

thousand, and in his home precinct, where three hundred voters were sent to the polls in court carriages, his ticket received only eighty votes! Could anything more clearly prove the frail hold of the government upon the people? And it must be remembered that they do not have universal suffrage in the cities but a property qualification which excludes the poorest of the people, the very ones who have most reason to desire popular government.

The second proof of the feeling against the government is to be found in the unanimity with which the duma opposes the position taken by the government through the ministry. While the members of the duma are divided among themselves on many questions, they act as one man in their opposition to the government's policy insofar as that policy has been outlined. In fact, the tension has been so great that I was afraid the body might be dissolved by imperial order before we could reach St. Petersburg.

The sessions of the duma are held in a palace built by Catherine the Great for one of her favorites, General Potemkin. It is a commodious building and has been remodeled to meet present needs. The largest room, extending the entire width of the building, was once the ball room and some notable entertainments have been given in it—entertainments calling for a lavish expenditure and attended only by the nobility; now the room serves as a lobby and peasant representatives, wearing the usual blouse and top boots, stride through it going to and from the sessions. In another part of the building there are ample dining rooms where the members of the duma and the press may secure meals at very moderate rates. The assembly hall is large enough to accommodate the four hundred and fifty members, but is badly lighted. The windows are all back of the speaker's platform, so that the members sit with their faces towards the light. It would be much better if the light came from above, but it is really surprising that the accommodations are as satisfactory as they are, considering the short time the workmen had to make the necessary changes.

Back of the president is a life-sized painting of the czar in uniform; on the left is a box occupied by the ministers when present, and beyond the ministers is a still larger enclosure occupied by the representatives of the foreign press. To the right of the president are seats for members of the council of empire who may be in attendance, and beyond them the enclosure occupied by representatives of the Russian press. Just in front and a little below the president's desk is the rostrum from which the members of the duma address the assembly, and just below this rostrum is the reporters' table where the stenographers take down the proceedings. Besides the rooms already mentioned there are committee rooms, cloak rooms, rooms for the home press and for the foreign press, etc., etc. In a word, the duma building looks very much like an American legislature or a European parliament—a likeness still further emphasized by the presence of men and women clerks, doorkeepers, pages, and spectators. One thing only was out of harmony with a legislative body and that was a company of soldiers stationed in a wing of the building as if in anticipation of possible trouble. We were present at two sessions of the duma and found them intensely interesting. The morning session is at present given up to speeches on the land question, more than a third of the members having expressed a desire to be heard on this subject. The speeches are usually short and often read from manuscript. Hand-clapping is allowed, and there was always applause at the close of the speeches. Occasionally the president announced that some speaker on the list surrendered his time and this statement also brought forth applause, the discussion of the subject having by this time become tiresome.

By the courtesy of our ambassador, Mr. Meyer, we were admitted to the diplomatic gallery, from which we could survey the entire body. There is probably no assembly like it on either hemisphere. It is made up of all classes and represents every shade of opinion. There are members of the nobility who have cast in their lot with the people, lawyers who have temporarily left their practice to devote themselves to the larger interests of the public, professors fresh from the universities, business men from the cities, laboring men from the factories, and there are, most numerous still, peasants from the farms. Some of the members are near the end of life and command attention by their years as well as by their words, and there is a sprinkling of young men who have become the spokesmen of their communities, but the majority are middle-aged men who have years of experience behind them,

and are yet strong for the battle. In garb there is also great variety, the black frock coat, the business suit, the belted blouse, and the clerical robe are all to be seen. The smooth face seems to be at a discount in Russia; one would suppose, so plentiful are whiskers, that the barbers were on a strike. There are many heavy heads of hair, too, sometimes the locks falling to the shoulders, sometimes cut square about the ears.

The lobby is a better place than the gallery to study features; sitting on one of the visitors' seats in this commodious hall we watched the members passing to and fro and were introduced to a number of them by the American newspaper men who are reporting the proceedings for the press of our country. There were also a number of Americans here studying the Russian situation as a preparation for university work at home, a son of the late Dr. Harper of Chicago being one of these. I shall send with this article a number of photographs of the more prominent members, but I regret that I can not bring before my readers some of the faces that we observed in the lobby—faces which seemed to present an epitome of Russian history—strong, firm, unyielding faces which plainly tell of the stern resolve that lies behind the peasant movement. They may protest, like Mark Antony, that they have neither "wit nor words nor worth, action, nor utterance nor the power of speech to stir men's blood," but they can "put a tongue in every wound" of their countrymen that will almost "move the stones to rise and mutiny."

This is the first duma and it has not proceeded far enough to fully develop the permanent leaders, but if I may use the simile, as the basket of pebbles is shaken by debate, the large ones are gradually rising to the top. The president of the duma is Prof. Serge Murmetseff, of Moscow, whose learning and judicial temperament combined to make him the choice of the several parties, no one of which can claim a majority. The constitutional democrats have the largest membership and are the best organized. They also have the advantage of occupying the middle ground between the radicals and the conservatives. Having about one hundred and fifty members on their rolls and some thirty more acting with them, they can count upon enough votes from the more conservative elements to defeat the extreme radicals, and they can rely upon enough radical votes to carry out their program. The floor leader of this party is Vladimir D. Nabokoff of St. Petersburg, a member of a prominent family and himself until recently an instructor in the national law school. He is about thirty-eight years of age, intelligent and alert, and has the confidence of his party. The orator of the constitutional democrats is Theodore I. Rodicheff, a scholarly looking man of fifty. He is polished in manner and persuasive in speech. One of the most influential of the constitutional democrats is Mr. Maxim Winawer, a Jewish lawyer of the capital. He is sometimes described as the "brains" of the party and is credited with drafting the duma's reply to the address from the throne. He is one of the ablest civil lawyers in the empire and his election from St. Petersburg, where there are but three thousand Jewish voters out of a total vote of sixty thousand, and his elevation to the vice presidency of the national organization of his party would seem to answer the charge that there is widespread hostility to the Jews among the people.

Nabokoff, Rodicheff and Winawer are members of the duma and are, therefore, prominently before the public at this time, but in popularity they have a rival in the person of Paul I. Millukoff, editor of the "Retch." (The government would probably put a "W" before the "R" and give the word its English meaning, but in Russian the word Retch means speech.) Mr. Millukoff, it will be remembered, was one of the candidates of his party in St. Petersburg, but the government compelled the substitution of another name because he was awaiting trial for an alleged violation of the press laws. He was acquitted soon afterward and is one of the moving spirits in the present parliamentary struggle. He speaks excellent English and has lectured in the United States. No one need despair of reform in Russia while such a man as Millukoff devotes his great ability to journalism.

Next to the constitutional democrats, the members of the "group of toil" form the largest party. There are about a hundred of these, and Alexis G. Aladin is their leader. He is even younger than Nabokoff, but has already shown himself to be a man of force and originality.

Count Heyden is the leader of the conservative element, if there is a conservative element in the duma. Perhaps it would be more accurate to describe him as the spokesman for the least

radical group for all of the members of the duma are reformers, differing only as to the extent of the changes and the speed with which they shall be made. He was once considered radical, but he has not moved as rapidly as public sentiment. Count Heyden bears quite a resemblance to Uncle Sam as he is pictured in the newspapers. I have spoken somewhat at length of the leaders in order to show that while the grievances of the peasants and laborers are at the bottom of the movement, all classes are enlisted in the effort to establish constitutional government.

The afternoon sessions are generally lively, for it is at this time that the ministers make their reports, offer their measures and answer the questions propounded by the members. The session which we attended was no exception to the rule. The house was full, the galleries crowded and the newspapers fully represented. There were more than forty Russian writers in their corner and not less than fifty of the foreign press. When the representative of the war department, replying to a question concerning some recent military executions, declared that the minister of war was powerless to overrule the generals, there were shouts of "Murderer!" "Assassin!" "Dog!" and other equally uncomplimentary epithets.

One of the demands made by the duma is for the abolition of the death penalty. This might seem a very radical measure to us, but the conditions are quite different in Russia. Here there is no assurance of an impartial trial, and torture is resorted to to force an admission of guilt. Only recently three persons were found to be innocent after they had been tortured and put to death. The members of the duma feel that the only security to the people is in the entire abolition of the death penalty, for while those who are falsely accused still live, there is a chance to rescue them. In this respect exile, hateful as it is, has its advantages, and I met a member of the duma who was returned from exile by the government upon the demand of the duma. In the torturing of prisoners for the purpose of extorting a confession Russia is even behind China, bad as China is, for in the latter nation it has been abolished except where one is charged with murder and is only permitted then after the guilt of the accused has been established by other evidence.

There are a number of important measures which are very little discussed in the duma because they are certain to receive the approval of the government; one of these provides for universal education. The program of the duma also includes legislation guaranteeing freedom of speech, freedom of the press, protection for the Jews and local self-government for the Polish portion of Russia. As the women have taken an active part in the agitation for constitutional reform, all of the parties are committed to woman's suffrage.

But now the land question is paramount. About one-third of the entire amount of land in the empire is in the hands of the czar, the government and the nobility, and the peasants demand that it shall be turned over to them. At this time they are willing to have compensation made to the owners, but the more they think about it and the more vehement their demand becomes, the less they are likely to consider compensation. There is no doubt that there are enough cases of injustice and contemptuous indifference to their needs to arouse resentment among the peasants if we take human nature as we find it. They tell of instances where whole villages have been compelled to pay toll generation after generation for the privilege of crossing some nobleman's land to reach the land farmed in common by the people of the village. Powerless to condemn land for roads, as it can be done in other countries, they have grown more embittered year by year until some of them feel that patience has ceased to be a virtue. It is now intimated that the government will offer a partial distribution of land as a compromise.

The opponents of expropriation seek shelter behind the excuse that the peasants attack the principle of private ownership. While it is true that there are socialists in the duma who prefer communal holdings to private ownership, the object of the peasants is not to dispossess small holders but simply to give the peasants access to the large estates. The situation resembles, in some respects, the situation in Ireland except that in Russia the land is to be turned over to the communities. I made some inquiry regarding the question of joint ownership and learned from one of the best informed men in Russia that there is a growing sentiment in favor of individual ownership. Ownership in common does not give to

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