

Budget, but we are not willing to pay that price for nothing."

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### The New Finnish Parliament.

When the last Finnish parliament was dissolved in November (vol. xii, p. 1139), elections were called for February 1, with an assembling of the new parliament on March 1. The dispatches report of the results of the elections that a clear majority is shown for the Agrarian and Socialist parties, while the Old Finns lost six seats, precluding any compromise with the Russian Imperial government. Finland is now face to face with her fate. The menacing attitude of the Russian government has not relaxed (vol. xii, p. 1211; vol. xiii, p. 15), and it was reported on the 19th that the Finnish question was to come up at a series of councils in St. Petersburg on the following week, when the matter would be finally dealt with. In the meantime, since, in spite of menace this parliament is evidently more radical than the last, it is interesting to read observations of the last parliament, furnished to the London Daily News by George Renwick. The Literary Digest thus condenses and quotes Mr. Renwick:

This Diet was remarkable for more than one reason. It was "perhaps the most democratic Parliament ever elected," was chosen by the "system of proportional representation, in which one quarter of the entire population exercised the franchise, both sexes having votes, and one-eighth of its members were women." This Parliament, with its two hundred members, each of whom was paid a salary amounting to about fifteen shillings a day, held its sessions at Helsingfors, the capital of Finland. Here Mr. Renwick was privileged to see it at work "and to make the acquaintance of a number of its members." He tells us: "The first thing which struck me on visiting the Diet, when I was courteously permitted to remain on the floor of the House and go about among the members, was its strikingly democratic appearance. There was a complete absence of ceremony, of pomp; there were no uniforms, no regalia; it might have been a workpeople's political meeting. I do not believe there was one frock coat in the whole assembly; it was a body of hard-working, clear-brained men and women. The President, a fine, stalwart, jovial Finn, Mr. P. E. Svinhufvud, took his seat just as the chairman of a political gathering would do in this country. The roll was called, and for some minutes the sonorous 'On' ('I am') of the Finns and the 'Ja' of the Swedes resounded throughout the hall. Then the President read the order of the day in Finnish and Swedish, and the Diet settled down to work.

"Speeches were permitted both in the Finnish and Swedish languages, and official translations were provided for those who were only acquainted with one of them. If a member rose in his place his remarks were limited by a two-minute rule; if he or she desired to exceed that limit it was necessary to speak from a rostrum beside the President's desk. There was no 'catching the Speaker's eye.' Members rose before the debate commenced or at opportune mo-

ments during it, and gave notice to the President that they wished to speak on the subject under discussion, the members being called upon in the order in which the President had received their names.

"Undemonstrativeness is a northern characteristic, but it seemed to be intensified in the Diet, behind which was the sinister figure of Mr. Stolypin, whose iron hand settles the fate of measures and Parliaments. There was an air of sullen determination in word and in deed; a note of pathetic pessimism in everything. Here was a nation at work under the oncoming shadow of Europe's most crushing despotism.

"'We are working for our Fatherland,' said one legislator to me, gravely, 'with the only weapons left to us—our pens and our tongues—in the hope that Russia and Europe may read and listen. Our speakers do not want to make people cheer; we want to make them think.'

"And they are thinkers all. A sturdy peasant from beyond the Ulea River came up to me and asked me to make clear to him a knotty point in the British Budget! Afterward I joined a little band of women members discussing the question of women's suffrage in England. Militant methods found no advocate among them.

"It is interesting to know that opinion in Finland is unanimously in favor of the woman M. P. No one has a word to say against her; all, in fact, are loud in her praises.

"'She does not belong to the talking party!' said a member of the Diet to me with just a suspicion of a smile. No, they are earnest and determined workers. When visiting the Diet, a stranger from the West is naturally interested in the woman M. P. As I entered the House for the first time a mere girl, dressed—and not too well dressed—as a domestic servant would be in this country, entered the hall. Clear-featured, with the light hair and blue eyes of the Northland, a chin which denoted determination, she was, I learned, a member for a northern constituency. Following her came a buxom dame, a Mrs. Ala-Kulju, a peasant's wife, such as one would meet by the score carrying loads in the market place. But in knowledge, in determination, in speech and in patriotism, she was the embodiment of a sturdy peasant life, without which a nation can not live, and well fitted to help in ruling and guiding a nation."

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### The Franchise Struggle in Prussia.

The riots in many Prussian cities on the 13th (p. 160) over the inadequacy of the Prussian electoral reform bill, were followed by serious fighting at Frankfort on the 17th, with between 200 and 300 wounded. The question of the Prussian franchise has penetrated to the Reichstag (the Imperial Parliament) where on the 19th the Socialists demanded explanations of derogatory remarks on popular suffrage, and laid the blame for the rioting in the Prussian cities upon the police. Deputy Lebebour is reported to have declared:

The Socialists will continue making demonstrations in the streets, and, perhaps, will use stronger methods. We will bring it to pass that the Prussian people obtain universal suffrage against the opposi-