

marked absence of crime, and concluded his remarks as follows:

"Take, for instance, your own county [Carlow]. It maintains its eminent character for tranquillity and order. There is only one prisoner returned for trial in it. In the county of the town of Drogheda it is the same. In the county of Louth there are only two cases, County Meath only two, Queen's County only two, County Wexford two. In the County of Wicklow there are three. From the county of the city of Kilkenny there does not come a single case for trial."

THE RUSSIAN SUFFERING.

COUNT LEO TOLSTOI, the eminent Russian novelist and philanthropist, has a six-column article on the famine among his countrymen in a recent issue of the *New York World*.

He begins by referring briefly to the acquaintance of the outside world with the condition and locality of the famine-stricken districts, this having been accomplished by means of mail and telegraphic communication and the press, and the reproaches bestowed because of alleged apathy and indifference. These reproaches he claims to be exaggerated, if not entirely groundless, and "I have," he says, "come to the conclusion that society and the Zemstvos have been straining every nerve to help them, and that their efforts have attained a degree of tension which admits only of relaxation, not of increase of energy." So, also, he says the central government are doing, their contributions being in the form of alms, public works and gratuitous fuel. These efforts, added to those of charitable societies, churches, journalists, men of letters, and the more wealthy in the various departments of life, are all that could be expected.

He says, if the results of all these efforts are inadequate, the fault is not essentially with the government or society. The relations of the government to the people are more to blame, and these he makes clear, prefacing his explanations with the startling statement that the culminating point of the distress has not yet been reached. Two things, which appear to the author as the cardinal omissions in that behalf, are the failure to supply seed corn to the peasantry who needed it, and not giving them gratuitous fuel from the State forests.

These faults seem to us so simple, so easily overcome, that it is only by a perusal of the entire article we can be made to understand how it is that such seemingly trivial circumstances constitute the keynote in the great wail of distress that surges up and out from the Muscovite peasantry.

Most of the seed corn furnished came so late that its object was not accom-

plished and the hungry ones were compelled to devour it at once instead of reserving it for the use designed; and of the fuel distribution Tolstoi says that on September 13 "permission was accorded to the families of necessitous farmers to gather dry, wind-fallen wood in the forests belonging to the State, which, however, were situated at such considerable distances from the villages on which this privilege was conferred, that the peasants, none of whom had any hay for their horses, found it absolutely impossible to cart it home. I know for certain that in my district not a single peasant profited by the boon."

This represents a state of affairs not confined to one or a few instances or localities, but is widespread and general, being dwelt upon by the writer at considerable length.

The question as to whether there is famine or only a panic prevalent in the stricken districts, Tolstoi answers by a characteristic illustration:

"If you want to patch a hole in a coat or other garment, it behooves you first of all to find out the size and shape of the rent. This is the first step which any reasonable man would think of taking. But, as it happens, it is precisely about the shape and size of the rent in the welfare of the Russian people that the representatives of the latter and the government are now at sixes and sevens. The authorities maintain that it is so very small and imperceptible that no patch is needed, that a patch of any kind would only spoil the garment and render it unfit for wear. The former contend that it is so immense that all the cloth available would not suffice to cover it. And while they both stand there wrangling and waxing hot, the icy wind is blowing through the hole, and the limbs of the unfortunate wearer are becoming stiff and numb."

And then he summarizes his answer by setting forth what he saw "with his own eyes." In some places the people were eating bread containing thirty to fifty per cent. pigweed, this being not figurately black, that is dark or brown when applied to bread, but inky black, heavy, clammy and bitter:

"And this is the stuff which young and old, weak and sickly, consume; delicate little children eat it; women before and after childbirth are nourished on it; mothers who suckle their newborn children draw from it whatever strength and nutriment it can give, and the sick and dying feed the flickering lamp of life with it."

Similar instances are numerous, and even harder cases not infrequent—such as a peasant selling three of the four wooden walls of his hut and burning the fourth for fuel; buying potato stalks of a landlord and the buyer binding himself to till an equal amount of land to that from which the stalks (or vines) were taken, in payment.

The situation is so appalling, so unbrokeably miserable, so unmitigatedly,

unbearably, heartbreakingly distressful that moral restraints are broken down, drunkenness prevails whenever and wherever the opportunity comes for it, and it really seems that if the prevailing distress were to be relieved altogether, the train of evils entailed upon the people, as a consequence of their sufferings, have taken too firm a hold to be for a long period entirely overcome. It is indeed a terrible, terrible tale.

BE SENSIBLE!

THE more the qualifications of the respective candidates for municipal office are canvassed, the plainer does it become to reasonable people, that either the Democratic or the Republican ticket is far in advance of the "Liberal" slate. Particularly is this the case in regard to the nominees for Mayor.

No one has been able, yet, in all the flaming speeches of lusty-voiced orators, or the idiotic pow wows of burlesque Indians, to advance a single reason why any business man in this city should vote for an anti-"Mormon" monomaniac for Mayor. Whatever he might be fit for in some other walk of life, it must be evident to all who knew him that he is by nature, proclivities, experience and personal manners and disposition totally unsuited to the place into which the "Liberal" bosses are determined to foist him.

Mr. Lett, or Mr. Wells is so much more adapted for such a position that the idea of comparing them with Baskin is truly laughable. We know the "Liberals" have done a great many foolish and irrational things, but we can scarcely believe that the business men among them, or any who have the interests of the city at heart, can carry their slavishness to party so far as to thrust such a cranky character into the municipal executive chair.

Will not the better elements of this city unite sufficiently to show their contempt for the insult which this nomination has put upon the capable men among them, and quietly support on Monday a man who will not be an angular and gnarled post in a round and even hole? "Country first, party afterward."

RELIGION IN RUSSIA.

IN the Presbyterian *Review* for January the Rev. Nicholas Bjerring has an article on "Religion in Russia." The figures which the gentleman quotes are those of 1878. Whether later reliable statistics were obtainable he does not say. In that year the