

drifted apart during the reign of Nicholas I; how the Crimean War estranged them for over half a century, and how, after the agreement of 1907, they were once more drawn together till the Great War forged a blood bond between them which, had not Bolshevism intervened, might have united them for all time. Their present relations are abnormal and difficult to

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define; and the outlook is so dark that I will venture on no prophecy as regards the future. It is a sealed book whose secrets we cannot read. God grant, however, that at some not distant time a new, free, and united Russia may once more stretch out the hand of friendship to us and march by our side along the road of peace, progress, and enlightenment.

A SWEDE'S VISIT TO PETROGRAD

BY J. HESSEN

On arriving abroad, the first thing that met my eye in a Berlin paper was a notice of how a meeting of a Workmen's and Soldiers' Council was broken off because the rooms were let for the remainder of the day for a masked ball. A workmen's council and a dancing salon — a true symbol of Bolshevism! The mere allusion to such a combination ought to be a sufficient warning against a repetition of the Russian experiment. But in Berlin, as in Petrograd, there is the same passion for dancing, and the Workmen's and Soldiers' Council, in whose hands lies the fate of the mother country, has to give way to the frivolities of a masquerade.

After a long and enforced interruption I have again begun to read French and English papers, but they apparently have no clear idea of what is happening in Russia or of what Bolshevik activities consist. There are numerous accounts of Bolshevik terrorism and atrocities, for the most part greatly exaggerated, which prevent

people getting at the real undisguised truth. As the press is entirely suppressed, many of the most terrible happenings are never made known. The European press is full of the many horrors in Russia, but is it known that four professors of the Conservatoire at Petrograd actually died of starvation last Christmas? That the Bolsheviks refuse to allow anyone to help the numerous prisoners who are without food, as, for instance, the Duke of Leuchtenberg, who is starving in prison while his friends and relations are compelled to remain in hiding?

Many times in the winter the snow was so thick on the railways round about Moscow, and the cold so intense, that passengers died in the carriages where the snow had penetrated, and those who tried to walk to the nearest station perished on the way and were buried under the snow. There is not a place in all soviet Russia where spotted typhus does not rage, and people stand in queues in the churchyards to bury their dead, who

are often lowered into the grave without a coffin, as it is impossible to supply the numbers that are required.

A stranger who had read of all the horrors reported from Russia would be surprised on arriving at Petrograd to see so little of the terrible things he had expected to find. On leaving the station he would be met by an apparently peaceful scene of everyday life; trams are running, at long intervals certainly, and they are much in need of repairs, but they are crowded with people, children going to school, various officials with their portfolios on their way to their bureaus. In front of the station a brisk trade in provisions is carried on: bread, meat, milk, sugar, etc. The air is full of an indescribable torrent of quite futurist abusive terms, but a foreigner would look upon it as a typical specimen of Russian everyday life, and although much may be out of order and in need of adjustment, he would imagine that the old state of affairs would be restored the moment Bolshevik terrorism disappears.

This is just the fatal mistake made by Europe and America. The perspective of the future and the hopes called forth by this view of the case form the great tragedy of the situation, while therein lies the greatest danger for the whole world, since Russia must be considered an important part of the community of nations.

The war has cost an unheard of number of lives, but that is not the worst feature of the case. The worst is that existence or life itself has so adapted itself to the Bolshevik conditions that it has entered into the form prepared by the Bolsheviks, who ruthlessly upset and overthrew everything, and yet everyday life is almost unchanged. In order to be able to adapt themselves to these conditions, which until quite recently would have

been considered impossible, and to submit to them, the people must have gone through a grave psychical upheaval. The entire physiognomy of the soul must have totally changed.

It is true that Russia is now experiencing the triumph of brutality, but it must be admitted that there were times when still greater brutality prevailed. In fact, it is not the matter in itself that is the decisive factor, but its relation to our state of thought and feelings.

The Bolsheviks, however, utterly ignore the way of thinking that characterizes this generation; they are full of contempt for the standard of culture which by degrees has been acquired. Everything in life has been turned upside down by them. Maxim Gorki (before he became a Bolshevik) wrote in his paper how quickly and easily a political revolution could be brought about, but that it was impossible in a day to change the character and habits of a people. This elementary truth does not appeal to the Bolsheviks. On the contrary, every detail in daily life has been overthrown, the social side of life has been brought down to the lowest level, all individuality is suppressed, and everyday life has become a most complicated affair. Nothing can be done without registration and applying for permission. In this manner has the everyday life, which otherwise ran its course without any effort, been transformed into a ceaseless straining of energy and strenuous work. The very reading of the papers is a strain on people's attention, so anxious are they not to overlook any of the new regulations or obligation to pay new fines.

This constant strain must inevitably give rise to a state of over-exhaustion which is all the more serious as the entire trend of life in general is in the

same direction. The unheard of high cost of living is a special source of suffering. When I mentioned some of the prices I had been called upon to pay for different articles of food, I was accused of exaggerating. People have also suffered terribly from the cold, particularly in Moscow. Firewood cannot be bought without a license, and unless one has friends in soviet circles it is very difficult to obtain one.

It is obvious that under present conditions, and in view of the abnormal nerve-strain people are exposed to, it is impossible that they in the long run can preserve their psychical balance. It may safely be affirmed that in Petrograd, in fact, in the whole of Russia, no psychically normal people exist any longer. Their mental state shows itself in their appearance, not only by their losing weight, but their energies are dulled, they are without life and interest, and go about looking like wandering corpses. In every street may be seen well-dressed people, both men and women, who stand there begging for food. Strange as it may seem, these scenes do not appear to arouse a spirit of compassion, but only serve to strengthen the instinct of self-preservation and egoism. Everything becomes more and more concentrated on the food question; all other interests are put to one side, or vanish altogether. In the streets, the theatres,

the trams, the schools, at meetings of professors, the one subject of conversation is food.

It is quite impossible to fight against this tendency or to struggle against the feeling of hopelessness, when not a single bright spot is visible on the horizon. Every day the situation becomes worse; the town grows emptier and dirtier, bodies of dead horses lie about in the streets, with crowds of hungry dogs skulking round them. The shops are shut, the few that are still open have almost nothing to sell.

Some years ago Rörich, one of Russia's greatest artists, painted a picture entitled 'The Town of the Death-doomed'; that picture, together with Dostoevsky's novel, *Evil Spirits*, are the two most popular possessions in Russia at present.

Hopelessness dominates everyone and everything. It is this feeling, that there is no way out of the trouble and that each day brings the country nearer to ruin, which has brought about such a total change in the mental life of the people. It is the fear of being plunged into an abyss which has imbued the people with such brutal egoism, but one trembles for the consequences on the character of children and young people brought up in such an atmosphere.

In whose name are all the sacrifices made, and what is it that has to be paid for so dearly?

Dagens Nyheter

ON LAUNCHING A NEW PAPER

WE believe the *Daily Courant* was the first daily paper published in England. It was a single sheet, printed on one side, and it appeared in 1702. That was not much more than two centuries ago — a mere fraction of time in our history. But in that time what a necessity of life the daily paper has become! What should we do without it? as Mr. Squeers said of Nature. What would the city men do without those fluttering rags which convert our morning trains into an army with banners? What would the betting men do? Or where would be the interest in races, boxing, and the football leagues? What should we do if we had to wait to hear about our battles till generals had finished polishing their dispatches, or till the men came home 'demobbed' and gave us their variegated tales? We should know even less of foreign parts than we know at present. We should, perhaps, think less of Parliament. The whole course of life and trade and politics and intercourse and conversation would be changed. We should miss the milk almost as much. And yet up to Queen Anne's reign our fathers got along somehow, and we are told that nearly up to Charles I no news was ever printed at all, and then only once a week. People must have lived on gossip more scanty than our own, and unvarnished.

It is needless to discuss the influence of the press. That would be to encroach upon the standing theme of many a sumptuous banquet where the mighty speaker rolls out his laborious platitudes, keeping a condescending eye fixed upon the reporters. The personal experience of any leader-writer is sufficient. How often at lunch or in a train does the leader-writer, still weary with slamming down his

morning's leader upon the copy paper in the office, listen to his random sentences quoted whole as the private and original opinion of person or persons unknown but sitting at his side! How often does he hear his leaders solemnly received as gospel, or as solemnly contradicted! Is it shame or pride which then fills his heart? At all events he recognizes the power of the press better than the eloquent platitudinarian of the banquet, and he needs no further proof.

As to the qualifications of a journalist, it is well known that 'Contempt of Shame and Indifference to Truth are absolutely necessary,' and Dr. Johnson, who thus defined the necessity, had every reason to know. For, though he acted as Parliamentary reporter for about three years to Cave's *Gentleman's Magazine* (we think it was), he boasted that he was only once in the House of Commons, and the speeches, including one of the elder Pitt's very finest, were entirely his own composition. Other writers of equal fame have engaged from time to time in the same precarious trade, though perhaps with less risk to character, since most of them wrote 'middles' rather than news, and were less exposed to contempt of shame and indifference to truth. We are thinking, of course, of such models in 'middle' writing as Defoe, Steele, Addison, Smollett, Goldsmith, perhaps 'Junius' (though he was rather a leader-writer), Coleridge, Lamb, Dickens, Thackeray, and, in our own times, Andrew Lang. Yet in spite of such names in literature of the best, a stigma was early attached to journalism as being literature's enemy. So it was that steady-going old Crabbe wrote of newspapers:

A daily swarm that banish every muse,
Come flying forth and mortals call them
news;
For these, unread the noblest volume lie,
For these, in sheets unsoiled the muses die.