

The Mystery.

This is your cup—the cup assigned to you
From the beginning. Nay, my child, I
know
How much of that dark drink is your
own brew
Of fault and passion. Ages long ago—
In the deep years of yesterday—I knew.
This is your road—a painful road and
dread
I made the stones—that never give you
rest;
I set your friend in pleasant ways and
clear;
And he shall come, like you, unto my
breast;
Eat you—my weary child—must travel
here.
This is your task. It has no joy nor
grace.
But is not meant for any other hand.
And in my universe hath measured place.
Take it; I do not bid you understand;
I bid you close your eyes—to see my
face.
—McClure's Magazine.

THE KOOPYETS' FRIEND

By VIRGINIA LEILA WENTZ.

In every Russian village you will find one building that is conspicuous because of its location and its height. It is always exactly in the center of the village, and it is always two-storied. This conspicuous two-storied house belongs to the village koopyets; it is his residence and shop. The koopyets or village trader is a person of the utmost importance from the moujik's point of view.

Well, Makar Semenovich, the koopyets of the village of Poltvtsee, was no exception to the rule. He was a thrifty Ivan. The troughs outside his house, one filled with water, the other with grain, never led an idle life; they were constantly in use by the steeds of the wagoners who traveled from Warsaw to Moscow.

Among all the wagoners who passed that way, none was so gay and none so well liked by Semenovich as Ivan Dmitrievitch Aksenov. He was a handsome, fair-haired, curly-headed young fellow, full of fun and always singing.

Aksenov passed through Poltvtsee twice a month, sometimes oftener; now one day, now another, according to his loads. One morning toward the end of May he and several other customers were drinking tea with Makar Semenovich in an inner room adjoining that in which the koopyets displayed his stock. One by one the moujiks had turned down their tumblers in token that they had really had enough. One by one they had risen, shaken hands with their host and thanked him for his hospitality. Finally Semenovich and Aksenov remained alone in the room.

"Well, friend," said Semenovich, looking the young fellow straight in the eye, "I've a secret to tell thee." Then he dropped his eyes somewhat, as one abashed, and began stroking Gogol's sleek sides. "I am going to marry," he announced. "I have decided it is not good for a koopyets to live alone; he gets too hardened, he needs—"

"A woman's softening influences," supplied Aksenov, holding his sides with laughter. "By St. Michael and all the holy angels, friend!"

"It is true, nevertheless," said Semenovich softly. "And I'm going in to Moscow to fetch her next week. We are to be married on the last day of the month of Mary. She's barely 20, unappily; but then for a man past 50 I'm a pretty vigorous-looking fellow, dost not think, Aksenov?"

"That you are!" cried the young man heartily. "And I wish you joy, Makar Semenovich."

Three weeks later, when Aksenov passed through Poltvtsee again, he saw the young bride. He was in the tractor or shop, trading some pianiki and herring for some gorgeous-colored calico when a peal of merry laughter reached his ears.

"What is that?" he exclaimed boyishly, laying down the calico. For it was lovely laughter, full of music, and it rilled and rippled through the quiet room like a flock of wild pigeons.

"That!" said the koopyets. "That's my young wife. I suppose she's playing with Gogol; she's a veritable child

and matched her moist lips exactly. The other hand was stretched out seductively to the greyhound leaping round her. A crystal buckle flashed at her waist; the sunshine coming in through the open window caught the red-gold of her hair, the pink cheek, the white, moving hand.

And it was so that Aksenov and she met.

Twelve months rolled by, and life in the little village of Poltvtsee grew wearisome to Sergia-Kara. Often in her morning and evening walks she would pause and look far off, following the course of the thick-wooded country which ran toward Moscow, Moscow the Beautiful! Moscow the Glad! Moscow the Gay and Laughing! Ah, why had she ever left her dear



"Stab, Semenovich!" said he. "You have killed me, friend," cried Aksenov as he fell, pressing his hands to his breast. Then out stepped the koopyets and stabbed blindly.

"Sergia-Kara grew almost happy again when Aksenov's periodical visits came around. He could tell her all about her dear Moscow, forsooth. And so, side by side, the two who, for youth and gaiety matched each other like the candlesticks on an altar, would talk together. Often, however, they were silent, not speaking, but following the same train of thought.

"Alas! if I had known," sighed Sergia-Kara one day.

"Yes, if we had known," replied Aksenov.

From that moment, without the utterance of another word, Aksenov multiplied his trips; for to him henceforth, as to Sergia-Kara, the only happy moments were the rare moments they spent with each other.

Gossip came to Makar Semenovich, of course; but being a man free from evil thought, who respected his wife and knew Aksenov for a friend, he chose to muse over other things.

It was a holiday, one of those innumerable Russian feast days, and Semenovich had closed his tractor and gone to take a walk in the woods. His thoughts were not the pleasantest, for he was trying to shift off his mind some more of the horrid gossip which had just reached his ears that morning after mass. Some one had said that the last time Aksenov passed through the village he had been seen secretly entering a hut with Sergia-Kara. The hut referred to was an empty log house of Semenovich's, used by the koopyets for the storage of grain.

Semenovich had almost reached the hut and was regarding it with a scornful pride on his lips, when the regular tic-tac of great wheels turning on the axles announced the arrival of a cart. Why it was Aksenov himself. He was just going to step forward when the cart stopped, and from the back end a woman sprang down into the dusty road. He stood there livid behind the bushes, his heart thumping like a huge fire engine.

"Wait, Sergia-Kara, you are forgetting the key," called Aksenov, holding up something which blinded the koopyets like a flash of lightning. It was the key to his grain hut!

"Run, Sergia-Kara, some one comes!" cried Aksenov suddenly turning pale.

And Sergia-Kara having run away with Gogol at her heels, Aksenov turned with folded arms toward Semenovich. He did not see him, but divined who it was, hearing the heavy panting of a man's breath, and de-

fecting the flash of a knife's steel blade among the bushes.

"Stab, Semenovich!" said he. Then out stepped the koopyets and stabbed blindly.

"You have killed me, friend," cried Aksenov as he fell, pressing his hands to his breast.

"Semenovich, one last service!" whispered the dying man. "Hand me the knife which is behind my gaiter." The koopyets hesitated, not understanding; but when he handed it to him Aksenov frowned between his gasps of pain.

"No, no! Stain it with my blood. There—like that. Now, put it in my hand. Good. Do you see, Semenovich—it is for your sake—for the sake of Sergia-Kara—no one must suspect you—every one must believe it was I—myself—"

Then, making a last strenuous effort, Ivan Dmitrievitch Aksenov shouted to his horses to go on. They started at his voice, and it was not long before the cart came to the next village. The horses, trained by long habit, stopped at the village trader's, and the koopyets himself came out to greet Aksenov. When he caught sight of him stretched out on the floor of the wagon, a stream of blood flowing from his breast, he called to some moujiks for help.

There, grasped tight in Aksenov's hand, they found his knife with initials carved in the handle.

"They are his own initials," exclaimed the moujiks. "He has died by his own hand. Poor Aksenov—whoever would have thought it? And he the gayest of the gay!"—New York Press.

WITNESS IN A TIGHT BOX.

Magistrate's Clerk Compelled to Testify to Superior's Incompetency.

Among the most successful practitioners at the English bar is Lord Brampton, whose strong point is the cross-examination of witnesses. In this he is quick to see a point in his client's favor and to take advantage of it. Lord Brampton tells a story of how he once won a case on a technical ground when he had no defense. He forced a magistrate's clerk to be put into the witness box by the prosecution to prove a purely formal matter; now, having gotten him there, he cross-examined him and made him practically admit that he "led his magistrate by the nose," to admit also that they had refused bail by his advice, and that a judge at chambers had afterward granted it, although the witness had come up all the way from London to oppose it. Then, asked the cross-examiner:

"You were in the room, sir, and did you not hear the learned judge say there was not a rag of a case against my unhappy client?"

The prosecuting counsel objected, and it was ruled out. But the jurors had heard it, and had heard the answer stopped. The dissatisfaction thus adduced in their minds made them acquit the prisoner.

Leaving the court that day the prisoner's counsel asked his opponent: "Why did you object to that question?"

The latter indignantly protested that his adversary must have known that it could not be put.

"Yes, I did," was the answer; "but I knew you, too, and felt sure that you would object at the right time. But you should have waited for the answer, as it would have been 'No.'"

How Woman Worries.

To her inability to look at things from a practical standpoint may be attributed woman's talent for borrowing trouble. She never waits for sorrow to come to her. She goes forth to look it up and if she doesn't have any of her own she assumes that of her friends. Above all, she anticipates. If her children are well she agonizes over what she would suffer if they were ill; while her boys are in roundabouts she begins worrying over the dangers of college life; while her girls are still babies she is miserable, thinking how unkind their possible husbands may be to them. In Mr. Dixon's new novel he tells about a man who had carved over the mantel in the library this sentence: "I am old and I have had much trouble, but most of it never happened." No woman would have ever adopted that for her motto and she couldn't have lived up to it if she had. She has plenty of trouble and the troubles that never happened troubled her more than the ones that did.—Exchange.

The Golden Willow.

The golden willow bows its head
To winter's piercing blast.
Its tender leaflets are all dead,
Its summer time long past.
And yet, though skies are overcast,
Come wind or rain, come hail or snow,
It holds the sunshine of the past
Through all its branches' golden glow.
Oh, weary, storm-tossed soul! wilt thou
His glowing message heed?
Though Fate's rude storms surround thee
now,
And life seems dread indeed;
Still hope through grief or loss or pain,
Joys at thy feet were cast;
Their memories thou must yet retain,
Smile for the sunshine that is past.
—Irene Pomeroy Shields.

Prophecy Was Timely.

There is an old story of a French king's astrologer, who made a false prediction concerning the issue of a certain battle.

"You are an excellent prophet," said the king, casting a vicious glance at him; "now pray tell me how many days you think I will live?" "I shall die just three days before your majesty," answered the wily seer. His majesty took good care to keep him alive.—Youth.

Duty Free.

Tourists returning from abroad can now bring through the custom house free of duty all articles to the value of \$100, except cigars, cigarettes and liquors.

NOTHING TO BE DONE

DEMOCRATS SEE LITTLE PROSPECT FOR GETTING VOTES.

Entire Session of Congress Has Been a Republican Vote-Making Time and the Opposition is Naturally Willing to See an Early Finish.

It is said that the Democrats are as anxious as the Republicans to get an early adjournment of congress. The Republicans have been figuring on closing the session about April 30, and as they are likely to have all the big money bills of the government out of the way by that time, they can probably accomplish this without detriment to the public service. True, the date would be earlier than any previous adjournment in a presidential year for about half a century, but the work is well advanced and the leaders of the party are anxious to get home to do some preliminary campaign work.

Several reasons are responsible for the Democrats' willingness that the session should end long before the national convention time. They see that nothing which will be done in congress will give them a chance to make party capital. They supposed they could embarrass the Republicans by the Smoot inquiry. This resource has failed them. The Swayne impeachment matter has no votes for them and they know it. There is no prospect of getting any Democratic campaign material out of the statehood question. Oklahoma and the Indian Territory are favorable to union. Arizona and New Mexico will accept joint statehood, although there is some opposition in Arizona to it now.

Thus the Democrats are wise in consenting to let the Republicans have their own way about an early winding up of the business of the session. Everything that can be done in Congress from this time forward is more likely to aid the Republicans than it is to help the Democrats. In fact, the entire session has been a Republican vote-making time. Every big question that has been before Congress or that has been considered in any of its aspects, from the Panama treaty and postal investigation down, has helped the Republican party, and correspondingly impeded the Democracy. These are Republican days in any case, and as the deliberations and deeds of Congress, when they affect the conditions at all, help the Republicans, the Democratic members are right in consenting to an early finish of business. The presidential campaign is not likely to be particularly exciting in any stage, but the Republicans are ready to open it at any time.—St. Louis Globe Democrat.

Some Cheap Claptrap.

The estimate held by the gentlemen conducting the Hearst newspapers of the stock of common sense and intelligence possessed by the average American workman is evidently not a high one.

These sheets pretend to be greatly exercised over their recent "discovery" that American labor is going to be discriminated against in the matter of employing workmen for the canal, through the employment of Chinese cheap labor. "Coolies," says Mr. Hearst's hired man, in high moral indignation, "work for less than free men. But the people of the United States will have something to say about making the isthmus a slave camp."

Now the people of the United States, including the laboring classes, are not exactly fools, and are fully aware of the fact that the employment of our American white labor in the work it is proposed to hire gangs of negroes and if necessary coolies to do, would be next to a physical impossibility. White men, natives of our latitudes, could not do hard manual labor under the tropical sun and in the fever haunted swamps of Panama. It is the humane purpose of the canal commission to employ so far as possible only such laborers as are injured to the climatic conditions of the isthmus and immune from the fever peril. The Hearst talk of the government's cheating American labor of the privilege of working in the Panama swamps, and "making the isthmus a slave camp," is mere claptrap, and an affront to the intelligence of the class it is addressed to.—Milwaukee Sentinel.

Mr. Root as War Secretary.

The achievements of Mr. Root as secretary of war during the last five years are attracting attention abroad, and the London Times makes them the theme of a two-column article in which it characterizes Mr. Root as a great American reformer.

The reforms instituted by Mr. Root in the departments are curiously like those which are suggested for the British army in the recent report of Lord Escher's committee. As long ago as 1899 Secretary Root defined the problems of reorganization in language almost identical with that used by the British committee with reference to the British army five years later. In 1899 Secretary Root wrote: "Two propositions seem to me fundamental in the consideration of the subject. First, that the real object of saving an army is to provide for war.

Second, that the regular establishment in the United States will probably never be by itself the whole machine with which any war will be fought." These words coincide almost exactly with the opening paragraph of Lord Escher's committee published last month.

Secretary Root defined in 1899 the reforms which he considered essential and he devoted the remainder of his term in office with unflinching persistence and with signal success to carrying out his program, which included the formation of a war college, the admission of officers of the state national guards to the courses there and at other training schools; an increase in the number of inspectors general; the establishment of a joint board to consider army and navy questions; the passage of the militia act, which provides for the co-operation of the regular and auxiliary forces of the United States; the abolition of the office of general commanding the army, and the creation of a general staff, with a chief entrusted with the preparation and planning of war, the direction of military education and a general supervision over all the other departments of the army.

This is the program which Secretary Root marked out and achieved. Now the British government, having almost identical problems on its hands, is adopting practically the same solutions of them.

ISLE OF PINES TREATY.

Only Question is Whether Territory is Part of Cuba.

The Senate committee on foreign relations has decided to postpone action on the Cuban treaty, which provides for turning over the Isle of Pines to the Cuban government until the next session of Congress.

It appears that the opposition to the treaty, which presumably led to postponement of action upon it, came from Americans who have settled in the island and have invested money in lands and farming industries "with the understanding that the sovereignty would remain with the United States." It is reported also that the members of the Senate committee contemplate a visit to the island to see whether it would be worth anything to the United States, and whether this government would be justified in assuming sovereignty over it.

While the interests of American citizens are always to be carefully considered by our government, it is hardly to be expected that the government is to be guided in its Cuban policy by the mistaken assumptions of American settlers in the Isle of Pines. Certainly our declared policy with reference to Cuba did not warrant the "understanding" that the United States was to assume sovereignty over the smaller island.

It appears to have been definitely settled that the Isle of Pines was politically a part of Cuba under Spanish rule, and section 6 of the Platt amendment, which was adopted by the Cuban constitutional convention, as an appendix to the Cuban constitution, provided only that "the Isle of Pines shall be omitted from the proposed constitutional boundaries of Cuba, the title thereto to be left to future adjustment by treaty."

"It was to bring about this 'adjustment' that the treaty now pending in the Senate was framed, and it was in conformity with our declared policy respecting Cuba that the treaty proposed a cession of the island to the Cuban government. The question to be determined by the Senate committee, therefore, would seem to be, not is the island worth anything to the United States, or what are the interests of American investors there, but was the island a part of Cuba, and would its retention be consistent with our declared Cuban policy?—Chicago Record-Herald.

More Canal Legislation Needed.

Work on the Panama canal will not begin before Congress reassembles in December, but the matter of sanitation should be taken in hand forthwith and somebody should be vested with authority to attend to it.

A bill has been reported to the senate which may be defective in details, but which is based on the correct principle. It makes the canal commissioners the governors of the canal strip. This is a proper centralization of power while the canal is under construction. It does away with the possibility of that friction which might arise if there were two sets of officers exercising functions in the same limited territory. There are on the commission two men of decided executive ability—Admiral Walker and Gen. Davis. The latter was military governor of Porto Rico.

The civil engineers on the commission should be quite willing to devote themselves to canal problems and leave questions of government to their more experienced associates.

The commissioners are on their way to Panama to look over the ground and study the situation thoroughly. The grant of authority to regulate police and other matters in the canal zone ought to follow them speedily.—Chicago Tribune.

Growth of American Exports.

In 1845, the earliest year for which exact figures are obtainable, our exports were valued at \$106,040,111 and our imports were \$113,184,322. Our exports passed the \$200,000,000 mark in 1853, the \$300,000,000 in 1860 and did not exceed \$400,000,000 until 1871. During all the years from 1845 to 1876 our imports exceeded our exports in value excepting four. Since then our exports have exceeded our imports every year except in 1888 and 1889. We now frequently export goods of as much value in a single month as were exported in the year 1845.

DECREE OF TALMUDIC LAW.

Wives of Jewish Soldiers All Given Conditional Divorce.

According to the Jewish World, a very touching editorial appeared in a recent issue of the Hebrew Daily Hazeferah of Warsaw, Poland, where the editor, Mr. Sorolow, calls attention to the Talmudic law which requires every married man before going on the battlefield to grant a conditional divorce to his wife, that she may remarry if he does not return within a reasonable time after the end of the war.

The rabbis of Lodz have caused all the Jewish soldiers that left that city for the seat of war to grant such divorces, and Editor Sorolow suggests that the example of Lodz should be copied all over Russia.

Every married soldier, volunteer or reserve, registers with a rabbi his name, address, age, height, birthmarks, name of company and regiment he joins, and the rabbi keeps a record of same until the soldier returns from the war.

If a reasonable time after the close of the war elapses and the soldier does not return, he is counted among the lost and unidentified dead, and his wife obtains the divorce from that rabbi granting her the right to remarry.

WHEN LIQUORS WERE CHEAP.

Philadelphia Sighs at the Thought of Good Old Times.

"I seldom drink liquor myself," said an elderly man, who was in a reminiscent mood, "but when I consider the prices charged for drinks to-day compared with the prices asked in my youth, I can only wonder at the change that has taken place. Long before the Germantown railroad was built my father used to keep a tavern at the corner of Ninth and Green streets. It was near the old hay market, and in those days the locality was really a suburb. In looking through some of his papers the other day I came across some old documents, among which were several receipts from John Hoffman in 1826. Rye whisky was billed at 33 cents a gallon, applejack at 35, and Jamaica rum at 37½. Another bill shows a cherry brandy charged at 36 cents a gallon, and French brandy, presumably cognac, at \$1. If we could buy the same brandy to-day at \$10 a gallon I guess we'd be lucky. And imagine buying good rye whisky for 33 cents a gallon! Why, it almost drives me to drink just to think of it."—Philadelphia Record.

Radium to Illuminate Gun Sights.

The discovery of the latest use to which radium can be put—the illumination of gun sights, and the like at night time—seems to indicate that it will play an important part in warfare.

In gun sights, leveling instruments and telescopes there is what is called a "fiducial" mark, which is used to obtain a faithful result.

These marks of course are useless in the dark, and though many ways of illuminating them have been tried, nothing has proved satisfactory.

Mr. Andrew A. Common of Eatonrise Falls, was the first to attempt to solve the difficulty by the use of radium, and his experiments were so successful that he applied for a patent. Unfortunately, he did not live to have it granted, but the complete specifications submitted by Mrs. Common, his widow and executrix, have just been accepted.—London Daily Mail.

When I Am Gone.

When I shall fold my hands in lasting sleep,
All done the tasks to me assigned,
I wonder, will there be someone to weep,
Or will the world seem not to mind,
When I am gone?

When I have passed away, will someone say,
As near my new-made grave, he wanders by,
"Stern Death comes to us all, to each his day,
And then pass coldly on without a sigh,
When I am gone?"

When I have ceased my work, will there be none
To place a rose upon my tomb,
And speak a word of praise for some deed done,
Some kind word said, and mourn my doom,
When I am gone?
—Thomas Curtis Clark.

Mal de Mer.

Seth Low, who is in Rome, narrated recently to an American, a good instance of the vicissitudes of sea travel in rough winter weather.

"When you cross the ocean December or January," said Mr. Low, "you are apt to be awakened in the middle of the night by the plaintive crying of a child in the next stateroom voice: 'Mamma! mamma! my dinner won't stay swallowed.'"

Odd Consulates.

Jacques Lehandy, "Emperor of Sahara," who is now in Brussels with his "court," is establishing consular agencies in northern Europe. In a little Norwegian town called Fredriksvalen hangs a consular shield in front of a barber's shop, bearing the words: "Agence du Consulat de l'Empire de Sahara."

The Retvisan.

That Russian stranded battleship Retvisan, which has figured so prominently in the news from Port Arthur, is called after a Swedish battleship of sixty-four guns which was captured by the Russians at the battle of Wiborg in 1790. The word Retvisan means "justice."

Want New Grain Road.

The Manitoba grain growers' convention, held at Winnipeg recently, passed a resolution recommending the immediate construction of a rail way to Hudson Bay as a highway of commerce to and from the Canadian Northwest.



"That you are!" cried the young man, heartily.

for joy, and so beautiful! But you must see for yourself." Semenovich led the way to the inner room.

"Sergia-Kara," he called tenderly, Aksenov followed him, and there, beside the tea-table, they both waited for a second. Then the curtains swung back.

In one hand Sergia-Kara held a mass of June roses, which showed a ripe crimson against her blue dress,