

BOYCOTTING THE NEW "DOUMA" IN RUSSIA.

ADVANCED liberals, to say nothing of the revolutionary parties, are profoundly dissatisfied with "the Bouliguin douma," as they contemptuously call the popular assembly created by the Czar (considered in our issue for August 26, page 268). They denounce it, as readers are aware from press despatches, because of its unrepresentative character, its limited and purely advisory powers, and its lack of autonomy. They complain that the property qualification for voters at the douma elections is too high, so high as to disfranchise all city workmen and the majority of the professional and "intellectual" elements—teachers, lawyers, journalists, writers, physicians, and so on. They aver that even the peasants will not be properly represented, owing to the indirect method of election and the influence of the bureaucracy. But the question has arisen and been actively discussed, What is to be done? Shall the disappointed liberals, the constitutionalists, who expected a genuine and potent assembly elected by a wide, democratic suffrage, accept the douma as an earnest, a step forward, or shall they scornfully repudiate it—boycott it, in short?

A boycott of the douma and the elections for members thereof has been strongly advocated in private circles and illegal publications. The reviews and newspapers have discussed the proposed boycott, but from a negative point of view. The leading liberal magazine, the *Viestnik Evropy*, which frankly describes itself as "moderate" or "centrist," deplors the boycott agitation while freely criticizing the douma scheme as it stands. To quote:

"The prevalence of such a view of our duty in large circles of intelligent men would be a great misfortune for Russia. There is evidence on every page of the political history of Western Europe that the recognition of the imperfections of an electoral system is entirely compatible with participation and cooperation in a national assembly founded on such a defective system. It is sufficient to refer to the French Chamber of Deputies of the days of Louis Philippe, in which, undemocratic as it was, there sat Garnier-Pages and Ledru-Rollin. It is equally certain that in an assembly which represents the minority rather than the majority, splendid, manly, determined warfare in behalf of right and justice may be carried on—an illustration is afforded by the conflict between Bismarck and the German Reichstag. In Russia something similar has been witnessed: mutilated and crippled as our zemstvo institutions have been since 1890, the best of the zemstvo workers have not held themselves aloof from these activities, and thanks to this they have been able to play so conspicuous a part in the events of the recent past."

This review, accordingly, urges all practical reformers to take part in the elections, send as many progressives to the douma as the conditions may permit, and continue the fight for better things from the new position.

The *Novoye Vremya* sneers at the boycott advocates, and says that they really fear the exposure of their own impotence and insignificance. They could not get themselves elected if they would, it adds, and their "absenteeism" is a case of sour grapes. The *Osvobojdenie*, the "illegal" organ of the constitutionalists, published at Paris, considers at length the pros and cons of the boycott proposition and concludes that, while the extreme and revolutionary parties are logical and consistent in the position they have assumed, since they prefer to continue the war on the autocracy from the outside, it would be a grave political error from the broader view of future national progress. The essential thing is union among the anti-autocratic and reform parties, and to oppose all compromise is to imperil the whole cause of Russian progress. Russia has already suffered greatly from the idealism and plumb-line-ism of her reformers, and to boycott the douma now is to sacrifice the advantage of far more favorable political conditions than the zemstvoists have enjoyed in the past.

The executive committee of the zemstvo congress, at a Moscow meeting, has adopted a resolution against the douma boycott and recommended vigorous participation in the elections.—*Translations made for THE LITERARY DIGEST.*

GERMAN OBJECTIONS TO THE CZAR'S POLISH REFORMS.

IF the diplomats of the Congress of Vienna, in 1815, thought they had settled the Polish question by their final distribution of the kingdom, they might learn better from the European comments of to-day on the disturbances caused in the cabinets of kings by this nation that was supposedly legislated out of existence so long ago. At the present moment, according to the *Slowo Polskie* (of Leopold, Austrian Poland), the Polish question is likely to cause friction between Russia and Germany. Concessions made by Russia to her Polish population rouse the restless Polish population of Germany, and *vice versa*. An insurrection in any one of the sections of dismembered Poland would result in a revolt in either or both of the two others. Hence the present jealousy and uneasiness with which Germany and Russia are eying each other. To quote:

"Judging by the voices of the semiofficial press, pressure has been exerted by Germany on the Russian Government in order that the latter should not make any grave concessions to the Poles. A Polish aristocrat that has relations in Russian court circles was explicitly told that the resolutions of the Committee of Ministers [in the matter of Polish reforms] will not satisfy the Poles, but considerations of foreign policy did not allow the Government to make more advanced concessions. It is clear that these 'considerations of foreign policy' signify a regard for the relation of Russia to Germany."

Indeed, the German semiofficial press describe quite distinctly the attitude of the German Government in the matter of the concessions for the Poles under Russian rule. Here is what the *Gegenwart*, the organ of the Alliance of Agriculturists, which is called Germany's "collateral government," writes of this subject:

"The new course in Russia's internal policy obliges Germany to raise her voice against the liberal tendency in Russia, especially in relation to the Poles, and this, because the traditional attitude of our government and of the Russian Government toward their Polish subjects indicates the degree of heat or cold in their mutual relation. In Berlin and in St. Petersburg there has become fixed the conviction, which belongs to the political axioms, that whoever moves the Polish card stirs the Russo-German relation; whenever the mercury rises on the Polish-Russian or on the Polish-German thermometer, it surely falls on the Russo-German thermometer.

"So has it always been, and so will it always be. Hence, we judge that our government has not neglected to caution whomsoever it is necessary in St. Petersburg, that the Russian internal policy may be dangerous to German interests. . . .

"We can reconcile ourselves to the admission of the Poles to government service; to their being granted permission to possess land, especially if that privilege shall be circumscribed by certain reservations; finally, we agree to the introduction of the Polish language as the language of instruction in the teaching of religion and Polish literature. But if the schools should, in general, be Polonized, and if special political arrangements for the Poles should be introduced, that would be a very serious event, upon which our statesmen would have to meditate deeply, as such a reform would represent an exceedingly precipitous path leading to dangerous doubts as to how Russia intends in future to handle the Polish card."

Altho Russia's hearkening to Germany's counsel would disable Russia for a long time in European politics, it would not be surprising if she followed the voice of the German inspired organs, says a Polish comment on the *Gegenwart* article, for both the Czar's Government and the anarchy which is running riot in Russia have long been working unwittingly "*pour le roi de Prusse.*"—*Translations made for THE LITERARY DIGEST.*

The construction of the new class of battle-ships, says *The Daily News* (London), decided upon by the German Government as a result of the lessons of the Russo-Japanese War, will be begun next year. The main object of the increase in size is to allow of the vessels carrying heavier guns, it being expected that the new ships will be provided with 30-centimetre instead of 28-centimetre weapons, the heaviest now carried on German war-ships.

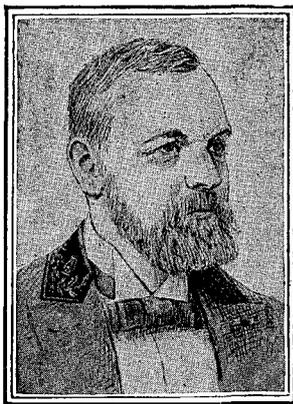
NOTABLE BOOKS OF THE DAY.

SCIENCE'S LATEST MARTYRDOM.

ANTARCTICA; OR, TWO YEARS AMONGST THE ICE OF THE SOUTH POLE. By Dr. Otto G. Nordenskjöld and Dr. Johan Gunnar Andersson. Illustrated, with Maps and Index. Cloth, pp. xviii, 608. Price, \$5.00. Hurst & Blackett, Limited, London. The Macmillan Company, New York.

THE scientific material collected by the ill-fated Swedish Antarctic expedition of 1901-1904 is being examined at the cost of the Swedish Government. Dr. Nordenskjöld wrote at once on his return an outline of the expedition's experience to the London *Times*; later, one to the *Deutsche Revue*; also a short sketch to the *Independent*, this year. This is the English form of the full popular account.

The *Antarctic*, it will be remembered, after cruising a month in the seas south of the South Shetland Islands, landed Dr. Nordenskjöld with



OTTO G. NORDENSKJÖLD.

a party of five on "Snow Hill Island," south of Haddington Land, to winter there. They erected their house and observatories, and began scientific work. The steamer then brought the rest of the scientists back to the waters between Tierra del Fuego and South Georgia Island, where, under Dr. Andersson, they made scientific investigations. The intention was in the spring to take off Dr. Nordenskjöld; the best possible use was to be made of the Antarctic summer of 1902-1903; and in May, 1903, they were all to be back in Sweden.

But when the *Antarctic* turned southward for Dr. Nordenskjöld, the pack-ice prevented her from reaching him. Dr. Andersson, with two

companions, left her at "Hope Bay," meaning to try to reach Nordenskjöld by sledge. They failed, however, and were forced to return to the bay and winter in an improvised stone-hut. Poorly equipped, they suffered great hardship. The *Antarctic*, nipped in the ice, sank south of the eastern extremity of Joinville Island, carrying down collections, notes, etc. Her twenty souls, after drifting about on the ice for sixteen days, landed on Paulet Island, where they led a wretched existence for nine months. One of the sailors died and was buried there.

Here lay the two relief parties during a second winter, each ignorant of the fate of, and unable to communicate with, the other, and both equally unacquainted with Nordenskjöld's condition and barred from reaching him. Yet so near to each other were the three parties, that from his island's heights Nordenskjöld could see the locality of both Andersson's and Captain Larsen's station, without, however, any of his little band's suspecting their friends' comparative nearness. Finally, Andersson and Nordenskjöld met on a sledge-trip. Soon afterward Larsen and five others set out in a whale-boat from Paulet Island and found Nordenskjöld, on the very day that he had been reached by the officers of a warship sent out for the expedition's relief by the Argentine Republic. Part I. gives the story of Dr. Nordenskjöld's party, and is written by him; Part II. tells the experiences of the two relief parties, and is written mostly by Dr. Andersson, the botanist of the expedition, and Captain Larsen.

To the general reader, the book's main interest will lie in what gave Kane's and Livingstone's and Stanley's writings their charm—its story of romantic adventure. It is as fascinating reading as Robinson Crusoe. Antarctic scenery and natural phenomena are vividly portrayed. There is abundant detail that makes the pictures clear and complete without tiring. And the ample maps and the numerous illustrations from photographs (there are a few reproductions in color from paintings by F. W. Stokes, the American Polar artist, who was with the party for a time), added to the graphic text, bring the romantic happenings so clearly before the reader that he feels himself actually going through them.

The expedition made the first comprehensive researches in the seas and lands south of South America and the Atlantic—"the land of greatest mystery the earth now owns." It has reconstructed the map, between longitude 55° and 64° W., of the southernmost land man knows. It discovered the first fossil on South Georgia Island, and further south fossils (animal and plant) that form a foundation, Dr. Nordenskjöld thinks, on which will eventually be built a knowledge of the main Antarctic geological features from the Jurassic period to our own time. It made geological, botanical, and zoological collections, and astronomical, meteorological, hydrographical, and magnetic observations, extending over two years (in collaboration with the English and German expeditions working simultaneously respectively in Victoria Land and Emperor William Land), also bacteriological investigations, the exact value of the whole of which remains to be announced. The Antarctic region it found to be practically uninhabitable—in summer as cold as the Swedish winter, and in winter still colder, with terrific, protracted hurricanes. The

expedition did not either winter or penetrate as far south as either the English or the German one.

ANOTHER DREAM OF MAN'S BEST ESTATE.

A MODERN UTOPIA. By H. G. Wells. Cloth, 393 pp. Price, \$1.50 net. Charles Scribner's Sons.

MR. WELLS meant this work as a very serious one. Many readers of it will find its perusal trying, and will fail to realize, as proper compensation for the task of reading the same, whatever grist it offers for the mind. It would have been far better had Mr. Wells maintained throughout, both in the form and manner of his book, as well as in his attitude toward it, an unmodified seriousness. "A Modern Utopia" is the third book from him to deal with sociological and kindred topics. In a note to the reader Mr. Wells admits that he wrote the first of them, "Anticipations," in order to "clear up the muddle" in his own mind ament the subjects he therein treated. That did not accomplish the classifying process desired, so he wrote "Mankind in the Making." This he regards as "even less satisfactory, from a literary standpoint, than the former," but it was an improvement as far as his own instruction was concerned. In fact, he achieved "a certain personal certitude upon which I feel I shall go for the rest of my days." In this third book he deals with some issues left over or opened up by the others, and seeks to embody "the general picture of a Utopia . . . at once possible and more desirable than the world in which I live." He says he has written into it "the heretical metaphysical scepticism upon which all my thinking rests."

Since Mr. Wells has so successfully taken his "cure," and promises to abandon the style of work which wrought it, one might congratulate him and let it go at that. This, however, would be human and friendly, rather than critical. Certainly, Mr. Wells, in his button-holing of the reader by his foreword, suggests, by his apologetic deprecation and forestalling, not as much confidence in his work as in the result upon him, and, candidly, the work appears to warrant it! Not that the otherness of his Utopia is too bizarre, too foundationless, or not sufficiently ameliorative. But it is not Utopian enough. It is municipally very proper, clear, and reasonable, rather than alluring. It is a panacea, perhaps, for Mr. Wells's laboring mind, but not a potent lure for other mentalists with a keener demand for Happiness with a large H.

There is a wobbly bit of romance, and a thankful skein of narrative which only irritate and distract the reader. Mr. Wells places his Utopia

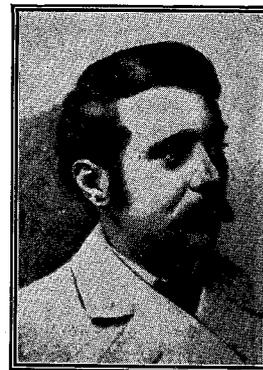
on the extreme verge of space, and then (as antidote to nostalgia?) finds it so like Switzerland and London, tho "improved," that the visible difference is not perceptible. "It would be indefinable, a change in the quality of their grouping, a change in the quality of their remote small shapes." This is not the Utopia of the human dreamer, who would fain have a palpable touch of Paradise in his.

Another unhappy "property" Mr. Wells employs is a wretched botanist who has had an unfortunate love-affair, for which Utopian wanderings are not even a distraction. He is a tiresome little creature. So that Mr. Wells's attempt to sugar-coat his pill of sociological ideality only makes it more bitter.

His Utopia suggests a "Bank Holiday" with the nicest kind of self-made men consciously ruminating on their delectation.

There is no laboring or servile class in this Happy No Land. The government of this World State is vested in a body of "Nature's Noblemen," whom, with his transliterative penchant, he styles "Samurai." There is a premium on Maternity. Mr. Wells admits that the question "of marriage is the most complicated and difficult in the whole range of Utopian problems." But the question of government is more insistent. There is no meat in this Utopia, which suggests melancholy degrees of cereal alimentation. But in the matter of drinks, there is a lovely latitude. "Under no circumstances," says Mr. Wells, robustly, "can I think of my Utopians maintaining their fine order of life on ginger-ale and lemonade. Those terrible temperance drinks fill a man with wind and self-righteousness." In this respect, his Utopians are Eu-to-per-ians.

"A Modern Utopia" has received lengthy and flattering criticism, or at all events, reading notices. The London *Athenæum* says "there has been no work of this importance published for the last thirty years." (?) The *Academy* thinks it "an advance on Mr. Wells's high level." The *Outlook* (London) thinks the main attraction of the book is its "unaccountable touch of reality," but as to real problems of Society, when Mr. Wells treats them we "feel that he is floundering in a quagmire of superficialities and impossibilities," and "immaturities of conception." The *Sun* and *Times* (New York) are laudatory, but *The Independent* scores the blend of romance and argument as "exceedingly unfortunate," and regards the



H. G. WELLS.