

PRESS OPINIONS

THE RUSSIAN DOUMA.

The Manchester Guardian (Lib.), May 12.—The opening of the Douma on Thursday is a historic event, not because institutions are of themselves pregnant, but because they testify to the power and the wealth of the force which has called them into being. There have been Russians who have loved liberty better than life, but until now we were lacking in proof that liberty was more than the inspiration of a few. The opening of the first free assembly that Russia has ever known is a sign that the long agony of a nation is becoming conscious and articulate, that it is passing from the patience of suffering to the realization of fruitful discontent. How far the process of awakening has gone it is difficult to record. The greeting which the people of St. Petersburg gave to the members of the Douma goes to convince us that in the towns, where the fellowship of men is closer, as their suffering is keener, the desire for freedom has a reality apart from the desire for relief, but we do not yet know how intense and sustained it may be. And beyond the towns dwells the vaster mass of peasants, whose minds are as remote from us as their homes. The cause of freedom rests with them.—(Mar. 17) The language of the Address leaves little room for doubt that the members of the Douma desire not only to resume the lands of the crown and the monasteries, but to resume them without compensation. The resistance of the regular clergy is certain; nor is it unlikely that the owners of private estates will oppose a scheme which strikes a blow at their territorial influence and may reduce their wealth. The cold silence in which the Douma listened to an appeal for generous compensation is significant. Nevertheless the Douma will not have to face a united Church or a united gentry. In Russia, as in most countries, the hostility between regular and secular clergy is intense, and the Douma will probably gather to it the parish priests, who count for most, while the Constitutional Democrats ought to carry with them the majority of the landed proprietors. The real peril before the Douma is of disappointing its natural friends rather than of rousing its natural enemies. Already some members have criticized the Address as too moderate, and have expressed a doubt whether its proposals are adequate to solve the land question. But if the peasants can complain that they are offered not enough, the artisan gets nothing from the State except the right to do what he can for himself. The social question in Russia, as elsewhere, will be the crux of the Revolution.

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INDIVIDUALISM AND SOCIALISM.

Johnstown (Pa.) Democrat (Dem.), May 22.—The late Thomas G. Shearman was right when he predicted fifteen years ago that this country would have to face the issue of socialism. . . . Mr. Shearman anticipated just what is now seen to be developing. He foresaw with a perfectly clear vision the reign of economic disorder of which recent graft exposures in insurance, railroad, banking and other circles have been a reminder; and he ventured the prophecy that there would grow up a tremendous reaction against the existing system as a result of which socialism would take on a new importance and become a serious threat against the very foundations of democratic society. . . . Mr. Shearman, however, did not feel alarmed by the prospect of a great socialist uprising. Indeed, he was disposed to welcome it—not because he had any sympathy with socialism, but because he believed that such an uprising would excite a revival of the democratic spirit and compel the believers in individualism to take a new grip on their faith. He pointed out that it has been in a denial of individualism that the social woes which socialism proposes to remove have obtained. Individualism has not failed; it has simply not been tried; it has not been given a chance. It has been girt about by tariffs, by privileges, by restricted opportunity and by undemocratic limitations on free government until it has possessed only the forms of democracy without the substance; and it thus unjustly bears a burden of blame which rightly should rest upon quite other shoulders.

IN CONGRESS

This report is an abstract of the Congressional Record, the official report of Congressional proceedings. It includes all matters of general interest, and closes with the last issue of the Record at hand upon going to press. Page references are to the pages of Vol. 40 of that publication.

Washington, May 22-26.

Senate.

The railroad rate bill having passed the Senate on the 18th (p. 7292) by 71 to 3, the legislative appropriation bill was taken up on the 21st (p. 7347) and passed (p. 7360); and on the 22d the bill to regulate immigration was considered (p. 7430). After further consideration on the 23d (p. 7497) it was passed (p. 7514). The bill to exempt denatured alcohol from internal revenue taxation was considered (p. 7534) and passed (p. 7539) on the 24th; after which consideration of the agricultural appropriation bill was resumed (p. 7539) and passed (p. 7551). The agricultural appropriation bill being considered (p. 7578) on the 25th, was passed on the same day (p. 7597); and after passing the bill to regulate Philippine coinage (p. 7601-2) the Senate adjourned to the 28th.

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House.

Miscellaneous business was done on the 21st and on the 22d the diplomatic and consular appropriation bill was taken up (p. 7461). Its consideration was continued on the 23d and the 24th (p. 7554). A conference on the railroad rate bill was ordered on the 25th (p. 7604), and on the 26th the consular appropriation bill was further considered (p. 7656).

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Record Notes.

Text of bill to exempt alcohol used in the arts from internal revenue taxation (p. 7600). Speech of Representative Dalsell on revision of the tariff (p. 7648). Senator Newland's speech on regulation of railroad rates (p. 7523).

**RELATED THINGS
CONTRIBUTIONS AND REPRINT**

RECIPROCITY.

For The Public.

With the May blossoms, cheery and bold,
Came the oriole's song to his mate;
And he sang to her early and late
The one theme that can never grow old;
While after-notes too eager to wait,
All regardless of measure and date,
Were at any odd season outrolled,
When she thought his whole story was told.

Serene in her gold-hued gown sat she,
With no sign of assent or demur
To the rhapsodies showered upon her
By the flamelet aloft in the tree,
That her love was awake and astir
With his jubilant music and whirl,
Sife could trust such a wooer to see.
"Nothing sweeter than silence," sang he.

D. H. INGHAM.

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SAN FRANCISCO'S GREAT OPPORTUNITY.

A Letter in the London Speaker of April 28, 1906, Signed by T. R. Bridgwaters.

May I, through the columns of The Speaker, voice an appeal to the citizens of San Francisco before they build upon the ashes of their disasters, to con-

sider the enfranchisement of their new city, by some system of state municipalization?

Having visited this city more than once and being familiar with every part of it, these great disasters during the past week seem to have created the opportunity to put into effect, even if only to some partial extent, the main great idea which was so eloquently advocated by one who lived in that great city—Henry George—and who wrote there in that city his famous book thirty years ago, "Progress and Poverty."

The glorious site of San Francisco, visited by Sir Francis Drake, and many years later named and founded as a mission station by the Spanish monks of the Order of St. Francis, owes its greatness to-day to no one man, or to men, but to its unrivaled natural position, one of the finest harbors in the world, and almost the only one for thousands of miles along the Pacific Coast from Vancouver to Valparaiso. The city of San Francisco, built on seven miles of sand waste, surrounded on three sides, east, north and west, by sea, extends from the great bay of San Francisco on the east for about five miles across to the full Pacific Ocean on the west. All the most valuable property is on the bay front, with its docks and landing stages, and diminishes in value as the five miles or so are traversed towards the Pacific; the last three miles are little more than half unbuilt on sand wastes, ending in complete sand wastes along the Pacific shore. All that is not built on is mapped out for that purpose, and has therefore some fictitious value. The abnormally valuable land lies on some eight square miles out of about thirty square miles, ready to receive a far greater city in course of years. The wealthy land owners possess, therefore, but a small fraction of the whole, and the majority of owners are what is known as "land poor," waiting for the development of sites.

Would it not be an act of great recklessness with this remaining twenty-two square miles almost unbuilt on to rebuild the city of to-morrow upon the comparatively small site of the ruined city of yesterday? Should not the new city, with the warnings of the past week, be built in quite a different way, in sections, to withstand earthquakes, and surrounded by garden spaces, across which no flames can be carried by the ever-blowing winds of the Pacific, which so much cause the always beautiful climate of San Francisco? Vienna of to-day, and many German cities, illustrate this style of building with open spaces. This new way of rebuilding San Francisco could not be done except by some great system of municipalization, or land enfranchisement, a system which will add to the glory of a great city, and which must yet become even a greater city, uniting as it does now the eastern world with the western world.

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AN EARTHQUAKE EXPERIENCE.

A Portion of a Letter Written to Mrs. Marie Howland, of Fairhope, Ala., by Mr. Ng Poon Chew, Editor of the Chinese Daily Paper of San Francisco.

It is impossible to relate fully what we have passed through in the earthquake and fire which have almost destroyed the whole city of San Francisco.

At 5:13 o'clock in the morning of the 18th ult. I

was rudely awakened by the shock of the earthquake. Immediately I was thrown from my bed onto the floor. The house, it seemed to me, almost tipped over on its side. I tried hard to get up on my feet, but was unable to do so while the earth trembled so violently. It seemed hours long, although it lasted only half a minute. The noise was simply fearful. Our bookcases fell upon the floor one after another. Every glass globe was also thrown down and broken. One heavy bookcase fell in front of our children's bed, and came near killing or injuring them. They were half scared to death.

But our little baby, the three and a half year old Caroline, who was sleeping in another bed with her mother, in my room, sat up on her bed. Seeing me sitting on the floor, she pointed her little finger at me, crying out and laughing, saying, "Look at papa! He is a baby sitting on the floor!" She thought it was a funny sight to see me on the floor.

When the shake ceased, we all ran out to the street, only half dressed. The street was already full of people, some dressed, some half dressed, and some only in their night gowns. The women and children were crying and the men fearful. The front walls of many houses in our neighborhood fell upon the street, and all chimneys were thrown down. Some injured and dying were here and there. The atmosphere was filled with dust of falling chimneys and buildings, which caused the early morning light to be very peculiar and extraordinary, thereby increasing the apprehension of the people. Few dared to return to their homes, on account of the frequent shaking of Mother Earth during the whole day, with more or less violence.

Soon we noticed fire in different parts of the city, and we were startled to know that the water mains were broken by the quake, hence no water to put out the fires. Still we did not realize that the city was doomed. But in the afternoon of the 18th we were confronted with the cold realization of our danger. It was then too late to save anything except what we could carry in our hands. No street cars, no teams or any other vehicles could be had for love or money. So we ran for our lives, for the fire threatened to cut off our retreat in the rear, our only way to safety. So we led our five children along as fast as we could walk.

We slept in the open air, on the public highway, on the night of the 18th; and after trodding along the whole day of the 19th, covering many miles, we were picked up near the shore of the Golden Gate and conveyed to Berkeley, where we are now, staying with friends.

We lost practically everything we ever possessed on earth. Our whole newspaper plant went up in smoke, including every volume of my large library of 2,600 volumes, and all my household effects.

We are to-day just as innocent of earthly possessions as a new born babe. But we are thankful it is not worse. We might have been killed or injured, as so many of our less fortunate fellow beings were killed or injured.

With good health, strong arms, brave heart, and faith in the future we will begin life again. God has taken care of us in the past and He will provide for us in the future. Yours very truly,

NG POON CHEW.