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EDITORIAL

THE THIRD DUMA.

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THE Duma is the product of what is justly considered the revolutionary effervescence in Russia. The present Duma is the third of its species. In rapid succession three of these parliaments have followed upon one another's heels. Two points determine the direction of a line; if still a third point is in line with the line determined by the two previous ones, the permanent direction of the line is absolutely established. What is the direction of the line in which the Duma is moving? The answer to this, like the answer to most social questions, can be best read by the light of the torches lighted by the genius of Marx. On this particular subject the enlightening torch is found in a brilliant passage of *The Eighteenth Brumaire*. It is as follows:

“In the first French revolution, upon the reign of the constitutionalists, succeeds that of the Girondins, and upon the reign of the Girondins follows that of the Jacobins. Each of these parties in succession rests upon its more advanced element. So soon as it has carried the revolution far enough not to be able to keep pace with, much less march ahead of it, it is shoved aside by its more daring allies, who stand behind it, and it is sent to the guillotine. Thus the revolution moves along an upward line.

“Just the reverse in 1848. The proletarian party appears as an appendage to the small traders' or democratic party; it is betrayed by the latter and allowed to fall on April 16, May 15, and in the June days. In its turn, the democratic party leans upon the shoulders of the bourgeois republicans; barely do the bourgeois republicans believe themselves firmly in power, than they shake off these troublesome associates for the purpose of themselves leaning upon the shoulders of the party of Order. The party of Order draws in its shoulders, lets the bourgeois republicans tumble down heels over head, and throws itself upon the shoulders of the armed power. Finally, still of the mind that it is sustained by the shoulders of the armed power, the party of Order notices one fine morning that these shoulders have turned into bayonets. Each party kicks backward at those who are pushing forward, and leans forward upon those who are crowding backward.”

The first Duma consisted of a large number of peasant delegates, besides industrial reformers. In the second Duma the numbers of these had decreased visibly; the Constitutional Democrats, already a powerful fraction, became relatively still more powerful; while the reactionary wing gained in numbers. In this third Duma the peasantry delegation is but a “vestige”; the industrial revolutionists, ditto; while the reactionary element, though not yet in absolute control, have the lead. Finally, the situation is pictorially summarized by the ostentatious display of ecclesiastics gowned in cloth of gold, followed by a choir intoning deep-toned chants of praise.

The Russian Revolution that brought forth the Duma partakes of the nature of that first French States General described in Eugene Sue’s “The Iron Trevet.” By the light of Marx’s analysis of the French Revolution of 1848, we can comprehend the nature of the receding steps of these Dumas. As the Movement—that Marcel set on foot and materialized in the premature revolution described in “The Iron Trevet”—though it receded and finally went down, yet re-rose in the great second upheaval which Marx takes as the type of progressive revolutionary action, so will, upon the ruins of the Dumas we have witnessed, rise, and speedily too, another Movement the tempo of whose motion will be, not that of the French Revolution of 1848, but that of the French Revolution that Marx sketches as the type to be followed.

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