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RUSSIA.  
DESCRIPTIVE AND ILLUSTRATIVE.









RUSSIA

BY  
THORWALDSEN

BY  
LUDWIG LITZINGER, FRANCIS TAYLOR, AND  
WALTER B. MANN



A Figure by Thorwaldsen

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS  
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# RUSSIA

BY

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER

AUTHOR OF "ITALY," "CONSTANTINOPLE," "THE ORIENT," ETC.

AND BY

OTHER DISTINGUISHED FRENCH TRAVELERS AND  
WRITERS OF NOTE

*TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH, WITH AN  
ADDITIONAL CHAPTER UPON THE STRUGGLE  
FOR SUPREMACY IN THE FAR EAST*

BY

FLORENCE MACINTYRE TYSON

ILLUSTRATED BY NUMEROUS PHOTOGRAVURES

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. TWO

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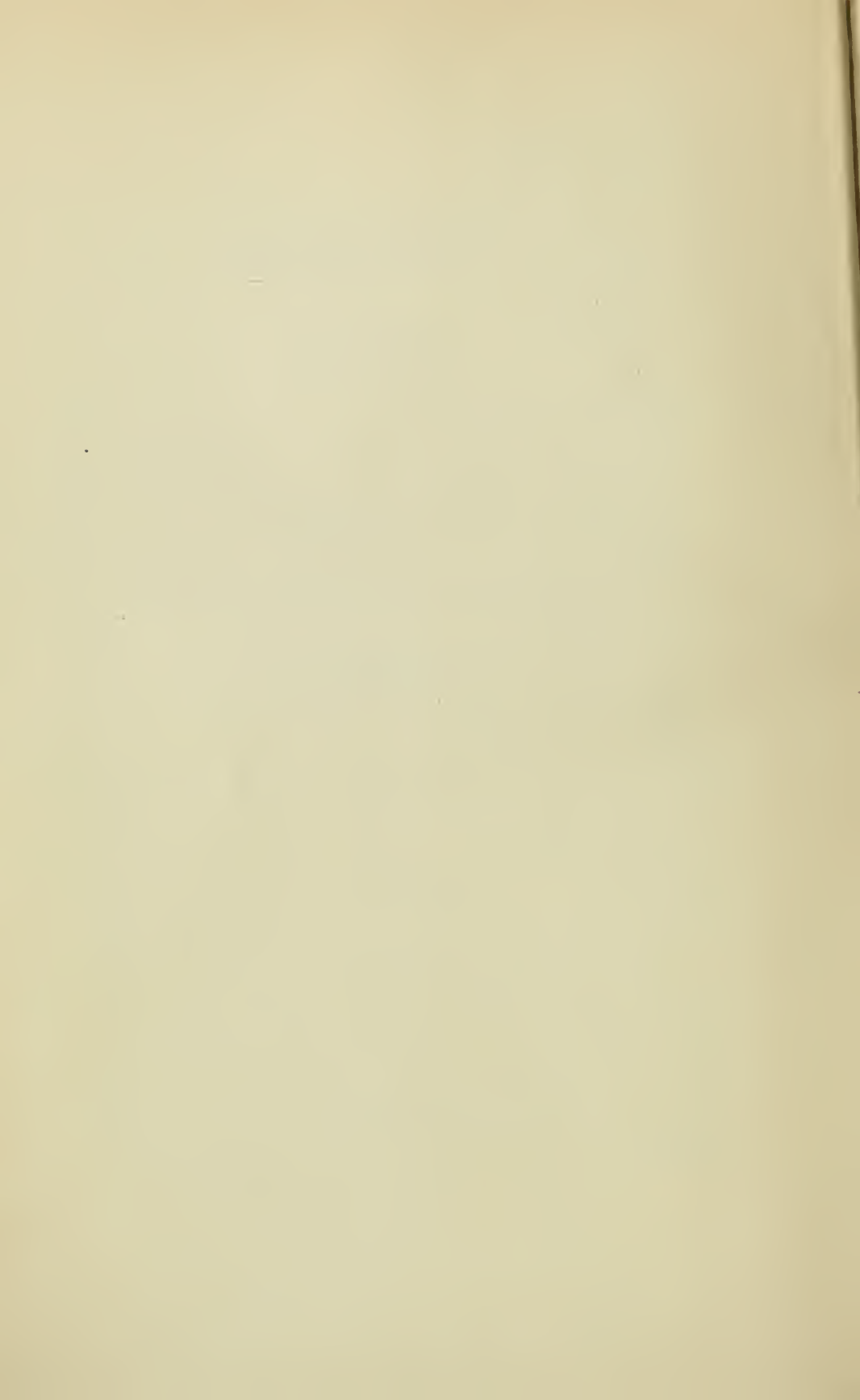
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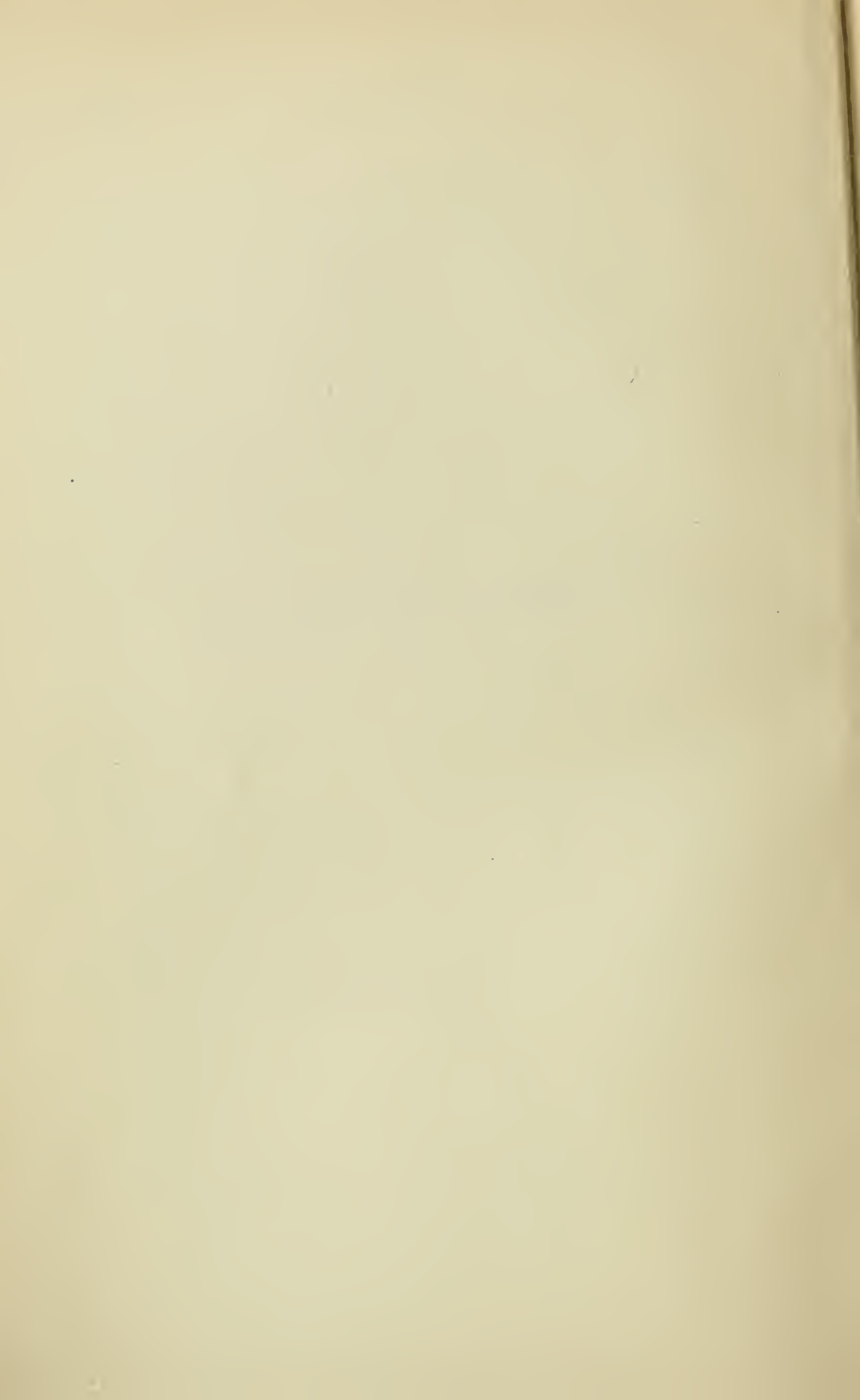
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RETURN TO FRANCE.





# RUSSIA.

## DESCRIPTIVE AND ILLUSTRATIVE

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### XX.

#### RETURN TO FRANCE.

FOR many days, weeks, and even months, we had been putting off our departure for France. St. Petersburg had been a sort of enchanted island where our courage had disappeared amid the delights of a most congenial life; and we must confess it cost us a great deal to decide to return to Paris and put on the harness that we had worn for so long. To the attraction of new things, which we so greatly enjoy, was joined that of the most agreeable relations. We had been petted, fêted, spoiled, even loved, we are fatuous enough to believe, and all that is not left without regret. We were enveloped in the Russian life, which is so soft, caressing, flattering, and it was hard for us to lay aside that downy pelisse. Still we could not spend the rest of our life in St. Petersburg. Every mail from France brought more pressing letters, and the great day was at last irrevocably fixed.

We have already said that we were a member of the society of the "Fridayans," young artists who met every Friday, sometimes at the house of one member, sometimes at another's, and passed the evening in drawing, or painting in water-color,

or sepia, improvised compositions, that were afterwards sold at Beggrow's, and the proceeds placed in a fund established for the assistance of any comrade in need. Towards midnight a merry supper terminated the hours of labor: pencils, brushes, crayons were swept away, and their places were taken by the classic macaroni made by a Roman, chicken-salad, or some great fish taken from the Neva through a hole in the ice. The supper was more or less sumptuous, according to the condition of the purse of the "Fridayan" who entertained that evening. But whether it was washed down with Bordeaux, with champagne or only with English beer or even *kwas*, it was always gay, cordial and fraternal. Absurd stories, studio jokes, amusing nonsense, unexpected paradoxes, flashed about like a play of fireworks. Then they would return home in groups, according to the quarter in which they lived, continuing the conversation across the silent, deserted, snow-covered streets, where no other sounds were heard but our peals of laughter, the barking of a dog, awakened by our passing, or the iron stick of the guardians of the night striking the sidewalk. Friday, the day preceding our departure, happened to be our turn to treat the group, and the entire band assembled in full numbers at our house in Morskaïa street. In view of the solemnity of the occasion, Imbert, a gastronomic official, celebrated in St. Petersburg, belonging to the corps of the emperor, condescended

to arrange the menu, and to watch over its execution, and even deigned to put his own hand into the preparation of a dish of partridges, such as I have never seen on any table. Imbert held us in great esteem on account of a *risotto* done in his presence, after a pure Milanese receipt, as the result of a conversation upon foreign cooking. He declared it exquisite and ceased to look upon us as a Philistine, and without regard to our literary reputation we had become an artist in his estimation. Never did approbation flatter us more, and so he made this dish for an host whom he judged was capable of appreciating his merit.

As was the invariable custom, the evening began with work: each one sat down before his desk, prepared in advance, under the shade of a lamp. But the work did not progress very rapidly, for we were preoccupied; and conversation stopped the pencils, while the India ink would dry on the brush, between the touches. For nearly seven months we had lived as one of them, among these witty, sympathetic young men, who loved the beautiful and were full of noble ideas. We were about to leave. When people separate, who can tell if they will ever see one another again? Especially when they are separated by a great distance, and you are about to resume your ordinary course of life, after having mingled with theirs. A certain sadness fell upon the "Fridayans," so that the announcement of supper was received with pleasure. Toasts drunk to our

happy journey aroused the languishing gaiety and were received with such good-will that it was resolved to remain till daylight and to accompany us *en masse* to the railway station.

The spring had already arrived: the great breaking up of the Neva had taken place, and only a few tardy masses of ice were floating down the current, to be lost in the gulf, which was already open to navigation. The roofs had lost their ermine covering, and the snow in the streets had turned into black mire and hopeless slush. The ravages of winter, hidden for so long under a white covering, showed in all their ugliness. The pavements were disjointed, the streets broken, and our droskies, pitching from one quagmire to another, jolted us so terribly that we jumped about like peas on a drum, for the bad condition of the streets did not at all prevent the drivers from tearing along as if the devil were after them. If only the two little wheels follow them, they are quite content, and do not in the least trouble themselves about the traveler.

We arrived in due course of time at the station, and there, finding that the separation was coming all too quickly, the entire party entered the train, to go with us as far as Pskov, beyond which the newly constructed road did not go. This custom of going part way with one's friends or relations, which is peculiarly Russian, is, we think, delightful. The bitterness of parting is softened, and



solitude does not at once succeed to embraces and hand-clasps.

But at Pskov we had to part. The "Fridayans" went back to St. Petersburg by the return train; it was the final parting, and the actual journey had begun.

We were not to return to France alone, but had as a traveling companion a young man who had lived in the same house with us in St. Petersburg, with whom we had become very friendly. Although he was French, he was, what is very unusual, acquainted with all the languages of the North, speaking German, Swedish, Polish and Russian as he used his mother tongue. He frequently made trips into Russia, in every direction, in every kind of vehicle and in all sorts of weather. When traveling, he was possessed of an admirable equability of temper, could do without anything, and appeared almost insensible to fatigue, although he was delicate in physique and habituated to the most comfortable life. Without him, we never could have accomplished our return at this season of the year, through roads so difficult.

Our first care was to seek in Pskov either to hire or buy a carriage, and after many futile attempts we found something that passed for a drosky, though its tattered condition and worn-out springs did not inspire undue confidence. We bought it, with, however, the understanding that if it broke down before it had gone forty versts the owner

was to take it back with the addition of a small indemnity. It was our prudent friend who thought of this, and thankful we were he had done so, as you will see. Our trunks were strapped to the back of the miserable vehicle; we got in and the coachman sent his horses off in full gallop. It was the most horrible season of the year in which to travel, for the roads were indeed but a mass of mire, a little less deep, in the middle of a vast marsh of liquid mud. All around the perspective consisted of a sky of a dirty grey, resting on a horizon of black, flooded fields; now and then we caught glimpses in the distance of a few half-submerged trees, or the shining of some muddy pools, or a log-cabin to whose roof still adhered some patches of snow, like strips of paper partly torn off. Across the warmth of the temperature, blew, as evening approached, blasts from a wind sharp enough to make us shiver under our furs. The wind does not grow warmer from coming from this mixture of snow and ice. Flocks of crows dotted the sky with their black wings as with croakings and curvings they took their flight homeward. It certainly could not be called gay, and had it not been for our friend, who entertained us with an account of a journey in Sweden, we would have been melancholy indeed.

The carts of the moujiks carrying wood came ever and anon along the road, drawn by little horses as muddy as dogs, around whom flew a very

deluge of mire; but at the sound of our bells they stopped respectfully at the side of the road and allowed us to pass. One of the peasants was even honest enough to run after us and tell us that one of the trunks was loose, and had dropped, the noise of whose fall could not be heard above the uproar made by our wheels.

Night had well-nigh descended, and we were still very far from the post-house. Our horses were going like the wind, excited by the thought of their approaching stable. The poor drosky jumped about on its exhausted springs, and followed diagonally the galloping horses, the wheels not able to turn fast enough in the thick mud. Coming into contact with a stone, we received so severe a shock that we were within an ace of being tossed out into the mire. A spring broke; the front part would not hold. Our coachman got off, and with a piece of cord mended as best he could the broken wagon so that we might flounder along in some fashion till we could reach the relay-house. The drosky had not lasted fifteen versts. It was impossible to even think of continuing the journey on such a turnout. In the courtyard of the post-house were no other vehicles more available than télégas, and there were still five hundred versts before us, before we would reach the frontier.

In order to thoroughly understand the horror of the situation, a little description of a téléga would not be out of place. This eminently primitive con-

struction is composed of two boards placed lengthwise on two axles, which support four wheels. On each side is a narrow board framework. A double rope is fastened to each side, and, furnished with a sheepskin, forms a sort of swinging seat for the traveler. The driver stands on the cross-beam, or sits on the floor. The trunks are piled up behind. To this machine are fastened five little horses, that have been rejected by the fiacres, so unattractive is their appearance when they are still, but that the best race-horses would be put on their mettle to follow, once they are started. It is not a means of transport that would recommend itself to a sybarite, but they go like the mischief, and the *téléga* is the only carriage that can stand the roads that the thaw has rendered well-nigh impassable.

We held a council of war in the courtyard. My friend said to me: "Wait. I will push on to the first relay-station and will return with a carriage—if one is to be found."

"Why should you do that?" I answered, astonished at the proposition.

"Because," returned my friend, with a smile, "I have undertaken journeys in *télégas*, with friends who seemed strong and robust. They stuck proudly on the seat for the first hour, contenting themselves with a few grimaces and repressed contortions; then soon, their hips dislocated, their knees in agony, their stomach torn in pieces, their brain jumping about inside their heads like a dry nut



in a shell, they began to storm, to groan, and to cover me with insults. Some even wept, and begged me to put them on the ground, or throw them into a ditch, preferring to die with hunger and cold, or to be eaten by wolves, than to suffer longer such agonizing torture. No one could stand it for more than forty versts."

"You have a wrong impression of me. I am not in the least a finicky traveler. The galleys of Cordova, whose bottoms are but nets made of reeds; the tartans (little boats with three-cornered sails) of Valencia, which resemble the boxes marbles are rolled in to make them round, did not cause me to utter a single complaint. I have driven in a cart, holding on by my hands and feet to its sides. There is nothing about a *téléga* that could possibly astonish me. If I complain, you may answer me as did Guatemozin his companion on the gridiron: 'And I, am I on a bed of roses?'"

This haughty reply reduced him to silence. Horses were put to the *téléga*, our trunks piled in back, and we were off.

And the dinner? are you asking. Friday's supper surely must be digested by now, and a conscientious traveler ought to tell his readers about his repasts. We took but a glass of tea and a thin slice of brown bread: for when one is about to make one of those extraordinary courses it is better not to eat, just as the postilions do not when they are making a post at full gallop.

We would be loath to create the impression that the téléga is the softest of carriages. Still it was more supportable than we had dared to hope for, and we balanced ourself without too much exertion on the horizontal rope, somewhat softened by the sheepskin.

As night fell, the wind became more piercing. In the North, winter disappears unwillingly, and often returns to fling handfuls of snow in the lap of spring. Towards midnight the mud had hardened, the puddles were frozen, and the mass of petrified slush made the téléga bounce about more fiercely than ever.

At last we reached the post-house, which we recognized by its white front and pillared portico. All the stations are exactly alike, and are built, from one end of the Empire to the other, on the same model. We were taken from our téléga, together with our luggage, and placed in another, that was leaving at once; and we were off at a full gallop, while the vague objects seen in the darkness flew past on each side of the road like an army in retreat. It was as if an unknown enemy were pursuing these phantoms. Nocturnal hallucinations began to trouble our eyes, which were heavy with sleep, and dreams, in spite of our efforts, mingled with our thoughts. We had not been in bed at all the night before, and the absolute need of sleep made our head fall from one shoulder to the other. Our companion made us

sit down on the bottom of the wagon, and held our head between his knees, to prevent us from cracking it against the sides of the vehicle. The most violent bumping of the *téléga*, which sometimes in sandy or marshy places in the road jumped over logs placed crosswise, did not awaken us, but altered the course of our dreams, as if someone were to jog the elbow of an artist who was at work, so that a face commenced with the profile of an angel ended in a devil or a clown.

We slept for three-quarters of an hour and woke refreshed and gay, as if we had slept in our own bed.

There is certainly something intoxicating and delightful in going fast. What joy there is in passing like a whirlwind, amid the sounding of bells and of wheels, in the heart of a vast, nocturnal silence, when all men are at rest, and only the stars awake, to wink their golden eyes and point the way! The feeling of going on, of advancing towards a goal, in hours that are generally lost, inspires you with a strange pride; one is full of admiration of one's own exploits and rather despises the Philistines who are snoring in their beds.

At the next relay, the same ceremony was enacted: an entrance full of fantasia into the courtyard, and a rapid transferring of ourselves from one *téléga* to another.

“Well,” said I to my companion, when we had left the post-house and the postilion had set his

horses into a full gallop along the road, "I have not begged for mercy yet, and the téléga has certainly come many a mile. My arms are still on my shoulders, my legs are not out of joint, and my spinal cord still supports my head."

"I had no idea you were so well-seasoned. Now the worst is over, and I scarcely think I shall be obliged to lay you down by the side of the road, with a handkerchief on the end of a stick to call to your assistance any chance carriage or post-chaise that may happen to come along these desert places. But since you have had a nap, it is your turn to stay awake while I close my eyes for a few minutes. Do not forget, in order to keep up this rate of speed, you must give the moujik a blow in his back, every now and then. Call him, too, 'dourak' at the top of your voice; it can do no harm."

We acquitted ourselves conscientiously of the task imposed upon us; but we may as well say, in order to clear ourselves in the eyes of philanthropists from the reproach of cruelty, that the moujik wore a thick sheepskin touloupe so that the fur deadened any blow. Our fist fell, as it were, upon a mattress.

When day dawned we saw with surprise that snow had fallen in the night over the country that we had traversed. Nothing could be more depressing than this snow, whose thin layer but half-covered, like a ragged shroud, the ugliness and wretchedness of the soil flooded by the recent thaw.

Before long the wind began to whirl about a sort of fine, pulverized snow, like sleet, which cut us in the eyes and pierced, as if with a thousand needles, the portion of our face that the necessity of breathing forced us to expose. Nothing can be imagined more disagreeable than this maddening little torture, which was augmented by the rapidity with which the *téléga* was going against the wind. Our mustache was soon starred with white pearls, and stiff with stalactites, between which our breath passed smoky and blue as the smoke from a pipe. We felt frozen to the marrow of our bones, for damp cold is much more disagreeable than dry cold, to which was added that discomfort that comes at dawn, and is so familiar to travelers and those who indulge in nocturnal adventures. No matter how hardy or philosophic one may be, the *téléga*, as a place of repose, is not quite equal to a hammock, or even to that green leather sofa that is found everywhere in Russia.

A scalding hot glass of tea, and a cigar, swallowed and smoked at the relay-house while the horses were being changed, made us feel as good as new, and we continued valiantly our way, puffed out with pride from the compliments of our friend, who said he had never seen a man from Western Europe endure the *téléga* so heroically.

It is very difficult to give any description of the country through which we were passing, as it looks at that season of the year to the traveler forced



by stern necessity to cross it. There are gently undulating plains of a blackish tone, dotted with posts, designed to mark the road when the winter snows efface them, and which in summer must look like telegraph poles with nothing to do. Nothing is seen as far as the eye can reach, save forests of birch-trees, sometimes half-burned, or an occasional village, hidden among the trees, and disclosed only by the little apple-green bulbous towers of its church. At this season the snow was lying in long strips here and there on the dark mud, that the frost of the preceding night had frozen stiff, till it looked like those long pieces of linen that are stretched over the fields to whiten in the dew; or, should that comparison be too charming, to the pieces of white braid sewn on to the rusty black of the shabbiest imaginable sort of a pall.

The pale daylight, struggling through the thick grey clouds that covered the sky, is too feeble to give to objects either light or shadow: everything is blended together, and seems of the same dead, heavy color. Under this dull light the landscape looks grey, dirty, wan, unwashed, and the artist would be helpless to portray this vague, indefinite, flooded, morose and melancholy land. Our only consolation and refuge from overwhelming ennui was the thought that our face was turned homeward, in spite of the regrets that memories of St. Petersburg aroused.

Each jolt over this grey, sad country was bring-

ing us nearer to our native land, and we were soon to find out if seven months of absence had made our Parisian friends forget us. Then, too, the action necessary to a difficult journey is supporting, and the satisfaction of triumphing over obstacles distracts one's attention from small discomforts in detail. When one has traveled in many countries, one does not expect to find at each step "charming conditions." One grows accustomed to these voids of nature, who occasionally falls from her high estate, as do the greatest poets. More than once we were tempted to exclaim, with Fantasio, in Alfred de Musset's comedy: "What a wretched sunset! Nature is pitiful this evening. Just look at that valley down there, those four or five miserable little clouds climbing over that mountain! I used to make that sort of landscape, on the back of my school-books, when I was twelve years old!"

We have long left behind Ostrov, Regitza, and other little towns, which, as may be imagined, we did not observe very closely from the top of our téléga. If we had stayed among them longer, we could have but repeated the descriptions we have already given, for these places are exactly alike: there are always the same wooden fences, the same wooden houses, with double sashes, through which one catches a glimpse of an exotic plant, the same green-painted roofs, the same church with its five

bells and its front adorned with a painting of some Byzantine saint.

In the middle, the post-house stands out, with its white front, before which are groups of moujiks in greasy touloupes, and yellow-haired children. As for women, one scarcely ever sees one!

The night was closing in, and we could not be far from Dunaburg. We arrived there amid the last rays of a livid sunset, which did not impart a very gay aspect to this town, peopled chiefly by Polish Jews. It was one of those skies, such as are portrayed in pictures representing pests, of a wan grey, full of morbid, greenish tints. Under its gloom the blackened houses, drenched with rain or melting snow, and suffering from the shocks of winter, resembled piles of wood and filth half-submerged in an inundation of mud. The streets were veritable torrents of dirt. The waters from the melted snows were rushing everywhere, seeking an outlet, and carried with them débris too horrible to name. Ponds of filth spread out here and there where masses of dirty snow resisted their progress.

In the midst of this dirty mixture, which would make anyone chant a hymn in honor of Macadam, the wheels turned like the paddles of a steamboat in a muddy stream, covering the walls and rare passers-by with splashes of dirt, though the latter were booted like oyster-fishers. Our own reached to the waist. Happily, there was a pavement somewhere under this deluge, which, although softened



by the wet, offered at a certain depth a point of resistance that prevented us, together with our horses and vehicle, from disappearing as if we were caught by the tide of Mt. St. Michel.

Our cloaks had become, under this constant splashing, veritable celestial planispheres, with numerous muddy constellations unmarked by astronomers, and had it been possible to appear dirty at Dunaburg we would not have been fit, as the saying goes, to be touched with tongs.

The passage of isolated travelers is a rare occurrence at this season. Few mortals are courageous enough to make the journey by *téléga*, and the only available vehicle is the courier's cart. But one must apply a long time in advance in order to get any places in it, and we had left suddenly, like a soldier who sees his leave expire and must rejoin at any cost, under pain of being considered a deserter.

Our companion laid it down as an unvarying rule that as little as possible must be eaten during journeys of this kind, and his abstemiousness exceeded that of the Spaniard or Arabian. However, when we represented that we were simply dying of hunger, not having paid attention to "the wants beneath the nose," in the language of Rabelais, since Friday night,—and now it was Sunday evening,—he finally condescended to give way to what he called our "weakness," and, leaving the *téléga* at the relay-house, set out in quest of some sort of

food. Dunaburg goes to bed betimes, and only here and there glimmered a light from the dark mass of houses. Walking in this slushy mire was by no means an easy operation, and we felt at each step as if an invisible boot-jack had seized us by the heel.

At last we espied a reddish light in front of a building that bore some resemblance to a tavern. The reflection of the light was reproduced on the liquid mud in red streaks like blood running from a slaughter-house. It was by no means appetizing, but we had reached that degree of hunger that had ceased to be dainty. We entered without allowing ourselves to be turned aside by the nauseating odor of the place, where a smoky lamp was sputtering with difficulty in a thick atmosphere. The room was full of queer-looking Jews, in narrow long garments shining with grease, and of a color that might have been black or violet, chestnut or olive, but which at present were of but one tint, which we shall designate as "intense dirt." They wore oddly-shaped hats, with broad brims and enormous crowns, but so discolored, shapeless, dirty, creased and old that the neediest rag-picker would not have touched them with his crook. And their boots! The glorious St. Amand himself could scarce do them justice! Down-at-heel, shapeless, wrinkled, whitened by layers of half-dried dirt, like the feet of elephants that had been long stamping through the jungles of India. Several of these Jews, espe-

cially the young ones, had parted their hair in the middle and formed it into a long curl that hung down their back, a coquetry that contrasted strangely with their appalling dirt. There was here no trace of the beautiful Jew of the Orient, the heir of the patriarchs, who has kept his biblical nobility, but the awful Jew of Poland, given over, amid filth, to every sort of illegitimate commerce and sordid industries. In this light, with their thin faces, their restless eyes, their beards forked like the tail of a fish, their skins like smoked her-ring, they brought to mind the paintings of Rembrandt.

Eating was not, apparently, progressing with any degree of activity in the establishment. Glimpses could be caught of a few persons drinking slowly in dark corners a glass of tea or of vodka, but of solid food not a vestige. Understanding and speaking the German and Polish of the Jews, my friend asked the master of the place if there were no means by which he could give us a meal of some sort. This demand apparently filled him with amazement. It was the Sabbath-day, and the food prepared the evening before for this day, upon which it is not permitted to do anything, had been devoured to the last crumb. However, our starved appearance touched him. His larder was empty, his fire extinguished, but perchance he might find some bread in a neighbor's house. So away he went on his errand of mercy, and in a few minutes

there appeared among this mass of human rags, carrying triumphantly a sort of shallow dish, a young Israelitish maiden of most marvelous beauty, the Rebecca of "Ivanhoe," the Rachel of "The Jewess," whose beauty brightened this sombre chamber like a ray of sunshine. Eliezer waiting by the well would surely have given her Isaac's betrothal-ring. She presented the purest possible type of her race, a veritable biblical flower, blossoming, one could not tell how, upon this manure-heap. Sir Hasirim's Sulamite was not more intoxicating. The gazelle eyes, the delicately aquiline nose, the lovely lips, crimson as the doubly-dyed purple of Tyre, in contrast with the pure pallor and exquisite curve from temple to chin, made to be framed in the traditional bandeau.

She offered us the bread with a smile, like those daughters of the desert who place their pitchers to the parched lips of a wayfarer, and, engrossed in gazing at her, we forgot to take it. A delicate flush mounted to her cheeks as she became aware of our admiration, and she placed the bread on the edge of the table.

We sighed sadly as we reminded ourselves that the days of impassioned adventures were passed for us. So, while feasting our eyes upon the radiant apparition, we betook ourselves to munching our bread, which was both raw and burned, but which seemed to us as delicious as if it had issued from the Vienna Bakery of the Rue de Richelieu.



Nothing detained us longer in the wretched inn; the beautiful Jewess had disappeared, making the smoke-stained walls seem still more sombre from contrast. So we mounted our téléga with a sigh, as we said to ourselves that it is not within the velvet-lined caskets that are to be found the loveliest pearls of the Orient.

We soon reached the banks of the Dwina, which we had to cross. The banks of the Dwina are high, and the descent to the river bed is accomplished by plank slopes which are steep enough to remind one of "Russian mountains." Fortunately the skill of Russian drivers is nothing short of marvelous, and the little Ukraine horses are wonderfully sure of foot. So we arrived without accident at the foot of the descent where in the darkness we heard the waters boil and roar. There was neither bridge nor ferry-boat to take passengers over, but a system of rafts, placed close together and bound by cables: they adapt themselves in this way better to the rising of the waters, going up and down with them. The crossing, although quite free from actual danger, was quite frightful. The river, swollen by the melting of the snows, reached the top of its banks, and rebelled against the obstacle presented by the bridge of rafts. At night, too, water easily assumes a lugubrious appearance. Lights, come from Heaven knows where, glance over its surface, like phosphoric serpents, the foam throws off strange sparks, and the water turns black, till one

feels he is floating over an abyss. So it was with a sentiment of profound satisfaction that we found ourselves on the other side, carried along by horses who mounted the ascent almost as rapidly as they had descended the opposite bank.

Once more we were speeding along through the dull, grey plains, only perceiving objects that effaced themselves from the memory as promptly as they passed before the eyes, of which it was quite hopeless to attempt any description. These uncertain visions, seen but to disappear as we speeded along, are not without charm: it is as if one were galloping through a dream. One feels eager to penetrate this vague obscurity, as thick as cotton, where every outline is blurred and every object but a black spot.

We thought of the beautiful Jewess, whose face we burned into our memory as an artist deepens his work, lest it should be effaced, and we essayed to call to mind how she was dressed, but without success. Her loveliness had so dazzled us that we had only seen her head. All the rest remained in shadow. The light had been concentrated about her, and had she been dressed in gold-brocade, embroidered with pearls, it would have attracted no more attention than a simple muslin frock.

At daybreak the weather changed, becoming decidedly wintry. The snow began to fall in great flakes, and soon the landscape, as far as the eye could reach, was enveloped in white. Every few

moments we were obliged to shake ourself free from the snow that threatened to cover the téléga, but it was labor lost: in a few steps we were powdered anew, like the tartlets that the confectioner covers with sugar. This silver down rose, fell, mingled together under the blast of the wind. It was as if from the top of the skies numberless featherbeds were being emptied, and amid all this whiteness it was quite impossible to see four steps ahead. The little horses shook their dishevelled manes impatiently. The desire of freeing themselves from so much discomfort gave them wings, and they galloped towards the station at the top of their speed, in spite of the resistance offered by the newly fallen snow to the play of the wheels.

We have a strangely passionate love of the snow, and nothing delights us so much as this powder of frozen ice that whitens the brown face of the earth. Its immaculate, virginal whiteness, sparkling with mica, like Parian marble, is to our taste vastly preferable to the richest coloring, and when we are traversing a snow-covered road we feel as if we were walking on the silver sand of the Milky Way. But this time, it must be confessed, our inclination was too abundantly gratified, and our position on the téléga was fast growing intolerable. Our friend himself, in spite of his impassibility, and habituated as he was to the most extraordinary journeys, acknowledged that it would have been much more agreeable to be in a corner near the

stove in a warm room, or even in a simple post-chaise, if one could have made any progress in such weather.

Matters soon degenerated into a veritable "snow-chase." Nothing could be more weird than this tempest of plush. The wind was blowing low down near the ground, sweeping the snow before it with irresistible violence. Volumes of white smoke ran along the earth, in whirling flakes, like frozen smoke from a fire at the pole. When the mass ran against a wall it piled up against it, and soon leaped over, to fall on the other side in cascades. In an incredibly short space of time, ditches, stream-beds, roads had all disappeared, and only the indicator-posts remained.

Had we stopped, we would have been buried in five or six minutes, as if under an avalanche. Under the force of the wind, freighted with these immense masses of snow, the trees bend, the poles bow, the animals lower their heads. It is the khamsin (desert-storm) of the steppes.

The danger was not great this time: it was daylight, the fall of snow was not very deep, and we could enjoy the spectacle quite without peril. But at night the "snow-chase" can easily follow and swallow you up. At times there passed across this whiteness, like pieces of black cloth, flocks of crows and ravens, carried along by the wind, and often falling heels over head to the ground. We met two or three peasants' carts, whose owners were



striving to regain their isbas as they fled before the tempest. It was with lively satisfaction that we at last caught sight, through the chalky maze, of the post-house with its Greek portico. Never did architecture appear so sublime. To spring from the bottom of the téléga, to shake the snow from our cloaks, and to enter the travelers' room, where reigned a delicious temperature, was but the affair of a moment. At the relay-stations the samovar is in a constant state of ebullition, and a few swallows of tea, as hot as it could be taken, soon re-established the circulation of our blood, which was rather chilled from so many hours passed in the open air.

“I will go with you on a journey of discovery to the arctic pole,” said my friend to me, “and I really think you would make a charming companion there. How we would live in a snow hut, on pemmican and bears' steaks!”

“Your approbation is very flattering, for I well know you are not given to over-praise. But now that I have sufficiently proved my powers of resistance to joltings or temperature, there would be no cowardice, in my opinion, in seeking a more comfortable means of continuing our journey. Let us go see if there is not some vehicle in the courtyard less exposed to the rigor of the elements. Useless heroism is pure nonsense.”

The courtyard, half filled with snow, which they were vainly striving to push into the corners with

brooms and shovels, presented a strange spectacle. It was encumbered on all sides with télégas, taren-tasses, and droskies whose upraised shafts resembled the masts of half-submerged vessels. Behind all these primitive vehicles we discovered, through a whirling shower of tempest-tossed snow, the leather top of an old calèche, that looked like the back of a whale stranded on the foam, and which, in spite of its dilapidation, seemed to us a veritable ark of safety. The carriages were pushed aside, our equipage dragged to the middle of the courtyard, and we found that the wheels were in good condition, the springs quite solid, and that if the windows would not precisely close, at least no glass was lacking. It was not, to be sure, precisely the sort of turnout in which to cut a figure in the Bois de Boulogne; but, since we were not expected to make the tour of the lake, nor to excite the admiration of the other sex, we esteemed ourselves indeed fortunate in being able to hire it as far as the Prussian frontier.

We were soon installed with our trunks, and off we set, at a speed that was necessarily retarded by the violence of the wind, which was whirling the frozen dust in front. Although we did our utmost to keep the windows closed, there was soon a pile of snow on the unoccupied seat. Nothing can withstand that impalpable white powder impelled by the tempest: it enters the smallest crack, like the sand of the Sahara, and penetrates even the case

of one's watch. But, as neither of us was a Sybarite to complain of a crumpled rose-leaf, we enjoyed with profound satisfaction this relative comfort. We could at least lean our heads and backs against the old green cloth cushions, whose upholstery was, to be sure, of the most modest description, but immeasurably preferable to the wooden sides of the *téléga*. One was not at all events in danger of falling and breaking one's head, should one by chance happen to fall asleep.

We took advantage of the situation to doze a little, each one in his corner, but without daring to abandon ourselves utterly to so great a luxury, which is sometimes dangerous in so low a temperature, for the thermometer had gone down once more to five or ten above zero under the influence of the icy wind. But gradually the storm abated, the particles of snow suspended in the air fell to the ground, and we beheld as far as the horizon an entirely white landscape.

It grew much warmer, and was but twenty-four degrees above zero, which is a spring temperature for Russia at this season of the year. We crossed the *Vilia*, that empties into the *Niemen* near *Kowno*, by means of a ferry-boat, and reached the town, which presented quite a good appearance under the fresh fall of snow with which it was sprinkled. The post-house is situated on a handsome square, surrounded with well-built edifices, and planted with trees, most of which resembled

constellations of quicksilver. Towers shaped like onions and pineapples peered here and there above the houses, but we lacked both time and courage to visit the churches whose presence they revealed.

After a light collation of sandwiches and tea, we ordered fresh horses to the calèche, that we might cross the Niemen by daylight, and the daylight is by no means of long duration in this latitude in February. Several carriages, télégas and chariots were crossing the river at the same time, and in the middle of the crossing the yellow, rushing water reached almost to the joists at the side of the boat, which yielded under the pressure more and more as we approached the other shore. If a horse had grown frightened, nothing would have been easier than for the whole thing to turn topsyturvy, bag and baggage; but Russian horses, although so full of fire, are very gentle, and do not become alarmed at so little. In a few minutes we were galloping towards the Prussian frontier, that we hoped to reach during the night in spite of the groans and sounds issuing from our poor calèche, which, however, though terribly jolted about, did not give way and leave us forlornly on the road.

In fact, towards eleven o'clock we reached the first Prussian outpost, whence the carriage was to be sent back to the station from which we had taken it.

“Now,” said our friend, “that we have no more wonderful acrobatic exercises to execute on im-



possible carts, it would be well to take supper comfortably and to pay a little attention to our complexions, so we will not look quite like scarecrows when we reach Paris.”

As will be imagined, we made no objection to this discourse, which though short was to the point and agreed perfectly with our own thoughts.

When we were a little boy we used to fancy that the frontiers of a country were indicated by blue, pink, or green lines, marked on the ground as they are on the geography maps. It was a childish, silly idea. But although they are not traced with a pencil, the line of demarcation is none the less distinct and absolute. At the spot indicated by the post painted white and black, Russia ended and Prussia began, in sudden and complete fashion. The bordering country had exercised little influence on its foreign neighbor.

We were ushered into a low-ceiled room, furnished with a great china stove, which was emitting most grateful sounds. The floor was covered with yellow sand; engravings in frames decorated the walls; the tables and chairs were German in shape, and tall, sturdy servants appeared to lay the cloth. It had been long since we had seen women occupied in those domestic cares, peculiarly suited to their sex. In Russia, as in the East, men always perform these duties, at least in public.

The cooking was no longer the same. To chtchi, caviar, *agourcis* (cucumber), capons and soudacs

succeeded the mug of beer, veal with raisins, rabbit with gooseberry jelly, and the sentimental German pastries. Everything was different: the shape of the glasses, the knives, forks, a thousand little details too small to mention, demonstrated every moment that we were in another country. We washed down this copious repast with Bordeaux wine, which was excellent in spite of its fine label printed in vari-colored ink, and with a bottle of Rudesheimer drunk from emerald-colored glasses.

As we dined we constantly reminded ourselves of the need of moderating our appetites lest we should injure our digestions, like those shipwrecked people picked up by a vessel from a raft where they had been consuming stale biscuits, shoes and india-rubber.

Had we been wise, we would have taken but a cup of bouillon and a roll moistened with Malaga wine, in order to accustom ourselves gradually to the food. But bah! since our supper is swallowed, let it stay, with the hope that it will not cause us any remorse.

The costumes too had changed. At Kowno we had seen the last touloupes, and the types resembled each other no more than the clothes. To the vague, pensive, gentle air of the Russian had succeeded the stiff, methodical, self-satisfied air of the Prussian—an entirely different race—with the visored cap, the short tunic, with pantaloons nar-

row at the knee and wide in the leg, in the mouth a porcelain pipe or a piece of queerly-shaped amber in which was placed the cigar. Such did the Prussians of the first outpost seem to us. We were not surprised, for we already knew them.

The carriage into which we mounted resembled one of those little omnibuses used at the château to go to the station for those Parisians who are expected for dinner. It was comfortably upholstered, close fitting, and well-hung; at least it produced that effect upon us, after the journey in a *téléga* we had just finished, which represents fairly well the torture of the *estrapade* used in the Middle Ages. But what a difference between the fiery pace of the little Russian horses and the phlegmatic trot of the great, heavy Meeklenburgers, who seem to fall asleep as they go, and are scarcely awakened by the touch of a whip gently administered on their flank. The German horses are acquainted with the Italian proverb: "Chi va piano, va sano." (He who goes slowly, goes safely.) They meditate upon it, as they lift their great feet, and cut off the second part: "Chi va sano, va lontano." (Who goes safely, goes far), for the Prussian stages are much closer together than the Russian ones.

However, one arrives at last, even if one does not go fast, and the morning found us not far from Koenigsberg, on a road bordered with great trees, which extended as far as the eye could

reach, and presented a truly magical aspect. The snow had frozen on the branches so that each tiny twig was adorned with a jeweled crystal of extraordinary brilliance. The avenue had assumed the appearance of an enormous cradle in silver filigree, leading to the enchanted castle of a fairy of the North.

It was as if the snow, aware of our love, had, as we were leaving, spread out her magic to delight us with one of her most superb effects. Winter had led us as far as it could, and was quitting us with regret.

Koenigsberg is not a town of very gay aspect, at least at this season of the year. The winters are severe, and the windows still keep their double sashes. We noticed several houses with graduated gables and apple-green façades, supported by a highly-ornamented iron "S" as in Lübeck. It is the birthplace of Kant, who in his "Criticism on Pure Reason" carries philosophy to its original source. We half expected to see him, as we turned each corner, with his iron-grey coat, his three-cornered hat, and low buckled shoes, and we thought how distressed he would be, amid his meditations, at the absence of the slender poplar-tree, that has been cut down, on which for more than forty years he had been wont to fix his eyes during his deep metaphysical reveries.

We went straight to the railroad station, where



we each settled in a corner of a car. We have no intention of describing a railroad journey across Prussia. It would present nothing very interesting, especially when one does not stop at the towns, and we went without stopping to Cologne, where at last the snow abandoned us. There, as the departures of the trains were not coincident, we were forced to wait awhile, which we employed in the indispensable needs of our toilettes with the view of becoming a little humanized, for we presented the appearance of wild Samoiedes coming to exhibit reindeer on the Neva.

The rapidity of our journey in the *téléga* had brought about a variety of accidents in our trunks. The polish had fallen from our boots and left but the bare leather; a box of excellent cigars contained nothing but *polvo sevillano*, the constant jolting having reduced them to a fine yellow powder; the seals of the letters that had been entrusted to us were worn out by the ceaseless rubbing: neither crests, monograms nor address could be distinguished; several envelopes were open, and snow was scattered all among our linen! Order re-established, we retired to rest after an excellent supper, and the following day, five days after our departure from St. Petersburg, we arrived in Paris, at nine o'clock in the evening, as we had faithfully promised. We were not five minutes behind time. A *coupé* was awaiting us at the station, and a quar-

ter of an hour later we found ourselves among old friends and charming women before a table brilliant with light, where was smoking a delicious supper, and our return was joyously celebrated till daylight.

SUMMER IN RUSSIA.



## XXI.

### SUMMER IN RUSSIA—THE VOLGA—FROM TVER TO NIJNI-NOVGOROD—THE CITY, ITS POP- ULATION AND GREAT FAIR.

AFTER so long a sojourn in Russia, we found it rather difficult to fall back again into our old life in Paris. Our thoughts were constantly returning to the shores of the Neva, and flitting around the cupolas of the Vassili Blajennoi. We had seen the empire of the Tzars in winter only, and we were longing to visit it in the summer, during those long, glorious days when the sun sets but for a few moments. We were acquainted with St. Petersburg and Moscow, but we knew nothing of Nijni-Novgorod. And how could anyone live without having visited Nijni-Novgorod?

How does it happen that the names of certain cities unceasingly engross the imagination, and sound for years in your ears, with a mysterious harmony, like a melody heard somewhere by chance, of which you cannot get rid? It is a strange obsession, quite familiar to all those whom an ap-

parently sudden determination pushes outside the boundaries of their native land towards the most extraordinary points. In the midst of your work, your reading, your pleasure or your pain the demon of travel whispers low his syllables of incantation, till perforce you must obey. The wisest course is to offer the least possible resistance to the temptation, that you may be the sooner delivered from it. Once you have decided the matter yourself, you need trouble about it no more. Let the spirit act who has suggested the thought. Under his magical influence, obstacles disappear, difficulties dissolve, permissions are granted, money that could not generally be obtained for the most pressing and legitimate needs falls gaily at your feet, your passport goes of its own accord to be stamped and viséed at legation and embassy, your clothes arrange themselves in the body of your trunk, and you discover that there are just a dozen fine, new shirts, a complete black suit, and an overcoat in which to brave the most diverse seasons.

Nijni-Novgorod had for a long time been exercising over us an irresistible influence. No melody sounded so deliciously to our ears as this vague, distant name; we were always repeating it, like a litany, with a sort of semi-unconsciousness; we would look at it on the map with a sentiment of inexplicable pleasure; its configuration delighted us, like a flourish in a curious drawing. The nearness of the "i" and the "j," the alliteration pro-



duced by the final "i," the three syllables upon which one must rest in pronouncing it, charmed us in a fashion, half-puerile, half-cabalistic.

Finally, after several months of struggle, we determined to go.

An exceedingly plausible motive, the necessity of going to take notes for a work on the Art Treasures of Russia, upon which we had been working for several years, took us, without too much inconsequence in the eyes of reasonable people, to that original and singular city of Moscow, that we had seen before, crowned by winter with a diadem of silver, covered as to its shoulders with a mantle of snowy ermine. Three-quarters of the way had been accomplished. Only a little more flapping of the wings eastward, and the goal would be reached. The demon of travel had arranged everything in the most natural manner possible. In order that nothing should detain us he had sent away very far into the heart of the country the persons we were forced to see. So no obstacle, no pretext, no reason existed, that could prevent us from accomplishing our desire. We took our notes hastily; but while we were visiting the wonders of the Kremlin, the name of Nijni-Novgorod, traced by the finger of the tempter, shone in capricious, Slavonic letters, interlaced with the flowers amid the brilliant gold-work and the iconostases.

The simplest and shortest way was to take the trunk-line that goes from Moscow to Vladimir and

thence by post to Nijni; but the fear of being unable to procure horses, for it was the season of the celebrated fair which brought to that point three or four hundred thousand men from every land, decided us in favor of the students' road, that is so rarely taken nowadays. The English-American maxim, "Time is money," is not ours, and we are not one of those tourists always eager to arrive. The journey in itself is what interests us the most.

Contrary to advice, we commenced by going back to Tver, in order to take the Volga near its source, to trust ourselves upon its tranquil bosom, and allow ourselves to be carried lazily towards our goal. And if the reader is surprised at this lack of hurry that had succeeded to the so lively desire, we can only say that, once sure of seeing Nijni-Novgorod, we no longer felt any wish to hasten. That vague apprehension

“Which makes man almost fear to see his desire accomplished”

influenced us, doubtless, without our knowledge, and moderated our impatience. Would the city of which we had dreamed for so long vanish at the breath of reality, like those masses of clouds, on the horizon, that take the forms of domes, towers, cities, only to be dissolved and swept away at the breath of the wind?

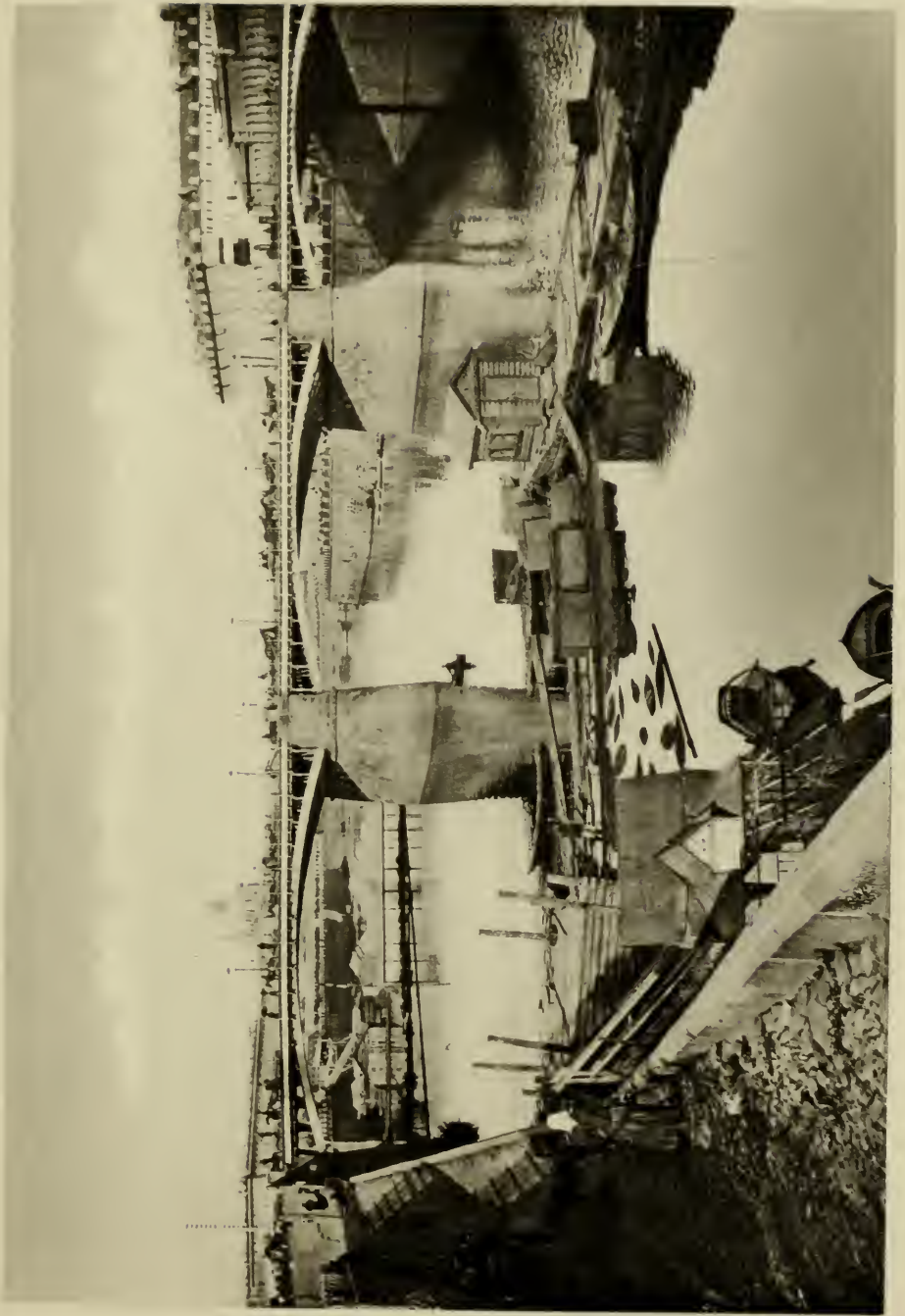


The first bridge across the river was built in 1782 by the architect Ivan Fedorovich Fedorov. It was a simple wooden structure with a single arch. The bridge was destroyed by fire in 1812 during the Napoleonic wars. A new stone bridge was built in 1823, designed by the architect Andrei Stakgoldin. This bridge was also destroyed by fire in 1851. The current bridge, designed by the architect Vladimir Shukhov, was built in 1899. It is a suspension bridge with two towers and a central span. The bridge is 2,365 meters long and 100 meters wide. It is one of the longest suspension bridges in the world.

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View of River and Bridge as seen from the Kremlin, Moscow







Too faithful to the motto of the railroad: "Linea recta brevissima" (the straight line is the shortest), the rigid railroad from St. Petersburg to Moscow leaves Tver out, so that we were obliged to reach it with the assistance of one of those swift droskies that in Russia never leave the traveler in the lurch, but seem to spring from the earth, at the call of necessity.

The hotel "de la Poste," where we stopped, has the dimensions of a palace, and would be quite equal to serving as a caravansary to an entire nation in migration. Servants dressed in black, with white cravats, received and led us with English solemnity to an immense chamber, out of which a Parisian architect would have made an entire apartment, through a corridor whose length reminded us of the monastery halls of the Escorial. The dining-room would have seated comfortably a thousand persons. While we were dispatching our dinner in the embrasure of a window, we read in the corner of our napkin these mysterious words: "Three thousand, two hundred." But in spite of all this, had it not been for the gay laughter, the merry voices and the clanking of the sabres of some youthful soldiers in a neighboring room, the hotel would have been absolutely deserted. Some great dogs, as sad as those in Aix-la-Chapelle, of which Henrich Heine speaks, were prowling about as if they were in the street looking for a bone or a caress. Weary servants would let fall upon the

table a half-cold dish, that had been brought from kitchens leagues away. We saw from the balcony the grand square of Tver, into which converge all the streets. In one corner, a group of mountebanks, who always prove irresistibly fascinating to the idle of every land, had put up their posters, and were grinding out their music. Directly in front, the dome and bulbous towers of a church were defined against the sky with their chained gold crosses. On either side were charming houses. Private droskies drawn by blooded horses dashed past, hacks stood waiting to be hired, and peasants already dressed in touloupes were settling themselves for a nap at the foot of the stairs.

The season of the long days, when the sun disappears but to reappear an instant later, almost confounding his setting with his dawn, had already passed, but it was not dark until ten or eleven o'clock at night. It is difficult for a denizen of Western Europe to form an idea of the colors that flood the heavens during this lengthy twilight. The palettes of our artists have given no picture of them. Delacroix, Diaz, and Ziem would be lost in amazement were they to behold them, and a true portrayal would be considered impossible. It is as if one had changed one's planet, and the light had arrived refracted from an unknown prism. Turquoise and apple-green shades disappear among zones of pink, which in turn change to delicate lilac, mother-of-pearl, or steel-blue, with grada-

tions of inconceivable beauty; at other times, there are great stretches of white with milky, opaline, or rainbow tints, such as one imagines the etherealized daylight of Elysium to be, which comes neither from sun, nor moon, nor stars, but from a luminous veiled ether within itself.

Over this ineffable sky, as if for the purpose of bringing into bolder relief its ideally exquisite coloring, passed flocks of crows and ravens, on their way to their nests, with strangely regulated evolutions and croakings, full of mysterious meanings. These hoarse cries, followed by sudden silences and repetitions in chorus, seemed a sort of hymn or prayer to Night. The pigeons, respected in Russia as the symbol of the Holy Ghost, had already sought repose on all the arches and curves of the church. They are countless in number, but the faithful piously scatter grain for them.

Descending into the square, we directed our steps, without guidance or information, towards the river, trusting ourselves to that instinct in regard to the formation of a city that rarely deceives an old traveler. Choosing a street that ran at right angles to the beautiful street of Tver, we soon reached the banks of the Volga. The principal street resembled a street of St. Petersburg, but, in the portion less crowded than and further removed from the centre, it had preserved the true Russian appearance. On either side were wooden houses painted in various colors, with green roofs, and

painted board fences over which one caught glimpses of the fresh green of beautiful trees. Through the low windows could be seen masses of green-house plants, destined to make their owners forget the whiteness of a winter six months in duration. Some women were returning from the river barefooted and carrying bundles of linen on their heads; while peasants, standing on their *télégas*, were urging their wiry little horses which were hauling lumber from the dockyards on the river-bank.

At the foot of the shores which were quite steep, but down which the droskies and carts dashed with an impetus that would have frightened to death the coachmen and horses in Paris, lay the flotilla of the *Samolett Company*, with its tiny smokestacks. The river is so shallow that only small steamers can be used in this part of its course. Our place taken, for the boat was to leave betimes the following morning, we continued our walk along the bank of the river, whose brown water reflected, as if in a dark mirror, the splendors of closing day, adding a magical vigor and intensity all its own. The opposite bank, bathed in shadow, extended like a long cape amid an ocean of light, in which it would have been difficult to separate the sky from the water.

Two or three little boats were moving their oars, like insects dipping their slender legs here and there in the clear, dark mirror. They looked as



if they were floating on some uncertain fluid, and as if they would be wrecked by the upturned reflection of a dome or house.

Further on, a dark bar cut the river in the middle like the roadway of an isthmus, but on nearing it we perceived it was a long raft that served to connect the two banks, and that a part of it opened to allow the passage of boats. It was the bridge reduced to its primitive construction. The freezings, floods and thaws make the permanency of bridges very uncertain. They are sooner or later sure to be carried away. On the edge of the raft, women were washing linen. Not content with using their hands to clean it, they were treading upon it, in Arab fashion. This little detail made us fly in fancy to the Moorish baths of Algiers, where we remember having seen young *iaoulets* dancing on the towels in the midst of the soapsuds. The quay, which possesses a beautiful view, serves as a place of promenade. Dames in all the glory of toilettes that would have graced the Boulevard des Italiens were taking the evening air, accompanied by little girls in short, puffed dresses, which looked like the little skirts of the dancers in the time of Louis XIV. When in the midst of these fashionable toilettes there passes a peasant in a tow jacket, with reed sandals on his feet, which was very much the costume of the peasant of the Danube in the presence of the Roman Senate, the mind cannot fail to be impressed with the im-

mense contrast. Nowhere do the latest civilization and the most primitive barbarism jostle elbows together in more marked fashion.

The hour had arrived for following the example set by the crows and returning homeward. The sky was slowly growing darker. A transparent obscurity enveloped every object, taking away the outline without effacing it, as in the marvelous illustrations of Dante, by Gustave Doré, in which the artist has so perfectly rendered the poetic twilight.

Before retiring, we went out on the balcony to light a cigar and enjoy that magnificent sky, whose intense scintillations called to mind the sky of the Orient.

Never before had we beheld such myriads of stars, flashing amid the violet sky whose immeasurable depths were strewn as if with a cloud of tiny suns. The Milky Way was outlined in silver with wonderful clearness. Amid this confusion of cosmic matter, the eye wandered among stellar formations and new worlds; it was as if the nebulous spots were putting forth mighty efforts to form themselves into stars.

Dazzled by this sublime spectacle, which we were perhaps alone in enjoying at this moment, for man uses with great moderation the privilege which, as Ovid says, has been granted him "of carrying his head high and looking at the heavens," we allowed the Dark Hours to fly past, without thinking that



we must be afoot with the dawn. At last we sought our chamber. In spite of the luxury of linen that the formidable number marked on our napkin would seem to have presaged, there was but one sheet on our bed, about the size of a napkin, that the least movement sent flying to the ground. We are not one of those persons who sigh poetically over the discomforts of an hotel, so we wrapped ourselves philosophically in our cloak and lay down on one of those broad leathern sofas that are found everywhere in Russia and which from their extreme comfort atone for the exceeding discomfort of the beds. And besides we were spared the trouble of dressing with those sleepy movements and that half-awake hurry which may be counted among the greatest ills of the traveler.

The instant we appeared at the door of the hotel, a drosky dashed up at full speed, followed by several others, each wildly striving to arrive before the other. Russian coachmen never lose an opportunity of going through this little performance. Arrived at about the same time, they dispute about the customer with amusing volubility, but without violence or brutality. The traveler having made his choice, they start off in a gallop, and disperse in every direction.

A few minutes sufficed to land ourselves and our luggage on the bank of the Volga. A wooden plane led to the wharf, near which the little steamer

“Nixe,” with steam up and smoke pouring from her funnel, was tugging at her moorings. The late-comers, followed by their baggage, and dragging their traveling-bags, crossed hastily the gangway, that was on the point of being raised. The bell rang for the last time, and the “Nixe,” turning her paddle-wheels, swept gracefully into the stream.

At Tver, the Volga has by no means assumed those broad dimensions which near its mouth, where it flows into the Caspian Sea, cause it to resemble the gigantic rivers of America. Sure of its future grandeur, it begins its course modestly, without swelling into waves or tossing into foam, and runs sedately between two flat banks. One is filled with surprise, when one examines its water, which reflects with absolute fidelity the sky, the light and every surrounding object. It is brown, resembling dark tea. Without doubt, the Volga owes that color to the nature of the sands that it pushes about constantly, changing its channel with as much fickleness as the Loire, and making its navigation, if not dangerous, at least difficult, especially in this part of its course and during the dry season. The Rhine is green, the Rhone is blue, the Volga is brown. The first two seem to bear the color of the sea into which they flow. May this characteristic exist also in regard to the Volga? We cannot tell, for it has not yet been our privilege to see the Caspian, that enormous body of

water forgotten and left surrounded by land, by the retreat of the primitive oceans.

While the "Nixe" is proceeding peaceably on her way, leaving a wake of foam, like the froth on a glass of beer, let us take a look at our traveling companions; and let us, without fear of impropriety, cast aside the line, very slightly observed be it said in passing, separating the first-class passenger from the second and third. Well-bred people are alike in every country, and if in their moments of intimacy they offer little differences that may be seized upon by the observer, they never present those divergences that the passing tourist may rapidly jot down with pencil in his note-book. Until now there has been in Russia no middle-class. Doubtless one will soon exist, thanks to recent institutions, but they are of too recent a formation to produce as yet any visible effect: the general aspect remains still the same. The gentleman or the tchinovnik (employé) is clearly distinguished from the man of the people by his coat or uniform. The merchant keeps his Asiatic blouse and his long beard; the peasant his pink shirt, ending like a blouse, his wide trousers stuffed into his boots, or, should the temperature be low, his greasy touloupe, for the Russians of every class are generally very chilly, although in the West people imagine that they brave with perfect indifference the most severe cold.

One part of the deck was encumbered with

trunks and packages, and one could not take a step without coming into contact with a sleeper. The Russians, like the Orientals, lie down wherever they happen to be. A bench, the end of a plank, a step, a trunk, a coil of rope, anything will do. It is enough even for them to lean against a wall. Sleep comes to them in the most uncomfortable positions.

The arranging of the third-class passengers on the "Nixe" made us think of the decks of the steamers with ladders in the Levant, when they are taking on Turkish passengers. Each one had his own corner, in the midst of his baggage and provisions. The families were grouped together, for there were also women and children. It resembled an encampment on the move.

Some wore long, blue or green robes, fastened at the side with three buttons and drawn in at the waist with a narrow belt. They were the most elegant or the richest. Others wore red shirts, a brown felt *sayon*, or a sheepskin tunic, although the thermometer registered seventy-five degrees. As for the women, their costume consisted of a cotton dress, a sort of cloak reaching half-way to the knee, and a handkerchief thrown over the head and knotted under the chin. The young ones wore shoes and stockings, but the older ones, disdaining these concessions to Western fashions, boldly thrust their feet into coarse boots greased with tallow.

In order to give a proper tone to this sketch, it

should be greasy, soiled, glazed with bitumen, scratched, sealed, for the costumes it essays to depict are old, dirty, worn-out, tattered. Their owners keep them on day and night, and never leave them until they are left by them. The price, relatively high, that they cost explains this constancy. At the same time, these moujiks, so negligent of their toilettes, go to the public baths once a week, and the underneath is better than the outside. Then, too, it would not be well to trust too much to appearances. Often some one would point to one of the dirtiest and most ragged of them, and whisper: "Would you not give him a kopeck, if he asked for it? Well, he is worth more than a hundred thousand silver roubles." Although we were told this with the most serious air in the world, and with the respect that a large sum of money always inspires, it was difficult for us to believe in the fortunes of these ragged, down-at-the-heel Rothschilds.

There was nothing very characteristic in their types, though often the pale blonde hair, straw-colored beard and steel-blue eyes indicated the Northern race. The bronze of summer had placed its mark on their faces, turning the skin into almost the same color as their hair and beard. The women were not at all pretty, but their homeliness, tempered with sweetness and resignation; was by no means disagreeable. Their gentle smile disclosed beautiful teeth, and their eyes, although



slightly oblique, were not lacking in expression, and as they seated themselves on the benches some vestige of feminine grace would now and then flash through their heavy garments.

The "Nixe" proceeded on her way with wide-awake caution. The wheel of the boat, in order that the pilot might see far up the river and recognize the obstacles, was placed on the bridge uniting the paddle-boxes and communicated with the rudder by a system of chains that transmitted the impulsion. At the prow were always stationed men with graduated poles, who, singing in unison, announced the depth of the water. Red and white buoys, stakes and branches of trees, planted in the bed of the river, indicated the channel to be followed, and it was necessary to use extreme caution in order to follow these capricious meanderings in safety. In some spots the sand was almost level with the top of the water, and more than once the keel of the "Nixe" touched bottom; but a reversing of the wheels carried her off and into the current, thus freeing her from the humiliation of applying to the salvors, who, standing on a floating plank, with long poles in their hands, wait at the shallows for boats in peril. The danger consisted in running against the great rocks scattered along the sands of the Volga, that are taken out and placed along the shore when an accident has disclosed their presence. Sometimes the shore-boats run afoul of them and their entire cargo is lost.



The shores, whose hollow banks attest the swelling of the river at the period of the melting of the snows, are not at all picturesque, at least in this part. They stretch out in gentle, monotonous undulations. Sometimes a forest of pine-trees enlivens with its dark verdure their long yellow stretches, or else a village of little log-houses interrupts the line of the horizon with the corners of its queerly shaped roofs. There is always a church in the village with whitewashed walls and green dome.

Every time that the "Nixe" passed an edifice consecrated to religion, even if our back was turned, we were made aware of the fact by the bending of heads, the bowing of bodies, the signs of the cross, on the part of the peasants, people and sailors. One of them even acted as an indicator. Gifted with a piercing vision, he could discover above the distant horizon the most imperceptible point of a tower and would at once begin to make the sign of the cross with automatic precision and rapidity. Then we would take out our field-glass, and make ready to examine the church or monastery when it should be within our reach. In Western Europe, even piety is chary of demonstrations. Religious sentiment is shut up with the soul, and these exterior practices fill a stranger with astonishment. And yet, what could be more simple than to salute the house of God!

The scenes upon the Volga were very animated

and interesting enough to chain us for hours together on the deck of the "Nixe." Boats were descending the river, spreading out immense sails, hung from lofty masts, to catch the lightest breath of wind. Others were ascending the stream, drawn by tow-horses. These horses have neither the size nor strength of the French draft horses, but their number atones for any other deficiency. The teams are generally composed of nine animals, and at short distances relays are established on the sandy shore in camps, that would supply Swertzkov, the Russian Horace Vernet, with many a delightful subject for his pictures. Some little boats were being pushed by men. It was hard work for those poor fellows to walk ceaselessly the length of the deck, pushing on a great pole with all the energy of their chests. They do not live long, it is said, rarely reaching forty years.

Some of these boats are very large, though they draw little water. A stripe of apple-green often enlivens the beautiful silver-grey tint of the pine which has furnished the wood for their construction. On the prow, painted eyes open their great eyelids, or the Russian eagle most crudely outlined bends his double neck and stretches out his sable wings. Ornaments carved with an axe, with a precision the chisel could not surpass, adorn the stern. Most of these vessels are loaded with wheat, and their cargoes are enormously valuable.

Steamboats of the Samolett or of the rival com-

pany passed from time to time, and the whistles would unfailingly be blown with scrupulous nautical politeness.

We also observed canoes made from the trunks of trees, like the Indian pirogues, which came close to us in spite of our paddle-wheels to throw on board the mail from small stations where the "Nixe" did not stop, and to receive postal matter that was tossed to them.

On the "Nixe" there was a never-ending coming and going of passengers. At every landing-place some were dropped or taken on. The stations were often far apart, and from them wood would be taken and piled up on the boat, for coal was too scarce and expensive to use. It was at the sight of the immense piles of wood ranged along the river-banks that the old, conservative peasants would exclaim, that at the rate the railroads and steam-boats were going, everyone in Holy Russia would soon freeze to death.

These landing-places, all built exactly alike, consist of a square pier with two rooms on it separated by a broad hall, one serving for an office, the other, a store or waiting-room devoted to travelers and their luggage. Since the height of the water varies, a sloping bridge of planks unites the landing-place to the shore. Along the sides of this bridge, little articles attractive to a tourist are displayed in picturesque little shops. Young girls offer you five or six sour, green apples, in baskets, or

little cakes upon which are moulded, as butter is with us, figures of amusing barbarity, such as chimerical lions, that were they of bronze and covered with archaic mouldiness could pass for specimens of Ninevite art.

Women, provided with pails and a glass, sell *kwas*, a drink made from rye and aromatic herbs, very agreeable to the taste when one is accustomed to it. As the price is insignificant, people of position think it below their notice, and only the common people consume it. These women wear so singular a costume that it is worthy of notice. The fashions of the Empire put the waist under the arms, and our eyes, accustomed to long waists, always look at the portraits of that time with astonishment, even when they are portrayed by the genius of Gérard or Prud'hon. The Russian peasant women fasten their skirts above the bosom, so that they look as if they were wrapped in a bag to the arm-pits. The ungraceful effect of the constant depression, which ends by spoiling the finest figure, may readily be imagined. The rest of the costume consists of a waist with puffed sleeves, and a pointed handkerchief tied under the chin. There was also sold in shops wheat and rye bread, one very white, the other very dark; but the brisk trade was in *agourcis*, a variety of cucumber, which are eaten fresh in summer and salted in winter, without which no Russian could possibly manage to exist. They are served at every meal, and are a

necessary adjunct to every dish; every one munches a slice as in other places he eats a piece of orange. They tasted rather insipid to us. It must be remembered, however, that the Russians, for a hygienic reason, do not season their food: tasteless things suit their palates.

Is it desirable to pick up the itinerary of the Samolett Company and to transcribe the very complicated names of the little stations where we stopped? Their appearance was very much the same: a wooden staircase made of logs descended to the river; on the crest of the bank are a Gostiny-Dvor, a government-house and the homes of the richest inhabitants of the place, with their window-frames painted white on a red or olive foundation, and the church, with its dome surrounded by four towers, sometimes painted green, sometimes copper or brass; or a monastery surrounded by walls frescoed in stripes, in the Byzantine style of Mt. Athos, and further on log cabins notched at the corners. To which add, for the sake of giving life to the picture, a few droskies awaiting travelers, and some scattered groups of idlers, whose interest in the arrival and departure of the steamer never flags.

Kimra, however, wore a festive air that quite surprised us. Apparently the entire population was ranged along the river at the top of the bank. The report had spread that the "Nixe" was bringing the Grand Duke, their ruler, on his way to



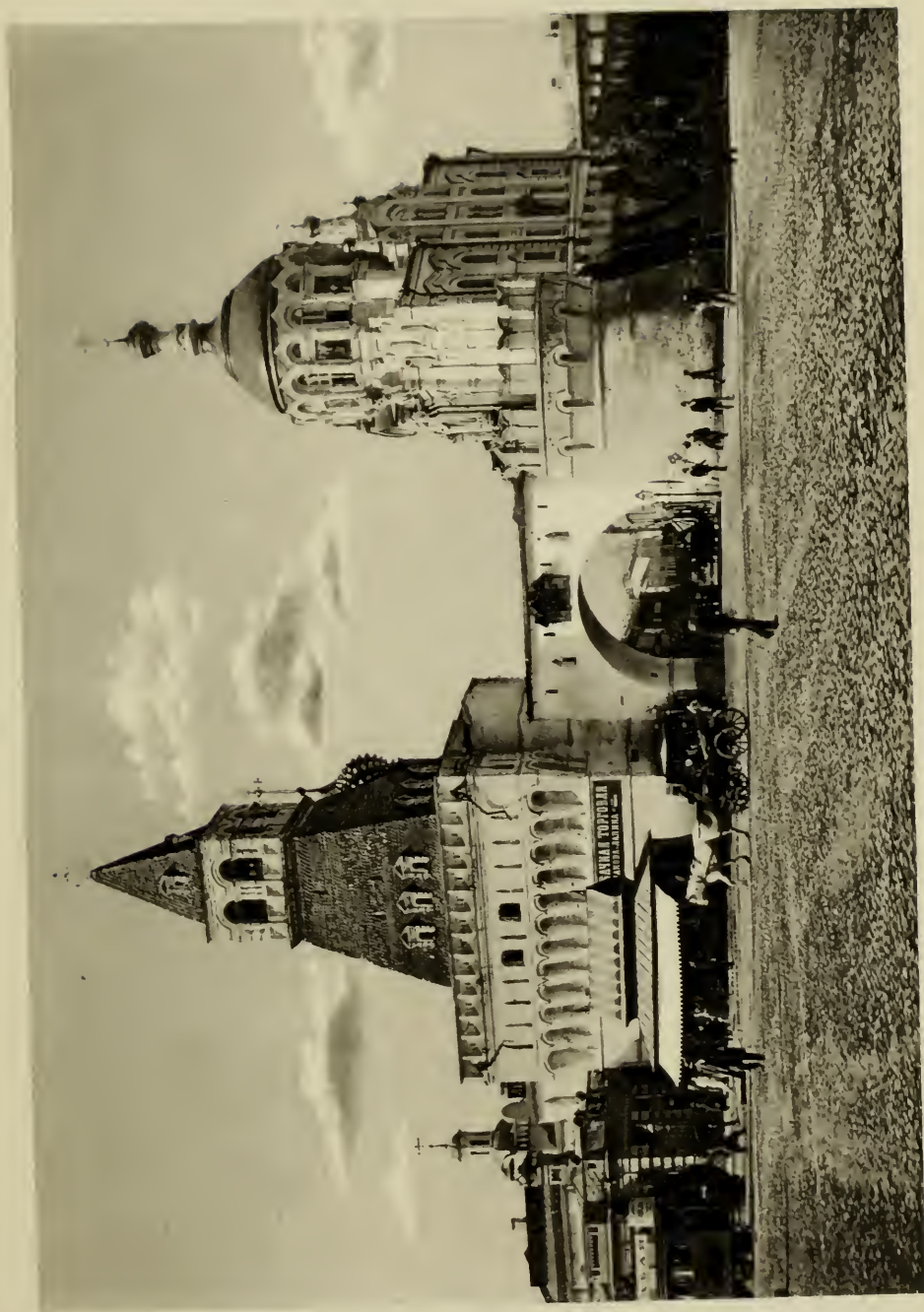
Nijni-Novgorod. Such however was not the case. The Grand Duke passed later in another boat, but we availed ourselves, without scruple, of the opportunity to observe a union of types in the crowd that the humor had gathered together. Some elegant toilettes, reflecting French fashions slightly delayed by their journey from Paris to Kimra, shone out conspicuously on a national background of skirts in the shape of bags, and of cotton-prints of superannuated design. Three young maidens, wearing the little Andalusian hats, zouave jackets and balloon crinoline, were absolutely charming in spite of a slight affectation of Western indifference. They were laughing merrily and had apparently disdained the luxury of boots indulged in by the rest, men and women alike. Kimra is as celebrated for its boots as Ronda for its gaiters.

The shallowness of the river and the need of recognizing the buoys did not permit nocturnal journeys. So the "Nixe," letting off steam, and casting anchor, stopped as the last rays of the sinking sun were disappearing below the horizon. Evening tea was served to all the passengers, and the samovars, heated to the highest point, poured their boiling contents over the delicious herb. It was a curious spectacle to us to see people of the lowest class, who looked precisely like beggars, enjoy this delicate, perfumed drink, which is considered a luxury with us, to be poured by white hands at the functions of society.





Entrance to Kremlin from Chinese Town,  
Moscow





Their manner of drinking tea was to cool it a moment by pouring it into the saucer, and to swallow it while holding between the teeth a small piece of sugar which sweetens the beverage sufficiently for Russian taste, that in this matter approaches closely to the Chinese.

When we awakened on the narrow divan of the cabin, the "Nixe" had already resumed her way. Day was breaking, and we were steaming along a bank on the top of which was a village of peasants' cottages, that were reflected in the tranquil water as if in a looking-glass.

We stopped at Pokrowski, a monastery of the sixteenth century, embattled like a fortress. Most of the passengers descended to pray in the church and implore a blessing on their voyage. Amid the half-light of a mysterious chapel, all covered with pictures and rustling with gold, a priest of Oriental aspect chanted with an acolyte one of those beautiful melodies of the Greek worship, whose effect is irresistible, even should the listener not share the beliefs, that inspire them. He possessed a magnificent bass voice,—deep, rich, sweet,—and he used it to perfection.

Ouglitch, before which we passed towards the end of the day, is quite an important town. It has not less than thirteen thousand inhabitants, and the towers, domes and steeples of its thirty-six churches produced a superb effect. The river, widened out at this spot, made one think of the

Bosphorus, nor would it have required a great stretch of imagination to transform Ouglitch into a Turkish town, its bulbous towers into minarets. We were shown a little pavilion on the bank of ancient Russian style, where Dmitri was killed, at the age of seven, by Boris Godunoff. On the sandy shore, at the confluence of the Mologa and the Volga, numberless flocks of crows and ravens were executing those extraordinary evolutions that precede their retiring to rest. Sea-gulls, the frequenters of great watercourses, began to be seen. Higher up, we noticed pygargs capture for their supper some of those sterlets for which would be paid their weight in gold by Western gourmets.

A most brilliant, crimson sunset had been succeeded by a clear, blue, silver ideal moon, when we reached Rybinsk. A flotilla of great boats well-nigh barred the river.

Amid the forest of black masts and cordage lamps shone, while like a thread of quicksilver the steeple of a church mounted upward into the blue ether.

Rybinsk is a place of some importance, a town of commerce and pleasure, and the Volga, rendered wider and deeper by the tributary which brings into it the waters of the Mologa, allows great boats to reach and to leave the port. Then, too, the regular population is augmented at certain seasons by a considerable number of travelers, who ask to be amused only and whom the realization of their



desires keeps in a generous and amiable mood. One of the favorite diversions of the Russian people is to hear Gypsies sing their airs and choruses. Nothing can exceed the passion into which the Gypsies throw the auditors, a passion, that only the *fureur* of the virtuoso can equal. The enthusiasm of the *dilettanti* at the Italian opera will give but a feeble idea of it, for here nothing is simulated, factitious or conventional. Fashion and *bon ton* are forgotten, and the inmost fibre of primitive, savage man trembles at these strange sounds. The taste for this diversion is not at all surprising, in fact we share it, and since on the boat we had been told that Rybinsk possessed a celebrated troupe of Gypsies, we accepted the invitation to hear them that had been extended to us by an amiable, cultured and hospitable nobleman who was a passenger on the "Nixe" and in whose company we would willingly have sailed to the end of the world.

The Count de —— had preceded us to arrange matters, after having indicated to us the name of the hotel where the concert was to take place. We went ashore very leisurely, enchanted by the spectacle of a night of marvelous beauty. Under a sky where the stars paled from the light of the moon, the river spread out like a lake, that was divided by the dark line of the shipping. In the luminous track of the star of night, the dark reflections of the masts lengthened out over the water

like ribbons of silver and black velvet, while the waves lapped gently against the shore. The houses along the banks were lost in shadow, save for a single line of silver light on the top of their green roofs, though an occasional red flash indicated that all their inmates had not yet sought repose.

Standing alone in a large square, the principal church shone like a block of silver with an almost impossible intensity of light. It seemed as if it were illumined by Bengal fires. Its dome, encircled with a diadem of columns, sparkled like a tiara of diamonds; phosphorescent lights gleamed from the copper bell-towers, while the steeple, that recalled the spire in Dresden, seemed to have impaled a half-dozen stars on its golden point. There was something supernatural, magical, about it, such as is seen in the apotheosis in the fairy scene, when the azure of the perspective discloses, as it opens, the palace of the sylph or the temple of blessed Hymen.

Thus illumined, the church of Rybinsk looked as if it had been cut from a fragment of the moon fallen to the earth, so absolutely had it absorbed its silver, snowy light.

Scarcely had we reached the top of the quay, which is made of the great rocks that the Volga tosses about during its risings, when across the distant music of the tea-houses there fell upon our ears the ominous cry "Karaoul!" (Help! help!) shouted by someone who seemed to have a knife in

his throat. We sprang to one side; several shadows took flight. An open door of a house closed, the lights were extinguished, and all returned to obscurity. To the call of despair had succeeded the silence of death.

We passed two or three times before the door, but the house remained dark, silent and noiseless, like the tavern of Saltabadil, in the fifth act of *Le Roi s'Amuse* (The King Amuses Himself.) What use could there be in penetrating into this cut-throats' hole, alone, a stranger, without arms, unable to speak the language, in a country where no one comes to your assistance in case of accident or murder, for fear of the police and being called as a witness? Then, besides, it was all over with. The human being, whoever he was, who called so terribly for help stood no longer in need of it.

Our entrance into Rybinsk was not lacking, as you perceive, in dramatic coloring, and we regret our inability to recount in detail the history of this assassination, for the cry we heard was indeed a cry of agony, but we know nothing more about it. The night had hidden it all under its mantle.

Still strangely moved, we entered a *traktir* (inn) where the portraits of the Emperor Alexander II. and of the Empress Alexandrovna, framed gorgeously and painted like a beer sign, were companion pieces to the holy images surrounded with gold and silver leaves and illumined by the tremulous light of a hanging lamp. Tea was brought us,

and while we were enjoying the national beverage, strengthened with a dash of cognac, a hand-organ in the next room was playing an air of Verdi.

Very soon we were joined by the engineer of the Samolett Company and the chief mechanician of the "Nixe," and together we set off in search of the inn where the Gypsies were to sing, and where we were also to meet the Count de ——.

The hotel, which belonged to a wealthy wheat merchant, whose acquaintance we had made on the steamer, was situated at the other end of the town. As we left the river behind, the houses grew larger and were surrounded by more spacious lawns, which were separated by high fences. The streets terminated in open places, and wooden sidewalks helped us to cross the mud. Some lean dogs sat barking at the moon, and after we had passed followed us persistently, either from distrust, or a feeling of sociability, or in the hope of procuring a bone. Light mists floated near the ground, interposing their gauzy vapor between our eyes and surrounding objects, investing them with a poetry that daylight would in all probability destroy. Finally, amid the azure mist, we perceived the crimson embrasures of lighted windows. It was the inn. The dull thrumming of a guitar, which for some time had reached our ears, like the persistent chirping of a cricket, and whose notes became more distinct each moment, guided us to the door. A moujik led us through long corridors to the room, where the



Gypsies were. Count de ——, the wheat merchant, and a young officer composed the audience. On a table, among champagne bottles and glasses, were two long candles, like church tapers. In the thick, tobacco-laden air the flames were surrounded with yellow aureoles. We were handed a full glass on the condition that we should empty it promptly, that it might be refilled. It was Roederer of the finest quality, such as one drinks only in Russia. The libation accomplished, we seated ourselves in silence.

The Bohemians were standing or leaning against the wall in Orientally indolent attitudes, without the least thought of the eyes fixed upon them. Nothing could be more inert than their poses, or more sad than their countenances. They looked as if they were exhausted or asleep. These savage natures, when not stirred by passion, have an animal calmness it is difficult to describe. They do not think, but dream like beasts in the forest. No civilized face is capable of assuming that mysterious absence of expression, more alluring than all the wiles of coquetry. Oh! to bring to those faces the blush of consciousness is a fancy that comes to the coldest, the least poetical, and soon turns into passion.

Were the women, at least, beautiful? No, not in the ordinary acceptation of the word. In Paris, they would assuredly have been called plain, with perhaps the exception of one, who more nearly

approached the European type than did her companions. Olive skins, masses of black hair, thin bodies, little brown hands, such are their principal features. Nor were their costumes in any way remarkable: they wore neither amber nor glass necklaces, nor skirts covered with stars and furbelows, nor gaily striped mantles, but rather Parisian toilettes, with a few barbarisms justified by the distance from Paris, flounced frocks, silk mantles, etc.; they looked like badly-dressed maids.

So far, you are doubtless thinking, the entertainment has been nothing remarkable. Be patient, as we were, and do not despair of the Gypsy, even though she has renounced, in the cities at least, her rags and picturesque tinsel. The place to see the blooded horse is not in his stable covered with blankets; it is on the turf, where action reveals his beauty. Finally one of the Gypsy maidens, throwing aside her lassitude and torpor, at the persistent call of the guitar, in the hands of a rascal that looked like a brigand, advanced into the middle of the circle. She raised her long eyelids, with their black lashes, and the room seemed full of light. Around her mouth lingered a vague, delicious smile; an indistinct murmur, like voices heard in a dream, escaped from her lips. In this pose the Gypsy had the air of a somnambulist, without apparent consciousness of her surroundings.

She saw neither the hall nor her assistants. A transfiguration had taken place within her. Her



features had grown noble, and had lost every trace of vulgarity. Her stature had increased, and her poor little toilette fell around her like antique drapery.

Finally she took up the song and chanted a melody that was at first slow, then rapid, with an intoxicating movement. The theme resembled a captive bird whose cage has just been opened. Still uncertain of his liberty, the bird makes several trembling steps before his prison, then he hops a little way, and when he is sure that no snare threatens he swells out his throat, gives vent to a cry of joy, and on joyous wing madly dashes towards the forest, where his old companions are singing.

Such was the vision that filled our spirit as we listened to that air, of which no known music can give an adequate idea.

Another Gypsy joined the first, and soon the entire chorus of voices joined in following the winged theme, with pearly scales and trills, rich, low notes and soft modulations, with sudden returns and unexpected renewals. It chirped, whistled, chattered, gabbled with a volubility full of gaiety, a friendly, joyous tumult, as if the savage tribe were rejoicing over its escape from the town. Then the chorus was silent, while the voice continued to sing of the joys of liberty and of solitude, and the refrain accentuated the last phrase with maddening energy.

It is very difficult, if not impossible, to explain in words a musical effect, but you can at least recite the dream to which it has given birth, and the Gypsy songs have a singular power of evocation. They arouse the primitive instincts, obliterated by social life; the memories of an anterior existence, that had almost vanished forever; longings for independence and wandering, secretly hidden in the depths of every heart; and inspire you with a strange homesickness for unknown lands which seem to have become your true home. Certain melodies sound in your ears, like an irresistible *ranz des vaches*, and you are filled with a desire to throw aside your gun, to abandon your post, and to swim over to the other shore, where there exists no obedience to discipline, or law, nor any moral code, but simply caprice. A thousand brilliant pictures pass confusedly before your eyes: you see the encampment of wagons in the meadow, the camp-fire where bubbling pots are suspended from three sticks, the varied garments drying on ropes, while further on there crouches on the ground an aged fortune-teller, lost in the study of the future, and a youthful, swarthy-skinned, ebony-haired Gypsy is dancing to the accompaniment of a Basque tambourine. The first scene melts away, and amid the troublous perspective of past centuries appears dimly a distant caravan, descending the lofty plateaus of Asia, expelled doubtless from its native land, through its spirit

of revolt, that is impatient of any curb. The snowy draperies fiercely striped with red and orange are floating in the breeze, copper rings and bracelets shine on brown skins, and the triangles sound with stirring, metallic ring.

These are not, indeed, the reveries of a poet. Gypsy music exercises an extraordinary influence over the most prosaic beings, and makes even the Philistine, engrossed in his routine and luxury, burst into song. This music is not, as readily might be imagined, a savage music. It springs, on the contrary, from a very complicated art, though different from ours, and those who execute it are true virtuosos, although they do not know a note and are quite incapable of transcribing one of those airs they sing so well. The frequent use of quarter notes at first disturbs the ear, but one soon grows accustomed to and even finds a singular charm in it. It is a whole scale of novel sounds, of bizarre tones, of shades unknown to the ordinary piano, which are used to render sentiments which are outside of every civilization. Gypsies have in fact neither country, nor religion, nor family, nor code of morals, nor political faith. They accept no human yoke, and coast on the outside of society, without ever entering within. Those who brave or toss aside all law do not submit to pedantic formulas of harmony or thorough-bass. Free caprice in free nature, the individual abandoning himself to sensation without remorse for

the day before, without thought for the morrow, the intoxication of space, the love of change and craze for independence—such is the general impression produced by these Gypsy songs. Their themes resemble the songs of birds, the rustling of leaves, the sighs of Æolian harps; their rhythms the distant galloping of horses over the steppes. They beat the measure, but they fly.

The prima donna of the troupe was undoubtedly Sacha (the diminutive for Alexandra), she who had first broken silence and fired the dormant verve of her companions. Now the wild spirit of the music was unchained: the Gypsies were no longer singing for us, but for themselves.

A delicate pink glow colored Sacha's cheeks. Her eyes shone like flashes of lightning. She, as well as Petra Camara, lowered and raised her eyelids, like a fan that is opened or shut, in a fashion that produced alternations of light and shade. This play of the eyes is irresistibly fascinating.

Sacha approached the table—a glass of champagne was offered her which she refused, for Gypsies are abstemious—and asked for tea for herself and her friends. The guitar-player, apparently having no fear of losing his voice, swallowed glass after glass of brandy, to give himself fire, and in fact, beating the floor with his foot, striking the guitar with the palm of his hand, he sang and danced, demeaned himself like a *beau diable* and made grimaces, as a sort of amusing interlude,

with amazing ardor and enthusiasm. He was the husband, the *rom* of the blonde Gypsy, and never did a couple conform less to the proverb: "Married people should be alike." We have already said that Gypsy women are sober; were we to add that they are chaste as well no one would believe us, but nevertheless it is true. In Russia their virtue is considered invincible. None of them was ever known to be seduced, and noblemen, both young and old, have spent fabulous sums upon these Gypsies, to no purpose. At the same time, there is nothing repellent in their virtue. One may press their hands or waists, and sometimes they return a kiss that has been stolen from them. If the chairs were to give out, they would seat themselves cozily upon your knees, and when the song began place their cigarettes between your lips, and take them again later. Sure of themselves, they attach no importance to these little familiarities, which on the part of other women would present an entirely different meaning.

For more than two hours, song succeeded song, with giddy rapidity. What caprice, what verve, what enthusiasm, what difficulties deliciously overcome! Sacha executed *fioriture* that would have put the Grand Opera on its mettle, while she joined in the conversation and asked for a *moire* antique robe (the two French words with which she was acquainted) from one of her friends. Finally the rhythm became so overpowering, so



captivating, that dancing was added to the singing, in the fashion of the ancient chorus. Everybody joined in, from the old dried-up hag, who exercised her shriveled anatomy, to the little eight-year-old girl, who took part with feverish ardor, lest she should fall behind her elders. The ill-favored guitar-performer disappeared amid a whirlwind of chords and sighs from his instrument. For an instant, we confess, we feared that the *cancan*, at that time making the tour of the world, had reached Rybinsk, and that the evening would finish like a piece at the Variétés or Palais Royal; but nothing of the kind happened. The dancing of the Gypsies resembles that of the Bayaderes. Sacha and her companions, with outstretched arms and undulations and swayings of the body, might have been dancing the Malapou, which the blue god dances so admirably on the banks of the Ganges, before the altar of Shiva. Never did the Asiatic origin of the Gypsy seem to us more plain or incontestable.

The hour for returning to the steamer had arrived, but the exaltation of both listeners and performers was so great that the concert continued in the street. The Gypsy women, taking the first arm offered, walked so as to be separated in groups at some distance from each other, and sang a chorus of echoes and answers, with decrescendo effects, interspersed with brilliant bursts of melody, that produced a magic, supernatural result. Oberon's flute, even when Weber blows into its



ivory, could not answer in sweeter, more silvery or more dreamy notes.

When we had regained the deck, we turned at once towards the shore. Standing in a group in the moonlight, the Gypsies waved their hands towards us by way of salutation; a dazzling stream of notes, the last rocket from the silver shower of these musical fireworks, rose to inaccessible heights, gleamed over the darkness, and was gone.

The "Nixe," sufficient for the navigation of the upper Volga, was not of great enough tonnage, with its increase of passengers and merchandise, to descend the river, which had swelled to considerable proportions. We had been transferred to the "Provorny," a boat of the same company, Samolett, that was of one hundred and fifty horsepower. Buckets, marked each one with a letter, spelled the boat's name and hung under the bridge, suspended in rows. There was an upper cabin on the deck, above the staircase leading to the travelers' saloon, that offered a shelter for observation, in case of heat or bad weather. There it was we passed most of our day. Before the "Provorny" started on its way, we turned to look at Rybinsk, to see what it looked like in daylight, not without apprehension, for the sun is not as indulgent as the moon: it ruthlessly exposes what the orb of night conceals under its silver and blue. Well! Rybinsk did not lose much by daylight. Its yellow, pink, green houses, of wood or brick, crowned

gaily its quay which was built of irregular stones like a cyclopean wall in ruins; but the church, that in the moonlight had seemed so white, was painted an apple-green and its vari-colors produced a pleasing effect. Still this play of color was a surprise. The church was by no means devoid of character with its dome, its flanked towers, and its four porticoes looking eastward, like those of St. Isaac's. The spire resembled those queerly shaped ones seen in Germany and Belgium, but it shot up to a great height, and if it did not satisfy the taste, it amused the eye, with its outline silhouetted against the horizon.

The boats lying at the port of Rybinsk were mostly of large dimensions and of so unusual a shape as to be worthy of description, for the commerce between this city and Nijni-Novgorod, Kazan, Saratoff, Astrakhan and other towns of the lower Volga is very active at this season of the year. Some were making ready to leave, others were waiting or had just arrived, and the scene was full of interest. The "Provorny" threaded its way skilfully among this flotilla and reached the current.

On either side of the river the shores were quite high, though the country had not changed its character sensibly. There were still the same pine forests, with their tall trunks and sombre verdure; the villages composed of log-built cottages scattered around a green-domed church; sometimes the

abode of a nobleman, turning its front curiously towards the river, and at the corners of his park a gaily painted kiosk or belvedere; wooden staircases ascending the bank, and leading to some habitation; lands hollowed out by the rising and falling of the waters; sandy shores, where flocks of geese were waddling about, or herds of cattle, which had found their way thither in order to drink: a thousand variations of the same subjects that the pencil could portray better than the pen.

We soon caught sight of the convent of Romanoff. Crenelated, whitewashed walls give it the air of a fortress, and must formerly have secured it against sudden attack, for the treasures piled up in the monasteries excited in troublous times the cupidity of pilfering bands. On the top of the walls, great cedars stretched out their horizontal branches, covered with sombre, rugged verdure. These cedar-trees are cultivated with especial care at Romanov, for it was under a cedar that the miraculous image that is worshipped there was found.

At Yourevetz, the wood for the engines was brought by women. Two poles, fixed like a litter, held a pile of cut wood, that two strong, alert peasant women dropped into the receiving-room of the steamer. Their exertions had flushed their faces with the glow of health, while between their parted lips shone teeth whiter than peeled almonds. Unfortunately some among them were pitted and marked with smallpox, for vaccination is not gen-

eral in Russia, there being a widely-spread prejudice against it.

Their dress was of the simplest, a cotton skirt, of those old-fashioned patterns that are occasionally met with in old, provincial inns, in the form of bed-spread or curtain, a coarse linen waist, a handkerchief knotted under the chin,—nothing more. The absence of shoes and stockings gave us the opportunity of admiring their exquisitely delicate feet, which might well have worn Cinderella slippers. We noted with satisfaction that the frightful fashion of the skirt drawn like a curtain above the bosom was followed by only the oldest and ugliest among them. The younger ones wore their waists above their hips, as anatomy, hygiene and common sense dictate.

It was opposed to all our ideas of gallantry to see women carrying heavy loads and turned into beasts of burden, but after all, this labor, that they perform without a trace of fatigue, procures them a few kopecks and augments their comfort and that of their families.

As we descended the river, we met a large number of boats, like those we had seen anchored at Rybinsk. They draw very little water, though their dimensions are not inferior to those of a three-masted merchantman. Their construction is unusual and is not seen elsewhere. Like Chinese junks, their prows and sterns turn up, like the points of a wooden shoe. The pilot occupies a plat-

form, furnished with a carved and open-work balustrade. On the deck are cabins in the shape of kiosks and bell-towers painted and gilded; but the strangest part is the horse-gin, which consists of two stories, the lower one for the animals and the upper one for the horse-gin proper. The number of horses thus installed often reaches one hundred and fifty. They take turns, some working while others rest, so that the boat is always on its way, though slowly. The masts of these boats are of extraordinary height, being made of four or six pine trunks coupled together like the arched pillars in Gothic cathedrals. The rope ladders attached to them have rungs bound crosswise by ropes.

We have described in detail the barks of the Volga, and their original arrangements, for they are fast disappearing. In a few years the horse-boat will be replaced by the steamboat and living force by mechanical. This entire, picturesque system, is too complicated, slow and costly. Everywhere the useful and necessary will prevail. The sailors manning these boats wear hats, high-crowned and brimless, like stove-pipes. One is rather astonished not to see smoke issuing from them.

These boats made us think of the great wooden floats of the Rhine, which carried villages, provisions for Gargantua's table and even herds of cattle. The last pilot able to guide them died



some years since, and steam navigation has replaced this barbarous, simple arrangement. Yaroslav, where we touched, communicates with Moscow by means of a diligence, curious enough to deserve a passing mention. The vehicle, to which a crowd of little horses is harnessed, is awaiting travelers at the landing-place. It is what is called in Russia a "tarantass," that is, a carriage-box placed on two long beams that unite the front with the back, and whose flexibility takes the place of springs. This arrangement possesses the advantage of being easily repaired in case of breakdown, as well as of being able to withstand the most severe jolts. The body, which is not unlike that of the old litter, is furnished with leather curtains, and the sufferers sit sideways as in an omnibus. After having surveyed with the respect it merited this offshoot of antediluvian carriages, we ascended the stairs of the quay and sauntered into the town. A continuation of the quay formed a promenade bordered with trees, and often supported on arches, which allowed the lower streets and the torrents to reach the river.

The view from this point is very beautiful. While we were contemplating it a young man approached and offered, in tolerable French, to be our guide to see the curiosities of the town. He did not look like a Russian, and his worn though neat clothes attested the poverty of a man whose birth and education forbade manual labor. His

pale, emaciated, sad face was full of intelligence. The steamboat would leave in a quarter of an hour, and we dared not risk an excursion through Yaroslav, lest we should be left behind. To our great regret, we were forced to refuse the services of the poor fellow, who turned away with a sigh of resignation, as if he were accustomed to such disappointments. A false shame, for which we can never forgive ourselves, prevented us from slipping a silver rouble into his hand, but he looked so well-bred we feared to offend him. Yaroslav bears the *cachet* of the old Russian towns, if the name of old can be given to anything in Russia, where white-wash and coloring cover persistently every trace of old age. On the porticoes of the church were pictures in the archaic style of Mt. Athos, but the style alone was old. Whenever they begin to lose color, the faces and draperies are touched up, the aureoles regilded.

Kostroma, where we stopped awhile, contains nothing of interest, at least to the traveler who can take only a hurried glance through it. The little Russian towns are extraordinarily uniform in character. They are built after certain laws and according to certain fatal necessities, so to speak, against which individual fancy attempts in vain to contend. The absence or scarcity of stone multiplies the wooden and brick buildings, and with these materials architectural lines are unable to reach a distinctness interesting to the artist. As

for the churches, the Greek ritual imposes its absolute forms, so they could not present the variety of style of Western churches. Our descriptions would simply resolve themselves into monotonous repetitions. Let us then return to the Volga, which is monotonous as well, but still varied in its unity, as is every great spectacle of nature.

Multitudes of birds were flying over the river, without counting the crows and ravens so numerous in Russia. Every moment, the passage of the steamer disturbed flocks of wild ducks among the reeds or sandy bottoms. Grebes and teal skimmed along the water, as they took their flight. The white-throated, grey-winged sea-gulls circled and curved about, and hawks and king-fishers flashed around in search of prey. Occasionally the pygargs would swoop down upon an imprudent fish, and rising swiftly, take their flight further up the river bank.

The long twilight of the summer day was rich in magical effects: delicate shades of orange, citron and lilac floated above the horizon. On this splendid background, like the figures on the gold background of a Byzantine icon (sacred picture), the river-bank pictured in sombre outline all its occupants,—trees, hills, houses, distant churches. Tiny banks of dark blue clouds, scattered by the wind, fled in flakes above the sky-line; the sun, half-lost behind a wood, scattered myriads of spangles over leaf and twig, while the river repeated in darker

tones this exquisite scene. Rendered visible by the increasing gloom, sparks glided like serpents across the smoke of the steamer, while through the darkness, along the shores, shone like fiery insects or wandering stars the lanterns of the fishermen returning from their labors.

As the water was very low, and we did not dare approach the shore, being unable to distinguish the buoys in the darkness, the anchor was thrown out, in the middle of the river, which was very broad at this point. One felt as if he were in the centre of a vast lake, for the curves of the river-bank and the juttings of the promontories shut out the horizon on all sides.

The following day was passed in that busy indolence that forms one of the charms of travel. We watched, as we smoked a cigar, the shores fly by, growing more and more distant, till the river was three times as wide as the Thames at London Bridge. Boats, drawn by horses, and sailboats almost grazed us, as they passed on their upward or downward course. The activity increased, presaging the approach of an important centre. But if the journey had been peaceful, the evening furnished a most dramatic incident.

Our steamer had stopped for the night before a village or little town, whose Russian name has escaped our memory, alongside of a bridge of boats moored to the shore. Soon our attention was attracted by bursts of laughter and the noisy dia-

logue of a dispute. On the platform of the bridge two men were quarrelling and gesticulating like ruffians. From insults they passed to acts. After several punches and blows had been exchanged, one of the combatants seized the other around the body, and with a movement as quick as thought threw him into the river. The fall of the vanquished splashed the water over our face, for he fell between the bridge and the steamboat, in a space not larger than three or four feet. The water closed over him, and we saw nothing come up. There was a moment of terrible anxiety, for everyone thought the unfortunate man was drowned, and there was no means of fishing him up from under the keel of the boat, where he had probably already been swept by the current, when all at once we saw in the moonlight the water move near the bank, and a human form emerged and sprang up the bank as hard as it could go.

The man, an excellent swimmer, had fallen under the paddles of the wheel, whose box touched the next ship. He could congratulate himself on having made a narrow escape. But the victor, instead of running away, continued to rail with violent gestures, walked up and down, sat down on a bench at the door of his cabin, then rose and resumed his work. Charles III., declared that there was always a woman behind every crime, and in his instructions to judges he asked always: "Who is she?" The philosophic feature of this dictum was



fully demonstrated. A trap-door opened and from the depths of the bridge a woman emerged, the probable cause of the dispute. Was she young and pretty? The feeble light of the moon did not allow us to pass judgment at that distance, and the singular oscillations with which she occupied herself prevented us from distinguishing her features. Calling to her assistance all the saints of the Greek calendar, she prostrated herself, rising only to fall again upon her knees, making the sign of the cross with incredible swiftness, Russian fashion, as she murmured prayers, interrupted with cries and sobs. Nothing could be more weird. The police, that the victim had gone after, arrived at last, and after a long discussion two soldiers in grey cloaks carried the guilty party away with them. We followed them for a long time with our eyes, both prisoner and soldiers standing out in full relief on the top of the bank, but the soldiers did not dare to abuse the recalcitrant, for he was a *tchinovnik* (government clerk.) At daylight the anchor was raised, the paddles of the "Provorny" beat the water with the certainty born of daylight, and soon we were within sight of Nijni-Novgorod. It was one of those white, pearly, milky mornings, through which every object appears as if through a silver gauze. A colorless sky, penetrated with veiled sunshine, lowered over grey hills and leaden waters. Bonington's water-colors often present these effects, that one might imagine

beyond the reach of painting, and, which can be depicted only by colorists of genius.

An immense assemblage of craft of every sort and condition covered the Volga, scarcely leaving in the midst of the current a passage free for the boats and steamers. High masts formed a veritable forest of bare pines, whose straight lines pierced the universal whiteness, and, at their tops, the fresh air of early dawn lifted the gaily-colored pennants, and turned the gilded weather-cocks. Some of the flour-carrying boats were powdered with white, like a miller. Others sailed along in all the pride of green prows and salmon-colored sides.

We reached the landing-place of the company without accident or damage, which was an unusual occurrence, for, although the river at this place is exceedingly broad, the navigation is so active and the number of ships so great that it does not seem possible for such a chaos to be unravelled; but the rudders wave their tails and the boats file past each other with the swiftness of fish.

Nijni-Novgorod stands on an eminence, which, after the interminable succession of plains we had just traversed, produced the effect of a high mountain. The descent is made to the quay by rapid slopes, gay with verdure, and followed in its abrupt zigzags by ramparts of brick with here and there remnants of plaster. These crenelated walls form the enclosure of the walls or Kremlin, to make use of the local expression; at the top rises a

tall, square tower, and bulbous bell-towers with gilded crosses attest the presence of a church within the fortress.

Wooden houses are scattered about, and even on the quay are great red buildings with white window-frames. These bright tones impart gaiety and vigor to the houses, and prevent this strictly regular style of architecture from wearying the eye.

Along the stairs of the landing-place, a crowd of drosky drivers was disputing for the passengers and their luggage. We got rid, not without trouble, of the *isvochtchiks* who surrounded us, and, signalling a drosky, set off in search of a lodging, a rather difficult matter when the fair is in progress. As we drove up the quay we entertained ourselves by watching the little improvised open shops, where were exposed bread, cucumbers, sausages, smoked fish, cakes, pastry, apples and other articles of food loved of the common people. Soon the vehicle turned and began to climb a road between immense grassy declivities, for Nijni-Novgorod, as Oran formerly was, before military necessities had levelled its picturesque precipice, is divided into two parts by a deep ravine. The walls of the Kremlin and a promenade bordered with fine trees crown its top on the left; a few houses are stuck to its right slope, but they soon weary of attempting to climb the declivity, from which they seem ever to slip away. The ascent was soon made

by the impetuosity of the Russian horses, which seem unable ever to walk, and we arrived at the summit of the plateau, on which is a broad square in the centre of which were a church with green domes surmounted with a gold cross, and an iron fountain made in very questionable taste. Since we had asked to be taken to the hotel furthest removed from the fair, with the hope that we should more readily secure lodging there, our coachman stopped before an inn in the corner of the square on the side of the Kremlin. After a moment of waiting and talking, Smyrnof, the proprietor, professed his readiness to receive us, and a moujik carried off our trunk.

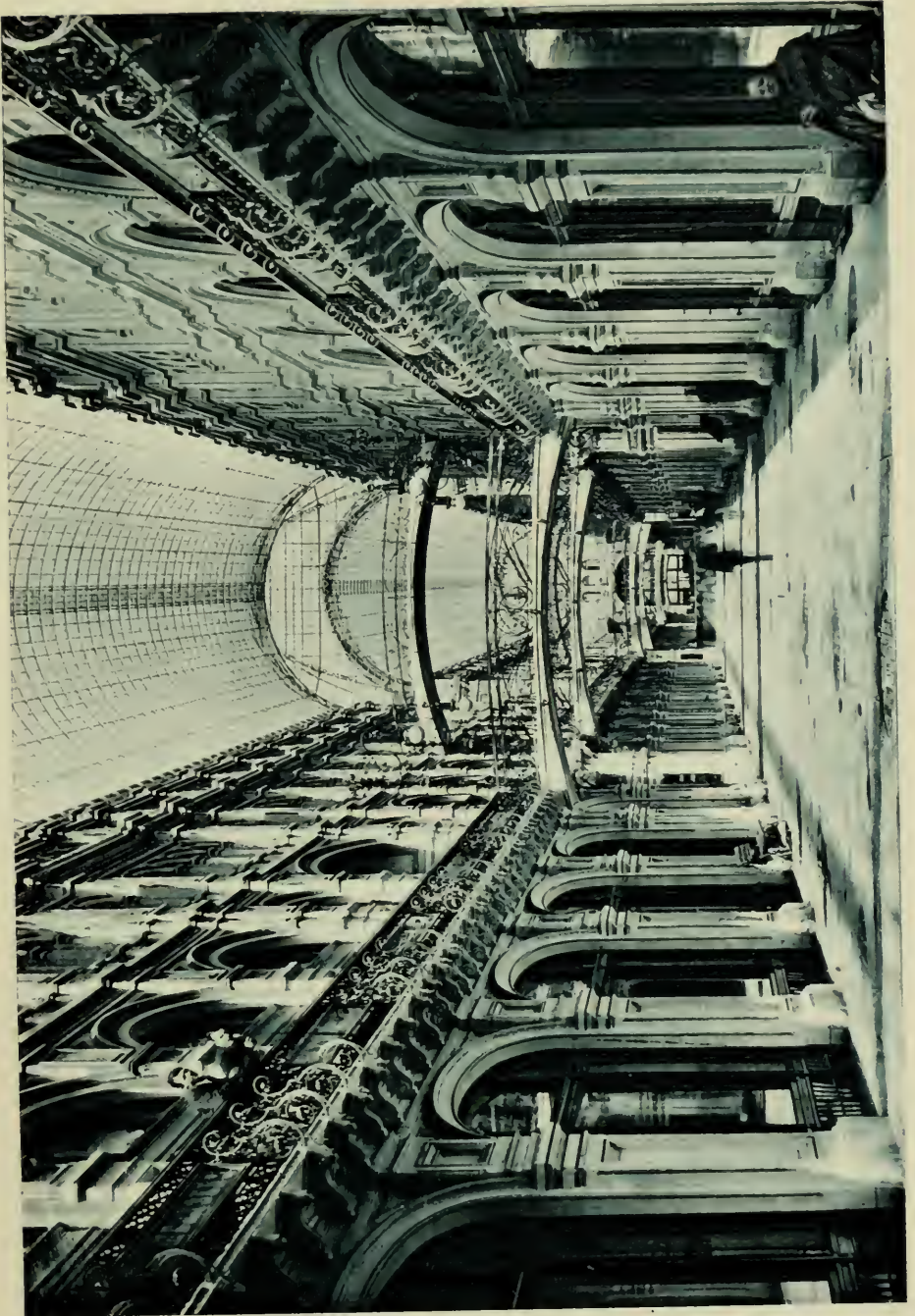
Our room was large, light and clean, and contained all that was indispensable to a civilized traveler, except the bed, with only one sheet, and an unique mattress about as thick as a biscuit. But in Russia everyone professes an absolute indifference to the spot where he sleeps, an Asiatic fashion that we share, and the bed of the Hotel Smyrnof was quite as good as any we could find elsewhere.

While awaiting our breakfast, of which we stood in great need, for the provisions on the steamboat had been nearly exhausted and our bill-of-fare proportionally meagre, we looked around the square and our eyes fell upon the fountain, not in admiration of its architecture, which, as we have said, was in the worst possible taste, but on account











of the amusing popular scenes of which the public fountain is of necessity the centre.

The water-carriers had come for a supply, which they procured by dipping into the basin and filling little long-handled pails and emptying them into the openings in the barrels with great rapidity, not however without spilling half the pails' contents. There were also military prisoners, in old grey cloaks, coming for water between two soldiers with fixed bayonets, while peasants filled wide-bottomed wooden pitchers with narrow tops, for house use. But we did not see a single woman. At a German fountain there would have gathered a bevy of Gretchens, Nannerls, and Koetherles, to enjoy a fine gossip around the curb of the well. In Russia, women, even of the lowest class, rarely go out, and the men perform most of the outside domestic duties.

After a very good breakfast, served by Mussulmen in black coats and white cravats, whose English toilettes formed an immense contrast to their Tartar countenances, we had nothing on hand more pressing than to descend into the fair grounds, which were situated at the bottom of the village, on a shore formed by the confluence of the Oka and the Volga. There was no need of a guide in order to find it, for everybody was going in the same direction, and one had but to "follow the fashion" as the mountebanks ask you to do, from the top of their little stages.

At the foot of the hill a small chapel attracted our attention. On the steps, bowing with the mechanical motion of wooden birds, whose heads are raised and lowered by a hidden mechanism, were squalid, frightful beggars, veritable human rags, that the rag-picker, Death, had been too disgusted to pick up with his crook and throw into his basket, and certain nuns with high velvet bonnets and narrow serge gowns, who hold before you an alms-box in which tinkle previous offerings, and who are always to be found where a concourse of people offers hope of good receipts. The picture was completed by five or six old women who would have made the sibyl of Panzoust seem young and charming.

A vast quantity of burning candles within the building illumined the vermilion plaques of the iconostase, where lamps were burning besides. We threaded our way with difficulty through the narrow pathway, obstructed by the faithful crossing themselves with vigor, and swinging up and down like dervishes. Water, gifted doubtless with some miraculous property, filtering through a stone shell, hung against the wall like a holy water basin, was apparently the object of especial devotion.

Droskies and télégas dashed by, making deep ruts in the mud, and chasing the foot-passengers to the side of the road. Sometimes a more elegant drosky would contain two women, in conspicuous toilettes, painted like idols and casting smiles



to right and left. The fair of Nijni-Novgorod brings all sorts of people from all the evil spots of Russia and much farther still. They come by the boat load and an especial quarter is reserved for them.

By one of those contrasts loved of chance, that excellent maker of antithesis, often the swift-rolling equipage brushed past a quiet cart, drawn by a long-haired, little horse, with head bent under his gaily-painted collar, which was carrying a family group—grandfather, father, and mother, the latter often nursing an infant at her breast.

That day, without prejudice to the others, the brandy-sellers must have made great returns, judging from the number of drunk men who, according to the common saying, “were cutting scallops with unequal teeth” on the board-sidewalk or staggering about in the mire of the street. Some, extremely intoxicated, were unable to walk alone, but were carried away by two friends acting as crutches. The faces of some were livid and deadly white, and of others crimson and apoplectic, according to their temperament or the degree of their intoxication.

One young man, overcome by too frequent libations of vodka (brandy made from grain), had rolled from the sidewalk to the sloping shore onto a pile of wood and dirt; he would attempt to rise, and fall, laughing like an idiot and uttering inarticulate cries, like a haschachin, during his paroxysm.

His hands full of earth, his face soiled with mud, his clothing torn and spotted, he would crawl on hands and knees, sometimes reaching the top of the quay before rolling back to the river, into which he would fall up to his waist, without feeling the coldness of the water or realizing the danger of drowning, a death more disagreeable than any other to the drunkard. There is a Russian proverb about little glasses of brandy: "The first one enters like a stake, the second like a falcon, the others fly like little birds." The poor fellow whose falls we have been describing must have enclosed an entire flock in his breast. It is not pleasure in the taste that a moujik desires, but drunkenness and forgetfulness. He swallows glass after glass, until he falls down dead-drunk, and nothing is more frequent than to come across bodies that look as if they were dead, stretched out on the pavements.

The ever-increasing crowd detained us some time before a beautiful church in which the German rococo style was most curiously blended with the Byzantine. On a red background, there stood out in white, ovals, volutes, *chicorées*, capitals curled like cabbages, consoles, pots and other glaring fantasies, all surmounted by bulb-shaped towers of entirely Oriental aspect. It looked like the roof of a mosque on a Jesuit Church.

A little further on, amid an indescribable confusion of carriages and people, packed together as in the Champs-Élysées on an evening when fire-

works are displayed, we finally succeeded in reaching the fair grounds. To enter it was a matter of danger and difficulty. Fortunately true travelers are like great captains—they pass everywhere, not with a flag, but with a lorgnette in their hands.

At the head of the bridge rose tall poles, covered with streamers of every color that extravagant fancy could dictate, like those Venetian standards used in our fêtes. On one a pencil, full of good intentions, had striven to represent the Emperor and Empress; others were adorned with the double-headed eagle, with St. George brandishing his lance, with Chinese dragons, leopards, unicorns, griffons,—the entire chimerical menagerie of animals. A light breeze was tossing them about, causing them to assume the queer shapes of the animals they portrayed.

The bridge built over the Oka was a bridge of boats, strengthened with joists and furnished with a wooden pavement. A crowd completely covered it, and in the middle carriages dashed along with that rapidity that nothing moderates in Russia, but which does not cause accidents, thanks to the skill of the drivers, seconded by the willingness of the foot-passengers to get out of the way. The noise resembled the noise made by the chariot of Salmoneus on the bridge of brass. The two banks of the river disappeared under the immense number of boats and an inextricable mass of rigging. Perched on their high saddles, the Cossacks,

acting as police for the fair, walked their little horses about sedately, and were seen from afar, with their great lances, amid the droskies, télégas, and vehicles of every description and pedestrians of both sexes. But there was no other noise. Anywhere else there would have risen from such an assemblage a tremendous noise, an uproar like that of the sea. A very atmosphere of sound would have floated over the prodigious concourse of individuals; but crowds made up of Russian elements are silent.

At the other end of the bridge were arranged the platforms of the mountebanks, and pictures, of the crudest description, of phenomena: boa-constrictors, bearded women, giants, dwarfs, three-headed calves, a Hercules. Little booths with cheap gew-gaws and cotton goods, low-priced images of the saints, cakes and green apples, sour milk, beer and *kwas*, were scattered each side of the wooden walk, while in the back the beams, that had not been cut even, made them look like baskets whose sides had not been filled in by the basket-maker.

A shop for boots, slippers and felt shoes attracted our notice, since shoemaking was an industry peculiar to the country. There were women's tiny slippers of white felt, stitched with pink or blue, that resembled those called *sorties-de-bal* that the dancers put over their slippers when they go to their carriages, and which Cinderella



alone could have gotten her slipper into. The Nijni Fair is a town in itself. Its long streets run at right angles to each other and end in squares, with a fountain in the centre. The wooden houses on each side of them are composed of a lower story where is the shop, and of an upper one, supported by little pillars, where the merchant and his clerks sleep. This story and the posts holding it form a covered gallery in front of the stores. The bales that are being unloaded can in case of rain find a temporary shelter under it, and pedestrians, safe from carriages, may make their selections or satisfy their curiosity without other risk than that of being jostled by the crowd.

These streets often run out to the meadows, and nothing is more curious than to see, outside of the fair grounds, encampments of carts with their half-tamed horses fastened to the sides, and their owners asleep on some piece of stuff or coarse fur. The costumes at the fair are more ragged than picturesque, although not lacking in a certain wild individuality: not a bright color, save now and then a pink shirt; and only brown in various shades would be needed to picture these old clothes. However, effective pictures might be made of these touloupes, hats, laced leggings, and queerly-shaped shoes, of these yellow-bearded faces and little thin horses, whose intelligent eyes gaze at you through the meshes of their tangled manes.

A camp of this kind was occupied by some Si-



berian fur sellers. The furs, which have received only the preparation absolutely indispensable to their preservation, are lying in piles pell-mell, the skin outside, without the smallest attempt of displaying to advantage. To an outsider it looks like a sale of rabbit skins. Nor do the merchants present a less unattractive exterior than do their wares, and yet some furs are there of enormous value. Beavers from the polar circle, *zibelines*, sables, blue Siberian fox, reach amazing prices, that would deter the Westerner from their purchase. A cloak of blue fox is worth 10,000 roubles (\$8,000); a collar in castor back with white hairs longer than the brown fur, 1,000 roubles (\$800). We own a little cap of this fur for which in Paris we could not get three dollars, yet which has brought us some consideration in Russia, where people are judged a good deal according to their furs. It cost 75 silver roubles. A thousand minute details, imperceptible to our eyes, augment or depreciate the value of a fur. If the animal were killed during the severe season, when he had on his winter coat, the price rises; his fur will be thicker and will protect the wearer from the intense cold. The nearer the animal's abode approaches arctic latitudes, the more is his fur prized. The furs of temperate countries become insufficient when the thermometer descends thirty degrees below zero; they do not retain long, when in the open air, the caloric with which they are impregnated indoors.

A characteristic industry in Russia is that of the box-maker. The imitation of the West acknowledges the pure taste of Asia in the making of trunks. There are always numerous shops at Nijni-Novgorod, and it was among them we lingered longest. Nothing could be more charming than these chests in every size, painted in brilliant colors, with ornaments in polished gold or silver, sprinkled with blue, green or red spangles, adorned with gilt nails in symmetrical designs, latticed with thongs of white or fawn-colored leather, with steel or copper corner-pieces, and locks of simple construction. One imagines such are the trunks of a sultan or emir on his travels. For traveling, these trunks are covered with strong crash, which is taken off at the end of the journey; they also serve as chests to the great regret, doubtless, of their proprietors, who would prefer the fashionable mahogany to this charming, barbarous luxury. We shall never forgive ourselves for not having bought a certain box, colored and polished like the mirror of an Indian princess. But we were overwhelmed with shame at the bare thought of putting our miserable things in this casket, fit only for cashmeres and brocades. With these exceptions, the Fair of Nijni-Novgorod displays especially what is called in trade "the Paris article." While it may be flattering to our patriotism, it is tiresome from a picturesque point of view. One hopes to find, after eleven hundred leagues of

travel, something else besides the odds and ends of Parisian bazaars. These various articles were much admired, to be sure, but that is not the serious side of the fair: tremendous business matters are arranged here, the sale of a thousand cases of tea, for example, which are on the river, or of five or six boats loaded with grain, and worth several millions, or else perhaps a quantity of furs, to be delivered at such a spot, and not shown at all. So the great commercial movement is, so to speak, invisible. Tea-houses, furnished with a fountain for the ablutions of the Mussulmans, serve as places of rendezvous and exchange to the contracting parties. The samovar emits its stream of vapor; moujiks, dressed in pink or white shirts, move about, waiter in hand; merchants with long beards and blue blouses, seated before Asiatics with bonnets of black Astrakhan fur, empty their saucers filled with the steaming infusion, a small piece of sugar between their teeth, with an absolute phlegm, as if in these conversations, apparently so indifferent, the most tremendous interests were not at stake. In spite of the diversity of race and language among the participants, Russian is the only language used in conducting business matters. Over the confused murmur of conversation floats, perceptible even to a stranger, the sacred word "roubl-serebrom" (silver rouble).

The varied types of the crowd excited our curiosity more than the sight of the shops. The Tar-

tars, with high cheek-bones, oblique eyes and concave noses like the profile of the moon, coarse lips, with yellow skins turning greenish in places where they are shaved, were in great numbers. They wore little printed calico caps, placed on the back of their heads, brown blouses and belts studded with metal.

The Persians could readily be distinguished by their long oval faces, big noses, brilliant eyes, stubby black beards and noble Oriental physiognomy. They would have been recognized, even if their tall conical hats of sheepskin, their striped silk dresses, their cashmere belts, had not served to attract the attention. Some Armenians dressed in narrow tunics with flowing sleeves, Circassians, as slender-waisted as wasps, with low bearskin hats, were conspicuous among the crowd, but what we looked for with especial eagerness, particularly when we reached the quarter where tea was sold, was the Chinese. We fancied our desire was on the point of being realized when we spied the shops with curved roofs and trellises carved in Greek fashion, with smiling figures, which made one feel as if transported by the magic ring to a city of the Celestial Empire. But at the thresholds of the shops, and behind the counters, we saw only honest Russian countenances. Not a sign of a plaited queue, nor head with oblique eyes and pointed brows; not a sign of a hat shaped like a dish, nor a blue or violet silk robe—not a China-

man was anywhere to be seen. We do not know upon what foundation we had based our belief, but we had somehow felt sure that at Nijni-Novgorod we should certainly see some of those queer figures, that existed for us only upon vases and stands of porcelain. Without reflecting upon the enormous distance from Nijni-Novgorod to the Chinese frontier, we had believed foolishly that the merchants of the Middle Kingdom would themselves bring their tea to the fair. It was indeed so thoroughly ingrained upon our mind that, in spite of the witness of our eyes, we sought for information upon the subject. For three years none had come, and only one was here this year, who to protect himself from importunate curiosity had adopted the European costume. It was hoped one would come next year, but it was by no means certain. These explanations were amiably given us by a merchant from whom we purchased some tea; but, having discovered that we were a French writer, he insisted upon our accepting some peko, in which he mixed several handfuls of white flowers, and gave us besides a present of a tablet of tea, with a Chinese label on one side, and on the other a red wax seal, from the custom-house of Kiakhta, the last Russian post. This tablet contained an enormous quantity of leaves pressed into a small volume. It looked like a piece of bronze or green porphyry. It is the tea that the Manchu Tartars use during their journeys across the



steppes, and of which they make that sort of butter soup described in so entertaining a manner by Père Hue.

Not far from the Chinese quarter—as it is called in Nijni-Novgorod—are the shops where Oriental merchandise is sold. Nothing can exceed the elegance and majesty of the effendis in flowing silk robes, with cashmere belts bristling with poniards, who, with the most disdainful indifference, are enthroned on their divans in the midst of piles of brocades, velvets, silks, flowered stuffs, silver and gold striped gauzes, Persian carpets, scarlet cloths, embroidered probably by the fingers of captive peris; pipes, narghils of Khorassan steel, amber beads, bottles of essence, stools inerusted with mother-of-pearl, and Turkish slippers, embroidered with gold.

Now we scarcely know by what transition to introduce what we have to say, and yet if this detail is omitted the picture of the fair would be incomplete. For a long while, without being able to form an idea of their use, we noticed from time to time whitewashed towers with narrow windows enclosed with an iron grating. The open door of the towers showed a winding staircase going into the earth. Was it a guard-house, subterranean docks or passages to shorten the road? We could not tell. At last we determined to go on a tour of investigation, and since no one objected we entered a staircase and when we had reached the end of

the stairs we saw an immense vaulted, tiled corridor stretching out as far as the eye could reach. On one side was a row of cells without doors. In some, reserved for Mussulmans, were hanging gourds for ablutions. Air and light came through the slits of which we have spoken. Every night a sluice is opened and these subterranean rooms are flooded and purified by streams of water. This gigantic and singular work, without parallel in the world, has averted more than one cholera and pest at this spot where every year, in six weeks more than four hundred thousand men gather. It is the work of a French engineer, M. de Bethencourt.

We were beginning to tire of wandering through these interminable streets bordered with shops and booths; and, the voice of hunger making itself heard, we yielded to the invitation addressed to us from across the river by the sign of Nikita, the famous *restaurateur*.

Moujiks, standing on the axle-trees which had served to bear long logs of wood, were striving with might and main to pass each other. What coolness, courage and grace they displayed! As the swiftness of their pace made their shirts float in the breeze like *chlamydes*, one foot in advance, their arms outstretched, their hair flying in the wind, they looked like ancient Greek heroes. It might well have been a chariot race in the Olympic games.

Nikita's restaurant is a broad wooden house,

with large windows full of exotic plants of all sorts, with which no fashionable establishment would dare to dispense, for the Russians love greenness and verdure. Servants in English costume served us with sterlet soup, beefsteak with horseradish, a salmi of fat fowl (an unfailing dish), a tolerable roast chicken, a jelly of some kind with too much isinglass, an almond ice of exquisite delicacy—all washed down with iced seltzer and incomparable Bordeaux Lafitte. But what afforded us the most pleasure was to be able to light a cigar, for it is positively forbidden to smoke in the inside of the fair; indeed no fire is allowed save the tapers burning before the holy images, with which each shop is furnished.

Our dinner over, we returned to the fair, in the hope of seeing something new. A feeling very similar to that which detains you at the *bal de l'Opera*, in spite of the heat, the dust and general dullness, prevented us from returning to the hotel. After having walked through several narrow streets, we arrived at a square where there was a church on one side and a mosque on the other. The church was surmounted by a cross, the mosque by a crescent, and the two symbols shone peacefully in the evening air, gilded by the rays of the impartial or indifferent sun, which is perhaps the same thing. The two religions apparently got along very well together, for religious tolerance is

great in Russia, which numbers among its subjects even idolaters and Parsee Fire-worshippers.

The door of the church was open and the evening service was being chanted. It was not an easy matter to effect an entrance, for a compact crowd filled the body of the church, as liquid fills a pitcher. However, by dint of a few pushes, we succeeded in clearing a passage. The interior looked like a furnace of gold: forests of tapers, constellations of lamps, illumined the gold-work of the iconostase, whose reflections mingled with the rays from the lights with dazzling, superb effect. All these lights made in the top of the cupola a thick, crimson mist, into which soared the beautiful songs of the Greek worship, chanted by priests and repeated low by the assistants. The inclinations of the head, exacted by this ritual, bent and raised at prescribed moments this great religious crowd, with an ensemble like a well-executed military maneuver.

We came out in a few minutes, for already the perspiration was streaming from our body as if we had been in a vapor-bath. We should have been glad also to visit the mosque, but it was not Allah's hour.

What should we do with the rest of the evening? A drosky passed by; we hailed it, and, without knowing where we wished to go, it darted off in full gallop in the usual fashion of the *isvochtchiks*, who rarely ask where the traveler desires

to be taken. A "na leva" or "na prava" corrects their direction, if necessary. This one, crossing the bridge leading to Nikita's, tore through the open country, whose only roads were indicated by muddy wheel ruts. We let him alone, thinking he would end by taking us somewhere. In fact, this intelligent coachman had decided to his own satisfaction that gentlemen of our sort, at this hour of the evening, could only wish to be taken to the quarter reserved for tea, music, and amusement.

It was beginning to grow dark. We crossed, at a frightful rate of speed, a rough country full of pools of water, in a half-light that allowed but the outline of objects to be seen. Finally lights began to flash through the darkness and the sound of brass instruments reached our ears, betraying the presence of orchestras. We had arrived. From houses with wide-open doors and lighted windows issued the humming of balaleikas, intermingled with guttural cries. Strange scenes could be seen through the windows. Drunken figures staggered on the sidewalk, succeeded by showily dressed women.

Mud was everywhere. At the corners the water, lacking outlet, formed deep puddles, in which the carriage wheels, immersed to the hub, stirred up foul miasmas.

Little desirous of being overturned in such a mud hole, in the midst of a crowd of half-sub-



merged droskies, we ordered our isvochtchik to turn and take us back to the Hotel Smyrnof. From his look of amazement, we fancied that he considered us a very ordinary person of extremely narrow perceptions. However, he obeyed, and we finished our evening walking about the avenues around the Kremlin. The moon rose, and now and then a silver ray, darting among the branches of the trees, betrayed a couple with entwined arms, or walking hand in hand. Down below, all was excitement; here all was love.

The next day we devoted to visiting the upper part of Nijni-Novgorod. From a terrace on the extreme corner of the Kremlin, at whose feet lies a beautiful public garden, with its fresh masses of verdure and winding alleys, one enjoys a wonderful view, a boundless panorama. Among gently undulating plains, rich in tints of lilac, grey or blue, the Volga unfolds its course, now clear, now dark, as it reflects the azure of the sky, or the shadow of a cloud. On the nearest bank can be discerned little houses, seemingly smaller than those tiny wooden villages that are made in Nuremberg. The ships riding at anchor close to the shore look like a Lilliputian fleet. Every object is absorbed and swallowed up in a serene, azure immensity that brings to one memories of the boundless ocean. It was a distinctly Russian scene.

Nothing remained for us to see, and we proceeded

to Moscow, free from the obsession which had forced us to undertake this long peregrination. The demon of travel no longer murmured in our ear: "Nijni-Novgorod."



THE MIR, THE RURAL  
COMMUNE.





## XXII.

### THE MIR, THE RURAL COMMUNE—THE MOUJIK AND HIS PRESENT ECONOMICAL CONDITIONS.

BY ANATOLE LEROY-BEAULIEU.

If I were asked what was the most original of all Russian institutions, I should answer: It is the Mir, the rural commune of Grand-Russia, of Ancient Muscovy.

Although bestowing land upon him, the act of emancipation left the moujik in economical conditions analogous to those in which he lived in time of slavery. The peasant is to-day owner of the soil, whose possession only was formerly conceded to him by his master, but the mode of ownership is the same as was the mode of possession. Since, as before, the emancipation, the lands of the peasants have been and were held by them in common and not by a personal, individual or hereditary title. Instead of being divided among the various inhabitants of a village, the fields conceded to the moujiks remain generally the collective, undivided property of all the members of the commune. The peasant, decorated by law with the name of "proprietor," owns in a fixed and permanent manner only his cottage (his isba) and the little enclosure

around it; as for the rest, he is in reality but the usufructuary of the lot purchased by him.

The respect for the ancient mode of tenure of the soil has wonderfully smoothed for the peasant his passage from servitude to freedom. When he became independent of the noble proprietor, the moujik fell into dependence upon his commune. Indeed, the bond which attached the peasant to the soil was not entirely broken, or was partly renewed. The undivided property, and the tax for which they are all responsible, are like a double chain, which retains the peasant in his native commune and fixes him to the soil. They are no longer legally attached to a master, they are still legally attached to one another. Their liberty, like their property is in a certain measure collective; freed from the bonds of servitude they can with difficulty move beyond the boundaries of the community. These emancipated serfs might be compared to a herd of animals chained together, and constrained to browse wherever the herdsman leads them. The Russian rural commune offers two constituent parts for our consideration: the mode of ownership or tenure of the land, and the code of government or administration. Joined intimately to each other and held in a mutual dependence, the economical and the administrative commune are distinct enough to merit a separate study. We will first consider the commune as joint owner of the soil. This sort of agrarian communism is perhaps the

most remarkable, as it is the strangest, feature of the Russia of to-day. In a century like ours, so full of theories and systems, a study of this feature offers wonderful lessons to people restless in their social state and tormented with discontent.

Whatever may have been the process of evolution of the collective proprietorship among the Russian peasants, the tie of the family and of the commune of domestic life and of the mir is too narrow to understand one without knowing of the other. The father of the family, according to the old Russian custom, is sovereign in his house, as the Tzar in the nation, or, according to an old proverb, "The Khan in Crimea." In order to find anything analogous to it in the West, it is necessary to go into classic antiquity and compare with it the paternal power of the Romans. With the Russian peasant, age does not free the child from the authority of his father: the grown-up and married son remains subject until his own children are men, or until he in turn becomes the head of his own house. Domestic sovereignty has remained intact among all the transformations and revolutions of Russia. Among the nobility this paternal power has worn away from long contact with the West and from modern individualism: scarcely more remains than certain outside rites, as that touching Slav custom which requires the children after each repast to kiss their parents' hands. Among the people,—the peasantry, and also the merchant

class, old traditions have still survived. Among these two classes, the most distinctly Russian, the family has remained more strongly established than in any other country of Europe. The misfortune is that every virtue pushed to extreme becomes an abuse, and this paternal authority sometimes degenerates into tyranny. The ignorant, coarse father acts like an autocrat inside his cabin, while the son, taught by custom and servitude to obey, does not know how to preserve his own dignity as a man, or that of his wife. Paternal power is often, with the moujik, hardened by former contact with slavery and it is by no means surprising that young married people sometimes desire to be freed from a yoke nearly as heavy as slavery. To the rule of paternal authority, in the still patriarchal family of the moujik, is added the common property, the rule of the commune. The family may thus be considered as an economical association, whose members are united by ties of blood, and whose chief is the father or "ancient" with the title of "the head of the house" or "the doyen."

In slave times, the family preferred to remain together. Partings were feared, and never occurred until the courtyard (dvor) became too limited for the number of its inhabitants, when it was regarded as a necessary evil, and the division of the little patrimony was called "the black division." The master's interest, for he was obliged to furnish wood and materials for the construction





The typical Russian peasant's cottage in Central Russia is a small, rectangular building, usually made of brick or stone. It has a steeply pitched roof, often covered with straw or reeds. The walls are thick and made of brick or stone, with small windows and a single door. The interior is simple, with a central hearth and a few wooden benches. The cottage is usually built on a small plot of land, with a garden or field nearby. The architecture is simple and functional, reflecting the traditional lifestyle of the Russian peasantry.

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Typical Russian Peasant's Cottage in Central Russia





of new isbas, was in accord with the tradition opposing the separation of families. To-day, when the spirit of individualism and independence, the gifts of liberty, have invaded the moujik's dwelling, it would be greatly to the profit of the individual if the collective tenure of the soil should be abolished, so that the Russian peasant need not pass through the intermediary stages that have arrested the progress of the other Slav nations. Divisions, however, have already ceased to be of rare occurrence, and few isbas shelter several families under the same roof.

The man who emancipates himself from the paternal yoke must soon free himself from the yoke of the collective commune.

The communal domain generally consists of cultivated fields and pasturages. The latter are used in common, each family sending its beasts there, marked with its own mark, and guided by a common shepherd. The fields are divided more or less regularly among the members of the commune, to be cultivated by each one separately, at his own risk and peril.

Individual possession is thus associated with collective ownership. In this mir, so communistic in appearance, the first spring of activity must be personal interest.

The regimen of the mir is founded upon a periodical partition of the soil. Three points must be considered in regard to these partitions: first the

titles that give the right to the lot, next the periods of this territorial division, and last the manner of apportionment and allotment. On these points, especially the first two, are many variations, according to the region and the customs.

There are two principal methods touching the right of possession: sometimes the division is made by head (*doucha*); that is, according to males; again it is made, and more often so, by families, taking into consideration the capacity for work of the various households and the part that each member can contribute.

The lot of each family, then, is in the ratio to the number of its male members, or of its adult and married members. It can readily be seen what encouragement is given to increase of the family by this partition. Every son that comes into the world and reaches man's estate, brings a new lot of land to his family. Instead of diminishing, the paternal acres are increased by a large family. By law, women have no pretensions to land, but in practice they have as much as the men; for, according to the system of *tialgo* (by families), it is the wife that gains the increase of property for her husband. So that Russia has more marriages and more fruitful families than any other country of Europe. The increase of the population makes necessary a constant re-partition of the soil. In order to furnish the new-comers a lot, without having recourse to a new partition,



certain lands are reserved, especially among the tenantry of the crown. These reserves are sometimes rented for the profit of the mir, sometimes utilized as a common pasture. The increasing density of the population and the scarcity of lots forbid this recourse to most villages, so that the new-comers are often forced to await a new division. The principle of communism would of itself suffice to exact these periodical divisions; for without them, families increasing unequally, the common property would soon be unequally divided. This is of course one of the principal difficulties of all communism, which tends to destroy itself, in face of the impossibility of absolute equality, which in order to be at all maintained must constantly be renewed. Thence arises the need of these frequent divisions; the oftener they are repeated, the more they conform to the principle of community and equality, but the more they cramp agriculture and oppose an obstacle to general prosperity. The peasant, holding a lot of land that he cannot keep, does not care for it, and thinks but of an immediate profit, without troubling himself about the future. He keeps his care and forethought for the little enclosure around his isba, which is not subject to periodical divisions.

The principle of the mir requires that, since each lot of land must pay an equal tax, each lot must be rigorously equal. The Russian commune

is servile in its subservience to custom. It endeavors to make the lots equal both in extent and value; generally they are drawn by lot. In no other manner could this double equality be so well attained. Each peasant receives a parcel of as many sorts of land as there are in the community. When the lands are of the same excellence, which owing to the homogeneity of Russian soil is by no means unusual, the distance from the village gives them an unequal value. One of the consequences of the community of land is the agglomeration of villages. Isolated houses, scattered farms, presuppose a permanent occupation of the soil. In order to be able to avail himself of the lot that falls to him, each member of the community must be established near his brothers.

The inconveniences of this communal parceling are numerous. First of all, the scattered pieces of land that form a lot do not make a whole that can be rationally cultivated. And next, the peasant, obliged to cultivate small pieces of land, often several leagues apart, spends a good part of his time and strength in useless journeys, so much so indeed that it is by no means unusual to see distant pieces entirely abandoned by their possessors.

In this way much land is lost, and many harvests. Then, too, these intermingled parcels lack means of ingress, and are often so narrow that it is almost impossible to plough or harrow them.

There is no other manner of correcting these defects than by abandoning the chimera of absolutely identical lots, of material equality.

This severity in the composition of lots does not prevent inequalities in the manner of distribution. Generally the procedures of re-partition are not fixed with mathematical regularity. The mir is not a mechanical repeater, noting unerringly its number and quantity. These allotments of land are not made as are the rights of cutting wood in the communal woods of France, which are strictly made by fires or half-fires. Instead, the Russian mir is managed in a paternal—that is, arbitrary—fashion; it does not take into consideration merely the number of inhabitants of a house, but their age, health and strength. In its re-partition, the mir generally takes into consideration the natural or accidental inequalities, the forces and capacity of all, treating each one according to his needs or powers.

The community of land is in close relation to the community of taxation. For centuries the two things have been so closely bound together that certain people consider common property as a natural consequence of common charges. Now, in a country where the taxes of every sort have always been heavy, where for a long while the soil has been held, less as a right than as an obligation, where even to-day the amount of the imposts frequently exceeds the normal revenue

of the land, it is natural that in the communal re-partition the peasants should have in view the payment of these taxes. Since the emancipation, as much as during slavery, this question dominates the whole life of the mir. In the distribution of the common fields, it is less engrossed with the right of the individual to the land than with its contributive possibilities. Each lot generally corresponds to a proportional part of the common impost, and the quantity of land worked by each family is in proportion to the charges it must pay. The partition of the common domain, then, is but a partition of the common taxes.

The amount bestowed varies according to the age, strength and number of those in the family, as well as its agricultural resources. The strongest and richest receive a larger portion of land, since they must pay heavier taxes. In the partition, the needs of expenditure are less considered than the means of production. Ivan Fedotof, for example, receives this year a lot or a half-lot more than last year, because his children are growing up, and his family is capable of increased labor. On the other hand, his cousin Vassili Fedotof receives a lot or half-lot less, because he is growing old and his strength is declining. The communes in which the income from the soil exceeds the annual taxation are the only ones that do not need to occupy themselves with such considerations, but may divide their fields by heads of families.

Even the ownership of the soil is of little account without means for putting it in order. Now the commune which distributes the fields gives its members neither beasts nor implements. So one often sees peasants who, having sold to others their right to the land, having according to the Russian expression "sold their souls," are employed as day-laborers upon the land accredited to them. The guaranty against pauperism is in fact less in an equal partition of lands than in a diffusion of capital. Even to-day it is not rigorously true that every man in the Russian provinces has his share of the soil. The theoretic right of every one to land cannot always be exercised. Not content to crowd together in the cities, whose entrance is not forbidden him, the pauper penetrates gradually into the country, which would apparently seem to be protected by the solid rampart of communism. Thousands of peasants are to-day without a corner of land: some, because they have given up their part, to enter into trade or a vagabond life; many, because the communities have not all reserves, and growing slower ever in dividing they have not yet been admitted into the re-partition; and finally, still many others who have lost their fathers before they attained their majority, and because the commune, who is their legal guardian, has taken away from their paternal lot lest these minors should allow the imposts, with which each lot is charged, to fall upon the community.



The village communities, as they have been left by the emancipation, are approaching a crisis, in which they must either perish or adopt modern customs. A just idea of what the Russian commune is capable of becoming cannot be formed from what it is to-day. To form an equitable opinion, it must be freed from its fiscal burdens, delivered from the heavy, burdensome weight of its solidarity. It may be added that it cannot attain full development until the intellectual horizon of the moujik is broadened; and the peasant in order to possess land must pour annually heavy sums into the treasury. Now this ransom from servitude that has been gradually accomplished within the last fifty years will not be completed before the end of the first quarter of the twentieth century. It is a good sign that the emperor has been able somewhat to diminish the burden of taxes.

Few persons desire the immediate abrogation of the common tenure, but many demand measures leading in that direction and that will prepare the way. Even to-day the village communities are not indissoluble; the law that maintains them gives the interested parties the right to destroy them and to make a definite partition of the communal domain; the decision of the assembly of the peasants by a two-thirds vote is all-sufficient. The fate of the collective regimen is then within the hands of those interested, and may fall by a single

vote. A broad movement of opinion among the peasants is enough to deprive Russia of all communal lands.

But many things must be considered. Besides custom and tradition, which count for so much among the moujiks, several other reasons militate against it. First, the agglomeration of dwellings, where each one fears he may have forever a lot too distant from the village where he lives. Also the fear of getting a bad lot, without being able to make up for it in the next drawing. Another motive of repulsion to personal property is taken from the communist manners of the mir. In the definite partition the peasants fear the unequal multiplication of their families, which in a generation or two would naturally render the lots unequal. And finally, in those places where the taxes are greater than the revenue, the peasants fear if they renounce the community they may be burdened with too large a lot and too heavy taxes. What they fear is not the inequality in the property resulting from the unequal growth of the families, but, on the contrary, an excess of land and taxes in consequence of death or illness in their homes. In a word, most of the moujiks are still attached to the ancient mode of possession, while fully recognizing the inconveniences of the periodical partitions.

But already this sort of agrarian communism

has fomented vague socialistic instincts in the mind of the moujik. He sometimes throws a covetous glance upon the lands of his old master, the noble proprietor, whose property is outside of the commune. He dreams within his heart, and sometimes out loud, of a new distribution of lands, this time gratuitous, at the expense of his neighbors, the "barines" (the noblemen). This fact is so well known that at his coronation at Moscow the emperor declared solemnly to the representatives of his faithful peasantry that the question of property had been definitely settled, and that henceforth there would be no more distribution of land by ukases. But none the less does the moujik continue to await—upon the bounty of "his father, the Tzar"—the enlargement of the domains of the commune. If his hopes are not yet realized, he says it is the fault of the nobles and functionaries who surround the Tzar. In more than one province, on the faith of deceiving rumors and false ukases of the emperor, there have been agrarian revolts that had to be quelled by the troops. If there is a social peril in Russia, it is not from the side of the nihilists and Western revolutionists confined to a thin civilized layer of the nation; it is not from the workmen in the cities, comparatively few in number and recruited generally from the peasantry; it is the reverse in Europe or America,—it is from the moujik and

rural masses. Happily for Russia, the socialistic instincts of the peasant of Great-Russia are bridled by a double rein: respect for divine law and confidence in the Tzar.





RUSSIAN CLASSES, LANGUAGE,  
CALENDAR AND MANNER OF  
COMPUTING TIME.



## XXIII.

### RUSSIAN CLASSES—THE NOBILITY, ITS NUMBER, CLASSIFICATION AND PRIVILEGES—LAN- GUAGE, CALENDAR AND MANNER OF COMPUTING TIME.

The Russian people is divided into classes, whose boundaries are rigorously determined. The emancipation of the serfs, which served as a base for the social constitution of Russia, is gradually undermining the old order of classification, but the ancient framework remains good, and the Russian code recognizes four categories or conditions: nobles, priests, the inhabitants of the cities, and the peasantry. Each class is less distinguished by the possession or absence of certain privileges than by its peculiar functions, though the members of each are not irretrievably enclosed with their class, since they hold all their rights from the Tzar, who is at perfect liberty to raise or abase from one condition to another; finally—and this is worthy of notice—although there are in Russia nobles and *bourgeois*, neither the nobility nor the middle class have an historic, political or social individuality. Then, too, there is a difference between the nobility of birth and that of personal service. Both are an aristocracy of the court and an aristocracy of service whose rights

are acknowledged by the "tchine," that is, by a fixed rank in the government or in the army, and not a political aristocracy. The Tzar is not, as was Louis XIV., the first noble of the kingdom, but an autocrat placed above and beyond all classes, who are all under equal obligations to him.

There is no proportion between the urban and the rural population. In European Russia (without counting Poland, Finland, and the Caucasus), there are about a million nobles, six hundred thousand priests, six million *bourgeois*, and more than fifty million peasants. One of the principal efforts of Peter the Great and Catherine II. was to organize a middle class in the European sense of the word; but the corporative organization, which they took from the Germanic races, did not suit the genius of the Russian people. Previous to the emancipation (1861), the serfs were divided into three classes: the serfs of private individuals; the serfs of the estates of the crown, considered as freemen; and those peasants, comparatively few in number, who were reserved as appanages to members of the royal family. The reform of Alexander II., in point of fact, was of advantage to the first class only. The act of emancipation of the serfs regulated their rights and those of their former masters, the means of existence of the freedmen, and the conditions under which they could become proprietors.

The Russian language belongs to the family of











the Slav languages, spoken in Russia, Poland, Bohemia, Servia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, and among the Croats, the Slovenes, the Czechs and the Poles, and in the Wend districts of Saxony and Prussia. The Russian language, like the Servian and Bulgarian, received and still feels the impress of the Slav or ancient Bulgarian, which is still the language of the church. Both in its morphology and its vocabulary, the Russian—as well as the other Slav languages—belongs to the Indo-European group. Its inflections are greatly varied, as in the Greek and Latin, and it numbers four declensions and two conjugations. All the essential words of the language are found in the vocabularies of the Greek, Latin or Germanic tongues. As for example, *otets* (father) from the Latin *atavus*; *mat* (mother) from *mater*; *sestra* (sister) from the German *schwester*, etc. These resemblances are not always visible at first sight, and must often be verified by the aid of comparative philology.

It is enough to glance at a Russian grammar to recognize the absolute identity of the present indicative in Latin and Russian.

Among the Slav nations, some use the Latin alphabet, modified by diaeretic signs; while others, like the Servians, Bulgarians and the Russians, have a national alphabet, whose foundation is Greek. The oldest Slav alphabet is derived from the small Greek letters; while the Greco-Slav al-

phabet, attributed to the apostle St. Cyril (ninth century), is taken from the capital letters. Whatever may have been its origin, the Russian alphabet of to-day is nothing else than the Cyril alphabet, modified in the eighteenth century by Peter the Great.

The scale of its sounds is exceedingly complete; for example, it possesses the "b" the Germans lack, and the "j" the Italians have not. Unfortunately Russian orthography, like that of the English, does not at all correspond to the pronunciation. The accent, which is very capricious, changes the sound of the letters upon which it is placed, or which are close to it, which forms one of the greatest difficulties of the Russian language. The study of it is especially difficult, if one is unacquainted with the mechanism of the classic tongues. It is quite impossible to learn it by any empirical method, and two years at least are necessary to place one in a condition of being able to decipher readily an ordinary text. There is no royal road leading to a knowledge of Russian.

It is frequently asked why the Russians, who are Greek Christians, have not the same calendar as other Christians. It may be replied that the calendar used by other Christians is the Julian calendar, reformed in 1582 by Pope Gregory XIII., but that the Greek Church, not recognizing the spiritual authority of the pope of Rome since the schism of Photius in 1053, has not accepted



the Gregorian reform, but has kept the Julian calendar as it was ratified and Christianized by the council of Nice in 325. But there is another and more conclusive reason, grafted upon the first, of which we will speak.

The ancient Roman calendar, whose divisions were too short, had finally displaced the equinoxes by about eighty days, when Julius Cæsar, in the year 46 B. C., on the observations of Sosigenes, an astronomer of Alexandria, decreed that in order to establish the equilibrium of the seasons the year 46, called "the year of confusion," should have a length of 445 days; that starting from the first of the following January the ordinary years should contain 365 days, but that every four years there should be a year of 366 days. This decree gave to the Julian year a mean length of  $365\frac{1}{4}$  days. Such a reform was certainly a progress in the right direction; at the same time it gave a too great length to each period of four years, so that at the end of sixteen centuries, in 1582, the equinoxes were sensibly out of order in the opposite direction. Then it was that Pope Gregory XIII., in compliance with the expressed desire of the Council of Trent, and after the calculations of the astronomer Lilio, modified the calendar, giving it, by means of the combination of temporary intercalations with which we are conversant, a mean length that has established with tolerable exactitude the equilibrium of the years.

The calculations, based upon an equation between the solar and lunar years, gave to the Julian calendar a loss of more than twelve days since its creation. Unfortunately in the application the pope came in contact with a difficulty because a reduction of twelve days, although perfectly rational, interfered with the method given by the Council of Nice to fix the festival of Easter, which is regulated by the spring equinox, that in the year 325 fell upon the 23rd of March. He solved this difficulty by allowing the correction to begin only with the year 325, the date of the Council of Nice, thus leaving out 370 days of the Julian calendar, and suppressing but ten days instead of twelve to October, 1582; so that the Gregorian calendar, quite regular as to the length of the year, has lost constantly since the year 86 B. C.

The result, then, of the suppression of ten instead of twelve days in 1582 is that the Gregorian calendar has lost two days in 1627 years and that the distance between the Russian calendar and our own was ten days after the reform of 1582, a distance that has been increased by the addition of another day in 1700 and a second in 1800 because those two secular years were bissextile ones for the Russians and ordinary ones for us; so that the distance in 1900 was thirteen days; that is to say that in 1900 the Russians had lost fifteen days in the time that has passed since the creation of the Julian calendar and we always our continual

loss of two days. So that the actual difference between the two calendars in 1900 was thirteen days.

Let us now answer the question asked at the beginning of this subject. The answer is not difficult. The Russians say: "If we have reasons for not taking the Gregorian calendar, we have none in the world for abandoning the Julian, since we recognize that the Gregorian is defective; if, then, in the interest of our commercial and scientific relations you desire that we should come to an agreement with you and with the times, let us both correct and act together: suppress your two days of loss, and we will suppress our fifteen, and we will make the correction all the more gladly, that we shall then have a common, exact calendar that will no longer be Gregorian or Julian. If we alone correct, we shall certainly take the exact quantity, but then we shall still have a calendar which will not conform to yours. What, then, would be the use of a change that would bring about such a result?" Thus it is that the Russians keep the Julian calendar.



THE PRESS AND CENSORSHIP.





## XXIV.

### THE PRESS AND CENSORSHIP—LAWS AND MEANS ADOPTED UNDER ALEXANDER II.—SYSTEM UNDER ALEXANDER III.—PRINCIPAL DAILY PAPERS AT PRESENT.

BY GUSTAVE LEJEAL.

The first Russian newspaper made its appearance during the reign of the Tzar Alexis (1645-1676); it bore the title of "The Current News" and was meant only for the circle surrounding the emperor. The real creator of the Russian press was Peter the Great, who inaugurated the detached sheet for public use when he founded "The Russian Gazette of St. Petersburg," which belonged to the Academy of Sciences, which possess the collection from 1794.

The impetus once given, a number of periodicals came into existence, among which may be cited: "The Monthly Writings," by the Academician Muller (1755); "The Busy Bee," of Soumarok (1760); "The Aurora" (1778); "The Twilight" (1782), by Novikof. Karamzine first published "The Journal of Moscow" (1791), and afterwards founded "The Messenger of Europe," which became the principal representative of the Western spirit introduced by Peter the Great, while a few years later (1809) appeared in Mos-

cow "The Russian Messenger," the organ of autoeratic theories and of the Slavophiles. But a wrong idea must not be formed on this matter; in spite of the different shades, these publications were supported by literature and government communications; political subjects were rarely touched upon, and when such was the case it was by order of government.

The political press in the real sense of the word has never existed in Russia. From the beginning the government has permitted only those things to be published which are useful to it, or at least not undesirable. Upon grave occasions, when it is necessary to stir or calm the public mind, the rein is slightly loosened. As for example, in 1812, during the wars against Napoleon I., two newspapers made their appearance, and became very influential agents in the patriotic movement that manifested itself at that time in Russia—"The Russian Invalid," the organ of the minister of war, and "The Son of His Country."

Some years later, towards the close of the reign of Alexander I., the publication of a political and literary journal was undertaken—"The Bee of the North"—by Gretch and Bulgarine, which during its early years rendered great service to Russian literature. It was in its pages that all the writers first became known who shed so much lustre on the latter portion of the reign of Alexander I., and the beginning of that of Nicholas I.

(1825-1855), Pouchkine, Lermontof and others.

At all times censorship in its most severe forms had existed in Russia, but it was never more powerfully organized than under the Tzar Nicholas I. Every journal, every pamphlet, every book, native or foreign, ancient or modern, was submitted to preventive censorship. A superior board was also charged with censuring the censors. They even went to the length of instituting especial censorships. There was not only an ecclesiastical censorship, a military censorship, but each branch of the administration was invested with the right of controlling every writing that concerned it. Scientific works were allowed to be printed only after examination by a committee of academicians and professors. These precautions notably reduced the circle in which the Russian journalists could move; but their pens were fine and sharp, and the perspicacity of the reader, whetted by obstacles, allowed him to comprehend a half word. Henceforth, there flourished in Russia, to the highest point of perfection, that art of making everything understood without incurring the anger of the censorship, which distinguished a part of the French press under the Second Empire.

Difficulties of all sorts caused Russian men of letters to unite in publishing collectively their works in periodical editions under the modest title of almanacs. It was within the pages of these

almanacs that were read for the first time the works of the great national historian Karamzine, of Pouchkine, Lermontof, Polejaief, Ryleef, Pogodine and others. These publications met with so great a success that they inspired several writers with the idea of bringing out monthly reviews, such as "The Muscovite," the patriotic "Annals," collaborated by Dostoievski and Herzen; and "The Library of Reading." "The Muscovite" carried the flag of Slavophilism (intense nationalism), under the guidance of Khomiakof and the brothers Aksakof; "The Annals," on the other hand, was the organ of the Zapadnikis, and represented Western ideas. The laws, the rigor of the censorship, the difficulty of communication, and the slowness of the mails, favored the prosperity of these monthly publications, at the expense of the daily sheets. All the especial jurisdictions of which we have spoken fell to pieces at the opening of the reign of Alexander II. An imperial ukase suppressed them except in matters ecclesiastic, and organized the ordinary censorship, at the same time liberating from preventive censorship a notable portion of literature and of the press. But in consequence of internal agitations, these liberal measures were gradually abandoned; and while preventive censorship was abolished for publications in volumes, the regimen used by Napoleon III. in France was adopted for the periodicals. Previous authorization, warn-



ings, communications, bail, suppression, interdiction of sale beyond a certain number, preventive, obligatory or optional censorship, subject to the choice of the journalists, but only in St. Petersburg and Moscow—such were the means inaugurated by the law under Alexander II., and in actual use to-day. It was at this time that Katkof and his friend, Professor Leontief, founded “The Russian Messenger,” a great monthly review, in Moscow, and took under their protection “The Moscow Gazette,” which soon became a magazine of the highest importance. Katkof defended national and absolutely autocratic doctrines. When Napoleon III. desired to intervene in favor of Poland, the Russian government, then in the midst of social reorganization resulting from the freeing of the serfs, hesitated. It would probably have yielded had not Katkof, in flaming articles, declared that all compliance to foreign claims was treason to the country, and appealed to the Tzar and to the country to resist them. His voice was listened to, for it was in sympathy with both Tzar and people. Henceforward Katkof was a prophet in the land; he could brave even the ministry and the censorship, for he was sustained by the Tzar and public opinion. His importance as a journalist constantly increased, so that he may without exaggeration be called “The maker of ministers,” for by degrees his friends and partisans obtained the most important portfolios, Count

Tolstoi and de Wishegradsky among the rest.

The tragic end of Alexander's reign promptly arrested the relative liberality which had thus far presided in the application of the law to the press. "The Golos," "The Poriadok" (Order), "The Molva," "The Moscow Telegraph," which had extolled the various measures of the liberal regimen, were doomed to disappear. Other journals gathered around the throne of Alexander III., the new Tzar, but the rigorous system inaugurated by the new reign, although lasting but a few years, brought great sufferings upon the press. In the midst of these mournful circumstances, Katkof's journal—"The Moseow Gazette"—continued to occupy, until the death of its editor (1888), a position of importance. Katkof, a nationalist before all else, first hoisted the flag of an alliance with France, though he was far from loving liberal ideas or democratic institutions, which are the dominant notes to-day in the Russian press.

The principal daily papers at present are: "Novoie Vremia" (The New Times), skeptical, without bias or opinion, but much read on account of the variety of its matter, and thoroughly organized system of reporting; "Novosti" (The News), liberal; "Grajdanine" (The Citizen), of Prince Mestehersky, more imperialistic than the emperor, and more orthodox than the metropolitan of Moseow; "The Sviet," by General Komarof, an ardent Slavophile; "The St. Petersburg Jour-

nal," written in French, the venerable organ of the minister of foreign affairs; "Nedialia" (The Week), democratic, national and progressive, much read by the young men in the schools; "Den" (The Day), liberal, which has several times suffered from the rigor of the censorship. As for "The Moscow Gazette," it is still alive, but does not continue the success it enjoyed under the leadership of Katkof.

The number of monthly reviews in Russia is quite considerable. Among the most important may be cited in St. Petersburg: "Viestnik Evropy" (The Messenger of Europe), progressionist and much engrossed with foreign literature; "Rousskii Viestnik" (The Russian Messenger), Katkof's old magazine, both of long standing; "Rousskoie Obozrenie" (Russian Review), a newcomer, frankly nationalist, and among whose contributors may be cited Messrs. Paul Bourget, Melchior de Vogue, Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, etc. At Moscow is published "Rousskaia Mysl" (Russian Thought), liberal and democratic.

Contrary to the measures imposed upon the press in St. Petersburg and Moscow, where it may choose between previous censorship or responsibility, the provincial Russian press must forcibly submit to previous censorship; nor has it representatives in all the cities, for throughout the entire empire there are but eight or nine committees of censorship, who are necessarily overwhelmed

with work. In certain chief government residences there are isolated censors, employed by the government, though they are constantly obliged to refer to the committees. It may readily be understood what difficulties such an organization must present to the provincial press; so, except for rare exceptions—such as “Kievljanine” (The Kivois) of Kiev; “Novorossiski Telegraph” (The Telegraph of New Russia) of Odessa; “Youjni Krai” (The South) of Kaarkof; “The Varchavski Dnevnik” (The Varsovian Journal), all ultra-conservative—few sheets can exist in the provinces and compete successfully with “the government journals” written by government officials. Foreign books and newspapers, since the persons of the authors and editors are safe from prosecution, are subjected to an especial censorship, called the *Inostrannaia tsentsoura*. Although, in consequence of the extension of national productions, the importance of the foreign library has greatly diminished, this institution is kept constantly employed. Large and flourishing under Alexander II., to-day it is considered of less importance. Then, too, the entrance of suspected publications is not absolutely forbidden; but the incriminating passages are erased by means of printer’s ink, “passed into caviar” in the language of the trade, and sometimes entire pages of “*La Revue des Deux Mondes*” or of the “*Deutsche Rundschau*” undergo this treatment. Publications in foreign

languages are not the only ones submitted to this treatment in Russia; it applies equally to certain languages spoken in the interior of the empire, notably to the Polish and Malo or Little-Russian in which the government fears may be hidden federal aspirations.





THE RUSSIAN ARMY AND NAVY.



## XXV.

### THE RUSSIAN ARMY AND NAVY—THEIR STRENGTH AND HOW RECRUITED—MILITARY SCHOOLS —IMPORTANT STRONGHOLDS.

BY DÉsirÉ LACROIX.

According to the terms of a law promulgated in 1874, every Russian subject in condition to bear arms owes military service to the State from the age of twenty to that of forty-three. In proportion to the figure fixed for the quota, the first numbers are classed in the active army for five years for the infantry, mounted and fortress artillery; six years for the cavalry, engineers, technical, administrative and health service. After which they pass into the reserves, the first class for thirteen years, the second class for twelve years; then into the “opoltchenie” or national militia for five years.

This national militia is a sort of reserve of the territorial army or landwehr of the second ban, and is divided into two classes, whose service depends upon material and not upon age.

Thus all the soldiers freed from the reserve are counted in the first class until the expiration of their available service; as are the conscripts, fit to enter service, who have been classed originally

in the annual quota of the permanent army, but who have been found above the number required, and so have not been called to service under the flag. On the other hand, the second class includes, from their twentieth year, those young men whom the lack of fitness renders undesirable for active service, and those who have been exempted for family reasons. In a word, it has been sought to include within the first class only those elements capable of giving good service, that are kept to the extreme limit of their service. Exemptions, reprieve in summons, and advantages in education are provided for by law, and substitutions are authorized among relations, as far as cousins-german, while those whose places have been filled are put into the reserves.

On the other hand, those young men who have received excellent educations are required to give but two years of actual service; they can be made non-commissioned officers or even officers if they can pass the full examination for that position.

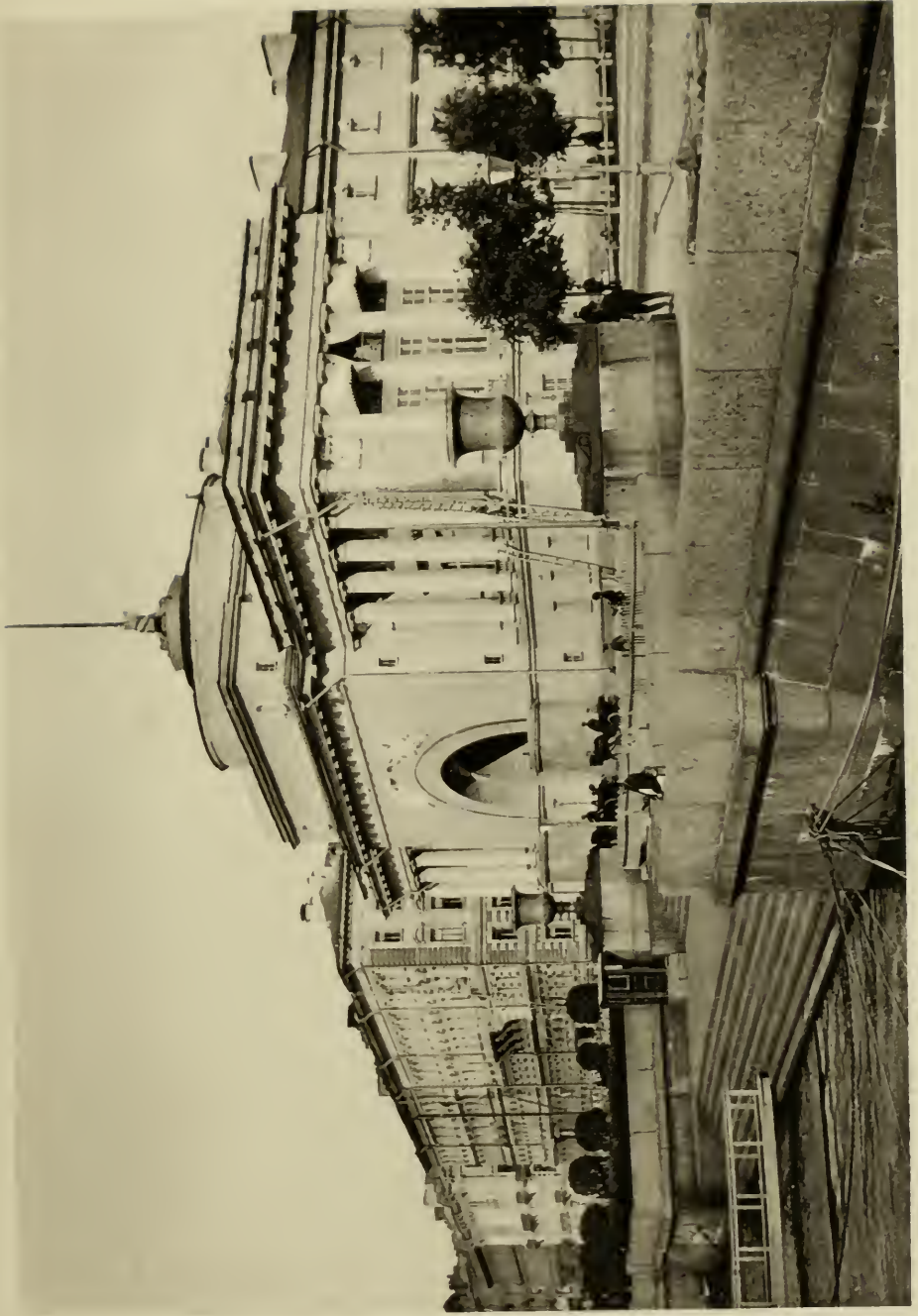
There are also volunteers, who form two classes, according to the degree of their instruction: those of the first category, making but one year of active service, and those of the second, two. Moreover, a certain number of young men who have received but little instruction are admitted to give voluntary service, at the rate of two in each company, squadron or battery.

To each regiment of the line is assigned an











especial zone, from which to be recruited; only the contingents from Poland and the Baltic provinces are scattered among the entire army. Special troops have their own particular region for recruiting, while the Imperial Guard is chosen from among the best subjects and handsomest men of Russia.

In Finland military service commences at the age of twenty-one, and the young men, who are chosen by lot, are placed in the active army for three years, in the reserves for two, and in the militia for fifteen years. All the others are placed directly in the reserves, and are called out every year for four years, for camps of instruction, lasting ninety days. The recruiting lists of the empire for 1890 showed the number of young men called to have been 878,011, among whom were 47,738 Jews. The number excused from service for family reasons was 420,757, which left as submitted to military law 457,254 men. Sixty-five thousand were exempted owing to physical disability; 84,422 were postponed for similar causes; 12,969 were placed under observation in hospitals; 22,460, including about 5,000 Jews, did not respond to their summons, so that 259,268, of whom 73,000 were married men, were summoned to be enrolled in the permanent army. Finally 28,446 natives of the Caucasus, Tereck and Kouban were placed under the military law in 1890, and 2,399 were summoned.

The "voiskos" or territories of the Cossacks are given an especial recruiting. The ensemble of those in active service and the reserves, including seventeen contingents of 18,000 men, all completely trained, form a total of 254,000 soldiers. The Ataman, or supreme head of all the Cossacks is the hereditary grand duke.

Let us add that in 1888 the population of Russia, exclusive of Finland, numbered 112,342,758 souls; that same year there were born 5,116,996 children; the mortality was 3,335,518. The increase in the population, then, must have been that year 1,781,478. The recruiting of the officers of the army is assured by the numerous military schools of different degrees, such as the primary schools of the Guard and of Revel and Oka, which receive the sons of soldiers, who fill the offices of non-combatants, such as clerks, secretaries, musicians; technical schools and those of pyrotechnics for the preparation of master workmen, designers, and artificers; schools for gunsmiths; schools of feldschers, who are aids to surgeons, and look after the sanitation of the troops; schools of artillery for the Cossacks of the Don and the Kouban; the battalion school for under-officers of infantry at Riga, destined to the preparing of non-commissioned officers for various corps. Military preparatory schools include twenty military gymnasiums, for the sons of the chevaliers of St. George and of certain officials and noble families,



besides eight gymnasiums for the sons of soldiers in course of preparation for the Younkers Schools.

There are five schools devoted especially to the infantry, of which two are those of St. Paul and Constantin at St. Petersburg, and the Alexander School of Moscow. There are also the Nicholas School for the cavalry, the Michael School for the artillery, and the Nicholas School for engineers. The length of the course is two years for infantry and cavalry, three years for the other arms. The admission takes place either for excellence in examinations, or on the presentation of diplomas from certain other schools. To these schools must be added the corps of the emperor's pages, who are chosen from among the highest court-officials or nobility, whom the sovereign wishes to have near him, and who receive especial instruction.

These last enjoy the coveted privilege of becoming at once lieutenants of the Guard, even should there be no vacancies, provided they leave their classes with a good record. The scholars of the special schools, whose final examinations are satisfactory, are also named lieutenants of the Guard, if there are any vacancies, or of the army. All these various schools educate almost all the officers of the Guard, and of especial branches, and about a fifth of the officers of the line.

The enormous supplement of officers necessary to the needs of the army is furnished almost exclusively by volunteers, and in time of war by

direct promotion of non-commissioned officers to the grade of officer. The upper military schools include academies for the advanced study of artillery, engineering, military legislation and medicine, in order to prepare the officers for the different needs of the service. There is also a shooting-school established at St. Petersburg. Nor must mention be omitted of the Galvanic Technical School, whose important instruction is confided to an officer with the rank of lieutenant-general, who has exclusive control of the courses taken by the officers, the galvanic company attached to the school, and over the detachments of electricians placed with the corps of sappers and bridge-builders, of torpedo-miners, and of military telegraphy. The school of aerial application has produced capital results.

The military forces of the empire, exclusive of the navy, form two grand divisions: first, the permanent army, comprehending the active troops, the reserves, local troops, Cossacks, and irregulars; second, the *opoltchenie*, or national militia. These forces together are constituted into corps, brigades, divisions, and *corps d'armée*, scattered in time of peace throughout the various military districts. In time of war the army-corps are grouped into armies.

An army-corps is formed by the union of two or three divisions of infantry with a corresponding quantity of cavalry and artillery. In times

of mobilization, the army-corps is augmented by engineers and accessory detachments.

There are twenty army-corps; one of the Guards, one of Grenadiers, seventeen of the Line, one of the Caucasus.

There are one hundred and fifty-six brigades of infantry, forty-five of cavalry, forty-eight of artillery, seven of engineers.

A division of cavalry comprehends generally three regiments of regulars, one of Cossacks, two batteries of artillery, with six pieces to a battery.

The Russian infantry comprehends 12 regiments of the Guard, 16 of Grenadiers, 165 of the army, and 87 of the reserves; 56 battalions of Chasseurs, 87 battalions of independent reserves, 488 battalions of militia. Every battalion, whether it is a part of a regiment or independent, is composed of four companies. The regiments and battalions of the Guard are designated by particular names, as for example the "Preobrajensky" Regiment and the Battalion of the Imperial Family. The regiments of the Guard are commanded by major-generals; the other regiments are commanded by colonels.

The Russian cavalry is composed of 56 active regiments, to which must be added the irregular troops of Irkutsk, Kars, of the Oussouri, the Kouban, of Daghestan and the sotnias of the Tartars of the Crimea. Then comes the militia, each of

whose three classes furnishes promptly 10,656 men and 10,080 horses.

Finally the troops *de dépôt* furnish 600 officers, 30,000 combatants, 4,000 non-combatants and 23,500 horses; and the Cossacks are formidable and effective, with 145 regiments, 3,204 officers, 120,406 men and 134,180 horses.

It can readily be imagined what an overwhelming effect (without counting the resources of the militia) would be produced by this mass of nearly 200,000 horses if in case of war it should be put in motion. And what is especially worthy of notice is that this numerous cavalry is the best mounted in Europe on account of its modes of raising the horses, and its resources of fifteen million animals available for service in time of war. The Russian cavalry makes from five to six miles an hour. Trotting and walking in turn, it traverses 22 miles in five or six hours. It is, besides, systematically trained to make long journeys and has obtained remarkable results, as proof of which notice the officers of the Cavalry School, who made 375 miles in seven days, and a regiment of Dragoons of the Guard who made 94 miles in thirty-eight hours.

The cavalry is armed with a simple sabre and the Berdan carbine of the same calibre as the gun. The Cossacks have always their sabres fastened to their saddles, and carry their carbines in a yellow leather case. The regular cavalry has be-

sides a short bayonet with a sheath. The cuirassiers are armed with revolvers, and the Uhlans, cuirassiers and Cossacks of the first rank with lances. The Russian cavalry and especially the branch of the dragoons is considered more skillful than any other in Europe in a combat on foot.

In the ensemble of the elements composing the army, the artillery counts as organized unities belonging to each of them. Thus there are mounted batteries, horse batteries, and mountain batteries; the reserves and the troops *de dépôt* have mounted batteries; local troops have the elements of the fortress batteries; the Cossacks and irregulars possess many horse batteries, which is also the case with the country troops. To each of these subdivisions is attached a certain number of mountain batteries carried by horses.

There are besides engineers, frontier troops, the Gendarmerie, fortress troops, regiments of mortars, a peculiarity of the Russian army, a health service and velocipedists—all carefully trained and thoroughly organized.

Finally for an effective war footing, of all the organized corps of the Russian army, there are 55,600 officers and functionaries, 2,758,000 men, 435,000 horses, 26,000 carriages, and about 5,000 *bouches-à-feu*.

As for the available militia, it is simply beyond calculation; some idea of its formidable numbers



may be obtained from the published reports of the Russian Minister of the Interior, which show that the average number of young men classed each year in the *opoltehenie* is never less than 365,465, without including those unfit for service. The result is that from the year 1894 Russia has at her disposition eight to nine million combatants. Of course, from the point of view of effectiveness, the army is widely scattered and hence its forces are difficult to group: the Russian Empire in Europe and Asia covers double the area of the whole of Europe with the enormous population of 129,000,000 of which 114,000,000 are in Europe and 15,000,000 in Asia.

In fact, the greatest difficulty with which the Russian army has to contend is the lack of rapid mobilization of its troops (which was the sole reason of its disadvantage in its last war with Turkey); but still the garrisons of the Southwest have been brought nearer to Galicia, and the movement has continued in that direction, till it has reached the frontier, where great masses of cavalry are always stationed. Finally the mobilization gradually tends towards the centre of a cross, of which St. Petersburg and Odessa would be the two extremities, with a massing of the troops constituting the reserves in the centre of the Empire, in the direction of Moscow and Kazan.

Since, moreover, the activity of the heads of the Russian army in regard to the construction of railroads shows no sign of abatement, there is reason



to predict that the time is approaching when the slowness of the Russian mobilization will be greatly decreased, since this army will to a certain degree be put in motion on its base of concentration or very near it.

Seamen for the Navy are furnished by recruiting and volunteering. A law fixes the contingent to be called annually at 5,000 or 6,000 men, and this contingent is taken by lot among the sailors considered fit for service who are twenty years old, and live in territory bordering the sea. The regular duration of service is fifteen years, seven in the crews of the fleet, and eight in the reserves. The Government has always the right of allowing a sailor to pass a year earlier into the reserves, if he has pursued certain primary studies. The enlisted men, who have served for at least two years as sailors or engineers on long cruises, and those who have served one year on coasting ships, pass into the reserves, the first at the end of five years of active service, the last at the end of six. As for the volunteers, they serve for two years in the fleet and five in the reserves; immediately upon signing their engagement they can ask for an especial examination and if successful they are enrolled with the grade of petty officer. After two years of active service they must undergo a second examination, which allows them to pass into the reserve with the grade of a cadet.

The Russian navy is divided into four fleets,

whose make-up is quite independent of each other. They are the Baltic Sea Fleet, the Black Sea Fleet, the Caspian Sea Fleet, and the Siberian Fleet.

Each group of ships comprises one or more divisions commanded by a captain, and each division comprises as many companies of marines as there are armored cruisers.

On January 1st, 1904, the ships of the Russian navy were as follows:

17 First Class Battleships of 291,129 tons.

12 Coast Defense Vessels of 66,679 tons.

8 Armored Cruisers of 71,261 tons.

6 Protected Cruisers of the First Class of 39,546 tons.

5 Protected Cruisers of the Second Class of 19,450 tons.

11 Other Cruisers and Scouts of 18,093 tons.

49 Torpedo Boat Destroyers.

165 Torpedo Boats.

1 Submarine.

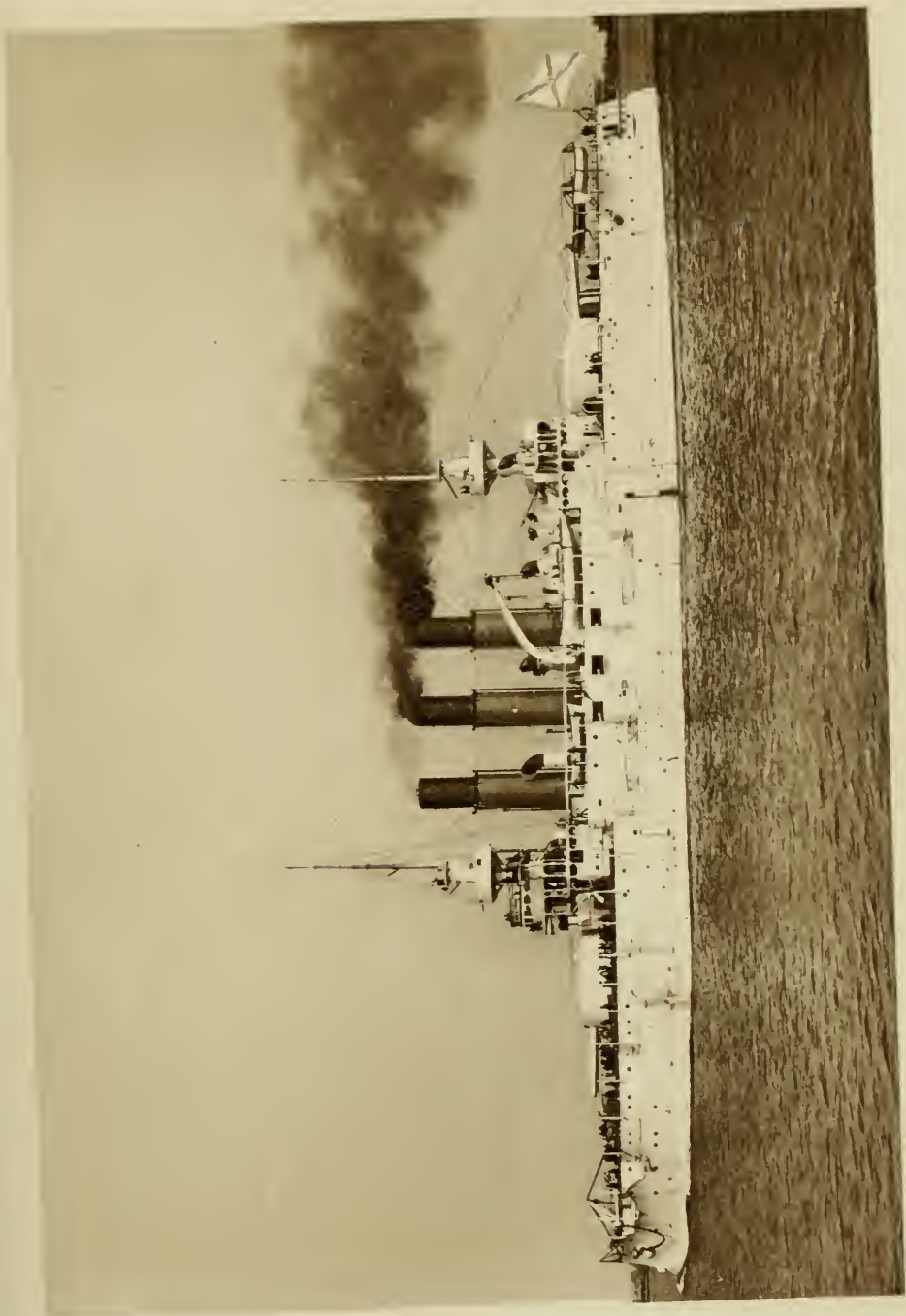
There is also a great number of boats forming the Merchant Marine, which can be brought into requisition in time of war, as auxiliary cruisers.

The Tzar has supreme command of all land and sea forces, but he delegates the actual command of the navy to a Grand Admiral, chosen from among the members of the Royal Family. At present he is the Grand Duke Alexis. This commander is at the same time President of the Council of the Ad-



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**A Russian Battleship**







miralty and Superior Council of War, and a member of the Council of State and of the Senate.

He has under him an Under-Secretary of State, with the rank of Vice-Minister, who is called "Director of the Ministry." The Council of the Admiralty, which is named by the Tzar, is composed of ten general officers of the navy, an officer-general and a privy-councilor who performs the duties of secretary.

All questions relative to the navy are decided by this body, and their decisions are carried into effect through the medium of superior and port-commandants.

The officers of the navy are divided into two classes: those commanding ships of the first class and those commanding auxiliaries. The list of officers includes one Admiral-General, five Admirals, twenty Vice-Admirals, thirty-five Rear Admirals, eighty-nine Captains of ships of the first rank, and two hundred and thirty-two Captains commanding ships of the second rank.

There is no commissary officer in the Russian navy, but an officer of the ship fulfills that function.

When on a war footing, the Russian navy can summon at once about 40,000 men.

The school for officers is: The Navy Academy at St. Petersburg, which is the principal one for officers of vessels, where generally 240 wards of the nation chosen from among the members of the

aristocracy, the sons of officers or officials, receive instruction. On finishing a course of study, extending through four years, these young men receive the title of *Garde-marine*.

At the Naval Academy there is also a sort of upper school of war for ensigns and lieutenants, which initiates them in naval tactics and international law. A vice-admiral is the head of this upper course, and as assistant professors are two generals of division, one general of brigade, three privy-councilors, four counselors and one lieutenant-colonel.

There are also, at Cronstadt, a school of navigation and artillery, a school of marine-engineering, and a torpedo school close to the construction works for the Whitehead torpedoes, where officers, who are designated by the inspector-general of engineers, take a course lasting through two years.

The marine corps is formed into two classes, the infantry and artillery. In the infantry are 521 officers and 1,200 soldiers; in the artillery are 206 officers and 4,000 soldiers.

Russia possesses 2,250 miles of seacoast on seven different seas. Her ports of the first class are Cronstadt, St. Petersburg, Nicolaief, Sebastopol, and Vladivostok. The ports of the second class are Sveaborg, Revel, Archangelsk, Baku, Batoum, Nikolayevsk (in Siberia, at the mouth of the Amur River) and Kagala (Oxus).

In case of war, the port of Cronstadt, besides

its part in the defense of the coast, whose fortifications cover 29 kilometres, is of supreme importance as the key to the Capital and the protector of the arsenals and factories of arms in the neighborhood of St. Petersburg. The island of Kotlin, the Channel of the North and the Channel of the South are fortified. The former is defended also by several lines of forts whose outside ring contains 92 cannon of 11 and 14 inches, while 100 other cannon on the island of Kotlin could assist in the defense of the Channel. This island is also protected on its western side by four lines of forts, while 200 cannon protect the Channel of the North. North.

To sum up, more than 500 cannon guard the various channels, without counting the numerous torpedoes and submarine mines placed in the passes and along the coast. It is all arranged for a combined action of the forts and the fleet.

On the coasts of Finland, with its rocks and islands, are deep bays or fjords which afford excellent shelter for ships. In the angle formed by the gulfs of Finland and Bothnia, emerges the fortified island of Gustavsvärn. To the east is Helsingfors, in whose magnificent harbor is the superb fortress of Sveaborg, whose ramparts are cut in the living rock or built of granite. At the end of a deep bay, at the mouth of a canal, coming from Lake Saima, the railroad is intersected by

the important fortress of Viborg on the road from Åbo to St. Petersburg.

On the Düna, near its mouth, is the city of Riga, whose port is defended by numerous batteries.

Odessa, which contains a number of military establishments, is placed under the protection of four moles, armed with large-calibre batteries.

At the entrance of the Dnieper, the forts of Kinburn and Otchakoff guard the approach to Kher-son and the great maritime arsenal of Nicolaief, the chief harbor and refuge of the Russian fleets.

The entrance of the Sea of Azof is defended by powerful works, such as forts Mithridates and Todleben. Taganrog commands the mouth of the Don. The shores from Yenikale to Batoum are defended by a series of redoubts, while the military port of Libau can hold a fleet three times as great as the entire squadron of the Baltic.

To all these terrible engines and these means of tremendous defense must be added the remarkable military qualities of the Russian army. Exceedingly appreciative of the smallest kindness shown him, and quite without demands on his own account, the Russian soldier endures without a murmur fatigue and privation, and in battle gives proof of signal courage and bravery. Also the relations existing between the officers and their troops are characterized by kindness on the one side and sincere, respectful affection on the other. The emperor and his chief officers are the first to

set an example of these cordial relations. Everyone knows that in Russia the title of "Father" is given to the emperor by all his subjects, and frequently the title of "little father" is bestowed by the soldiers upon their chiefs.

When coming to review a regiment, the emperor always salutes it with a "Zdorovo rebiata" (Good morning, my children), to which the soldiers reply: "Zdravie jelaiem" (We wish you the same). And all the officers imitate this salutary example.

The expression "Boye Tsaria krani!" (May God protect the Tzar!) is of frequent occurrence in the conversation of the soldiers.

What power and premonition of victory exists in this conception of the Russian soldier, comparing his country to a great family, and the authority of the Tzar to that of a father, an authority descending on him through different grades of the military hierarchy! And how discipline, faced under this new aspect, becomes stronger, more spontaneous and more ardent in its devotion!

To these qualities must be added a power of physical and moral resistance, that has been evidenced upon many an occasion, and that ranks the Russian soldier before all of those whom no obstacle, no climate, no suffering can dismay. Then, too, the generals and Russian officers, who are magnificent "trainers of men," never miss an opportunity of exalting the excellencies of their admirable soldiers.



When they speak of them their words are full of bravado, so overflowing are they with legitimate pride in commanding such men!



RELIGION AND SECTS.



## XXVI.

### RELIGION AND SECTS—CHRISTIANITY INTRODUCED IN RUSSIA—CLERGY AND CONVENTS.

BY GUSTAVE LEJEAL.

It was towards the close of the tenth century that Christianity was introduced into Russia. According to the chronicles, which are rather legendary in character, Vladimir I. received baptism and ordered his subjects to follow his example, under pain of death. Apparently none failed to comply, though there is reason to believe that at the bottom of more than one soul lingered an affection for the earlier belief, that was destined to appear at a later period in one of the numerous sects of Russia. A Slavonic version of the Scriptures which was used by the apostles to the Bulgarians and Servians, Cyril and Methode, proved a powerful aid to the adoption of the new faith.

Russia received Christianity as it was conceived and practiced at that time by the Greek Church, whose destinies she followed for a long time. Later the Greek Church separated from the Roman Church and is still at variance upon several points with it. She refuses to admit the creed of the Council of Nice. According to her, the Holy Spirit proceeds solely from the Father, and not

from the Father and the Son. She teaches that the Eucharist must not be consecrated with unleavened but with leavened bread. Her conception of Purgatory is formed upon very different lines from that of Rome. She refuses indulgences; refuses to souls who have left this life the opportunity of expiating their faults by torments, even spiritual ones, and allows them no other expiation than the prayers of the living and the celebration of the holy mysteries. To these dogmatic and ritual differences the Greek Church adds a real one. She rejects the primacy of the Pope and his pretensions to jurisdiction over all Christendom. When in the nineteenth century Pope Pius IX. proclaimed two dogmas, equally denied by Greek and Russian theologians,—the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin and the Infallibility of the Pope,—an irrevocable separation between the two confessions was consummated.

Until the fall of the Byzantine Empire the Russian clergy, receiving their inspirations and even their investitures from the Patriarch at Constantinople, enjoyed considerable independence from the temporal power. After the ruin of that empire, the Patriarchs of Kiev and Moscow inherited much of that outside authority which permitted them to play an important rôle in the State. In proportion as the patriarchs increased in power, they bent every effort to free themselves from Greek supremacy, and to constitute a national church. Russian

theologians sought eagerly for points of separation, and at the beginning of the seventeenth century they had found the nine following points on which their faith differed from that of the Greeks :

The Greek confession demands a triple Hallelulah in honor of the Trinity ; according to the Russian doctrine, the Hallelulah must be repeated but twice in honor of the double nature of Christ.

The Greeks, always mindful of the Trinity, made the sign of the cross with the three first fingers of the hand ; the Russians used only the index and middle finger, doubling the thumb and other fingers into the palm of the hand, for they considered the three last as a symbol of the Trinity, and the two first as figuring the dual nature of Christ.

The Greeks made their processions around the churches in a contrary direction to the sun ; the Russians followed the sun.

It was forbidden the Russians to shave, for they had been created in the image of God, the Father, and it was acknowledged that He wore a full beard.

In the confession of the Greek Church it is said : “ Whose reign is eternal ; ” in the Russian missal it is said : “ Whose reign shall be eternal.” The Greeks exposed but one piece of bread upon the altar ; the Russians exposed seven.

The Greeks in their prayers said : “ Jesus Christ, our Lord ; ” the Russians in conformance to their missal : “ Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”

The Greeks wrote the name of Jesus: "Jissos;" the Russians wrote it: "Jssos."

The Russians admitted only the cross with eight points and considered the cross of four or six points as Latin, and consequently heretical.

These points of divergence still actually preserve their importance, for the Russian dogmatism, like that of the Greeks, has preserved its immobility.

But it was found necessary, in the seventeenth century, that they should be formulated with the exactness of the above. At this time, confusion and disorder reigned in matters religious. In consequence of various circumstances, notably of the ignorance of the copyists, grave errors, extraordinary interpolations and contradictions had for a long time been introduced into the holy books, and the liturgy had been corrupted by ignorance and heresy. The isolation of the churches and the difficulty of communication added still more to the anarchy. Unity was in grave danger, both from a doctrinal and liturgical point of view. A patriarch of Moscow, Nikone, resolved to re-establish it in all its integrity. The ancient Greek and Slavonic manuscripts were gathered together, monks were summoned from Byzantium and Athos, and the Slavonic versions were compared with the originals. The books of liturgy were subjected to a similar examination, the interpolations of ignorance or fancy effaced and a new text of missals was printed, which the patriarch caused to be adopted by a coun-



eil, who imposed their usage upon all the Muscovite States. The superior clergy and the nobility sustained the patriarch. The inferior clergy and the common people opposed an irresistible resistance to the decisions of the council. In their opinion, the patriarch had inaugurated the reign of Anti-Christ. Such is the point of departure of the Raskol or schism which has divided the Russian Church ever since and of which later we will give an account. The civil power was obliged to interfere, in the interest of law and order. Nikone himself was deposed and imprisoned. The prestige of the patriarch, thus first attacked, was, after a brief interval, suppressed. Peter the Great replaced the patriarch of Moscow with an assembly of bishops and dignitaries, which at first bore the title of "Spiritual College," but soon assumed that of the "Holy Synod," which it still keeps. To this assembly was confided the administration of the Church, and, since it nominated its own members, it held this administration within its own hands. The supremacy of the civil power was thus established in religious matters. The office of patriarch was divided into three parts, and metropolitans were created for Moscow, Kiev, and St. Petersburg.

But thenceforth only the highest of the bishops were nominated by the government, that is by the Tzar. The Russian church to-day is essentially national. The Tzar is the head of the hierarchy. He names in principal the ecclesiastical dignities,

though in practice he shares this prerogative with the Holy Synod. In the orthodox catechism the Tzar is called "the curator and protector of the church." No ecclesiastical attributes are accorded him, but he is regarded as the anointed of the Lord, placed by divine hand for the protection and guidance of Christian people, from a religious point of view, as well as from all others.

In matters of dogma the Tzar has no more influence than the meanest of his subjects. To the ecumenical councils alone belongs the authority of decision; then, too, the immobility of dogma renders his intervention useless. People are wrong, then, when they consider the Tzar as the "Pope of the Russians."

The members of the Holy Synod are, as we have already said, subject to the nomination of the Tzar. Three are immovable: the metropolitans of Kiev, Moscow and St. Petersburg. The last presides over the assembly. But the laws and regulations which serve as a charter to the Synod are careful to state that this assembly acts only in virtue of permission of the emperor. And in order that these enactments may not be dead-letters, there exists a lay representative of the emperor, with the title of "high-procurator" (ober procuror), who, as Peter the Great said, was "the eye of the Tzar." This procurator is in reality the veritable head of the orthodox worship. This high-procurator is the legal intermediary and obligor between the em-

peror and the Synod. He has the right to veto the decisions of the Assembly in cases where they seem to him opposed to the laws, with the understanding of course that both parties may appeal to the emperor. What is especially worthy of remark is that this procurator is, so to speak, the minister of the propaganda and of proselytism, charged with the Russification of new countries in a religious sense.

The matters referred to the Synod are numerous. Those relating to spiritual affairs, to discipline, censure, marriage and divorce are reserved for its deliberations; others, relating to schools and finances, are more especially the affair of the bureau of the high-procurator.

The Russian clergy are divided into two classes: the black clergy (*tehernoe Doukhovenstvo*) and the white clergy (*bieloe Doukhovenstvo*). The first class includes monks from whom the great dignitaries are usually chosen (*igoumenes*, *archimandrites*, *bishops*, *archbishops* and *metropolitans*). But it must not be imagined that they are chosen from among all the monks, for such is not the case, but only from those who belong to families of a certain rank, or those who have made themselves conspicuous at the University or the Seminary for exceptional talents. This minority passes through the cloister only to ascend to the episcopate and other dignities of the church. In Russia, men go to the convent to make a career. Their vows once pronounced, nothing is more rapid than the ascent

of a seminarian. He pronounces his vows at twenty-five or thirty; he is named inspector or professor in the seminary, then rector or superior; he is generally a bishop before he is fifty. These high dignitaries of the black clergy are vowed to celibacy. It is otherwise with the white or secular clergy, who include the parish clergymen (popes), deacons, priests and archpriests, who not only may but even must marry. There are sixty bishops in the empire named by the Tzar, and presented by the Synod. The dioceses or "eparchies" follow generally the limits of the provinces, and are in consequence fifteen or twenty times larger than those of Western Europe. The title of metropolitan or archbishop is no longer an actual distinction; it is not always an office, but rather a title not always entirely honorary, conferred by the Tzar, in recognition of services rendered. Like the title, the salary of the bishops depends greatly upon the central power. There is no fixed salary attached to the office, but it varies in different cases, according to the indemnity fixed by the Synod, the ecclesiastical rents, the perquisites and voluntary gifts. Altogether these form quite a large revenue, that allows the bishops to hold with dignity their places in the best society. It is but just to say that its choice generally reflects honor upon the government, both in point of education and purity of morals. The food of the bishops is that of the cloister—fish and vegetables.

The bishops are subordinated to the authority of the Holy Synod, and their relations to that body strictly prescribed. Each of them is assisted by an ecclesiastical council, that plays in the diocese the rôle of the Holy Synod in the empire. The members are named by the Synod on the presentation of the bishop, and their decisions are only valid upon the confirmation of the bishop, who himself, in numerous cases, must refer them to the Holy Synod. The consistories judge in the first instance of matters of discipline for the clergy, and of marriage and divorce. The Holy Synod serves for them as a Court of Appeal.

Provincial councils have at various times taken up matters of interior reform, the interests of the clergy, and especially the propaganda, but thus far their efforts have produced little result.

The population of the great Russian convents, such as Petchersh at Kiev, Troitza, Simonov, Donskoï, Novospaki, near Moscow, St. George of Novgorod, the Assumption of Tver, Solovetsk on the White Sea, etc., shows no sensible diminution. Since these establishments have played an important rôle in history, and evoke glorious memories, they still receive great crowds of pilgrims, who are as much attracted by patriotism as by devotion, two things very often confounded in Russia. As for the monasteries of less importance, though the people still flock to them in pilgrimages, the monks are less numerous. Each bishopric possesses at least



one monastery, whose superior is by right a member of the consistory. The number of convents may be approximately estimated at five hundred and fifty, with eleven thousand monks and eighteen thousand nuns. It may be stated, with feelings varying with the sentiments one holds, that, with a population almost double, Russia numbers five or six times less brothers and sisters in religion than does Catholic France.

The regular Russian clergy do not ordinarily possess the same initiative and aptitude for labor presented by the clergy of Western Europe.

“The mission of monks,” said one of them, “is neither study nor labor; their mission is to chant the offices, to live for the welfare of their souls, and to offer repentance for the whole world.” It is the Greek idea, pure and simple. The ascetic is an expiatory victim, destined to avert the anger of the All-Powerful One. Still it is certain that these tendencies have been modified of late years, and that more than one convent has become a centre for serious study, at the same time that it uses its money to found hospitals, orphanages, and other charitable institutions. They have been unable to resist the storm of humanitarianism that has blown across Europe.

Russia contains also a certain number of Tchernitsys (women robed in black), a sort of beguins or plebeian *chanoinesses*, who, without making vows, remain unmarried and live in communi-



ties in fasting and prayer, though each one keeps her liberty and property; and also there are several congregations of Sisters of Charity, especially dedicated to the care of the sick, the infirm, and the poor. But these institutions are not regarded as religious. They who belong to them do not pronounce any vows; they are only associates. The Sisters of Charity were instituted during the Turco-Russian war of 1877-1878, under the patronage of the Empress Maria Alexandrovna. At first they devoted themselves entirely to wounded soldiers, but when the war was over they did not all scatter, and those who remained took care of the sick in the hospitals.

The white clergy, that is the secular and married clergy, is not less worthy of attention. For a long time it has formed a caste, a sort of tribe of Levi, whose mission it is to furnish priests. It is easy to comprehend how this organization has been constituted. The serf could not enter holy orders without defrauding his lord, from whom, once a priest, he was free. The noble, on his side, could not enter them without renouncing his seigniorial rights and class privileges. Under these circumstances, the clergy was recruited from the ranks of the clergy and their children, and thence resulted a class attached to the altars, as there is one to the soil. The sons of the popes were as a matter of course destined for the seminary. A veritable caste was thus formed, which took rank among the

privileged classes. It was exempt from military service, personal taxation, and corporal punishment, and was subject to especial jurisdiction. This state of affairs was still more accentuated by the obligation of the priests to marry. The daughters of the popes were their destined wives. The result was that the priesthood became hereditary; and matters reached such a point that a seminarian could not obtain a curacy unless he allied himself to the family of his predecessor, or paid him a pension. The hereditary rights did not stop with the functions of curate and priest; they descended to those enjoying the smallest emoluments, even to the singers, sacristans, beadles and bell-ringers.

It can readily be understood to what abuse such an organization could be put. It lasted, however, until 1864. At that epoch, Alexander II. freed the serfs, opened to everyone access to the priesthood, and made every career available to the children of the clergy. But a long time passed before the noble, the merchant and the peasant made use of the authorization; even to-day the sons of popes are very nearly the only ones who solicit admission to the seminaries.

The parish clergy numbers five hundred thousand members, most of whom belong to the inferior clergy; the priests or "popes" are few in number. The priests are designated generally under the name of "sviachtchennik." The word "pope" is taken almost always in bad part, for, no matter

how religious he may be, the Russian does not hesitate to remark the faults that can compromise the sacred character of a priest, such as avarice and drunkenness. These defects, to which the clergy are peculiarly liable, are greatly modified and are fast disappearing. Among the secular priests an amelioration is operating slowly, but surely. Many city priests are to-day remarkable for their solid education and perfectly correct morals. Protopopes or archpriests are formed from a parish where there are several. These proto-popes are often given the function of inspectors of the parish clergy. They may aspire, like the bishops, to a seat in the Holy Synod, but their marriage forbids them the episcopate.

The village pope is far from obtaining similar guaranties. His ignorance, and above all his poverty and isolation, make up a sad condition of affairs. The parish clergy either receive no salary from the State, or else one that is at best exceedingly inadequate. Only a third of the popes are appointed. In the provinces where the orthodox religion finds itself in rivalry with strange sects they are rather better paid, in order that they may make a better figure. But even then they receive but 300 roubles. The clergy must then in great measure ask for its support from its parishioners under the forms of perquisites, alms, fees for the administrations of the sacraments, even under a

form of taxation imposed by the parish trustees, a sort of council, instituted in 1864.

This manner of seeking his daily bread gives too often to the ministry of the priest a venial character, derogatory to his dignity. But on this side also the situation is tending towards improvement. In 1833 the Holy Synod received from the State but one million roubles, and in 1890 its receipts amounted to more than eleven millions. It is true that only the half of these millions went to the clergy, either urban or rural, and that of thirty-five thousand parishes, not more than eighteen thousand benefited by the donations of the State. Great progress, however, is certainly being made in the right direction, and the time is not far distant when the Russian clergy, freed from material cares, will take the position in society which it deserves from the services rendered, notably for the impetus it has given to popular instruction, which is in part confided to it. It may safely be stated that the number of adherents of the orthodox Church is constantly increasing in a ratio that attests its power. In 1870, throughout the entire Empire, there were forty-eight millions of orthodox. A report of the high-procurator to the Holy Synod in 1891 placed their number at seventy millions, or about two-thirds of the whole population. This progress is due to the increase from births and to the conversion of dissenters.

In 1888 the statistics showed fifty-six births in

every thousand orthodox inhabitants. Raskolnikys, Sectarians, United Greeks, Catholics, are gradually being absorbed by the national church. What is the most remarkable feature of this movement is the conversions of Mussulmans, so refractory everywhere else, to the Christian doctrine. For example, among 662,000 Tartars in Kasan, 41,000 are orthodox Greeks; as are 453,000 Tchouvaches among 459,000; 107,000 Tcheremisses among 111,000. The same proportion exists among the Mordvines and the Tartars of Oufa and Viatka.

We have already mentioned the circumstance that gave birth to the Raskol or schism dividing the Russian Church. Under this generic name are included all the heresies, often very different in character, with but one point in common,—antagonism to the Established Orthodox Church. The fundamental principle of the Raskol, its very source, rests entirely in the minute worship of the letter and of the formalism that distinguishes the Russian in all religious matters. Among Westerners most of the modern sects owe their origin to the taste for speculation and criticism, or from the searching of the true meaning under the letter. In Russia, on the contrary, they owe their origin to the *attachment* to the letter, to antiquity and to aversion to all innovations.

The “old Believers,” the Raskolnikys, are those who have preserved intact the faith, books and ceremonies of their ancestors. This fact, which has



been manifested since the reform of Nikone, was affirmed before during the Middle Ages. From the beginning the Raskolnikys have been divided into two parties: the Popovtzys, who have priests, and the Bezpopovtzys, who have none, but reject the office of the priesthood. The first believe that, in spite of following the heresy of Nikone, the Russian Church has not lost its apostolic powers, "the chirotonie," that is the right of consecrating bishops and priests, by the imposition of hands. They accept in consequence priests consecrated by the Orthodox, and were even in dependence upon the Established Church, until 1846, when they succeeded in organizing an especial clergy. An old bishop of Bosnia, one Amboise, deposed by the Patriarch of Constantinople, adopted the doctrines of the Popovtzys, and consented to consecrate their priests and bishops. This improvised metropolitan fixed his residence in the convent of Belokrinitza, in Bukovina, on the Russian frontier, and established throughout the entire Empire a religious hierarchy, consecrated by a pretended ecumenical council. A fraction refused to accept the new patriarch and formed themselves into a new sect, under the name of Yedinovertzys (similarity of belief), who continue to have their priests consecrated by Orthodox bishops. The difference exists only in certain details of worship and in the missals prepared after the Anteniconian models.

The Bezpopovtzys (without priests) in abolish-



ing the ministry of the priest and divine service renounced also all the sacraments, except baptism, which may be administered by anyone at all. They have thus opened the door to all the fancies of sectarianism to atone for the absence of the sacraments. Some commune with dried grapes, distributed by a maiden; others, the "Gapers," maintaining that Christ cannot deprive the faithful of his body and blood sacrificed for mankind, stand open-mouthed during the service, awaiting the coming of angels, the only true ministers of God, to satisfy them with an invisible chalice. Others, and these are the most reasonable, limit themselves to confessing themselves silently before the image of the Saviour or of the Virgin holding the infant Jesus; theirs is the sect of the Saviour (Spasovtzy).

But the reign of Anti-Christ having been inaugurated upon the earth, and all being subject to its power, what is the use of propagating the species or of marriage and its duties? From these ideas has sprung a sect without morals. The Fedosseevetsy live in a state of free love. The Wanderers (Stranniki) consider there are three Anti-Christ: the pope, the patriarch Nikone, and the Tzar Peter the Great. They flee from civilized life, seeking Christ, who must finally reappear to save the world from perdition, and live in the heart of the forest, in a state of free love. The Child-killers (Dietoubtzy) consider it a duty to send to heaven at

least one of their children before he is soiled with sin. The Chokers or Assassins (*Douchilstchikys*) believe they render a service to their relations and friends by hastening their death when they fall ill. There are even a very few, fortunately, who think a child should be baptized and fed with his mother's blood.

In spite of their aberrations, these sects have a common bond in their belief in the coming of Jesus Christ, and the Scriptures, which they interpret in various fashions. But there are others who separate themselves completely from these religious beliefs and assert that there have been incarnations since that of Bethlehem. According to them, prophecy is always active. They are included under the general name of *Klystys* or *Christys*. One of the most remarkable appeared during the reign of Alexis Michaelovitch, the father of Peter the Great (1645-1676). The true faith, according to these sectarians, had been revealed in Russia by the eternal Father himself, who had descended on Mount Gorodine, in the Vladimir government, and had taken human form. Danilo Philippovitch was the name the divine incarnation bore among men. From Danilo sprung, by a woman a hundred years old, Ivan Timofeevitch Souslof, who, crucified at Moscow, rose the third day, and ascended into heaven, as did the veritable Son of God. The Holy Spirit, say these "men of God," these adorers of the living God, as they style themselves, breathes

upon whom He chooses. He can then descend upon all and make Christs of them. There are also communities in which the members adore each other, rendering to one another a sort of mutual worship. They are called "the communities of Christ."

After the invocation to their saints, certain Klystys give the spectacle of whirling dervishes. Men and women turn, jump to exaltation (radenie), a sort of epileptic fit, during which they prophesy. Others scourge themselves or hypnotize themselves in various ways. Each community forms a group or "korabi" organized after the fashion of Masonic lodges and having like them signs of recognition. At the bottom of several of these sects, generative force is adored. They admit in effect that love is a supernatural principle and that consequently it is an act of religion to obey it. Taking as examples the daughters of Lot and those of Solomon, these Klystys give themselves over to every sort of disorder.

But these licentious or cruel rites cannot satisfy these unbalanced imaginations. There are those who seek, by mutilating their bodies, the peace of the spirit. They are called Skoptsys. "The White Doves" (such is the name they assume) marry often, but it is from proselyting they recruit their numbers.

The origin of this sect is not very distant. Its founder lived in St. Petersburg during the time of

the First Napoleon. He was arrested in 1820 and confined in the monastery of Souzdal, where he died in 1832. The Skoptsys accord to Jesus the title of "Son of God," but they consider him as one of the predecessors of Selivanof. Mutilation was, they say, the secret doctrine of Jesus Christ. This doctrine being corrupted, a new Christ was needed to achieve redemption for the human race, and he was Selivanof, who practiced the principle to its fullest extent.

The efforts of the Government have been unsuccessful in freeing the Empire of this sect. In daily life, the Skoptsys are the gentlest and most honest of men, and are distinguished by their frugality, their probity and the simplicity of their manners. Their spirit of economy allows them to grow rich, which renders the propaganda more dangerous. For some time a new spirit has been growing up among them, producing a modification of their views. The reforming or Protestant tendencies are represented among the Russian sects by "The strugglers of the Spirit" (Doukhobortsys) and the Milk-Drinkers (Molokanys). These last personify the reaction of reason and conscience against the orthodox formalism and excess of ritualism. Rejecting all clergy, they see only allegories in the sacraments and declare that true communion with Christ consists in the reading of and meditating upon His word. The Molokanys eat bread in common in remembrance of the Saviour, but quite



The first of the two towers of the Assumption Cathedral in Moscow, which was built by Ivan the Terrible in 1585, is the only one of its kind in the world. It is a tower of the type known as a "tower of the Assumption", and it is the only one of its kind in the world. It is a tower of the type known as a "tower of the Assumption", and it is the only one of its kind in the world.

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**Assumption Cathedral and Ivan's Tower,  
Moscow**







without mystery. They have been persecuted. About 1800 they were assigned lands on the border of Molotchna, north of the Sea of Azof, where nearly all their communities are found, which contain not less than one hundred thousand adherents.

The Spirit-Strugglers are rather more mystical than the Milk-Drinkers, and there are several thousand of them. They believe in inspiration in the interior word, that makes itself heard within every man. Christ preferred oral tradition to written Scriptures. They deny original sin, each man being responsible only for his own sins. They even admit the pre-existence of the soul and of former sins.

The Molokanys place as their ideal a sort of democratic theocracy. "The Church," they say, "and civil society are but one; as such, society should be based upon evangelical principles, on love, liberty and equality." At first, they refused to become soldiers, but of late they have come to terms. But in spite of their idealism, they dream of a terrestrial renovation for man; under the name of the Empire of Ararat, they look for the universal reign of justice and equality. It is said that in 1811 Cossacks arrested a deputation of these sectarians, on their way to ask Napoleon if he were not the deliverer announced by the prophets. From the Molokanys issued a group, the Obchtchiie, who, about 1825, under the guidance of one Popof, preached the community of property. Since, they

have modified that doctrine, and have retained a common store only, where each householder must deposit the tenth of his harvests to aid the poor. The rest of this sect live in a little village of the Trans-Caucasus.

But outside of these communities, many monasteries or "skytes" of the Raskolnikys are veritable phalansteries, where the brothers live as equals and hold in common the product of their labor.

One of the most recent and vigorous bodies of dissenters in the Empire is that of the Stundists (Chtoundistes), which is a direct issue of Western Protestantism. It is especially numerous in Southern Russia in the neighborhood of Odessa, where German colonies are planted. Their teachings are very similar to those of the Anabaptists or Menonites. Their dogma is vague: it is a Christianity deprived of all ritual; their services are limited to singing the psalms or canticles, and the reading of the Bible. In civil life they show a decided leaning towards communism. The "babas," the women, declare themselves the equals and not the servants of their husbands, and they are the most ardent Stundists.

To demonstrate that in Russia there is a constant formation of new sects, we will cite the Tchislenikys or Counters, who reverse the legal festivals according to a book fallen from heaven in 1866; the Trouchaverys, who regard themselves as alone pure and in 1868 recognized a little *bourgeois* as

Christ; the Pliasounys or Dancers, who made their appearance about 1870, and in spite of their dancing remain attached to the Church; the partisans of Tikhanof, the Sighers, who find prayer too material and content themselves with sighing at the foot of the altars (1871); the followers of Tombof, discovered in 1872, whose ideas are very much those of the Skoptsys; finally in 1880, in the province of Don, the apparition of the Samaboys (self-gods), thus called because, like "the adorers of the living God," they end in the deification of man, and especially of woman. At this same period, a moujik of the government of Tver, Soutaief, created a new sect. Soutaief's system is one of remarkable simplicity. He takes it entirely from the Scriptures. For him, Christianity is the love of one's neighbor, not theoretical, but active love dominating one's life, and showing itself in practice by the community of goods. According to him, "the kingdom of God must come below." What occupies him is the welfare of his brother and the good of society; his own will come as a matter of course. All religion is reduced to the practice of justice; nothing is useful or sacred but what teaches man to live better and makes him better. So he considers rites and sacraments and the ministrations of priests as superfluous.

Such a doctrine, as may readily be imagined, may gain at first certain enthusiasts, but cannot penetrate among the people; its true importance



is that it inspired Tolstoi, who has however preserved his own originality. "Because he takes literally the Sermon on the Mount," says M. Leroy-Beaulieu, "Tolstoi, like Soutaief, like the Molokans, is none the less a rationalist in his own way. Like them, he cares very little for dogma. His religion is only concerned with life. Soutaief does not know what there is yonder beyond the sky; Tolstoi denies categorically the future life. Although a Christian, he is a nihilist. He admits no other immortality for man than that of humanity. According to him, true Christianity knows no other. 'Jesus,' he says, 'always taught the renunciation of personal life. Now the doctrine of individual immortality, which affirms the permanence of personality, is in opposition to this teaching. The survival of the soul after death is only, like the resurrection of the body, a superstition contrary to the spirit of the Scriptures.' "

Agreeing with Soutaief, Tolstoi places salvation in this life. It is on this earth he attempts to construct the holy Jerusalem, and for that he does not wait till Christ shall descend from the clouds; he believes neither in prophecies nor miracles. It is the millennium, but after the fashion of Comte or Fourier. The difference is that he asks for the key to his paradise neither of science nor riches nor politics, knowing them all incapable of bestowing happiness. He only hopes for the transformation of humanity through inward transformation. Like



Rousseau, Tolstoi believes that, in order to be happy, men have but to emancipate themselves from the factitious needs of civilization. Do not offer him as an objection the terms progress, industry, science, art—only so many empty words. Every man should live from the labor of his hands and the sweat of his brow. Tolstoi has put his doctrines into practice, consequent upon these ideas; he lives in the country, works with his hands, has a trade in winter time like any peasant, and above all else labors to spread a knowledge of the truths he has discovered. A new sect has been grafted upon one of the last works of this great writer, "The Kreutzer Sonata." Its adherents, people of wealth and learning, would abandon a brilliant position to give themselves up to manual labor. Yielding to the obsession of Anti-Christ that we have already described among the others, they would teach that the corruption of the human race is so profound that all hope of ameliorating its condition must be abandoned; the most that could be hoped for is the complete destruction of humanity; so conjugal love is forbidden in the new religion, and suicide seems a religious act.

The religious movement, of which we have spoken at length, does not generally extend beyond the ranks of the lower middle-class. The upper classes are preserved from contagion by their skepticism and especially by fear of official disfavor. Yet, about 1878, Lord Radstock inaugurated in the

salons of St. Petersburg the preaching of a sort of vague Protestantism which rested upon justification by faith, contrary to the ideas generally adopted by Russian reformers, who make all their religion consist of works. Justification by faith being more easy of practice than by works, Lord Radstock's preaching met with considerable success. Several gentlemen joined him, such as M. Pachkof, Count Korf, Count Alexis Bobrinsky. All went well, as long as the preaching was confined to the drawing-room; but M. Pachkof inaugurated popular meetings; an iconoclastic and anti-sacramental propaganda spread the doctrine even within the cottages of the moujiks. The authorities interfered; the society of the propaganda was dissolved in 1884; its organ, "The Evangelical Sunday Leaf," was suppressed, and some of the preachers sent to prison. The diffusion of "Pachkovism" was uprooted, though it may still claim a reasonable number of followers scattered among the provinces.

The legal situation of the sects has varied at different times in Russia and has been fixed only by the laws of 1883 and 1884. Of course it is understood that it is not a question of those strange or immoral sects, of whom we have spoken, who count but few followers, but only of the old-believers, the Raskolniks. For the first time, legislation has recognized that the old-ritualists have a right of assembling for prayer and the celebration of the

divine office, according to their rites. The laws restricting their civil rights have been abolished; to-day they can be legally married, and their children are legitimate. They are free to reside in the length and breadth of the empire and to travel abroad, are allowed to inscribe themselves in the merchants' guilds, to fill public offices and to receive honorable distinctions. Although public ceremonies are still forbidden them and other restrictions still exist against them, they have gratefully accepted this new legislation and have augmented the number of his subjects who are devoted to the Tzar. As for the other dissenters, as well as for the peaceable Stundists, Molokanys, Paehkovists, as also for the Klystys, Skoptsys, Wanderers and others, they remain, one and all, exposed to administrative and judicial severity, in spite of the essential differences existing between them from a moral point of view.

It is worthy of remark that persecution for religious belief is becoming more and more rare, and that the orthodox Church seeks to bring in dissenters by persuasion. With this in view, she encourages preaching, and even goes to the length of permitting contradictory conferences, which is in opposition to the habits of the Russian clergy, wedded absolutely to rites and formalism.

Any other religions than the national orthodox are simply tolerated in Russia. In order that they

may have no doubt on the subject, they are dependent upon the Minister of the Interior.

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It is not only on account of their religious views that the Jews are so hated in Russia, but because, being thrifty, they accumulate money which they lend at exorbitant rates and very frequently end by becoming, through extreme usury, the owners of property upon which they have lent a comparatively small sum.—Ed. Note.

LITERATURE.





XXVII.

LITERATURE.

THE INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF RUSSIA TO  
THE REIGN OF CATHERINE II.

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THE INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF RUSSIA  
FROM THE TIME OF CATHERINE II.

BY E. M. DE VOGÜÉ.

Of the French Academy.

There was a time when people asked if Russia belonged to Europe. Catherine II., in her celebrated "Instructions for the Commission charged with drawing up a project of a new Code of Laws," felt the need of answering certain Western publicists, who wished to throw her empire into Asia. "Russia," said she, "is an European power; and here are the proofs: The changes undertaken by Peter the Great in Russia had so much greater success, since the customs heretofore prevalent did not at all accord with the climate, but had been brought there by the mixture of different nations and the conquest of several foreign provinces.

Peter the Great, introducing European manners and customs among a European people, found his task more easy than he had himself dreamed possible.’’

Peter the Great and Catherine II. had neither the time, means nor scientific education to enable them to reason on the ethnical constitution of the Russian people and on the historical circumstances that at times carried it away from or brought it back to Europe. Notwithstanding, at bottom Catherine was right. The Russian people is indeed of European origin. Considered in its essence and dominant element, it belongs to that Slavonic race which penetrated to the centre of Europe as far as the mountains of Bohemia, which reached the shores of the Baltic as far as Dantzic, and Salonica in the basin of the Ægean Sea. But the peoples of this race have endured different destinies; some, as in Bohemia and Poland, have felt the influence of German civilization and of Catholicism; others, as in Servia, Bulgaria and Russia itself, have been raised in the school of the Byzantine Orthodox Church, and have endured for a greater or less time the domination of Asiatic nations, such as the Turks and Tartars. There is in Western Europe a Latin people, who for a long period were also themselves under the yoke of the infidel—the Spanish. No one, however, dreams of placing Spain in Africa, or of ranking it among the Mussulman nations. It is true that Spain is sepa-

rated from the African continent by the Straits of Gibraltar, while Russia stretches into Asia, from which it is only divided by a serious geographical frontier.

The primitive axis of the Russian world was placed in the basin of the Dnieper and of the Upper Volga. Gradually it was turned towards the Orient, in proportion as Russia assimilated the Finnish nations, of which some rare tribes exist to-day, but most of which are but a memory. The primitive Slavs received their name and first organization from a Scandinavian tribe, but the Scandinavian element, brought by the Vargues, has left little trace in their intellectual life. It inspired them with a taste for distant expeditions; it threw the Slavs of Kiev on Byzantium. Byzantium revenged herself by imposing upon them her religion, by forming their alphabet, literature and art in her own image. Once more conquered, Greece conquered, in her turn, her fierce conqueror.

The conversion of Russia to the Orthodox Greek religion was the capital fact that at first dominated the moral development of the Russians in the Middle Ages. The Normans and Finns brought them nothing as an intellectual inheritance. The Russian alphabet, that seems at first glance so queer to us, is but a copy of the Greek alphabet, augmented by a certain number of letters that no longer exist in the Hellenic language. When she adopted the

Byzantine dogmas, and took to the already converted Bulgarians the Slavonic liturgy of to-day, Russia, in the tenth century, created an abyss between herself and the Latin West. She remained a stranger to that Roman civilization which constituted the chief tie between the nations in the Middle Ages. Together with the Greeks, the Bulgarians and the Servians, she constituted an isolated group in Europe, which represented a particular form of civilization, a literary tradition *sui generis*.

Directly upon her conversion she produced all the intellectual works in harmony with Byzantine culture. She possesses chronicles, lives of saints, sermons, stories of pilgrimages, legislative texts, prose recitals, that read sometimes like a romance, sometimes like an epic poem. The study of them is difficult. The Slavonic Russian which serves as medium is as different from modern Russian as is the French of Joinville from that of Augustin Thierry; but the explorer who descends into these deep layers returns largely rewarded for his labors. The Chronicles of Nestor (twelfth century) are quite equal to those of Gregory of Tours. The lives of the saints Boris and Bliobj, the lives of the fathers of Kiev, rival any legends of France. The will of Vladimir Monomakh might have been written by Charlemagne. The journeys of Prince Daniel to holy places (twelfth century) show the Russians and the French living peacefully together by the tomb of Christ in Palestine, whose protection

was destined later to be so fiercely disputed by Emperor Nicholas and Emperor Napoleon III.

“On Holy Friday,” relates Daniel, “at the first hour of dawn, I came, although ill, to present myself before Prince Baudoin, and bowed profoundly. Whereupon the prince signed most graciously for me to approach and said to me: ‘What dost desire, Russian prince?’ He knew me very well and was very fond of me and very amiable himself.”

This severe literature found in primitive Russia more readers than one would readily imagine. The princes were generally highly educated. They established schools, collected libraries together, often making translations themselves. Princesses passed their lives copying manuscripts. Sometimes a gentleman amateur, like him who is called Daniel the Prisoner, amused himself with profane compositions, that recalled those of the Low Empire. Poetry was strictly excluded; it seemed a remnant of paganism; but the people could not make up their minds to do without it. In spite of the menaces of the Church, in the midst of the evils of civil wars or foreign invasions, they treasured these “bylines,” these long epics, in which a crowd of legendary heroes figure, such as Dobrinia Nikititch, or Ilia of Mourom, with many another who gravitate around the brilliant sun, Vladimir. It was only in the nineteenth century that a collection was begun of these curious products of the popular imagination. Unfortunately the race of rhapsodists



who sing them is only to be found in the most distant ends of the Empire; perhaps to-day they have even disappeared altogether.

Towards the middle of the thirteenth century, a formidable catastrophe fell upon Russia. She was ravaged by the Tartars, saw her temples destroyed, her cities burned, her princes reduced to become the vassals of a savage horde, a half-barbarous khan, in whose presence "they must strike the ground with their foreheads." Literature took refuge within the monasteries. In defiance of the rule of pagans, the monks preserved the Byzantine traditions, the culture of the Greek language. The Muscovite region replaced the Kiev land as the intellectual centre of the Russian world. The monks cleared the Northern forests and increased their country's domain, at the moment it seemed about to succumb forever. Thanks to the Church, the national language was preserved; it no more perished during its struggle with the Tartars than did Spanish during its contest with the Arabs; but, like the Spanish, it has felt the influence of the speech of the invader. To-day the Russian words designating a relay of horses (*iam*), small money (*dengi*), tax (*tamojnia*), the public domain (*kazna*), and many others, are taken from the Tartar. Literature could not remain indifferent to the misery of Russia in her long struggle and heroic efforts. I leave unnoticed the "Recital of the Battle of Igor," which celebrates a war against the Polovtzes,



heathen like the Tartars: but I cannot pass over in silence the "Zadonstehina," the epic recital that celebrates the glory of Prince Dmitri Donskoï, who conquered the Tartars at Koulikovo (1380). It is a fragment from a veritable epic:

"Beauteous swallow, the joy of lovely days, fly beneath the blue heavens, gaze at the strong city of Moscow! Sing the glory of the mighty prince Dimitri Ivanovitch, and of his brother Vladimir Andreevitch! They threw themselves like falcons on the field of the Tartars. The horses neighed on the Moskva, the drums beat in Kolonna, the trumpets sounded, the standards waved. The bells in the belfry of great Novgorod ring out ———."

And the poet,—for he is indeed one—shows us Russia in all its entirety, rising from Novgorod to Kiev, from Moscow to Lithuania, and rushing to that field of Koulikovo which will be sown with the dead, towards that Don which will flow red with blood for three whole days. During two or three centuries Russia bent all her efforts against the Tartars; she stood complete in her isolation in Europe; she became half-Asiatic, as the South of Spain became half-Arabian. She threw off the Mongol yoke at last, just as her co-religionists and confrères, the Greeks, the Servians, the Bulgarians, fell in their turn under the Osman yoke. She did not profit at once from the blessings of the Renaissance, though she did not remain altogether insensible to them. Greeks and Slavs, escaped from

the Balkan peninsula, were welcomed by the Muscovite princes. In 1472, Ivan III. married the princess Sophia, the last of the Palæologi, an emigrant, educated in Rome, who organized the court of Moscow on the model of that of Byzantium, and summoned there the artists of Greece, Germany and Italy. In the Slavonic Orient, as in the Latin Occident, spirits were in a ferment. Heresies developed, controversies arose. The archbishop of Novgorod, Gennadius, wrote to the metropolitan of Moscow his celebrated letter in which he demanded the establishment of schools. Maximus, called the Greek monk of Mt. Athos, a former scholar in the schools of Paris, Florence and Venice, undertook to correct and definitely establish the text of the Sacred Books. Macarius, bishop of Novgorod, reduced the Lives of the Saints. In 1564 was established in Moscow the first Russian printing-press. It published the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul. During the period of the Tartar invasion, a portion of the Russian provinces was detached from the Muscovite group, and was united politically to Poland-Lithuania. But, although attached to Poland, Lithuania forgot neither the Russian language nor orthodox alphabet. And if she assimilated the benefits of Western civilization, it was but to transmit them to Muscovite Russia. She served as a sort of intermediary between the Latin civilization, of which Poland was the centre, and

that peculiar civilization, half-Byzantine, half-Asiatic, that had developed in Muscovite Russia. In connection with the printing-press of Moscow, appeared one in Ostrog, in Lithuania, and one in Lvov, in Galicia. The earliest attempts of Slav-Russian were produced in books printed in Lvov, which became classics in Eastern Russia, till the day when an Archangelsk fisherman gave his countrymen the first national grammar. The ancient chronicles call Kiev "the mother of Russian cities." The capital of St. Vladimir was justified in this title more than ever during the seventeenth century.

In the Polish schools, and especially those of the Jesuits, she studied, and became mistress of the pedagogic processes, the literary methods of the Latinized West, and in turn transmitted them to Great Russia; she bestowed also the taste for syllabic verse imitated from the Polish poetry, the taste for biblical dramas imitated from the tragedies of the college. This influence of the School of Kiev made itself felt during the entire seventeenth, and a portion of the eighteenth century. Moscow was filled with amazement at the sight of priests who were acquainted with European, as well as with the Greek and Latin languages.

Russia was all the more astonished because she has always been profoundly conservative. During the long centuries in which she remained isolated from Europe, she became accustomed to living con-

fined upon herself, ready to admire herself, always distrustful of strange things. The Muscovite distrusts a stranger. He holds fast to inexorable formulas, that condemn all that comes from without. "This is not ours; this is not done with us." If one desires to understand this social condition, one needs but to study the doctrines of the old Russian believers, the Raskolniks, attached to the ancient texts, hostile to the correction of modern criticism, even when it is represented by a patriarch. One needs but to read that extraordinary Russian document attributed to Pope Sylvester.

But during the sixteenth and end of the fifteenth century, Muscovite Russia in vain strove to surround herself with a Chinese wall, and to forbid foreigners and heretics access to her borders; they entered on all sides. I have already mentioned the Greeks of Byzantium, the Little-Russians of Kiev, the Italians of Venice and Florence; now it is the English who have arrived and established their business-places on the White Sea. Next come German, Swedish, Dutch engineers, to mould cannon or work the mines. Ambassadors from neighboring States bring compliments and presents to the Tzar from their masters; Russia is forced to reply to the acts of courtesy. Threatened on the West by the Swede, the Pole, the Turk, she sends ambassadors who explore Europe, discover many un-

known things, and bring back marvelous stories to their native land.

The father of Peter the Great, the Tzar Alexis Mikhailovitch, is already in many things a Western monarch. Under his reign, Moscow sees for the first time a theatrical troupe, composed, it is true, mostly of strangers. Women of high birth, illustrious "boiarines," force open the doors of the terem (harem) in order to witness these spectacles, that their mothers would have considered diabolical. A stranger Slav, a Croatian, who lived in Moscow about 1650, already accused the Russians of xenogamy; he essayed to bring them back to their Slav patriotism, and mapped out a pan-Slav program, which was not received kindly and sent its author into exile in Siberia. A distinctive trait has been observed among certain animals, a horror, a hatred of all that is new, which is called "mison-eism." This sentiment was very general in Moscow during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, though there were some who realized that it was impossible to get rid of strangers, and that the best method of doing so would be to learn what they knew. Under the reign of Alexis Mikhailovitch, a Russian, one Kotochikine, wrote in Swedish an exhaustive, critical description of Russian life about to be transformed by contact with Western life.

No matter what Catherine II. wrote, nor what is generally thought, the reintegration of Euro-



pean Russia does not date from the reign of Peter the Great. It would have happened, even if destiny had not sent this heroic, barbarous reformer, who opened with the axe "a window towards the West." It is well known what obstacles he met and surmounted with fierce perseverance. He sacrificed even the life of his son to reforms he considered necessary to the future of his country. Old customs were the symbol of old traditions. He cut off the long beards, shortened the long garments, broke the bars of the terem, and forced the St. Petersburg and Muscovite beauties to appear in the Assemblies, which were not yet equal to the salons of Versailles, but whence was formed, when all is said and done, that exquisite being, in turn capricious or virile, heroic or charming, whom we admire in the Russian woman of the nineteenth century. Under his reign the West truly penetrated into Russia and Russia into the West. The works of a Simeon of Polotsk or a Theophane Prokopovitch were still attached to the Slav tradition of Kiev and Moscow. But a new spirit began to breath upon Russian literature. In 1703 was founded the "Gazette of Moscow," to which the Tzar himself did not disdain to contribute. In 1725 the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg was created. At first reserved for strangers, especially Germans, it gradually opened its doors to Russians. It was both a scientific and a teaching body; its members studied; charts and annals bring into



light the ancient relations of Russia with Scandinavian countries, with the Byzantine Empire, with the Mussulman Orient. Henceforth the nobility is forced to serve, and in order to serve it must have studied the practical sciences, mathematics, artillery, engineering. Peter the Great cared above all else for the useful and troubled himself very little about the poetical or philological. The poets who lived during his reign were appreciated only by his successors. Prince Kantemir (1708-1744) is already the type of the literary man of rank as he is seen in Paris or London. He had lived in Western capitals, was intimate with Abbé Guasco, with Maupertuis, with Montesquieu. He frequented the salons of Paris. His satires, whose French translation appeared in London in 1749, are probably the first Russian literary work which was translated into French. It met with considerable success and was succeeded by a second edition the following year. Russia could point with pride to her Boileau, under whose influence she was henceforward to seek for literary models among the works of the French classics, or those of the German poets. Trediakovsky put into humorous verse the "Telemachus" of Fénelon, and into excellent prose Rollin's Ancient History. But the Russian language still hesitated, unable as yet to throw off the yoke of Slavonic tradition and the School of Kiev. With Lomonosov, the son of an Archangel's fisherman, a seminarian, who was in turn

poet, grammarian, chemist, and Bible teacher, she entered upon her inheritance of literature. Listen to this: "Chief among a number of languages, the Russian language, not only on account of lands where it rules, but also on account of its own expansion and wealth, is great before all others of Europe. This will seem improbable to strangers and to those Russians who have devoted themselves more to the study of foreign languages than to their own. But he will agree with me who, without being biased with preconceived ideas, will apply himself to understanding and mastering it. Charles V., the emperor of the Romans, used to say that one should speak Spanish with God, French with one's friends, German with one's enemies, Italian with women. But had he known the Russian, he would certainly have added that it could be spoken to all. For in it would he have found the majesty of the Spanish, the vivacity of the French, the force of the German, the delicacy of the Italian, and in addition the wealth and picturesque precision of the Greek and Latin. The vigorous eloquence of Cicero, the grandiose dignity of Virgil, the agreeable elegance of Ovid, lose nothing in the Russian language. The most exquisite conceptions of philosophy, the most varied qualities and metamorphoses of nature, the phenomena of the moral world, find within our language proper words for their expression."

Lomonosov was a Russian Malherbe and Vauge-

las together. In 1755 appeared the first edition of his grammar, and the University of Moscow was founded. Peter the Great had summoned German savants to St. Petersburg. Elizabeth essayed to bestow upon old Muscovite Russia a truly national centre of education. She did not succeed at first. The new university had, however, the honor of forming the first comic Russian poet, Von Vizine, the author of "The Minor and the Brigadier." The gymnasium of Kazan, which was founded about the same time, educated the future poet Derjavin, Catherine's singer, who was to be to Lomonosov what J. J. Rousseau was to Malherbe.

A year after these events, in 1756, the Russian theatre was definitely established. Soumarakov undertook to be its Racine. Henceforth intelligent Russia was possessed of but one idea, that of rivaling the foreigner: Germany in science, France in literature. Under the reign of Elizabeth, who had hoped to marry Louis XV., French influence preponderated. Without doubt Russian society still has traces of its olden roughness, notably towards the former serfs, and abuses excite but feeble, timid protests. Still this society is in process of transformation; it advocates respect to women, and studies the laws of gallantry. Formerly its boiars were hirsute and brutal; now it has its dandies, brought up by Parisian preceptors, or those who pass for such; the nobility travels abroad, and prides itself upon imitating what it

sees. During the reign of Catherine II., Russia was invaded by a spirit of philosophy. The institute of Smolna was founded for the education of noble young girls. A woman, the princess Dachkov, is placed at the head of a new academy established for the improvement of the Russian language and literature. Von Vizine and Kapnist are writing comedies. The empress herself, although of German origin, writes Russian in a picturesque, graceful manner. Novikov, Stecherbatov, Radistchev, are writers of talent. Kheraskov, Bogdanovitch, Khemnitzer, seek inspiration from the classics of France, and when Catherine declared that Russia was truly European none thought of disputing it. For a long while Asiatic domination is but a dream. Already, during the Seven Years' War, Russian troops have tried issue with Germany. During the wars of the Revolution and of the Empire, they penetrated into Austria, Sweden, and even into France. And they brought back from these lengthy military excursions more just ideas of that Europe from which their ancestors had been separated for so many centuries.

To sing the exploits of these armies, new poets are born, Pouchkine and Joukovsky. Catherine's old singer, the official Pindar of her victories, Derjavine, was present in 1815 at that memorable meeting in which was heard a youthful pupil of the Tsarskoc-Selo Lyceum, Alexander Pouchkine, when

in verse that announced a master he celebrated the glories of the Russian arms and the talent of those who had celebrated them. The author of "The Ode of God" and of "Felitsa" could hail, before he died, the evolution which was to bring Russian literature into the paths of romanticism, assure definitely its originality, and place it in a condition in which it might contest on equal terms with the most finished works of our old civilization. But this so powerful and glorious tree has not sprung all at once from the surface of the Muscovite soil; its roots are buried in the deepest soil of the past; its blossoming was made possible through the patient, accumulated efforts of many generations. It is well to remember, in the education of great nations, as in the education of great men, the smallest details are of importance.

After the death of Catherine the Great, the literary and political salon of the Winter Palace was closed. During the last third of the eighteenth century, in vast, slumbering Russia, this royal salon had been the sole centre of ideas: the hot-house where were being acclimatized the frail buds of art, philosophy and poetry, robbed from France. King Voltaire ruled; French genius dictated its laws to docile imitators, dramatists, poets, court-gossips. During the short mournful years of the reign of Paul I. nothing was heard but the voices of corporals on the field of maneuvers.

The elegance and freedom of spirit disappeared



from a court fashioned after Prussia. The succession of Alexander I. inaugurated the new century, and marked the point of departure of the intellectual movement in modern and autonomous Russia—a movement which, amid transformations which we will outline, has not ceased in its development to-day; which slowly threw off foreign influences, and finally assumed in the contemporaneous novel an eminently national character.

The philosophy of the eighteenth century had been for Catherine only an agreeable subject of conversation; she carefully forbade its application to practical government. The ardent, sensitive Alexander, educated by La Harpe in the principles of liberty, attempted in good faith at first to realize his humanitarian aspirations. All thoughtful minds throughout the Empire followed the impulsion emanating from the court, and gave themselves up to dreams of a bright future. The history of Alexander I., and of the ideas unfolded during his reign, is the history of a hasty, troubled dream, terminating in disenchantment and restlessness, from the reaction of a sovereign, frightened by the abortive revolt of a liberal nobility who had imagined Russia was ripe for a Revolution. At first, Alexander was encouraged in his course by a triumvirate of young friends whose counsels he sought, Czartoryski, Novossiltsof, Strogonoff; later on he was vigorously impelled forward by the



wonderful man who dominated this period, Michael Speransky.

Speransky possessed the love of action, boldness and boundless mysticism. "There is in man a principle that forces him to run chances," this little seminarian who had reached the summit of power used to say, an aphorism that he repeated upon his return from Erfurt intoxicated with the sight of Napoleon; while on his side Napoleon had said to Alexander: "Will you give me this man in exchange for a kingdom?" From 1807 to 1812 Speransky was his master's sole confidant, a sort of omnipotent grand-vizier. He aspired to nothing less than the recasting of old Russia on the model of the Napoleonic empire. He drew up a code from the barbarous pell-mell of ancient ukases and Muscovite customs; he sketched out a constitution with two great organic bodies, the Senate and the Council of the Empire, which still keep something of the life with which he endowed them; he meditated the abolition of serfdom. The great reform was only to be realized a half-century later, but numerous witnesses attest that Alexander and Speransky thought of it ceaselessly, and were more than once on the point of risking its chances.

At this epoch literature languished. The intellectual movement was absorbed by the application of the new political and social ideas. The old poet Derjavine alone, a voice from another century, managed to compose several pompous odes for offi-

cial anniversaries. Literature was, in Speransky's voluminous memoirs, on every question of the day, memoirs that are still discussed passionately in the cultivated circles of St. Petersburg and Moscow. It exists also in the replies of the opposition, who organized a resistance under the leadership of Karamzine. This last was a nobleman of the olden time, a believer in the past and the national traditions, and with it all a literary disciple of Rousseau, which gave a singular originality to his course. In a famous note written in 1811, "Ancient and New Russia," he became the advocate of the ideas and interests aroused by Speransky's innovation. Thus was brought into existence in Moscow that school at once political, philosophic and literary, which was later known as Muscovite, Slavophile, Panslavist; it has existed without interruption to our time, with the Aksakofs and the Kathofs demanding for the Russian people peculiar conditions of life and a place apart in the world, without any compromise with Western ideas. In the struggle that has ensued between the successors of Karamzine and the imitators of Speransky, the liberal tendencies of the latter have obtained brief victories, but the final triumph has always remained with the first and their autocratic national doctrines.

Karamzine did not content himself with outlining these doctrines in his memoirs, but incorporated them in his great work, "The History of

Russia." It is the first example of good Russian prose. His work, incomplete in matter, still remains unrivaled for the excellence of its method and the art of narration.

Shaken by the terrible onslaughts of this adversary, Speransky was ruined by the Anti-French reaction, to which the war of 1812 gave rise. One morning it was known that the favorite, who the evening before had ruled the Empire, had left St. Petersburg in the night on his way to Siberia. Under the influence of a new counsellor, General Arakteheief, Alexander revolted from the ideas that had filled him with enthusiasm in the early part of his reign. Frightened by the progress of the revolutionary spirit and the upturnings in Europe, a convert to the doctrines of the Holy Alliance, he sought in mysticism a refuge for his lost illusions. Russian intelligence slid with him down this decline. About 1815 St. Petersburg resembled a chapter of the initiated. On all sides were seekers of the unknown, Theosophists, Swedenborgians, Rosierucians, Martinists, Masons of various rites. Bible societies and Masonic lodges became State institutions. The old orthodoxy was abandoned to the people. The drawing-rooms, government offices, literary circles, belonged heart and soul to that troubled spirit that had swept over England and Germany, till it reached Slav territory, where it found its own home. Tolstoi has traced in a masterly manner in certain chapters

of his "War and Peace" the state of these souls during the crisis of illuminism that poured over them at the beginning of the century.

The lodges rapidly degenerated into political conventicles. The "Society of Friends," founded by Pestel and his accomplices on the model of the secret societies of the West, was the heart of the liberal conspiracy of the "Decembristes." Everyone knows how it broke out in 1825, the day after the death of Alexander, and how miserably it failed between popular indifference and energetic repression. The new Tzar Nicholas, frightened by this inauspicious beginning of his reign, swore an implacable war against the ideas that had seduced the eager spirit of his brother and the young Russian nobility; he enforced order with silence throughout his Empire. For a long while thought had no other medium of expression than poetry, which drew to itself the blossom and sap of genius.

Among the clubs of young men, that had multiplied since 1815, dipped into politics and ended tragically, a single one was preserved from the ardor of its literary passions. It was called the *Arzamas*, and was the cradle of Russian romanticism. Its founders were the first pupils of the *Tsarskoe-Selo Lyceum*, founded by the Tzar for the children of the nobility. At the time that a patriotic war was firing Russian imagination, this school sheltered amid its beautiful park all the youths who were destined to make a name for them-



Sevastopol—View of Museum







selves under the reign of Nicholas. The eldest, the poet Joukovsky, initiated them into German literature, since he was the first to turn from the French to the German, preferring Goethe and Schiller to Voltaire. He translated elegies, ballads, poems, legends; made excellent versions of the Iliad and Odyssey, that more nearly approach the original than those of any modern language. In spite of the great services he rendered Russian literature, his timid, gentle genius was eclipsed by the glory of Pouchkine, who is universally acknowledged as the father of Russian romantic poetry.

When scarcely more than a child, but an *enfant prodige*, Pouchkine became rapidly the head and inspiration of his fellow-disciples of the Lyceum. At that time the German influence began to decline. Byron took possession of all imaginations. Pouchkine was ready to feel this influence more than any other; his entire passionate soul seemed to flow into the same mould as that of the English poet. The adventures of a wandering life and the revelations of an Eastern sky completed the likeness between these two fraternal geniuses. Slightly compromised by politics, exiled to the South of Russia, Pouchkine had the good fortune to be taken away from his friends in time, thus avoiding the final catastrophe and perpetual banishment into Siberia. The enchanting places of his exile were the Caucasus, the Crimea, and Bessarabia. These Russian shores were at that time but a continuation of

Mahomedan Asia, where nothing had dimmed the splendors of nature or the picturesque qualities of the population. The youthful poet, already stirred by the reading of Byron, plunged to the lips into this brilliant, strange loveliness. Spots wonderful in themselves appeared transfigured by the dreams and wild imaginations with which he peopled them. Upon his return to St. Petersburg after these fruitful years of exile, the Orient that he had discovered dashed with him into Russian poetry. Poems, like the "Fountain of Bakhchisarai" or "The Gypsies," fixed the outside garment that was to be worn for twenty years by the eternal form of human thought and feeling. But Pouchkine's spirit was too active, too broad, to remain shut up in this boundary. He passed to other subjects, and exhausted them all. He finished his "Eugene Onyegin," an imitation of "Childe Harold" of course, but a personal and national imitation, where Russian customs spoke in a frame borrowed from the stranger master. At a period when every land was honoring its middle age, Pouchkine dipped deep into his country's history, in search of poetic subjects, and made it live in burning letters in "The Songs of the Ancient Slavs," "Poltava," the drama of "Boris Godunof." With his novels "The Captain's Daughter" and "The Queen of Clubs" he created a clear, fine style learned from his preceptors, the French of a past century. Both critic and journalist, he touched upon every sub-

ject, political and literary. His voluminous correspondence bears witness to a mind continually at work amid a disordered life, a never-failing justness of perception in a soul ravaged with passion, an inexhaustible source of ideas and new ambitions. Had he lived he would have rivaled Victor Hugo, whom he resembled in facile, magnificent strength. In 1838—he was born with the century—a fatal duel annihilated these hopes. The ball was indeed terrible that laid on the snow of the islands the first poet of Russia, and one of the greatest of modern times.

He is not to be judged by the pale translations hitherto attempted. They only allow us to catch a distant echo from his verse, that so harmonious instrument, which renders in turn the majesty of history, the tenderness and despair of the heart, the fire of passion, the laughing grace, the profound melancholy of that rich imagination. Pouchkine owes nothing to our romantic Renaissance; he knew nothing of it. It was one of those rare moments in which Russia borrowed nothing from France. He despised Hugo and Lamartine and cared only for the classics. But he never entirely freed himself from English and German influence. Though it would not be just to refuse him originality, he poured Russian wine into glasses picked up from everywhere; accepting them from every hand, with the docility of his race, he fashioned them to his use, with the adaptability of that



same race. With perhaps the exception of Musset, whom he did not know, Pouchkine may be considered as the most natural, most spontaneous of poets, as one who passes the most simply from the gaiety of a child to the melancholy of an old man, from the serenity of the Greek to the passions of the barbarian.

It seemed as if Michael Lermontof was meant to console Russia for this great loss. But the span of his life was even more brief. He was but twenty-eight when he perished from the same death as Pouchkine, being killed in a duel in that Caucasus that he had so praised. Lermontof and the Caucasus! These two names are inseparable. The young officer composed all his poetry amid the mountains where he was serving. Byronism found in him an even more fervent advocate than in Pouchkine; it was precisely the style of literature suited to this exaggerated being, fierce in disposition, of indomitable pride, always tortured by the desolation of his heart. He possessed neither the broad spirit nor the universal curiosity of his predecessor; he could but see and tell of the grandeur among which he lived; he could only feel his own suffering. His poetry rushes like the torrents of Kasbek, reflecting magnificent scenes with stormy sorrow. He left but one finished poem, "The Demon." Among the Romantic poets, there is nothing more intense in its spirit of revolt, as there is nothing more beautiful, than his descrip-



tions of nature and accumulation of images. Lermontof's lyrics are, I think, preferable; they live in the memory of all the Russians, so touching is the note of passion; they suit the Slavonic mind, as do the songs of the Gypsies, which they equal in sadness. This poet showed himself capable of writing the most exquisite prose, in a series of Caucasian stories, under the title "A Hero of our Time." Petchorine, the hero, at whom the author is always laughing, but with secret sympathy, is always himself; it is the fatal man of 1830, *exalté*, disenchanted, the type of so many novels of that period. As for his poems, they are impossible of translation, or have been as yet. One cannot tell, before inhaling it, in what the perfume of a foreign flower differs from those of the same family with us, nor in what a sigh differs from all other human sighs. And Lermontof, in spite of the shortness of his career, may be classed as a poet of the first rank after Pouchkine.

In an entirely different manner, Griboiedof takes his place with them through a single comedy, "The Evil of Being too Clever." It is the Russian misanthrope, a disappointed misanthrope with a very original taste of his native soil. His satire is full of bitterness; it expresses the dull irritation of the Russian against his social *entourage*, his contempt for the unfinished world of which he is a part, only surpassed by his contempt for the finished and limited world that European civiliza-

tion proposes as an example. The Russian poets of the Romantic cycle were legion: Delvig, Baratinsky, Yazykof and twenty others merit attention. But, with more or less brilliant flashes, they are only imitators of Pouchkine. What must be emphasized in this sketch of the intellectual movement is the predominance, from 1820 to 1840, of lyric poetry to the exclusion of all other kinds—a short tender breath of springtime, when man seemed to have nothing else to do but to sing of his individual sentiments and the beauty of an ideal world. It was too violent to last, and disappeared suddenly in 1840. A few souls still vibrated under its influence, as for example the exquisite Tutchef; they were henceforth but isolated voices. In Russia as everywhere else, more than everywhere else, the romantic paroxysm is exhausted. The individual is lost in the mass and returns to general ideas, practical cares and the study of realities. Did these great, dreamy children become serious as they grew old? Most of them died young, in all their errors, and another generation has taken their place, imbued with very different ideas, the generation that the Russians call “the men of the forties.”

Most of these men came from Germany. In default of schools and proper atmosphere at home, they had gone to the Universities of Berlin and Jena, and had imbibed the troublous philosophy taught there. They returned to their own country, steeped in skepticism that criticised the world

at large and Russia in particular. The poets of the preceding era had endured the political and social compression which prevented them neither from loving, nor dreaming, nor enjoying every delight from the aristocratic heights where they live. The newcomers, mostly of modest extraction, returned impatiently to a life that stifled them. In 1848, when the ground trembled and shook all around, they were mad, that they alone must be silent and mute amid the new order of things announced by the prophets. Bielinsky offers the most complete type of this generation. He was the great agitator of ideas of his time. Given up entirely to criticism, he was the sole Russian who drew from this study all of which it was capable. With some rubbish, his large book is full of new and ingenious ideas on the past and future of the national literature. In 1843 he proclaimed the death of romanticism, and the need of returning to realism, the elements of which were to be sought from Russian life. Then, too, literary discussions were not to him what they were to most of his fellows, but a convenient pavilion in which to hide the contraband philosophic and social doctrines with which their brains and minds were teeming. The spirit of negation, enveloped in general formulas in order to escape the censorship, attacked everything indirectly, leaving the intelligent reader—and in this respect they are all so in Russia—to make his own applications to the political, religious

or philosophic authorities. This was the course adopted with more or less force and talent by the numerous disciples of Bielinsky; they scattered their bile in the literary reviews, that began to multiply. Thus progressed the mute work of disintegration, in an edifice to all appearance intact, until the death of Emperor Nicholas. It was no longer, as in 1825, the wild conspiracy of a handful of noblemen who desired to imitate the liberal Parisians, but the patient work of German thinkers, directed against every ancient, intellectual establishment, by laborers who increased daily in number with the spread of instruction. This destructive criticism was at least a creator in literature. It aroused many an unconscious soul, among others Gogol, to whom it indicated his path in life. Nicholas Gogol is the first of the great realistic Romancers, the true father of all the others. This Little-Russian of humble condition formed himself alone. He learned all by watching the life of the country people around him. Then he set himself to work to paint them quite simply as he saw them. Thus he wrote "The Dead Souls," a *chef-d'œuvre* that is only surpassed by "Don Quixote." For the first time, middle-class Russia appeared in its entirety with its wretchedness, its deformities, its absurdities; with its good-nature as well, and its heroic endurance. Amid the keen delineation of the humorist one feels a depth of infinite tenderness

for the model, while flashes of true poetry constantly beautified his jovial satire.

The figures evoked by Gogol are alive with intense life; as they are nearly all shabby and ugly, the mirror that shows them amuses at first, then fills the reader with grave thoughts on the social condition of his country. The novelist completes the demonstration in short stories, in which he portrays the existence of small government functionaries. One of them, "The Cloak," has served as a model to all Russian writers in similar compositions. Finally these personages appear upon the scene in the comedy of "The Examiner." The public see the vices of the administration, the dishonesty that was undermining the Empire, scoffed at on the stage.

Gogol's charming work opened new paths, that were filled with imitators as 1848 approached. The pictures he had painted with smiling satire, were continued with infinite sadness by Dostoievsky in his first work, "The Poor People," by Turgenieff with discreet melancholy and sovereign art in his "Stories of a Hunter." Under the pen of this young man, Russian prose became an instrument of incomparable beauty. His brilliance dazzled the sight, his harmony enchanted the ear. The shadowy silhouettes of the moujiks, drawn with so noble and pure a pencil, took possession of every heart. It may be said of this memorable book, that it gave the *coup de grâce* to slavery.



Grigorovitch sketched with heavier hand a dramatic picture of the condition of the peasants, in his "Anton Goremuika." Tchedrine, the future satirical author, made his *début* with "The Confused Affair," in which a poor woman sold herself to get bread for her husband and children. Herzen's novel "Whose Fault Is It?" repeated the pleadings of George Sand in favor of free love; while Pisemsky's first novel, "The Time of the Boiars," defended the same theme. Bakounine commenced his violent sermons. This murmur of revolt and defense found its poetical expression in the verses of Nekrassof, the friend and disciple of Bielinsky, the heartrending singer of the miseries of the Russian people.

This literary effervescence ended in the conspiracy of Petrachevsky, a distant feeble echo of the Revolution of 1848. Punishment fell upon the writers who had favored the movement. Almost all we have named were sent to their estates or to distant villages; the most compromised disappeared, like Dostoievsky, into the mines of Siberia. For some years Russian thought was dumb. The anxieties of the Crimean war oppressed all hearts; this proof revealed to the most prejudiced eyes the social sores that literature had formerly denounced. Emperor Nicholas did not survive his disillusionment; he carried into the tomb the regimen of which he was the personification. With the accession of Alexander II., and the imme-



diated freedom characterizing the new reign, intellectual life awoke. "The men of the forties," whom persecution had scattered for six years, gathered together and took up their pens. Herzen, alone kept in exile on account of the bitterness of his polemic, continued to harass the government with his devilish pamphlet, "The Bell," that penetrated into Russia, no one knew by what underground means, and reached even the study of the Tzar. Other writers, more moderate in disposition, were able to discuss the interests of their country in the journals and reviews. About this time the press began to publish purely political articles, till now an unheard-of boldness. The discussions, it is true, revolved almost exclusively around a question already decided by the monarch and all his subjects—the emancipation of the serfs. Each one understood that the hour had come and that this necessary revolution could not be longer deferred. The trio of "emancipators," Samarine, Tcherkasky, Milutine, discussed its conditions.

While the great act was being prepared in the councils of the statesmen, with all the necessary delicate precautions, a joyous breeze of hope caressed every head: this mobile race, thus far so little spoiled by history, flattered itself it was about to enter upon an era of greatness and felicity, where everything would assume a smiling aspect. The survivors of those years say that nothing can give an idea of the boundless joy and confidence

filling Russian hearts, nor of the wild enthusiasm with which the ukase of February the 19th, 1861, was received. This enthusiasm partly explains the beautiful outburst of intellect that was to recompense Alexander II. and glorify his reign with a literary galaxy hitherto unknown.

During the quarter of a century between 1855 and 1880 Russian genius finally freed itself from foreign imitations; it could be recognized by several essential, different features among writers of vastly different temperaments. It found in the novel a mode of expression appropriate to its needs and it in turn gave to this mode of expression an eminently national physiognomy. According to certain critics of Western Europe, the Russians marched this time, too, in the wake of the French realists. It is a superficial view, not carried out by facts. Doubtless the Slav novelists owed much to the lessons of Dickens and other English masters of fiction; nor did they escape from the influence of Balzac; but the most forceful of these novelists promptly transformed the foreign material that they had assimilated, and created works absolutely distinct from those which had shown them the way. It is inexact to see in them plagiarists of French realism, as it has been evolved from Flaubert to Zola. The Russians preceded rather than followed it. Gontcharof, Pisemsky, Tolstoi, had finished writing their earlier and some of their best works when *Madame Bovary* appeared. The

best proof of their distinct personality is that they have reacted in their turn, and very forcibly, on that European literature of which theretofore Russian writers had been a reflection.

It has been said so often, it is scarcely necessary to repeat it, that the novel has absorbed in Russia all the living forces of intelligence; has been the frame in which all its ideas, all its doctrines, no matter how serious, have been developed. The political and social conditions of the country have allowed free play to ideas only under the veil of fiction. Eloquence has no pulpit where it may be displayed. The sacred pulpit, which in France was its cradle, is nearly always dumb in the Orthodox Church; admirable music replaces the voice of the preacher.

Philosophy has not aroused original systems in this Russian mind, in spite of its love of speculation. Either through lack of preparation, or timidity before the bonds of their surroundings, the commentators of Büchner, Schopenhauer, and Hartmann, of Stuart Mill and Spencer, are still dependent upon Germany or England as soon as they touch abstract ideas. History is free only in the distant research of origins; it is cramped when it reaches epochs nearer us, paralyzed when it risks contemporaneous times. The taste for historical study has spread greatly during the last twenty-five years, and Russia has made an inventory of her past. Reviews and special publications have produced a formidable mass of documents; the

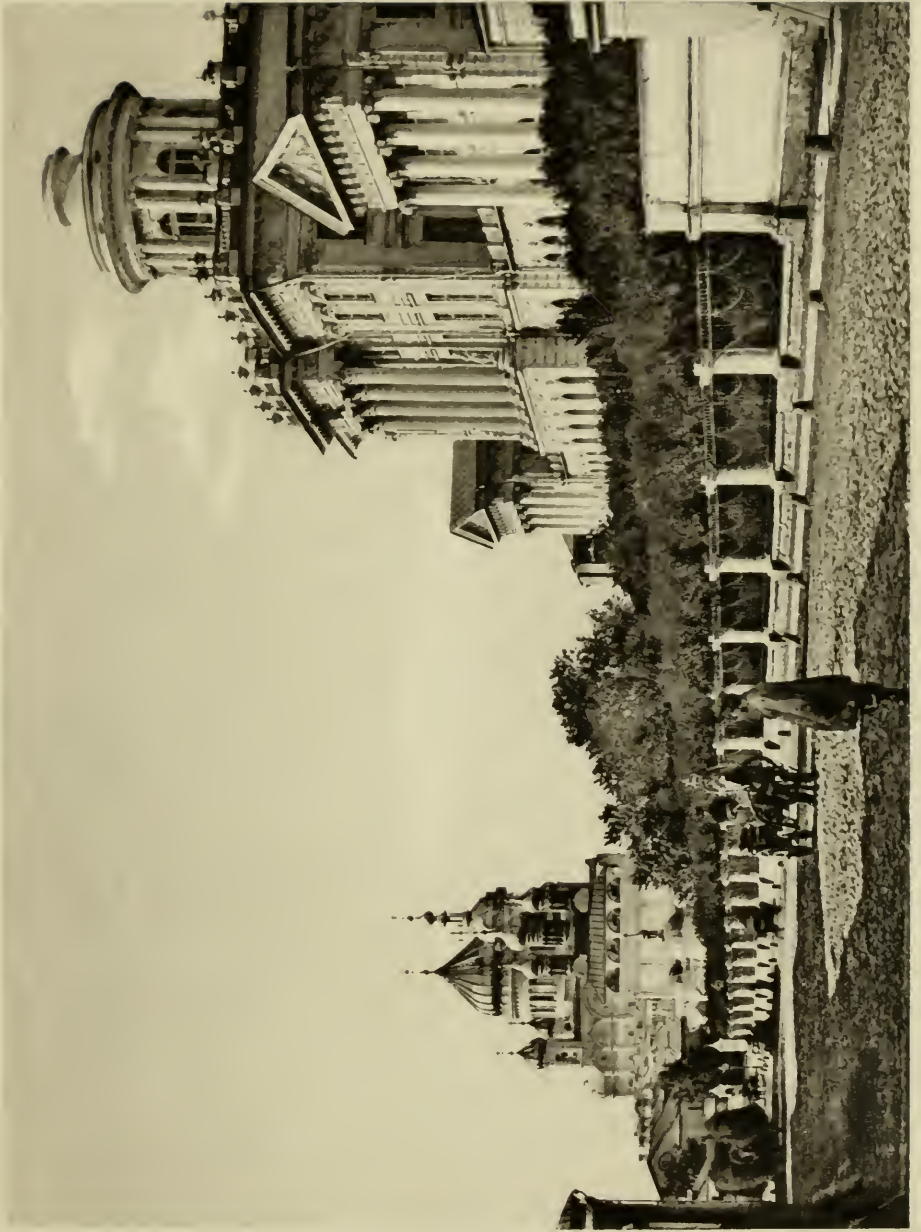
voluminous collection of texts gathered together by the "Imperial Historical Society" has no equal; but most of these documents still await the writer who will take from them the lessons of the past and present a narration that must be a work of art. Monographs are numerous. Several authors of talent, among whom must be cited the lamented Kostomtrof, have studied a personage, an event, an epoch or an especial region of the Empire. One, Solovief, has attempted to rewrite the history of General Karamzine, with the light of actual events. His twenty-eight volumes are but an estimable compilation of acts and ancient texts that make very difficult reading. Russia of the nineteenth century, it cannot be repeated too often for those who wish to understand, has put all its philosophy and all its history into the novel. A legion of writers has worked for this purpose, and each has brought about some significant result. I will content myself with naming the most prominent. In the beginning of the reign of Alexander II., Gontcharof and Pisemsky seemed destined to become the chief successors of Gogol. "The Oblomof" of Gontcharof incarnated into a type, become proverbial, certain defects of the national character,—indolence, *laisser-aller*, carelessness of fatalism. Through exact observation of its surroundings, and psychological analysis this book ushered in a new way of looking at the world. Gontcharof preserved these same excellencies in





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Poskoff Museum, Moscow





his other works, "Simple History," "The Precipice," but the great success of "Oblomof" was not continued; the novelist erred in too pale and uniform a coloring, and a certain monotony in the accumulation of details. Pisemsky interpreted better the disorders of society, and pictured vividly the uncertainties of the Russian conscience. "The Whirlwind," "A Thousand Souls," "The Makers" are the finest possible pictures of the middle class. In Ipsemsky was lacking, together with the realists of Western Europe, the gift of communicative sympathy found among others, as well as a broad superior view of the humanity that he studied. Novelists more emotional and more philosophic and of the first rank continued to appear.

But chief of all was Turgenieff, already considered peerless, from his "Tales of a Hunter." He continued to slip into all hearts by the exquisite little novels of the first order with sentimental romances, like "The Nestful of Noblemen," whose charm remains ever fresh for us, thanks to the discretion, moderation, and methods which produced it. He caught the interest of all by disentangling the chaos of confused ideas that clouded all minds after the shock of the emancipation. In "Rudin" he analyzed the lack of will, the absence of moral personality with which he reproached his countrymen pleasantly yet severely, when he said: "We have given nothing to the world, except the samovar; we are not sure of having invented that." In

“Fathers and Sons” he sounded the fathomless abyss that had been dug between the generation of slavery and that of 1860; he first diagnosed and named the evil which was to eat into the new-comers—nihilism. He followed its growing progress in “Smoke” and described its exterior manifestations in “Virgin Lands.” Turgenieff has not pushed as far as has Tolstoi the knowledge and domination of the human soul, but he yields to none for divination of every shade of feeling, and is superior to all his rivals in the strength of his adaptive genius, while from his intimate acquaintance with the classic writers of France he is the only Russian who fully attains perfection of classic taste. He is through and through an artist. His inimitable short stories made M. Taine declare that since the Greeks no artist has cut a literary cameo in such perfect relief, and with such absolute perfection of form.

Dostoievsky is entirely different. He is not trained in literary art, but is possessed of a native fire and intensity of thought that wholly overwhelms the reader. An amnesty had emptied the Siberian prisons of which he has given a heartrending description in “The House of the Dead,” rendered more tragic by the resignation and gentle tone of these strange memoirs. Other novels, “Humility and Offenses,” “Crime and Punishment,” “The Idiot,” are so many chapters in a mystic gospel, in which the sympathetic observer



glorifies even the vices and troubles of wretched mortals; not as in our romances, because the vice and misery are picturesque, but because "the religion of human suffering" claims indulgence for all its deformities. "The Maniacs" and "The Brothers Karamazof" are studies in nihilism which he saw in a nightmare of the imagination. He fascinates through feelings of terror and pity, always kept within the domain of truth. Many Russian and French readers place Dostoievsky upon a height that the future will probably lessen, but which has been justified by the all-puissant action of this man upon the minds of his contemporaries.

Apart from and above all the rest, Count Leo Tolstoi has made for himself a unique position in Russia and in the world. An officer in the Caucasus, and later in the Crimea, he led amid the unconquered tribes that adventurous, military life so celebrated by the older romanticists. He tells of it in his first work, "The Cossacks," an entirely novel interpretation of the Orient, that marked the radical changes that had taken place in people's minds since 1850. For the lyric visions of his predecessors, the thinker substituted the philosophic view of Asiatic people and things. In the "Pictures of the Siege of Sebastopol" the war is observed in an indifferent, detached way. He applied his pitiless analysis to his own life, writing his autobiography under the title of "Childhood,

Adolescence, Youth." Finally in his two great romances, "War and Peace," the Russia of the past, and "Anna Karenina," the Russia of the present, he embraced in one comprehensive study every aspect of the life of his country, better still of human life. He fixed in ineffaceable letters every phase of the inner consciousness, in relation to acts, feelings, ideas. Tolstoi looks at the world from a lofty elevation; nothing escapes, nothing astonishes him; his clear, cold sight pierces every mask, seizes secrets, unravels and recomposes every action, though it betrays deep commiseration for the pain and efforts of poor humanity. It might be the comprehensive, serene, tender look of a god, were it not for a certain feeling of anxiety that attaches him to mankind. This feeling increases with each new book, with each of the persons whom he portrays. What is the end of life? What must one do to be good? It must be brought back to its most simple elements. Such is the answer that Tolstoi receives from experience, and in order to conform to it he, more and more, renounces art, romanticism, all that has made his fame. He curses civilization, turns himself into a peasant, a philosophic peasant, and applies himself to the solution of the moral and religious problem, without religious dogma. The great painter reappears in some pages of "Popular Stories" and the "Kreutzer Sonata." Condemned henceforth to turn in a circle, Tolstoi offers the spectacle of a chemist

who, after having enriched the world by his discoveries, becomes an alchemist and is absorbed in the search of the Philosopher's Stone.

In spite of which—on account of which perhaps the future can alone decide—Tolstoi's fame and influence is felt in every corner of the world. With this novelist, together with some of those I have mentioned before, Russia has at last entered into a full consciousness of her genius; and genius fashioned heretofore by old Europe, from whom it received its ideas and forms, has passed beyond its native soil; is returning to Europe what it has received from her, while bringing her new forms and conceptions. Henceforward Russian literature is independent, recognized and acknowledged; as the diplomats say, this vassal of yesterday has taken rank among the great powers, and, like more than one State, she has reached her high fortune through romance.

It would be unjust to omit the less distinguished literary productions that complete the intellectual side of the reign of Alexander II. Although relegated to the background, poetry did not lose its attraction for the Russians. Nearly all cultivated people made verses, and a few true poets wrote beautiful ones. The lyric vein was continued by Feth, by Maikof, and especially by Nek-rassof, whose appearance in 1848 I have already mentioned. He continued his note of revolt even after the emancipation, since he could sing in no

other strain. All socialistic poetry must claim him as its father. It would be difficult to surpass the force and beauty of his invectives, the sombre richness of the pictures in which he tells the suffering of Lower Russia on a background of frozen steppes or sordid streets to which he has given a dignified grandeur. Very different, but of high excellence, was the gentle poet, Alexis Tolstoi, who sings in touching accents the joys of Nature. He was less happy when his ambition soared towards creating himself the "Shakespeare of Russia," in the trilogy, into which he introduces the figures of Ivan the Terrible, Tzar Boris and the ancient boiars.

The theatre had found its greatest play in "The Examiner," and a crowd of comic writers sprang up under the leadership of Ostrovsky. The middle class, the merchants of Moscow, with their habits and amusing characteristics, furnished most of the matter for these comedies. The pictures are realistic, often coarse; there is very little action and only here and there a pathetic or vigorous scene. In Russia the novel has taken precedence over the theatre, as so often happens; while it is in full maturity the theatre is in its infancy. The comedy of Ostrovsky and his imitators is bitter, sometimes sad; it is marked by a tendency, very pronounced in Russia, towards self-disparagement. Tchudrine's irony is taken from the same source, and his social satires were extraordinarily popular

under the last reign. Tchetrine possessed the talent of dressing a political allusion in such a way that it would escape the censorship, but would be perfectly clear to the reader.

Necessity sharpened this talent among the journalists, in the press that enjoyed a certain amount of freedom after 1860. To present a history of ideas in contemporaneous Russia, it would be necessary to devote a long chapter to the discussion of the principles exchanged between the St. Petersburg and the Muscovite camp. The mouthpiece of the first, which is liberal and European, is "The Messenger of Europe." The answer from Moscow came in the papers of the traditional school which advocates autonomous Russia and orthodox autoeracy, and is promulgated in the "Gazette" of Katkof and the "Rous" of Aksakof. This last has played an immense rôle in directing the Russian conscience. Aksakof's father had long battled for the same cause, and excellent romances from his pen had brought him literary fame. Aksakof, the son, placed at the disposal of his convictions a vibrating, rich eloquence, and a biblical style very appropriate to this prophet, who seemed to be always speaking from the top of Mt. Sinai; he occasionally lectured the emperor himself, with all the authority of that past in whose name he thundered against the innovators. It was at the call of Aksakof that Russia rose in 1877 to combat the Turk.



Between the two declared doctrines, a third lies hidden underground, revolutionary nihilism, the practical result of the philosophical nihilism analyzed by the novelists. With the exception of some obscure pamphlets, this savage doctrine has left no written traces in the battle of ideas; it is needless to mention the bloody traces it has left in history and how it rewarded the sovereign liberator of the serfs. During those years of anguish, all literary movement came to a standstill. Russian thought, oppressed by the phantom that menaced it with destruction, bestowed very little attention upon works of literature.

The writers whom we have just passed in review preceded or soon followed Alexander II. to the tomb. Tolstoi alone remains, and he is no longer the creator of former times; he is another Tolstoi, a prisoner to a chimerical abstraction, from which he is exhausting himself in his attempts to prove rational conclusions. The glorious Pleiad has not been replaced in the course of recent years. There is abundant production, but it is lacking in originality, romances, poems, historical and critical studies. Most of the young authors work after the models of their predecessors; some follow the French fashion of naturalism. It would be both rash and ungraceful to mention names and distribute places in the ranks of those who are honestly striving to fulfill their daily task. Like political Russia, literary Russia is gathering herself

together; let us hope it will bring forth a new blossoming of ideas and forms of art. After the active fecundity of the last quarter of a century, this time of rest is but natural, and conformable to the precedents of literary history in every land. Russia can have and inspire confidence in her future, now that she has given pledges of her intellectual ability and reacted in her turn upon her former preceptors. Can the mind be subjected to the same law as the earth, under a Northern sky? The laborer cultivates the Russian soil; after the harvest he lets the land lie fallow a year; the eye perceives over the steppe nothing but weeds or waving grass. The following year, a sea of wheat springs in a few weeks from the furrows, and the grain of these opulent harvests will nourish neighboring nations. Slav literature has now its fallow year: let us wish it beautiful, approaching harvests; let us wish for its glory and our pleasure that the bread of intelligence may arise anew and that we may partake of it in peace.



RUSSIAN ART.





## XXVIII.

### RUSSIAN ART.

INFLUENCE ON, FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES AND  
SCHOOLS.

BY MARIUS VACHON.

A learned historian, M. Darcel, talking of Russian art, said: "This art is, so to speak, a discovery to the modern critic; indeed it is scarcely understood in Russia itself. Russia, which lies on the road of the migrations that have successively come from the lofty plateaus of Asia to invade and people Europe, which serves as a boundary both to the Eastern and to the Western world, has been subject, in distant as in recent times, to a peculiar influence." This opinion contains with exactitude all the knowledge and all the hypotheses on the origin and development of Russian art. The tumuli of the Cimmerian Bosphorus have yielded, in fact, proofs of the influence of the antique civilization, brought to the centre of the Scythian nations by the Greek colonies of merchants and artists, that Thebes, the City of an Hundred-Gates, had founded on the shores of the Pontus Euxinus. All that has been faithfully kept for many centuries, from the greed of Vandalism, which is shown so proudly to-day in the Museum of the Hermitage

—vases in gold, silver and bronze, crowns, armor, jewels, terra-cotta, utensils for household and sacrificial use, articles of female adornment, etc.—proves the establishment of a direct affiliation of manners and customs between the inhabitants of these colonies and those of Southern Russia of to-day. The brooches and pins are ornamented with little female figures who wear the stephane of Juno, whose resemblance in shape and decoration to the “kakochnik” of the Russian maiden is such that it is impossible not to acknowledge a common origin. In the knights of the Golden Collar of the king of Koul Oba, the costumes do not at all differ from those of the Cossacks of to-day. The harness consisting of a simple cord bridle is still used by the peasants of that region.

At this same time, perhaps even before, peoples of the Aryan race descended from the Altai, between the ranges of the Ural and the shores of the Caspian Sea, crossed, leaving numerous colonies behind them, the lower part of Great-Russia, Lithuania, Livonia then Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. They scattered everywhere on their passage fertile germs of an original art, drawn from the living sources of Asiatic genius.

Having reached the confines of Western Europe, this human tide flowed back. In the ninth century, the Varegues or Scandinavians crossing the Baltic, or skirting the coasts of Finland, under the leadership of Rurik, or Oleg, invaded Great-Russia



The Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, is a vast collection of art and historical objects. It was founded by Catherine the Great in 1764. The collection includes works by the Old Masters, the Impressionists, and the Modernists. The museum is housed in the Winter Palace, which was designed by the architect Antonio Ricci. The Hermitage is one of the largest museums in the world, with over 300,000 objects in its collection. It is a treasure trove of art and history, and a must-visit for anyone interested in the arts.

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and brought it under their rule. They carried along with them a peculiar art, sprung from Asiatic traditions combined with new inspirations born under a Northern sky. No edifice that can be considered as indisputable has been preserved from that epoch. It is possible that the popular architecture of the peasants' wooden houses is still feeling the Scandinavian influence upon native art. In carved and graphic ornamentation this influence is very evident. It has existed full of life and vigor through many centuries, and has not yet disappeared. Russian manuscripts of the fourteenth century contain decorative compositions that are exactly like those found in the Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, which are very characteristically Scandinavian in origin. After a visit to the National Museums of Scandinavia and of Russia, one is profoundly struck by the complete analogy of general inspirations and integral elements in most of the works of decorative art, whether wood, stone or metal, belonging to those distant historic periods.

When, towards the close of the tenth century, Russia and Vladimir were converted to Christianity, the art of Greece entered into the country with the new religion. Close, constant relations were established between the two nations. Kiev was covered with religious monuments of purely Byzantine architecture, and soon became a great, artistic city, eager to equal Byzantium in magnificence. She was very proud of her four hundred churches, of

her cathedral, of her Golden Gate and of her palaces. In 989 Greek architects built the first stone church, the Dime, that served long as the model for Russian churches. In 1017-1037 the cathedral of St. Sophia was built of the same type, and decorated with superb mosaics (1045) by Olympius of the convent of Petchersky, a pupil of the Greek artists. St. Sophia of Novgorod, one of the most beautiful monuments of Byzantine art, was the work of a Greek priest, one Joachim (1075-1086). Next came the church of Veliko Petchersk, whose interior was magnificent with gold and mosaics.

With the eleventh century churches appeared with two, three, five, seven, nine and thirteen domes, cupolas or spires. These figures are symbolic. Two domes recall the dual nature of Jesus Christ; three, the Trinity; five, the four Evangelists and Christ; seven domes evoke the idea of the seven sacraments or the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit; nine represent the celestial hierarchy; and thirteen, the twelve Apostles and the Christ. At this time, they began to build stone walls around the cities and to fortify towers.

The twelfth century marks an epoch in architectural development. At Kiev, in 1108, was built the cathedral of the Archangel Michael, that was promptly surnamed "the church with the gold top," on account of its fifteen domes, covered with gilded plates; at Grodno, the convent of Kolojane,

one of the most remarkable monuments of Russian art; at Zvenigorod, the cathedral of the Assumption, the first religious building that was square; at the convent of Bogolioubov was the Intercession, and at Vladimir-on-Kliazma the Assumption (1136-1161) and St. Dmitri (1194-1197). In this last Viollet-le-Duc recognizes a Greek, and not a Byzantine influence. In his opinion neither St. Sophia nor those taken from it served as models. But from the churches of Armenia or Syria came the slender spires, the lofty, narrow naves of this cathedral, and after it most of the religious edifices of later centuries. The assimilation by Slavonic art of Byzantine art was rapid and complete, on account of their similar origin. Both were equally indebted to Asia. "In everything bearing upon the construction of arches, so vital a matter in Byzantine architecture, the Oriental, Asiatic or Iranian influence is much more powerful than the Roman influence, and it is the same with the ornamentation. The tradition of Roman architecture was promptly effaced in Byzantium by the Iranian influence. As in Rome the monuments were usually confided to Greek artists, for the Romans never furnished artists, so in Constantinople the imperial government applied to Asiatic artists who had long possessed their own art and methods, whose diverse origins it would be too tedious to mention, but which all issued from the centre of Asia in the most distant times."

The education of the Russian artists and workmen went on apace. From Yaroslav the Great (1016-1054) to Andrew Bogolioubski (1157-1174), both religious and civil monuments had been the work of strangers. But when John, bishop of Vladimir, resolved to restore the ancient basilica of Our Lady, at Souzdal, he was able to procure native workmen for this delicate operation. Even at that time Kiev possessed a celebrated architect, Peter the Milonegue, who, among other important works, constructed under the monastery of Vy-doubetsky, on the banks of the Dnieper, a brick wall of such perfect workmanship that his contemporaries spoke of it as a marvel. At the same time with architecture, Russia took from Byzantium the sacred iconography (figure-painting), which is the artistic representation of the new religion. The early emperors had converted Byzantium into a great museum, containing the most exquisite works taken from the palaces and temples of Greece, Italy and Asia Minor. Painters and sculptors received their inspiration from them at first; but the evolution of theology was not slow in placing an obstacle to the development of art by suppressing, from the eighth century, all sculptured representations of the Virgin and the Saints. Iconoclasm dealt it a mortal blow. Leo III., the Isaurian, signed an edict in 726 in which he ordered the destruction of all images. Except a respite of a few years, due to the tolerance of Empress Irene and



Michael Rhangabius, this period of cruel persecution lasted sixteen years. When Theodora, mother and guardian of Michael III., re-established through the Council of Constantinople the worship of images, there was a certain renaissance in art, that produced some original work. Russia could then, after her conversion to Christianity, have received a religious art of real value, inspired in a certain degree by antiquity. But gradually art drew away from Hellenic tradition, and gave itself up to a style imposed by a religion altogether devoted to dogmatic forms; and when the monk-painters emigrated into Russia from Mt. Athos, where they had taken refuge after the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, religious art degenerated into an industry, in which orthodoxy dominated all artistic tendencies. The Virgin and the Saints henceforth must be represented in strict conformity with immutable types, in order that each person might readily be recognized by the uneducated and ignorant faithful. This was especially the case when representing woman, who was portrayed tall, stiff, thin, and covered with thick garments that entirely hid her form from the liveliest imagination. The "icons" (painted pictures) were meant to inculcate morality to the rude mass given up to sin. Political interests also demanded that the outer form of religion should undergo no alteration, in order that this powerful

instrument of proselytism should always act with success.

Towards the end of the twelfth century, the Tartar rule, isolating as it did Russia from the West, and narrowing its relations to Asia, constituted a new but interesting and fruitful period in art. By a return to its source, art was vivified and developed into a splendid efflorescence, thus showing the power of its original instincts. Viollet-le-Duc has brilliantly set forth the character of this evolution in architecture: "The Tartars," he says, "found in Burmah and in the vast countries of Asia, whose puissant masters they had become, various expressions, more or less modified, of Hindoo art. This art, falling into decadence, became surcharged with decoration and presented in its details a wealth and abundance of mouldings and ornaments, that filled the Russians with delight, so that from the twelfth century the simplicity manifested in the church of the Intercession of the Holy Virgin is replaced by a more complicated exterior decoration. Then appeared those excreescences, those projections surecharged with mouldings, those swelling columns crowned with great capitals, which turn Russian art towards the Hindoo-Mongolian, without however being able to efface the first impression, either from architecture or ornamentation." Decorative painting and sculpture as well as the illumination of manuscripts show in their composition an exuberance of "*mo-*

*tifs*'' of the most picturesque fancy and daring boldness; there are inextricable intertwinings ending in figures of uncreated animals and complicated capricious forms.

Asiatic influence was so great upon Russian art that, after the throwing off of the Tartar yoke, it still dominated every other, and produced works whose originality marks a new period, the longest and most splendid of all those that can be determined precisely in the artistic history of Russia. Thus while the Lower-Empire was falling miserably into pieces under a civilization rotten to the marrow, while Byzantium was falling into the hands of the Turks, Russia, prosperous and glorious, was creating an art, superbly original and fruitful, that has produced *chefs-d'œuvre* in all its divisions—architecture, painting, metal-work, furniture, stuffs, embroideries, etc.

In the fifteenth century the accession of Ivan III. opened a new period,— that of Western influence. This sovereign called to Pskov masons who had learned their trades under German masters. The costly experience he had just had with Russian artists in the construction of the Assumption had seemed to him quite sufficient; the church, scarcely finished, was menaced with ruin. He summoned to Moscow in 1473 the Italian architect Fioraventi, who assumed in Russia the Greek name of Aristotle, and confided to him the mission of building a new cathedral under the same appella-

tion. Fioraventi chose a half-Byzantine, half-Lombardic style, with arches crowned with five domes, supported in the centre by circular pillars. By order of the same Tzar, Marco and Peter Antonio built, from 1485 to 1499, the Annunciation, square in form, with nine domes, with arches like basket handles, supported by square pillars, beyond which stretched the choir, placed on arched arcades surrounded with balustrades; the Granovitaia Palata, or Palace of Corners; and the walls and towers of the Kremlin. The architect Aleviso was commissioned to build, on the site of the church of the Grand Duke Ivan Kalita, the cathedral of the Archangel Michael and the Belvedere Palace or the Terema. In imitation of the sovereign, many private citizens gave themselves the luxury of stone houses, of artistic construction. During the reign of Vasilii Ivanovich (1505-1533), who shared his predecessor's ideas upon all matters of foreign art, new types of religious edifices made their appearance, among others the church of St. Peter the Metropolitan; the convent of Vysokopetrovsk, octagonal in form, placed upon a stone parapet with churches in form of towers.

But suddenly under Ivan the Terrible (1533-1584) a violent reaction set in against foreign influence. A Russian artist, whose name is involved in uncertainty, built in 1554 the Vassili Blajennoi, the boldest defiance that has ever been hurled against classic, Western, or Byzantine architecture.

Asia has once more resumed her preponderance, which is exuberantly manifested by the use of ornamentation at the base of the cupolas, gables above the windows, convex roofs, whose tops are covered with every kind of decoration, octagonal stories, surmounted with pyramids and lanterns, surmounted by bulb-shaped crowns, and by its exterior decoration gay with paintings or ceramics. During the latter part of the sixteenth and all of the seventeenth century Vassili Blajennoi was the model. In the Church of the Nativity of the Holy Virgin in Poutinski, in the chapel of the Virgin of Iberia, in the Kitai Gorod of Moscow and in many others the architects borrowed much that was typical in construction and decoration. Ivan the Terrible gave a great impulse to national architecture. He established in Moscow a bureau of construction, whose duty it was to examine all the works and to oversee the numerous brick manufactories, that furnished material to the masons. While so many new buildings, religious, public or private, were being constructed in stone and brick, the Muscovite wooden building was by no means abandoned, but houses great and small were being built with roofs ornamented with spires and cupolas of most original and picturesque form.

Ivan's successor, his son Feodor (1584-1598), exhibited no less taste for the arts, and contributed to their development. Painters, workers in mosaics and gold, embroiderers, jewelers, etc., multiply



and produce marvels that are now greatly admired in the museum of the Kremlin. Karamzine tells that the Greek bishop Arsene, when paying a visit to the court of the Tzar, was amazed to see the walls of the Irene palace beautified with exquisite mosaics, and inside, a quantity of enormous gold and silver vases, some in the shape of animals such as the unicorn, lion, bear and stag, and others in shape of birds such as pelicans, swans, pheasants and peacocks, of such weight that twelve men could with difficulty carry them from one place to another. These wonderful vases were manufactured in Moscow. Under this reign lacquer painting was first used upon buildings, notably upon the two palaces Balchaia Granovitaia and Zolataia Granovitaia. Its subjects were taken from national history, from nature, from allegories and moral and philosophical subjects. This innovation is characteristic of the Moscow school, which from that time became the most brilliant and fruitful. Ancient Russian painting is divided into two great schools: the school of Novgorod and that of Moscow. The first is the primitive school, its productions bearing a strong resemblance to the Byzantine style. It preserves immutable the tradition of Mt. Athos. The second soon achieved a certain independence and set itself to the study of nature and dramatic conceptions. So while Novgorod, imbued with ecclesiasticism was seeking for black backgrounds, dark flesh tints, harsh, accen-

tuated features, square ungraceful garments and deep lines, Moscow gave to the physiognomies of its personages a certain sweetness, grace, even a little worldly expression, touched more delicately the outlines, used light colors and studied the human form. The great historic or legendary compositions are the works of these artists rather than of the painters of Novgorod, less skillful in grouping figures and in inventing great subjects. The frescoes of the cathedrals of the Ascension and of the Archangel Michael in the Kremlin do them great honor. The composition of the "Last Judgment," which has been reproduced thousands of times in every dimension and degree of merit, is a magnificent, overpowering work, that recalls the "Hell" of Orcagna. There is a grandiose poetry in this colossal invention of a half-barbarous genius. Evidently the Moscow school has felt profoundly the influence of many foreign artists, Greek or Western, who at different epochs have worked in the decoration of the monuments of the Kremlin. During the rule of Theodore, metropolitan of Moscow, who was proclaimed sovereign patriarch in 1591, Moscow was partly destroyed by fire. It was rebuilt largely by German and Italian artists. In the seventeenth century, the towers were separated from the churches close to the western door, and surmounted by domes in the form of imperial crowns, the galleries and choirs

of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries being abandoned.

Although the ancient division of the sanctuary into three hemicycles was maintained, the principal example of this new method is the cathedral of the Epiphany in Kiev, built in 1693.

The accession of the Romanoff dynasty did not bring about any sensible modifications in the national architecture, although the tendencies of Alexis and Feodor were more in the direction of the new foreign ideas than towards the Russian traditional ones. Alexis had the holy books revised, founded the first theatre of Moscow, initiated commercial relations with France, and established a Greco-Latin Academy. A revolution was imminent, that would reform Russia from top to bottom, its policies, its administration, its habits and its art. During the early part of his reign, when Moscow was still the capital of the Empire, Peter the Great had edifices built, such as he had seen in Holland when he was there as a ship carpenter. The churches he had constructed are octagonal or circular in shape, with two stories and a single dome; a semicircular projection encloses the three traditional hemicycles. After the model of a Rotterdam monument, the Tower of Soukarev was erected in honor of the Streltsy regiment, commanded by the colonel of that name, who alone remained faithful to the sovereign during the uprising of 1689. When the great Tzar resolved to

transfer the government from Moscow to St. Petersburg, he summoned numerous European artists, and confided to them the construction and decoration of the new city, the modern capital of the Empire, whose frontiers his genius was constantly extending. The French were the favorites. Lefort, nephew of the first minister, had been charged with engaging from Paris artists of every profession. He chose Alexander Le Blond, an architect of the loftiest attainments, who was at once named architect in chief by the emperor; Pinault, an ornamental sculptor; the painters Caravaque and Nattier, and a band of tapestry workers from the Royal Gobelin Manufactory. Russian art was Westernized; the Asiatic and Byzantine influence disappeared. After the burning of Moscow in 1737, under the reign of Anna the churches were built after classic models, with porticoes, colonnades, cupolas, frontals, taken from Greece and Rome. The empress, widow of the duke of Courlande, and her successor, Ivan VI. of Brunswick, dismissed the French artists and replaced them with Germans, but Elizabeth restored them in her favor. When she established the Academy of Fine Arts, she chose only Parisians as professors. The artistic history of Catherine's reign seems but a chapter broken from French art. All the great artists of the time, painters, sculptors, engravers, silversmiths, designers, either were invited by her to come to St. Petersburg, or received

important commissions from her. Wallin de la Mothe built with the most exquisite taste and delicacy, in the Louis XV. style, the two little palaces of the Hermitage, that of the duke of Oldenburg, and the palace of the Academy of Fine Arts. De Wailly, the author of the Odeon and of the Great Theatre of Brussels, received munificent offers to come to St. Petersburg, which offers he declined, but at the request of the empress he opened a school for young men, pensioned by the government, and three of the most celebrated modern architects of Russia, Volkov, Bagenov, and Estarov, were his pupils; and he moreover sent numerous plans for buildings to St. Petersburg.

Clerisseau received the commands of Catherine II. for a restoration of the Roman villa for the Tsarskoe-Selo park, her favorite residence, and for a great gate of St. Petersburg, erected in commemoration of her coronation in Moscow. Italians succeeded the French, and they, too, built after the Roman, Greek and French styles, but in bad taste, which was the only change their coming made. The Revolution once over, the French were restored to favor and labored with such diligence and success that most of the monuments of Russia are their handiwork. All the edifices, whether civil or religious, not only in Moscow and St. Petersburg, but in all the other important cities of the Empire, are imitations, or copies or transpositions of the monuments of classic antiquity. But when she



adopted the forms of antique art, transmitted through the medium of Western artists, Russia, with a keen intuition of the past, returned absolutely to architectural decoration in its fullness, as it was practiced by the ancients. The artists did not merely restore the use of bas-reliefs and statues on the edifices, of porticoes and rostral columns, of friezes and frontals; they restored, too, the use of color and painting in decoration. When Alexander I. decided to have on the banks of the Neva, in imitation of the pope on the shores of the Tiber, a symbol of his religious autoocracy, he addressed himself to a French artist, Ricard de Montferand; and neither the Kremlin nor Kiev nor Novgorod furnished the model for this new work, but Rome, Athens and Paris, St. Peter's, the Pantheon, St. Genevieve and the Invalides. It was a sort of abdication of national art.

The latter part of the nineteenth century wrought a radical revolution in Russian art, which was brought back to its national originals.

The literary movement, inaugurated by Pouchkine, Lermontof, etc., was accompanied by the creation of a very serious historical school. Learned men studied Muscovite architecture with enthusiasm, and published important works on the cathedrals, churches and monasteries of Novgorod, Kiev, Rostov, Vladimir, etc. The Imperial Academy, whose entire teaching theretofore had been exclusively classic, took great interest in these

original studies and introduced them into their course on architecture.

A reaction ensued against foreign art, and when Nicholas, resuming the plans of Alexander I., decided upon building the cathedral of the Saviour at Moscow, as a thank-offering for the retreat of the French in 1812, he desired that it should be entirely national, without meddling or assistance of any sort from foreigners. A Russian artist, Tonn, prepared the plans; Russian masons built it; Russian sculptors made the statues; the Academy of Fine Arts undertook all the painting and ornamentation; the iconostases, the grilles, the doors, chandeliers, and sacred vessels are the work of silver and bronze-smiths of St. Petersburg and Moscow. The architecture of this colossal monument, which cost many millions, was taken from the Assumption of the Kremlin and from the Intercession of the Holy Virgin in Pokrova. There are the same pillars, the same doors with superimposed arches, the same long windows, the same kind of cupolas. But what a difference in the grace and harmony of their application! When one thinks of the Vassili Blajennoi, this so marvelous and exquisite a creation in spite of its defiance of all rules, of the church of Ostankino, that fairy-like fancy, where a daring hand has crowded together exquisite forms and decorations, the comparison is certainly not to the advantage of the modern edifice, in spite of the profusion of its

varied decoration, its wealth of material, and its determination to be grand and superb. Under Alexander II. the Western influence obstructs for a little this national renaissance; but finally Russia, through the force of political events and new ideas that had long been brooding within the national heart, turned resolutely about and, so to speak, shut the window that Peter the Great had opened on the West. Henceforth she means to live her own intellectual life. The types of national architecture are restored to honor; the industrials seek their inspiration from the forms and decorations of ancient works. Painting, unable to take aught from the religious schools of Moscow and Novgorod, which were hopelessly imbued in Byzantine ecclesiasticism, turns to the people and to national history, that it studied with enthusiasm and interpreted with skill. This evolution was by no means accidental, but was one form of the great movement that so entirely changed Russia during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Russia desires to impose her rule upon the nations she is constantly annexing as she takes possession of her birthplace, through the conquest of their intelligence and the assimilation of their manners. A national, clearly-defined art is then indispensable to her, for to-day she is remaking what she did a thousand years ago, with the modifications in ideas and forms imposed by the progress of modern civilization. One of the leaders in this move-

ment, the founder of the Museum at Moscow, which has been so powerful an instrument, appreciated the rôle art must play in this great Russian expansion: "The Museum desires to guide Russian industry to make exclusive use of its artistic subjects, its ancient decoration; but especially does it desire to restore the art of sacred iconography (image-making). This is of very great importance to the Russian nation, exercising as it does a most salutary influence. The labors of the Museum are accomplished only in the thought of increasing the instruction of the people, and aiding in the progress of material industry. They have been inspired by still loftier views, that may produce a moral and religious effect, and thus may aid in the historic development of the nation."

When the descendants of Rurik introduced Christianity into Russia and undertook the unification of all the Slavonic peoples, the icons (sacred images) were one of the most active means for the propagation of civil and religious ideas, by the consecration of the immutable types of the Virgin and the Saints, symbolic to the masses of the unity of religion and of the government. So it is that, in defiance of all the invasions of foreign styles, in spite of the radical attempts at Europeanization by Peter the Great and Catherine II., national art has kept its original character intact, and that its restoration has been so rapid and magnificent when a new government policy per-

mitted it. The evolution, at first restricted in architecture to the imitation of a single historical period, was not slow in becoming universal. Following in the wake of learning, it soon embraced an immense field, reaching from the decadent creations of the fifteenth century to the early monuments of ancient Asia, the source of Byzantine art. Thus the Polytechnicum, or Museum of Applied Industries, at Moscow is a type of the Muscovite palaces of the Middle Ages. It is as if India had contributed in the pilasters, lintels, and cornices her share of influence at the same time that the use of stone has permitted a superb and blooming richness of decoration that recalls the marvelous inventions of the sculptors of Delhi, Jeypore, Agra and Benares. The National Museum standing in the Red Square, between the Iversky Gate and the Kremlin, presents a second type, essentially differing from the first. The architect has chosen the principle of primitive wooden constructions, with the modifications required by the conditions of so immense an edifice and the employment of brick. It is a maze of low porticoes, thick pillars, cornices and projections of every sort, enormous gables, swelling cupolas, pyramids in broken, jagged shapes. Other edifices, such as the Volkovo Hospital in St. Petersburg, the cathedral of Vilna, and many superb churches and private mansions, bear witness to the endless variety of which the national Russian architecture is capable.



It readily adapts itself to all the exigencies of modern life, and is as suitable for palaces and cathedrals as for private mansions and villas. How proudly stands the National Museum of Moscow, on that incomparable Red Square, opposite the wonderful cathedral of Vassili Blajennoi, near the Sacred Gate of the Kremlin, Spasskoi, whose golden, many-sided spire rises so boldly into the sky alongside of the church of Our Lady of Kazan, so original in its robe of blue stucco bordered with white! I have, too, seen in the Islands, in St. Petersburg, Peterhof, Oranienbaum, and elsewhere, how graceful and picturesque, amid the deep verdure of the parks, surrounded with flowers, are these Russian chalets with their friezes, cornices and frontals, carved like lace, their slender many-colored pilasters and balustrades and their pointed gables crowned with a pine cone. The young school of Russian architecture, which counts among its artists such names as Ropett, Hartmann, Volkov, Bassine and many others of equal excellence, is taking an important position in the history of universal contemporaneous art.

The Russian school of painting is of relatively recent origin; for the icons (painted figures) form an industry rather than an art, owing to the manner in which they are made. Previous to the nineteenth century, the sovereigns and noblemen who desired pictures bought them in France or Italy. The few paintings furnished by the Academy of

Fine Arts never went beyond a copy or servile imitation of masterpieces. The founder of the Russian school is Brulov, who was sprung from a family of French origin, who came to study in France the artists of the Romantic period and especially Delaroche. Brulov's "Last Days of Pompeii" had brought him considerable fame. He had pupils who continued his historical and religious style after the fashion of the Academy. Bruni, who lived at the same time, followed the same path and became his rival. The cathedral of St. Isaac in St. Petersburg is a veritable museum of the Russian religious school. It can be thoroughly studied there, for Brulov, Bruni, Bassine, Nikitine, Sazonov, Scheboniëv, Alexéiev, Maikov, Zavialov, Chamchine and Moldavsky assisted in its decoration and many executed fine work. The paintings of Brulov and Bruni especially evidence, in spite of too much color, great knowledge of composition, and almost perfect drawing.

The Russian artists felt the effects of the naturalistic movement that stirred the French School. Chedrine first, and later Vorobiov and Avazovsky, followed boldly in the footsteps of Huet, Troyon, etc., whose works were appreciated in Russia long before they were admired in France. The museums are full of them. In the Academy of Fine Arts there is a very important series, including the collections of the Grand Duchess Marie and Count

Kouchelev. Under the influence of this movement most of the members freed themselves from the Academy, and threw themselves into the study of nature and the conservation of popular types, in which they were wonderfully successful, and rapidly acquired great originality.

Moscow and St. Petersburg are the two great centres of artistic production in Russia on account of their schools of art, which are richly endowed and number many pupils; but most of the painters, having terminated their course there, go to France, Italy or Germany to finish their studies. The government gives pensions to the honor men of the Academy, so they may be enabled to study without thought of material needs. But whether it is Paris, Rome, Dresden, Munich, Vienna, or Dusseldorf, whose masters or artistic atmosphere attract them, nothing ever impairs their individuality. Once back in Russia, that fact is clearly demonstrated, and all their work is impregnated with a vigorous nationality. There are few lands where cosmopolitan ideas and subjects, mythological legends, imaginative fancies are more rare. In the catalogue of a recent great exposition, embracing the twenty-five last years of Russian art, that was held quite recently in Moscow, where there were more than a thousand pictures, scarcely one hundred dealt with aught else than the landscapes, customs and history of Russia.

It is in landscape that Russian art gives the

greatest proof of its originality and power. Russian artists love nature, and have the instinctive sentiment of its beauties and harmonies; they study it closely with a fidelity that is almost religious. It is not under its green flowering aspect they seek it most eagerly; they know how to express its rude, wild poetry, in the vast solitudes of the steppes, under sombre autumn skies, in the midst of the snows. Chichkine paints pine forests covered with ice; Volkov, marshes and green ponds, the corner of a glade, where thick, stagnant waters lie at the foot of bare birch-trees; Sad, grey winter sunsets; Dobrovolsky, great outstretched roads; Vassiliev, the thaws with greenish shades and the vapor ascending from the damp meadows; Kouindji and Munsteohjelm depict the melancholy nights of springtime, illumined with pale moons; Prianichnikov and Kholodovsky, calm twilights, radiant mornings, and the underbrush full of mysterious shadows. The landscapes of pure invention, those where the capricious dreams of poets pile up every variation of light and color to caress the voluptuous pinks of nymphs and naiads, are unknown in the Russian school, which is absolutely naturalistic. Bogolubov made a great reputation for himself, and properly, from his views of towns bathed in sunshine, and marine scenes.

The genre painters love the people tenderly and take a passionate interest in portraying their expressive, picturesque physiognomy, and every de-

tail of costume, with a gentle pity and intimate delicacy that fill their works with an exquisite poetry. Thus it is that Orlovsky represents the peasant, Repine the trackers of the Volga and the conscripts, Maximov the poor and the village conjurers, Schverzov the moujiks, Perov and Makou-sky the workmen and small tradesmen.

Portrait painting is cultivated by numerous artists: Lehmen, Brulov and many others. National Russian history possesses an eloquent interpreter in Valerian Jacoby, whose "Wedding of Galitzin in the Ice Palace," "Catherine II. Opening the Academy of Fine Arts" and many others belonging to the emperor are superb both in conception and originality. Pleschanov, Sedov, Vereshchagin and others continue ably the examples of Brulov and Bruni in religious painting. Vereshchagin has gained an European reputation from his Oriental studies, and especially for his military work, so dramatic in conception, of the Russo-Turkish war. Chelmonski has devoted himself for many years exclusively to the portrayal of horses, with a power and originality that place him in the front rank among painters of that genre.

We are uncertain whether to class as a Russian, Monsieur Edelfelt, who has painted that exquisite portrait of Pasteur in his laboratory. He studied in Antwerp, was the pupil of Gérôme, and lives in Paris. Mademoiselle Bashkirtsev was but in



name a Russian artist; her pictures belong to the French school.

Sculpture in Russia is far from attaining the development reached by painting. The reason is to be sought in the religious and ethnographical conditions of the country. The orthodox religion has always been hostile to the carved representation of the human form in churches and monasteries. Since the eighteenth century this manner of representing the Virgin and the Saints has been forbidden. That is why all the religious monuments of Russia contain mosaics and paintings in profusion. The climate and the nature of the materials in general use for building—brick and wood—allow very little decoration in relief. It has only been within the last fifty years that the churches have been decorated with statues or that they have been placed in public places. The single notable exception was the monument of Peter the Great in St. Petersburg, made, by Catherine's order, by Falconet. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Russia counted so few sculptors of talent that, in order to execute the groups, statues, low and high-reliefs in bronze of St. Isaac's, foreign artists were employed: Lemaire, the author of the frontal of the Madeleine, and Vitali, Bouilli, and Salemann. Only two Russians could be chosen; Klodt and Laganovski.

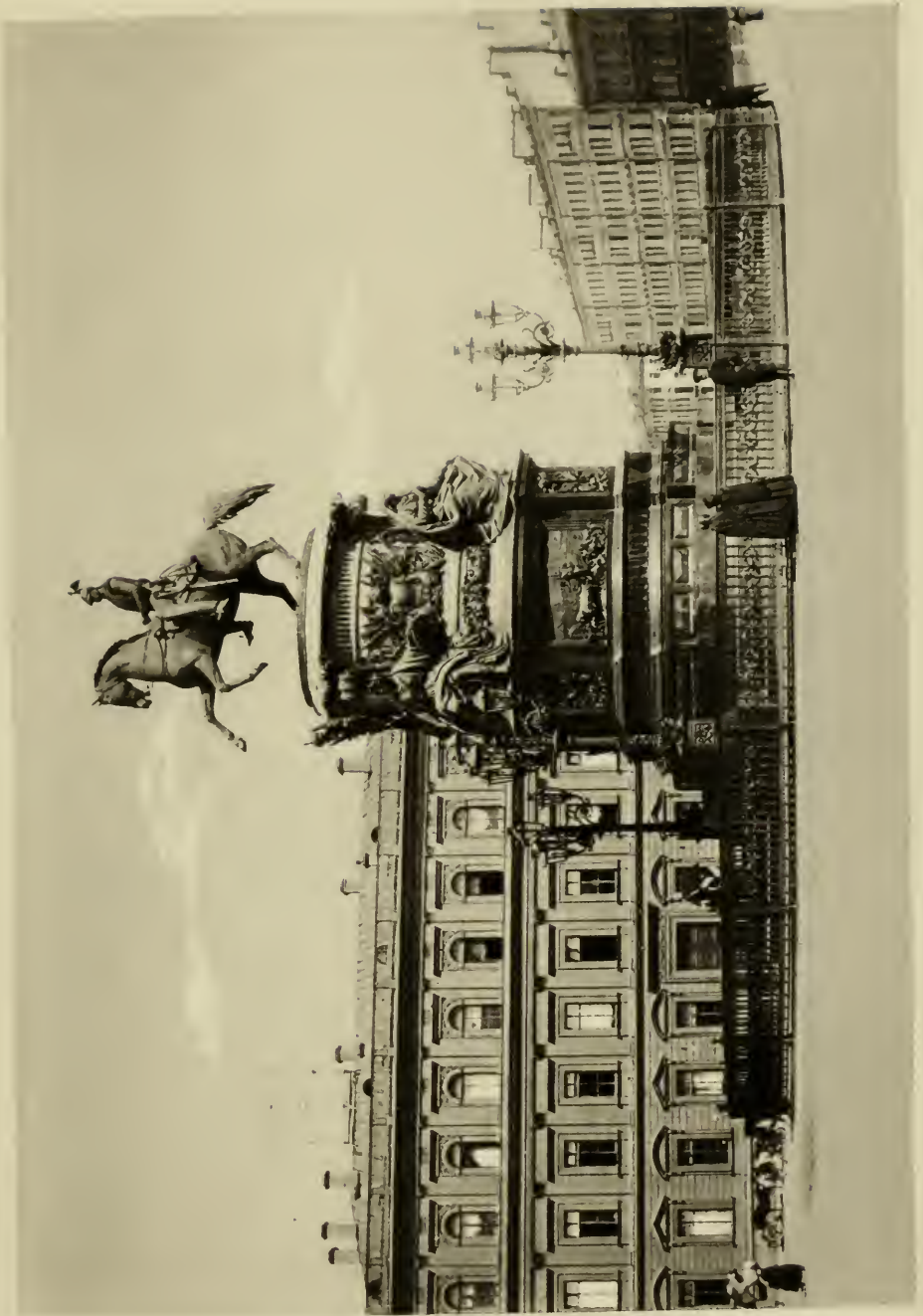
Klodt may be considered as the founder of the Russian school of sculpture. Born in St. Peters-

burg in 1805, he studied at the imperial Academy of Fine Arts and was named professor in 1838. His principal works are the monument of Nicholas at St. Petersburg, the statue of Krylov, the "Bearing the Cross" and the "Laying in the Tomb" in St. Isaac's. The monument of Nicholas is a colossal equestrian statue of the Iron Tzar, placed upon an oval pedestal and flanked by four allegorical statues of Faith, Justice, Strength and Religion, and ornamented with bas-reliefs representing the principal events of his reign. The work is not of a very high artistic value. Nicholas sits badly upon a horse that the artist has all but placed out of equilibrium in his desire to make him appear fiery. The bas-reliefs are poor; the allegorical statues alone are beautiful. The statue of Krylov has more originality. As for the works in St. Isaac's, the severity of their composition alone can be praised. At the commencement of the century another sculptor, Martoss, made for the Red Square of Moseow a monument in bronze, commemorative of the deliverance of that city, in 1612, by Prince Pojarsky and the butcher Minine of Nijni-Novgorod. This monument is composed of the two heroes, placed upon a pedestal, decorated with bas-reliefs, which represent, on the side next the Kremlin, Minine bringing his wealth to the square in Nijni-Novgorod to pay for the army of relief, and on the other side the victory of the Russians over the Poles. It is not devoid of merit.



The monument of Nicholas I., St. Petersburg, is a fine example of the work of the sculptor Peter Clodt von Jürgensburg. It is a full-length figure of the Emperor, standing on a high pedestal. The Emperor is shown in a military uniform, with a sword at his side. The monument is made of dark stone and is set in a park in St. Petersburg. The monument is a fine example of the work of the sculptor Peter Clodt von Jürgensburg. It is a full-length figure of the Emperor, standing on a high pedestal. The Emperor is shown in a military uniform, with a sword at his side. The monument is made of dark stone and is set in a park in St. Petersburg.

**Monument of Nicholas I., St. Petersburg**







About the same period (1815-1825) St. Petersburg was adorned with several sculptured works that belonged to the unfortunate art of that time. They are: on the square of the Summer Palace, a statue of Souvarov represented as the god Mars with breast and limbs bare; those of Barelay de Tolly and of Koutousov in the uniform of marshals of the beginning of the century, and the four grooms of the Anitschkov bridge in the Nevsky Prospect.

The monuments of the second half of the century possessed more character and merit. That commemorative of the millenary of Russia, erected at Nijni-Novgorod in 1862 by Mikeschine and Hartmann, gives brilliant evidence of the progress made. Its conception is both grandiose and novel. The artists chose for the monument the general shape of a bell, that of the ancient alarm-bell of Novgorod, which is in the Ivan Veliki tower of the Kremlin, which the Russians hold in great veneration. At the top is a group representing Faith, while around its swelling sides wind friezes in relief telling of the great events of Russian history. Mikeschine is a pupil of the Academy of Fine Arts of St. Petersburg, where he learned both painting and sculpture, and where he was chosen an Academician in 1865. By the same artist, working in collaboration with Grimm, is the monument of Catherine II., erected in 1873 in the garden opposite the Imperial Library of St. Petersburg, one of the greatest works of the time, to which

Russian art can justly point with pride. With great originality the authors have evolved the idea of the synthetic and picturesque representation of an entire reign, the greatest in Russian history, rich in men of lofty merit in all branches of human activity. From a circular pedestal rises the statue of the Empress, standing imposing and gracious, her sceptre in her hand. Grouped around the pedestal are the celebrated personages of her reign, in such varied attitudes as give them an intense reality. In front Potemkine is seated, with his fine face and winning smile talking with Galitzin, who is standing on his left, his hand on the hilt of his sword. Close by Roumiantsov is listening to them. Near him is Princess Dachkov, who was the director of the Academy of Sciences, and was greatly admired by Voltaire. She does not look out of place among these men of war; indeed she commanded a regiment, Catherine having named her colonel of her Guards. Counts Panine, Souvarov, Bibikov, Orlov and the poet Derjavine occupy the other side.

In 1880 Moscow erected a monument in honor of Pouchkine, whose statue by Monsieur Opekouskine is a fine work.

Antokolsky, born in Vilna in 1843, and made Academician in 1871, has gained a great reputation in Russia, which has extended into other lands, by his statue of Ivan the Terrible in the Museum of the Hermitage; by his funeral monument to the



Monument of Catherine. II., St. Petersburg







Princess Obolensky in Monte Testaccio in Rome, and by the Death of Socrates, by Christ before the People, and by the Chronieler Nestor. This artist is a frequent contributor to the Salons and Expositions of Paris. There are many other sculptors who have made a name for themselves, among others, Podozerov and Lanceray. This last excels in a particular genre that he has created: groups of Cossacks and Tcherkes, etc.

Russian ornamental sculpture is superior to its statuary, and it has found in the decoration of churches a limitless and fertile field. The smallest chapel opened in honor of the Virgin, or a saint at the corner of a street, possesses its icons, lamps of bronze, silver or enamel. The iconostases of the cathedrals are monuments of art, of inconceivable richness and beauty, where gold, silver, enamel, lapis, malachite, jasper, agate, silver-gilt, are employed in profusion. St. Isaac's and the Saviour, to limit the examples to modern edifices, contain *chefs-d'œuvre* of this kind, whose work is admirable and whose compositions often present a wonderful originality. Then, too, the industries of bronze and metal-work for religious purposes are to-day very prosperous and employ numerous workmen and artists both in St. Petersburg and in Moscow. In the decoration of churches, mosaics hold so important a place that the government has thought it advisable to erect an imperial factory for their production under the auspices of the

Academy of Fine Arts. For a certain number of years these artists have been exclusively occupied in reproducing the paintings of St. Isaac's, which were threatened with imminent destruction, and in executing panels for the cathedral of the Saviour.

During the last twenty-five years Russia has made immense strides in the industrial arts, so that she can now free herself completely from foreign assistance, which heretofore has furnished her with all the luxuries, elegancies and extravaganees of which she stood in need. France used to send enormous quantities of silks, furniture and jewelry. To-day this rich, vast field is well-nigh closed to her. Russia manufactures her own silks, both for furniture and wearing apparel. To the Exposition of 1889 there were sent brilliant specimens. The Russian cabinetmakers produce luxurious furniture of rare merit, not only in the national style, which has been most skillfully restored, but in the forms of the most beautiful periods of French art, especially in those of the Louis XIV. and XV. styles. The influence of the French art and artists of the eighteenth century still is visible, despite the German invasion and the evolutions of fashion. Metal-work and jewelry count famous and important establishments which compete successfully in the great international expositions, where their works are greatly admired for the taste of their composition and the skill of their execution. These two industries, more than any

others, have followed the movement of the national Renaissance, under the impulsion of the many imitators of its leaders, who met with the most active support at court and among the aristocracy.

At the same time that he expressed the desire that the female national costumes should be again worn at all official balls, Emperor Alexander III. gave to the jewellers and metal-workers orders for works of art executed after the models of Muscovite style, and even of more remote antiquity: after the marvels found in the mounds of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, which is taking from the very beginning of things.

Ceramics are very undeveloped in Russia. The only establishment which produces anything artistic is the Imperial Manufactory of St. Petersburg, founded in 1744, which employs about two hundred men and whose product is solely for the palaces and Imperial chateaux. They make very little else than the traditional Easter eggs, and copies of ancient pieces to complete broken services. Anything new or original is rare. But there is a house in Moscow that manufactures in biscuit popular types, some of which are really remarkable.

Another industry that touches upon the domain of art, in appearance at least, is the religious image-manufacture of Moscow and Kazan. In these two cities, and their environs, numerous factories for icons have been established. They are



painted on wood or copper and ornamented with reliefs in copper, pinchbeck, silver, silver-gilt or even gold. The system of the division of labor is carried out most thoroughly in this industry, which recruits its *personnel* from among monks and peasants. All the members of the icon, the eyes, nose, mouth, hair, hands and feet, are done by specialists, who do always the same thing, after the unvarying types of Mt. Athos transmitted to the Muscovite convents. This industry is very prosperous and extensive, for there is no orthodox who does not adorn his home with a holy image, before which lamps burn night and day. Schools and museums of industrial art have been established in great numbers in various parts of the vast Empire, with the view of furnishing designers and skilled workmen for the artistic industries.

The Russian Renaissance is yet but in its initial period, although it has already given evidences of great splendor and rich fertility. It will flourish abundantly and will produce beautiful, glowing fruits, for it is not a chance caprice, but the corollary of the social and political revolution of a people numbering a hundred million energetic and vigorous men.

SIBERIA.



## XXIX.

### SIBERIA.

#### AN EXTENDED TRIP THROUGH ITS CITIES AND INTERESTING PLACES.

BY JULES LEGRAS.

AFTER six days of tedious travel from Moscow, we reached Cheliabinsk, the frontier station between Russia and Siberia, the gate through which the great iron road penetrates into Asia. The station is small, much too small, as are most of them on this wonderful new line; and it cannot hold all the people, for at this season (March) the bulk of each traveler is doubled by enormous fur cloaks. But except for this, nothing proclaims the fact that we have left Europe. The train carries some thirty or forty travelers that you have seen get out at every important station, with whom in the course of the long six days you have struck up some sort of an acquaintance. It takes along, too, quantities of the newspapers you bought a week ago at Moscow. At Cheliabinsk you witness the same exhibition of furs and caps, of the government employees, and the same unpacking of old newspapers, as at all the principal stations along the route. You are eager to see something novel, something Asiatic or Siberian, but it is quite in vain to look or listen; everything is quite as Russian and quite as commonplace as at Riazan, Mor-

chansk, or Samara. You pass with difficulty among the heaps of furs, from which beards emerge, or run against piles of baggage heaped up in every corner, or, profiting by the absence of its owner, gratefully sink into a chair. When he returns from the telegraph office, you have piled around his place such a mass of bags and furs that he cannot recognize it. In Siberia, the first rule of life is, everyone for himself.

By dint of infinite patience, I obtain some sort of a breakfast, from a rude, untidy servant: a soup of sour cabbage in which a piece of boiled beef is floating and the invariable hashed meat that pursues one from Moscow to Vladivostok (and probably to Nagasaki, were one to take a Russian vessel) pitilessly the same at every station, in every restaurant, on every steamer, badly-cooked, often raw, with unexpected little bones and a sweetish cream sauce. Russians love passive pleasures, that cost little or no effort; breathless dashes in carriage or sleigh; tunes from enormous musical-boxes, to which they listen in the restaurants while they are eating chopped meat and stuffed patés, that, while possessed of great nutritive qualities, require next to no effort of the jaws. Oh! the monotonous cuisine of a Russian restaurant! What would I not give for a good beefsteak, requiring the full assistance of the teeth!

The town is several miles from the station, but that is nothing at all in this country. Sleighs



are in waiting, standing out black against a background of dazzling snow. In a flash one has taken possession of me, my luggage, gun and photographic apparatus. I tuck around me the sheepskins, and the long-haired little horse dashes off. After a week passed in an overheated railroad train, it is an exquisite joy only to glide swiftly through the pure air. It is thirty-five degrees below zero, but there is not a breath of wind. My breath, instantly frozen, falls in white ice over the high collar of my pelisse, but I am delightfully comfortable behind its warm folds, and my eyes alone feel the vivifying tingling of the cold. Cheliabinsk comes into view after a birch forest has been traversed, and looks charming under its decoration of snow, from which emerge the brilliantly colored domes of its churches. Thanks to the railroad, the little town has hotels, in the cleanest of which I install myself, in a little room furnished in German fashion, that is with some small claims to comfort: an iron bedstead (without sheets or coverlets, of course; everyone must carry his own bed clothes), a round-table, two or three velvet chairs, and some vases filled with artificial flowers. But one must never count on the service of domestics, for they are almost invariably lazy and ill-mannered; it is one of the annoyances that weigh most upon inhabitants of new countries.

A few years ago Cheliabinsk was only a little village, but the building of the railroad has in-

vested it with an ever-increasing importance. At one time not even a postal station, and outside of the great road of travel, it has become all at once the advance post of a colossal iron ribbon. Everything that enters Siberia and everything that leaves it by land must stop there. So it is always in an overcrowded condition. At the present moment more than 4,000 cars are piled up in hastily constructed sheds along the road. It will require several months to move such an accumulation of stock, and the Minister of Roads has just arrived to devise in person some method for relieving the congestion.

Cheliabinsk, too, is the first stopping point of the Russian emigrants who come each year in such great numbers to colonize Asia. Indeed emigration was the strongest argument put forth by Russia for the construction of the railroad, and there is an annual exodus from Russia of not less than two or three hundred thousand peasants.

The place of departure occupies a great enclosure in which snow-covered log buildings are scattered among the white birch-trees. There are dormitories, refectories, infirmaries, kitchens and bath-houses. And although at this season (March) the emigration, properly speaking, has not yet begun, and numbers but the belated ones of the last summer or those who are returning displeased with their venture, the place is full. Fancy an oblong hall around which runs a sort of sloping table

about seven feet in width. This table (nary) serves both as seat and bed to the occupants of the place. The furniture is similar to that used in prisons and lodging-houses, but it is difficult to move about owing to the baggage scattered *pêle mêle* on the floor alongside the proprietors. Outside the cold is very great, in spite of the brilliant sunshine. As one opens the door, a cloud of vapor greets one, as if from a steam bath; the heat is suffocating, and the air extremely difficult to breathe. On the "nary" half-nude figures are stretched in shocking confusion. The children wear but a little shirt falling to their knees; the men are dressed in trousers and shirt, over which, should they desire to go out, they put a heavy sheepskin cloak; the women have on a cotton chemise and a skirt. The Russian peasants adore a stifling atmosphere, like that which reigns here; when they go out, they dress warmly, but indoors they are often entirely naked. Our entrance was the signal for perfect silence, interrupted only by snores, coughing and children's cries. The men rose, and the children gazed with curiosity at us; but the women, in absolute indifference, continued uninterruptedly their occupations. On the table, on which with the coming of night everyone stretches out, lay indescribable bundles of rags, while from all this heaped-up humanity and misery there exhaled a nauseating odor that turned one giddy.

I have no intention of going into technical details upon the subject of emigration. Only fancy that all the emigrants that come into Siberia by rail are forced to stop at Cheliabinsk, and that last year there were 250,000, and you may be able to form an idea of the aspect presented by such an army of poverty, of all the sufferings, the maladies that follow in their train, and of all the dangers to which fatigue and destitution expose them.

The 19th of March found me once more in the slow Siberian train. Everyone knows how comfortable the Russian trains are, but the Siberian ones are better still. The first car behind the locomotive is composed of baggage car, kitchen and electric-light plant. I am speaking of course of the "Train de luxe" that leaves Moscow every Saturday at a quarter to nine P. M. A daily one leaves Moscow for Irkutsk, but it is very slow.

This Siberian Express is still a novelty in Russia, and people come to the station to see it start, and will tell you there is nothing so fine in the world, which is naturally very amusing to an American, but then one does not travel in order to extol the delights of one's own country, but rather to view those of others. And after all this train is really wonderful, and this Siberian road is the marvel of the age.

Well, the train has movable tables and electric reading lamps and there is a pneumatic bell to the restaurant and an electric bell for a servant. The

beds are wide and very comfortable and all one's small luggage can be comfortably stowed away overhead. There are appliances, too, for admitting fresh air, or hot water into the heating apparatus, so that altogether the Siberian Express is a very fine affair indeed, and well it may be, for before many years have passed over our heads the Siberian railway will probably be one of the great passenger routes of the world.

But it must be said the Russian railroad officials need to be educated in the management of so fine a train. One is forced to wait an interminable time for one's meals, and, owing to a lack of proper arrangement, while there is ample room for tables, people must struggle for one, which is frequently only to be gotten after exasperating delay. The bells are generally out of order, and the lavatories are used in common by both sexes. To be sure, the Russian has a naïve fancy for eating when he is hungry, without thought of looking at the clock, so that both eating and cooking are continually in process, and the servants have really very little time to sweep up and set tables or to rest and eat themselves.

Since the building of the great wall of China, the world has seen nothing of equal magnitude to the building of this great Siberian railway. It is said the first suggestion of it came from an Englishman, and that an American first offered definite plans for its construction. But the keen



foresight of Russian statesmen, proverbially the most skillful diplomats of Europe, perceived the vast benefit that must accrue to Russia, how it would increase her conquests in Asia, and enable her to cope fearlessly and to advantage with her great European foe—England—and then the enterprise was reduced to a definite project. The present Tzar wheeled the first barrow of earth and laid the first stone of the railway, at Vladivostok, May 19th, 1891, when as Tsarevich he was traveling through the Orient, and he has ever remained an enthusiastic supporter of and ardent believer in its success. It was decided to divide the whole line into seven parts, each of which was to be pushed with all possible celerity, and the result seems like the work of magic.

The great plain of Siberia presented no great difficulties, since in its immense stretch of a thousand miles there is no eminence higher than four hundred feet. The greatest difficulty lay in the fact that all supplies both of material and food must be transported from the western side of the Urals. The frequency with which streams must be crossed is such that it is estimated that the Siberian road crosses not less than thirty miles of bridges many of which have been constructed of wood that in time will be replaced with iron. About Irkutsk the country is mountainous, and there is some very stiff grading.

The entire distance from Moscow to Vladivostok

is 4,307 miles by rail and 1,467 by steamer, making a total of 5,774 miles, and requires twenty days of travel. But there is every reason to believe that the Russian government never really expected to make this its chief route, but determined that, by fair means or foul, an arrangement should be made with China that would permit it to carry the road through Manchuria, with the dual advantage of shortening her railroad and adding a new province, both rich and powerful, to the Empire. And so the ultimate route has been taken from Lake Baikal (Misovaya) across Manchuria to Mukden, whence it extends in three branches: one to Niuchwang, another to Port Arthur, and the third to Peking, though the latter is nominally built by the Russo-Chinese Banking Company.

The Manchurian road is 950 miles in length, and the total length of this colossal railway is 5,487 miles. Well may it be called the Great Siberian Railroad.

It is estimated that its total cost has exceeded five hundred million dollars. At present the rate of speed is very low, the through Siberian Express only making seventeen miles an hour, and of course the daily trains are very much slower. But in the first place the frequent stoppages help to lower the speed, and then naturally the celerity with which the road has been constructed has caused a good deal of the work to be done in a provisional manner, that would effectually pre-

vent rapid travel. Then, too, the rails used have been found to be too light, so that they are being replaced as rapidly as possible, though in a country where the severest winter reigns for eight months of the year the difficulties are enormously increased.

The cost of the journey is so little as to seem incredible. Some years ago, when it was found that people were not making sufficient use of the road, it was decided to place the cost within the reach of even the least well-off. The government issued the statement that a through ticket from Moscow to Vladivostok or Port Arthur would cost but fifty-nine dollars, and the results have been most satisfactory; indeed the amount of travel and merchandise carried has become so great that almost all the stations have grown too small, and frequent congestions delay freight for long periods. You will find very little pleasure in the first-class cars, which are largely filled with government officials, and one is never free from an irruption of these free-and-easy employees, who smoke and talk at the top of their voices, in spite of one's remonstrances, troubling themselves very little about the tenth night of an unhappy traveler, so that they reach gaily the station whither their service calls them. But in the second-class matters are quite different, and there reigns the cordiality habitual to all Russians upon whose head is not the little cap of the government official. So to the

second-class I betook myself. The car is divided into little boxes,—whose walls do not reach to the ceiling,—opening upon a common corridor, so that the car is like a great room with many corners. In an instant it assumes the aspect of a room in a hotel. Cloaks and caps are hanging from the pegs; under the seats are shoes of every possible sort and size; on the little tables drawn near the windows are candlesticks, books, boxes of bonbons, a teapot with cups and saucers, and sugar in a linen bag; on the seats are traveling-bags, and especially pillows—the indispensable companions of every Russian who travels. Soon an exchange takes place of little dainties with which each has provided himself—pieces of cheese, sausage, smoked fish, bonbons, etc.; the eight-day-old papers pass from hand to hand, tea is drunk, cigarettes lighted—and everyone talks.

But what in the world do people find to talk about in a Siberian train? Well, the conversations are very varied, at least in the second-class, but in the first I generally met with the same cold commonplaces one meets at home. In the second, people observe each other less, and are more frank and simple. Of course there are bores everywhere, and it is no more possible to escape the maker of puns or bonsmots there than elsewhere. But generally people really talk on those great questions in which Siberia is so passionately interested: emigration, the railroad, the river courses, etc.

These discussions assume a so much more animated tone since the speakers know little or nothing about the country but come there with a battery full of preconceived ideas upon each of these great questions. Then, too, the Russians are passionately enamored of pure "theories."

But occasionally you are lucky enough to meet a man who is really acquainted with the subject, and you listen with delight, while your neighbors stand in a circle at the entrance of your box. But before long you become aware that you must accept with reservations the communications and figures offered. In Russia, and especially in Siberia, even the most respectable man has often reasons, that seem to him good, for concealing at least a part of his thought, and for keeping to himself, while amusing the galleries, the real observation, the precise fact, with which he is acquainted. In these countries one meets true virtuosos in lying, who are all the more disconcerting because nothing about them would lead one to distrust them. Lying, which further West is used but as an arm of defense and even then with reluctance and rarely, plays here such a rôle as causes one to remember the proximity of China. I always meet, in the most serious and least compromising researches, with great difficulty in obtaining the truth. In this still so new land, few people appear capable of understanding that a stranger can be interested in what interests them, without mean-



ing to play them some evil trick. In no other spot in the world is so much deceit enveloped in such cordiality and amiability. The merchant deceives you about the average prices you wish to note, the contractor about the life of his workmen, the manufacturer about his goods, the ship-owner about the nature of the cargoes he carries; and last of all, the Government officials, if they are not friends or of high rank, deceive you upon every subject, either through ignorance of the desired detail or from calculations of prudence. It is necessary to exercise unceasing watchfulness over the figures that are given one, to study carefully each new informer, and in spite of every precaution to resign oneself to being duped in more than one case. So when by chance one clasps the hand of a really true, reliable man, one experiences a shock of amazement. It may then be readily understood that these railroad conversations, no matter how animated or interesting they may be, are not worthy of attention. Acquaintances of a day, who will never see one another again, the travelers indulge even more than usual in romancing. Alas! for the innocent tourist who takes down information received in this way! A great deal of the nonsense that one meets with in books about the Russians is the result of too naïve a faith in the confidences of a traveling companion.

Had I been guilty of reading novels or newspapers between Königsberg and Omsk, and espe-

cially while crossing the Urals and the Siberian Plain, I should have missed one of the most exquisite and delicate pleasures I have ever experienced. I should not have watched the snow. Ten days of slow, gentle sliding among the forests and steppes covered with spotless snow, gave me more varied impressions than would an entire winter passed in Russia. But how shall I describe the fugitive reflection? I can indeed but enumerate the details of my vision, with the sad consciousness that all its charm has evaporated!

The Russians erect on each side of the railroad an open-work palisade or fence formed of movable screens that are placed in a row during the winter. This palisade is destined to protect in a measure the road against the piling up of the snow that is whirled along by the terrible storms that sweep through the steppe. I do not know how efficacious it is during the bad weather, but generally the snow accumulates about the lower parts. It thus forms some distance from the rails an enormous white cushion, whose top is curled backwards like the crest of a wave.

The snow is as ever-changing as the sea: colors succeed each other upon its flat surface as varied, as rich, as upon the surface of the eternal deep. In the morning under the radiant sunshine of those lands, where a grey cloud is well-nigh unknown, the snow seems to sparkle with myriads of diamonds. It is as if each starry crystal enclosed a

ray of light, and every day, for two or three hours, we would glide amid an endless flashing of tiny butterflies of fire. Towards eleven o'clock all these jewels were extinguished, and as the sun assumed a new level the white surface assumed a new coloring. In the early day it is brilliant, heavenly, young, in its purity; as the day advances, its deepening blue shadows, accentuated by the smoke from the train, are so tender that the sky seems faded. But the greatest glory is reserved for evening. Over the limitless plain, where in the dim distance rise great forests against the horizon; over the steppe, where but a moment ago every object, whether man, horse, bird, or shrub, made a black spot; over the motionless stretch, where the eye wearies with whiteness, all at once the setting sun places a rose-colored kiss. The pink light gradually expands, with ever-increasing force, brought into bold relief by the steel-blue shadows and infinite undulations till it touches the sombre rim of the horizon. A last dazzling, gold-colored ray bathes palisade or wooden house with glory, then sinks and is gone. The shadows deepen, the snow becomes grey, while the rosy light that flooded it anon is but a tiny band on the cold sky, where it long illumines the twilight. Ah! the delicious, tender, beloved snow! Never can I forget the happiness each day of its contemplation afforded me!

The spotless steppe is not only enlivened by the

changing lights flitting over its surface; the marks upon it reveal to an attentive observer the life of its inhabitants. In Russia the marks along the road tell but of the monotonous coming and goings of the workmen and inhabitants, but when the Urals and the Siberian Plain are reached, animation seems to redouble along the iron road. The tell-tale snow is giving me a thousand details of the inner life of the forest. Here are the quiet, prudent, straight footprints of wolves, who have passed noiselessly, stopping ever and anon to sniff among the bushes or to stand with eager eye, erect ear and muzzle turned towards the wind. Further on are the foxes, quick and light of foot; then the tiny, star-shaped tracks of the birds; then unfamiliar footprints, a thousand little timid creatures, who have run quickly from one bush to another, and, their haven reached, are still trembling from so long a journey. And last come the hares, the numberless, silly wanderers through forest and plain. There is no end to their prints, often so numerous as to hollow out a path in the snow; gentle hares out for a walk, with neat, little jumps, close together with an occasional halt, to listen or gnaw a piece of bark; playful hares whose frolics are shown in parallel lines, suggesting a chat by moonlight; then there are terrified hares, fleeing with feints and doublings, and great bounds, when their nails leave deep marks in the snowy crust. I found written there all the noc-

turnal life of these lands, and I delighted in it as in turning over the leaves of a book of engravings.

Every hour or so the train stops in front of some pretty little wooden house with its red roof standing out from the flat desert. These are stations, though they look like playthings, that are scattered every twenty-five or thirty miles along the route, at a distance from the villages which are quite invisible but to which they belong. There is always a long stop, of twenty or thirty minutes or perhaps even three-quarters of an hour, according to the humor of the conductor or the station-master. Some stations have no buffets, but even the humblest are furnished with tea and vodka (white brandy), which is all that is needed to satisfy everybody. Most of the travelers get out at each station, only those remaining inside who are asleep or who have accepted the charge of watching over the luggage. In Siberia thefts are incessant, on the railroad as well as elsewhere. One of my traveling-companions had his boots stolen, another his rubber shoes; some one stole my Astrakhan cap, but I made such an awful racket in the other part of the mixed car, affected by the third-class, that soon my cap was found in a buffet where I had never set foot. The stations are so small that the travelers find it difficult to get accommodations. There is a perfect battle around the counter for a glass of tea or vodka, and it is almost impossible to get a seat at the table for yourself and your cloak



in order to devour "tchichi" (sour cabbage soup), or a cutlet of hashed meat, or the quarter of a goose with sugared cabbage, that a careless, dirty servant places before you. Generally the cooking is infamous and dirty, and comparatively dear. A portion of "tchichi" in which a piece of boiled meat is floating costs 25 or 30 cents; a portion of goose or a hashed cotelette 35 to 40 cents; and this in this country where a live goose is worth from 8 to 20 cents and a pound of beef from 4 to 6 cents. One quenches one's thirst with home-made beer, and that from Kourgane is very good and costs 12 cents a bottle. Wise people rarely allow a buffet to pass without taking something: here a soup, there a roast, further on both roast and soup, and at night before going to sleep one or the other.

You then must eat as rapidly as possible, without talking, almost without touching any bread; you swallow your tea or beer, and off you go to inspect your baggage. A rapid glance and calculation. Thank Heaven, they are all there! You go out again, and walk up and down alongside the train in the sunshine, and chat and smoke, while awaiting the third bell and the last whistle.

The third and fourth-class passengers rarely ask at the stations for more than a glass of vodka or some boiling water for their iron teapot, whose contents they enjoy along the route. Most of the travelers are Russian, but the morning of the second day the Kirghizes make their appearance.

They have already in these parts assumed their share in the new order of things. At first every now and then they would dash up on their indefatigable little ponies and enter into competition with the train. They had no trouble in gaining the victory of course, but the locomotive, if not swift, reached its distant goal much sooner than they could have done themselves. So they have accepted the inevitable, and take their places bravely in the third-class. There they are in their great sheepskin coats, with big red boots and flowered caps. There they sit quietly, talking little, their short legs wide apart, and never removing their coats, in spite of the heat of the car. Their broad, bronzed, tanned faces with oblique eyes and high cheek-bones shine, and their glance wanders curiously from one object to another.

What can they be thinking of? They are perfectly aware that this comfortable train, which they no longer disdain, will soon bring thousands of colonists to settle in their native steppe, yesterday free, to-day sown with spots where their flocks can no longer pasture. This train marks the uprooting of their customs, centuries old; soon their nomad life will have become impossible; the patient Russian moujiks will soon seize this territory which was theirs and is about to be taken from them. Against the horizon, where but yesterday the tombs of their ancestors were the only objects that caught the eye, will soon appear the grey isbas and the

white and green churches. Do you imagine these good Kirghizes are thinking of all this? Probably not, since they are good Mussulmans.

A long stop, then the slow crossing of a bridge 2,700 feet long over the frozen Irtych, which in the moonlight resembles an enormous white road, a few sharp whistles, an invasion of porters in white aprons, announce that the first stage of my journey has been completed and that I have reached Omsk, the capital of the Steppe.

#### OMSK.

I was lucky enough not to have visited the good town of Omsk under its classic aspect, for the first visit that I made was in the autumn, when great blasts of icy wind swept it clean, and again at the close of winter, when the cold held imprisoned the mud which turns it into a veritable sink.

I then did not suffer from its worst feature, so that I run the risk of perhaps being too partial. But do I need to make excuses if, captivated by its simple air, by long, cozy chats around the samovar and by the sight of two or three of the most charming faces I saw in Siberia, I have preserved a loving and smiling impression of this capital in miniature?

Situated at the crossing of two great commercial roads, the Trans-Siberian uniting it to Europe, and the Irtych uniting it to China, Omsk is far from

unimportant, and its future is full of promise. It is already the administrative centre, from which is governed an immense province reaching from the Urals to Turkestan. It is the residence of one of the three viceroys of Siberia, the Governor-General of the Steppe, and it possesses in addition a Governor and a cortège of functionaries, both civil and military. Its society is much more cultivated than that of most of the Siberian cities, and as the great fortunes are unable to give it its tone, as is the case in the eastern part, cultivated people form a solid nucleus that is able to influence to a certain extent public life. Of course a government city is always the seat of intrigues and dissipation and Omsk suffers from both these evils; but, on the other hand, it is too close to Europe to be exclusively engrossed with its small local interests, or to forget all else in cards and alcohol. It is a centre where people think, and some even believe in progress. Omsk is but a week from St. Petersburg, and, too, it is placed on the edge of an immense new country, which is only just opening to the influx of immigration. The duty of the government officials is to guide this huge army of colonists, as well as to protect the interests of the Kirghiz population, whose native steppe is being invaded.

In Russia, for reasons of economy, the stations are always at a great distance from the cities to which they belong; in Siberia, where the same

reason does not exist, local intrigues have brought about the same result. Omsk is two miles and a half from its station, from which it is separated by a piece of wild land that the least rain turns into a morass, where the least wind blows a tempest, and where the approach of night admonishes the prudent man to furnish himself with a revolver. The administration of the Trans-Siberian, it is said, was unable to arrive at an understanding with the city about land. The land belonged to the Cossacks, and wherever in Siberia one meets with Cossacks one is pretty sure to find oneself in face with boundless rapacity and odious insolence. The Cossacks were the first colonists of Siberia; they were installed on all the frontiers that conquest afterwards absorbed; they still occupy all the frontier posts and are charged with their defense. In return the State guarantees them the perpetual possession of some of the best lands. Proud of their exceptional position, the Cossack peasants constantly abuse it, and I know no class in Siberia so heartily and universally detested by the public. Later I shall have occasion to return to this subject, so will only say now that the Cossack owners of the land around Omsk would consent to no agreement with the engineers who were building the road. Thanks to which, not only the Trans-Siberian has its station far from the town, but (and this is infinitely worse) the great bridge by means of which it crosses the Irtych is built exclusively for its own use. A foot-



path is not even allowed, and the population is still obliged to cross the river on an inconvenient ferry-boat. It is necessary, in order to understand these things, to have had some experience of Russia.

Omsk, it must be confessed, is not a very brilliant town. Uncomfortable travelers call it a big village, because there are no public buildings, and especially because pavements are an exception or a memory. As soon as I was rested and duly installed, I started off to pay a visit to a friend. He lived at the other end of the town, and it was an inexpressible delight to glide for a half-hour in a little toy sleigh through the streets wadded with yellow snow, in sunshine so brilliant as to tint the blue horizon with pink. My coachman recognized me, and we chatted together on the way. He had been here for twenty years, exiled from his village; his wife, as was her privilege, remained at home and remarried. He told it all without emotion. It must be remembered that we are in the heart of Siberia, and, except the government officials, very few people have come here of their own accord. You cannot walk ten steps in the street without running up against an exile of some sort—an "*ex-porté*," as one of my Russian friends says with a sad smile. My coachman, who swore he was innocent, probably formerly stole horses in Russia; the landlord of my hotel is a Pole, exiled for thirty-five years; the doctor to whom I applied was mixed up in some University troubles, it was said; the

lady with whom I had so delightful a conversation in the train in regard to the economic future of Siberia had passed ten years on the confines of Asia, close to Bering Strait, in the most terrible place Russian justice possesses,—Sredne-Kolymsk. My coachman was exiled by common law; the three others are what is called “politicals.” None of them cared to allude to his exile nor to recount his wanderings: the first because exile was the penalty for a crime; the others, I fancy, from defiance or disdain. The political exiles are of course the only ones to be met with in good society. But do not imagine that the fact of being exiled constitutes a blot or is an obstacle to entering the society of the large cities. Only the threats of a too zealous police officer in some out-of-the-way corner can turn a village population against the men who they know are so gentle, upright, poor and good. In the towns nothing of the sort could ever happen, and more than one of these exiles for the cause of liberalism becomes a personage of importance. Persons high in authority have assured me that the country owes much to their activity. Forced to reside in half-barbarous centres, they have introduced something of Western civilization. They have become hotel-keepers, clock-makers, physicians, clerks, contractors, etc. A certain number of them have first passed through prison, and others, still more unfortunate, been sent to remote villages. Gradually they have obtained permission

to approach the towns, and now they are utilizing, as best they may, the remains of their ruined lives. And nothing, I repeat, but their uprightness and integrity distinguishes them from the rest of the cultivated people. Far from pointing at them the finger of scorn, everyone appreciates them and gives them employment when he can.

Since I am talking of political exiles, I should like to repeat a conversation that I had one October evening last year with several of them on the subject of their exile, although it is a subject upon which I do not care often to touch. Yielding to my entreaties that day, they all determined to answer my questions. D——, the first to speak, had been transported one fine day with a friend, without knowing the reason, into a little hamlet in the heart of the forests of Northern Russia, but neither he nor his companions in exile could receive permission to give lessons. The exercise of teaching is rigorously forbidden to those who are called “the politicals.” Finally his friend became a shoemaker; while he himself, having at one time in leisure moments amused himself by learning the trade of locksmith, joined two locksmiths from St. Petersburg, themselves also exiled in this hole of a place, and together they opened a shop, where at first they undertook to repair, but finally to make guns, locks, samovars, even watches. Thanks to this trade, which still left him a few hours for reading, D—— made a hundred francs a month, a veri-

table fortune. Some time later, having made the acquaintance of a chemist, equally of course exiled, he opened with him a rudimentary soap manufactory. Unfortunately the chemist was lacking in experience and practical application. In the midst of these misfortunes, our friends came across a Tartar, who taught them certain secrets learned by him in a great soap factory in Kazan, his native city. The soap was so good that the factory, greatly enlarged, exists to-day after many years. "Unfortunately," concluded D——, "it does not belong to me any more."

Another of my friends, a great brown man, A——, had been sent to a Siberian village in the basin of the Yenisei. Two others accompanied him, who were wheelwrights; he himself was a student of medicine. The three all together had twenty dollars in money and ten in debts. Arrived towards the end of September, they employed the month of October in building an isba. In spite of the most rigid economies, they had to pay ten dollars for the wood, and ten to the carpenters. The merchants of the village gave them credit. Once in their house, they set to work. Most of the income was furnished by A——. A student of medicine in his third year, he did his best to help the sick who flocked to him, for, in opinion of the poor creatures of these forsaken countries, every civilized man is a doctor. He would not accept money for his visits, but left his patients

to give what they thought best. Although these peasants were very poor, their gifts sufficed to more than support the three friends. By the end of November they had paid their debts. But this prosperity was not of long duration. A—— was forced to abandon the use of his profession, for lack of ability to overcome the ignorance of his clients. It was impossible to persuade them that health was not bought from the doctor, as sugar from the grocer. The peasants wanted to strike bargains, to pay so much to be cured at such a time and in such a fashion! Then, too, the sick refused to follow the hygienic prescriptions. The use of cold water, for example, could never be ordered. In the end, A—— went to work with a cabinetmaker. To-day he is free.

A third speaker, whose brilliant eyes shone behind his glasses, took up the story in his turn. It was the good T——. “The history of my adventures in Siberia are less gay,” said he, “than those that you have just heard. Our friends have not spoken of the horrors of their isolation, nor the tortures of their journey. What indeed is the use of talking about them? Read Goltz’s book, ‘The World of the Condemned,’ and you will know many of the sufferings we have endured, they and I. But since you are not eager to hear sensational stories, but only to understand Siberia, I will not linger longer on that subject. I was very young when I was sent here, and had many illusions, and



they helped me to endure everything. Perhaps one of the incidents of our slow journey may interest you. With us, as we walked towards the boundaries of Asia, was an old Jew, an excellent man, who spoke neither Russian, Polish, nor German, but only a Hebrew patios. He was as peaceable as he was indifferent to any form of government, still he walked with us, 'the politicals.' And this is the reason. In a little town of Southwestern Russia, this man kept a sort of little inn, which was frequented from motives of economy by very poor people. One day a search was made of his house, and amongst others a letter was found addressed under his name to one of his customers. The letter was compromising. Our man was arrested without chance of explanation, and sent off. As for myself, I had about six dollars a month to live upon in a little out-of-the-way village, where barley was worth twenty francs. I had to learn how to make bread. One of my friends and myself studied it from a little school book, for we were profoundly ignorant of the rudiments of the bakery. We made use of a sort of rye flour. The peasants around us baked their bread each day; in order to have more time for our studies, we attempted to bake but twice a week, but the bread when stale was so indigestible and the flour so coarse it gave us dysentery. We lived down there in the most absolute isolation, in the midst of whites more ignorant than savages. But grad-

ually they became accustomed to us. We used to read to them Turgenieff's 'Stories of a Hunter,' and when the book was finished we had to begin again. It was a great success," concluded T—— with a smile full of sadness.

I am far from desiring to give sensational stories, but these will serve to explain the formation of the most cultivated and honorable portion of Siberian society. A quarter of a century has passed away since they first began to suffer, and now they are men with families, and a position, among the most respected citizens of the towns in which they reside. They worked hard in a hard country; now they scatter around them the good seed of instruction, together with the noblest examples of civic virtues in a corrupt society, which is gradually being modified under their influence. These stories are not indeed mere anecdotes; they are typical facts.

It was a great delight to meet once more my friend Ivan Kravisof amid the peaceful surroundings of his hospitable home, over which his young wife presided with the gentle grace of certain Russian women. We had made together, the previous autumn, an expedition into the Kirghiz Steppe, to examine the condition of the colonists. We had slept side by side on a heap of hay in the isbas, heated to suffocation; had passed the night stretched on the ground in the open with the thermometer ten degrees below; had shared the vermin

common to both old and new inhabitants of the great steppe; since then we had become friends. He is an engineer and an eager worker with a heart full of frankness and simplicity. His duties consist in sinking artesian wells in the steppe, to furnish water to the newly-established villages of colonists. This enormous Siberia is everywhere lacking in equipoise: in certain parts it possesses great broad streams and immense forests; in others there is no water at all, or at least it is salt. It is often necessary to make five or six soundings in the steppe before finding sweet water. Then the well must be dug, strengthened and covered, after which the colonists may come. But this work, apparently so simple, is singularly difficult, when it must be accomplished at diverse points of the grassy desert, and is complicated by a winter lasting seven months. Sometimes when the work is all finished the water suddenly changes, becoming bitter or salt—and all the work has to be begun over again with great expense and enormous fatigue. Should the colonists be already installed, their flocks perish if good water is not given them promptly.

Every morning the thermometer marks ten degrees, but everyone assures us the winter is over (March 24th). During the day it grows warmer, only to turn cold when the sun sets. There is not a cloud in the sky; sunshine and a blue and rosy sky are the usual beauty of winter days in these

cold lands. And one can never weary of admiring, each day, exquisite changes of the sky at twilight.

If one wishes to form an idea of the people of Omsk, it is almost useless to wander about its straight streets, but rather to pass an hour on the Orme bridge, which unites the two parts of the little town. It was my favorite resort whenever I had a free afternoon. Nor was I the only *flâneur*, for every nook and corner was full of them, their caps drawn over their ears, their collars turned up over their caps. Everyone who has anything to do in town must pass here, and since by law horses are not allowed out of a walk you have ample leisure to examine the passers-by. Private and hired sleighs succeed each other, and their occupants are so wrapped up that only their faces are to be seen. It is a constant succession of furs, and when the least wind blows, the men's beards are covered with icicles. Here the Kirghizes pass slowly along, on their way home to their little winter mud huts. They are either standing in their big sleighs or are on horseback. Their clothing consists of a short sheepskin cloak, leggings, and high boots of red leather, trimmed with white sheepskin. On their heads is the traditional little cap, lined also with sheepskin and covered on the outside with flowered white calico. Under this white headgear their bronzed faces and white eyes would produce a sinister effect, did one not know how gentle these

poor nomads really are. Some are driving long-haired camels, who advance slowly over the silent snow, the bells at their necks tinkling as they draw without effort a sleigh which, behind their great, bare, dry feet, seems like a plaything. Next come a group of peasants; they are newly come colonists, who are established within reach of town. There are many Germans among them, who are readily recognizable, for the type has been preserved pure, in spite of their residence of more than a century in Russia, and they can always be designated under their greasy Russian costume. Finally some soldiers march rapidly by. The cold has reddened their noses, while their ears are protected by the "baehlyk," a sort of yellow cloth hood, pointed like a carnival bonnet. A policeman walks up and down, his great sabre strapped across his shoulders, and he looks very peaceable, sleepy and a little stupid. Under the bridge, skaters are executing their evolutions. It all is enclosed within a frame of dazzling snow, while above arches a radiant sky, whose azure is delicately softened and veiled by the frost.

In the evening I was invited to take supper with a young officer and to enjoy a wonderful foreign dish. It was dark as pitch, and only the reverberation of the snow indicated the direction of the streets, absolutely dark themselves, where only an occasional sleigh passed by. At last we somehow reached the house, and entering unceremoniously



through the court we crossed complicated corridors and finally reached a door leading into the dining-room, which is a great, bare room, whose only furniture consists of a table, a few chairs, a little bureau and a comic toy which is shown me as we await the appearance of our host. At last he enters. His coat is unbuttoned, his cheeks flushed from the fire; he comes from the kitchen carrying in his hands, with the aid of a napkin, a copper vessel, in which reposes this wonderful dish that has come straight from Central Asia and the Afghanistan frontier and is called a "kaouardak." It is made from pieces of mutton, potatoes and carrots cooked and served in melted mutton fat, and is positively delicious with the thermometer away down outside, especially when a little "hole" has been made for it by two or three glasses of vodka. A kaouardak and a pilaf of lamb make up the menu, and the conversation is very animated. The young lieutenant paints for me the terrible emptiness of garrison life on the frontiers of Siberia, in isolated posts, where there are neither books, comfortable lodgings, occupation nor society, and he emphasizes the terrible condition of a lieutenant who is receiving triple pay, without the faintest means of spending the fourth of it. And the evening, which perhaps was rather *savage* and Asiatic, terminated by an amiable and comprehensive talk upon literature. And while I am on the subject I must describe a dinner given me by

another friend. Upon this occasion he had devastated his vegetable garden, which consisted of some onions grown in the pots of the green plants that make an indispensable part of every Russian household. These onions then had been chopped fine and mixed with the herring, with which the meal opened. The soup was made from the heads of frozen sturgeons, and was excellent; next was served boiled horse, one of the favorite dishes of our neighbors, the Kirghizes, who kill a colt as we do a calf. This young horse meat is wholesome and succulent and the yellow fat around it is delicious. Next there appeared roast duck, followed by a plate of buckwheat. The dessert was composed of curdled milk and dry cakes. But with the gaiety and good humor that seasoned the feast there mingled on my part a feeling of sadness, for I was leaving that evening for Barnaoul, since I must needs hasten my journey to the Altai before the thaw should render the roads impassable.

After a long night in the train, I reach at sunrise the left bank of the Obi, where I am to take horses to reach Barnaoul. Indescribable confusion reigns in the little station; every one is striving to get something to eat before taking the train on the other side of the frozen river. I soon find a coachman who will take me to the first relay station in his peasant sleigh, a simple wooden box with mats upon which I throw myself *pêle mêle* with my baggage, and off we set in the

radiant morning. I am never weary of admiring the effects of light in this land. Those who have never seen a sunrise over the snow-clad steppe can form no idea of the wild enthusiasm hidden under these inadequate words. In these lands, where the sky is well-nigh as cloudless as in the tropics, but assumes soft, tender tints, the light is diffused over every object. There are no deep shadows, but only shades and transparencies. Then, too, the gauzy vapors that float over the azure sky impart to the sunshine colors of such exquisite delicacy that the eye cannot separate them. It is then an inexpressible delight to glide, warmly clad, over these icy roads that shine like mirrors. We soon reached the river, and dashed full speed on the ice. The Obi is enormous here, being 5,000 feet wide, but under its crust of snow it is only to be distinguished from the plain by the sombre forests covering its banks. A track winds over the river, among the blocks of ice, that are at times piled into a gigantic wall. Over this track glide slowly the peasants' sleighs, carrying merchandise to Southern Siberia. There are fifty or a hundred sleighs, in a long file, standing out in bold relief against the snow; along they go with measured step, following the meanderings of the track, with a sort of sad resignation, and the long string would scarcely seem alive did not the horses constantly shake their heads. On reaching one of these files my coachman halloed to the

*arrière-gardes*, who were asleep inside their warm pelisses, and the cry ran from group to group: "Stop!" If the track were broad, and the drivers complaisant, they would draw to one side. But generally my horses were obliged to plunge into the untrodden snow, up to their middles. Then the oaths would fly thick and fast, and my coachman, a young peasant of sympathetic mien, would burst into peals of laughter after he had hurled a volley of those awful Siberian oaths behind him, which was his revenge for the delay and the snow-bath. Twice the sleigh was overturned, and—Great Heaven! my photographic plates!

At the first station house, at Berzka, I left the ice of the river and hired a sleigh for the rest of the trip. It was a monumental affair: a wooden box, extremely heavy and solid, placed on two runners, and half covered by a stiff hood. Having no further need of changing at each station, I fixed myself comfortably. First, in the bottom of the sleigh (there are no seats in Siberian vehicles) I spread a layer of hay, and over that two covers. I have on a wadded coat covered with a sheepskin pelisse, on my feet a pair of woolen stockings, and two pairs of Caucasian "pimy," a soft boot made of goat's skin, both impermeable and warm. Once seated, or rather stretched out, I cover myself to the chin with a woolen plaid, over that a fur robe, and a water-proof cloth, on which I lay the apron. My luggage, piled all around,



helps to support me. In this equipage I shall be quite indifferent to any number of degrees of cold that we shall certainly have at night; it may even go to twenty, in which case I shall exchange my pelisse for a "Dakha" made of reindeer skin and fur sewed together. But fortunately this inconvenience was not necessary. Have I not been told constantly for eight days that winter is over? The distance between the stations is about twenty-five or thirty miles, but while they change horses I leave my sleigh rarely, contenting myself with the glass of milk and piece of black bread brought me. But towards two o'clock I stopped in a large village and ordered a samovar and some eggs. An old mamma, indolent and fat, kept the post-house; and with her was a daughter and a lad of fifteen, who was shaken with fever. I gave the poor fellow some doses of quinine, and set to work to prepare my eggs. The young girl, who assisted in the operation, was as ugly as only a Siberian can be, but she had nice frank eyes and a merry laugh. I broke the eggs, put in a little milk and began to beat. It was a great event, and even the coachman came in to watch it. The young peasant took charge of the pan. "Wilt taste?" I said when it was done. "Oh no, it is fast day, we cannot eat eggs:" with a gay laugh.

Barnaoul is a little town, built on sand hills, of most unattractive exterior, and is the administrative centre of the region of the Altai, a chain of



mountains that forms a portion of the Sibero-Chinese frontier and has given its name to the province that contains the most important of the "Cabinet Lands." In Siberia those lands are termed Cabinet Lands that belong to the personal domain of the Emperor. The Tzar is in fact one of the two proprietors who divide Siberia, the other being the Russian State. With a few exceptions these two powers possess the immense territory of Russian Asia. Of course the Tzars have reserved the best part for themselves, and the good corners of Siberia are called "Cabinet Lands." The Tzar administers them himself and receives the revenues, though naturally he is assisted in this care by a large number of greedy "tehinovniks" (government officials) who live in great style at his expense. This province of Altai is a very important part of Siberia. Extremely fertile, enjoying a milder and more even climate than that of the Northern Governments, it is less subject to loss of crops. Indeed it regulates to a certain extent the price of grain in the rest of Siberia, often preventing partial famines. It is watered by the immense Obi River, so that the charge for exporting grain even as far as Tomsk is very low. Then, too, grain is not the sole product the province of the Altai can send to the rest of Siberia, but meat, salt, minerals and coal must be included. Of course I could not exclude such a province from my investigations. But alas! my search was very

short! Scarcely had I taken possession of a room in the inn of the place, when the temperature began to rise. In the upper town the snow and ice were melting, and torrents of muddy water flowed down the hills. The lower town was simply a black pond. The thaw, the terrible "Razpoutitza" of the Russians, was at our doors. This name is used to designate the lapse of time that must pass from the moment when the melted snow refuses passage to the sleighs and that in which the earth, at first liquefied by the spring, has resumed consistency enough to support the weight of carriage wheels. During this period the place where you happen to be becomes your prison; it would be both useless and foolish to attempt to move during the Razpoutitza. And the forced detention may last a fortnight or three weeks. I was in despair at the thought of losing so much time at Barnaoul, but truth to tell I have found few towns in Siberia so agreeable as Barnaoul. Like Omsk, it is an administrative centre, so that a number of cultivated people are found here, who form a delightful society. This is one of the greatest advantages of this little town, and I know no corner of Siberia where good breeding and culture unite to greater advantage. Chemists, agriculturists, foresters, engineers, physicians, statisticians, functionaries of the State or Cabinet, unite modestly to discuss or found some establishment of public utility: a school, workshop, infirmary, library, or museum.

They were eagerly interested in events in Europe, and gave me much information on local matters, on the interrupted immigration, the difficult question of proper fertilizers for Siberia, the nature of the soil and the production of grain, popular lectures and medical assistance, on the forests and silver mines, the iron and coal mines that have just been ceded by the government to a great company—in a word upon all the vital questions of this rich province. They gave me also the history of the last census. I was already aware that in Russia it had caused grave disorders, and that near Kazan an employe had been killed by the crowd. It had also provoked a disturbance on the Siberian steppe, the details of which I had learned at Omsk. On the census leaves distributed among the Kirghizes, and translated into their language, it had been forgotten to omit the question relative to military service. The nomads, who are exempt from this service, received the notion that an attempt was being made upon their rights, already injured by the edict forbidding them to go on pilgrimage that year to Mecca, on account of the pest. It was necessary to distribute new sheets among them. In the Altai, the most serious difficulties have been caused by the presence of a strong contingent of "Old Believers." This sect does not admit the ministry of priests. Its partisans are cited as models of temperance and industry, but naturally the orthodox clergy is never weary of persecuting











them. The census offered them a new opportunity. The Old Believers marry legally without priests by a simple declaration to the police. The priests took advantage of this to declare on the census sheets that their wives were concubines and their children illegitimate. Of course the result was complaints and official intervention. I have told these little stories simply as an indication of the confusion of races and religions that Siberia presents and to show how much tact and flexibility the Russian Government possesses to advance in anything like an equal measure this confused mass.

Four charming days passed in hurried visits through muddy water, in talks gay or serious, in animated discussion amid a hospitable circle. And I am off at seven o'clock in the evening, in the hope that the frost will soon harden the route. The servants tuck me in my sleigh, where I stifle, and five horses are brought out, since the driver hopes thus to make his way by dragging me over the bare earth. It is a glorious evening, with shades of twilight unknown to our lands. The evening star shines so large and luminous and seems so near that I shiver as I watch it. We pass through bare gorges, solitary at this hour, through clusters of willows deprived of their icy covering, and reach the river, the ice of which is already half a foot under water. At last, in three hours after the first change of horses, I breathe freely. Henceforward I am assured there will be snow enough

to carry me along, and I fall asleep without troubling myself about the dangers of the Siberian forest.

I awake in the morning refreshed and rested, ready to enjoy the most marvelous effects of snow I have ever witnessed. What a delight to behold are these tender lights, these simple blended colors, this rose and blue and white scattered by the cold, till it floats like a delicate film against the horizon.

Suddenly the sun appears, and each blade seems possessed of life. In the distance the great white birch trees sheathed in ice stand out like enormous white bouquets against the dark background. A little further they seem like giant communicants that with bent heads march towards the rose splendors of the horizon. The bushes we brush past are white too; the white partridges also stand quite without fear, motionless on the sides of the road, and seem also to have put on the livery and to join me in the enjoyment of this white, sun-illumined peace. The sunshine allowed me for a long while to delight in these simple wonders, which he too contemplated curiously; then he melted them and my dream disappeared.

I reached the village of Krivochokovo, where the railroad crosses the Obi, and since the tri-weekly train does not leave till day after to-morrow I have a day in which to saunter about.

The Obi bridge is the third great bridge of the Trans-Siberian line, the first being at Kourgane over

the Tobol, and the second at Omsk over the Irtych. This one is very fine, and measures 755 metres (2,300 feet), and on its trial proved itself much stronger than had been at all expected. I had a letter to a notable of the place, and, thanks to the cordial hospitality and grace of an animated and delightful conversation, I passed a charming day. They had detained me till ten o'clock in the evening, by repeating: "Why are you in a hurry?" and I was on the point of making my departure, when I heard the mistress of the house say in a low voice to her husband: "Shall I send for the carriage?" To which he replied "No." At this word a shiver passed over me. Doubtless this host, who had made me send away the coachman, whom I had wished to keep all day, was unaware of what his refusal meant, else would he surely have said to me: "Here is a sofa, sleep here." Assuredly he did not think, but I did, and felt something that resembled the sentiments of P. L. Courier when he heard the terrible: "Shall we kill them both?"

My situation was perilous, but what could I do? At the end of a few moments I rose to take my leave, and having asked if I could get a cab, was met with the reply that at this hour none could be obtained. Then I left. The violence of the snow had ceased, and the thaw, that had been momentarily arrested, had set in once more. What should I do? Krivochokovo is a village enjoying so admirable a position that since the opening of the



railroad its population in three years has passed from 600 to 11,500 souls. Unfortunately these souls constitute the very flotsam and jetsam of Siberian civilization. The village has neither streets nor lights nor police. It is considered a cut-throat spot, where honest people shut themselves tight at night. I had neither stick nor revolver, and I had on me a large sum of money, in addition to which my sheepskin pelisse embarrassed my steps. And finally I was ignorant of the exact position of my inn, situated a mile and a half away in a tangled coppice. First of all, dogs threw themselves on me. I shook them off and started as best I could, the snow having effaced all trace of the road, amid a whirlwind of thoughts—indignation, anger against my host, regret for my thoughtlessness, resolutions for the future—if I ever got out of this—then fear, and finally resignation to the worst.

The night was inky black. Amid the irregular clusters of houses there was no regular street by which I could guide myself. I remembered that I had crossed in the carriage a ravine quite deep in water. How in the world should I get across it now? I attempted to do so and stood hesitating on the brink, which I was feeling with my hands, when I heard a “Who is that?” It was the watchman of a pile of wood who hailed me. He assisted me to cross safely, then, breaking off a large branch that would do as a stick, he said: “You are wrong,

barine, to go about this way without a revolver; the place is not safe. May God protect you." Need I detail my sufferings, my gropings and false steps? I hesitated in the darkness, ran against piles of turf, or sank into deep ponds thinly covered with ice, stifling in my pelisse that I was obliged to hold with one hand since it did not button. If I approached the few houses the watchman sounded his rattle menacingly, and dogs flew at me savagely. I called several times, but received no reply. Fearing to attract the attention of some evil-doer by my cries, I was silent. Suddenly I found myself in a coppice, but far from the inn, and groped carefully forward, then turned back. Again the watchman sounded his rattle and the dogs barked, but in despair I hallooed at the top of my lungs. Finally he heard me. At first he shouted from a distance, but finally, convinced of the purity of my intentions, he approached. With difficulty I induced him to accompany me. As we walked along, he informed me that the evening before a woman, who was staying at my hotel, having started early to catch a train, had been assassinated about ten paces from there, and he added: "You are very imprudent, sir." Finally I espied the inn. It took a long time to wake them up and make them open the door, but I finally got inside and reached my room, bathed in perspiration, trembling with fever and fatigue, and fell down helplessly, only conscious of having

passed an hour and a half whose remembrance will remain with me long. As for my so amiable host, whose hospitality might have cost me my life, he will doubtless never know of this adventure. Two days later I was in Tomsk.

#### TOMSK.

Tomsk is not on the direct line of the Trans-Siberian. The engineers charged with tracing it played the principal city of Siberia an evil trick in giving it only a branch line. Gossip has it that it was the result of a misunderstanding. This branch road is not more than forty miles long, but since it takes an entire night to traverse it one has ample time to execerate it. I arrived early in the morning at a tiny station, built of course in the middle of the fields, several versts from the town. There were cabmen who contended at the top of their voices for the passengers. One got hold of me, and we went jolting along the river bank. During the day the thaw gave evidence of its arrival, though carriages and sleighs struggled along in the slippery mud. Late in the afternoon I mounted the steep hill upon which is Millionnaya Street; it was rather a difficult matter in the melting ice and filth of every sort and odor, that the thaw was bringing to the surface. From the top the view of the town was delightful, in spite of the lowering sky, piercing wind and scanty flakes of

snow. Before me lies the broad river clothed all in white; against the horizon the mysterious, sad forests, powdered with snow. All around are flat roofs, green or grey, with monotonous grey houses, presenting that melancholy common to all Russian towns seen from a little distance. Close by, a church with pink walls and green cupolas stands out gaily amid all the greyness.

The town presents a good appearance in spite of the universal filth the snow can no longer conceal. The broad streets are lighted with electricity, while the copper telephone wires hang down so low they can be touched by the hand. A few large brick houses, a great white cathedral with a sky-blue dome, a market full of life, and crowds in the streets at certain hours, are the things that struck me first, and seemed to indicate prosperity and life. Tomsk is in fact an important centre, much more alive than Irkoutsk, the ancient capital, which has rather fallen behind. Great hopes are based upon the new University and the considerable nucleus of government officials that have been drawn here by the opening of the railroad, though as yet the materialism of shop-keepers controls. The native coarseness of Siberian tastes and manners must be taken into consideration together with the unwillingness of the Government to see anything like a centre of liberalism develop so near the frontier. Tomsk feels the effects of the struggle for supremacy, between intellectual, official and commercial

elements, for the conduct of affairs—as well as its difficult geographical situation. It is about thirty miles distant from its river, the Obi, and also from the Trans-Siberian. The Tom is but an affluent of the big river, and its railroad is only a branch from the chief line. Little favored by Nature, and being neither entirely commercial nor entirely intellectual, the city suffers greatly from its ambiguous position.

The warmer temperature transforms the roadways. The upper snow, which is reduced to a grey powder, is disappearing, leaving exposed a thick layer of all that, for seven months, thousands of horses have dropped, and on all sides little rivulets are running and cascades gurgling.

The students of the University gave last night a charity concert for the benefit of the primary department, and I went. The theatre belongs to a private individual who built it on a fine square, after being, as he fancied, furnished with every necessary authorization. Unfortunately the archbishop perceived one day that, without being directly opposite, the cathedral and the theatre were within sight of one another. Was it possible to tolerate so demoniacal an impiety? A theatre six hundred paces from a cathedral! Hide your faces, you pious Siberians! No, never can such a place of perdition be allowed alongside a temple. Russians are not bigots; Siberians are still less so. So the archbishop's anger provoked a mild merriment.



Nevertheless an archbishop is a great personage, and must be obeyed. To tear down the theatre would have been hard indeed; nor did the prelate desire to go so far as to demand it. The owner hastened to erect a great building between the cathedral and the theatre so that they would be entirely separated and religion respected.

But to what use should the proprietor (a wealthy merchant) put his building? Stores? There were plenty already, and then, too, the place was not favorable. Dwelling-houses? It is very close to the authorities. Why not a hotel? So the hotel is authorized and since it is on a beautiful square it will probably succeed, and Monseigneur is to be sincerely congratulated upon his victory. A hotel is not, to be sure, like a theatre, a place excommunicated by the canons, but it is exceedingly amusing to anyone acquainted with Siberian hotels to see one being built in the face of the church, these inns being by no means scrupulous, as, witness the full exercise of at least four or five of the capital sins—without counting gormandizing.

Tomsk then kept its theatre. The auditorium is large, white and furnished with chairs, whose price advances as they approach the stage. The electric lights are so-so, but they are there. It made me think of the theatre at Archangel, only there the light was furnished by fifty candles, and was so delicate one felt as if at home. The curtain was painted in what was meant to be allegorical

subjects. In the centre stands an enormous woman, while angels fly all around her. These angels are of most robust proportions and one who is skipping about clad in naught but innocence is too comical for anything.

The students open the concert. Their leader of orchestra, very youthful, very serious, gloved in white, and buttoned tightly in his uniform, beats time with immense conviction, although a little embarrassed by the presence of the Governor. After the students come the amateur artists, belonging to the best society of the town, all together forming a simple, pleasant ensemble.

One day a friend came to take me in his carriage through abominable roads, where we ran the risk of overturning twenty times, to visit the "Point of emigration," that is, the barracks that serve as the first refuge for the emigrants. The valley of the Tom forms a depression in which Tomsk is built. The river bank is much higher and there is the port. The river is navigable for steamers only during the spring floods. A month after the great thaw people can no longer embark from the town, but must go to the port. A Russian or Siberian city would be ashamed, I think, if it were to have within its boundaries either railroad station or steamboat wharf. A railroad has just been built to join the port with the station. Since the fields through which it runs are already covered with water, an embankment has been built of in-

terlaced branches and stones. The breaking up is expected every day, and yet the workmen are paddling about taking their time. The station is raised up several yards, in the middle of this confusion of wood, materials, offices and barracks, which in a few days will be inundated.

It is scarcely necessary to relate in detail my visit to the emigrants' quarters who are awaiting the breaking up of the ice and the advent of the steamboats. It is but the same story of ragged misery, the same odor peculiar to the Russian emigrant. Perhaps these looked even more than usually wretched since they had lost the tiny ray of illusion that was supporting their brethren. The whole impression was lugubrious in the extreme.

It was growing decidedly warmer, and the thaw, which is nothing short of a flood, was increasing each day. The streets have assumed the aspect of a river of chocolate colored mud, where the horses' feet sink to the fetlock. The smells, that at first were individual, so to speak, as each odorous unity was freed from its coat of ice, are now united in one great whole of which the result is too terrible to talk. In the upper town the spring floods were rushing down. And very curiously, although but two months previous in Nice I had enjoyed the spring, it filled me here with as much delight as if I had been waiting for it since last October. When I felt the soft air and saw the earth from under

the snow, the waters run that I had beheld imprisoned and heard all those things babble that had been dead, I was seized with inexpressible delight. The spring permeated my entire being and gave me strength to support with patience the *ennui* of the horrible time we must remain indoors while it accomplished its work.

I was fortunate enough to receive an invitation to accompany an official on a tour of inspection of some coal beds in the province of Tomsk. We started betimes in the morning on a train that was heated to suffocation by stoves and the already hot sun (April), and required eight hours to make the 69 kilometres (43 miles) separating Tomsk from the station Taiga, where the branch joins the chief line. This station, where one is obliged to wait anywhere from six to twenty-four hours for the east or west bound train, should have been large, since it serves one of the greatest Siberian cities; but in the original plan, that demonstrates the absolute ignorance in Russia in regard to the development of which Siberia is capable, the poor little building was made so small that in a year it was found necessary to add wings, and it is even now ridiculously small; you are stifled and crushed in it, and look in vain for some corner in which to pass the interminable hours of waiting. After breakfast we went to visit the village of Taiga, which is one of the curiosities of modern Siberia, a true mushroom village, which, together with

Krivochokovo, ten miles further west, makes one think of those mining camps of the western part of the United States that spring up within a few months. Two years ago there was absolutely nothing there but the trackless, virgin forest where the woodcock whistled and the reindeer fed in peace. One fine day a station was built on this point. The floating population that the Trans-Siberian attracted felt instinctively the importance of the place and settled there. All that goes to or from Tomsk must of necessity pass here; it must be a considerable depot for machines, wagons and merchandise, and of course much was to be made from the depot and from the travelers. Workmen built cabins close to the station, and drinking shops sprang up for their benefit; gradually isbas were added to isbas, one evil place to another, thieves to drunkards and ne'er-do-wells, so that at the end of eighteen months the place numbered 2,000 souls. One should visit it to become acquainted with what constitutes the flotsam and jetsam of the Siberian population. It is constructed without other plan than the desire to be as close to the station as possible. We plunged into piles of melting filth, splashed through manure heaps, ran every few steps into things unspeakable; in a word for an hour wandered through the most awful *tohu-bohu* of a sordid camp. What especially struck me was the number of drinking-saloons. Alcohol is a friend from which the Russians are never willing



to be separated. Of course there are neither police nor government. The town has existed officially but since last autumn, so that St. Petersburg has scarcely had time to reduce things to order, and in the meanwhile thefts, debauch, and murder work their sweet will in the town that probably within a quarter of a century will have supplanted Tomsk.

Our train arrives at last, and towards midnight we get out at Soudjenka, about 85 kilometres (53 miles) from Tomsk. It has taken us 16 hours to come this distance! We were to start the next morning at daybreak, and in the meanwhile my two companions and I stretch out on table and benches for the night. Day comes at last, with a purple light on the horizon, that turns to crimson and a thousand delicious tints of early morning. In the silence of the forest a woodcock raised his plaintive note. Two sleighs with horses harnessed tandem came for us, and we dashed off through the snowy path that had been frozen during the night. Unfortunately as we proceeded the thaw increased, and the road became little more than a running stream, through which the horses struggled with imminent risk to life and limb. At last we reached the mine. Preparatory work had already been begun and it had been ascertained that at the depth of twenty metres the coal was excellent and by no means expensive to work. In fact since my departure an adventurous capitalist has concluded an

arrangement by which he furnishes certain Western and Central portions of the Trans-Siberian railroad which is now using coal, while in Russia they are still using nearly everywhere wood.

The return was worse than the going, but in course of time we reached the station without accident; of course our sleigh was overturned, but wonderful to say not even a basket of eggs we had bought at a village was broken. There a long wait for the train ensued, then at Taiga another delay for the train to Tomsk. Finally through the courtesy of a Government official we were invited to his special train, so that we reached Tomsk at ten that night, instead of seven the next morning. It is scarcely necessary to add that traveling in Siberia is not altogether a delight. I went to visit the University, and M. Kouznetsef, who was at church when told of my presence, came for me and dragged me to the chapel, which is reached by a passage. We were in the midst of Holy Week, and though the people do not go to church the Government officials carefully make their devotions daily. The chapel of the University is *par excellence* the "swell" spot, in which it is proper to be seen during Lent. And the reason is very plain: the Governor goes there; so that one can have the joy of performing one's duty and the sweet assurance that everyone will know it. But I must confess I care very little for the ceremonies

of the Orthodox worship, which force one to remain standing for hours together.

Holy Saturday was ushered in by delicious sunshine, that melted the snow fallen over night (April 24th). The entire town was in commotion; the stores were full of customers and every one full of joy. Yesterday was Lent, and I could well understand that this festival signifies to those people imprisoned for eight months, deliverance, the return to life of nature, the air, water, forest, flowers. That is why they throw into this festival the expression of their delight; the churches are illuminated and the bells ring out merrily. In the parlor of Gavriel Petrovitch an enormous table is arranged along the wall and on it are laid the most delicate of comestibles. In the centre a milk pig, adorned with lard; in the corners are babas or koulitchkis, great towers of pastry, sown with raisins, which are taken with tea. Green plants form the background which we all spent a long while arranging. Between the large pieces are an enormous ham, herring, butter, sardines, anchovies, caviar, lobster, filet of smoked pork, different sorts of cheese, gaily-colored eggs, oranges, lemons, smoked-sturgeon, and I do not know how many more good things, the mere remembrance of which still makes my mouth water. Then there were wines, vodka, and liqueurs of every color.

During the night of Holy Saturday the entire city is given up to rejoicing. At midnight the

churches were full of people and brilliant with illuminations. It made me think of our Christmas, and the effect was charming. In the spaces in front of the churches tables were spread, to which the common people bring, in white napkins, food to be blessed by the clergy. Men, women and children mount guard before these cakes or pastries and when the midnight mass is over, as the people separate crying repeatedly "Christ is risen," the clergy come and mutter several prayers and scatter a few drops of water over the exposed provisions. All then draw together the ends of their napkins and scatter to homes amid the fast falling snowflakes to "un-lent" themselves. The Russian expression is charming and wonderfully expressive. After the long Lenten abstinence they do not wait for the Easter breakfast, but begin to enjoy themselves as soon as they are through with the mass.

Just as I was about to retire at one o'clock, the fire bells sounded an alarm. I discovered by means of the telephone that the Club was on fire, so I jumped into a carriage and arrived on the spot.

The house on fire was a large one-storied building which was used for balls, concerts, and all the reunions of society, but there was no danger, for no one was there that night. It was snowing terrifically, the sky was soon a brilliant crimson, and the snow illumined underneath looked like a moving cloud of great, red sparks. The crowd was

perfectly indifferent and a squad of soldiers was detailed to guard the furniture from the depredations of the spectators.

The Russian Easter dawned under a grey sky and strong wind. As soon as we were up, we started off on a round of visits. All the town was afoot and private carriages and hacks crowded the streets by ten o'clock. Etiquette requires that one should make his appearance for a few minutes at the house of each of his acquaintances, and exchange three Christian kisses, and that one should manage as best he can the offer of a glass of wine or liqueur at each house. The first part of the program was easy of execution, and the charming, fresh faces piously touched with the lips, made up to one for all the beards he needs must press; but there are but two modes in which to execute the last part, either to get gloriously drunk, or to distract the attention of one's host and change the full glass for an empty one; but in spite of every effort, it must be confessed that towards three o'clock an arm-chair seemed vastly preferable to dinner.

Since morning the river has been mounting; its enormous covering of ice has risen from moment to moment, and the breaking up is expected. The next day the condition of the streets was frightful. A drunken man came within an ace of being drowned as he attempted to cross the Netchaievskia Street, nor would that have been at all unusual, for last year a cow disappeared entirely and perished



in a few minutes. The principal townsmen have met with accidents. Overturned carriages and fallen horses are quite matters of course and the number of vehicles upset in the sticky mud is too great to attract attention.

In spite of the danger of accidents, I crossed the entire city, to pass the evening at the house of M. Kouznetsef. The evening passed pleasantly among the charming bibelots scattered about the house, when the master of the house said with a half-smile: "Have you heard the story of the mammoth of the Mariinsk forest?" People knew very little about it, so the savant took from a drawer of his library a little, rare book, full of letters and authentic telegrams exchanged about this fine discovery, and this is its history:

In the spring of 1877 some workmen, employed on a place belonging to a Christianized Jew, discovered the remains of a mammoth in a perfect state of preservation: the skin and the hairs were intact. The news was immediately sent by the happy possessor to the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg. That learned society forthwith telegraphed: "Neglect no means to get the animal out whole; if possible, send us a piece of the flesh, and above all else, do not fail to keep all that you find in the intestines." There was a great commotion and everyone was enthusiastic over the discovery. The police officer of the district was ordered to the spot, and dogs devoured some of

the animal's flesh in his presence. The proprietor had himself eaten a steak from it, declaring it exquisite. The official then made his report (which was read to us), calling to his aid all his powers of rhetoric. The excellent officer in a pompous, florid style explained the discovery, the effect produced in the province, his personal impressions, experiences and scientific conjectures, and the results of measurements made under his supervision. The colossal mammoth measured 60 meters (190) feet), and its entire length was not yet exposed! Evidently the officer thought his fortune was made after such an effusion. The Academy continued to exchange telegrams with the owner. It was discussed whether the animal should be exhibited in the towns on its way to St. Petersburg and if an entrance fee should be made. A thousand details were in full discussion, when an engineer sent by the Government arrived on the spot, and proved that the pretended mammoth was made of a layer of comestible clay and his skin was a sort of mineral!

The University of Tomsk is an immense white building delightfully situated in the centre of a grove of birch-trees. It contains quite a town within itself, including houses for the various professors, a library, museum, a chapel, besides buildings for botanical purposes. I passed a delightful morning with Professor Sapojnikof, examining his collections, his green-houses, his

laboratory, and listening to his recital of his last trip to the Altai mountains, and his preparations for another this summer. A springlike temperature reigned within, and while seated among his flowers we could gaze at the great, sad horizon, where the Tom, still white with ice, was quivering into motion.

The next morning (April 28th), hearing that the break-up had set in, I flew to the river bank. The evening before it was smooth and white, and now during the night the water had risen seven feet, and broken its still thick covering into pieces. Enormous, terrible masses of ice, crushed against each other, giving the impression of a terrible cataclysm. Nothing can give an idea of the effect produced by this grandiose piled-up mass of ice, and never before was the irresistible puissance of water revealed to me in so concrete and imposing a manner.

I have accepted an invitation for a hunting party, but before telling of it I desire to present the hunter by his own fireside. On my arrival at my host's I was received by him on crutches, for he had injured his leg by a fall from his horse, but all the same he must show me his dogs, of which there were ten, which, each in his own way, adored him. I have never seen a finer exhibition of dogs—Ostiak dogs, with thick hair, short, straight ears, and pointed muzzles; setters of pure breed; crossed dogs; magnificent beasts, and degenerate beasts—

a loving, faithful, affectionate company! Returning to the house, M. D—— opened a sideboard and showed a mass of various sorts of game preserved by the cold. Then in one corner a sleigh especially for hunting; further on a boat; then a particular kind of saddle for long tramps in the forests. Then came the guns. There were ordinary guns, guns of enormous calibre for shooting bears, carbines of every kind, munitions, decoys, all the extraordinary accoutrements of an enthusiastic hunter and in complete disorder. At table we talked hunting, after dinner we talked hunting, finally deciding we would start the next day on a trip.

The next morning we endured stoically the torture of a journey on the branch road from Tomsk. Arrived at the famous Taiga that I have already described, we set about finding horses, and towards evening found two, one with a saddle, one without. We set off in a pouring rain followed by the moujik hunter, my friend's servant. We went along for a mile or two on the railroad that was as yet unballasted, and finally entered the forest, where our horses often sank into the soft snow up to their shoulders. We had gone but a few paces when my horse stumbled over a hidden log, and off I went over his head. With Alexander's assistance I got on, but fifty metres further on my horse and I both went down. And so we proceeded with falls innumerable owing to the prostrate trees concealed under the snow. From time

to time streams of melted snow must be crossed, and one proving deeper than we thought, my friend's horse disappeared and began to swim. I gave mine his head and sprang upon a log thrown across the current, but slipped and was up to the waist in ice-cold water. Fortunately our shelter, which consisted of the horizontal branches of an enormous pine-tree, was not far away. A fire was quickly made and a glass of hot vodka taken, and I laugh now when I think of the appearance I must have cut, rolled in a plaid, while my clothes were smoking before the fire and we discussed our arrangements for the next day's shooting.

We had come in quest of grouse. Nearby was a clearing well known by my friend, where the cocks were in the habit of coming to cluck their amorous serenades to the assembled hens. Every one knows that when they are clucking they are absolutely deaf to sound of step or gun; when they cease, the hunter must stop too. The best plan is to hide in the forest near the clearing and shoot without moving, which is what we proposed to do. Towards half-past one a faint light was perceptible in the east, and we set off. I was posted at the foot of an aspen tree with my gun; for two long hours I waited patiently while an icy wind tossed about the branches of the larch trees. All at once a great black bird made his appearance; he stood fifty paces from me and gazed at me; then, as I did not move, he began jumping over the snow



with a noiseless grace that made me think of the *pas* of a ballet dancer. I slowly raised my gun without being noticed by the cock. Suddenly near me I heard a clucking, and turning I saw the bird was proceeding to enjoy himself. At the first ball he stopped singing, then resumed his song, which the second ball terminated forever. In the meanwhile another bird was dancing over the snow, without troubling himself about me. He stopped on a tree uprooted by the tempest, and my ball went through him. I waited a half hour longer till my friend joined me, saying he had done nothing and that the night was not good. I picked up my birds. How beautiful they were! Their enormous plumed heads with yellow beaks, each body as large as a turkey's and their feathered claws, excited my admiration. I scarcely think my first rabbit or first partridge afforded me as much satisfaction as my first grouse, so dearly bought.

There are in Tomsk quite 2,000 Poles, and, thanks to their intelligence and probity, they play an important rôle there. It is curious to find this Polish element from one end to the other of a Russian land. It is everywhere irreconcilable in its hatred and bitterness and fascinating by a grace that is perhaps too unstable in a country where the lack of tenacity is one of its greatest defects. The rôle of the Poles has been considerable in Siberia; they brought to the land of their exile something of Western civilization; they con-

tinue to come as government officials, and it must be confessed they understand their duty to society. The high Russian officials regard with an unfavorable eye this united, powerful minority, and have endeavored to impede their development, though quite unsuccessfully, the only result being to increase the number of malcontents in a land where resistance to local authority is infinitely more marked than in Russia. Of course I am not unaware of the danger incurred by the formation of a nucleus in its centre hostile to all its tendencies; but in this century radical measures cannot very well be adopted towards this alien element. They can no longer be violently uprooted and sent away; the most that can be done is to keep them under surveillance and to favor their fusion with the dominant element.

Although we are in the month of May the weather is grey and lowering, with great icy blasts at times from some distant fields of snow. The river, which has risen high since the break-up, tosses about its terrible islands of ice, that grind and carry away everything that comes in their way. All that part of the town which is built on the bank of the Tom is submerged. The inhabitants, accustomed to such disasters, have quietly betaken themselves to the roofs or pass through the streets in boats. As I watch this colossal passage of ice carried towards the mysterious North beyond the horizon, I meditate upon the absolute-

ly inexcusable shiftlessness of this race. This inundation, as did its predecessors, causes enormous expense and many deaths; yet for many years, perhaps many centuries, the same thing will happen every spring. They know the scourge, and the period of its recurrence; but they await it in helpless resignation, and submit to it in silence, instead of endeavoring to arrest it and ward off its attacks. It is convenient to live on the bank of the river, so they fix themselves there and expect some fine day to see their home or business establishments destroyed. The Russian fatalism shows itself strongly, but it must be remembered that it is augmented by these hastily built centres placed by a nature so colossal that all our older civilization would find it difficult to combat. The flexible Russian civilization, this civilization of the forest, floats on these great spring waters, where our stone and steel would imprison them. Certainly these periodical visitations cause great loss, but it is a tribute they pay without a murmur. With us, if an inundation carries away one life or one house, there is an uproar; here already ten men and several millions in value have been swallowed up—the wave passes and all is forgotten.

The first steamers have arrived with the passing of the floods and already the still wet bank, piled up with masses of ice, is the scene of animation and life. All the population evidently sees in the river smiling in the sunshine, oblivious of its fury

of yesterday, a symbol of the short life of summer which is opening before them. Everywhere people are strolling about; even the beasts seem happy.

The quays have become the centre of the city. The merchants open their shop windows and doors to dry the inside; water-carriers, their barrels placed upon a cart drawn by a horse, move with difficulty through the mud; coachmen wash their carriages in the river; in the midst of this coming and going of busy people, saunters the crowd, looking intently at the smiling blue river and the line of steamers. Already some peasants have brought little barrels of fruit for sale and stand motionless and silent awaiting a customer, and every nook and corner is flooded with glorious sunshine. A group of young girls, fresh and laughing, come to take a peep at the river on their way to school, and the sight of this graceful, dimpling youthfulness casts a charm over the joyous tumult. Among the steamers moored at the port are two belonging to the Government. They are white, clean, perfect in every detail, and present a lively contrast to the general *laissez-aller* of the rest.

The town, too, has entirely changed its aspect. First of all, the streets are passable, at least for him who does not fear clouds of dust; for the unspeakable mud of the last few weeks is reduced to a powder that brings inside the house the odorous particles of all that is in the street. Everywhere there is a fermentation of activity; red-shirted

workmen are leisurely placing the great wooden beams of which most of the houses are constructed. It is already summer, though a rude one with traitorous blasts of wind fresh from the snow-covered forests.

The light grows daily more brilliant. The sun almost every evening sinks to rest on a couch of molten gold amid clouds of royal purple, and in the morning, as I walk down Millionnaya Street, I catch glimpses among the pines of the round towers and campanile of a charming little church nestling among its gardens. It is painted light blue picked out in white and gold, and stands in charming contrast to the pearl-grey morning sky. Yonder, too, is a picturesque scene on the banks of the Ouchaika, a rather dirty little stream that runs through a corner of Tomsk: the laundresses have their general quarters near the bridge, and there they stand in full view, their feet in the mud or water, their skirts tucked up, as, in blissful ignorance of knee-protectors, they rinse their linen in peace.



SMILING SIBERIA.



## XXX.

### SMILING SIBERIA.

ITS POPULATION AND IMMENSE RESOURCES—  
FROM KRASNOIARSK TO IRKOUTSK.

KRASNOIARSK has without doubt a fine future. It is situated at the junction of the Trans-Siberian and the Yenisei. By means of this river it communicates with China, with the rich district of Minousinsk, and, so to speak, with England, which discovered and utilizes the passage from the Sea of Kara and the mouth of the Yenisei. Certain English goods can be bought more cheaply in Krasnoiarsk than in Paris. As an illustration of English tenacity, a story may be told of their utilization of this great Siberian river. It was Captain Wiggins who first demonstrated that sea-going ships could ascend this stream. But the first English expedition, having conceived erroneous ideas of the needs of the country, carried a cargo suitable to savages; very probably scalping-knives were not omitted. Since there were, however, no savages, their glass beads, etc., were a dead loss; nor did their hatchets fare much better, nor their pegged nailed shoes, none of which met with Siberian approbation.

The following year, the English brought preserves, clocks and clothing. This choice was most happy, but they made the mistake of disposing of their wares at ruinously low prices, entering thus into competition with the local merchants. The latter formed a league, and obtained from the Government the establishment of custom-houses for foreign goods. The English had not managed their affairs very well, but, without allowing themselves to be discouraged about their losses or the exactions of the custom-house, they continued their efforts, until now their commerce is so great as to attract the imitation of Germany and Denmark.

Krasnoiarsk is yet rather an insignificant little town. It is scattered sparsely over the red river bank, to which it owes its name, while the Yenisei is extremely wide at this point. In order to build over this rapid, deep stream the railroad bridge, it was found necessary to go some distance farther up, where it is much less wide. As for the town itself, there is a ferryboat which is moved by the impulsion of the current with the aid of a cable fastened in the middle of the stream and supported by *flotteurs*. It is scarcely necessary to say that the passage is slow, with the result, since travel between the two sides is considerable, that it takes fully two hours to await one's turn and to cross on the two boats. A long row of vehicles covers the slope leading to the quay, that moves forward a few yards every half-hour. The











day after my arrival, desiring to pay a visit to the other side of the Yenisei, I sat waiting in my carriage, when my attention was attracted by a group of prisoners, among whom were three old men. Suddenly amid the silence a voice from behind the balustrade asked a soldier:

“Where are you taking those poor old men?”

The soldier did not reply, and the man continued:

“They are much more fit for an old men’s home than for a prison.”

“Bah!” said another voice, “they have probably committed some crime!”

“Pshaw! a crime! No; it is because they need them, that is, the really guilty ones who are useful to them and who are allowed to go free!”

“That is true; but just wait till July 2nd and then see.”

It was on that date that the Minister of Justice was to come to Irkoutsk to inaugurate the new judicial regime, which was hailed here with mad joy, as the dawn of justice after the arbitrary proceedings of the police. Henceforth Siberia will enjoy a portion of the rights granted Russia by Alexander II. Under the rule that has existed until now, the police officer, the “ispravnik” alone was charged with judicial inquiry, which he conducted according to his own fancy. Henceforth the new judges will make personal examination and cannot pronounce sentence without having

heard the accused. Certainly it is not too much, but it is enough to make the Siberian tremble with joy, and to place in the mouth of the peasants, whom no one can accuse of sentimentality, expressions such as those of which I have just spoken.

As I was about to leave Krasnoiarsk I was happy enough to be introduced to S. E. Anatole Nicolaeitch Koulomzine, Secretary of State, Chief of the Committee of Ministers and of the Trans-Siberian railway. In pursuance of his duties, he has constant access to the Tzar, who is President of the Railroad Board, and who has sent M. Koulomzine to examine into Siberian colonization. It is upon this high official, then, that depends the agricultural future of this immense colony, and according to his counsels Russian emigration beyond the Urals would continue or lapse. For days his arrival had been awaited with feverish anxiety. From the smallest "tchinovnik" (clerk) to the Governors and Governors-general, from the most amiable to the most haughty, every man in the employ of the State was looking anxiously to the visit of the Examiner.

Such was the personage brought by special train, and who did me the honor to ask me to join his suite, so that whether traveling by rail or carriage I would be free from the delays and annoyances that attend the ordinary traveler.

At Kansk stopped then the part of the road



open to travel, though the rails were laid some fifty miles further, and M. Koulomzine expressed the desire of traversing it, in spite of the risks and dangers attending the passage.

In the evening a new train was formed and we set off very slowly and with infinite precautions. The rails had just been laid, but were not ballasted, so that the inequalities were often very great. The way winds amid cuttings, ascends gently the mountain, crosses and re-crosses the post-roads as if in play with it. On the rear platform of the last car, with Bobiński, the head of the section, who meant to pass the night there for fear of accidents, I watched the little rails, already twisted from the premature use to which they had been put, these series of close windings, these hastily constructed embankments, so narrow as to seem almost useless. At times I could fancy myself in central Germany on some little local train meandering along the flowering woods; and this is nothing less than the great Siberian Line, the immense iron ribbon stretched from one world to another and cutting Asia in two!

So close an examination gives one a full knowledge of the haste with which this line has been constructed, of the work accomplished in the simplest, most economical manner possible. One divines the feverish haste of all these men to reach the goal with the least possible delay. First to place the rails end to end in some fashion, then to

return to repair, replace, consolidate—such seems to be the plan. There is doubtless a certain reason in this dashing procedure, but it is so un-European and so dangerous!

We glide along in the silence of the forest, and a sort of sweet sadness takes possession of me, at the thought of the double iron ribbon that foot by foot desolates the “taiga” (native forest) and conquers Asia. There is in this simple line of parallel rails something terrible that never strikes us at home, because we are accustomed to it, but that amid these wastes assumes large proportions. This modest road is a terrible instrument of invasion and progress. Thanks to it, there arrive in these virgin solitudes men who, having endured neither fatigue, terror nor suffering, have not the same respect for it that filled its first invaders. Proud of their Western experience, these men bring into the taiga new ideas, new appetites: what they call civilization. Never before had I felt the cruelty enclosed within this beautiful word, nor the hypocrisy in which we mask ourselves when we talk of progress and pacific conquest.

In the morning the road runs between moist woods, brilliant with flowers, and infested with mosquitoes. One cannot be still five seconds without being bitten. The laborers along the road are wearing a red cap with a black linen visor to protect them.

At last we reached Klioutchi, the provisional

terminus of the line which we are to leave by tarentass, so without a moment's delay, while the voluminous baggage of the great man is being carried from the train to his carriage, my friend and I arrange our traveling bed.

To be in one's own tarentass is to be settled very comfortably. The carriage has no seat; it is made of a wooden or osier box, between two and three yards long, and half as wide in its rear. The front narrows into a sort of prow, upon which is fixed a seat for the coachman. The body of the vehicle is protected by a leather hood to which in need a leathern apron can be hooked. The result is a great box, that can upon occasion be hermetically sealed over its inmates. This box is attached to wooden bars, nearly five yards long, that rest upon four wheels. Such is our carriage. In the bottom are scattered the valises and trunks, that are flat and made of soft leather. When the bottom has been raised by carefully adjusted baggage, over them are thrown all one's pelisses, cloaks, furs, even mattresses if there are any. It only remains then to stretch oneself out, tucking pillows under one's arms, back, etc. Once installed one can travel with impunity thousands of miles in this rudimentary vehicle. The wheels and springs wear out sooner than does the traveler. Were I to declare that one cannot be more comfortable than in a Siberian tarentass, I should scarcely be believed, and yet such is the exact fact! At full

length upon a soft couch, one can dream or sleep. The only annoyance is to have to get up to pay for the old horses and to procure fresh ones. Nor is this a slight one. It is difficult to believe how wearing is this constant contest, repeated every few hours, with the apathy or cupidity of the post-masters. In ordinary times people suffer greatly, but under this unaccustomed influx of travelers it is a veritable torment to procure horses, unless one is a millionaire or a great personage. At certain stations entire families have been awaiting their turn, for ten, twenty, forty-eight hours, and thanks to the thousand dishonest expedients, invented by the post-masters to detain them, these unfortunates see equipages pass before their eyes hour after hour, that are refused them. These are the final convulsions of the post-horse service, that in a few months the railroad will have killed forever.

We set off at a moderate speed, in a file of four carriages: first the General, then the luggage, next his suite, and last my friend and I. We must keep fifty feet apart on account of the dust. Horses are awaiting us at the relays and in four minutes the change is made and we are off, unless we have decided to take tea or breakfast. M. Koulomzine has decided not to travel at night, considering it too fatiguing, of which I am very glad, for I can now observe the details of the route. We camp in a post-house, laying some coverlets on the floor, and the members of the suite imitate us.

After a refreshing bath in the ice-cold waters of the Biriouza, we dash off through the morning sunshine, and the roadway is a bewildering tangle of flowers. Flowers without end crowd each other in the sides of the cleared forest through which the road runs. I notice great yellow buttercups and dandelions along the ditch, and further on a sort of blue fuchsia, its bell-like centre delicately touched with white; pink and white lilies-of-the-valley, then white, yellow, orange flowers with which I am not familiar, but which are exquisite. Then above all on either side spreads the delicate pink eglantine; here the flowers bloom in full beauty; there a very riot of pink buds is about to burst into bloom.

The profusion of the flowering eglantine is so great that the heart is touched, and instead of beholding a simple grace of June I involuntarily associate it with the remembrance of all the unhappy ones who for more than a century have passed along this road, to whom the blossoming of this wild rose has been the last fugitive consolation—and at the same time the last note of pain—before the prison doors have closed behind them forever.

The great Siberian road is about as wide as its counterparts in Europe, and owing to the initiative of two political exiles for the last twenty or thirty years, there is some pretense at keeping it



up. The toll, about forty cents, between Tomsk and Irkoutsk, is devoted to this purpose.

The roadbed, while not equal to European ones, is kept in very fair condition. In the summer time, the ruts are filled in with broken stone, that the vehicles crush in passing over. Besides certain portions are remade each year, and in several villages I saw stone-rollers. Of course on so traveled a road there are many bad places and the dust is suffocating, but still it must be confessed that few Russian roads are as good as this Siberian one. Over it, night and day, passes a never-ending line of post-carriages, traveling carriages, and interminable rows of carts. Thirty, forty or even fifty of them go together slowly, each with its little horse, and driver who is never hurried, never wearied, who sleeps when he can, rests while his horse is eating, in sunshine or in rain or in cold, watching unceasingly the 25 *pouds* of goods confided to his care, for which his sureties are responsible. When we met one of these long, dusty files I called to mind the words of my driver on the canal road:

“Ah! Barine, how I would like to go with you! I fear neither cold nor hunger.”

“What dost know about them?”

“I have been a driver along the route from Tomsk to Kiakhta: that is enough.”

On we go, ascending or descending giddy slopes. In the distance are the blue mountains, and every-

where the forest, but it is no longer the virgin taiga of my journey of the canal. We are always coming into contact with the railroad which runs along by the road, save when the inclination is too sudden. The substructure is about finished, and the temporary wooden bridges in place, which in five years are to be replaced by iron ones. Piles of sleepers are lying ready, along the sides of the road, over which the luxuriant Siberian vegetation has already thrown its flowers and leaves. Every now and then there are stations. They are only awaiting more rails, those monotonous, insignificant rails, that as with the wand of the enchanter will wake into life and animation this sleeping land.

An accident to the wheel of one of the carriages detained us awhile at a village, where to our great joy, fell a refreshing rain. I thought it a capital chance to make the acquaintance of the peasants, but I remember but two things: first, the infection, the especial, celebrated odor, of the post-houses made up of the smells of dampness, sweat, closets, breaths, foul air, and dirt—an unspeakable horror; and the other, the appearance of a young girl, who was pretty indeed, but with an expression so cruel as to make me shiver.

We start in a pouring rain, and soon are in the midst of a superb storm, that illumines mountains and valleys. The lightning assumes bizarre shapes,

filling with blinding phosphorescence the grandiose country through which we are passing.

The road continues over the top of the mountain. One of my drivers declares that often the wheat does not ripen here, where during the nights, often following the hottest days, the thermometer reaches the freezing point. But just now the heat is overwhelming. The flora along the road has assumed a different character, and one sees great yellow lilies and splendid pink and crimson orchids, such as we are accustomed to behold behind the glass of a conservatory. All day long, this delicious bloom continues; the profusion of flowers seems to increase as we approach the heart of Asia, and this unexpected discovery touches me profoundly.

Were it not for the flowers, the way would be monotonous; but from time to time a carriage stops, and some one gathers an enormous rainbow-tinted nosegay that is a joy and consolation under the maddening heat.

Some carts full of emigrants passed and we stopped to talk a bit with the men. They came from the province of Poltava, in Little Russia. Owing to the lack of land and difficulties of various kinds, they were on their way to join a group of their relations, established on the Amur. Their carts have white awnings, and the men, who were walking barefooted, wore enormous straw hats. Gradually they gained more courage and related

to us the hardships piled upon them by the landed proprietor next them, of the fines if they walked upon his land or their pigeons lighted on his fields. Finally, utterly worn out, they sold all they possessed and started for the Pacific slopes, which they hoped to reach in time for seeding. They go about twenty miles a day and the distance is nearly four thousand. Good land much nearer had been offered them, but like true, obstinate Little Russians, they shook their heads and went onward.

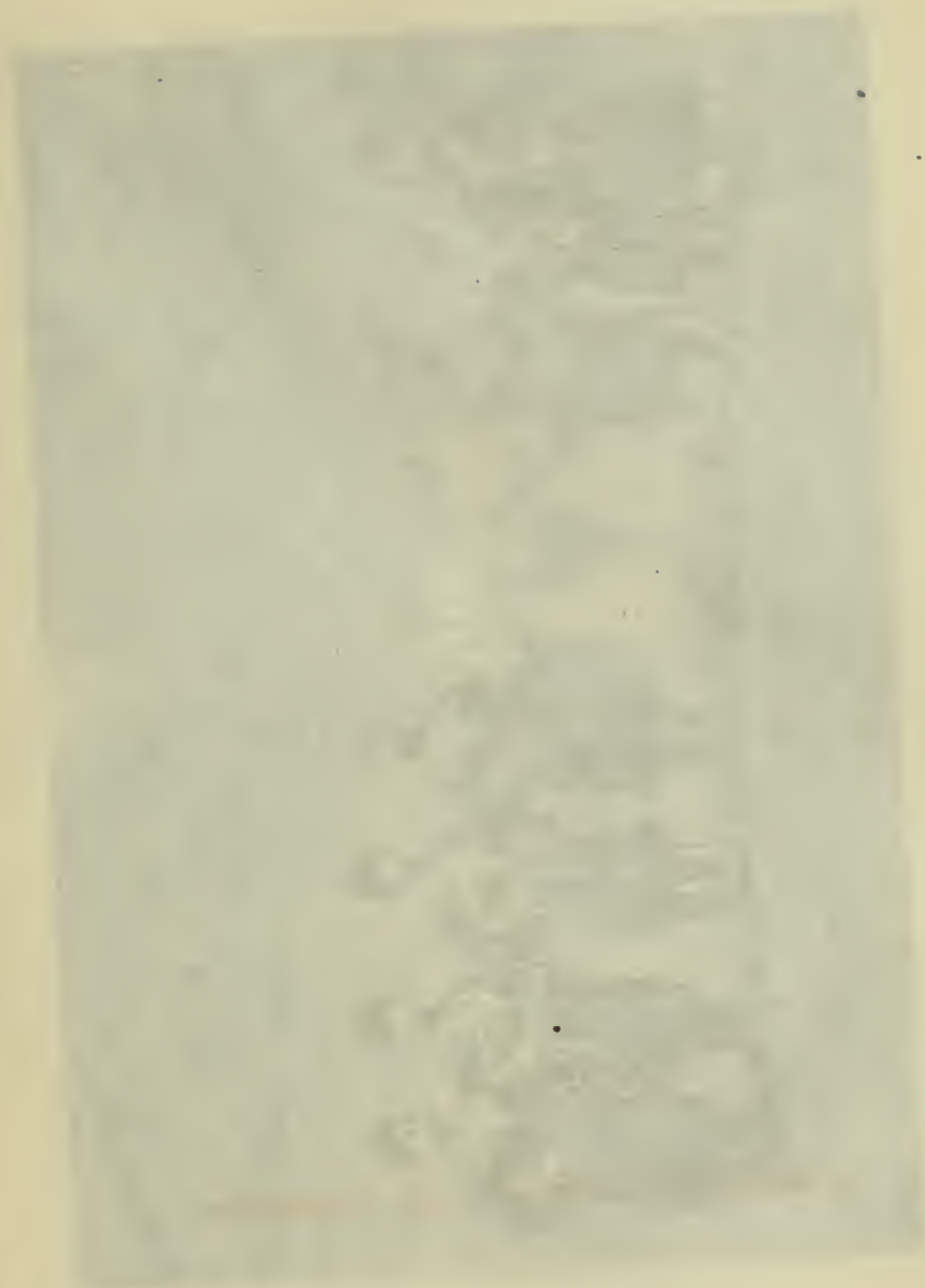
At last we reached the little town of Zima, charmingly situated at the terminus of the dusty steppe we had just crossed. The engineer of the railroad bridge had the honor of receiving the great personage whom we accompanied. He occupied the first story, whose windows opened on the delicious verdure that bordered the Aka, a deep, clear, ice-cold stream, that danced past the house, scattering a grateful coolness as it sped merrily onward. The apartments, furnished in exquisite European fashion, brought back the civilization that we had well-nigh forgotten amid the forest, and the contrast was so marked between our *vêtements de route* and the elegance of the table service that an inward restfulness replaced the bustling days.

I passed a day in the carriage of the newly-appointed police commissioner, a man of great elegance and charm. He had read much and was

greatly interested in the great questions stirring the Russian world; but he did not like Siberia, "with its drunken people, who were always stealing, and who killed each other after they were drunk." Siberia seemed to him the abode of crime, the detestable land of interminable winters. This officer's carriage generally preceded M. Koulomzine by a quarter of an hour; since it was necessary to warn the villages of his arrival, procure fresh relays of horses, and clear the streets of men and carts.

But to-day we were late and were but three minutes in advance of the great carriage; then, too, our horses were bad and our driver drunk. At each turn we fancied we heard behind us the gallop of the equipage we were to announce. We admonished the coachman, who pressed his horses. And so passed two hours, in which we had gained something over a mile, a short time indeed in which to have the table set and breakfast served. At last the village was reached, one of those enormous Siberian agglomerations drawn out each side of the road for a matter of two miles. We arrived at full speed, with a great clanging of bells. Not a soul was to be seen in the broad street: the heat was so intolerable that every peasant had sought the shade. All of a sudden a man left a house to cross the street. He ran as if he did not see us, and passed just in front of us just as we were upon him. Then he saw us, raised his arms and





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**A Group of Cossacks and Their Commanders**

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tried to turn back; it was too late. "Stop! stop!" we cried to the coachman, who was doing his best. But the horses had made too much headway. The man stood still a second, then fell and disappeared and we had passed and were some distance off before we could stop. I left my companion to the duties of his office, and ran back to pick up the man. He was not there, but I fancied I espied a flash of red disappear into a house. I ran after him, crying: "Where is he?" "Here, my lord, here," replied the peasants. At sight of me, the man fled into another room and I followed, and I think I was paler than he. On seeing me, the man, a great fellow in a red shirt, fell upon his knees and joining his hands, cried: "Pardon me, my lord, I did not mean to do it." And he trembled visibly.

"Hush! Who is blaming thee? Let me see if thou art hurt. Undress."

"No, no! Nothing is the matter with me. Pardon, my lord."

"Imbecile, undress, I tell thee!"

At last he obeyed, and I discovered he was suffering from but slight contusions on his knees and elbows. He had fallen between the third and fourth horse and so escaped the carriage, which otherwise would certainly have crushed him. I breathed freely once more. The man was comforted and disappeared. He it was who was to drive the General, to celebrate which honor he had gotten



gloriously drunk and had fallen against the wall; at the sound of the bells, he had awakened with a bound, and had tried to cross the street to reach his horses.

It had been decided we should make a detour, to visit the prison of Alexandrovsk, which is to ordinary prisons what a model farm is to village agriculture. It is a model prison, a carved toy, that is exhibited with pride and is really very fine. It doubtless would be rash to draw the least conclusion from it in regard to other Siberian prisons, but even if it be exceptional I must praise the perfect cleanliness of the rooms that were shown us. Probably the approaching visit of the Minister of Justice was not without its influence, but I observed several very desirable innovations. Irons, for example, were not used here, perhaps because Alexandrovsk does not keep desperate criminals. Then the prisoners were sorted according to age and crime, and young people were not put with hardened sinners, and for the Orientals there is a place apart. There is a reward for good conduct too. The infirmary is a model of ventilation, and there are workshops and schools. The head of the Alexandrovsk prison is a man of probity and intelligence; he is a political exile, sent to Siberia forty years ago. Persuaded that more desirable results can be obtained through justice and firmness than through undue severity, he endeavors to ameliorate the condition of the men rather

than to punish them. And his shops are not merely a means of moral elevation, but are run with profit. So that I carried away a peaceful impression of this prison. But still I was given a number of facts, the inexactitude of which I afterwards discovered, to my great indignation. But why should I be angered over false affirmations, I who know Siberia so well?

We were shown 231 prisoners. There were 700 inmates at that time, which is not many, considering the prison was built to hold 1,000. But why should they have told me there were only 231 there, when we really had seen but one-third? Then, too, I asked: "You have sometimes a great crowd?" "Never," replied the inspector with a smile. Now some one else had just told me: "We have sometimes as many as 3,000 men here at once." Moreover the book, "Description of the Manners and Population of the Government of Irkoutsk," speaks of the frightful accumulations of prisoners, which is true beyond dispute. Perhaps these details were not of great importance, but why so many little deceits to me, who was only admiring this model prison, and still admire it in spite of everything?

Towards evening I perceived from a mountain top, dominating the valley, the distant framework of Irkoutsk, the white city. This impression of white against the horizon in the June twilight is delicate and charming. An hour of giddy de-

scent, followed by a drive in the dust, and we are in the outskirts; next come straight streets and beautiful houses; then my tarentass stops in front of the hotel, whither my friend has preceded me.

#### IRKOUTSK-THE-WHITE.

A month and a half have passed since I quitted Tomsk, during all which time I have never ceased to float or roll towards the East. So, before going farther into Trans-Baikalian or Amurian Siberia, I have determined to make some stay in Irkoutsk, to rest and to study the great questions of gold, tea, Russo-Chinese relations and emigration.

I settle myself, then, in what is considered the best hotel in the city, the Deko. Vermin and dirt reign supreme. I was given an enormous chamber on the first floor, with two alcoves, one for the bed, the other for dressing-room and toilette, and I paid \$1.35 a day. The two huge windows look on the street. If by a miracle I should ever succeed in opening one, there would float in clouds of dust, that the chamber-maid would never dream of removing. So the choice of two evils is before me, either to suffocate with heat or to choke with dust. The windows have neither shutters nor thick curtains, and for several hours the sun pours in. The furniture is broken, dirty, spotted with ink and grease, and to top all else so full of ver-

min that it would be enough, in order to get rid of a person, to ask him to sit down upon the sofa or armchair for ten minutes.

For bathing purposes, I have the instrument common to the poor families in Russia: a copper pitcher, with a hole in its lower part, into which a sort of spigot is introduced, which to a certain extent prevents the water from running out when it is put down. To wash is a very elementary performance. One begins with one's hands. Carefully turning the stem, the little thread of water comes out to soften the soap. The dirty water falls where seems to it good, generally anywhere else than into a big, flat copper basin. The hands washed, they are formed into a hollow and held before the spigot, then carried quickly to the face. This performance is repeated, according to one's amiability, several times. It only remains then to dry the face and hands with a towel. It is economical and rapid. Such is the instrument placed at my disposition; fortunately I have used it so often that I do not mind it so very much.

Opposite the toilette room is the curtained dwelling-place of my bed. A glance discloses cohorts of fleas disporting themselves upon the folds of the curtains. Fortunately, very fortunately, the bedstead is iron. The walls are bare and have been colored blue, but holes are scattered over them, true havens of safety to the insects, who fly to them for refuge. Then, too, travelers who have

preceded me in this charming apartment have not hesitated to leave most abominable marks of their presence. Are you asking how I could sleep in such a kennel? Every evening I scatter around the bed a little barrier of insecticide and sleep in flea powder, in spite of all of which precautions I find in the morning many uninvited guests in the folds of my sheets. And the Deko hotel is the first one in Irkoutsk, and I must spend a month there! And when I return home, there will be people who will exclaim: "Oh, how happy you must be to be able to travel!"

Irkoutsk is the residence of the Governor-General of Eastern Siberia, one of the three viceroys of the colony. Eight or nine hundred miles do not seem a long distance in this land, but all the same they cause a very marked difference to exist between the two towns of Tomsk and Irkoutsk. Not only the character of the soil is changed, but also the conditions of life are entirely different.

At Irkoutsk we are on the extreme border of Russian Siberia. The entire region beyond is but partially exploited by gold-seekers, and is colonized by strangers, peasants of Mongol origin, the Bouriats. During the entire journey across Siberia, the advance is parallel with the Chinese frontier, but until now I had discovered no traces of "the yellow invasion." Indeed there is a bizarre chaos of races in Russian Asia: Moujiks, Kirghizes, Ostiaks, Tunguses, Bouriats, Chinese,



Japanese, Ghiliaks, etc.; there seems no end to them. Nor is it possible to form any positive conception of the insoluble problems presented by this kaleidoscope of races. I resolved then to confine myself to the study of the Slav invasion of this part of Asia, that is generally though erroneously believed to be a barren desert.

That evening there was a great uproar caused by the theft of the trunk of the Minister of Justice, on his way here to inaugurate the new code, which trunk, among other things, contained his dress uniform loaded with gold. It was very funny. If only it would serve as a lesson, and teach this great personage that the railroads are not safe for the ordinary traveler!

A bridge of boats joins Irkoutsk to the suburb of Glasgow, where are all the best houses, as well as the railroad. The Angara, transparent and swift, flows between high banks forming a current of air so cold that one is forced to button his coat as he crosses the bridge, and this in July!

People have been talking to me about the difficulty of applying the forestry laws. Formerly the peasants cut wood where they pleased and ravaged the forests. As soon as a protective law was made, they came into collision with the foresters, who do not always show a desirable amount of tact. In order to cut wood in the forest, it is necessary to receive permission from Irkoutsk, and

sometimes the distance is great. So occasionally a village is forced to warm itself with the bridge materials for lack of ability for complying with the demands of the administration. Which doubtless, too, explains many of the forest fires, brought about by the peasants by way of revenge.

I went one morning to visit the very fine historical and ethnographical Museum of the Geographical Society. And by the way, although it is July and suffocatingly hot, it is not the shady side of the street that is chosen, but the side protected from the wind, for the dust is so great that you cannot see at all if it envelops you.

A friend who had devoted much time to their study showed me Bouriatic and Mongolian collections owned by the Museum. He explained in detail the relations of Buddhism and Lamaism and described, as he showed me the religious objects, the famous ceremony of the "Tsame," which takes place every year at the Bouriatic temple, on the Lake of the Geese. Next were Yakuts collections, yourtes (cabins) made of skins, and nartys or little sleighs in which the natives of the Polar Circle carry during the summer their burdens over the immense marsh, frozen nine months of the year, that covers the entire North of Asia.

There are cradles, that look like invalid's chairs with a sort of trough in front, so that the mama is not forced to change the food oftener than her husband changes his for his beasts. Then there

are cooking utensils showing the hundred ways of dying by hunger invented by the poor savages, who seek in leaves or the bark of trees the substitute for bread! Indeed so full of interest is this Museum that I determined to come often and study at leisure its thousand attractive details.

As I pass down the street, a singular sign catches my eye: "Trunks and coffins, ready made and to order."

The town is empty, and asleep in the brilliant sunshine that floods every corner; everybody is in the country. But never anywhere in the world have I seen so many idlers and loafers, and when people do not work here they always get drunk. The appearance of the populace is sullen and aggressive.

I continued my walk to the right bank of the Angara and climbed the mountain. The view is beautiful beyond description. Every little detail of the city at our feet stands out in relief amid the rays of the setting sun. Yonder is a yellow church, then a *café-au-lait* cathedral; here green and grey roofs stand in sharp contrast to the white walls, and as background the blue mountains extending into the evening shadows. The joyous river, the divine Angara, seems to hold the town in a tender embrace before joining the distant greenness. I am never weary of this wonderful scene.

As I gaze some one tells me of the life on the

confines of Asia, at Sredne-Kolymsk, the last, most terrible circle of the Siberian Hades. It is generally political exiles who are sent there, and it requires three months to go from Irkoutsk to the village of deportation.

The inhabitants of Sredne-Kolymsk, four hundred in number, are degenerate Cossacks, eaten up by a terrible disease and by drunkenness and incapable of serious labor. The exiles employ their time as best they may, some fishing or hunting, others reading, writing or dreaming. This icy desert exercises so potent an influence that often they go mad. Others lose all hope as if no longer in the world, and pay no attention to their persons. The mail arrives three times a year; then the bags are seized and emptied upon the floor, while the letters and papers that have survived a triple censure are feverishly devoured. Four months of papers to read! Some read night and day, while a few take them in order, that they may be in touch with the feelings of former readers so far away.

I made the acquaintance of the mayor of Irkoutsk, Vladimir Platonovitch Soukatchof. He is a man who uses nobly his great fortune, and is never weary of contributing generously to new enterprises. This elegant Siberian is well known in Paris, but few, I fancy, have visited the charming villa that contains one of the rare picture galleries of Siberia. This gallery was a joyful sur-

prise to me. In a new country the emotions caused by art are rare. The collection is almost entirely Russian and is composed of landscapes, marine-views, and views of the Crimea, that land so attractive to all lovers of color. The dominant impression is that of a great sweetness of touch, of outlines often dimmed by mist like those flights of fancy so dear to the inhabitant of the great steppes or mournful forests.

I went to visit the magnetic observatory and received a warm welcome from the intendant and his wife. These observatories are very interesting to visit, since the Russians, instructed by Germans, use an over-careful method not followed by other nations, whose results are, however, equally good. Then the magnetic variations at this point of Siberia possess a range and frequency that are astonishing. The local deflection of the magnetized needle undergoes enormous variations a few leagues from here. After we had enjoyed from the summit of the tower the marvelous panorama of Irkoutsk, shining in dazzling whiteness amid its couch of green and the smooth bosom of the Angara aflame with the setting sun, a lady recounted her memories of the great fire of 1879, which destroyed the entire town. The fire broke out in several places at once, which gave it the appearance of incendiary origin, and as all the houses were of wood it spread with incredible rapidity. The inhabitants had but time to seize



some few effects and fly. Families camped by hundreds in the cemeteries until they could re-enter the city that had been reduced to ashes. Without other provisions than a little tea, suffering from cold and hunger, and overwhelmed by their sudden misfortunes, they were forced to wait until the fire had consumed the last shed. The situation was frightful, in this city so far removed from the centers of production. Nor is it difficult to understand the reaction that followed. Before the fire, Irkoutsk had been a town where people were extravagant and tossed their money about, drinking champagne at nine dollars a bottle, and sending their linen to be laundered at St. Petersburg. After its misfortunes it was still worse. Many persons had gotten insurance. With that rage for pleasure that so often follows great emotions, they gave themselves up to enjoyment. A very orgy of delirium ran riot in the few houses standing among the smoking cinders.

Even now when the populace is displeased with the Governor-General, he receives letters threatening him with another conflagration. Only last year these reports received so much credence that many families stationed men on the flat roofs with barrels of water and others kept horses harnessed day and night, in order to be ready to flee at a moment's notice. Whether it be true or not, the report is very typical and gives a singularly



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**Russian Peasants in a Village of Siberia**

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lively picture of the terrifying propagation of fire in these wooden towns.

On the fourteenth of July, the Minister of Justice, M. Mouravief, inaugurated the new code which will rule Siberia. In spite of the intense heat, all the official part of the town was in movement at an early hour, and Heavens! how many uniforms there were! The hall was too small for all the people. There was generally too much gold on the uniforms, and generally the wearers did not look at home in them; and somehow there was a lack of *cachet* about them. There were many ladies, most of whom alas! were gowned in white, sometimes with trains. White rarely suits stout persons on the borderland of forty, and apparently there are a great many fat people in Irkoutsk; then, too, good dressmakers are very far away! The ceremonies are opened with a thanksgiving. The minister makes discreet little signs of the cross, that reveal the courtier. Standing stiffly by him in full uniform, the Governor-General crosses himself ceaselessly with great devotion. Were one to attempt in Russia the psychology of the sign of the cross, how many discoveries would be made!

Then began the speeches. The Minister of Justice declared: "That until now, Siberia had been a prey to arbitrary rule, and that many examples of revolting iniquity had been the result." When a minister uses such language, the country must indeed have suffered. M. Mouravief added that

now all was to be changed, and without sharing his confidence in every particular, I felt quiver all around me, and especially among the silent crowd massed at the bottom of the square, this hope in true justice that would uplift Siberia throughout its length and breadth.

The city tendered the minister a great banquet, and since I was honored with an invitation, I arrived, as requested in my billet, an hour in advance. Almost all the guests were in evening dress, a rare occurrence in this land, where all the civil officials have a uniform. The hall, which was immense, was decorated with evergreen and three-colored flags. (The yellow flag with an eagle belongs to the Tzar. In Russia they have blue, red and white flags as ornaments.) We waited a long while. At last the minister arrives and passes among the tables bowing and shaking hands. He had been preceded by the archbishop in his blue velvet robes. Those who were acquainted with Monseigneur rose, kissed his hands, placed three kisses on the corner of his lips, and kissed his hand a last time. The whole performance was gone through with incredible rapidity and most curious effect.

Everyone knows that very well-served Russian dinner, with *hors-d'œuvres*, that is taken standing before the sideboard. At a given signal, this crowd of two hundred persons rushed into the halls adjacent to the banquet hall, and in an indescribable

uproar each one sought to take possession of a sardine, of a piece of herring, or a slice of caviar, washed down with vodka. It could not be called breaking the ice, but rather crushing it. More than ever, I regretted the absence of ladies, who would have kept a little order and decency among these fierce appetites. People do not speak to their table neighbors, unless they are previously acquainted. The menu was very fine, and champagne flowed freely, but what I appreciated more than anything else, was that a witty and discreet friend had placed me at his side and so secured me a charming evening. The hour for the toasts and speeches arrived at last. And Heavens! what eloquence! The minister in due course took his turn; and when he pronounced the name of the sovereign his face became illumined with ecstasy, and happiness exhaled from his entire person. It was very well done. In the evening the streets were illuminated. It was the first time I could walk Irkoutsk without feeling my way with my cane.

In spite of its broad streets and excellent houses, Irkoutsk is the least Russianized of all the Siberian cities. On its wooden sidewalks can be heard all the languages of Europe, and a goodly portion of those of Asia. The most hideous, fantastic Bouriats and Chinese can pass along its streets without attracting the least attention.

But on the other hand, the Siberian type appears here more distinctly than in the more West-

ern cities; and the reason doubtless is that the afflux of a more recent population has been less rapid than in the towns already penetrated by the Trans-Siberian. The general characteristics by which I recognized a Siberian were frowning brows, a forbidding air, a waddling walk, with a straight, bold carriage, and an expression of countenance either brazen or satirical. Of course I should not pretend to advance these as infallible signs of an ethnical type. But I was never once mistaken when I marked a man as a native of Siberia, though of course I give this for what it is worth. The costumes of the peasants and laborers are equally typical. The blouse-shirt is worn here very long, falling to the knees and instead of being coquettishly held in at the waist by a belt as with the Russian peasants, the Siberians let it float in ample folds over their large, creased pantaloons and it is awful. They wear round felt hats, with broad brims.

Irkoutsk, with its \$140,000 of income, possesses neither lights, paving nor waterworks. There are but 600 oil lamps in all, and even these are not lighted on moonlight or short nights, although the city contains a population of 51,000 souls and is scattered over a large area. Whenever one goes out one runs the risk of breaking his neck, to say nothing of having his throat cut. Then the intelligent class is unanimous in deploring the crass ignorance of a certain number of the principal merchants,



who form the majority in the municipal council and paralyze all efforts looking towards the benefit of the public interest. It was only after a violent struggle they succeeded in getting the delightful bridge of boats across the Angara, uniting the city to its brilliant suburb of Glasgow and the great Siberian road. These ignorant councilmen will have nothing to do with electric lights or tramways, being incapable of rising above their little interests as shopkeepers, and terrorized at the approach of these instruments of progress, that would reduce their accustomed profit of 150 to 200 per cent.

Here in Irkoutsk are still to be found traces of that old Siberian ignorance, that the Trans-Siberian is sweeping away. The town merits better things. It is so pretty, so well endowed by nature, so smiling, in the tender embrace of its charming river, the Angara!

I breakfasted towards noon in the restaurant of the hotel. It is the middle of July and the curtains are down, and it is relatively cool, though the flies are in swarms. The presiding genius of the place, an excellent very brown lady, who looks like a man in disguise, stamps about, and pours out little glasses from her bar, as she smokes her cigarette. As I read a Russian journal, my breakfast is placed before me. A cold soup, and "akrochka" made from pieces of meat, cucumbers, and all sorts of vegetables; then a fowl with a cream salad and a



sorbet. I descend to my waiting tarentass, whither the luggage has already preceded me, and at three o'clock am once more alone on the grand route of Siberia.

THE TEA KINGDOM.



## XXXI.

### THE TEA KINGDOM.

LAKE BAIKAL—KIAKHTA—THE CHINESE FRONTIER—VISIT AT A GOLD MINE—CITIES AND VILLAGES—TEA TRANSPORTATION AND OPIUM SMOKING.

AFTER having rolled along for seven or eight hours, behind the measured trot of two thin horses, over a road skirting the Angara, I reached at nightfall the spot where the great river springs into being in Lake Baikal. The way, after leaving Irkoutsk, had been rather monotonous; but as the day declined the landscape seemed to expand in its robes of shadow and mist. In front mysterious mountains appeared enveloped in vapor turned into silver by the moon, while the opal-tinted waters melted into the distant, half-seen horizon.

It was Lake Baikal, "The Sea," as the people here call it, and I reached the shore, where the waves, swayed by a light wind, sounded noisily, as if out of breath. I had great difficulty in finding a shelter for my carriage and myself, but succeeded at last and fell asleep upon the bare floor of a little room, upon which I had spread my pelisse.

The village of Listvinnitchnaya owes its impor-

tance to Lake Baikal; its inhabitants live by fishing and what they can pick up from the passage of travelers and merchandise. This is the place of embarkation for the lake, as well as of the custom-house, placed for the torment of travelers arriving from the East. Travelers crossing the lake are stopped, their baggage tumbled about and handled by careless hands, until they are reduced to despair, while people who are really engaged in contraband undertakings understand how to avoid it all. For of course those who are engaged in carrying into Siberia cargoes of tea, silks, or tobacco, never dream of passing here by the great route but slip through some mountain path, or on foggy nights pass under the very beards of the customs-officers in little boats down the lake.

I had to pass in the village an entire day, which I employed in divers excursions. The first took me back to the road I had come the day before. It was flooded with radiant sunshine, so that I could enjoy that wonderful landscape, only half-divined in the darkness before. The road skirts the right bank of the river, while the opposite side, abrupt and wooded, is full of beauty. Indeed this lake is one of the most exquisite ones I have ever seen. The banks, that are steep on the western side where we are, form on the eastern side colossal, rocky, perpendicular walls falling straight to the water, with but an occasional opening to allow the passage of some little stream, while back of this



grandiose line rise snow-covered mountains, whose tops are glistening in the sunshine. The blue waters stretch out as far as the eye can reach, and at times bring to mind the Mediterranean. But above all else, my eyes involuntarily turn towards the misty horizon, to that lace-like vapor, to that grey, up-piled disorder of mountains that to the east encircles this interior Asiatic Sea.

Until within a few years, very little was known of Lake Baikal, when the Government sent to explore it an hydrographic expedition, which soon ascertained that previous maps had been incorrect. Soundings were taken in different points, and notably on the passage crossed by the steamers between Listvinnitchnaya and Mouisovaya. These soundings revealed the existence at the bottom of the lake of a chain of mountains which rises abruptly from enormous depths, for in several spots the sounding line descended about 6,500 feet without touching bottom.

The following morning I took the steamboat for the eastern shore, with my carriage on the deck. There were very few passengers, but I fell into conversation with a merchant from Irkoutsk who knew the country very well. I heard this characteristic anecdote from him :

One day two merchants of the town, the X—— brothers, were accused of having opened a gold mine without legal authority. They were condemned. As they were already in Eastern Siberia,

they could not be exiled very far away, but were sent to a lost little village, where they could neither enter into business nor have their children educated. At the end of two years, the poor fellows obtained permission to return to Irkoutsk. They had been there several months, when General Goremykine became aware of their presence. He could scarcely believe his eyes. How was it possible for him to have signed, without reading it, the prayer of the condemned? No! it could not be! There was some intrigue in the affair. What would you have done in the Governor-General's place? Two courses were open to him: either to shut his eyes or to make an examination and punish the official who had deceived him. The General did neither, but followed a third. Admitting there had been fraud, he was careful not to touch the guilty parties, but exiled again the unhappy merchants. "That will teach them," said he, "to corrupt my officials!"

Fortunately the brothers were acquitted by the Senate.

The waters of Lake Baikal, like those of the Angara, are of incredible transparency. Pebbles can be seen at the bottom, through a depth of forty-five feet. This purity of the water is so prized by the inhabitants that they have adorned it with legends. They declare that the Baikal can endure no impurity, and that when, for example, a man or beast is drowned in it the body is thrown up

promptly upon the shore. For my part, this so marvelously clear water, in which one sees no fish, this icy, virgin water, seems dead to me, who so love the sea!

On the front of the boat are some prisoners, guarded by soldiers even dirtier than themselves; they are convicts on their way to the penitentiary. Half of the men's heads are shaved, and their legs are encircled by kandaly chains that bind their ankles with an iron band.

The women are unchained, but like the men they wear a penitentiary great-coat, of coarse, grey cloth with a lozenge-shaped piece of yellow cloth inserted in the back. There was a young girl among them, as pretty as a picture. What crime could those eyes so veiled in indifference have committed? A Caucasian woman, who was accompanying her husband to the penitentiary, wept silently, as she gazed at "that Sea" so soon to separate her from him she loved. Another woman displayed touching solicitude over two children, a boy and a girl, of five and seven. She wrapped them in a shawl, for it was cool, and divided between them a piece of white bread bestowed by a charitable passenger. A lady asked: "Are they following their father?" And the woman replied, with great simplicity and the resignation of despair: "No! they are following me!"

The fog that had for a long while imprisoned us was at length lifted, so we could see the shore; we

had gone some thirty miles and were approaching the station of Mouisovaya. With shrieking of whistles and ringing of bells, we came to a halt, amid an uproar of moving carriages, of horses stamping and tinkling their bells, and of men calling to each other. We were in Trans-Baikalia and it was very hot.

The route I took to reach Kiakhta is called "the route of the merchants," and was constructed by the tea merchants of Kiakhta desirous of making a short cut. It is charming and peculiarly delightful after the monotony of the Western steppes. The heights between which it winds its dusty way are crowned with pines, cedars, and foliage; they are, too, extremely rich in iron ore, and already a factory has been established. At one side tosses and foams a joyous torrent, and as it bounds from rock to rock, amid overhanging pine-trees, under the over-arching violet sky, I am forcibly reminded of the Pyrenees. We are still ascending; the route winds around the mountain tops, and in spite of the overwhelming heat I am filled with a joyous happiness, as if I had come into some familiar country. For an instant, we catch a glimpse of the pale blue lake, then it disappears in the mist, when suddenly the bounding little torrent that had quitted us returns again, though it is running in another direction. On the summits, skirted by the road, are bushes upon which passing Bourriats have fastened gaily-colored prayer papers. Then comes

the descent, amid the rays of the setting sun, into the darkening valley, a descent at full trot, ending in a mad gallop, a delicious, intoxicating descent, that ends at the station of Oudounga, where I have determined to pass the night, lest I arrive too soon at the home of a rich Bouriat, whom I am to visit. The post-master himself counsels me not to lie down on a bench in his house. "There is so much vermin," said he, "that we have nearly lost our little son, whose body is one great sore."

Mindful of his advice, I passed the night in my dear little hay-carpeted carriage.

The next day, July 29th, was a painful one, passed in slow peregrinations, in terrible heat, through camps of Bouriards. These cunning natives profited by my ignorance of the Mongol tongue, to amuse themselves at my expense, leading my tarentass slowly from village to village, across a long valley, treeless and barren. At the stations I entered their dwellings, and always found in the principal room the sacred étagère on which were statuettes of the gods, some holy books, amulets, and a dozen or so cups containing cereals. These Bouriards made a sinister impression upon me. I can see now an enormous old man, naked to his waist, talking to some cronies at his door, all seated on their heels, and I thought I was looking at a council of savages.

Finally at evening my tarentass entered a sort of great plain, surrounded with mountains, and



tapestried with aquatic plants, as if it were the bottom of a recently drained lake. In an instant I knew it was the Lake of the Geese, and that I was entering the sacred village on its flat shores.

The Great Priest, or Khambo Lama, of the Bouriat monastery, of the Lake of the Geese, places at the disposition of travelers a large house, a sort of hostelry, comfortable after Russian fashion. Two aspirants to lamahood opened its doors, and carried my luggage into the dining-room, which was to serve me as bedchamber, since the salon was reserved for Prince Oukhtomski, whose arrival was momentarily expected. The prince was returning from China, where he had carried presents from the Tzar to the "Son of Heaven." I was scarcely installed, when there entered a lama, very obsequious, very dirty and very corpulent. He spoke Russian, and announced that he was sent by the great priest, whose secretary he was, to arrange the details of the visit I was to make him the next day. The excellent creature was very talkative. As I was offered a dinner at his master's expense, preceded by vodka, I gave him my provisions, and we were soon the best possible friends. He gave copious details about the society, and on his departure I was quite conversant with the life led in the Holy City.

The following day I rose at dawn, made my toilette and awaited the visit of the Cheretoui. In fact the great priest was absent. Being ill, he had

sought a convent more free from visitors than was this one. The Cheretoui took his place. Now for reasons known only to himself, he decided to pay me a visit, instead of receiving me in his own apartments. Towards nine o'clock the cortége made its entry. The Cheretoui, Baldanichi Djordjievitch Djorjief, is a little, bent old man, with a broad face and flat nose, and eyes so small that they look like a straight line across the visage. From all his bowing, smiling person, there exhales an impression of cunning *bonhomie*. Although, after the great lama, he is the highest dignitary of the convent, his clothes bear no sign of his elevated position. He is dressed, as are all the lamas of his suite, in a yellow silk robe, embroidered with images of the Buddha. He wears, as do they, a sort of scarf of red silk very long and wide, and draped like a toga. It is the symbol of monastic vows. He could not, or pretended he could not, speak Russian, and our conversation was carried on through the intermediary of a lama who butchered that language most brutally; so, as may be imagined, the conversation was not very animated. We exchanged courtesies, good wishes, questions. The little eyes of the Cheretoui observed on my face the effect of his words as they were translated, and his expression was made up of a curious mingling of the inquisitor and good-natured man. I obtained his permission to visit the curiosities of the temple, and we separated after an exchange of

presents. I offered him a light piece of Russian silver; he presented me with a blue silk scarf, embroidered with pictures of the Buddha, and a little plaster statuette of Sakya-Muni, and we parted mutually satisfied with each other.

The temple, which I lost no time in visiting, is a wooden building, of three superimposed stories, each of smaller dimensions than the lower one, terminating in a roof with turned-up corners, *à la Chinois*. The great lower hall is filled with slender columns, from which are suspended great streamers that swing in the lightest breeze. The benches are placed straight against the wall, in which is the entrance. At the moment thirty of the faithful were chanting prayers to time given by a gong, and in a rhythm that grew more and more rapid, till it was maddening. Opposite the entrance, at the bottom of the hall, runs a balustrade, behind which are the wardrobes with glass fronts, containing the statues of the gods: a Buddha, a god of fecundity, hideous gods and peaceful gods, and, last of all, a copper statue representing a goddess, Nohon Hedekhe, altogether charming, with a slender figure, an exquisite bosom and neck, and a gentle, religious aspect, which caused one to accept without repugnance the third eye placed in the middle of her forehead. I do not know if a veritable lama carved this work; in any case, to have so full a knowledge of women, he

must have taken his time, before pronouncing his monastic vows.

In the next story are a new hall and new wardrobes, with new gods, more sombre and terrible. There also are kept the tinsel, the grotesque disguises and hideous masks, used by the lamas, to celebrate the great festival of the Tsame, with dances and symbolic processions.

Then a wooden ladder leads to the last story, where in two little niches, facing each other, rest a light god and a dark god, horrible, repulsive monsters. The Bouriats have not multiplied the figures of the gods in their temple, but they have chosen them carefully. A little ladder, climbed together with my lama, whose robe was sadly in the way, and we are standing on the terrace dominating the temple. Gold gods and black gods are forgotten in this splendid light. At our feet stretches the symmetrical roofs of the sacred village, inhabited only by lamas, or aspirants for that honor. It is a tranquil, wooden town, its bare courts enclosed with wooden fences. Grass grows in the streets, through which walk slowly, piously, in rainbow-tinted garments the Buddhist priests. On the left are rocky, bare, desolate hills. Then the eye wanders gratefully over the blue lake, whose shores are so low and waters so peaceful that often the line between is lost. I stood long, gazing at this little wooden village simmering in the heat, on its bare, sandy plain, and my guide was at a loss to

understand the length of my meditation. I was thinking that the Russians, although yet so young in civilization, have instinctively found the means of assimilating peoples. Had we Mecca in our possession, we would send their soldiers, with gaily braided red trousers, some bottles of absinthe, and a long list of officials. The Russians in this Mecca in miniature have not a single *tehinovnik* (government official), their only representative here being a cunning enough old fellow, but he is only a horse dealer with no thought of the propaganda.

I continued visiting the temples. One is little more than a huge, dark shed where reposes a gigantic statue of Buddha. I saw, too, the rudimentary printing-press, where one places by hand the proofs on engraved wood. Finally my walk terminated at the house of an old priest, the brother of the former Khambo-lama. Everywhere throughout the apartments, furnished only in thick matting and rare, sacred *étagères*, reigned the most scrupulous neatness so strenuously practiced by a part of the Far East. I was offered tea prepared in Bouriat fashion: in bricks and cooked with sour milk and several other ingredients.

All the monastery is in commotion. Prince Oukhtomski is to arrive in the afternoon, and great preparations are made for his reception. All the lamas of distinction have donned their best clothes and have been standing for an hour in the courtyard of the hotel, while from the top of the temple





The interior of the cathedral is a masterpiece of Gothic architecture. The nave is supported by a forest of slender piers, each topped with a delicate capital. The vaulting is a complex web of ribbed arches, creating a sense of height and lightness. The clerestory windows are filled with stained glass, depicting scenes from the Bible. The choir is a masterpiece of sculpture, with a large canopy over the altar. The apse is a semi-circular structure, also filled with stained glass. The overall effect is one of grandeur and beauty.

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**Cathedral Interior**





outlooks scour the horizon. Twice everybody has been called out, but with the aid of a powerful glass I undeceived them. The pitiless sun is broiling us. From my window, I examine at leisure the costumes of my hosts. Some wear yellow robes, others crimson, and they look very much like a gathering of professors of the Faculty. But the extraordinary headgear of the lamas attracts my attention. Some have great yellow plumes, others yellow pointed bonnets, trimmed with green ribbons; still others have enormous flat coiffures, yellow of course, which go very well with the lofty head-coverings of their colleagues. All these men, thus strangely costumed, walk up and down in the full sunshine, watching the horizon and exchanging remarks that I cannot understand, interspersed with laughter. Finally, weary of waiting so long, I set off.

I arrived about noon in the terrible heat, at the outskirts of Kiakhta, the end of my excursion, and thank Heaven that I am delivered for several days from the torture of traveling over the dreadful roads of the sandy plain, or on the mosquito-infested bank of the Selenga river! Later I visited Maimatchine, the Chinese town.

Its wall is not a hundred metres distant from the last house of Kiakhta. The two towns touch each other, in spite of the post between them that indicates the line of the Russo-Chinese frontier. The wall is composed of baked earth, chopped straw



and light wooden slats. It is peeling in places and crumbling at the top, and seems to me symbolic of China, that is falling to pieces. The entrance is infested with ragged idlers, and as soon as one sets foot inside, one is greeted by the most terrible odors, arising from neglect of sewers, and above all, an indefinable stale, penetrating, maddening smell—the Chinese odor. The streets are extremely narrow; it is as much as one can do to press close against the wall as a carriage passes; and they are paved after a fashion with tiles and disjointed stones. And strangely enough the vast *portecochères* of the shops are generally clean, well-kept and adorned with an awning. An entrance into these courtyards brings a troop of snub-nosed little dogs to the front, while the contrast presented by the interior of these houses of trade to the noisy street fills one with amazement. The yard is gay with flowers: roses, geraniums, and many others, while little cages full of birds are hung against the walls. The shop opens invitingly before you, and you enter a room that is dark, cool and exquisitely neat. The back of the shop is generally occupied by a sort of low platform that covers the stove, and there it is that the *personnel* of the house sleep side by side, like soldiers, on thick pieces of felt, covered with gay stuffs. The wall towards the courtyard is furnished with movable bamboo sashes, filled with oiled paper or stuff in various designs (glass is very rare). Everything is so

clean and well-arranged in here that it seems almost incredible, the street is so near. The furniture, without being exactly fit for a museum, is very handsome, being of varnished wood inlaid with copper. Here, for example, is a high wardrobe of dark-colored wood, without ornamentation of any kind, save four pieces of inlaid copper. It is severe but very beautiful. I ask the use of this piece, and a young man comes forward, seizes a handle hidden in the copperwork, and opens two doors. It is simply meant to hide a tiny staircase that is used for domestic purposes.

The back of the shop is full of glass cases, from which the sellers take innumerable bibelots: pieces of china, household utensils, chop-sticks, covered teacups, with metal saucers shaped like a flower, ewers, wine cups, etc., in a word the thousand little things necessary to everyday life. Then packages tied in silk paper are brought out, while the clerks skillfully open them with their long, slender fingers, and exhibit rare wares, gods in gilt bronze, silks, foulards, embroideries, tea, books of prayer and of obscenity, images. The masters of the shops were very gracious and very indulgent to my European curiosity, allowing themselves to be questioned about innumerable details and giving the prices quietly, without any effort to dispose of the articles.

But the shop does not absorb the entire house. There are rooms where no one is invited to go, fam-

ily rooms, I fancy, with domestic altars. Then, too, there were the workshops. Near a window an artist, seated on his heels, was patiently engraving characters upon a board. Further on clerks with their broad sleeves turned back were counting Russian money, while talking and laughing gently. A Chinese stretched on a bench was gravely reading a book, while near him two boys were learning to write. It was so cool in these carefully closed Chinese houses that it was a joy to work in them.

The Mongolian escort that had accompanied Prince Oukhtomski and his suite from Ourga to the frontier had stopped at the gates of Maimatchine. It was an unusual opportunity for me to see a foreign camp. So we went there after dinner, in the cool of the evening. The tents had been erected on an eminence to the southwest of the town, and everyone was dining or cooking. The faces of the Mongolian soldiers were not very reassuring. I should have preferred to travel alone than to have had them at my heels. They were dressed in miserable cotton shirts and down-at-heel boots. One passed by me entirely naked. Fires were lighted in holes dug in the ground, or stoves were placed on the grass, and the cooks were frying in abominable oil nameless horrors. I saw, however, some pancakes. To turn them, the cook seized them in his fingers, whose traces were left in black upon them. Seated on a stool, before a little bench, a Chinese officer, fat and jovial, was

taking his dinner with his two chop-sticks. He consumed the contents of all the little bowls offered him, and then was ready to enter into conversation with us by means of this Russo-Chinese *sabir* that is used on the frontier. He showed us with infinite pride a silver watch presented to him by the prince, and one of his colleagues, an honest old fellow, tried to dispose of an ash-receiver from the same source. A soldier stopped, open-mouthed, to listen to a conversation of which he could not understand a word, though he kept on scratching like a monkey, his body naked to the waist. These men were pleasant in manner, and doubtless are content with their vagabond life with all its dirt and squalor. for they did not seem at all unhappy.

To return to Kiakhta we must pass near the market-gardens of Maimatchine. Vegetables of every kind were planted and growing finely; indeed one did not wonder at the fertility of the land when the odor announced the fertilizer used on it. These vegetables are sold at low prices from door to door and form the chief food of the natives. Indeed the difference on the two sides of the frontier is most marked: on this side is the large establishment of the Russian, with out-houses and lands run without profit; on the other side, the economical and industrious Chinaman, content with little, patient and tenacious, who from a spot scarcely larger than one's hand re-

ceives profit and advantage. It would seem at first glance that the great neighbor, who loves his ease and lives carelessly, should become tributary to the patient Asiatic. Or is it that this anomaly is caused: that in modern Russia the firm will and brave daring is only among the upper class, that directs a docile malleable people, while in modern China, which is falling to pieces, the patient labor, the will to struggle, is found only in the middle classes of the population that a feeble, uncertain government does not know how to utilize?

I passed part of a day visiting the Gostiny-Dvor. It is the emporium of the Kiakhta tea, and through this enormous white building pass all the bales of tea that cross Mongolia to enter Russia. Since Russia has possessed the great steamers of the "Flotte Voluntaire" which establish direct communication with the Far East and the Black Sea, most of the tea is carried directly from Hankow to Odessa, for this mode of transport is of course much less troublesome and expensive than that across the roads and deserts of the Asiatic continent.

So that the tea would never take this way had it not been that the tariff favors the teas of Kiakhta, which pay little more than half of those going to Odessa, and if in addition Siberia did not need it herself. Siberia consumes very little tea in leaves as we know it, but in bricks, almost unknown in Europe.



A brick of tea looks like a tablet of blackish wood ten to fourteen inches long, seven wide and about one inch thick. It is made by submitting the tea leaves, which have been especially prepared, to a strong pressure. When wishing to use it a piece is broken off and put in boiling water as with ordinary tea. All the native Siberians and the peasants use it, since it is cheap, of small volume and easy to carry about. On account of their relative cheapness, the bricks are packed carelessly. They reach Kiakhta in matting-baskets. Each brick, marked with the name of the maker, is wrapped in paper, and then the basket is enveloped in a sort of coarse woolen carpet, but these precautions are far from being sufficient, and the packages reach Kiakhta in lamentable condition. Transported by boat, on the backs of camels, and in carts drawn by oxen, manipulated by a hundred different hands, each more careless than the other, left without shelter on the ground and in the rain, thrown roughly from one to another in transshipment, submitted, in a word, to all the adventures and dangers of a journey of several months across China and the Mongolian desert, their pitiable condition on their arrival at their destination may be imagined. Often the inside is as much ruined as the exterior; the bricks are broken, and mildewed; others do not turn up at all. All these drawbacks must be arranged for and remedied, for the Mongol drivers are supposed to be respon-

sible, though in fact they steal the contents of the boxes and especially the carpet and cords, for they are articles eagerly sought for on the steppe of Mongolia. When, for example, a driver reaches Ourga, in order to get bread he gives the baker some of the cords from his load, and allows, without murmuring, the merchant at Kiakhta to deduct from his salary the value of this precious article. Owing to all these misadventures, the losses occasioned in transporting are so great that I have seen, in a consignment of 150 boxes, 130 damaged.

The bricks, once arrived at the Gostiny-Dvor, are carefully brushed and sorted and packed anew with the old coverings in new cases, and are then taken to be sewed.

This sewing is a specialty of Kiakhta, and applies equally to tea in brick or leaf. In fact the tea before it has passed the custom-house has but a moderate value; the damage is of course a loss, but of no moment in comparison with that happening after it has crossed the frontier. Now the risk of carrying it across Siberia is considerable, or used to be before the building of the railroad. Slowly in open carts, in long files, it was carried to the nearest river; thousands of miles must be traveled in rain and snow and storm, and months passed before the tea reached its destination. It became necessary to protect it against the dangers of this journey. The cases were then sewed in the skins

of oxen, previously disinfected by a chemical bath from which they issued as soft as a chamois skin. Then the sewers enter on the scene. These are skillful workmen, who receive eleven cents a case and sew fifteen or twenty a day. They are armed with a needle twelve inches long, and slightly curved at the point, with sharp sides. With this little instrument they can readily cut an entire skin. The skin is measured to fit the case, and the ends are fastened together with cord. These men work with incredible rapidity; the pieces fly around them cut by the sharp needle, and the box, in a turn of the hand, is covered with the skin, which as it dries grows tighter, and serves as an impenetrable buckler. Henceforth it matters not whether it is roughly handled or left in the rain; its covering keeps it dry and insensible to changes of temperature. Unfortunately the process is rather a costly one. It is estimated that for a case of tea bricks the cost is \$1.27, and for the leaf tea \$1.95, and this expense is only necessary on account of its journey through Siberia. Now that the railroad and steamers can be used, it will make a sensible difference to those merchants who transport 20,000, 80,000 or 100,000 cases of tea.

Once sewed, the cases are delivered to a contractor, who undertakes to send them to their destination, generally Nijni-Novgorod or Irbit, where in February is held the great Fair of Siberia.

Before leaving the Gostiny-Dvor, a duty must

be paid on each case, and the money thus received is very judiciously expended upon the roads such as "the Road of the Merchants."

But with the advent of the railroad such precautions will be no longer necessary, so that in all probability Kiakhta will soon degenerate into a frontier station on the caravan route.

I returned to Maimatchine in a broiling sun and stopped for a chat with Syn-Tai-loun, who offered us in his cool shop tea and numberless other dainties: dried fruit, whose kernel is sugared, pepper bonbons, and custards with dried fruits, and last of all a pipe and a narghil. The tiny pipe was smoked in two puffs; as for the narghil, slender and graceful, it was by no means disagreeable.

The temple of Maimatchine looks charming from the outside. It is placed at the end of a great courtyard adorned with flowers and shrubs in boxes, and the front part of it is used for a theatre. Inside it is almost impossible to walk about, owing to the quantity of statues. The hall is very dark, but beautifully carved, full of vases, sculptures and enormous statues of hideous gods, some of whom are dressed in silken robes.

Outside the city gates, in the sunshine and dust, are swarms of Asiatics: Mongols, Chinese, and Bourriats, of every sort and color from white to black, from lemon to bronze, with costumes and head-coverings of every variety possible; warriors in yellow robes and conical hats with rolling

brims; Chinese in blue robes; porters in unspeakable rags, with a white mushroom hat and red tassel; idlers of every sort; beggars, purchasers. Some wander from shop to shop; others are composedly preparing their meal; one man, crouched before a little bench, is making good use of his chopsticks and enjoying his breakfast. An idler, standing under an awning, is talking with a merchant, and has lifted his blue dress to his shoulders, that he may be cool. No one minds the nudity that is seen at every step; women are not allowed near the frontier. Sellers sitting on their heels behind their wares or food, peacefully await custom; patient artisans are working at their trade, almost in the street; men, covered with dust, lead long strings of carts, drawn by oxen; every now and then a neat little vehicle leaves the town drawn by one horse and containing two well-dressed laughing Chinese. Where are they going? To Ourga, the Holy City, or else to Oulane-Bourgasse, the village of amusement. Finally Mongol horsemen, almost standing on their little, lively horses, pass quickly by, scattering the crowd by guttural exclamations. It is a hurly-burly, a swarming, an uproar, full of filth and infection, that beggars description under the blinding sunshine and stifling dust.

I have received an invitation to go into the country to a Chinese dinner. Two ducks, two chickens, a milk-pig, salt and wine have already



been sent out. I confess my curiosity is so excited that I feel nervous, as if at the approach of a great event. For several days I have been exercising myself in the use of the Chinese chopsticks and to-day I am to discover if I shall be able to manage them, or must in humiliation fall back upon a fork.

At last the company was all assembled in the beautiful room, a dozen Russians and myself. The Chinese sat down with us, though they contented themselves with overlooking the service and giving orders, while a cloud of clerks transformed into waiters gathered around us.

The table was literally covered with china saucers or cups, the largest of which served as soup plates, and the smallest, about the size of a nut, as liqueur glasses. Before each person was placed a saucer containing soya vinegar, which was very thick and black. The Chinese always dip each mouthful in it. Let us add chopsticks of black wood (for we are among simple people, and ivory chopsticks are an unknown luxury to them), and last of all tiny china spoons.

The *hors-d'œuvres* fill the table, and are so numerous and frequently changed, and I am so busy with my chopsticks, that I could not note them all. However, I remember shrimps, slices of jellyfish, mingled with cucumbers, pigs' ears with cucumbers, sliced meat, hard eggs quite black and rolled like sausage and served with jelly, and a number of articles of which I had no knowledge.

As I said before, we are dining with plain people, representatives of the great commercial Chinese houses; nor was it a ceremonious affair, and one bowl served for two or three. Each one fished in it in turn with fork or stick, then dipped the mouthful in the saucer of vinegar. I was quite fascinated by my new utensil and managed all the dishes without mishap. Next came the soups. Each one of us took a little vinegar in his china spoon, and then dipped into the common bowl. There were a soup with chopped green herbs, a vegetable soup with fragrant herbs, a chicken soup, and an unknown soup.

Then (though I am not sure of the order of precedence) green beans and cabbage with sauce; cubes of fat mutton, that positively melted in the mouth; then meat balls fried very brown; a sort of sauce with wild garlic; little brown pieces of mutton; koucho, a sort of thick cake, about as big as the palm of the hand, with garlic, which, to the joy of our hosts, everybody liked and for more of which everybody asked.

Then came duck soup, stuffed melon, pork, and holothuria soup, forcemeat balls, meat pasties, thin macaroni soup, milk-pig flattened and browned (one of the triumphs of Maimatchine cookery); then a copper vessel like a samovar with a spout, in which were boiling mixed together *pêle mêle* the remains of all the dishes that had appeared on the table—it was not good—and at last a bowl of rice

without salt or water, that marked the end of the repast. By that the host meant, since he had exhausted all the resources of his cook, there remained nothing more to offer his guests but the most common article of diet—rice. The guests are expected to reply to this politeness by refusing the rice, as a sign they are no longer hungry. Unfortunately Europeans are not always conversant with this symbol, and either from courtesy or taste eat the final rice, to the great despair of their entertainer. After leaving the table, tea and dried fruits were served. I must not forget that during the meal a sort of rice brandy called wai-go-lon was served in tiny toy cups; it is drunk very hot and must be taken at a swallow. If I add that this drink mounts readily to the head, and that as soon as the cup is empty it is promptly filled, it will be seen that I was often forced into the impoliteness of letting my brandy grow cold, in order to be able to note the menu.

At Maimatchine a good deal of opium is smoked, which is explained by the abnormal life of the place. The law will not allow Chinese women to remain near the frontier. The residents of Maimatchine are then unmarried or separated from their families. Generally the clerks are engaged for three years, during which time they have no family life, and the passing distractions of Troitskosavsk or Oulane-Bourgasse are inadequate to soften their exile, so all that have the means smoke

opium. At my request, I was given the address of a well-known smoker and went to pay him a visit, and he gave me a demonstration with much amiability. He took from a shelf a long pipe with an enormous bowl, then he took with a needle a little ball of opium, which he put in the flame. The ball, swelled, hardened and cooked; he turned it about in his long fingers, and finally placed it in the bowl of his pipe. "Will you taste it?" he asked me, smiling. The temptation, I confess, was strong, but I was overcome by the thought of the ensuing nausea. The Chinaman promptly availed himself of the delicious vapors, and, stretched on a couch, smoked and smoked with quick puffs. "It is very good," he concluded, as I took my leave.

My hosts drove me one afternoon to Oulane-Bourgasse. It is a sort of *lieu de plaisir* to which the Celestials resort against the commands of the prefect of Maimatchine, who is a very strict guardian of the virtue of his people. We trotted at a smart pace over the rough road intersecting the steppe, which was covered with a short, thick grass, upon which cattle were feeding. The mountain stood blue against the horizon, and as far as the eye could reach all was bare and desolate. We stopped to photograph the cottage of some poor Mongolians and were invited to take tea. The yourte was formed of a piece of felt stretched over branches of trees. The men were sitting on their heels, and as we approached a little child ran

forward, naked save for a pair of great boots. The mistress of the place was very gracious and was quite young and pretty and her headdress was most unusual. Her hair, glued to infinite stiffness, stood out at each side of her head like two gigantic ears. In the centre of the yourte was a stove surmounted by a caldron, in which a black liquid was boiling which was served to us as tea in wooden cups after having been strained in some fashion and mixed with sour milk.

At last we reach Oulane-Bourgasse. It is a village of Mongolian yourtes, and as we walked about, in spite of the efforts of several of the natives to distract our attention, we perceived the brilliantly-painted carriage used by Tjur-gou-teheye, the prefect of Maimatchine. The virtuous functionary is more severe with his employees than with himself. Women in gaily-colored robes flitted past under the leadership of a dirty servant. On all sides were wrinkled, weather-beaten old women, dirty Mongolians, children and dogs. It was a very ugly village of most unattractive appearance.

After leaving Maimatchine I went through the undulating steppe, to visit at the home of one of the great tea merchants of Kiakhta, A. M. Louchnikof, at Oust-Kerane, where at great expense the principal merchants of Kiakhta have built close together beautiful country-houses. One is struck with amazement at the sight of an oasis of verdure rising amid the bare steppe, and I was still



more delighted to find in so comfortable a house so numerous and brilliant a company. Our host, who suffers from rheumatism and never leaves his rolling-chair, is a man of rare intelligence, and his malady, which he supports with stoicism and to which he never alludes, has extinguished neither the vivacity of his mind nor the wit of his conversation. He has eleven living children, six girls and five boys, engrossed in various occupations ranging from trade to the plastic arts, from journalism to the army. He loves a full life, and, condemned himself to be still, he finds his happiness in the incessant movement of the guests who are eager to come to his house. There are now at least thirty of us. Often there are visitors for but a meal, and others who, like myself, are happy in forgetting everything else in the delights of this charming abode.

Our life is very simple: in the morning, an ice-cold bath in the little river, followed by a walk through the meadows, a ride to the distant forest, or a row on the willow-bordered stream; the rest of the day we talk, or read, or work as the fancy takes us, with perfect independence.

I am feeling rested, refreshed by the sympathy met in this charming home, a sympathy that surrounds without annoying you and is altogether delightful. It is true Russian hospitality. All this varied society: merchants, officers, engineers, *littérateurs*, idlers, tourists, ebbs and flows at its ease

around the master of the house nailed to his rolling-chair. Alexis Mikhailovitch, playing with his watch-chain, a long chain falling from his neck and ornamented with a great diamond, has his chair rolled from group to group, hiding his pain, never intruding a single complaint among this bubbling youthfulness, tossing pleasant or caustic remarks here and there. He is the soul of that society which he sustains by incessant labor.

It is with infinite regret that I tear myself away from so charming an abode and find myself on a mountain road, among defiles so difficult and dangerous, whose only reward is the superb views from their tops over the distant valleys veiled in delicate blue to the dim horizon. The descents, which are so frightfully steep that we are forced to leave the carriage, are succeeded by ascents so violent that the tarentass must be wedged by a bar of iron to prevent it from rolling backwards and carrying the horses along with it. The villages, through which we pass are peopled with Cossacks and I went among them with a prejudice in their favor, as a sort of reaction against all the evil things that were said of them throughout Siberia. Nowhere in this land, where man is so hostile to man, have I met with such churlishness, impudence, laziness, and deceit, not only towards me, for that would amount to very little, but towards everyone. The Cossacks of the Djida richly merit the detestable reputation acquired by the rest of their brethren

in the rest of Siberia. At last we reached the village of Tsekir, where we left our equipages to take those of the proprietor of a gold mine, who had invited us to pay him a visit.

The mountain road leading to the placer was abominable. It was winding, capricious, dusty, and full of holes, that were badly filled in by throwing across the road trunks of trees, that slipped under the horses' feet, and tossed the carriage madly about. We were more than four hours in making 25 versts. But all things have an end; we arrived safe and sound at the Glafirovski mine, where the intendant in frock and white cravat received with profound bows His Excellency, the inspector, and, what was of infinitely more importance, gave us a substantial luncheon. Two days, passed in examining this mine and its neighbor, Nikolski, in company with the inspector, have given me a tolerable idea of the manner in which Siberian mines are worked.

The placers are about three miles from the Chinese frontier, in the bosom of broad valleys, traversed by a purling rivulet. The gold-bearing sand is almost on top of the earth, which naturally is of great advantage. It is carried in little one-horse wagons to a central building, reached by an inclined plane. At the height of thirty-five feet is a platform, in which is a great opening that receives the contents of the wagons, and which communicates with a hollow cylinder pierced with holes of

decreasing size, through which runs a current of water that turns it round and round. The centrifugal force pushes the large pebbles to one side (and sometimes the large *pépites*), while the earth and light sands are carried by the water with a gentle fall over a series of steps furnished with felt, and growing ever more narrow. So that at the first step the light gold is deposited on the felt; as for the mud, which is generally very heavy and falls to the bottom, it is taken up carefully and carried to another inclined plane, through which runs a little stream, that is presided over by a great Cossack. Armed with a paddle, the Cossack slowly stirs the mud in the running water. His practiced eye allows only the little pebbles and particles of earth to escape. Gradually the mud grows clear, is washed, and decreases in volume, and there remains but a little pile that is moved by the action of the water. The workman then pours in mercury, and after having stirred it some minutes he allows all that the mercury has not absorbed to escape. It only remains then to pour the amalgam into a crucible and to submit it to the action of heat. The mercury evaporates quickly, leaving behind a yellowish, porous, ugly and very heavy metal, which is gold.

But do not imagine this gold belongs yet to the proprietor, at whose expense it is extracted. He is forced to sell it to the State.

Not only must he have been put to great ex-

pense to inaugurate this work, have submitted to annoyances without number, enormous direct taxes and considerable indirect ones, but also he must have paid and fed all his laborers and have waited himself until all the Draconian formalities exacted by Russian law have been fulfilled, before he can touch any of his own profits.

I was greatly interested in seeing the buildings and sleeping rooms of the workmen. They are but sheds, dark, damp and indescribably filthy. The men themselves are dirty, ragged and overworked. To be sure, they are to a great extent the scum of Siberian population, but still they are human beings, bound like slaves to a contract that holds them relentlessly, without their power to break it. The Russian law has already accomplished much to ameliorate their condition; but where is there an "Ispravnik" who will insist upon the execution of the law, when he is paid both by the State and the proprietor? Complain? To whom would the miners complain? Every interest is here leagued against them and when at last they are free who in the distant city would trouble themselves about their complaints? I am speaking of the mines in general scattered throughout the depths of Siberia. At the same time it seems as if much of this misery was unavoidable. The owner of a placer can rarely administer charity or assistance; his own work is out of proportion to its results, either gain or loss; he is engaged in a game



that may absolutely ruin or suddenly enrich him. Money from gambling is rarely satisfactory. There is something feverish, abnormal, in this seeking for gold, that will always make it stand apart from the labors of other great industries.

Overwhelmed with provisions and courtesies by the intendant, from whom the departure of the inspector lifts a great load, we set off in the early morning over our frightful road, which in spite of all its discomforts is enchanting. It traverses forests of cedars and larches, of colossal dimensions and wonderful greenness, against which stand out in bold relief the white birches, amid murmuring, limpid streams and valleys lying peacefully in the sunshine, whose bosoms are full of gold. All the villages through which we pass for two days are situated in the midst of delicious wooded mountains, often reminding me of the Vosges, through which winds with many a turn and twist and purling song the little Djida. We pass, too, among meadows the wealth and variety of whose flora is incomparable. I noticed strange marguerites of a delicate violet with yellow hearts, the lilac colored flowers of the wild garlic, the great blue balls of thistles, pink, yellow, white flowers of many kinds, and finally a star-shaped flower so deep a blue it might have been dyed. What a delight to the eye is this smiling Siberia on the very threshold of autumn!

THE BASIN OF THE AMUR.



## XXXII.

### THE BASIN OF THE AMUR.

#### LUXURIANT VEGETATION—A BEAUTIFUL REGION —VLADIVOSTOK.

For two days we have been speeding over the railroad, thickly dotted with workmen, and naturally our conversation falls often upon technical questions relative to the railroad that is carrying us along. I learn, for example, that the immense marshy plain that we are now crossing, where autumn inundations are of such frequent occurrence, is formed of an impenetrable subsoil of loam, with a slight layer of black earth. The result is that the summer rains form into lakes over the prairies to such an extent that often the railroad, detached from the land, floats for miles supported by its sleepers. But all that is necessary to restore a proper state of habitation in these valleys is to dig drain ditches, which is done by the few intelligent colonists settled along the road. This plain is an impenetrable steppe, alternated with marshy plateaus and seas of stagnant water. It is, too, covered with a vegetation so luxuriant that it is difficult to reach the soil and which at times attains such heights that the cows grazing there are lost to sight. Flowers are scattered in myriads amid this splendid vegetation. I especially noticed

pink carnations, that I thought could only grow in cultivated gardens. The forest, too, is radiantly beautiful. I counted twenty-two different kinds of trees, some of which had attained royal proportions.

But as we advance southward, villages grow more numerous, strung along on the hilltops like beads on a necklace. They are inhabited chiefly by emigrants from Little Russia, who live now in full and plenty. I stopped in one of these villages. I saw excellent kitchen-gardens. Of course they belong to Chinese or Koreans who have rented them and who work them themselves. This is an art in which the Russian peasant does not shine. Whenever in all this part of Siberia one sees a market or kitchen-garden in a flourishing condition one may be sure that no Russian has ever put his hand there, save to gather the fruit and vegetables, but that yellow gardeners have done it all. The Russians console themselves by saying: "Bah! some fine day we will chase these Manzis (a sobriquet for Chinese) away!" But that may not be so easy after all.

As we advance through the grassy plain, flocks of pheasants and wild duck, aroused by the passage of the train, take flight and are lost in the distance. At last we enter the region of fruit. Grapes, melons, watermelons, are offered for sale in abundance at the stations where we stop. We are rapidly approaching the South, and in a few hours will





The first part of the book is devoted to a general survey of the Greek Church in the Far East. The author discusses the history of the Church in the Far East, the different branches of the Church, and the present state of the Church in the Far East.

The second part of the book is devoted to a detailed study of the Greek Church in the Far East. The author discusses the history of the Church in the Far East, the different branches of the Church, and the present state of the Church in the Far East. The author also discusses the role of the Church in the Far East, the influence of the Church on the people, and the future of the Church in the Far East.

The third part of the book is devoted to a study of the Greek Church in the Far East. The author discusses the history of the Church in the Far East, the different branches of the Church, and the present state of the Church in the Far East.

**Greek Church, Vladivostok, Siberia**

The fourth part of the book is devoted to a study of the Greek Church in the Far East. The author discusses the history of the Church in the Far East, the different branches of the Church, and the present state of the Church in the Far East.





reach the ocean and Vladivostok, the end of Asia.

We reached the station in the middle of a September night and finished our nap in the station. On awakening we find ourselves at the port. On the left the hills are terraced with beautiful white houses, while before us stretches a glorious bay, on which great steel men-of-war are riding at anchor. On all sides are boats, moving ships, and Chinese junks that lift their square sails and slip away, carried by the breeze towards the open, past the long, dark green hills. I am so fascinated with the beauty of it all I cannot gaze enough, but sit at the window of my car lost in delightful contemplation. The sea, this great bay, this Golden Horn, as it is called, is for me the end of my journey and deliverance. At the station I read, full of pardonable pride, a sign-board: "Vladivostok, from St. Petersburg 10,558 kilos" (6,564 miles), and I remember that I have come all these miles, slowly, almost without thinking about it.

The town is full of people, the hotels full to suffocation, and each is moreover more execrable than the other, but after long negotiation I obtain at the German inn, "The Golden Horn," a wretched bit of a room in which to take shelter.

The aspect of Vladivostok is charming. It is by far the prettiest of all Siberian towns, with its hills, in whose verdure nestle white houses, and its beautiful roads stretching out among the blue mountains. Then, too, it is a very animated port,



where predominates the Yellow Race. Chinese and Koreans are everywhere, cover all the roads of construction, fill the squares, and the embrasures of the *porte-cochères*. They are nearly always badly dressed, the Koreans in ample garments of white linen, the Chinese in blue cotton. Often they are ragged or are bare to the waist. Nothing could afford a livelier picture of poverty, tenacious of life. At sight of them, one comprehends as never before what is meant by the "yellow invasion." All this movement in the streets is novel to one who has just passed six months in sleepy Siberia. I simply revelled in it, down to its minutest detail. It amused me to observe that it is the Chinaman who does everything here, and also to watch the Japanese, with coarse hair, carefully washed faces, little observant black eyes and European clothes, which gave them the air of *valets de chambre*, who yesterday polished your boots and to-day have come into a good fortune.

The eleventh of September is a festival for the Yellow Races. They have taken possession of the streets: Chinese freshly plaited and shaved, brutish-looking Koreans, Japanese and little Japanese women trotting along on their wooden clogs. A little outside of the town there is a Chinese *champ de fête*. There is a temple, near which is a stove into which they throw sheets of paper upon which are printed prayers, and fireworks are cracking. A performance in an open-air theatre,

in spite of the wind, fills with delight the spectators, who are standing or sitting on their heels, while a multitude of hawkers expose their wares, that are bought by the great idle crowd with eagerness.

The courtesies of these hospitable Russians are leaving a sweet souvenir of my last Siberian hours. But all the inhabitants of this charming town complain of its terrible climate, of the awful winds that prevail during the winter, of its dampness, and, above all else, of the frightful cost of living, even taking into account colonial salaries. Vladivostok is a free port, but everything is exceedingly dear, because it must come from outside, and because the importers, few in number, are absolutely unscrupulous. At the hotel a bottle of beer costs 30 cents—and it is Japanese at that. The house of Kunst & Albers of Hamburg, which unites in its relentless tentacles every imaginable trade, including exchange, banking and freight, sells all sorts of German rubbish at fabulous prices, and the public seems fairly well satisfied. A bottle of German cologne brought on German ships, and which has cost the veriest trifle of duty, which in Germany costs 14 cents at retail, costs here 55 cents. And so it is with everything else.

Vladivostok leaves the impression of one of those towns which are charming at first, but where no one remains long who is not forced to do so. Half of the population is composed of officials, and if

one wishes to form a clear idea of the uncertainty of its population it is only necessary to know that women are here in the proportion of 18 to 100! Such a predominance of masculine population indicates clearly that people do not come here for pleasure or for a long stay. In spite of the continued efforts of the Russian Government to attract population, the town will be for many a year yet little more than a moving camp. Nay, more, should the Ministry persist in that deplorable course of burdening with excessive duties the new fields that it should encourage, Vladivostok will probably rapidly fall below its present status. At St. Petersburg, the number of soldiers stationed here from Nicholskoye to the forts dominating the shore and the harbors is known to a man, but the authorities are profoundly ignorant of the price of a pound of meat, a quart of petroleum, or a load of wood.

The above reflections were interrupted by an uproar under my window. Inquiry into the cause resulted in learning that some Chinese prisoners were passing. They were ragged, dirty, their pigtailed were rolled around their heads, as, sullen and morose, they walked between a guard of soldiers and the gaping crowd. Their capture was effected in rather a strange fashion. A lawyer of the town had gone with some friends to a neighboring island, hunting a kind of deer whose horns sell at enormous prices in China, and was assassinated during the



Vladivostok—Eastern Terminal of the  
Trans-Siberian Railway







day. His friends found his body and informed the Governor, who sent a detachment of three hundred soldiers to beat the wooded island and catch the assassins, while a gunboat cruised about to prevent any escape by flight. These men catchers worked away for several days and their hunt was terminated by the capture of five Chinese brigands. Truly this land is full of surprises.

And now I am bidding goodbye to this mysterious Siberia, of which I had dreamed so long, this enormous land, which for me henceforth must be divided into cities and villages, hostile and friendly sites and loved corners. I am quitting fertile Siberia, smiling Siberia, sad Siberia, with its cruel winters. And while I shall live in the hope of returning, I am quite willing to go now, since I feel the need of rest and at the same time of being awakened into life after this sleeping desert; the need of sensations of art, after so long contact with brutal nature; the need of laughter after the sad basin of the Amur.



RUSSIAN POLICY IN THE EAST.





## XXXIII.

### RUSSIAN POLICY IN THE EAST.

ITS DEVELOPMENT AND AIMS—BRIEF CONSIDERATION OF THE PROBABLE FUTURE  
RUSSIA IN THE EAST.

BY FLORENCE MACINTYRE TYSON.

Every one is familiar with the famous reply of Lord Beaconsfield to a young woman who applied to him at a dinner table for information on the Eastern Question.

“My dear young lady,” said that distinguished statesman, “there never were but two people who understood the Eastern Question,—myself and another man. That man is dead, and I have forgotten all about it.” But in the years that have rolled by since that epigram was uttered this Eastern Question, that tortured the brains of European diplomats and statesmen for so long, has been robbed of much of its complexity owing to two new factors that have entered into it—the tremendous advance in influence made by Russia, and the building of the Trans-Caspian and Trans-Siberian railroads—so that now it might almost be said the Eastern Question has become, “What will Russia do?”

One of the inherent advantages of an autocratic government is continuity of purpose and hence, in

all healthy absolute monarchies, a well-directed foreign policy.

In order to appreciate how much England has suffered from the lack of this continuity in political policy, one has but to call to mind the abandonment of the Transvaal, and of Chinese Gordon at Khartoum by Gladstone. How much these acts cost the English nation is only just beginning to be understood, but the historian of the future will probably class them with the policy of George III. towards the American colonies. Such things could not happen in Russia, where one Tzar takes up the work of his predecessor and, imbued practically with the same ideas, carries it on to completion; where revulsions of popular feeling and a change of ministry meaning a different foreign policy are unknown.

What, then, is the foreign policy which the Tzars pursue with such constant purpose?

A glance at the map of Asia may help us to determine this question. It is not to absorb all that continent, as some authorities would have us believe, but to obtain outlets to the Pacific, the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean, which will enable Russia to utilize to the best advantage the territory she already possesses with all its boundless natural resources.

There are, then, three things that Russian statesmen passionately desire. First, as much of the Turkish Empire as can be secured, the city of

Constantinople and Asia Minor being considered of prime importance, since this would give an outlet to the Mediterranean and be of enormous strategic and commercial importance, and the stimulus to Russian commerce and manufactures would simply be incalculable. Most of European Turkey she is willing to give to Austria, if this should be insisted upon by that country. To France and Germany may fall Syria, and England may command the common mouth of the Tigris and Euphrates, under the same conditions. But Constantinople and enough of Asia Minor to give her control of the Ægean Sea, with land communication along the shores of the Black Sea to her possessions in the Caucasus, are regarded by her as indispensable, and quite worth fighting for, if not to be gotten under other conditions, though her statesmen, confessedly the keenest diplomats of Europe, hope to obtain this result by the gradual disintegration of the Turkish Empire. So hers is at present a waiting policy, because she feels convinced that Turkey will fall to pieces of its own weight (which is, of course, but another name for incapacity), and because at the death of Francis Joseph, Emperor of Austria, now upwards of seventy-four, she looks for the division of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in which case that monarchy would not be in a condition to demand so much as would be the case were the Ottoman Empire to be divided now. And this suggests the thought: Is this divi-

sion of the Austro-Hungarian Empire probable?

The Dual Empire is an agglomeration of many races held together by the accident of the Hapsburg crown. It has a population of forty-six million, twenty million in Hungary and twenty-six million in Austria. Hungary has its own parliament, and is united with Austria but in the executive branch, and for the national defense, but were Hungary not to elect the Hapsburg heir as her king, which course she is quite free to pursue, such action would entail the division of the empire.

But there is besides another important point, not usually considered—Pan-Germanism—i. e., that all peoples of the German race should be united under one flag, that of the German Empire.

This movement is widespread, both in Germany and Austria; it has its leaders, its newspapers, its atlas and its flag, and enjoys the support and sympathy of no less a personage than the Kaiser himself.

Sir Rowland Blennerhassett thus describes its political aims: "This party now openly desires the disintegration of the Austrian Empire, and the annexation of the German portions to Germany with the extension of the German Empire to the shores of the Adriatic." The German Emperor recently in a speech at Bonn gave utterance to similar sentiments when he said: "Why did the old Empire (German) fail? Because its extent was not coterminous with that of the German race.



In order to be assured of success, an empire should be peopled by one race, and its boundaries should include within its limits all the possessions of that race.”

It is then highly probable that, at the death of Francis Joseph, Germany will endeavor to annex the Austrian half of the Dual Monarchy, with the assistance and co-operation of the Germans of Austria. This movement, besides the natural desire of men of the same race to be under one government, is influenced by a powerful material reason. It would bring Germany to the Adriatic and enormously enlarge its domestic markets.

One of the reasons of the great wealth of the United States is her large domestic market, which enables persons to conduct business enterprises on a gigantic scale impossible in Europe. As this argument appeals to everyone's pocket, it cannot fail to be a powerful one.

This seems to me to be a question much more fraught with danger to the peace of Europe than what is technically known as the “Near Eastern Question.” Germany is building a railroad through Asia Minor to Bagdad under a concession from the Turkish Government, and Germany has been moving Heaven and earth to “stand in” with Turkey. It was Germany who armed the Turkish soldiers during the last war with Greece, and German officers who drew up the plan of campaign, and the Kaiser is the friend and protector of the

Sultan. The concession to build this railroad is the result. Russia looks upon this railroad with extreme jealousy and regards it as an invasion of her own peculiar sphere. Indeed a war between Russia and Germany in the future would seem by no means improbable.

This brings us to the second object of Russian foreign policy, viz.: the possession of the Persian Gulf or at least an outlet on that gulf. Of course Persia herself is perfectly helpless and nothing but the strongest outside interference can prevent its accomplishment, since Russia regards it as of most vital importance for the proper development of Central Asia.

England, however, has announced that she would regard the occupation of the Persian Gulf as a serious menace to her own safety and as a *casus belli*. Many people believe that England and Germany have formed a secret agreement whose terms allow Germany a port on the gulf as a terminus for her Bagdad railroad, in return for which Germany is to join with England in preventing Russian entrance into the Persian Gulf, where England already has fortified stations. Russia is already practical master of Teheran and all Northern Persia, so that the spheres of influence are in dangerously close proximity.

Let us now consider the effect upon the politics of Europe of the building of the great Russian railroads from Europe into Asia,—the Trans-Cas-

pian and the Trans-Siberian. The marvelous revolution and great strategic effect of these narrow ribbons of steel are just beginning to be appreciated.

Within the last century, certainly since the battle of Waterloo, the leading rôle in European politics has been taken by England. She has enlarged and perfected her colonial empire, till it has reached superb proportions. In 1881 she took possession of Egypt and has since possessed herself of Africa, well-nigh from Cairo to the Cape. She has fortified points of immense military value, such as Gibraltar, Aden, Singapore and Hong-Kong.

In 1877 she tore from Russia the fruits of her victory over Turkey, and placed fleets in the Cattegat and Dardanelles, and Russia was powerless. With little or no navy, the serried battalions of her splendid army were of no avail.

Within a very short time, England carried matters with a high hand against France at Fashoda. Again an inferior navy and another submission, till it would seem that the foreign colonies of France are but held by the permission of England.

The fact that armies could not be used against her has always been England's strength, and to this she owes greatly her huge colonial empire and the trade that has followed in its wake.

Now, however, a new factor and a mighty change have to be reckoned with. Russia, realizing the cause of her defeat in 1877, determined to get

within striking distance of England where her army might have full play. And so she has built the Trans-Caspian railway from the shores of the Caspian to the frontiers of Afghanistan, then onward through Central Asia to Adijan, near the Chinese frontier, a total length in all of 1,261 miles. Thus is she approaching India and is close to Herat, which is considered the key to that country. Had the English foreign policy been as far-sighted as the Russian, the English would now be masters of Afghanistan, in at least its southern portion, and with the mountain passes in her hands, the difficulty of an hostile invasion would have increased enormously; but the expense was considered too great, and the benefits too remote, just the same argument we hear to-day with regard to our own colonial policy, for to few is the gift of looking into the future vouchsafed.

Does then Russia desire to have India? Not at all; but when a squeeze is attempted, such as the Turkish *coup* of 1877, Russia threatens the invasion of India, and the British fleet melts away. The Russian position in Manchuria to-day would be untenable were it not for this lever. In point of fact, it is much easier to seize the territories of defenseless China than to attack those of England. Then, too, Russia needs money to develop her immense internal resources, to build railroads, exploit mines, establish factories, etc., and the invasion of India, a project involving enormous ex-

pense and uncertain results, would be the height of folly and is not contemplated by her. In proof of which witness her apathy during the storm and stress of the Boer war, though no more favorable opportunity can ever occur.

We now reach the third aim of Russian foreign policy, the possession of Mongolia and Manchuria—in a word, Northern China.

The events of 1904 have demonstrated to the world the fact that Russia's intentions in the far east were not to be achieved without determined opposition. The rise of Japan and the consequent conflict in Manchuria are not, as yet, finished history at this writing, but the immediate effects of the war in Chinese territory have already been felt by the rest of the civilized world.

The situation in northeastern Asia at the outbreak of hostilities in February, 1904, was briefly as follows: A glance at the latest maps published before that time will show that Russia was in possession of the Trans-Siberian railway completed as far as Vladivostok on the Pacific, while from Harbin, some hundreds of miles westward, a finished line ran south through Manchuria and terminated at Dalny and Port Arthur on the Liao-tung peninsula. From Mukden, the ancient capital of the Manchus, a further extension of the road passed through Niuchwang and entered the Chinese capital Peking. In addition to her vast holdings in Siberia, Russia had practically assimilated the



large section of territory covered by these lately built railway lines, known as Manchuria, and until 1895 a part of the Chinese Empire.

Not only had she occupied Manchuria with her troops, but hundreds of millions of dollars had been poured into the country to force its rapid development and Russianization. A strong and extensive banking system was established, permanent cities were constructed at Harbin, Dalny and Port Arthur, and in addition the last named town was rendered supposedly impregnable by the most elaborate system of fortifications designed in recent years. It has been estimated that Russia's expenditures in this region aggregated more than three hundred millions of dollars, all of which she reasonably expected to have returned to her in profits from the enormous trade which the fertility and resources of the country held in promise.

Moscow, 5,800 miles distant, was in communication with Port Arthur by railway, and it was expected that troops could be mobilized from her military headquarters even at this distant fringe of her vast empire.

The astonishingly rapid rise of Japan nevertheless to a front rank among the powers of the earth checked the vast designs of this Slavonic Empire. It is probably true that Russia did not believe war would come so quickly as it did result from her strategic maneuvers in the far east. She was doubtless unprepared for the conflict which Japan

forced upon her in the early days of 1904, and through the course of that year was swept steadily back before her preparations could be made. A long series of Japanese victories beginning at Port Arthur with Admiral Togo's attack, the invasion of Korea and Manchuria by the Japanese armies, the sweeping back of the Tzar's men to the ancient capital of Manchuria, and the ferocious storming of her impregnable fortress by General Nodzu at the end of a disastrous year, thoroughly halted for the time Russia's machinations in the neighborhood of China.

Japanese prestige has enormously increased at the Chinese court since she successfully attempted combat with a first-class military power, and Russian influence has received the most crushing blow of its history, not only in Asia, but throughout the world. What resources the Japanese have for continuing an imperialistic policy, to what extent they will force their aggressions, how they will carry themselves after raising their reputation to a height, remains to be seen. It is probable, however, that this conflict marks the turning point in Russia's policy with regard to Eastern Asia. A new power has stepped into the field, a power which has intelligence, industry, bravery, and in addition the immense advantage of being upon the spot where her influence is to be exerted, and of being a race not unrelated to the horde which she will endeavor to dominate.

Russia has been forced back from the coast which she so earnestly coveted; her one ice free port has been wrested from her. It is unlikely, however, that the aspirations and traditions of her history since Peter the Great will be extinguished by this blow. Indeed it is more probable that she will suffer in the present losses which might seem, to one of Anglo-Saxon blood, irretrievable, and with the persistence of a Slav recuperate and insidiously work her way down again more securely to the position she formerly occupied.

Russia has no aspirations outside of Asia. She does not desire a share of Africa or South America as do France and Germany.

Her policy, however, is to exclude foreign trade from her colonies in favor of her own, which is the antithesis of the policy of England, who has always been an advocate of the "open door" and whose colonies are free to the trade of foreign nations, on the same terms as her own. Equal opportunity to all is her motto, and it is owing to her efforts that the markets of the world are what they are. If Russia is allowed to absorb any considerable portion of China, that portion will be closed to foreign commerce, if not immediately on Russian possession, as soon thereafter as she has gained a foothold and considers such action safe.

The average imports of Japan are about one hundred and fifty million dollars, and those of China approximately the same amount. Were the

ports of China free to the world her imports would soon increase tenfold, and this would mean prosperity to our Pacific Coast, with the absorption of any agricultural surplus there.

In view of this fact, the United States should use every effort to prevent Russia from enlarging her sphere in China. How great a peril this is to American commerce is not generally appreciated in this country, where such considerations are regarded as too remote.

In 1867 when Mr. Seward purchased Alaska there was a howl of indignation in many quarters. Scarcely more than thirty-seven years have passed, and yet, aside from its economic value, how would our strategists view a Russian stronghold at Sitka and others in the Aleutian islands within striking distance of our Pacific coast?

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Having given a short synopsis of Russian policy, let us consider very briefly the probable future of Russia in the East.

Russia's strength, as I have already said, lies in her ability to assimilate Eastern peoples, making them not merely contented under her rule, but essentially Russian.

England governs well and justly, but the natives under her always remain foreigners.

The outlet to the Pacific has already been gained

by Russia, and it seems certain that sooner or later she must control Constantinople, while any control in the Persian Gulf is highly improbable owing to the opposition of both England and Germany.

The Russian Empire now, 1905, numbers nearly 150,000,000 persons. According to the last census, that of 1897, in Europe she had an area of 2,188,000 square miles, and a population of 115,000,000; Russia in Asia comprised 6,472,395 square miles with a population of 14,000,000, of which 6,000,000 were in Siberia and 8,000,000 in Central Asia, making a grand total of 8,660,395 square miles and a population of 129,000,000 souls. Her area is twice the size of the United States, including Alaska, and more than four times that of Europe, excluding Russia. Her population is equal to that of France, Germany, and Great Britain and Ireland combined. Figures are dry reading to most people, but it is necessary to study these given, in order to form a correct idea of the vastness of this great Russian Empire.

Russia's natural resources of every kind are immense, but generally undeveloped. Her industries, while increasing rapidly under the stimulus of a high tariff, are still in their infancy. The people are by nature lacking in initiative, which is owing to the Oriental strain in their blood. The country, too, is poor, the average wealth per head being \$268, as against \$1,500 in England, \$1,250 in France, and \$768 in Germany. It thus appears



that in proportion to her population, she is scarcely more than one-third as rich as is Germany, though that country occupies a low position in the financial scale.

The lands in Russia belong to the village commune and not to the individual peasant, which, together with the lack of energy, is the cause of the deplorable condition of agriculture there. The civilization of the people is enormously below that prevailing throughout the rest of Europe, but when we consider that two hundred years ago Russia was where the rest of Europe was in the thirteenth century, we are lost in wonder that even so much has been accomplished.

While it is true that the Siberian winter is cold and long, owing to the Altai Mountain chain which prevents the penetration into Siberia of the warm currents from the south, there is a very large portion of its area capable of raising grain and able to support a considerable population.

Central Asia is hot, and cotton is raised there, and, although much of this territory is at present desert, it has been discovered that proper irrigation will vastly increase the arable lands.

The population of Russia increases rapidly, so that, at its present rate, in 1920 it will probably number 170,000,000 souls. The masses are becoming more civilized, and in the next generation it is quite within the bounds of possibility that the United States and Russia will be the leading pow-

ers of the world, with England as a close second through the might of her colonies. The fate of Germany will depend upon how thoroughly she may be able to combine the Germanic races to her advantage.

The reason of the great future preponderance of the United States and Russia is their immense natural, internal resources. The earlier advantage will lie with the first, on account of its superior civilization, but the ultimate leadership will be materially affected by the control of China, which is the sole remaining country possessed of boundless natural resources, as yet undeveloped, though this fact is not generally understood in America.

The movement of expansion, that has led Russia from the Caspian Sea to Vladivostok, from the Urals to the boundaries of China, could not be arrested half-way, as the Russians themselves had at one time thought, if one may judge from the construction of a line of forts destined to arrest the progress of the Turcomans.

To quote from the words of the man who was the most brilliant statesman of his time in Europe, Prince Gortchakov: "When a civilized State finds itself in contact with peoples whose social organization is rudimentary, it invariably happens that the relations of commerce and the security of the frontier require that the more civilized State should exercise a certain ascendancy over its neighbors, whose nomad and turbulent habits render

them very inconvenient associates. At first, incursions and pillaging must be stopped; and in order to do this effectively the bordering tribes must be reduced to a more or less direct submission. When this result has once been attained, they in their turn assume more tranquil habits, but they find themselves exposed to the depredations and aggressions of more distant tribes. The State is forced to defend them against these depredations; hence arises the necessity for periodical, distant and costly expeditions. If the State contents itself with merely punishing the depredators and then retires, the lesson is soon forgotten; it becomes necessary to place the base of the system upon fixed or permanent geographical and political conditions.''

The progress of the Russians then, whether they will or not, must continue till the day arrives in which they find themselves in the presence of an impregnable natural barrier, or of an organized State with positive, fixed limits inhabited by a people capable of defending it.

The autocratic government of Russia will give way in time, either through wise concessions on the part of the rulers, when the people are able to appreciate their advantage, or through some terrible social upheaval in the line of the French Revolution. Indications of this event have already begun to make themselves felt. The massacres of strikers in the streets of St. Petersburg in January,

1905, are recent illustrations of the widespread feeling against autocratic rule. Industry has in late years done much for the Russian people. Whereas, formerly, the country was practically divided into nobility, merchants and peasants, the development of manufacture has produced a class of working men somewhat better educated than the peasants, and who provide fertile ground for the sowing of revolutionary seed. About two hundred and fifty thousand of these in St. Petersburg, and over half a million in Moscow, are banded together by their labor unions, and have begun to feel a need of more liberty than an absolute monarchy is inclined to give them, and it is significant that the demonstration in St. Petersburg of one hundred thousand men, women and children, who marched to the winter palace to present a petition to the Tzar, "The Little Father," only to be met by volleys of musketry, was followed by similar movements in various cities of the empire. There is a strong body of reactionaries, comprising many noble names, carrying on this work from headquarters outside of the country, whose sympathies are with the people as opposed to the autocracy, and whose energies are devoted to the attainment of constitutional government for the Russian people.

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