

the autocratic government has quite collapsed under the stress of the crisis. Its machinery of relief has hopelessly broken down, and it is powerless to help. The vicar was much impressed by Charlie's stories, and last Sunday gave us a rousing sermon on the subject, attributing the famine entirely to the cruelties practised on the Jews in Russia. He pointed out that, for thousands of years, those people which despitefully entreated the Jews have invariably sunk lower and lower in the comity of nations, while those who have been kind to the race have equally certainly prospered.

A correspondent writes from Samara to the *Pall Mall*, that the Russian authorities have completely lost their heads. The writer then goes on to blame the merchant classes and the koolaks, or village usurers, most severely. He says, "It is impossible to imagine what fiends they are, beginning from the millionaire merchants of Samara down to the village koolaks." A rich merchant of St. Petersburg has been discovered manufacturing flour out of two sorts of refuse. The first of these is the flour made from grain which is ground too young, which cakes and mildews; the second called "living flour," is that which, from being kept long in warehouse, has bred maggots. The enterprising merchant mixed the two and re-ground them, selling the result as ordinary flour. He carries on this industry openly, but, attention having been called to it, he will possibly have to close his manufactory, even if he escapes prosecution. It would be easy to fill columns with stories of the terrible scenes which are being enacted in the provinces. A poor woman of Ratchino, in the Province of Orenberg, a widow, having nothing to give her three children, went to beg at the next village, where they gave her a little bread and cabbage. Hurrying back, she found her little ones all dead. A post-mortem examination showed that the stomachs contained nothing but rags and earth. At Ekaterinburg, a woman confessed to her priest that she wished to kill her four children to save them from such a lingering death. The priest went with her, taking some bread, but it was too late. The children devoured the food, but all died shortly afterwards. A servant girl who has been lately on a visit to her family, says the cattle trucks are filled with men and women "like calves." The Moscow merchants have arrived in numbers to buy up all they can from the peasants. After having purchased all movables, they are now bargaining for the clothes off the backs of the peasants. A peculiarly odious form of traffic is being also carried on in women's hair. Under the circumstances this would be bad enough anywhere, but especially so in Russia, where for a

girl to have her hair cut is a sign of infamy. Not content even with scissors, the buyers use the razor, and pay two roubles (five shillings) for the best head of fair hair. I think, after reading of these horrors, one ought to be very grateful for all one's blessings.

I hear the "ghost boom" is upon us, and Dr. L. A. Weatherly and Mr. J. N. Maskelyne (of the Egyptian Hall) have seized the opportunity, and in a few weeks their book, "The Supernatural?" will be published by Mr. Arrowsmith, of Bristol. It deals with theosophy, ghosts, dreams, Oriental magic, and spiritualism, the argument of the whole being, that to natural causation must we look for supernatural seemings. I shall certainly get it, in the hope that for the future I shall not mind going upstairs in the dark.

How curious that Mrs. Besant and Mrs. Parnell are cousins. I must say I feel for the latter—her remorse must be intense. How terrible to think that had it not been for her influence, Parnell would never have had to enter upon the struggle which killed him. Do you remember those verses written by his sister, Miss Fanny Parnell, who died in 1883? They are very Irish, and very touching.

"Shall mine eyes behold thy glory, O my country? Shall mine eyes behold thy glory?
Or shall the darkness close around them, ere the sunblaze-break at last upon thy story?"

"When the nations ope for thee their queenly circle, as a sweet new sister hail thee,
Shall these lips be sealed in callous death and silence, that have known but to bewail thee?"

"Shall the ear be deaf that only loved thy praises, when all men their tribute bring thee?
Shall the mouth be clay that sang thee in thy squalor, when all poets' mouths shall sing thee?"

"Ah! the harpings and the salvos and the shoutings of thy exiled sons returning
I should hear, tho' dead and mouldered, and the grave-damps should not chill my bosom's burning."

"Ah! the tramp of feet victorious! I should hear them 'mid the shamrocks and the mosses;
And my heart should toss within the shroud and quiver as a captive dreamer tosses."

"I should turn and rend the cere-clothes round me, giant sinews I should borrow,
Crying, 'Oh, my brothers, I have also loved her in her loneliness and sorrow."

"Let me join with you the jubilant procession; let me chant with you her story;
Then, contented, I shall go back to the shamrocks, now mine eyes have seen her glory!"

The "Rudyard Kipling craze" continues, and I do not wonder. The *Illustrated American* of course has a little story about him. It seems "he works overmuch at his profession, and was sent away by his Physicians to take a little sea trip round the coast. The company was rather

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