

THE RUSSIFICATION OF FINLAND.

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The Russification of Finland is progressing with disastrous effects, according to the St. Petersburg correspondent of the Independence Belge. So far it has been next to impossible to secure accurate information concerning the troubles which occurred at Helsingfors and Viborg, on account of the close scrutiny of the censorship. In fact the Russian papers, among them the *Novoe Vremya*, the *Novosti*, and the *Gazette of St. Petersburg*, state editorially, "that the government of St. Petersburg has not only been kept in absolute ignorance of the real state of affairs, but has actually been deceived" by the reports of Gen. Bobrikoff, asserting the "Finnish people had accepted the new military law with entire satisfaction." "It is through such mendacious reports," says the *Novosti*, "that the Russian authorities have been deceived concerning the true situation of the country which they govern against the wishes and against the interest of the people."

The *Gazette of Finland*, semi-official organ of the government, is the only available source of information from which the correspondent of the Independence Belge in St. Petersburg could gather an account of the last revolutionary outbreak in Finland, and, as might be expected, this account is "highly colored for the benefit of the Russian authorities, while the true state of affairs is shown in a more dramatic light in private letters sent from Helsingfors to St. Petersburg." The government being under the impression that the application of the new military law, which provides for the oath of allegiance to Russia, would hasten the Russification of Poland, ordered the recruiting to proceed. At Helsingfors 857 men were called for, and 57 only answered; riots occurred, and the Cossacks were compelled to charge the populace, which threatened to burn the barracks. Without the intervention of Mr. Mourén, the Lutheran pastor who addressed the rioters, the loss of life would have proved very large, as the First regiment of Finnish sharpshooters was ready to fire, when he interfered and begged the officers to allow him to speak. This incident started the revolutionary movement, which spread all over the duchy with lightning rapidity. Martial law is expected at any moment. The Russian government then issued an "imperial re-

script," notifying the Finns that "disobedience to the military law would be a convincing proof of the insufficiency of the administrative system inaugurated last century to guarantee the peaceful conduct of public affairs and submission to the authorities."

The Finns consider this "rescript" as a practical proclamation of martial law, inasmuch as many "communes" (districts) have refused to obey the existing law. The governors have imposed very heavy fines on those "communes." Hammerford paid 35,000 marks, Helsingfors 30,000, and six other cities from 15,000 to 20,000 marks. These fines greatly exasperated the people. In some places the boards of medical examiners refused to assist in a system of recruiting which they consider unlawful. As usual, the Cossacks were on hand to handle the refractory recruits. At Viborg 150 young men were called by the military authorities; 32 only came. At Nikarleby a single man presented himself; he was crippled. Besides, not a single recruit would take the oath. The measures of repression were in keeping with Russian methods. At Helsingfors the Cossacks rode into the Protestant church, chasing everybody. They broke also into private houses, flogging the inhabitants, sparing neither women nor children. Convalescents were whipped in the hospitals, and a school teacher who attempted to protect a young girl was beaten to insensibility by an officer. The opposition to the military law is universal. According to the "official" reports published in the *Gazette of Finland*, those who took part in the riots almost exclusively belong to the best classes of society. So far the opposition has been so successful that the period of enlistment has been extended to the end of June.

Commenting editorially upon these events, the Independence Belge says: "The Finns will not be brought to terms by the Cossacks; any kind of brutal action will do nothing but exasperate this prudent and wise nation, which would never have rebelled openly, but which protests against the illegal acts already committed with a dignity and self-respect worthy of the greatest praise. The government at St. Petersburg could formerly rely on the loyalty of the Finn; through its stupidity it has made of them a rebellious people, the resistance of which will prove unconquerable. What reliance can Russia place on the Finnish recruits, incorporated by force? It is good policy to supply internal enemies with weapons, while organizing

an army against the outsiders?" In the opinion of the same paper, if the government at St. Petersburg persists in its "unfortunate policy" in the grand duchy of Finland, the only result will be to give a large impulse to Finnish emigration. At the present time 1,000 Finns leave their country each week, and if this state of affairs keeps up, Finland will be deserted in a very short time.

THE LABOR PROBLEM A RELIGIOUS ONE.

The Rev. Herbert S. Bigelow, pastor of the Vine Street Congregational Church, in Cincinnati, and Democratic candidate for Secretary of State of Ohio, in the Cincinnati Post of September 1.

The greatest religious problem of the age is the labor problem, and through a new conception of what religion means I believe the labor problem will be solved. Strikes will not solve the problem. Even to-day the strike is employed, not so much because strikers have faith in it, as because they do not see any better means of enforcing their demands. When men have learned what can be done with the ballot they will turn to it as the sure road, and the only road to emancipation.

There is no real cause for quarrel between labor and capital, and there never was any. There certainly is, though, a bitter conflict at hand; the conflict has already begun. But look beneath the surface and you will see that this conflict is not between labor on the one hand and capital on the other, but between labor and capital both on the one hand and monopoly on the other.

By monopoly we mean a special privilege secured by unjust legislation, the practical effect of which is to give some men an unfair advantage over others. Take, for instance, the late Rogers law. Having secured the exclusive privilege of the use of the streets of Cincinnati for a certain purpose, the Consolidated Street Railway company believed it would be able to demand a five-cent fare of its passengers for the next 50 years, and it capitalized that prospect, and has declared dividends on a capital stock of \$20,000,000, where the actual capital invested is probably not one-fifth of that amount.

The monopoly which enables the street railroad company to demand a five-cent fare for service which it could well afford for three cents is based on a special privilege; that

special privilege is the exclusive use of the streets for all street railroad purposes under a franchise that authorizes a five-cent fare; and the law that conferred that special privilege was an unjust law, for it conferred upon the street railroad company an unfair advantage over its patrons.

The only way any monopoly can be destroyed is the way the monopoly of the streets of Cincinnati was destroyed; namely, by repealing the law upon which that monopoly is based. It will be a great day for labor when the masses clearly see this point; that their real enemy is Privilege, created by law. Then they will use their votes, and not to express class hatred nor to threaten property rights, nor to try revolutionary experiments, but to repeal by conservative steps the laws out of which manifold monopolies have grown. Thus they will throw open to competition opportunities and enterprises that have been monopolized. This is the only salvation of labor; it is the only salvation of capital. Such a programme no man can intelligently oppose, unless he is a holder of some monopoly privilege. And upon the high moral ground that the welfare of the individual cannot conflict with the welfare of society, the monopolist himself ought to see that it would be for his interest also if he were shorn of his privileges.

Another striking example of the unfair advantages enjoyed by the street railway monopolies is the exemption from their fair share of taxation which the law allows them. The laws of Ohio, as interpreted by the courts, forbid the taxation of the franchise value of these corporations. And so it comes about that we see the owners of street railway franchises drawing dividends on \$20,000,000 while paying taxes on less than \$3,000.00. As a general proposition, it is safe to say that the average street railway is capitalized for five times its actual cost. Yet it is obliged to pay taxes only on one-fifth of its actual value.

Now note how different it is with other forms of property. Take real estate values in Cincinnati. Here is an example: A private dwelling in one of the best sections of the city was sold for \$13,000 nine years ago.

The other day it was sold again for \$5,000. This depreciation was not due to any change in the character of the neighborhood. There were several causes for it, but the chief cause was the fact that the property had been outrageously taxed. Nine years ago, when it was sold for \$13,000, it was list-

ed on the tax duplicate for \$7,000. The other day, when it was sold for \$5,000, it was on the tax duplicate for \$5,800. That is, private property is taxed at 116 per cent. of its actual value, while the street railroad is taxed on a valuation of \$2,800,000, or 14 per cent of its actual value.

The distribution of the burden of taxation is a problem most important for labor to consider and solve.

To adjust the burdens of taxation so that monopoly shall bear more of them, and shall be discouraged; so that labor and capital shall bear less of them and labor shall no longer be robbed and investment of capital shall no longer be checked by unnecessary and unjust taxation, and so that the opportunities for employment, which are under the control of monopoly, shall be thrown open to enterprise, is to encourage labor and capital alike and make friends of them, as they ought to be. For, on the one hand, it will increase the demand for labor and advance wages, and, on the other hand, while it will infallibly diminish the dividends of monopoly on watered stock, it will insure larger and steadier returns to honest capital.

This subject may not be an inviting one for the orator, but the statesmanship of the future will be turned toward the overthrow of monopoly, to lighten the burdens of industry and to establish equality of opportunity between man and man.

WHAT IS PRIVATE PROPERTY?

A letter from the Rev. Charles F. Dole, of Jamaica Plain, Mass., to the Boston Herald of October 9.

The discussion which is now going on in regard to the situation in the anthracite coal region raises the very practical question: "What justly constitutes private property?" Many indications make it probable that society is being irresistibly urged to undertake a new definition of this term. We have an obvious historical precedent in favor of the likelihood, as well as the righteousness, of a more restricted definition of private property than we have hitherto been accustomed to make. It is a short period since political power, offices and titles were commonly regarded as the property of individuals—lords and princes. A sovereign could give or sell a dukedom; his oldest son, however unfit to rule, was regarded as having the right to succeed his father in his titles, revenues and crown lands. We, in America, have

altered and limited this meaning of property. Even the senatorial claim of a right to dispose of the patronage of a state rests upon what is styled "courtesy." We have become so accustomed to our narrower definition of property that we hardly reflect how destructive it once seemed and still seems in the eyes of a hereditary nobility. We ought to be ready to ask further questions as to what property justly is.

Everyone agrees that what a man actually makes or earns, or what represents his toil, or skill, or service, is his rightful property. If Mr. Carnegie or Mr. Morgan has benefited mankind to the extent of his present fortune, so far no one grudges him a dollar of its value. If out of this grand fortune he chooses to give \$100,000 to a friend or relative, we make no complaint. The gift may be foolish. This depends upon how the friend uses it. The gift of \$10,000 a year may pauperize the man or woman who lives an idle life as fatally as alms given at the street corner. We are disposed, however, to let a great benefactor have his way with his gifts, at least as long as he lives.

How long now, after a great benefactor of mankind has died, ought society to suffer his "dead hand" to rest upon it? Forever? We give no such lease of life to the most useful patents and copyrights. Suppose the millionaire "founds a family," as in the case of the Astors and Vanderbilts. An income of even \$40,000 a year represents the entire labor of a force of 60 average men. Is it not an enormous extension and exaggeration of the definition of property that a man may claim the right for his heirs through successive generations to appropriate to themselves this vast share of the product of labor? Is this equitable? Is it not rather a wholly artificial arrangement? Why shall we not some time look upon the claim to the hereditary holding of an industrial dukedom, as we all now look upon the claims of an arrogant medieval prince?

This view becomes clearer when we begin to ask how far the rich man's acquisitions (in the case of Mr. Morgan, for example) really represent toil or skill or useful service. Would he dare himself to urge that he deserved all his millions? Must he not see that anomalous industrial conditions, and often peculiar laws, and possibly peculiar financial transac-