

Students at Harvard or Kieff.

Prince Kropotkin in The North American Review.

During my stay last month at Cambridge, the Harvard students held a noisy meeting to protest against the "mutton monotony" of their food at Memorial Hall. In a similar way, but with a more serious purpose, the Kieff students, excited by the fact that one of them had been brought before the Justice of the Peace for misconduct in the streets of that city, also held a meeting. At Harvard the meeting ended in fun, but at Kieff the Dean of the university excluded a number of students from the university for one year for having held that meeting, and put others under arrest. "What would you do in such a case?" I asked several Harvard men, and the reply always was: "Why, of course, hold another meeting!" This is what the Kieff students did. They held another general meeting and asked the Dean to have a talk with them. Whereupon the Dean sent for the town police, the State police, and the troops. Incredible though this may seem, it actually happened. It is confirmed not only by scores of private letters, but also by an official statement, published in The Official Messenger. "The meeting was illegal, and the Dean sent for troops to disperse it." The most intelligent of all those who were summoned by the Dean proved to be the head of the Kieff State Police, the Gendarme General Novitsky. I knew him: he examined me while I was kept in the St. Petersburg fortress. He is intelligent, and my opinion of him was that, like so many others, he is a better man than the institution he belongs to. Gen. Novitsky, seeing that the meeting was quite peaceful, brought in the Dean, who was immediately offered an armchair by the side of the Chairman, and was treated very politely by the students. But the meeting ended in nothing—the Dean refusing to revise his orders. "Was not the meeting uproarious? Was it not political?" I was asked by my American friends. "No, the facts were as I state them; The Official Messenger itself has confirmed them." "Was, then, the Dean a madman, or a fool?" "No, he was neither of these." And there lies the cue to all the students' disturbances of the last forty years.