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Edited by C. Harold Perrott, B.A.
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TO THE READER.

RECENT political events have brought the subject of Finland and its constitution into world-wide prominence.

It is therefore felt desirable to issue an organ for the purpose of keeping the public informed on matters of general interest relating to the Finnish nation.

The Editor has arranged that articles shall be contributed by writers whose special knowledge enables them to afford trustworthy information.

The Journal will be issued from time to time as occasion may demand.

The first number contains:

1. Historical Introduction.
2. The Constitution of Finland.
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4. The Monsther Address to the Tsar.
5. The Deputation of the Five Hundred and the Tsar's Reply.
6. The First Application of the Edict.
7. The Work of Russian Secret Agents in Finland.

C. H. P.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

FINLAND occupies in more senses than one an exceptional position among the European nations. In the first place, geographically, Finland is the most northern country that can boast a social state which, whilst forming part of the common treasury of civilization of the world at large, has at the same time developed a form of culture adapted to her people, even while those people were being moulded according to the ideas embodied in it. These ideas being derived from the West, and principally from the Scandinavian peninsula, Finland constitutes the Eastern outpost of Western culture, as opposed to that form of civilization which is now in a process of fermentation in vast Russia and of which the results yet lie hidden in the future. Apart from this, there is not to be found elsewhere a country with so harsh a climate, with a soil so sterile, with a history embracing so many hardships, and yet with a people standing firm under conditions which would have caused most races, less hardened, to succumb to the task allotted to them by Providence. Considering, therefore, all that the Finnish people have hitherto undergone, the hope still remains that the recent ruthless attacks upon the national integrity of Finland—the most formidable that have ever occurred in the history of this much-tried people—will prove futile, and that the cause of justice and humanity will eventually triumph.

We purpose here to give a brief sketch of the historical incidents which have contributed to the development of the Finnish national characteristics.

By way of preface let it be said that the inhabitants of Finland have from time immemorial always enjoyed to the full that individual liberty which is such an essential feature in the Scandinavian social structure, and which has rendered the people strong to resist ill-fortune. It should be borne in mind that Christianity was introduced into Finland by the Swedes, who undertook several crusades with this object in the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and which crusades resulted in the conquest of

the country. The social organization of the native inhabitants being still very primitive, the country received the laws and institutions of the conquerors together with their religion. However passive the condition of the conquered might be at first, it was not long in changing. In the middle of the fourteenth century the Finnish provinces were granted the same active rights, concerning legislation and the election of kings, as the Swedish provinces. Any political distinction between Swedes and Finlanders was abolished. Finland was thenceforward an integral part of the kingdom of Sweden, possessing the same constitution, the same civil laws, the same financial system, as other parts of the kingdom, and sharing alike the triumphs and disasters of the Swedes.

Owing to the geographical situation of Finland, it acted as a shield against the repeated attacks by Russia upon Sweden, and there are many periods in the history of Finland when for twenty or thirty years war raged in the country, which was devastated to the utmost state of destitution. Also outside the country Finland largely contributed to the military glory of the common fatherland, and during the Thirty Years' War the contingent of Finnish soldiers amounted to two-fifths of Gustavus Adolphus's army, although the population of Finland was only one-fourth of that of Sweden.

The great majority of the population of Finland were not of the same race as their Western neighbours. The distinction, however, does not seem to have been an obstacle to the growth of a political solidarity between the two parts of the kingdom, and the existence of Swedish colonies on the west coast of Finland contributed much to the completion of this cohesion. The racial distinction, however, still remained. The Finns retained their language, which the Swedish government did not even attempt to suppress, and the cultivation of which was much advanced, after the Reformation, by the translation of the Bible into the Finnish tongue, and through the zeal of the Lutheran clergy with regard to popular education. The material interests of the inhabitants of the country, Finns and Swedes alike, were



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not always identical with those of Sweden, and the defence of Finland was practically left to native troops; the geographical situation of the land made its provinces a distinct group, collectively styled, even in official documents, since the end of the sixteenth century, "Grand-Duchy of Finland." Here, then, was the germ of a national independent existence; but the people did not wake to the consciousness of this while their intimate association with Sweden lasted.

The founding, on the Neva, of the new capital of the Russian Empire by Peter the Great, was the starting-point of the policy pursued by the Russian rulers, with regard to Finland, for a whole century. Vanquished in the great northern war, which terminated in the peace of Nystad in 1721, and again in the campaign of 1741-1743, Sweden was obliged to cede to Russia a part of Finland, the province of Viborg.

In 1808 Finland was invaded by Alexander I., whose policy was to force Gustavus IV. to adhere to the continental blockade, as well as to complete the conquest of the country. When, in February, the Russian forces crossed the frontier, they were met by scarcely any resistance. In a few weeks they had advanced south-westwards to Åbo, and north-westwards far into Osterbotten, for Klingspor, the Commander-in-Chief of the Swedo-Finnish army, constantly gave orders to retreat. But in April the defensive forces at last assumed the offensive. Under the command of Adlercreutz, von Döbeln, Sandels, and others, they gained various victories, compelling their assailants to retire. Having received reinforcements, however, the Russian army, which was commanded by most astute generals, gained the upper hand. On the 3rd of May, the powerful fortress of Sveaborg capitulated, and the issue of the war seemed decided. Before the end of the year the Swedish and Finnish troops were obliged to evacuate the country, and to cross the Torneå river into Sweden.

At the beginning of the war the Emperor Alexander I. had announced his intention of conquering the whole of the Swedish part of Finland, and from the manifesto issued to the Russian people in 1808, as also from a despatch to foreign powers shortly before, it is clear that by that time the Emperor had decided upon the incorporation

of Finland with Russia, as the outcome of the conquest. But during the course of the war this plan was much modified. The resistance of the Finns and their loyalty to Sweden did not fail to create a strong impression on the Tsar. His former demands for the complete surrender of the Finnish people proving futile, he issued a new manifesto in June, 1808, in which he declared that the ancient laws of the country would be inevitably maintained. Then an order went forth for the election of deputies for the four Estates, who were to give information as to the condition of the country and to express their opinion regarding the best means of alleviating its heavy burdens. This command gave rise to doubt and hesitation throughout the land, and was in many districts disobeyed, the principal cause being that, according to the laws of the country, which the conqueror had solemnly undertaken to maintain, deputies thus elected would not possess the power of expressing the wishes and wants of the people. This reluctance to proceed to election was also, no doubt, due in some measure to the fact that the war was still being carried on with varying success, and that the conqueror could not therefore be regarded as the rightful sovereign of the country. In answer to these hesitations a new Russian proclamation was issued to the effect that "this was no question of convoking a Diet, but of sending a deputation most humbly to advise His Imperial Majesty of what, in the present position of the country, might be of benefit and promotion to its welfare." After this, and discerning no hope of support from the Swedish government, members were duly elected, and the deputation proceeded to St. Petersburg. The spokesman of the deputation, Baron Carl Erik Mannerheim, handed over to Alexander I., on December 1st, 1808, a memorandum pointing out that the deputies, not having been elected in the usual way, as directed by the fundamental laws, had no authority to enter into such negotiations as the Estates only were entitled to deal with; the deputation, therefore, requested the Emperor to summon the Diet. This representation gained the approval of the Emperor, and the deputation soon received the communication that His Majesty had decided that "a general Diet should be held as soon as circumstances would allow."

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BY a decree published on January 20th [February 1st], 1809, the Estates of Finland were summoned to assemble on March 22nd, in the town of Borgo, at a General Diet, conformably with the laws and regulations.

The Emperor was present at the opening of the Diet, and signed, on March 15th [27th], the very day of his arrival at Borgo, the following declaration to the inhabitants of Finland:

"Providence having placed Us in possession of the Grand-Duchy of Finland, We have desired, by the present act, to confirm and ratify the Religion and fundamental Laws of the Land, as well as the privileges and rights, which each class in the said Grand-Duchy, in particular, and all the inhabitants in general, be their position high or low, have hitherto enjoyed according to the Constitution. We promise to maintain all these benefits and laws firm and unshaken in their full force."

Two days later, at a solemn audience held in the cathedral, the Emperor received the homage of the Estates as Grand-Duke of Finland. The Estates took the oath of fealty to the new Sovereign, and affirmed, at the same time, the inviolability of the Constitution; the Emperor's declaration was read aloud, the document was delivered into the custody of the Marshal of the House of Nobles; after which a herald of noble birth stood before the throne and proclaimed: "Vive Alexandre I., Empereur de toutes les Russies et Grand-Duc de Finlande!"

The ceremony concluded with a speech by the Emperor, in the French language, bearing witness to the sentiments with which he had received the homage and oath of the country's representatives, and testifying that it was an *act of union* that had just been effected.

The Emperor came once more to Borgo for the closing of the Diet, which took place on the 6th [18th] of July in the same year. The following is an extract from his speech on this occasion:

"In assembling the Estates of Finland in a General Diet, I desired to ascertain the wishes and sentiments of the nation touching its true interests. Carry into the distant parts of your provinces, impress on the minds of your compatriots, the same confidence which has presided over your deliberations here. Inspire them with the same assurance concerning the most important objects of your political existence, the maintenance of your laws, the security of your persons, and the inviolability of your rights of property."

"This brave and loyal people will be grateful to that Providence which has brought about the present state of affairs. *Plaud from*

this time forward in the rank of nations, governed by its own laws, it will only call to mind its former rulers in order to cultivate friendly relations when these shall have been re-established by peace.

"And I, I shall have reaped the best result for my solicitude when I see this nation, externally tranquil, internally free, devoting itself to agriculture and industry under the protection of its laws and of its good customs and manners, and thus, by the very fact of its prosperity, doing justice to my intentions, and blessing its lot."

In the Peace Treaty between Sweden and Russia, dated the 5th [17th] of September, 1809, and ratified in St. Petersburg on the 1st [13th] of October, the union of Finland with the Russian empire is looked upon as a *fait accompli*; its future political position is referred to only in Article 6 of this treaty, and in the following terms:

"Since His Majesty the Emperor of Russia already has given the most positive proofs of the justice and clemency with which His Majesty has resolved to rule over the inhabitants of the country He has lately acquired, He having nobly, spontaneously, and of his own free will assured to them free exercise of their religion, of their rights of property and privileges; His Majesty the King of Sweden finds Himself liberated from the duty, otherwise sacred to Him, of making conditions hereon in favour of His former subjects."

The union thus established has been clearly defined by the Emperor, not only in the above-mentioned speeches, but also on other occasions, for example, in the edict of the 15th [27th] of March, 1810, concerning the militia, and from which we quote the introduction:

"His Imperial Majesty's Gracious Manifesto."

"From the moment that, through the Will of Providence, Finland's destiny was entrusted to Us, it has been Our aim to rule that Land in conformity with the *liberties of the Nation and the rights assured to it by its Constitution.*

"All the steps we have hitherto taken, with regard to the internal administration of the Country, are simply in consequence of and in addition to that fundamental idea. The maintenance of the Religion and the Laws, the summoning of the Estates to a General Diet, the formation of a State Council in the Nation's midst, and the inviolability of the judicial and administrative authority, afford sufficient proofs to assure the *Finnish Nation of its political existence and the rights appertaining thereto.*"

It is evident, too, that the Emperor not only settled his own mode of action with reference to the government of Finland, but also bound that of his successors, as appears from a passage in an edict issued in 1816:

"It is thus We have wished both to disclose the maxims that have been and henceforth will be Our guides with regard to Our Finnish

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subjects, and also for all *perpetuity* to confirm the assurance granted to them by Us as regards the maintenance of their separate constitution during Our reign and the reigns of Our successors."

The Diet was not convoked again by Alexander I., nor did it assemble during the reign of the Emperor Nicholas I. According to the fundamental laws of Finland the fixing of the time for the convocation of the Diet depended entirely on the will of the Sovereign, and it was natural enough that a prince who, more than any of his contemporaries, looked upon the maintenance of the principle of absolute monarchy as the chief object of his policy, should wish to avoid availing himself, in one of his own states, of the co-operation of representatives of the people. But the Constitution of Finland was not generally set aside during this period of government. The Grand-Duchy was governed, as required by its fundamental laws, separately, by the side of the Empire. The work of the administration did not become the expression of the arbitrary will of the public functionaries, contrary to the Constitution, but the country continued to be governed according to the laws. The co-operation of the Diet, however, being indispensable for all business connected with loans and taxes, the prolonged suspension of the legislative machinery necessarily impeded the development of the country, and shortly after the accession to the throne of Alexander II. the convocation of the Diet was loudly called for by patriotic voices. The Emperor hesitated at first to summon the Finnish Estates, and, instead of the Diet, "a Committee of representatives of the four Orders of Finland" was directed by an edict of 1861 to meet in Helsingfors. This edict gave birth to bitter disappointment, as such a committee was a form of representation unknown to the fundamental laws and therefore lacked the authority which belonged to the Estates. When the Tsar's attention was drawn to this fact, he, without hesitation, agreed to correct the measure he had taken. On this occasion he must have realized that an opposition which does no more than demand respect for valid laws is friendly rather than hostile to a governing power based on sound principles. On the 18th of June, 1863, an Imperial decree was issued convoking the Estates of Finland in a General Diet

in Helsingfors on September 15th of the same year. This decree was received with universal enthusiasm by the Finnish people. Beautifully decorated for the occasion, and in holiday attire, the capital of Finland welcomed Alexander II., the Protector and Restorer of the Constitution, when he arrived there to open the Finnish Diet in person. The Emperor and Grand-Duke made a speech, which is chronicled in the annals of Finland as one of the landmarks of its modern history. The long and painful suspense of by-gone days was dispelled, and the way was prepared for constitutional development and useful progress under the confident co-operation of the Sovereign and the nation.

The liberal-minded Emperor did not fail to recognize the importance of this co-operation. In 1869 a law was promulgated, after having been approved by the Estates in the session of 1867, to the effect that henceforth the convocation of the Diet should be periodical. The Estates, it was prescribed, should assemble at least every fifth year. The intervals, however, were soon found to be too long. Since 1882 the Diet has been summoned every third year.

This régime, with regular sessions of the Diet, has resulted in an extraordinary progress in various directions. Even Finland's antagonists in Russia have not had the temerity to deny this, although they would willingly shut their eyes to its real cause. It is true that the system of government, or "parliamentary scheme" of Finland, is somewhat antiquated. In accordance with the old Swedish precedent the Finnish Diet consists of four Estates: the Nobles, the Clergy, the Burgesses, and the Peasantry, and these together represent the Finnish people. The four chambers work simultaneously, and each of them possesses the same authority. In case of a constitutional reform, that is, of a bill which is to bring about a revision or modification of the fundamental laws, the assent of all the four Orders is necessary, whilst in most other legislative matters a resolution agreed to by three of the Orders is valid as the decision of the Diet. Yet it must not be supposed that such a division of the representatives into different orders is an indication of pronounced distinctions of class and rank. The refreshing breezes that blew over

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the land during the reform period of the sixties completely destroyed whatever was left of a tendency towards recognizing an aristocracy. This levelling of the difference of class and rank has not resulted in Finland, as it might have, and indeed has, in certain other countries. The number of large fortunes is comparatively small; on the other hand, utter destitution is unknown. The soil of Finland for the most part belongs to independent peasants, who thus till their own acres. The social and economic conditions in Finland are in this respect entirely different from those prevailing in the Baltic Provinces; hence any comparison between the Swedish-speaking population of Finland and the German landlords in those provinces is ridiculous. The various classes of the Finnish people are bound together by an indissoluble bond, and a strong national spirit pervades them as a whole. It is a pre-eminently democratic nation, among whose people distinction and success in life depend chiefly upon personal ability. No class of society is excluded from admission into the higher educational establishments, the fees of which are very low; hence a considerable percentage of their pupils consists of sons and daughters of peasants, artisans, and lower burghers of the towns. There is no parish, even in the remotest part of Finland, which has not one or more national schools. In the Lutheran communities of the country the number of children who do not possess a certain amount of book-knowledge is exceedingly small, whereas in those few communities in the east, where the doctrines of the Greco-Russian Church prevail, nearly one-half of the children from seven to sixteen years of age are lacking any kind of education. It is doubtful whether in any other country the upper classes voluntarily devote so much of their time to the education of the people as in Finland. In latter years there have been provided, by private subscription, several "People's High Schools," while University Extension Courses are held every year.

Ever since 1863, when Alexander II. summoned the first Finnish Diet that had been convoked for fifty-four years, the era of public enterprise in Finland has been a many-sided and fruitful period of reform. Thanks to the fact that the Swedish law of 1734, which, after 1809, continued in force in Fin-

land, is one of the most perfect and salutary codes ever produced, at any time, in any country, the cessation of legislative activity for more than fifty years did not result in such fatal consequences as must have otherwise been the case. The chief reform in this department is a new criminal code, drawn up according to modern principles. The position of women, and the laws touching thereon, have both been considerably improved, and attempts have been made in various legislative departments to realize the idea of woman's equal rights with man. It is a significant fact that in the University of Helsingfors, which possesses about two thousand students, the number of the women is between two and three hundred. Important internal government reforms have been brought about through new laws on communistic administration in the country, and in towns, where the principle of self-government has been successfully applied. In 1864, the last of the many years during which the regulation of the finances lacked the co-operation of the Diet, the State expenditure amounted to about eighteen million Finnish marks, whereas at present it amounts to about fifty-five millions. This rapid growth of expenditure during a period of reform might have seemed alarming, had not the State revenue increased in proportion without any burdensome measures of taxation. The greatest relative increase of expenditure has been in the cause of schools, commercial industry, navigation, and, above all, railways. These things, so important for the intellectual and material development of the country, could never have been so generously fostered and brought to their present high level, had not the financial condition of the country undergone a radical change, and its wealth increased considerably. With regard to this, and taking one branch of trade alone as an example, it may be worth mentioning here, that whilst the average amount of butter exported between 1871 and 1875 was some 4,600 tons yearly, in 1896 it had increased to 12,800 tons.

The reforms which gave Finland the advantage of a regulated monetary system have been of the greatest benefit to the country. According to the Money Law of 1877, a metal coinage, based on the gold standard, is the only lawful money—the "mark," the mone-

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tary unit, being fixed at the same weight of pure gold as is current in France.

There are vast stretches of workable land in Finland still waiting for the plough and the hoe, while a considerable outlay both of money and labour are yet required to bring the already cultivated ground into a perfect state of culture. Many improvements in

various departments, too, remain necessary—new walls to be raised, as it were, upon the old and solid foundation. But, as a recent writer upon the subject has said, the Finlanders know, by sad experience, that the most promising crop may fall through one night's frost.

The night of frost has come.

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IN July, 1898—just a month before the Tsar's Peace Rescript appeared—summonses were issued for an Extraordinary Diet to be held in January, 1899. This Diet was to give its opinion upon a new army bill, drawn up by the Russian government. In October the bill was sent to the Senate, or Executive Council of Finland, and on January 12th the Extraordinary Diet assembled at Helsingfors.

The military system in Finland has, since 1881, been based on the principle of conscription. The Finnish army, as other institutions of the Grand-Duchy, is of a strictly national character, and used only for the defence of the country. The standing army is limited to a number of 5,600 men. To reach this amount, out of the annual contingent of about 8,000 young men of the proper age for conscription (twenty-one years) and fit for military service, some 1,920 are annually, after balloting, placed under the colours, where they serve for three years, on the lapse of which time they are transferred to the reserve, where they remain for two years, and ultimately stand in the militia until they have completed their fortieth year. The rest are at once placed in the reserve for five years, and undergo in the first three years military training not exceeding ninety days altogether.

The main features of the new Army Bill are as follows:

Placing Finnish troops outside the Grand-Duchy;

The right for Russians to serve in the Finnish army, which shall be subordinate to Russian authorities;

The right for Russians residing in Finland to do their military service in the Finnish army, whilst, *vice versa*,

Finnish subjects would be enrolled with Russian troops;

Alleviations on the ground of higher educational standard to be granted only to those who can speak, read, and write Russian (hitherto students at the University and other high schools serve only one year);

Increasing the time of service under the colours from three to five years, and in the reserve from two additional years to thirteen;

Raising the annual contingent of soldiers in active service from 1,920 to 7,200.

The immense increase in the number of Finnish soldiers for which this bill provides will be more fully pointed out in an article below ("The First Application of the Tsar's Edict"), where also the late amendments to the bill will be commented upon.

While the bill was still in committee, and had not yet been subject to any deliberation in the Estates, the Tsar issued on February 15th the following Edict:

"We, Nicholas II., by the grace of God Emperor and Autocrat of all the Russias, Tsar of Poland, Grand-Duke of Finland, etc., etc., do hereby proclaim to all Our faithful subjects that: The Grand-Duchy of Finland, which, since the beginning of the present century, has been included in the Russian Empire, possesses, by the gracious consent of Tsar Alexander I., of blessed memory, and of His August Heirs, special institutions with respect to interior administration and legislation, which are suited to the conditions of life in that country.

"But besides the local legislative matters in Finland, emanating from the peculiar conditions of society in that country, there also arise in the administration of the Empire other legislative questions in regard to Finland, which, on account of their intimate connection with the general interests of the Empire, cannot be exclusively treated and decided by the institutions of the Grand-Duchy. In regard to the manner in which

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such questions are to be decided, the laws now in force do not contain any definite stipulations, and the lack of such has brought about serious difficulties.

"In order to remedy these difficulties, We have, constantly bearing in mind the welfare of all Our faithful subjects without respect to persons, seen fit, for the perfection of ordinances now in force and for the observance of the respective institutions in the Empire and the Grand-Duchy, to establish a fixed and unchangeable order for their work in elaborating and issuing laws of a general interest or importance to the Empire.

"Whilst maintaining in full force the now prevailing statutes which concern the promulgation of local laws touching exclusively the internal affairs of Finland, We have found it necessary to reserve to Ourselves the ultimate decision as to which laws come within the scope of the general legislation of the Empire.

"With this in view, We have with Our Royal Hand established and confirmed the Fundamental statutes for the working out, revision, and promulgation of laws issued for the Empire, including the Grand-Duchy of Finland, which are proclaimed simultaneously herewith.

"In conformity with Our Crowned Forefathers, We see a pledge for the advancement of Finland in the most intimate union of this country with the Empire. Under the protection of Russian rule, and rendered strong thereby, Finland has, during nearly a whole century, constantly and steadily progressed in peaceful development, and it has been a source of happiness to Us to see by the lately delivered assurances of the Estates that the feeling of devotion for Us and Russia is ardent in the hearts of the Finnish people.

"We feel assured that a co-operation between the institutions in the Empire and the Grand-Duchy of Finland in the legislative matters which concern their common interests, if founded on fixed precepts in positive law, will tend to a still more effectual protection of the welfare and advantages of the Russian Empire.

"Issued in St. Petersburg this third day of February, year eighteen hundred and ninety-nine A.D. and in the fifth year of Our Reign.

"The Order is signed by His Imperial Majesty: "NICHOLAS."

This Manifesto was accompanied by the following:

"Fundamental Statutes for the working out, revision, and promulgation of laws issued for the Empire, including the Grand-Duchy of Finland.

"1. The original working out of laws issued for the Empire, including the Grand-Duchy of Finland, is to take place, each time with the gracious Imperial consent, in cases where the general course of administration necessitates the working out of a new law or the alteration or supplementing of a law already in force.

"2. This order is observed both with respect to the laws which are applicable throughout the whole Empire, including the Grand-Duchy of Finland, and with respect to the laws which are applied only within the limits of the Grand-Duchy, in case they touch the common interests of the Empire or are connected with the legislation of the Empire.

"3. Application for gracious Imperial consent in regard to the execution of the aforesaid laws (§§ 1 and 2) shall be made by the duly authorized and appointed Minister of the Empire and the Minister-Secretary of State for the Grand-Duchy of Finland, after having mutually communicated with each other. When the Governor-General of Finland, with respect to the course of the administration of the Grand-Duchy, finds it necessary to supplement the laws in force in the country, in the order fixed and established by these Statutes, he has a right, in order to effect their further treatment, to communicate his proposals on the subject to the proper Minister of the Empire and the Minister-Secretary of State for the Grand-Duchy.

"4. After the gracious Imperial consent has been obtained for the issuing of a law or laws for the Empire, including the Grand-Duchy of Finland, the Minister of the Empire shall communicate with the Governor-General of Finland, the Minister-Secretary of State for the Grand-Duchy of Finland, and the Imperial Senate of Finland, in order to get their opinion in regard to the wording of the proposed law.

"5. With respect to the legislative proposals, which in accordance with the ordinance for the interior administration of the Grand-Duchy of Finland, are handed over to be treated by the Diet of Finland, it is necessary to have the opinion of the Diet in making the laws mentioned in § 2 of these Statutes. The opinion of the Diet shall be given at its nearest following ordinary session, unless there should be a gracious Imperial command for convening an extraordinary session for this purpose.

"6. After the opinion of the Governor-General of Finland, of the Minister-Secretary of State for the Grand-Duchy of Finland, and of the Imperial Senate of Finland, and, in proper cases (see § 5), of the Diet of Finland, have been ascertained, the Minister of the Empire hands over the legislative proposal to the Imperial Council in the form and manner ordained by the Statutes for the Imperial Council. The documents on this subject must be accompanied by a copy of the opinion of the Senate and Diet.

"7. This legislative proposal is examined on common principles under the co-operation of the Governor-General of Finland, the Minister-Secretary of State for the Grand-Duchy of Finland, as well as the Senators in the Imperial Senate of Finland, who, after gracious Imperial election, have been especially appointed for this purpose.

"8. The gracious decision of the Imperial Council in regard to said legislative proposal shall be promulgated in the duty ordained form and manner both in the Empire and in the Grand-Duchy of Finland.

"President of the Imperial Council,

(Signed) "MICHAEL."

On the original His Imperial Majesty has signed with His own Royal Hand:

"SO MAY IT BE."

According to these documents, then, such questions of legislation in Finland as will be, by the Tsar, deemed to have a bearing on the interests of the Empire, are to be decided upon by the Russian Council of State, after communication with Finnish authori-

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ties, and the Finnish Diet, which hitherto has exercised a truly legislative power, will, in such matters, only be authorized to give its opinion.

The form in which the Edict and the "Fundamental Statutes" have been issued is not consistent with the Constitution of Finland, since they have appeared without the knowledge and the consent of the Estates. And as for its import, the Tsar's declaration simply amounts to a Coup d'Etat.

The Fundamental Laws of Finland, solemnly confirmed by Alexander I. and all his successors, including the present Tsar, prescribe that the Sovereign shall not make a new law without the knowledge and the consent of the Diet, or abolish an old law, "and furthermore, that Fundamental Laws can be made, altered, explained, or abolished only on the proposition of the Emperor and Grand-Duke, and with the consent of all the Estates."

The oath of Nicholas II. runs as follows:

"As We, through the will of Providence, have come into hereditary possession of the Grand-Duchy of Finland. We have hereby desired to confirm and ratify the Religion, the Fundamental Laws, the rights and privileges of every class in the said Grand-Duchy, in particular, and all its inhabitants, high as low, in general, which they according to the Constitution of this country have enjoyed; promising to preserve the same steadfastly and in their full force.

"Livadia, this 6th of November, 1894.

(Signed) "NICHOLAS."

The Tsar's Coup d'Etat on the very eve of his Peace Conference had taken the world by surprise. Now, however, it seems more than probable that there is a connection between the Peace Rescript and the Edict of February 15th, both forming parts of one and the same scheme. Mr. Sidney Low writes in the May number of "The Nineteenth Century":

"This Finland outrage is distinctly a military, as well as an administrative measure. The virtual suppression of the Diet is necessary in order that the Finns may become not merely Russians, but also, and particularly, Russian soldiers. The first application of the Manifesto of the 15th of February was decreed about the beginning of April. It was announced, on the advice of the War Minister, General Kuropatkin, that the new Army Bill must be regarded as 'concerning the interests of the Empire,' and consequently that the Finnish Assembly would have no right of rejecting or modifying it. Thus, the considerable increase of the Russian army which is contemplated by this Bill will, from the Russian point of view, be arranged before the close of the Congress which was intended by

the Tsar to put a stop to further armament. If the Manifesto of the 15th of February had not been applied to this particular Bill the question could not have been decided in time, for the Constitution of Finland for a law of this kind distinctly requires the consent of the Diet, and the Russian Government had every reason to believe that the Diet would not give its consent. The destruction of the national liberties, and the sacrifice of the local institutions of the Finns, must be consummated in hot haste, in order that these poor peasants may be caught in the military net, just too soon to be protected by any international agreement against increasing existing military establishments. Such is the wedding-garment in which holy Russia arrays herself to prepare for the bridal feast of Peace to which she is good enough to invite her rivals among the nations!"

To this may be added that the "poor peasants" of Finland—the Finlanders, by the way, are not all peasants nor poor—are on an average much more prosperous than the Russian moujiks. "Finland," as the "National Review" observes, "is the only accessible military reservoir which has not yet been exhausted."

The full consequences of the Coup d'Etat are as yet difficult to foresee. Although its first aim evidently was to deprive the Diet of the power of decisively rejecting, or altering the army proposal, there are those who still hope that the Tsar, by taking into further consideration the real import of his Edict, will abstain from carrying it into execution. If, on the other hand, the army "reform" is to be forced upon the nation against its will, it seems probable that the Finns will in their own way contribute to the realization of their Sovereign's expressed wish "to see the triumph of the grand idea of universal peace over the elements of trouble and discord." Already the prospect of being dragged out of their native country to serve for five years in Russia has caused an influx of emigrants to another continent, where they will retain the political freedom to which they are accustomed. And it would not be surprising if, in spite of all Imperial decrees, the Tsar's army were not increased by a single Finlander.

As the Edict leaves to the Tsar's own discretion which laws shall be deemed to have a bearing on the interests of the Empire, nearly all legislative matters of any importance may be decided upon without the consent of the Diet. Thus the ecclesiastical and educational institutions may be put under Russian authorities, the Greek Church

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may be declared to be the ruling one, whilst the Lutheran faith will become a more or less tolerated sect. Under the Russian sway schools would be abolished, in harmony with the Russian abhorrence for popular education; the University russified, and share the sad fate of that in Dorpat; Russian officials allowed to serve in the Finnish administration, and the system of Russian bureaucracy with all its evils developed in Finland; construction of new railway lines decided by Russian authorities; new taxes imposed without the consent of the people; the Finnish currency replaced

by the Russian, to the detriment of industry, commerce, and agriculture; and punishment by "administrative order" without trial, including the deportation of the most intelligent and liberal-minded elements of the people, introduced into the country. Respect for law and justice will become a thing of the past. Under such a régime Finland will be ruined, both morally and materially, and the northernmost spot in the world where Western civilization has so signally triumphed over the extreme obstacles of a barren soil, will be transformed into a wilderness.



THE MONSTER ADDRESS TO THE TSAR

IT was on the 14th February last that General Bobrikoff returned from St. Petersburg with the Tsar's Manifesto in his pocket, and on the following day the first knowledge of its existence leaked out. The Governor-General had received instructions from his master, the Minister of War, to push the matter through *per fas et nefas*, and therefore he made an early attempt to have the document published and promulgated over the head of the Senate. He sent for the vice-president of that body, and ordered him to publish the Manifesto forthwith in the official paper. What the exact reply of the vice-president was is not actually known, but the fact remains that the editor of the paper in question handed in his resignation rather than be party to a breach of the law, which the publication of such a document without the knowledge of the Senate would have amounted to.

The fact of such a manifesto having been issued became generally known on the 16th, a Thursday, and the people learnt, too, that the members of the Senate were deliberating whether to promulgate it then and there, or first to send a deputation to the Tsar to protest against the illegal and unconstitutional nature of the measure. The mere knowledge that reasons *pro et contra* were being brought forward by Finnish senators caused an intense excitement in the capital, and this excitement grew apace as the Senate's deliberations were continued throughout Friday without any decision being

arrived at. On Saturday the 18th, whilst the Senate was in session, the streets became more and more densely thronged with people burning with anxiety to learn the result of the vote that all knew was to be taken. At two o'clock the voting took place, and a few minutes later fully ten thousand citizens had heard that the promulgation had been decided on, and that the voting was ten to ten, the vice-president then having given his casting vote in favour of the promulgation. Simultaneously it became known that intimidation had played an important part in this decision. The Governor-General had succeeded in convincing the Senate that he had orders to dissolve that body and declare a "state of siege" should promulgation be refused. Naturally this was accepted as the truth. General Bobrikoff had been too short a time in the country for the people to realize what sort of man they had to deal with. His insolent invention was accepted as genuine, and rather than subject their country to the horrors of a "state of siege," as carried out by Russian officials, ten of the senators sacrificed their own reputations and voted for the utterly illegal promulgation of the Manifesto, although fully conscious of the fact that their action would never be forgotten nor forgiven by their countrymen.

The people were at first stupefied by the decision of the Senate. No one seemed to know what to think or what to do. But by the next day, Sunday, various plans of action were being

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suggested and discussed. From the provinces came telegraphic and telephonic messages inquiring what was intended to be done by those at headquarters. On Monday many anxious inquiries and letters eliciting information poured in from all parts, and that evening a crowded meeting of citizens was held in Helsingfors, and a resolution was unanimously adopted that a mass-protest in the form of an address from the whole people be sent to the Tsar, urging him to revoke the Manifesto. A committee of twelve was chosen to organize the movement, and was given plenary powers for acting.

It might seem an almost impossible task for those twelve citizens, entrusted as they were with the organization of a petition to be signed in every parish of an extensive country—a country possessing scanty means of communication—in the midst of a severe winter, and with only fourteen days at their disposal. But they did not fail, for their labour was rendered comparatively light by the enthusiastic aid extended to them on every side. At their first meeting the members received the news that in St. Petersburg arrangements were being made for a visit by the Tsar and Tsarina to the Riviera in the near future. The news came through a usually reliable channel. The committee had already decided that the mass-address should be sent to St. Petersburg by a monster deputation, consisting of one delegate from each of Finland's five hundred parishes. The news from St. Petersburg resulted only in a supplemental resolution, namely, that the monster deputation be sent down through all Europe to the Riviera should the necessity arise. The question of funds for such a journey was solved with equal ease and confidence in the general spirit of sacrifice. Three of the members of the committee were requested to invite subscriptions to a fund for covering all expenses. Twenty hours later the committee met again and received the report of the three, who were able to announce that a sum of half a million marks had already been guaranteed—twice the possible expense of the deputation's journey.¹

¹ A few days later everything was arranged with Cook's Agency for the transportation of the five hundred delegates from a German port to Nice and back, but as the Tsar's plans for this journey came to naught, these arrangements were futile.

The same spirit of co-operation was met with in all parts.

For obvious reasons the committee did not see fit to make use of the telegraphic system, which in Finland is in the hands of the Russian government, nor of the mails, which were suspected of being tampered with by inferior officials. All information in regard to the undertaking was therefore to be conveyed solely by word of mouth, and for this purpose about one hundred emissaries were needed. At the first hint of such requirement three hundred men in different walks of life offered their services. Work on the address was meanwhile being pushed forward with all possible speed. Two hundred young men and women toiled day and night in relays, getting out copies of the address and of an introductory speech to be read at the meetings in all of Finland's parishes on Sunday, the 5th of March.

The messengers having the longest distance to cover left Helsingfors on Friday night, the 24th of February. By Monday morning all had started, and everywhere they met with the same reception. The moment the news reached them the peasants on their own account set forth in all directions to carry the information to outlying farms and villages. Nothing but a word was needed. Everyone in the country was ready and willing to do his utmost. The nation herself will appeal to the Tsar! was the message that flew over the land, and awakened hope on all sides.

On the 5th of March meetings were held everywhere, in cities, in villages, and in country districts. Where no sufficiently large halls were available, the churches were thrown open, and men and women crowded eagerly to the tables where the copies of the address were waiting to be signed. The literate only were allowed to become signatories, and in many cases the strictness with which this rule was applied gave rise to most touching incidents. In one village an old man of seventy, a foreman of labourers on an estate, came to his master and begged that he might be taught to write his name. "It is too hard a punishment for the idleness of my youth that I am not to take part in my country's protest against injustice," argued the old peasant, with big tears trickling down his wrinkled cheeks, and it was only after an hour's hard work that he was con-

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soled by being able to write his name in more or less legible characters. Others, upon learning that signatures could be received during three more days, sought the parish school-teachers, and came back inordinately proud when, by dint of hard work and unflagging perseverance, they also were able to become signatories. In a certain instance the owner of a farm in the heart of the wilderness learned from one of his hired men, who had happened to pass through the "church village" on the Sunday in question, what was being done. It was too far for all of the people on the farm to undertake a journey to the church, doubtful as it was whether they would arrive in time. But the owner of the farm was not disconcerted by this. He sat down and wrote to the Tsar himself, requesting him "please to respect the Finnish laws, and recall the measure he had taken to destroy them." Then he signed the paper, and after him the members of his family signed it, as well as his servants and labourers. This being done, he sent a man with his best horse to hunt up the delegate chosen to represent his parish, in order to hand the paper to him. The delegate was found, the quaintly-touching addition to the mass-address arrived at Helsingfors in due time and was joined to the rest. Would that the Tsar had seen it and heard its story!

The northernmost parish to be visited by an emissary was Rovaniemi, within the polar circle. There all roads end, no other means of communication are available in winter than snow-shoes, but the people are more than proficient in that sport. The committee at Helsingfors considered it impossible to get the address forwarded further northward, but the Rovaniemi people thought differently. When they learnt that their northern neighbours were to be excluded from participation in the mass-protest against the wrong inflicted on their country, the peasants decided to take the matter into their own hands. A volunteer was needed to carry word further north, and the best runner of the district came forward. He had a little more than a hundred miles to cover, mostly through uninhabited wilds, in order to reach the "church-village" of the "neighbouring" parish of Kittilä, and he had only twenty-four hours at most in which to cover the

distance. But eighteen hours sufficed him. He ran all day and all night over frozen swamps and through trackless forests, reaching his goal by the noon of the following day, and delivering his message to the few inhabitants of the village. They in turn sent out snow-shoe runners in all directions, and towards evening seventy men had come in, although most of them had traversed many miles at utmost speed in order to be in time. They held a meeting, put their names to a copy of the address, chose a delegate, and despatched him the very same evening on his road to Helsingfors. He in his turn ran a distance of more than a hundred miles with the precious paper for his only luggage. He arrived the next day at a place whence he could continue by horse, and travelled some 150 miles more by sleigh to the nearest railway station, reaching Helsingfors by the same train as the bulk of the other delegates.

In spite of all this Finland's Governor-General has had the unparalleled audacity to declare that the mass-address was the work of a handful of agitators in the capital!

In Helsingfors the collecting of signatures was undertaken by some forty ladies of position and influence. As there was no intention to let the scheme come to the knowledge of the Governor-General prematurely, no meetings could be held in the capital. Therefore the city was divided into forty districts, each of which was taken charge of by one of these ladies, who called as many young people as she thought necessary to her help, and on March 5th started a house-to-house canvassing campaign, with the result that in the capital alone 34,000 signatures were appended to the petition.

East and west of Helsingfors stretches an archipelago a dozen miles out to sea. The furthest islands are inhabited by fisherfolk who in winter are cut off from all communication with the rest of the world, but they were not to be left out of the movement. Young men in Helsingfors skilled at snow-shoeing formed a "flying column," and covered the pathless ice-fields, running from island to island, from rock to rock, with the message, and brought back more than a thousand signatures of men and women only too glad for this chance of sharing in the protest.

It is simply impossible in so brief a

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space to enumerate all the incidents worthy of note in the "address movement." The few mentioned, however, should put beyond the pale of calumny and falsehood the fact that the whole Finnish people, young and old, high and low, rich and poor, were heart and soul in the movement. If further proof is needed, it is surely sufficient to state that in less than ten days the address to the Tsar was signed by 523,931 adult Finnish men and women

from all walks of life, from every part of the country, from the southernmost islands in the Baltic Sea to the dreary wilderness more than a hundred miles beyond the polar circle. A more strikingly spontaneous, a more grandly unanimous exhibition of public spirit, of love of independence, of dogged will to oppose all infringement of law and right, no nation has ever before given, or indeed is ever likely to give again.



THE DEPUTATION OF FIVE HUNDRED AND THE TSAR'S REPLY

MONDAY, the 13th of March, the anniversary of the death of Alexander II., "Finland's Benefactor," had been fixed as the last day for the delegates from the various parishes to arrive in Helsingfors, and by the evening of that day all were assembled—some of them having journeyed many hundreds of miles. By nightfall on the 17th the tremendous task of sorting and numbering the documents, of counting the signatures and classifying the huge mass of papers, was duly accomplished by the hundreds of young men and women who had volunteered to work in relays, night and day, from Saturday evening, when the first lists came to hand, till Tuesday night, when the last were bound up and sent off.

On Wednesday morning the members of the deputation agreed that they should go *en masse* to St. Petersburg. A few days previously the students of the St. Petersburg University had attempted to protest against the police interference to which they had been subjected, and had been knouted into submission by Cossacks and gendarmes—had been arrested and thrown into prison because they had dared to speak out like free men. All this was known at Helsingfors, and many cautious voices were raised, warning the delegates not to proceed to the Russian capital. The monster address had been despatched to St. Petersburg on Tuesday night in charge of a small number of the delegates. Many people hoped that the rest would refrain from going, and did everything towards persuading them to adopt their view. But the members of the deputation

were not to be brought to this way of thinking. One man, who essayed to utter something to this effect at their meeting on Wednesday morning, was met with such a thundering volley of "Down, down!" that no one else ventured again to bring up the suggestion.

On Wednesday morning the deputation left the capital on its eastward journey by a special train of more than usual length. The hour of its departure had been kept a secret, but the news leaked out somehow, and the station platforms were thronged with many hundreds of people, eager to see the five hundred off, and to wish them "God-speed." There was no cheering, however, and no demonstration took place. When the long line of carriages, slowly at first, but with increasing speed, glided out into the darkness, the crowd became still, and it was as though all were addressing a silent prayer to the Most High to grant success to this attempt of the nation to avert the fate which threatened their beloved country.

Three-quarters of an hour later the Governor-General was made aware of the fact that the deputation had started for St. Petersburg. Thousands of people had been cognisant of the resolution adopted earlier in the day, many hundreds had known the exact hour of departure, but nevertheless not one of General Bobrikoff's numerous agents knew anything until more than half-an-hour after the "special" had actually left Helsingfors. On receiving the information he gave way to a torrent of passion, and tried by all the means in his power to induce a high

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Finnish official to wire an order to the Chief of the Police of St. Petersburg to send back the members of the deputation before they could enter the Russian capital. Neither his orders nor his threats availed, however, against the determined refusal of the Governor of Helsingfors to send such a telegram. All he agreed to do was to inform the Prefect of St. Petersburg (*alias* Chief of the Police) of the departure of the great deputation, so that he might consult with the Finnish Secretary of State about the forwarding to the Tsar of the monster petition.

The deputation was met at the St. Petersburg station by the sub-prefect of the city, who requested the leaders to call immediately on the prefect in order to explain the object of their presence in the capital. He was told that nobody had time just then to see any prefects, as it was necessary to look for quarters and shelter for the hundreds of men unfamiliar with the city and the language.

The sub-prefect stared—he had evidently never before received a reply of that kind to an official request. Russians answer police-officers in a very different tone. But what could he do? It was obviously impossible to arrest people simply because they lacked time for a conversation with the Chief of the Police; so he inquired what hour would suit the deputation. They promised to come at one, which they did and were received with the utmost respect. The prefect merely requested the deputation not to march in a body in the streets, as that could not be permitted in St. Petersburg. He did not say, however, that he had ordered agents to dog the steps of each of the leaders of the deputation, but this was nevertheless the case, and they were not once free from espionage from the moment they stepped out of the train until they left the city.

In St. Petersburg occurred an episode illustrating one of the chief characteristics of the Finnish race—their tenacity of purpose and unreasoning loyalty. In the hurry and scurry of arrival the leaders had omitted to take note of the address of a boarding-house where eighteen of the delegates were housed. To all the order had been given that they must, under no pretext, leave their quarters until told to do so, as no one could tell at what moment they might not be required for calling in a body on the Secretary of State, or,

perhaps, even for an audience with the Tsar. A few hours later word was passed round the city that the delegates would not be needed that day, but the eighteen mentioned above, of course, knew nothing of this. Among them were two men who had travelled and worked in all parts of the United States, and another who, besides a trip to America, had also lived in South Africa. These three spoke English fluently, and were perfectly able to look after themselves and the others. In their rooms they could get nothing to eat, though they all had money, both Finnish and Russian, and any one of them could have fetched food from a shop in the neighbourhood. But they had promised not to leave their quarters until told to do so, and therefore not one of these brave men stirred for twenty-four hours. Only then came the releasing word, with profuse apologies for the oversight and for the starving the eighteen had suffered in consequence. "Don't speak of that," replied one of them. "We have all of us starved more than once for no better reason than for lack of money and food, so we may well suffer again in a good cause." Yet the members of the great deputation were designated in Russian papers as a rabble of loafers and vagabonds, under the leadership of a few agitators!

Meanwhile negotiations had been carried on in various ways with the object of obtaining an audience for the deputation, but all the steps in that direction proved futile. General Bobrikoff had sent his own wife, as a courier, presumably to the Minister of the Interior, Goremykin, and he had reported the presence of the deputation to the Tsar, besides issuing the strictest orders to the Finnish "Minister-Secretary of State"—General Procopé—not to take any personal steps towards asking the monarch to grant an audience. The Tsar, as usual, played into the hands of his advisers. The Governor-General of Finland had succeeded in unearthing an antiquated statute of 1826, by which it was enacted that deputations from country districts should obtain permission from the Governor-General before they could be allowed to come to St. Petersburg and ask for an audience. When some members of the deputation, who had remained in Helsingfors, reported upon the departure of the others, and requested the Gov-

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ernor-General to do what he could towards procuring them an audience. They were confronted with this old statute and told that they had acted illegally, and that therefore their request could not be granted.

When the Secretary of State for Finland officially informed the Tsar of the deputation's arrival, the Autocrat of All the Russias, as seen by his reply, crept behind the same old Act—behind a law that could never be binding for him one moment longer than he chose—he who, a few weeks before, had not hesitated to violate the constitution he had so recently and solemnly sworn to uphold! The Tsar's answer was as follows:

"Inform the members of this deputation of five hundred men that I of course will not receive them, although I am not vexed with them. They ought to return to their homes, and may then send in their petitions to their respective Governors, who, in their turn, will send them to the Governor-General, who will send them to you to be presented to me, if indeed any notice can be taken of them at all. Explain to the deputation the meaning of the Edict of February 3rd, after which let it return home."

And this answer by a curious coincidence was word for word the same as the one vouchsafed by the Governor-General to the members of the deputation calling on him—the only sentence the Tsar had added being the one wherein he told the deputation that he was not "vexed with them."

The leading members of the deputation were told of the Tsar's answer late at night, being at the same time informed that the Secretary of State would communicate it officially the next morning. One of them was chosen to act as spokesman, and as soon as General Procopé had delivered to them the words of the Tsar, Mr. Eugene Wolff, British Vice-Consul at Wiborg, stepped forward and replied with the following speech, that has made his name a synonym in Finland for manly frankness and outspoken courage:

"So this is all the consolation we have to take back to our countrymen, who are waiting at home in greatest anxiety. Is this the answer our Gracious Monarch gives to our humble request to be allowed to approach His High Person and to pour out before Him our sorrow and our trouble?—before Him whom, next to our God, we regard as our strongest protection and support. We shall, agreeable to His Majesty's commands, return in peace to our homes, but we return otherwise than we came. We came with steadfast hope; we return disappointed men. Your Excellency! Before we leave this room, we feel

bound by duty and conscience to say that we still think that the Ordinance of 1836 cannot properly be applied to the extraordinary step which our electors have taken when they confidentially sent us to appeal to His Majesty personally for justice.

"We are only a handful of men who now address Your Excellency in the name of the hundreds who have come here in the name of the hundreds of thousands who have sent us from all parts of our native country. Your Excellency! While we feel confident that you will not hesitate to present our humble address, we beg you also to inform His Majesty of these our sentiments, to which we should have considered it a precious duty to freely and openly give utterance, had His Majesty been graciously pleased to listen to us, strong in the consciousness that, standing before our Emperor, we also stood before Almighty God, to whom at this moment millions of earnest prayers for the success of our mission are going up from every home in our land—to the God who, we are sure, would judge us severely if we were false to the confidence placed in us.

"Your Excellency! We beseech you, referring to the evidence which His Majesty Himself has always borne as to how the Finnish people have faithfully served their Rulers and made good their confidence, and to the repeated assurances to the same end which we received from His August Father and his deeply-mourned Grandfather,—we beseech you to ask him if he will, before God and under the judgment of History, bear the responsibility of the moral ruin of a whole nation. Tell Him that we are accustomed to bear severe misfortunes uncomplainingly. The frost has, times without number, ravaged our fields, and the farmer has in one night lost the fruits of a year's heavy toil, and we have humbly borne these trials, supporting one another and trusting in the future, but such a blighting frost as that of February 15th the Finnish people have never known—with one stroke of the pen all that we held most dear and which we hoped to deliver unimpaired, if not increased, to our children was destroyed that night. None are unaffected by it,—high and low, rich and poor, all of us are alike struck by this visitation of fate. We cannot now see the results of its ravages, for our thoughts recoil at the prospect which is thereby opened up before us. Our children, to whom we had hoped to give as an inheritance a moral ideal, higher and better than our own, will, perhaps, when they see the firmest foundations of our political existence undermined, become a people of hypocrites with a lie on their lips. The Finnish nation's reputation for faithfulness and honesty may then become a tale that is told. Inform His Majesty that there are more than two million loyal subjects in Finland who are willing and who dare to do their duty. But do not hide from His Majesty the fact that we are cognizant of our rights. My father was the first to show me a plain pamphlet on whose cover was printed "The Fundamental Laws of Finland,"—he was the first one who explained to my young mind their significance. I still remember how, with tears in his eyes and trembling voice, he told me of the never-to-be-forgotten days in 1809 when the hearts of Prince and people met in the sweetest harmony. Ask His Majesty if he is rich enough to throw away the devotion and love of such

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a people? Your Excellency has told us that His Majesty through His Edict has reserved for Himself the personal right to decide in every special case as to which questions shall be referred to Imperial legislation and which to the home legislation of Finland. To this we reply that His Majesty's life, like our own, lies in the hand of the Most High. The love of millions could not protect the dear life of Alexander II. from a handful of miscreants and from those who delivered Him to them.

"During the last ten years we have been subjected to the most cruel calumnies on the part of the Russian press. We have been deprived of all that distinguishes the honest citizen from the bandit. Honesty, faith, honour—none have been left to us. These accusations, no matter how aggravating, have left us impassive, for we have, on the other hand, had friends among this noble Russian people—friends whose judgment more than outweighs the calumnies of the press, and we knew, above all, that we enjoyed the confidence of our August Ruler. It is therefore with the deepest sorrow that we find that these calumnies have given rise to doubts in His Majesty's breast in regard to our integrity. In a document issued from one of His Majesty's Ministries and at His high command presented before our lawful representatives now assembled for an extraordinary session of the Diet, it is alleged that our representative at the Throne deceived His Majesty Alexander II. of immortal memory. Your Excellency, we demand that you shall tell His Majesty that this is the blackest of lies flung at a faithful people. In Finland there has never been born a man capable of the crime of purposely deceiving such a Ruler as Alexander II., whom we loved in life, whose death was nowhere mourned so sincerely as in Finland, and whose memory we hold in saintly reverence. The Finns who have had the gracious honour of standing near to the throne have never, ~~ever~~ committed such a crime. In cases where the interests of the Empire have not been impaired they have, out of love for their country, been able to procure for it advantages which at later time it has been seen fit to alter. But mistakes are not crimes. They can and will be loyally corrected by the representatives of His Majesty's Finnish people when it pleases His Majesty to give a gracious proposition for their decision. Those who attack these men forget that the noble Prince himself sincerely loved His Finnish people. We give the lie to this accusation. May the shame rest upon the head of him who has dared to put it forward!

"We beseech Your Excellency to assure His Majesty that we shall never seek redress in unlawful action. It is for this reason that it is so galling to a dutiful people to find itself tracked at every step by spies. It is not these men that keep the people quiet; it is hereditary respect for the sanctity of law. We are no rebels, but we are not worthy of our free institutions if we do not openly and without fear, humbly but firmly, protest against every violation of our fundamental laws—our Constitution—sworn to by six Tsars and further developed under their wise rule. The whole Finnish people reads such a violation in the Edict of February 15th. This the gendarmes now thronging both city and country are at liberty to understand; there is not one among us who hides his thoughts in this matter. We beseech Your Excellency to inform His Ma-

esty that it is for the purpose of begging Him to be graciously pleased to recall this Edict, and to put an end to this demoralizing system of espionage, that we have ventured to approach Him.

"Your Excellency, you have assured us that, if the law had allowed this Deputation to have been received by His Majesty, you had unconditionally intended to read the appeal signed by over 500,000 citizens with the same unbiassed voice as that with which you read the representation of the Imperial Senate on this subject which is now the theme of our anxiety. It is true that His Majesty has already expressed His august will in regard to how our case shall be treated, but whereas we find no attempt has hitherto been made by Your Excellency to present at a personal audience the appeal which the Finnish people under no conditions will confide to their present Governor-General, we must, on these grounds, falling back on Your Excellency's assurances, solemnly request Your Excellency, as soon as an opportunity presents itself, to desire that the appeal, which has been received by Your Excellency, may be read to His Majesty by Your Excellency.

"Since we realize that appeals with a different bearing from ours may possibly be presented, as is their due, before His Majesty, we beg Your Excellency to tell His Majesty that there was once a Judas who betrayed his Saviour for thirty pieces of silver. Even among us, I am sorry to say, it has been possible to find some persons who were willing to sell their native country for current gold.

"Your Excellency! We beseech you to present these our sentiments to our gracious Emperor.

"God save His Majesty the Tsar, God save Her Majesty the Tsarina!"

The next day the deputation started on their homeward journey, the leading delegates having been forbidden by the Minister of the Interior to communicate the Imperial answer to the deputation *in corpore*. The last attempt to reach the Tsar had failed. But that did not lessen the nation's gratitude to those who had made that attempt. When the long "special" glided into the station at Helsingfors on Sunday evening, delayed many hours by a violent snowstorm, not only the platforms and the waiting-rooms, but also the open square in front of the building were teeming with thousands upon thousands of people. When the first of the delegates stepped out of the station someone in the compact mass below the stairs started the National Anthem. The hymn grew in volume, rising and swelling, till the great buildings opposite re-echoed the solemn strains, the crowd falling back with heads uncovered as the delegates marched through their midst into the city from whence only a few days earlier they had started with the vain hope of being able to bring home to the

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Tsar what the Finnish nation thought of the action he had taken.

In the evening the Municipal Board of Helsingfors gave a banquet in honour of the deputation, and heartfelt gratitude to the peasants who had left their far-away homes in order to carry the nation's message to the Monarch, was expressed in manly words by the

speakers of the evening. Women of gentle birth served the rough men from the forests in the far North. Every honour was shown by the nation to those sturdy champions of a righteous cause.

Thus was an episode of Finland's life-struggle closed.

THE FIRST APPLICATION OF THE TSAR'S EDICT

NO one in Finland now entertains any doubt but what the Manifesto of February 15th was intended to compel the Finnish Diet to accept the new army bill, framed by the same ministers who, in the name of the same monarch, sent forth the peace message to the world; yet hardly anyone expected so ruthlessly severe an application of it as that recently decided upon. A short time ago the Russian minister of war, General Kuropatkin, requested the Tsar to confer upon him, as such, the right to settle the number of conscripts to be drawn yearly from Finland for service under the Russian colours. Even the provision of the new army bill for the same proportionate number of conscripts in Finland as in Russia did not satisfy General Kuropatkin, who would have preferred to be the sole arbiter of the fate of Finland's young men. But the Tsar for once had the strength of his own opinion, and refused to acquiesce in the proposal. Optimistic souls rejoiced at this sign that the minister was not omnipotent, but the rejoicing was premature, as events soon proved. General Kuropatkin was not to be baffled by such a trifle as the Tsar's differing opinion. He renewed the attempt on apparently different lines, and this time succeeded. A few days ago two so-called amendments to the new bill were communicated to the Diet, the first one stipulating that the number of conscripts from Finland is to be in the same ratio as in Russia to the whole number of young men examined as to fitness for military service, and the second one providing for the payment by Finland of something more than ten million marks (£4,000,000) a year into the Russian exchequer for

the maintenance of the Finnish contingent. Both these amendments are to be treated in accordance with the Edict of February 15th, and by this latest blow aimed at the Finns it is proved beyond all shadow of doubt that the famous peace rescript—at any rate so far as the Tsar's ministers are concerned—is a piece of most insolent hypocrisy.

The Tsar himself may be, and most probably is, ignorant of the full purport of the measures he is induced to sign, and thus he escapes the scathing censure the civilized world cannot fail to pass on his advisers. But these advisers, the ministers who actually do rule the Russian empire, have deliberately attempted to hoodwink the world by their countersigning the peace rescript, whilst at the very same time, in direct contradiction to that rescript, providing for an increase of the imperial army on so elastic a basis that the augmentation can, and probably will, be extended into considerably more than a full army-corps. This, however, necessitates some explanation of certain peculiarities of Russian military organization.

In Russia the number of young men yearly available as conscripts is far too great for all of them to be used, the imperial finances not being up to the standard of such an army as Russia could put on foot were it only a question of men. Consequently various means are resorted to for bringing the strength of the army into harmony with the funds available for warlike purposes, one of these means being the granting to the vast majority of soldiers of a furlough covering the last and sometimes even the two last years of their term of service under the colours, this term thus being re-

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duced from five to four or often to three years. The number of men actually under the colours is therefore *de facto* smaller than on paper, and thus no insignificant sum is saved every year; and this in a measure explains the remarkable "cheapness" of the Russian soldier. It is the minister of war who decides the number of conscripts needed for filling the ranks, and this number he can settle entirely as he pleases, provided only that he orders leave of absence to be issued to a corresponding number of soldiers already serving. So long as he does not seriously upset the budget he can arrange his figures and regiments entirely to suit his own fancy, and increase the number of conscripts at will.

In Finland the physical standard of fitness for service has been so high, that of the young men yearly examined only about eight thousand, on an average, have come up to it. But the Russian system, and consequently the Russian standard, are henceforth to be applied in Finland, and this standard being much lower than the Finnish, the number of available conscripts in Finland will easily be increased by one half, thus amounting to quite twelve thousand. According to the present law, 1,920 conscripts yearly enter the army, the number of which is limited to 5,600 men, with about 4,000 more as reserves, the term of active service covering three years, and the men for two additional years belonging to the reserves. The rest of the available conscripts enter the militia, and put in altogether ninety days for training purposes, these ninety days being divided and made up in three consecutive years. All Finnish troops are, according to the law, intended for service in their own country only. In Russia the proportion of conscripts entering the army has for some time been such, that the same ratio applied in Finland would give 7,200 conscripts a year. The new army bill provides for five years' service under the colours, which, as there certainly will be no two years' furlough for Finnish soldiers, would give an aggregate of 36,000 men in active service. These men will have to remain in the reserve for *thirteen years*, which brings the number of reserves up to 93,600—altogether an army of 129,600, or, with due allowances made, of certainly *one hundred*

thousand fully-trained, armed, and equipped soldiers, to be stationed wherever the Tsar pleases. And this army will cost Russia nothing—Finland having to provide the funds as well as the men for this enormous increase of the Russian forces.

Yet this is by no means all. We have shown that the Russian Minister of War is able to arrange the number of conscripts to suit himself, that the application of the Russian standard of physical requirements will easily bring up the number of available Finnish conscripts to 12,000, and, finally, that the latest amendment to the new army bill gives the Tsar the right to decide, in accordance with the edict of February 15th, how much Finland is to pay for the maintenance of those of her sons dragged into military service in Russia. With no greater difficulty than that entailed in the manipulating of some figures on paper, the Russian Minister of War will thus be able to compel Finland to furnish Russia with not less than 150,000 soldiers—with 200,000 if matters are strained a trifle more—and to pay the costs of this army as well. Such is the proposal of the Tsar's ministers at the very time when the whole civilized world is preparing for the Peace Conference—a scheme the Tsar has been induced to sanction by a breach of his own solemn oath to maintain the Finnish Constitution—a scheme, finally, by which those proposing disarmament to the world, ruin, irretrievably ruin, a whole people in order to increase their own armaments.

It may well be asked what reason there can be for the Russian government to act in this manner at the present time. The answer is not very hard to find. The long-desired and long-planned Russification of Finland is one reason; but a far more important one is, that Russia needs soldiers to fill the gaps made in her regiments caused by the transportation of bodies of men to the Amur Province and Manchuria by every steamer for a couple of years, and who at the present moment form a small army. Her treasury is empty, and there is no certainty that Englishmen will meet her hope by lending her funds for further armaments. The people are starving, and unable to bear further burdens. Finland is the only really prosperous part of the Empire; hence Finland is to supply men and money

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for furthering Russian policy, no matter at what cost to her people.

But the Tsar and his ministers may yet learn that there is a far greater power than theirs ruling in Finland. The love of liberty and independence, innate in the Finnish race, developed by the enjoyment of full individual freedom during a thousand years, has become a moral power far greater than Russians are able to conceive. If the new army bill is imposed by force, there is likely to be an exodus from Finland such as the world has not witnessed from any country for centuries, an emigration of tens of thousands preferring to abandon everything rather than sacrifice their right to live and speak and act as freeborn men. Already hundreds of Finns are migrating weekly, mostly young men, sturdy, hardy, and capable of turning any wilderness into a garden, since through

their work they have rendered prosperous a country with so poor a soil and so harsh a climate as the one they have hitherto called their own. Some three thousand Finlanders have so far during the present year left their country to escape the fate that threatens them, and this gives a fair idea of what will happen when the policy of the Tsar's ministers shall have advanced a little further. So soon as it is proved beyond any possibility of doubt that Asia, as represented by Russia, is to engulf that furthest outpost of Europe, called Finland, the exodus will begin in earnest, the voluntary exile of a nation preferring the soil of a free country as a resting-place and the Almighty's open sky as its roof-tree, to the protection and justice of the Prince who feigns to inaugurate an era of peace and goodwill among men.

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THE collecting of signatures for the mass petition was still proceeding, when reports went abroad concerning the movements of certain suspicious Russians who were travelling in the provinces and endeavouring to persuade the people that the political reforms in Finland would, in reality, be of the very greatest benefit to the poorer classes. The country was to be divided up, said these agents, with the object of allotting to every man a piece of land sufficient for him to live upon. The same state of supreme bliss and happiness would be enjoyed by the Finn as by the Russian peasantry: no taxes to speak of, the mildest of laws, nothing to impair the felicity of the happy times to come. And as their hearers were carefully chosen from amongst the most ignorant classes, they did not fully understand the delight in living that is felt by the average Russian moujik, and more especially by those twenty-five millions that are starving this year.

At first the news of such preachings caused no uneasiness whatever, but as rumour became more persistent the outlook changed. People recalled

the fact that the same General Bobrikoff, who at present is Governor-General of Finland, had played a very important part in the Russification of the Baltic Provinces, where identical methods were used for inducing the lowest stratum of the population to divide themselves from the more cultured. The Finns were not long in discerning the object of this new movement, nor in discovering its author. From the reports which kept coming in from all sides it became evident that every parish in the country was visited by these agents. The "Novoye Vremya," the organ of Finland's arch-enemies, printed a couple of articles wherein the editor openly urged that the Russian government should seriously consider the advisability of a speedy allotment of land to all those in Finland possessing none. A number of Finnish newspapers were "warned," and one was suppressed for speaking too freely about the underground work that was being carried on. And soon after the return of the deputation of five hundred from St. Petersburg, news came from various country districts that the Russian agents had started collecting signatures to some mysterious documents. No one was

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allowed to read these papers, but many—to a large extent school-children—were asked to sign them,—some form of remuneration being made, either in money or in other presents, according to the age and tastes of the would-be signatories.

The situation was quite clear, and the only efficient remedy was soon suggested. In the Baltic Provinces similar methods had met with success because these provinces are inhabited by two distinct races, the one consisting of a highly-educated and wealthy class of one nationality, speaking their own language, and the other, the masses, of a different nationality, and speaking a different tongue. There it had been easy enough both to sow the seeds of distrust and to be sure of those seeds bearing fruit. General Bobrikoff did not comprehend the wide distinction between such a population and a people with one culture, one faith, one civilization, differing, it is true, in the various social strata, but nevertheless a concrete whole. He did not understand what such a difference meant, and therefore he hoped that the old methods would have the same result in Finland as in the Baltic Provinces. However, its immediate effect was a movement for spreading education to every hamlet, every hut, and every individual, the like of which no other country has ever witnessed. Within a few weeks ample funds were collected, societies were organized, teachers secured—a great number of these from amongst the students of the University at Helsingfors—and the work started. Before three months are over there will not be one Finnish citizen, high or low, rich or poor, lacking knowledge of the laws and the method of the administration of his country. Other subjects will of course be taught, as well, in the new schools, many of which will be established in villages where none have before existed.

General Bobrikoff will be able to boast of having done more in a few weeks for popular education in Finland—though, it is to be feared, very much against his will—than any one man before, and may also rest assured

that no such agitation as the one lately attempted will ever have the faintest chance of success among the Finns.

All this, however, is in the nature of a prospective remedy, but the present was not unheeded by the aggrieved Finns. The agents in the guise of Tartar and other pedlars increased in numbers until the country fairly swarmed with them. The newspapers, under strict censorship, were not allowed to brand them as they deserved. In various quarters they had succeeded in making proselytes for their new gospel. If nothing were done to stop this nefarious agitation trouble might ensue. So the peasants decided to take the matter into their own hands, and this they did with the best possible results.

In every parish in Finland municipal affairs are managed by a council which also has control of the funds of the community. These councils met and resolved that henceforth a premium of 50 marks—£2—should be paid in respect of every "pedlar-agent" taken *flagrante delicto*, that a fine of the same amount should be imposed upon anyone giving shelter to such agents as well as on those failing to report their presence, and finally that the premiums should be paid from the fund existing in every parish for encouraging the extermination of animals of prey and vermin.

Satisfaction was great when a few days later three hundred of the pedlars left by the same train for St. Petersburg, thus proving beyond any doubt that the bands of agents were sufficiently well organized to be reached by orders in a very short space of time. The only one who presumably did not smile at the resolutions of the parish councils was General Bobrikoff, who had repeatedly declared that no Russian spies were employed in Finland.

At present, however, he would be quite justified in issuing a solemn declaration to that effect; there are assuredly not many "pedlars" left upon whom to squander the parish funds.



