amazing and incredible things.

THE ELECTRIC PERIL.

Universal blindness, according to an "X-ray and therapeutic expert" in Chicago, is the danger threatening mankind because of their audacity in utilising the electric force of the universe. This prophet of woe, Dr. H. Preston Pratt, was called to give evidence for a young lady who has for nearly four years been partially blind and paralysed owing to an electric current passing into her body "through the atmosphere" from the wires of the Union Traction Company, and who accordingly claimed £10,000 damages. The doctor sets forth "that corroding effects have been discovered by eye specialists to proceed from the millions of dynamos now at work in every corner of the civilised world. Day and night we are never free from their baleful influences; and the eyes—the most delicate part of the human body—are the first to suffer."

COOKING FOOD.

The object of cooking food, apart from the gustatory effect of bringing out the pleasant flavours, is to increase its digestibility by breaking up its fibres into lengths more convenient for the digestive organs to deal with. In some instances meat would be quite as digestible without cooking; and Brillat-Savarin declared that it was not unpleasant to the taste. But if cooking is only to break up the fibres the same effect might be produced by extreme cold; and it has been shown that meat can in this way be "cooked" by liquid air. A smaller degree of cold will produce similar effects on vegetables and Dr. Ephraim Cutter speaks in the most appreciative terms of a "frost-bitten potato." It was, he says, shrunken, soft, limp, and elastic. It looked dark as if rotten, and yet there was no odour or degrading odour. Under the microscope its starch grains were shrunken, cracked, and fissured in the long and short diameters, wrinkled, and they polarised light beautifully. From all of which, as well as from the evidence of taste, Dr. Cutter thinks that such potatoes might be eaten without harm. Cranberries and onions were also frozen and tested; but though they might have been eatable, and were at any rate tasted, it is not quite certain from the microscopic examination of the grains whether they were "cooked" in the scientific sense.

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