# THE RUSSIAN PEASANT

## AWFUL IGNORANCE OF THESE POOR PEOPLE.

### Always Poor and Generally in Debt —Is the Land of the Czar Doomed.

The population of Russia to-day is estimated in round figures at 147,000,000 persons. Of this number 100,000,000 are peasants, and they lag so far behind the times in regard to education, manners, customs, and general enlightenment that they have been compared to the medieval German peasant of the fourteenth century. Indeed, so ignorant are they that a young man who can read is regarded by them as a wonder. They believe in witches, demons, and wood-devils, and live under such conditions that in ordinary times in the Russian villages 50 per cent. of the children from birth to five years die, and 350 to 400 per 1,000 of those from birth to one year. Truly an awful rate of infant mortality!

Is is surprising that people ask, Is Russia doomed? or that the country should have been so soundly beaten in warfare by the enterprising Japs?

As a matter of fact, the Russian peasant does not live — he merely exists. "Nitchevo" ("It is nothing"), he merely says, when anything happens to him. Nothing matters, nothing could be worse, and "Nitchevo" is

HIS PANACEA FOR ALL EVILS.

And yet the Russian moujik is really a fine fellow. Ordinarily, Mr. H. F. Kennard tells us in his book, "The Russian Peasant," he is a splendid, well-built man, large limbed, large-headed and healthy. He is equally unaffected by 20 degrees of frost or twenty glasses of vodka. He is clothed in uncured sheepskins, and carries in winter more clothes than the average Englishman could stand up in.

He is unspeakably stupid, however, and his dream of happiness is to gorge, to sleep as much as possible through the winter, and dance and sing in the summer. But the stranger's first objection to the moujik is that he smells—not because he does not wash himself. As a matter of fact, in every village there are public baths—baaza—and the peasants wash themselves there unfailingly every Saturday in order to be allowed to go to church on Sunday; for the Orthodox Church enjoins cleanliness.

HOW HE LIVES.

The moujik, however, apparently thinks that he has done all that is required of him by the church if he washes himself; for, according to Mr. Kennard, you can smell his izba, or hut, long before you reach it. As a rule, there are two rooms to an izba, a living-room and an outhouse, and, while the former is usually clean and whitewashed, the latter is fearfully dirty. Moreover, his uncured sheepskins do not give off the most pleasant of odors, and when, as during the Russian famine of 1906-7, three or four families combine, and live in the best hut, pulling down the others in order to use the timber for fuel and the thatch as forage for horses and cattle, it will be readily understood that the odor of that particular izba was not generally improved.

The Russian peasant is always poor, and generally in debt. He ploughs the land in the same way that his father ploughed it, and gets as little for his labor. His main worry in life is how to pay the Governor's taxes. If he says he cannot pay he is flogged; or perhaps he will sell part of his next year's power of work (i.e., work for nothing for several months) to raise a loan; and, of course, he is worse off than ever the following year.

The moujik's festivals to-day are the same as those of a century or so ago. Here is a description of one. It will show the extraordinary mummery practised in connection with marriage, although, at the same time, the description contains a very good hint to bold and daring spinsters in this leap year of 1908.

ON CHRISTMAS NIGHT

at dusk the marriageable village girls go out into the streets and meet their young men, and one says, "What is your name?" The young man answers, "Foma," and she replies, "My husband's name is Foma."

Some days later, at the girl's home, relations are gathered together; there comes a knock at the door, the starosta and the young man enter carrying loaves of bread. The starosta says something like this:—

"We are German people, come from Turkey. We are hunters, good fellows. There was a time once in our country when we saw strange footprints in the snow, and my friend the prince here saw them, and we thought they might be fox's or marten's footprints, or it might be those of a beautiful girl. We hunters, we good fellows are determined not to rest till we have found the animal. We have been in all cities from Germany to Turkey and have sought for this fox, this marten, or this princess, and at last we have seen the same strange footprints in the snow again, here by our Court. And we have come in. Come let us take her, the beautiful princess, for we see her in front of us—or can it be you would keep her till she grows a little older?"

Thus does the moujik ask for a wife.—London Tit-Bits.

## DANGEROUS OPIATES.

Most of the liquid medicines advertised to cure stomach and bowel troubles and summer complaints contain opiates and are dangerous. When the mother gives Baby's Own Tablets to her little ones she has the guarantee of a government analyst that this medicine contains no opiate or narcotic. And she has the assurance that no other medicine will so speedily cure stomach and bowel troubles, if they come unexpectedly. Give the well child an occasional dose of these tablets and they will prevent sickness by clearing the stomach and bowels of offending matter. Mrs. Wilbert Bone, Carrville, Ont., says:— "I have used Baby's Own Tablets for stomach and bowel troubles and know of no other medicine so satisfactory." Sold by medicine dealers or by mail at 25c a box from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

## USES OF VANITY.

### A Personal Blessing Vouchsafed to Man, Thinks Mr. MacBlink.

"The longer I live," said Mr. MacBlink, "the more I think that the greatest personal blessing vouchsafed to man is personal vanity.

"Do the mighty snub us? We smile and think that we are better than they. Are some men richer than we? Why, we know for some we could have made twice their money with half their chance.

"Are we homely? We think we are handsome. Why, the men we see, old and young, looking in the mirrors are proud of their hair, proud of their neckties, proud of their clothes, proud of themselves from their heads to their toes.

"They may live narrow lives, and if they only knew it, with no hope of ever getting out on the broad road; but they are satisfied with, more than that, they are vain of themselves. And what a blessing!

"Are we not content to wear cheap clothes because in our fond vanity we think that we ourselves give to them an air of distinction? So in many instances.

"And does not the same hold true as well to our views of all our belongings? Don't we think that our lumbering old clumsy gaited six minute horse could go in 2.22½ if we dared to give him his head? Don't we think that our yacht or our power boat could make anything else in the water look like thirty, yes, like twenty or even fifteen cents if we were once disposed to show what it could really do?

"Do we not think that our chickens are really the very best specimens of their breed, and do we not think that ours is the finest lawn? And our children! Do we not all think that our children, whatever they may be, are the finest children that ever were born?

"It is so of many things, and all these are cheerful, happy, helpful notions that even the most timid and shrinking of men may cherish. Our vanity is not only a protector and a shield, it is for us a castle within whose walls we can dwell in serenity and security, in sweet satisfaction with ourselves; and in a world so full of things that otherwise would jar us, is not this a great blessing? Many a man's lot in life has been softened, has been made happy, by his harmless personal vanity."

Traveller — "Here, landlord, what's the matter with your dog? I've driven him away a score of times, but he always comes back again, and sits close up to my armchair watching every mouthful I take. Do turn him out, and let me have my dinner in peace." Landlord—"Please, sir, my Carlo is such a knowing brute. I expect you have got the plate he generally eats off."

"Riches, my friend," said the plutocrat, "do not bring happiness." "Maybe not," said the socialist; 'but it must be a heap of satisfaction to have a lot of money and be able to talk like that to a chap that hasn't got any."

# FROM ERIN'S GREEN ISLE

## NEWS BY MAIL FROM IRELAND'E SHORES.

### Happenings in the Emerald Isle of Interest to Irishmen.

A North Wexford Farmer's Society has recently been formed.

A movement is on foot for the establishment of a boot factory in Arklow.

At the last pig fair in Tralee, the remarkable number of 1,050 pigs was on view.

Over one thousand pigs were killed by local bacon factories of Kerry during a recent week.

The Merchants' Hall, where the old Dublin Guild of Merchants formerly met, has just been sold by auction.

A domestic named Jane McCush was asphyxiated by blowing out the gas at the home of her employer in Belfast.

A huge fish, said to be a sunfish or "thrasher," and weighing 1,500 pounds, was recently taken in the harbor at Dunmore.

The Lord Chancellor has appointed James P. Hughes, Castleganny Mills, Borris, to the commission of the peace for the county of Carlow.

The death took place recently at Garvagh, of James Febridge Johnstone, late chief draughtsman in the Belfast Queen's Island shipbuilding yards.

Michael O'Callaghan, the driver of a mail train, was knocked off his engine when going at sixty miles an hour, and sustained but trifling injuries.

The commissioners of National Education have awarded the Carlisle and Blake Premium to Mrs. Mary K. Dick, Cornahilta school, Belleek, for the year 1907.

A constable at Cappagh, near Mohill, County Leitrim, found a parcel containing some sixty-three letters concealed in a hole at the back of a ditch alongside the road.

The fine and historic old seat of the late Geo. Davys, J.P., at Clonbonny, consisting of about 500 acres, has been purchased by John Rhatigan, of Kilcrowe, for the sum of $7,500.

Messrs. Workman and Clark, shipbuilders of Belfast, have received an order from the Boston United Fruit Company, United States, for four new steamers aggregating over 21,000 tons for West Indies' fruit trade.

The Dublin and South-Eastern Railway Company have increased the facilities which they had already provided for tourists desirous of visiting on Sundays the various spots of interest in picturesque Wicklow.

Two brothers, William and Matthew Pelan, of Tullynacross, near Lisburn, died within a few hours of each other, both having been in ill health for some time past. Their double funeral was very largely attended.

At a meeting of Belfast butchers recently, it was decided in consequence of the high prices at present being paid for sheep and cattle, which renders prices unremunerative, to raise the price of beef and mutton 1d. and 2d. per pound.

A train on the G. N. R. near Belturbet was delayed an hour and forty minutes owing to the failure of the electric train staff instrument. On investigation it was found the failure was caused by a spider getting between the contact point and the key lever in the instrument at Belturbet, causing a disconnection.

## THE ONLY WAY.

Not long ago a farmer sued a cattle-dealer for damages in the local county court.

"When I bought the bull," said complainant, "he told me it was gentle and perfectly harmless —a child could play with it, in fact. Half an hour after I got the animal home, he disabled a couple of my farm hands, and then turned on me——"

"Perhaps the beast was excited by his strange surroundings," suggested his honor. "Is he quiet enough now?"

"Well—yes; but you see——"

"Ah," remarked the defendant, "then my description was correct, after all. I said if he did get excited at first he would quieten down."

"Yes," responded the plaintiff grimly, "but you didn't tell me I should have to shoot the beggar to quieten him down! That's what I had to do!"

How can a man have undying love for a woman who dyes her hair?

The hard part about an easy job is the getting thereof.


SHREDDED WHEAT

Here's a Real Summer Delight—
SHREDDED WHEAT
with milk or cream and fresh fruits. Discard heavy foods and try this **natural** diet for a time and note how your energies will increase and your spirits revive,
NOURISHING WITHOUT BEING HEATING
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## SENTENCE SERMONS.

Honesty is being better than you have to.

He who does not doubt at all is doubtless damned.

It is always safe to be sorry for the self-satisfied.

If you would find folks you must first be yourself.

It's not the things laid on it that make the life larger.

A crooked path is the straightest road to the traps of sin.

Helping always brings happiness, and happiness always helps.

It is following the stars we have that will lead to the day to be.

Any man can talk religion, but only those who have it can teach it.

There always is some character being determined by our conduct.

The field of this world is not to be worked by digging at our neighbors.

It's the daily dull grinding that produces the ken edge for some crisis.

You have no right to sigh except when you are alone, and then you won't.

It's the man who forever is running away from pain who gets most bruises.

The man who has much starch in his neck is likely to have none in his backbone.

If you cannot be saved by work it is certain you will not be saved by whining.

The man who can carry all his religion in his head never lets it bother his hands.

It is simple ignorance of ourselves that makes us harsh in our judgments of others.

A Theological student was sent one Sunday to supply a vacant pulpit in a country town. A few days after he received a copy of the weekly paper of the place with the following item marked: "Rev. —— supplied the pulpit at the Congregational Church last Sunday, and the church will now be closed three weeks for repairs."

We can die only once—much to the regret of the undertaker.


SALADA CEYLON TEA

When you are going shopping don't simply say "A pound of tea," because you can secure better tea, more delicious tea, if you only ask for "Salada."