NOTES AND COMMENTS

No revelations in regard to the Russian war of terrors, it was thought, could surprise the world after the events of the last few years. But the disclosures in the duma with reference to police participation in terrorist plots, coupled with government communications admitting some of the charges and in turn accusing former heads of the secret service of active sympathy and alliance with revolutionaries, have created a sensation even among the keen observers of Russian affairs.

There appears to be little doubt that the chief of the "fighting" terrorist organization in Russia has been a government spy. This discovery was made at a congress of the terrorists in Paris, and the accused, who was present at the first sessions, deemed it prudent to disappear afterward. The government organs claim that this strange character was useful to his employers, inasmuch as he prevented the success of some plots and protected the emperor and the premier. But this is a poor defense if it is true that he organized several successful assassinations, including those of Plehve and Sergius, and for years guided the terrorist movement.

The constitutionalists assert that some of the reactionaries in the government have used the terrorists to get rid of rivals, as well as to discredit the reform regime and justify martial law, wholesale executions and savage reprisals. That provocative agents have been employed to instigate minor political crimes, and that the massacres of 1905 were ordered by officials are notorious facts, but that the highest members of the government should have encouraged and subsidized spies acting as energetic terrorists is amazing. The duma may well ask what claim Russia has to a place among civilized peoples and what confidence any honest Russian constitutionalist can have in the government and the bureaucracy.

"Strong-handed reform" has been the "liberal" premier's watchword. He has defended executions at the rate of four or five a day on the score of necessity. Pacification was his first duty, and to terrorists no mercy could be shown. But what becomes of this policy if many of the terrorists crimes can be traced to police and secret service instigation? And if some of the high police officials revolted against such horrors and helped the revolutionary movement will not that be regarded as natural? Was there ever an instance of confusion worse confounded more glaring than that presented by Russia to-day?

SOME SPITEFUL WILLS.

Three of Them Against Women, One Concerned a Man.

Quite a number of wills have been proved recently which have contained strange bequests, evidently prompted by spite. Strangely enough, most of these vindictive wills are directed against women. A St. Louis citizen left a thousand dollars to a certain party on the ground that he "never forgot a favor." Ten years ago, it appears, the legatee ran away with the testator's wife!

Another will was proved of a man who left his wife one farthing, and directed that it should be sent to her by post in an unstamped envelope. His will was made two years before his death, and he gave as the reason for his action that his wife had called him an "old pig" and other names.

The other day a man died and left his property to his daughter on condition that she paid to a certain person the sum of 7 cents for the purchase of a hempen cord or halter for the use of the dear wife of that person, expressing the hope that she would make use of the same without delay.

There is at least one case, however, in which a man is concerned. One of the uniformed officials of a popular railway line who died recently left an estate valued for probate at $1,585. In his will he made some unkind remarks against a certain person, of whom he states that "My estate would have been considerably larger if it had not been for my association with this perambulating human vinegar cruet and the cleverest known legal daylight robber." These associations he estimated to have cost him considerably over $2,000.

RELIGION AND THEOLOGY

We All Agree That Love Is Better Than Hate, That Right Is Better Than Wrong.

"Who shall abide in thy tabernacle? He that walketh upright."—Ps. xv., 1, 2,

It is easy to exalt opinions to undue importance, especially if the opinions are our own, and invariably if they are formed with a splendid disregard of all other opinions. There is a fatal facility about thinking the same things until opinion runs automatically and begins to rule us. Then we set up such automatic judgments as standards for others and as objects of worship for all.

This is not the kind of thinking that makes the world. This is not the kind of thinking that determines character. The deep thoughts of the heart shape the actions of the individual and dictate the actions of mankind. But this prejudiced and blind automatic utterance of opinion is often the type of thinking that dominates theology.

It is a disappointing experiment to ask, What ought I to do in order to find the way of the religious life and service? and to receive the answer that you must believe this statement or that definition or opinion. Almost any worth while man would rather be damned for intellectual honesty than saved by theological hypocrisy.

ETERNAL REALITIES.

If you examine the formulas and philosophies upon the acceptance of which your character and destiny are both supposed to rest you will be surprised to find how little they have to do with the deep and eternal realities of life. Theology concerns itself principally with matters about which we never can have precise information, where uncertainty is most certain to be discovered, and often with those matters which, if they were settled absolutely, would lose all interest to us.

People were happy in their enjoyment of this fair world long before the invention of the nebular hypothesis. They managed to stay on the ground long before the discovery of the law of gravitation. No man would be condemned to be chained to the earth for fear of falling off because he refused to believe that law.

The great thing to do is to accept the facts as they are for working purposes. That is the only pathway into larger understanding of the laws of our universe. The mechanic who obeys the elementary laws of physics is a better scientist than he who blindly subscribes to all the theories of our universe.

Theology properly is just our attempt to read something of the laws that reign in the higher reaches of our life. Its value depends on our use of the laws. It will not keep you from internal disturbances and regrets to indorse the theories of modern dietetics; neither will your wholesale reception of the elaborations of modern and ancient theology save you from conflict with the laws of the life of the spirit.

All thinking is for the purpose of living. It must come to the test of its product in

CHARACTER AND CONDUCT.

It is worth while to remember this when narrow views are insisted on by small men, and others seek to emphasize their outlandish opinions by their eccentric and often unsavory living.

The poorest kind of a religion in this world is the one that can be embalmed in a theological mummy case, dried up dust, labeled and laid away, awesome with antiquity but utterly helpless. The life has died out of any faith when it can be thus cased up and catalogued. A vital belief always defies precise analysis and the processes of pigeon-holing.

As soon as the heretics all die in a church the church dies. The heretics are those who leave yesterday's forms for to-day's facts. The only dangerous heresies are these: When we love and lie and refuse the truth, or when pride persuades us to be singular in error rather than to be lost in the larger company who see the truth.

If you are perplexed over opinions in matters of religion turn from the uncertainties to the certainties. We can all agree that it is better to live up than to die down; that it is better to lift up than to tear down. If we will gradually build such a form and certain platform for our practice we will cease to look for stability in clouds of theory, and will find truth through life, right doctrines through duty.

HENRY F. COPE.

THE S. S. LESSON

INTERNATIONAL LESSON, MAR. 14.

Lesson XI. Aeneas and Dorcas. Golden Text, Acts 9: 34.

Verse 31. The story of the conversion of Paul is passed over at this time, to be taken up in the next quarter, when we begin the second division of the Acts, the work of St. Paul. To dwell on that great event here would interrupt the course of the history, and is especially fitting in connection with the beginning of his career.

32. Peter passed throughout all quarters.—Peter's first home missionary work was in connection with John in Samaria (Acts 8). They both returned to Jerusalem preaching in the villages of Samaria on the way. Now we find Peter again on a gospel tour throughout Palestine, preaching the gospel, and healing the sick, as his credentials, and as illustrating the spirit and nature of the Gospels; visiting and encouraging and teaching the new churches formed by the persecuted Christians, and keeping them in touch with the apostolic church in Jerusalem.

33. Aeneas—Very nearly the same name as Virgil's hero of Troy. Eight years—Showing that the cure was miraculous. Sick of the palsy—Palsy is a cantraction of the word "paralysis."

34. Jesus Christ—That is the Messiah. Peter guards against being thought the source of the healing. He draws men not to himself, but to the Saviour, and shows that Jesus is still doing the same kinds of work he did when he was living on earth. So the true preacher or teacher always draws attention not to himself, but to his Lord.

36. There was at Joppa — The modern Jaffa,, nine or ten miles north of Lydda, the seaport of Jerusalem, having at present eight thousand inhabitants. A certain disciple named Tabitha—This in Syriac, the common language of the region, means splendor, beauty. Called Dorcas (Gazelle), which in the East was a favorite type of beauty.

37-43. The disciples at Joppa learning of Peter's presence at Lydda, sent for him to come without delay, apparently with some hope that the unseen Master would work through his disciple Peter a miracle of restoration such as he himself had wrought during his earthly life. Peter went, and like his Master at Capernaum, (40) put them all forth. Then he kneeled down and prayed. Then, with assurance of an answer, he, turning . . . to the body, said, Tabitha, arise.

41. Gave her his hand, to help her up after she was alive. Jesus took Jairus's daughter's hand before she was restored.

TO DESTROY EXPLOSIVES.

Powder May be Thrown in Water, but Dynamite Never.

The best way to destroy ordinary black gunpowder is to throw it into a stream under conditions that prevent any harm coming to human beings or animals through the dissolving of the saltpetre. If no suitable stream is available the gunpowder may be stirred with water in tubs, or the dry gunpowder may be poured out on the ground in a long thin line and ignited with a fuse at one end.

To destroy dynamite cartridges the paper wrappings should be carefully removed, the bare cartridges laid in a row with their ends in contact and the first cartridge ignited with a fuse without a cap. Even with these precautions a simultaneous explosion of the entire mass may occur, so that it is wise to retire to a safe distance. The row of cartridges should be laid parallel with the wind and ignited at the leeward end so that the flame will be driven away from the mass.

Frozen dynamite should be handled with special care, as its combustion is peculiarly liable to assume an explosive character. A small quantity of dynamite may be destroyed by throwing it in very small bits into an open fire, or the cartridges may be exploded one by one in the open air with fuses and caps.

Dynamite should never be thrown into water, as the nitro-glycerine which it contains remains undissolved and capable of doing mischief. Other explosives which contain nitro-glycerine should be treated in the same way as dynamite.

Ammonium nitrate explosives may be thrown in small fragments into an open fire, or if they do not contain nitro-glycerine may be destroyed by means of water. Explosive caps should be exploded singly with pieces of fuse.—Scientific American.

HORSE AND MAN RACE

TRIAL THAT TOOK PLACE ON THE PARIS COURSE.

Horses Outdid Foot Runner, Who Exhausted.

Some interest was created in the sporting world in 1805 by the announcement that a Spaniard named Genaro, a noted runner, had wagered two thousand francs that he would run against any number of horses on the racecourse of Longchamps, Paris, which is 2,296 yards round, the horses to trot or gallop, but not to walk, and Genaro not to walk either, the winner being the horse or man who should go round the course the greatest number of times. The affair came off on September 9, and thirteen horses were entered, named Theresine, Tom, Pacha, Taurus, Old Ireland, Jenny Stane, Penman, Miss Grinaway, Loto and Nobbler. Genaro, who was thirty-three years of age, and of a vigorous and wiry frome, but of the thirteen horses only ten were taken to the post—Theresine, Tom, and Jenny Stane being withdrawn.

TWO HORSES STAYED.

The signal having been given, the horses and Genaro started. In the third round Nobbler and Miss Grinaway were put out of the race for having fallen into a walk; for the same reason Penman was beaten in the fifth round, Schavenger in the seventh, Pacha in the thirteenth, Coquette in the fourteenth, Taurus and Sultane in the twenty-third. There now remained but two horses running, Loto and Old Ireland; but these had galloped away at a most unnecessary pace, and had made forty turns, while poor Genaro was only in his twenty-third. Still, there was a chance for the pedestrian, for those two horses, which were much distressed, could not have continued to run much longer, and had they given up the contest, Genaro would have been allowed by the terms of the race to go on at as slow a jog trot as he pleased, till he had made up the distance that they had gained upon him.

MAN GAVE UP.

But, between seven and eight o'clock, when it was very nearly dark, Genaro, who had suffered much from the heat of the day and the heavy nature of the ground, fell down senseless, and was caried off to the weighing house. The owners of Loto and Old Ireland, not wishing to kill their horses, immediately agreed to divide the stakes. These horses (old and famous steeplechasers) had done twenty leagues and three-quarters in five hours and a half. Genaro, in the same time ran nearly twenty-three turns, or about twelve leagues.

MAORIS IN PARLIAMENT.

Present-day Native Members are College-bred Men.

In the New Zealand parliament there are four native or Maori representatives. The old-time Maori members were a rather rough, only partially civilized lot, who had gone through the wars with the British and whose only conception of parliament was a place in which to ventilate thier personal grievances in prodigiously long orations. But present-day Maori members are college-bred, highly civilized, well-dressed legislators. Once in the olden time a famous fighting chief took his seat, and there was immediately a general exodus of white M.P.'s from his vicinity. With a sublime contempt for European conventions, he had come into the house with the tail of an ancient and odoriferous shark protruding from his pocket.

DOG WITH TUTOR AND MAD.

Nana, a French poodle belonging to Mr. Edward Ellsworth, a real estate operator, of New York, is surely the most pampered canine in the world. A private room at the Plaza Hotel, a tutor, a maid, a private bath, and a special menu are among the items on the list of necessaries of life provided for the dog. The tutor is engaged to teach Nana tricks more complicated than the ordinary jumping through hoops and "shamming dead," and Nana's food is specially prepared in the servants' kitchen.

Attorney (for defence)—"Now, what time was it when you were attacked?" Complainant — "I don't know; ask your client — he took my watch!"

"What sort of a man is Jinks?" "The impression you get of Jinks depends on the circumstances under which you meet him. If you're there to collect money you won't like him; but if you're there to pay money he seems a lovely character."

GERMAN SPIES AT WORK

TWO THOUSAND OF THEM ARE IN ENGLAND.

Kaiser's War Office Has a Large Army Picking up Military Secrets.

Major Alfred J. Reed the other night supplemented to a correspondent of a London newspaper at Auchterarder the statemnts regarding the presence of German spies in England and Scotland which he made at a Unionist meeting in Perthshire, Scotland, recently.

"I regret that for obvious reasons I am not at present permitted to divulge my source of information," he said, "but I may tell you that I have in my possession certain confidential correspondence, official and otherwise, which proves beyond doubt the activity of spies in London, in our eastern counties and in certain districts of Scotland .

"These, if published, would, I feel certain,

CAUSE A GREAT SENSATION.

The methods, organization and deportment of the German secret agents operating among us are at last exposed, and before long I think we may expect certain amazing revelations.

"The fixed agents, who are French, Belgian and Swiss, as well as German subjects in various walks of life, and of both sexes, are known only by number at the central bureau in Berlin, their names only being known to the travelling agent directing operations in their particular district.

"The work of these secret agents, who are marvelously well organized, has taken a new turn within the last few months, the seriousness of which will be at once recognized. Hitherto it was mainly confined to defences, military and naval secrets, food supplies and communications necessary to be destroyed. At the present moment, however, there is great activity among them in the preparation of plans of the water supplies of our large cities, and of how reservoirs may be destroyed and the supply of water cut from the morse densely populated areas.

1,500 IN SCOTLAND.

"In the industrial centres of Scotland alone there are at this moment no fewer that 1,500 persons, male and female, in the employ of the German general staff. It is now known that the whole of the defences of Scotland have been secretly investigated during the last two years, and reported on to Berlin.

"The number of Germans regularly collecting information in England, more especially on the east and south coast, is computed to be over 5,000."

SENTENCE SERMONS.

Growing is in inverse proportion to blowing.

A good day's work is the best prayer for rest.

He who fears to make foes fails to make friends.

The best way to be loyal to the past is to leave it.

For the work of heaven you need the bread of heaven.

True friendship is always richest in days of greatest need.

It's no use wasting blows on the man who is afraid of being hurt.

You get mush instead of men when you offer them only soft places.

It's no use sighing for a chance to lead if you dare not go alone.

Out of deep sorrows come high powers to comfort and strengthen.

Idleness makes the hours wearily long and the days woefully short.

The mark of a heavenly blessing is that it ignores our earthly boundaries.

He can never know any deep joy who can laugh at the sorrows of another.

The man who is liberal in his faith is not always the same in his finances,

Sometimes we need tides of grief to carry us over the bars of our dull content.

The only way to get all the happiness in life is to give for the happiness of all.

The man who hangs his head against hard facts feels his bumps and calls them faith.

If you would make sure of your sins being fruitful bury them under a pretense of piety.

There is always greater benefit in enduring my own pain than in envying another's pleasure.

The devil is worried by the people who work for the good, not by those who worry over him.

Some religious engines are run with all the steam on the brakes and all the air in the cylinders.

The man who thinks he carries the key to heaven in his pants pocket soons finds it fits the wrong door.

There are too many churches praying for souls to be added to them and providing only cold storage houses for them.

WORK FOR UNEMPLOYED

ENGLAND HAS LITTLE TO LEARN IN GERMANY

Labor Exchanges Help to Mitigate Evil—Are Not Complete Success.

A report of an enquiry into the methods adopted in Germany for dealing with unemployment has been presented to the British Labor party by Mr. George N. Barnes, M.P. The enquiry had special reference to insurance and labor exchanges. The commissioners found that there was little to learn,, even in Germay, as regards the practical application of insurance to unemployment. The matter has not yet been taken up by the Imperial authorities, excepting in so far as age, collection and tabulation of statistics bearing upon it, may be described. But it was found that there was a very considerable interest being taken in the question, and that three of the five towns visited had schemes in operation.

LABOR EXCHANGES. ...

Of public labor exchanges there are in Germany about 400, and the number is increasing. As to their utility, the report of the commissioners states, there are, of course, differences of opinion. There are those who regard them as the first and indispensable step to the further dealing with the problem of unemployment, inasmuch as thereby the actual condition of the labor market may be ascertained. There are those who regard labor exchanges as in themselves providing a remedy for unemployment by placing labor where it is wanted, and where it could not otherwiese have been placed.

FINDING THEM WORK. ..

The report for August of Sir Francis Oppenheimer, Counsul-General at Frankfort, showed that in thirteen towns workers were found for more than 10,000 vacancies, and in eight smaller towns vacancies were filled in numbers ranging from 5,000 to 10,000. In Berlin 107,398 vacancies had been filled out of a population of 2,040,222, in Frankfort-on-Main [illegible] out of a population of 488,413, and in Dusseldorf 27,301 out of a population of 253,099. The figures indicate that the exchanges are largely used, and that they have won the confidence of both employer and workman. Their usefulness is increased by the system of co-ordination which obtains in some of the German provinces, for by this means they assist in the mobility of labor.

The investigation of the commissioners led them to the following conclusions:

FINDING OF COMMISSION. ..

(1) That notwithstanding protective tariffs there exists in Germany a large amount of unemployment, though in the places visited the actual numbers of the unemployed and the degree of poverty experienced appeared to have been prevented from reaching the same acute stage as obtains in towns of similar size in Great Britain, owing to the following, among, other, reasons:

(a) The co-ordination and systematic management of public labor exchanges, which admits employers and workmen more easily to ascertain the actual condition of the labor market, and tends to lessen the number of those unemployed.

(b) The desire of municipal authorities and many employers to minimize unemployment by regularizing their requirements.

(c) The greater facilities possessed by the German municipalities to cope with unemployment in their respective areas, owing to their freedom from the restriction imposed by centralized authority.

(2) That inasmuch as the German schemes of insurance for unemployment are only in the experimental stage, and having regard to their obvious limitations, they cannot be recommended for adoption in Great Britain with much confidence.

HOT TALK.

Nagget—I hear she rejected you, I'll bet you felt foolish about that time.

Lovett—Yes, I guess I felt just as foolish at that time as you look all the time.

Guest—"How comes this dead fly in my soup?" Waiter—"In fact, sir, I have no positive idea how the poor thing came by its death. Perhaps it had not taken any food for a long time, dashed upon the soup, ate too much of it, and contracted an inflammation of the stomach that brought on death. The fly must have had a weak constitution, for when I served up the soup it was dancing merrily on the surface. Perhaps—and the idea presented itself only at this moment—it endeavored to swallow too large a piece of vegetable; this, remaining fast in his throat, causing a choking in the windpipe. These are the only reasons I can give for the death of that insect."