

The Boy Travellers in The Russian Empire

Adventures of Two Youths in a Journey in European and Asiatic Russia, with Accounts of a Tour across Siberia, Voyages on the Amoor, Volga, and Other Rivers, a Visit to Central Asia, Travels

Thomas Wallace Knox



Project

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MAP TO ACCOMPANY THE BOY TRAVELLERS IN THE RUSSIAN
EMPIRE.

THE BOY TRAVELLERS IN

THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

ADVENTURES OF TWO YOUTHS IN A JOURNEY IN

**EUROPEAN AND ASIATIC RUSSIA, WITH ACCOUNTS OF A TOUR
ACROSS SIBERIA**

**VOYAGES ON THE AMOOR, VOLGA, AND OTHER RIVERS, A VISIT
TO**

**CENTRAL ASIA, TRAVELS AMONG THE EXILES, AND A
HISTORICAL**

SKETCH OF THE EMPIRE FROM ITS FOUNDATION

TO THE PRESENT TIME

By THOMAS W. KNOX

**AUTHOR OF "THE BOY TRAVELLERS IN THE FAR EAST" "THE
YOUNG NIMRODS" ETC.**

Illustrated

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By THOMAS W. KNOX.

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PREFACE.

In preparing this volume for the press, the author has followed very closely the plan adopted for "The Boy Travellers in the Far East," and also for his more recent work, "The Boy Travellers in South America." Accompanied by their versatile and accomplished mentor, Dr. Bronson, our young friends, Frank Bassett and Fred Bronson, journeyed from Vienna to Warsaw and St. Petersburg, and after an interesting sojourn in the latter city, proceeded to Moscow, the ancient capital of the Czars. From Moscow they went to Nijni Novgorod, to attend the great fair for which that city is famous, and thence descended the Volga to the Caspian Sea. On their way down the great river they visited the principal towns and cities along its banks, saw many strange people, and listened to numerous tales and legends concerning the races which make up the population of the great Muscovite Empire.

They visited the recently developed petroleum fields of the Caspian, and, after crossing that inland sea, made a journey in Central Asia to study certain phases of the "Eastern Question," and learn something about the difficulties that have arisen between England and Russia. Afterwards they travelled in the Caucasus, visited the Crimea, and bade farewell to the Empire as they steamed away from Odessa. Concerning the parts of Russia that they were unable to visit they gathered much information, and altogether their notes, letters, and memoranda would make a portly volume.

The author has been three times in the Russian Empire, and much of the country described by "The Boy Travellers" was seen and traversed by him. In his first journey he entered the Czar's dominions at Petropavlovsk in Kamtchatka, ascended the Amoor River through its entire navigable length, traversed Siberia from the Pacific Ocean to the Ural Mountains, and continuing thence to Kazan, Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Warsaw, left the protection of the Russian flag eleven thousand miles from where he first went beneath it. His second visit included the Crimea and other regions bordering the Black Sea, and his third was confined to Finland and other Baltic provinces.

In addition to his personal observations in Russia, the author has drawn upon the works of others. Many books of Russian travel and history have been examined; some of them have been mentioned in the text of the narrative, but it has not been practicable to refer to all. Indebtedness is hereby acknowledged to the

following books: "Free Russia," by Hepworth Dixon; "Turkestan" and "Life of Peter the Great," by Hon. Eugene Schuyler; "A Ride to Khiva," by Col. Fred Burnaby; "Campaigning on the Oxus, and the Fall of Khiva," by J. A. Macgahan; "Life of Peter the Great" and "Life of Genghis Khan," by Jacob Abbott; "The Siberian Overland Route," by Alexander Michie; "Tent-life in Siberia," by George Kennan; "Reindeer, Dogs, and Snow-shoes," by Richard J. Bush; "The Invasion of the Crimea," by A. W. Kinglake; "Fred Markham in Russia," by W. H. G. Kingston; "The Knout and the Russians," by G. De Lagny; "The Russians at the Gates of Herat" and "The Region of the Eternal Fire," by Charles Marvin; "Travels in the Regions of the Upper and Lower Amoor" and "Oriental and Western Siberia," by Thomas W. Atkinson; and "The Russians at Home," by Sutherland Edwards. The author has also drawn upon several articles in *Harper's Magazine*, including his own series describing his journey through Siberia.

The publishers have kindly permitted the use of illustrations from their previous publications on the Russian Empire, in addition to those specially prepared for this book. As a result of their courtesy, the author has been able to present a "copiously illustrated" book, which is always a delight to the youthful eye.



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THE BOY TRAVELLERS
IN THE
RUSSIAN EMPIRE.

CHAPTER I.

DEPARTURE FROM VIENNA.—FRANK'S LETTER.—A FAREWELL PROMENADE.—FROM VIENNA TO CRACOW.—THE GREAT SALT-MINE OF WIELICZKA, AND WHAT WAS SEEN THERE.—CHURCHES AND PALACES UNDERGROUND.—VOYAGE ON A SUBTERRANEAN LAKE.

"Here are the passports at last."

"Are you sure they are quite in order for our journey?"

"Yes, entirely so," was the reply; "the Secretary of Legation examined them carefully, and said we should have no trouble at the frontier."

FRED'S REMINDER.

"Well, then," a cheery voice responded, "we have nothing more to do until the departure of the train. Five minutes will complete the packing of our baggage, and the hotel bill is all settled. I am going for a walk through the Graben, and will be back in an hour."

So saying, our old acquaintance, Doctor Bronson, left his room in the Grand Hotel in Vienna and disappeared down the stairway. He was followed, a few minutes later, by his nephew, Fred Bronson, who had just returned from a promenade, during which he had visited the American Legation to obtain the passports which were the subject of the dialogue just recorded.

At the door of the hotel he was joined by his cousin, Frank Bassett. The latter proposed a farewell visit to the Church of St. Stephen, and also a short stroll in the Graben, where he wished to make a trifling purchase. Fred assented, and they started at once.

They had not gone far before Fred perceived at a window the face of a girl busily engaged in writing. He paused a moment, and then suggested to Frank that he wished to return to the hotel in time to write a letter to his sister before the closing of the mail. "I really believe," said he, "that I should have neglected Mary this week if I had not been reminded by that girl in the window and her occupation."

Frank laughed as he rejoined that he had never yet known his cousin to forget his duty, and it would have been pretty sure to occur to him that he owed his sister a letter before it was too late for writing it.

ST. STEPHEN'S CATHEDRAL, VIENNA.

They made a hasty visit to the church, which is by far the finest religious edifice in Vienna, and may be said to stand in the very heart of the city. Fred had previously made a note of the fact that the church is more than seven hundred years old, and has been rebuilt, altered, and enlarged so many times that not much of the original structure remains. On the first day of their stay in Vienna the youths had climbed to the top of the building and ascended the spire, from which they had a magnificent view of the city and the country which surrounds it. The windings of the Danube are visible for many miles, and there are guides ready at hand to point out the battle-fields of Wagram, Lobau, and Essling. Our young friends had a good-natured discussion about the height of the spire of St. Stephen's; Frank claimed that his guide-book gave the distance from the ground to the top of the cross four hundred and fifty-three feet, while Fred contended, on the authority of another guide-book, that it was four hundred and sixty-five feet. Authorities differ considerably as to the exact height of this famous spire, which does not appear to have received a careful measurement for a good many years.

From the church the youths went to the Graben, the famous street where idlers love to congregate on pleasant afternoons, and then they returned to the hotel. Fred devoted himself to the promised letter to his sister. With his permission we will look over his shoulder as he writes, and from the closing paragraph learn the present destination of our old friends with whom we have travelled in other lands.^[1]

"We have been here a week, and like Vienna very much, but are quite willing to leave the city for the interesting tour we have planned. We start this evening by the Northern Railway for a journey to and through Russia; our first stopping-place will be at the nearest point on the railway for reaching the famous salt-mines of Wieliczka. You must pronounce it *We-litch-ka*, with the accent on the second syllable. I'll write you from there; or, if I don't have time to do so at the mines, will send you a letter from the first city where we stop for more than a single day. We have just had our passports indorsed by the Russian minister for Austria—a very necessary proceeding, as it is impossible to get into Russia without these documents. Until I next write you, good-by."

The travellers arrived at the great Northern Railway station of Vienna in ample

season to take their tickets and attend to the registration of their baggage. The train carried them swiftly to Cracow—a city which has had a prominent place in Polish annals. It was the scene of several battles, and was for a long time the capital of the ancient kingdom of Poland. Frank made the following memoranda in his note-book:

VIEW OF THE PALACE OF CRACOW.

"Cracow is a city of about fifty thousand inhabitants, of whom nearly one-third are Israelites. It stands on the left bank of the Vistula, on a beautiful plain surrounded by hills which rise in the form of an amphitheatre. In the old part of the city the streets are narrow and dark, and cannot be praised for their cleanliness; but the new part, which lies outside the ancient defences, is quite attractive. The palace is on the bank of the river, and was once very pretty. The Austrians have converted it into a military barrack, after stripping it of all its ornaments, so that it is now hardly worth seeing. There are many fine churches in Cracow, but we have only had time to visit one of them—the cathedral.

"In the cathedral we saw the tombs of many of the men whose names are famous in Polish history. Polish kings and queens almost by the dozen are buried here, and there is a fine monument to the memory of St. Stanislaus. His remains are preserved in a silver coffin, and are the object of reverence on the part of those who still dream of the ultimate liberation of Poland, and its restoration to its old place among the kingdoms of the world.

KOSCIUSKO, 1777.

"We drove around the principal streets of Cracow, and then out to the tumulus erected to the memory of the Polish patriot, Kosciusko. You remember the lines in our school reader,

"'Hope for a season bade the world farewell,
And freedom shrieked as Kosciusko fell.'

"We were particularly desirous to see this mound. It was made of earth brought from all the patriotic battle-fields of Poland at an enormous expense, which was largely borne by the people of Cracow. The monument is altogether one hundred and fifty feet high, and is just inside the line of fortifications which have been erected around the city. The Austrians say these fortifications are intended to keep out the Russians; but it is just as likely that they are intended to keep the Poles from making one of the insurrections for which they have shown so great an inclination during the past two or three centuries.

KOSCIUSKO, 1817.

"As we contemplated the monument to the famous soldier of Poland, we remembered his services during our Revolutionary war. Kosciusko entered the American army in 1776 as an officer of engineers, and remained with General Washington until the close of the war. He planned the fortified camp near Saratoga, and also the works at West Point. When our independence was achieved he returned to Poland, and after fighting for several years in the cause of his country, he made a brief visit to America, where he received much distinction. Then he returned again to Europe, lived for a time in France, and afterwards in Switzerland, where he died in 1817. The monument we have just visited does not cover his grave, as he was buried with much ceremony in the Cathedral of Cracow."

"Why don't you say something about the Jewish quarter of Cracow," said Fred, when Frank read what he had written, and which we have given above.

"I'll leave that for you," was the reply. "You may write the description while I make some sketches."

"I'm agreed," responded Fred. "Let's go over the ground together and pick out what is the most interesting."

Away they went, leaving Doctor Bronson with a gentleman with whom he had formed an acquaintance during their ride from the railway to the hotel. The Doctor was not partial to a walk in the Jews' quarter, and said he was willing to take his knowledge of it at second-hand.

CHURCH OF ST. MARY, CRACOW.

On their way thither the youths stopped a few minutes to look at the Church of St. Mary, which was built in 1276, and is regarded as a fine specimen of Gothic architecture. It is at one side of the market-place, and presents a picturesque appearance as the beholder stands in front of it.

The Jews' quarter is on the opposite side of the river from the principal part of the city, and is reached by a bridge over the Vistula. At every step the youths were beset by beggars. They had taken a guide from the hotel, under the stipulation that he should not permit the beggars to annoy them, but they soon found it would be impossible to secure immunity from attack without a cordon of at least a dozen guides. Frank pronounced the beggars of Cracow the most forlorn he had ever seen, and Fred thought they were more numerous in proportion to the population than in any other city, with the possible exception of

Naples. Their ragged and starved condition indicated that their distress was real, and more than once our young friends regretted having brought themselves face to face with so much misery that they were powerless to relieve.

POLISH JEW OF HIGH RANK.

Frank remarked that there was a similarity of dress among the Jews of Cracow, as they all wore long caftans, or robes, reaching nearly to the heels. The wealthy Jews wear robes of silk, with fur caps or turbans, while the poorer ones must content themselves with cheaper material, according to their ability. The guide told the youths that the men of rank would not surround their waists with girdles as did the humbler Jews, and that sometimes the robes of the rich were lined with sable, at a cost of many hundreds of dollars.

POLISH JEWS OF THE MIDDLE CLASS.

Fred carefully noted the information obtained while Frank made the sketches he had promised to produce. They are by no means unlike the sketches that were made by another American traveller (Mr. J. Ross Browne), who visited Cracow several years before the journey of our friends.

"But there's one thing we can't sketch, and can't describe in writing," said Fred, "and that's the dirt in the streets of this Jews' quarter of Cracow. If Doctor Bronson knew of it I don't wonder he declined to come with us. No attempt is made to keep the place clean, and it seems a pity that the authorities do not force the people into better ways. It's as bad as any part of Canton or Peking, and that's saying a great deal. I wonder they don't die of cholera, and leave the place without inhabitants."

In spite of all sorts of oppression, the Jews of Cracow preserve their distinctiveness, and there are no more devout religionists in the world than this people. The greater part of the commerce of the city is in their hands, and they are said to have a vast amount of wealth in their possession. That they have a large share of business was noticed by Fred, who said that from the moment they alighted from the train at the railway-station they were pestered by peddlers, guides, money-changers, runners for shops, beggars, and all sorts of importunate people from the quarter of the city over the Vistula. An hour in the Jews' quarter gratified their curiosity, and they returned to the hotel.

There is a line of railway to the salt-mines, but our friends preferred to go in a carriage, as it would afford a better view of the country, and enable them to arrange the time to suit themselves. The distance is about nine miles, and the road is well kept, so that they reached the mines in little more than an hour from

the time of leaving the hotel. The road is through an undulating country, which is prettily dotted with farms, together with the summer residences of some of the wealthier inhabitants of Cracow.

OUR GUIDE IN COSTUME.

On reaching the mines they went immediately to the offices, where it was necessary to obtain permission to descend into the earth. These offices are in an old castle formerly belonging to one of the native princes, but long ago turned into its present practical uses. Our friends were accompanied by a commissioner from the hotel where they were lodged in Cracow; he was a dignified individual, who claimed descent from one of the noble families of Poland, and the solemnity of his visage was increased by a huge pair of spectacles that spanned his nose. Frank remarked that spectacles were in fashion at Wieliczka, as at least half the officials connected with the management of the salt-mines were ornamented with these aids to vision.

THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL.

A spectacled clerk entered the names of the visitors in a register kept for the purpose, and issued the tickets permitting them to enter the mines. Armed with their tickets, they were conducted to a building close to the entrance of one of the mines, and ushered into the presence of the inspector-general of the works. He was also a wearer of spectacles, and the rotundity of his figure indicated that the air and food of the place had not injured him.

"The inspector-general received us politely—in fact everybody about the place was polite enough for the most fastidious taste," said Frank in his note-book—"and after a short conversation he called our attention to the robes which had been worn by imperial and royal visitors to the mines. The robes are richly embroidered, and every one bears a label telling when and by whom it was worn. The inspector-general treated the garments with almost as much reverence as he would have shown to the personages named on the labels. We realized that it was proper to regard them with respect, if we wished to have the good-will of this important official, and therefore we appeared to be dumb with amazement as he went through the list. When the examination was ended we were provided with garments for the descent. Evidently we were not regarded with the same awe as were the kings and emperors that had preceded us, as our robes were of a very common sort. They were like dressing-gowns, and reached nearly to our heels, and our heads were covered with small woollen caps. I do not believe they were labelled with our names and kept in glass cases after our departure.

"I made a sketch of our guide after he was arrayed in his underground costume and ready to start. Fred sketched the inspector-general while the latter was talking to the Doctor. The portrait isn't a bad one, but I think he has exaggerated somewhat the rotund figure of the affable official.

"From the office we went to the entrance of one of the shafts. It is in a large building, which contains the hoisting apparatus, and is also used as a storehouse. Sacks and barrels of salt were piled there awaiting transportation to market, and in front of the building there were half a dozen wagons receiving the loads which they were to take to the railway-station. The hoisting apparatus is an enormous wheel turned by horse-power; the horses walk around in a circle, as in the old-fashioned cider-mill of the Northern States, or the primitive cotton-gin of the South. Our guide said there were more than twenty of these shafts, and there was also a stairway, cut in the solid earth and salt, extending to the bottom of the mine. We had proposed to descend by the stairway, but the commissioner strenuously advised against our doing so. He said the way was dark and the steps were slippery, as they were wet in many places from the water trickling through the earth. His arguments appeared reasonable, and so we went by the shaft.

"The rope winds around a drum on the shaft supporting the wheel, and then passes through a pulley directly over the place where we were to descend. The rope is fully two inches in diameter, and was said to be capable of bearing ten times the weight that can ever be placed upon it in ordinary use. It is examined every morning, and at least once a week it is tested with a load of at least four times that which it ordinarily carries. When it shows any sign of wear it is renewed; and judging from all we could see, the managers take every precaution against accidents.

"Smaller ropes attached to the main one have seats at the ends. There are two clusters of these ropes, about twenty feet apart, the lower one being intended for the guides and lamp-bearers, and the upper for visitors and officials. Six of us were seated in the upper group. It included our party of four and two subordinate officials, who accompanied us on our journey and received fees on our return; but I suppose they would scorn to be called guides.

"There is a heavy trap-door over the mouth of the shaft, and the rope plays freely through it. The guides and lamp-bearers took their places at the end of the rope; then the door was opened and they were lowered down, and the door closed above them. This brought the upper cluster of ropes in position for us to take our places, which we did under the direction of the officials who accompanied us. When all was ready the signal was given, the trap-door was opened once more,

and we began our downward journey into the earth.

THE SHAFT.

"As the trap-door closed above us, I confess to a rather uncanny feeling. Below us gleamed the lights in the hands of the lamp-bearers, but above there was a darkness that seemed as though it might be felt, or sliced off with a knife. Nobody spoke, and the attention of all seemed to be directed to hanging on to the rope. Of course the uppermost question in everybody's mind was, 'What if the rope should break?' It doesn't take long to answer it; the individuals hanging in that cluster below the gloomy trap-door would be of very little consequence in a terrestrial way after the snapping of the rope.

DESCENDING THE SHAFT.

"We compared notes afterwards, and found that our sensations were pretty much alike. The general feeling was one of uncertainty, and each one asked himself several times whether he was asleep or awake. Fred said a part of the journey was like a nightmare, and the Doctor said he had the same idea, especially after the noise of the machinery was lost in the distance and everything was in utter silence. For the first few moments we could hear the whirring of the wheel and the jar of the machinery; but very soon these sounds disappeared, and we glided gently downward, without the least sensation of being in motion. It seemed to me not that we were descending, but that the walls of the shaft were rising around us, while our position was stationary.

"Contrary to expectation, we found the air quite agreeable. The official who accompanied us said it was peculiarly conducive to health; and many of the employés of the mines had been at work there forty or fifty years, and had never lost a day from illness. We had supposed it would be damp and cold, but, on the contrary, found it dry and of an agreeable temperature, which remains nearly the same all through the year. No doubt the salt has much to do with this healthy condition. Occasionally hydrogen gas collects in some of the shafts which are not properly ventilated, and there have been explosions of fire-damp which destroyed a good many lives. These accidents were the result of carelessness either of the miners or their superintendents, and since their occurrence a more rigid system of inspection has been established.

LAMP-BEARERS.

"We stopped at the bottom of the shaft, which is about three hundred feet deep; there we were released from our fastenings and allowed to use our feet again. Then we were guided through a perfect labyrinth of passages, up and down

ladders, along narrow paths, into halls spacious enough for the reception of an emperor, and again into little nooks where men were occupied in excavating the salt. For several hours we wandered there, losing all knowledge of the points of compass, and if we had been left to ourselves our chances of emerging again into daylight would have been utterly hopeless.

A FOOT-PATH.

"And here let me give you a few figures about the salt-mines of Wieliczka. I cannot promise that they are entirely accurate, but they are drawn from the best sources within our reach. Some were obtained from the under-officials of the mines who accompanied us, and others are taken from the work of previous writers on this subject.

"The salt-mine may be fairly regarded as a city under the surface of the earth, as it shelters about a thousand workmen, and contains chapels, churches, railways, stables, and other appurtenances of a place where men dwell. In fact it is a series of cities, one above the other, as there are four tiers of excavations, the first being about two hundred feet below the surface, and the lowest nearly two thousand. The subterranean passages and halls are named after various kings and emperors who have visited them, or who were famous at the time the passages were opened, and altogether they cover an area of several square miles. In a general way the salt-mines of Wieliczka may be said to be nearly two miles square; but the ends of some of the passages are more than two miles from the entrance of the nearest shaft. The entire town of Wieliczka lies above the mines which give occupation to its inhabitants.

AN UNDERGROUND CHAPEL.

"There is probably more timber beneath the surface at Wieliczka than above it, as the roofs of the numerous passages are supported by heavy beams; and the same is the case with the smaller halls. In the larger halls such support would be insufficient, and immense columns of salt are left in position. In several instances these pillars of salt have been replaced by columns of brick or stone, as they would be liable to be melted away during any accidental flooding of the mine, and allow the entire upper strata to tumble in. This has actually happened on one occasion, when a part of the mine was flooded and serious damage resulted.

"Our guide said the length of the passages, galleries, and halls was nearly four hundred English miles, and the greatest depth reached was two thousand four

hundred feet. If we should visit all the galleries and passages, and examine every object of interest in the mines, we should be detained there at least three weeks. Not a single one of all the workmen had been in every part of all the galleries of the mine, and he doubted if there was any officer attached to the concern who would not be liable to be lost if left to himself.

"Nobody knows when these mines were discovered; they were worked in the eleventh century, when they belonged to the kingdom of Poland, and an important revenue was derived from them. In the fourteenth century Casimir the Great established elaborate regulations for working the mines, and his regulations are the basis of those which are still in force, in spite of numerous changes. In 1656 they were pledged to Austria, but were redeemed by John Sobieski in 1683. When the first partition of Poland took place, in 1772, they were handed over to Austria, which has had possession of them ever since, with the exception of the short period from 1809 to 1815.

"While the mines belonged to Poland the kings of that country obtained a large revenue from them. For two or three centuries this revenue was sufficiently large to serve for the endowment of convents and the dowries of the members of the royal family. The Austrian Government has obtained a considerable revenue from these mines, but owing to the modern competition with salt from other sources, it does not equal the profit of the Polish kings.

"Except when reduced by accidents or other causes, the annual production of salt in these mines is about two hundred millions of pounds, or one hundred thousand tons. The deposit is known to extend a long distance, and the Government might, if it wished, increase the production to any desired amount. But it does not consider it judicious to do so, and is content to keep the figures about where they have been since the beginning of the century. The salt supplies a considerable area of country; a large amount, usually of the lower grades, is sent into Russia, and the finer qualities are shipped to various parts of the Austrian Empire.

"We asked if the workmen lived in the mines, as was currently reported, and were told they did not. 'They would not be allowed to do so, even if they wished it,' said our guide. 'By the rules of the direction the men are divided into gangs, working eight hours each, and all are required to go to the surface when not on duty. In ancient times it was doubtless the case that men lived here with their families. At one time the mines were worked by prisoners, who did not see daylight for months together, but nothing of the kind has occurred for more than a century at least.'

MEN CUTTING SALT IN THE MINE.

"Several times in our walk we came upon little groups of men working in the galleries; and certainly they were not to be envied. Sometimes they were cutting with picks against perpendicular walls, and at others they were lying flat on their backs, digging away at the roof not more than a foot or two above their heads. The shaggy lamp-bearers—generally old men unable to perform heavy work—stood close at hand, and the glare of the light falling upon the flashing crystals of salt that flew in the air, and covered the half-naked bodies of the perspiring workmen, made a picture which I cannot adequately describe. I do not know that I ever looked upon a spectacle more weird than this.

FINISHING THE COLUMNS.

"We had expected to see the men in large gangs, but found that they were nearly always divided into little groups. One would think they would prefer any other kind of occupation than this, but our guide told us that the laborers were perfectly free to leave at any time, just as though they were in the employ of a private establishment. There were plenty of men who would gladly fill their places, and frequently they had applications for years in advance. As prices go in Austria, the pay is very good, the men averaging from twenty to fifty cents a day. As far as possible they are paid by the piece, and not by time—the same as in the great majority of mines all over the world.

SUBTERRANEAN STABLES.

"But the horses which draw the cars on the subterranean railways are not regarded with the same care as the men. They never return to the light of day after once being lowered into the mine. In a few weeks after arriving there a cataract covers their eyes and the sight disappears. By some this result is attributed to the perpetual darkness, and by others to the effect of the salt. It is probably due to the former, as the workmen do not appear to suffer in the same way. Whether they would become blind if continually kept there is not known, and it is to be hoped that no cruel overseer will endeavor to ascertain by a practical trial.

"Every time we came upon a group of workmen they paused in their labors and begged for money. We had provided ourselves with an abundance of copper coins before descending into the mine, and it was well we did so, as they generally became clamorous until obtaining what they wanted. Fortunately they were satisfied with a small coin, and did not annoy us after once being paid.

"I cannot begin to give the names of all the halls, galleries, and passages we

went through, and if I did, it would be tedious. We wandered up and down, down and up, forward and backward, until it seemed as if there was no end to the journey. And to think we might have been there three weeks without once repeating our steps! I will mention at random some of the most interesting of the things we saw. To tell the whole story and give a full description of this most wonderful salt-mine in the world would require a volume.

"The chamber of Michelwic was the first of the large halls that we entered, and was reached after a long journey through winding passages and along foot-paths that sometimes overhung places where it was impossible for the eye, aided only by the light of the lamps, to ascertain the depth of the openings below. In some of the dangerous places there was a rail to prevent one from falling over; but this was not always the case, and you may be sure we kept on the safe side and close to the wall.

A MINING SINGER.

"In the hall we were treated to a song by one of the mining over-seers, an old soldier who had lost an arm in some way that was not explained to us. He had an excellent voice that ought to have secured him a good place in the chorus of an opera troupe. He sang a mining song in quite a melodramatic style; and as he did so the notes echoed and re-echoed through the hall till it seemed they would never cease. In the centre of the hall is a chandelier cut from the solid salt, and on grand occasions this chandelier is lighted and a band of music is stationed at one end of the vast space. Its effect is said to be something beyond description, and, judging from the effect of the overseer's voice, I can well believe it.

"From this hall we went through a series of chambers and galleries named after the royal and imperial families of Poland and Austria, passing chapels, shrines, altars, and other things indicating the religious character of the people employed in the mines or controlling them, together with many niches containing statues of kings, saints, and martyrs, all hewn from the solid salt. Some of the statues are rudely made, but the most of them are well designed and executed. In some of the chapels worshippers were kneeling before the altars, and it was difficult to realize that we were hundreds of feet below the surface of the earth.

"By-and-by our guide said we were coming to the Infernal Lake. The lamp-bearers held their lights high in the air, and we could see the reflection from a sheet of water, but how great might be its extent was impossible to guess. As we approached the edge of the water a boat emerged from the gloom and came towards us. It was a sort of rope ferry, and we immediately thought of the ferry-

boat which the ancients believed was employed to carry departed spirits across the river Styx. Certainly the darkness all around was Stygian, and the men on the boat might have been Charon's attendants.

"We passed down a few steps, entered the boat, and were pulled away from shore. In less than a minute nothing but the little circle of water around us was visible; the sides of the cavern echoed our voices and every other sound that came from our boat. In the middle of the lake we paused to observe the effect of the sound caused by the waves created by the rocking of the boat. It reverberated through the cavern and away into the galleries, and seemed as though it would last forever. When this sensation was exhausted we moved on again. Doctor Bronson asked the guide how far it was to the other end of the lake, but before the answer was spoken we had a fresh surprise.

"GLÜCK-AUF!"

"There was a flash of light from a point high above us, and almost at the same instant another, a little distance ahead. The latter assumed the form of an arch in red fire, displaying the greeting 'GLÜCK-AUF!' or 'GOOD-LUCK!' though this is not the literal translation. We passed under this arch of red fire, and as we did so the words 'Glück-auf! Glück-auf!' were shouted from all around, and at the same time flashes of fire burst from a dozen places above the lake. We shouted 'Glück-auf!' in reply, and then the voices from the mysterious recesses seemed to be quadrupled in number and volume. The air was filled with flashes of light, and was everywhere resonant with the words of the miners' welcome.

"At the other end of the lake there was a considerable party waiting to receive us, and of course there was a liberal distribution of coin to everybody. I ought to have said at the outset that we arranged to pay for the illumination of the lake and also of certain specified halls, in addition to the compensation of the guides. The illuminations are entirely proportioned to the amount that the visitors are willing to give for them. It is a good plan to unite with other visitors, and then the individual cost will not be heavy. Twenty dollars will pay for a very good illumination, and fifty dollars will secure something worthy of a prince, though not a first-class one.

FÊTE IN THE GRAND SALOON OF ENTERTAINMENT.

"They showed us next through more winding passages, and came at length to the Grand Saloon of Entertainment; which is of immense extent, and has no less than six large chandeliers hanging from the roof. It is lighted on the occasion of the visit of a king or emperor (of course he has to pay the bill), and the effect is

said to be wonderful. There is an alcove at one end, with a throne of green and ruby-colored salt, whereon the emperor is seated. A blaze of light all through the hall is reflected from the myriad crystals of salt which form the roof and sides; the floor is strewn with sparkling salt; the columns are decorated with evergreens; festoons of flags abound through the place; and a band of music plays the airs appropriate to the hall and the guest.

A RETIRED DIRECTOR.

"The workmen and their families assemble in their holiday dress, and when the music begins the whole party indulges in the Polish national dance. It is a strange spectacle, this scene of revelry five hundred feet below the surface of the earth, and probably among the sights that do not come often before the Imperial eyes. These spectacles must be arranged to order, and for weeks before an Imperial or Royal visit a great many hands are engaged in making the necessary preparations. From all I heard of these festivals, I would willingly travel many hundred miles to see one of them.

"By means of the illuminating materials that we brought with us, we were able to get an approximate idea of the character of one of these gala spectacles. After our last Bengal-light had been burned, we continued our journey, descending to the third story by many devious ways, and finally halting in a chamber whose roof was not less than a hundred feet above us.

"'Do you know where you are?' said our guide.

"Of course we answered that we did not.

"'Well,' said he, 'you are directly beneath the lake which we sailed over in a boat a little while ago. If it should break through we should all be drowned, dead.'

"We shuddered to think what might be our fate if the lake should spring a leak. It did break out at one time and flooded many of the galleries, and for a long while work in all the lower part of the mine was suspended. There have been several fires, some of them causing the loss of many lives; but, on the whole, considering the long time the mine has been opened and the extent of the works, the accidents have been few.

"The deepest excavation in the mine is nearly seven hundred feet below the level of the sea. We did not go there, in fact we did not go below the third story, as we had seen quite enough for our purposes, and besides we had only a limited time to stay in the mine. As we came up again to daylight, hoisted in the same sort of

chairs as those by which we descended, we made a final inspection of the salt which comes from the mine.

"'There are three kinds of salt,' said the guide. 'One that is called green salt contains five or six per cent. of clay, and has no transparency; it is cut into blocks and sent to Russia exactly as it comes from the mine. The second quality is called *spiza*, and is crystalline and mixed with sand; and the third is in large masses, perfectly transparent, having no earthy matter mingled with it. The salt is found in compact tertiary clays that contain a good many fossils; the finest salt is at the lowest levels, and the poorest at the higher ones.'

"Well, here we are at the top of the shaft, tired and hungry, and excited with the wonderful things we have seen. The visit to the salt-mines of Wieliczka is something to be long remembered."



Since the visit herein described, the manner of working the salt-mines of Wieliczka has undergone a decided change. Owing to the influx of a stream the lower levels of the mines were flooded, and for some time remained full of water. In order to free them it was necessary to introduce powerful pumping machinery of the latest designs, and also to replace the old hoisting apparatus with new. Horse-power was abandoned in favor of steam, both for hoisting and pumping; new precautions were taken against fire; all improved systems of mine-working were tested, and those which proved useful were adopted; and to-day the mines of Wieliczka may be considered, in every respect, the foremost salt-mines in the world.



CHAPTER II.

**LEAVING CRACOW.—THE RUSSIAN FRONTIER.—THE POLICE
AND THE CUSTOM-HOUSE.—RUSSIAN CENSORSHIP OF BOOKS
AND PAPERS.—CATCHING A SMUGGLER.—FROM THE FRONTIER
TO WARSAW.—SIGHTS AND INCIDENTS IN THE CAPITAL OF
POLAND.—FROM WARSAW TO ST. PETERSBURG.**

OUTER WALL OF CRACOW.

The sun was setting as our friends reached Cracow, on their return from Wieliczka. The walls of the city were gilded by the rays of light that streamed over the hills which formed the western horizon. In all its features the scene was well calculated to impress the youthful travellers. Frank wished to make a sketch of the gate-way through which they passed on their entrance within the walls, but the hour was late and delay inadvisable. The commissioner said he would bring them a photograph of the spot, and with this consolation the young man dismissed from his mind the idea of the sketch.

All retired early, as they intended taking the morning train for the Russian frontier, and thence to Warsaw. They were up in good season, and at the appointed time the train carried them out of the ancient capital of Poland.

CUSTOM HOUSE FORMALITIES.

At Granitsa, the frontier station, they had a halt of nearly two hours. Their passports were carefully examined by the Russian officials, while their trunks underwent a vigorous overhauling. The passports proved to be entirely in order, and there was no trouble with them. The officials were particularly polite to the American trio, and said they were always pleased to welcome Americans to the Empire. They were less courteous to an Englishman who arrived by the same train, and the Doctor said it was evident that the Crimean war had not been entirely forgotten. Several passengers had neglected the precautions which our friends observed at Vienna, in securing the proper indorsement to their passports, and were told that they could not pass the frontier. They were compelled to wait until the passports could be sent to Cracow for approval by the Russian consul at that point, or else to Vienna. A commissioner attached to the railway-station offered to attend to the matter for all who required his aid; formerly it was

necessary for the careless traveller to return in person to the point designated, but of late years this has not been required.

"This passport business is an outrageous humbug," said the Englishman with whom our friends had fallen into conversation while they were waiting in the anteroom of the passport office. "Its object is to keep improper persons out of Russia; but it does nothing of the kind. Any Nihilist, Revolutionist, or other objectionable individual can always obtain a passport under a fictitious name, and secure the necessary approval of consuls or ambassadors. Ivan Carlovitch, for whom the police are on the watch, comes here with a passport in the name of Joseph Cassini, a native of Malta, and subject of Great Britain. His English passport is obtained easily enough by a little false swearing; it is approved by the Russian minister at Vienna, and the fellow enters Russia with perfect ease. The honest traveller who has neglected the formality through ignorance is detained, while the Revolutionist goes on his way contented. The Revolutionist always knows the technicalities of the law, and is careful to observe them; and it is safe to say that the passport system never prevented any political offender from getting into Russia when he wanted to go there.

PASSPORT NOT CORRECT.

"I have been in Russia before," he continued, "and know what I am saying. The first time I went there was from Berlin, and on reaching the frontier I was stopped because my passport was not properly indorsed. I supposed I would have to go back to Berlin, but the station-master said I need not take that trouble; I could stop at the hotel, and he would arrange the whole matter, so that I might proceed exactly twenty-four hours later. I did as he told me, and it was all right."

"How was it accomplished?"

"Why, he took my passport and a dozen others whose owners were in the same fix as myself, and sent them by the conductor of the train to Kœnigsburg, where there is a Russian consul. For a fee of two English shillings (fifty cents of your money) the consul approved each passport; another fee of fifty cents paid the conductor for his trouble, and he brought back the passports on his return run to the frontier. Then the station-master wanted four shillings (one dollar) for his share of the work, and we were all *en regle* to enter the Russian Empire. We got our baggage ready, and were at the station when the train arrived; the station-master delivered our passports, and collected his fee along with the fees of the conductor and consul, and that ended the whole business. The consul knew nothing about any of the persons named in the passports, and we might have

been conspirators or anything else that was objectionable, and nobody would have been the wiser. Russia is the only country in Europe that keeps up the passport system with any severity, and it only results in putting honest people to trouble and expense, and never stops those whom it is intended to reach. There, they've opened the door, and we can now go before the representatives of the autocrat of all the Russias."

IN THE PASSPORT BUREAU.

One by one they approached the desk, with the result already stated. At the examination of the baggage in the custom-house the clothing and personal effects of our friends were passed without question, but there was some difficulty over a few books which the boys had bought before leaving Vienna. One volume, pronounced objectionable, was seized as contraband, but the others were not taken. Every book written by a foreigner about Russia is carefully examined by the official censor as soon as it is published, and upon his decision depends the question of its circulation being allowed in the Empire. Anything calculated to throw disrespect upon the Imperial family, or upon the Government in general, is prohibited, as well as everything which can be considered to have a revolutionary tendency.

"They are not so rigid as they used to be," growled the Englishman, as he closed and locked his trunk after the examination was completed. "In the time of the Emperor Nicholas they would not allow anything that indicated there was any other government in the world which amounted to anything, and they were particularly severe upon all kinds of school-books. Now they rarely object to school-books, unless they contain too many teachings of liberty; and they are getting over their squeamishness about criticisms, even if they are abusive and untruthful. The worst case I ever heard of was of an inspector at one of the frontier stations, who seized a book on astronomy because it contained a chapter on 'The Revolutions of the Earth.' He said nothing revolutionary could be allowed to enter the Empire, and confiscated the volume in spite of its owner's explanations.

"Under Nicholas," continued the Englishman, "Macaulay's 'History of England' was prohibited, though it could be bought without much trouble. After Alexander II. ascended the throne the rigors of the censorship were greatly reduced, and papers and books were freely admitted into Russia which were prohibited in France under Louis Napoleon. All the Tauchnitz editions of English works were permitted, even including Carlyle's 'French Revolution.' It is possible that the last-named book had escaped notice, as you would hardly expect it to be allowed free circulation in Russia. Books and newspapers addressed to the professors of the universities, to officers above the rank of colonel, and to the legations of foreign countries are not subjected to the censorship, or at least they were not so examined a few years ago. Since the rise of Nihilism the authorities have become more rigid again, and books and papers are stopped which would not have been suppressed at all before the death of

Alexander II.

"If you want to know the exact functions of the censor," said the gentleman, turning to Frank and Fred, "here is an extract from his instructions."

With these words he gave to one of the youths a printed slip which stated that it was the censor's duty to prohibit and suppress "all works written in a spirit hostile to the orthodox Greek Church, or containing anything that is contrary to the truths of the Christian religion, or subversive of good manners or morality; all publications tending to assail the inviolability of autocratical monarchical power and the fundamental laws of the Empire, or to diminish the respect due to the Imperial family; all productions containing attacks on the honor or reputation of any one, by improper expressions, by the publication of circumstances relating to domestic life, or by calumny of any kind whatever."

The boys thanked the gentleman for the information he had given them on a subject about which they were curious; and as the examination of the custom-house was completed, they proceeded to the restaurant, which was in a large hall at the end of the station.

WAY STATION ON THE RAILWAY.

Near the door of the restaurant was the office of a money-changer, its character being indicated by signs in at least half a dozen languages. Passengers were exchanging their Austrian money for Russian, and the office seemed to be doing an active business.

"That fellow has about as good a trade as one could wish," said the Englishman, as he nodded in the direction of the man at the little window. "Two trains arrive here daily each way; for people going north he changes Austrian into Russian money, and for those going south he changes Russian into Austrian. He receives one per cent. commission on each transaction, which amounts to four per cent. daily, as he handles the money four times. I have often envied these frontier bankers, who run no risk whatever, provided they are not swindled with counterfeits, and can make twelve hundred per cent. annually on their capital. But perhaps they have to pay so dearly for the privilege that they are unable to get rich by their business. By-the-way," said he, changing the subject abruptly, "did you observe the stout lady that stood near us in the anteroom of the passport office?"

BEFORE EXAMINATION.

"Yes," answered the Doctor, "and she seemed quite uneasy, as though she feared trouble."

"Doubtless she did," was the reply, "but it was not on account of her passport. She was probably laden with goods which she intended smuggling into Russia, and feared detection. I noticed that she was called aside by the custom-house officials, and ushered into the room devoted to suspected persons. She isn't here yet, and perhaps they'll keep her till the train has gone. Ah! here she comes."

AFTER EXAMINATION.

Frank and Fred looked in the direction indicated, but could not see any stout lady; neither could the Doctor, but he thought he recognized a face he had seen before. It belonged to a woman who was comparatively slight in figure, and who took her seat very demurely at one of the tables near the door.

"That is the stout lady of the anteroom," said the Englishman, "and her form has been reduced more rapidly than any advocate of the Banting or any other anti-fat system ever dreamed of. She was probably detected by her uneasy manner, and consequently was subjected to an examination at the hands of the female searchers. They've removed dry goods enough from her to set up a small shop, and she won't undertake smuggling again in a hurry. Import duties are high in Russia, and the temptation to smuggle is great. She was an inexperienced smuggler, or she would not have been caught so easily. Probably she is of some other nationality than Russian, or they would not have liberated her after confiscating her contraband goods."

The incident led to a conversation upon the Russian tariff system, which is based upon the most emphatic ideas in favor of protection to home industries. As it is no part of our intention to discuss the tariff in this volume, we will omit what was said upon the subject, particularly as no notes were taken by either Frank or Fred.

In due time the train on the Russian side of the station was ready to receive the travellers, and they took their places in one of the carriages. It needed only a glance to show they had crossed the frontier. The Austrian uniform disappeared, and the Russian took its place; the Russian language was spoken instead of German; the carriages were lettered in Russian; posts painted in alternate stripes of white and black (the invention of the Emperor Paul about the beginning of the present century), denoted the sovereignty of the Czar; and the dress of many of the passengers indicated a change of nationality.

SCENE ON THE RAILWAY.

The train rolled away from Granitsa in the direction of Warsaw, which was the next point of destination of our friends. The country through which they travelled was not particularly interesting; it was fairly though not thickly settled, and contained no important towns on the line of the railway, or any other object of especial interest. Their English acquaintance said there were mines of coal, iron, and zinc in the neighborhood of Zombkowitz, where the railway from Austria unites with that from eastern Germany. It is about one hundred and eighty miles from Warsaw; about forty miles farther on there was a town with an unpronounceable name, with about ten thousand inhabitants, and a convent, which is an object of pilgrimage to many pious Catholics of Poland and Silesia. A hundred miles from Warsaw they passed Petrikau, which was the seat of the ancient tribunals of Poland; and then, if the truth must be told, they slept for the greater part of the way till the train stopped at the station in the Praga suburb of Warsaw, on the opposite bank of the Vistula.

SHUTES FOR LOADING COAL ON THE RAILWAY.

As they neared the station they had a good view of Warsaw, on the heights above the river, and commanded by a fortress which occupies the centre of the city itself. Alighting from the train, they surrendered their passports to an official, who said the documents would be returned to them at the Hôtel de l'Europe, where they proposed to stop during their sojourn within the gates of Warsaw. Tickets permitting them to go into the city were given in exchange for the passports, and then they entered a rickety omnibus and were driven to the hotel.

It was late in the afternoon when they climbed the sloping road leading into Warsaw, and looked down upon the Vistula and the stretch of low land on the Praga side. Fred repeated the lines of the old verse from which we have already quoted, and observed how well the scene is described in a single couplet:

"Warsaw's last champion from her
heights surveyed,
Wide o'er the fields a waste of ruin
laid."

Laid desolate by many wars and subjected to despotic rule, the country around Warsaw bears little evidence of prosperity. Many houses are without tenants, and many farms are either half tilled or wholly without cultivation. The spirit of revolution springs eternal in the Polish breast, and the spirit of suppression must be equally enduring in the breast of the Russian. It is only by the severest

measures that the Russians can maintain their control of Poland. A Polish writer has well described the situation when he says, "Under a cruel government, it is Poland's duty to rebel against oppression; under a liberal government, it is her duty to rebel because she has the opportunity."

After dinner at the hotel our friends started for a walk through the principal streets; but they did not go very far. The streets were poorly lighted, few people were about, and altogether the stroll was not particularly interesting. They returned to the hotel, and devoted an hour or so to a chat about Poland and her sad history.

"Walls are said to have ears," the Doctor remarked, "but we have little cause to be disturbed about them, as we are only discussing among ourselves the known facts of history. Poland and Russia were at war for centuries, and at one time Poland had the best of the fight. How many of those who sympathize so deeply with the wrongs of Poland are aware of the fact that in 1610 the Poles held Moscow as the Russians now hold Warsaw, and that the Russian Czar was taken prisoner, and died the next year in a Polish prison? Moscow was burned by the Poles in 1611, and thousands of its inhabitants were slaughtered; in 1612 the Poles were driven out, and from that time to the present their wars with Russia have not been successful."

"I didn't know that," said Frank, "until I read it to-day in one of our books."

"Nor did I," echoed Fred; "and probably not one person in a hundred is aware of it."

POLISH NATIONAL COSTUMES.

"Understand," said the Doctor, with emphasis—"understand that I do not say this to justify in any way the wrongs that Russia may have visited on Poland, but simply to show that all the wrong has not been on one side. Russia and Poland have been hostile to each other for centuries; they are antagonistic in everything—language, religion, customs, and national ambitions—and there could be no permanent peace between them until one had completely absorbed the other. Twice in this century (in 1830 and 1863) the Poles have rebelled against Russia, because they had the opportunity in consequence of the leniency of the Government. From present appearances they are not likely to have the opportunity again for a long time, if ever."

One of the youths asked how the revolution of 1830 was brought about.

PEASANT'S FARM-HOUSE.

"Poland had been, as you know, divided at three different times, by Russia, Austria, and Prussia," said the Doctor, "the third partition taking place in 1795. At the great settlement among the Powers of Europe, in 1815, after the end of the Napoleonic wars, the Emperor of Russia proposed to form ancient Poland into a constitutional monarchy under the Russian crown. His plan was adopted, with some modifications, and from 1815 to 1830 the country had its national Diet or Parliament, its national administration, and its national army of thirty thousand men. The Russian Emperor was the King of Poland, and this the Poles resented; they rebelled, and were defeated. After the defeat the constitution was withdrawn and the national army abolished; the Polish universities were closed, the Polish language was proscribed in the public offices, and every attempt was made to Russianize the country. It was harshly punished for its rebellion until Alexander II. ascended the throne.

"Alexander tried to conciliate the people by granting concessions. The schools and universities were reopened; the language was restored; Poles were appointed to nearly all official positions; elective district and municipal councils were formed, and also a Polish Council of State. But nothing short of independence would satisfy the inhabitants, and then came the revolution of 1863. It was suppressed, like its predecessor, and from that time the Russians have maintained such an iron rule in Poland that a revolt of any importance is next to impossible. All the oppression of which Russia is capable cannot destroy the spirit of independence among the Poles. They are as patriotic as the Irish, and will continue to hope for liberty as long as their blood flows in human veins."

A knock on the door brought the Doctor's discourse to an abrupt end. It was made by the commissioner, who came to arrange for their excursion on the following day.

We will see in due course where they went and what they saw. It is now their bedtime, and they are retiring for the night.

ROYAL PALACE AT WARSAW.

The next morning they secured a carriage, and drove through the principal streets and squares, visiting the Royal Palace and other buildings of importance, and also the parks and gardens outside the city limits. Concerning their excursion in Warsaw the youths made the following notes:

"We went first to the Royal Castle, which we were not permitted to enter, as it is occupied by the Viceroy of Poland, or 'the Emperor's Lieutenant,' as he is more commonly called. It is a very old building, which has been several times altered

and restored. There were many pictures and other objects of art in the castle until 1831, when they were removed to St. Petersburg. In the square in front of the castle is a statue of one of the kings of Poland, and we were told that the square was the scene of some of the uprisings of the Poles against their Russian masters.

SHRINE AT A GATEWAY.

"From the castle we went to the cathedral, which was built in the thirteenth century, and contains monuments to the memory of several of the kings and other great men of the country. It is proper to say here that the Catholic is the prevailing religion of Poland, and no doubt much of the hatred of Russians and Poles for each other is in consequence of their religious differences. By the latest figures of the population that we have at hand, Russian Poland contains about 3,800,000 Catholics, 300,000 Protestants, 700,000 Jews, and 250,000 members of the Greek Church and adherents of other religions, or a little more than 5,000,000 of inhabitants in all. Like all people who have been oppressed, the Catholics and Jews are exceedingly devout, and adhere unflinchingly to their religious faith. Churches and synagogues are numerous in Warsaw, as in the other Polish cities. In our ride through Warsaw we passed many shrines, and at nearly all of them the faithful were kneeling to repeat the prayers prescribed by their religious teachers.

"From the cathedral we went to the citadel, which is on a hill in the centre of the city, and was built after the revolution of 1830. The expense of its construction was placed upon the people as a punishment for the revolution, and for the purpose of bombarding the city in case of another rebellion. From the walls of the citadel there is a fine view of considerable extent; but there is nothing in the place of special interest. The fort is constantly occupied by a garrison of Russian soldiers. It contains a prison for political offenders and a military court-house, where they are tried for their alleged offences.

LAKE IN THE PARK.

"There are ten or twelve squares, or open places, in Warsaw, of which the finest is said to be the Saxon Square. It contains a handsome monument to the Poles who adhered to the Russian cause in the revolution of 1830. Some writers say it was all a mistake, and that the Poles whose memory is here preserved were really on their way to join the regiments which had declared in favor of the insurrection.

"There are several handsome streets and avenues; and as for the public palaces

and fine residences which once belonged to noble families of Poland, but are now mostly in Government hands, the list alone would be long and tedious. One of the finest palaces is in the Lazienki Park, and was built by King Stanislaus Poniatowski. It is the residence of the Emperor of Russia when he comes to Warsaw; but as his visits are rare, it is almost always accessible to travellers. We stopped a few minutes in front of the statue of King John Sobieski. There is an anecdote about this statue which the students of Russian and Polish history will appreciate. During a visit in 1850 the Emperor Nicholas paused in front of the statue, and remarked to those around him, 'The two kings of Poland who committed the greatest errors were John Sobieski and myself, for we both saved the Austrian monarchy.'

"Inside the palace there are many fine paintings and other works of art. There are portraits of Polish kings and queens, and other rare pictures, but not as many as in the Castle of Villanov, which we afterwards visited. In the latter, which was the residence of John Sobieski, and now belongs to Count Potocki, there are paintings by Rubens and other celebrated masters, and there is a fine collection of armor, including the suit which was presented to Sobieski by the Pope, after the former had driven the Turks away from Vienna. It is beautifully inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl, and covered with arabesques of astonishing delicacy. We could have spent hours in studying it, and you may be sure we left it with great reluctance.

A BUSINESS MAN OF WARSAW.

"Warsaw has a population of nearly three hundred thousand, and there are a good many factories for the manufacture of carriages, pianos, cloth, carpets, and machines of various kinds. The city is the centre of a large trade in grain, cattle, horses, and wool, and altogether it may be considered prosperous. Much of the business is in the hands of the Jews, who have managed to have and hold a great deal of wealth in spite of the oppression they have undergone by both Poles and Russians.

"The women of Warsaw are famous for their beauty, and we are all agreed that we have seen more pretty faces here than in any other city of Europe in the same time. The Jews of Warsaw are nearly all blonds; the men have red beards, and the hair of the women is of the shade that used to be the fashion among American and English actresses, and is not yet entirely forgotten. We bought some photographs in one of the shops, and are sure they will be excellent adornments for our albums at home.

"In the evening we went to the opera in the hope of seeing the national costumes of the Poles, but in this we were disappointed. The operas are sung in Italian; the principal singers are French, Italian, English, or any other nationality, like those of opera companies elsewhere, and only the members of the chorus and ballet are Poles. Russian uniforms are in the boxes and elsewhere in the house, and every officer is required to wear his sword, and be ready at any moment to be summoned to fight. The men not in uniform are in evening dress, and the ladies are like those of an audience in Vienna or Naples, so far as their dress is concerned. The opera closed at half-past eleven; our guide met us outside the door, and when we proposed a stroll he said we must be at the hotel by midnight, under penalty of being arrested. Any one out-of-doors between midnight and daylight will be taken in by the police and locked up, unless he has a pass from the authorities. In troubled times the city is declared in a state of siege, and then everybody on the streets after dusk must carry a lantern.

"As we had no fancy for passing the night in a Russian station-house, we returned straight to the hotel. Probably we would have been there by midnight in any event, as we were tired enough to make a long walk objectionable."

The next day our friends visited some of the battle-fields near Warsaw, and on the third took the train for St. Petersburg, six hundred and twenty-five miles away. There was little of interest along the line of railway, as the country is almost entirely a plain, and one mile is so much like another that the difference is scarcely perceptible. The principal towns or cities through which they passed were Bialystok and Grodno, the latter famous for having been the residence of several Polish kings, and containing the royal castle where they lived. At Wilna, four hundred and forty-one miles from St. Petersburg, the railway unites with that from Berlin. The change of train and transfer of baggage detained the party half an hour or more, but not long enough to allow them to inspect this ancient capital of the independent duchy of Lithuania. At Pskof they had another halt, but only sufficient for patronizing the restaurant. The town is two miles from the station, and contains an old castle and several other buildings of note; it has a prominent place in Poland's war history, but is not often visited by travellers.

IN ST. PETERSBURG.

At Gatchina, famous for its trout and containing an Imperial palace, an official collected the passports of the travellers, which were afterwards returned to them on arriving at the St. Petersburg station. As they approached the Imperial city the first object to catch the eye was a great ball of gold outlined against the sky. Frank said it must be the dome of St. Isaac's Church, and the Doctor nodded

assent to the suggestion. The dome of St. Isaac's is to the capital of Russia what the dome of St. Peter's is to Rome—the first object on which the gaze of the approaching traveller is fixed.



CHAPTER III.

IN THE STREETS OF ST. PETERSBURG.—ISVOSHCHIKS AND DROSKIES.—COUNTING IN RUSSIAN.—PASSPORTS AND THEIR USES.—ON THE NEVSKI PROSPECT.—VISITING THE CHURCH OF KAZAN.—THE RUSSO-GREEK RELIGION.—UNFAVORABLE POSITION OF ST. PETERSBURG.—DANGER OF DESTRUCTION.—GREAT INUNDATION OF 1824.—STATUE OF PETER THE GREAT.—ADMIRALTY SQUARE.—THE SAILORS AND THE STATUE.

A commissioner from the Hôtel de l'Europe was at the station. Doctor Bronson gave him the receipts for their trunks, and after securing their passports, which had been examined on the train during the ride from Gatchina, the party entered a carriage and rode to the hotel. Frank and Fred were impatient to try a drosky, and wondered why the Doctor had not secured one of the vehicles characteristic of the country.

"You'll have abundant opportunities for drosky-riding," said Doctor Bronson, in reply to Fred's query on the subject. "For the present the vehicle is not suited to our purposes, as we have our hand-baggage and other trifles; besides, we are three individuals, while the drosky is only large enough for two."

The youths confirmed with their eyes the correctness of the Doctor's assertion as the little vehicles were whizzing around them in every direction. The drosky is a stout carriage on low wheels, somewhat resembling the victoria of Western Europe, and is drawn by a single horse. The isvoshchik, or driver, is seated on a high box in front, and somehow he manages to get an astonishing speed out of the shaggy animal that forms his team. Frank afterwards wrote as follows concerning droskies and isvoshchiks:

"It is astonishing to contemplate the swarm of droskies with which St. Petersburg and every other Russian city abounds. They are to be found everywhere and at all hours. No matter where you may be, or at what hour of the day or night, you have only to call out 'Isvoshchik!' or 'Drosky!' and one of the little carriages appears as if by magic. Not only one, but half a dozen will be pretty sure to come forward. The drivers contend, and not always very politely, for the honor of your patronage; but as soon as you have made your selection the

rejected ones drop away and leave you undisturbed.

ISVOSHCHIKS IN WINTER.

"There is something interesting in the manner of the *isvoshchik*, especially in the marked contrast before and after he has made a bargain with you. Until the transaction is closed, he is as independent as the hackman of New York or the cabby of London. The moment the bargain is settled and he has accepted your offer, he is your willing slave. Offer him forty copecks an hour, and he refuses, while demanding fifty or sixty; you walk on, and he pretends to go away, and if your offer is unreasonably low he will not trouble you again. Suddenly he reins up his horse close to the sidewalk, springs from his seat, and with the word '*Poshowltz*' ('If you please') he motions you to enter the carriage. He is now at your service, and will drive just as you desire; your slightest wish will be his law.

DROSKY DRIVERS.

"Doctor Bronson told us we must learn how to count in Russian, and also acquire a few phrases in common use; the more of them we could learn the better. While on the train from Warsaw to St. Petersburg we learned to count. I think we did it in about two hours, as it was really very simple after we had gone through the numerals up to ten and fixed them in mind. Perhaps you would like to know how it is done; well, here it is:

"The numerals from one to twelve are *o-deen*, *dva*, *tree*, *che-tee-ri*, *pyat*, *shayst*, *sem*, *vocem*, *de-vee-at*, *de-ci-at*, *odeen-nat-zat*, *dva-nat-zat*. For thirteen, fourteen, and so on, you add '*nat-zat*' to the single numerals till you get to twenty, which is '*dva-deciat*,' or two tens. Twenty-one is '*dva-deciat-odeen*,' or two tens and one, and so on. You go up to thirty, which is '*tree-deciat*,' or three tens, but generally shortened in pronunciation to '*treetsat*' or '*tritsat*.' All the other tens up to ninety are formed in the same way, with the exception of forty, which is '*sorok*.' Ninety is '*deviat-na-sto*' ('ten taken from hundred'), and one hundred is '*sto*;' two hundred is '*dva-sto*.' The other hundreds are formed in the same way to five hundred, which is '*pyat sot*;' six hundred is '*shayst sot*,' and the other hundreds go on the same way; one thousand is '*tis-syat-sha*.' You can now go ahead with tens and hundreds of thousands up to a million, which is '*meel-yon*'—very much like our own word for the same number.

"It helps us greatly in getting around among the people without a guide. We can bargain with the drivers, make purchases in the shops, and do lots and lots of things which we could not if we didn't know how to count. Any boy or man who comes to Russia should learn to count while he is riding from the frontier to St.

Petersburg, and if he takes our advice he will do so. He can find it all in Murray's or any other good guide-book, and he will also find there the most useful phrases for travelling purposes.

"In driving with the isvoshchiks, we have found them very obliging, and both Fred and I have been many times surprised at their intelligence when we remembered that very few of them were able to read or write their own language. When they find we are foreigners, and do not speak Russian, they do not jabber away like French or German drivers, or London cabbies, but confine themselves to a very few words. Take one we had to-day, for example: as he drove along he called our attention to the churches and other public buildings that we passed by, pronouncing the name of the building and nothing more. In this way we understood him; but if he had involved the name with a dozen or twenty other words we should have been in a perfect fog about it.

SLEDGE OF A HIGH OFFICIAL.

"In winter the drosky makes way for the sledge, which is the tiniest vehicle of the kind you can imagine. Two persons can crowd into a sledge, though there is really room for only one. Whether you are one or two, you sit with your face within ten or twelve inches of the driver's back, which forms almost the entire feature of your landscape. The sledges in winter are even more numerous than are the droskies in summer, as many persons ride then who do not do so when the weather is warm.

"Everybody rides in a Russian city in winter—at least everybody who claims to have much respect for himself; and in fact riding is so cheap that it must be a very shallow purse that cannot afford it. For a drive of a mile or less you pay eight or ten copecks (ten copecks equal eight cents), and you can ride a couple of miles for fifteen copecks, and sometimes for ten. By the hour you pay forty or fifty copecks; and if you make a bargain you can have the vehicle all to yourself a whole day for a dollar and a half, and sometimes less. They go very fast; and if your time is limited, and you want to see a good deal in a little while, it is the best kind of economy to hire an isvoshchik to take you about."

We left our friends on the way to the hotel when we wandered off to hear what Frank had to say about the droskies and their drivers. The ride along the streets was full of interest to the youths, to whom it was all new; but it was less so to Doctor Bronson, who had been in St. Petersburg before. They drove up the Vosnesenski Prospect, a broad avenue which carried them past the Church of the Holy Trinity, one of the interesting churches out of the many in the city, and then

by a cross street passed into the Nevski Prospect, which may be called the Broadway of the Russian capital. We shall hear more of the Nevski Prospect later on.

At the hotel they surrendered their passports to the clerk as soon as they had selected their rooms; the Doctor told the youths they would not again see those important documents until they had settled their bill and prepared to leave. Frank and Fred were surprised at this announcement, and the Doctor explained:

"The passports must go at once to the Central Bureau of the Police, and we shall be registered as stopping in this hotel. When the register has been made the passports will be returned to the hotel and locked up in the manager's safe, according to the custom of the country."

"Why doesn't he give them back to us instead of locking them in the safe?" one of the youths inquired.

"It has long been the custom for the house-owner to keep the passport of any one lodging with him, as he is in a certain sense responsible for his conduct. Besides, it enables him to be sure that nobody leaves without paying his bill, for the simple reason that he can't get away. When we are ready to go we must give a few hours' notice; the passports will be sent to the police-office again, with a statement as to our destination; after we have paid our bills and are ready to go, the passports will be handed to us along with the receipt for our money."

"That makes hotel-keeping a great deal more certain than it is in American cities, does it not?" said Fred.

"And you never hear in Russia of a man running away from a hotel where he has contracted a large bill, and leaving nothing but a trunk filled with straw and stove-wood as security, do you?" Frank inquired.

"Such a thing is unknown," the Doctor answered. "I once told some Russian acquaintances about the way hotel-keepers were defrauded in America by unprincipled persons. One of them exclaimed, 'What a happy country! and how cheaply a man could live there, with no police officers to stop his enterprise!'"

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"When you go from one city to another," said the Doctor, "the formality to be observed is slight, and the hotel people will attend to it for you without charge. When you are going to leave Russia, a few days' notice must be given at the police-office; and if any creditors have filed their claims against you with the

police, you must settle them before you can have your passport. If any one owes you money, and you have reason to believe he intends leaving the country, you can stop him or get your money by leaving your account with the police for collection. Absconding debtors are nearly as rare in Russia as absconding hotel-patrons, for the simple reason that the law restricts their movements. In spite of what our English friend said of the passport system, there are some excellent features about it. Another thing is—"

They were interrupted by a servant, who came to ask if there were any friends in St. Petersburg whom they wished to find. The commissioner was going to the Police Bureau with the passports, and would make any inquiries they desired.

The Doctor answered in the negative, and the servant went away.

"That is what I was about to mention," said Doctor Bronson, as soon as the door was closed. "The first time I came to St. Petersburg I was riding along the Nevski Prospect, and saw an old acquaintance going in the other direction. He did not see me, and before I could turn to follow him he was lost in the crowd of vehicles. But in two hours I found him, and we had a delightful afternoon together. How do you suppose I did it?"

"Why, I sent to the Police Bureau, paid two cents, and obtained a memorandum of his address. For a fee of two cents you can get the address of any one you name, and for two cents each any number of addresses. In numerous instances I found it a great convenience, and so have other travellers. If you wanted to find a friend in New York or London, and didn't know his address, you would have a nice time about it; but in Moscow or St. Petersburg there would be no trouble whatever."

As soon as they had removed the dust of the journey our friends went out for a stroll before dinner. The Hôtel de l'Europe is on the corner of the Nevski Prospect and one of the smaller streets, and only a short distance from the *Kazanski Sobor*, or Church of Kazan. But before they enter this celebrated edifice we will look with them at the grand avenue, the Nevski Prospect.

"It is straight as a sunbeam for three miles," said Fred in his note-book, "with the Admiralty Buildings at one end, and the Church of St. Alexander Nevski at the other, though the latter is a little way from the line. It is perfectly level from end to end, like a street of New Orleans or Sacramento. St. Petersburg is built on a marsh, and through its whole extent there isn't a hill other than an artificial one. It is a broad avenue (one hundred and thirty feet in width), reminding us of the boulevards of Paris, and the crowd of vehicles coming and going at all hours of

the day and far into the night makes the scene a picturesque one.

RUSSIAN WORKMEN ON THEIR WAY HOME.

"All classes and kinds of Russians are to be seen here, from the mujik, with his rough coat of sheepskin, up to the officer of the army, whose breast is covered with decorations by the dozen or even more. The vehicles are of many kinds, the drosky being the most frequent, and there is hardly one of them without the *duga*, or yoke, over the horse between the shafts. The horses are driven furiously, but they are completely under the control of their drivers, and accidents are said to be very rare. Perhaps this is owing to the fact that a driver is liable to severe punishment if he causes any injury to a pedestrian.

RUSSIAN OFFICER WITH DECORATIONS.

"Somebody has remarked that the Nevski Prospect ought to be called Toleration Avenue, for the reason that it contains churches of so many different faiths. There are of course the Russo-Greek churches, representing the religion of the country, and there are Catholic, Lutheran, Dutch, and Armenian churches, standing peacefully in the same line. It is a pity that the adherents of these diverse religions do not always agree as well as do the inanimate edifices that represent them.

"The buildings are very substantial in appearance, and many of them are literally palaces. The military headquarters are on the Nevski, and so is the palace of one of the grand-dukes; then there are several palaces belonging to noble families. There is the Institution of St. Catherine, and the Gostinna Dvor, or Great Market-place, with ten thousand merchants, more or less, transacting business there. We'll go there to make some purchases and tell you about it; at present we will cross the Nevski to the Church of Kazan.

"It reminds us of the Church of St. Peter at Rome, as it has a colonnade in imitation of the one which attracts the eye of every visitor to the Eternal City, and takes its name from "Our Lady of Kazan," to whom it is dedicated. Kazan was once a Tartar city, and the capital of the Tartar kingdom of the same name. It was fortified, and stoutly defended, and gave the Russians a great deal of trouble. In the sixteenth century John the Terrible conquered the kingdom and annexed it to Russia. The last act in the war was the capture of the city of Kazan. The Russians were several times repulsed, but finally the Kremlin was carried, and the Tartar power came to an end. A picture of the Virgin was carried in front of the attacking column, and this picture, all devout Russians believe, gave the victory over the Moslem. The church was built in memory of the event, and the

sacred picture from Kazan is preserved and worshipped here.

"It is a beautiful church, in the form of a cross, two hundred and thirty-eight feet long and one hundred and eighty-two feet wide. From the ground to the top of the cross above the cupola is more than two hundred and thirty feet, and the cupola is so large that it is visible from a long distance. As we entered the church we were struck by the absence of seats. We were told by the Doctor that Russian churches contain no seats, and all worshippers must stand or kneel while at their devotions. To this there are no exceptions; the same requirement being made of the Emperor as of the most obscure peasant.

"There is no instrumental music in the Greek Church, and church choirs composed of male and female voices are unknown here. All the singers in the churches are men; the prayers are mostly intoned, and all the congregation joins in the responses. There are no pews, or reserved places of any kind, except a standing-place for the Emperor, all worshippers being considered equal; neither are there any fees to be paid by those who come to worship.

"The picture of Our Lady of Kazan, which has such a miraculous legend connected with it, is richly covered with precious stones, said to be worth nearly a hundred thousand dollars. There are other costly pictures in the church, but none to equal this one. There are a good many flags, and other trophies of war, along the walls and around the pillars; and, to tell the truth, it has almost as much the appearance of a military museum as of a cathedral. There are the keys of Hamburg, Leipsic, and other cities which at various times have been captured by Russia, and the church contains the tombs of several Russian generals who were killed in the war with France in 1812.

A RUSSIAN PRIEST.

"We observed a curious effect in the pictures in this church which we found afterwards in a great many holy pictures in Russia. The hands and face, and any other flesh, are painted on a flat surface, but the dress and ornaments are often raised in gold, silver, or other metal, and studded with precious stones, according to the will or financial ability of the owner. The Church rejects all massive images of the Saviour or saints as idolatrous, and says they violate the commandment "Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image." It does not exclude mosaics, and anything produced in low relief, but the rule that flesh shall be represented by a flat surface is imperative.

"We afterwards attended service in the Kazan church, and were impressed with

its solemnity and simplicity. The vocal music had an admirable effect as it resounded through the vast building, and we have never anywhere seen a congregation more devout than this. Nearly every one held a candle, and carefully guarded the flame from the draughts that occasionally swept over the congregation. Illuminations have a very important place in all church ceremonies, and there are no weddings, betrothals, funerals, or any other sacred services, without candles or tapers.

"Lights are kept burning in front of the principal pictures in the churches. Throughout the Empire there is an *Eikon*, or sacred picture, in the principal room of every house whose owner is an adherent of the Church of the country, and often in every room of consequence. On entering a room where there is such a picture, every devout Russian crosses himself; and so great is the respect shown to it, that when Russian thieves enter a room for the purpose of stealing, they spread a handkerchief over the picture so that the saint who is represented upon it cannot see them.

"Religion has a more important part in the practical life of the Russians than in that of any other people of Europe. The blessing of the Church is invoked upon every undertaking. Steamboats, ships, and all other craft are blessed by the priest at their launching or before being put into service; the locomotives and carriages of a railway are similarly treated; and the same may be said of every vehicle, machine, or other thing of consequence. So with cattle, horses, sheep, and other live-stock; and so, also, with the furniture and adornments of the house.

"In the theatres the Government does not allow the representation of any kind of religious ceremonial as part of a performance, lest it might bring religion into ridicule, and under no circumstances can an actor be dressed to personate a priest. The Czar, or Emperor, is the recognized head of the Church, and among the common people he is regarded as only a little less than a divinity.

"Those who have lived long among the Russians, and ought to know them, say the venerative feeling among the common people is very great, and more so among the higher classes than in the Latin countries of Europe. They are devout church-goers, and the feasts and fasts of the Church are carefully observed. They form a serious drawback to business matters, as there are certain days when no man or woman can be induced to work at any price. The owners of establishments which require to be kept constantly in operation manage to get around this custom by keeping their employ es constantly in debt, as the Russian law and custom compel a man to work steadily to discharge such indebtedness.

"Pilgrimages to monasteries and shrines are more common among the Russians than any other Christian people, and the poorer classes often go on long and painful journeys through their religious zeal. A large number of Russian pilgrims can be found in Jerusalem every year at Easter, as well as at other times. So important is this pilgrimage that the Russian Government maintains a convent at Jerusalem for lodging its subjects; and the Crimean war practically grew out of a quarrel which was brought about with reference to the holy places of the famous city.

CONVENT OF SOLOVETSK IN THE FROZEN SEA.

"Great numbers of pilgrims go every year from all parts of Russia to the Convent of Solovetsk in the Frozen Sea, seven or eight hundred miles to the north-east of the capital.

"We may have more to say on religious matters before leaving Russia, but for the present we will drop the subject and continue our walk on the Nevski."

As they strolled in the direction of the Neva, the river that gives its name to the long avenue, Fred asked how it happened that St. Petersburg was built on a marsh instead of upon elevated ground.

"It was because Peter the Great wanted a capital city that could be a seaport, and this was the best site that could be found. Moscow was inland (it is four hundred miles from here to that city), and Peter realized that no country could be great and important without communication over the sea to other lands. So he came here and founded the city which bears his name. It was a forbidding place, but his will was law, and the city grew and lived though a hundred thousand men perished in the first year of its construction. The first house was built in 1703. In 1712 Peter declared it his capital, and the Imperial court was moved here from Moscow. For a long time the place was very unhealthy, and even down to the present day it is not by any means the best location in the world for a city. The drainage is defective, the drinking-water is not good, especially in the summer season, and the city has several times suffered from inundations.

"For many years every vessel coming to the port, and every cart entering the city, was required to bring a certain number of stones for filling the marsh and paving the streets. Where the large buildings stand, fabulous amounts have been expended in making foundations, and many of them have cost more than the buildings that stand upon them. The foundations of the Church of St. Isaac are said to have cost four millions of dollars, and twenty-five years were spent in their construction."

Frank asked about the inundations mentioned by the Doctor.

"There have been some eight or ten of them," the Doctor answered. "The most serious inundation of this century was in 1824, when the water of the Neva rose thirteen feet and four inches above its ordinary level. Observe that line," said he, as he pointed to a mark upon a building: "that is the point to which the waters rose in the inundation of 1824."

THE INUNDATION OF 1824.

The mark was nearly four feet above the level of the sidewalk where they stood. Frank and Fred regarded it with astonishment, while the Doctor continued:

"In a single night (November 17th) property to the value of twenty[Pg 71]
[Pg 72] millions of dollars was destroyed, and it was estimated that not less than eight thousand people lost their lives. The flood was caused by a strong westerly wind which combined with the tide and forced the waters in from the Gulf of Finland, which is here formed like a funnel. Now suppose the flood had occurred in April, at the time when Lake Ladoga breaks up and pours its accumulated ice and water through the Neva, what would have been the result?"

"Would the city have been destroyed?" queried one of the youths.

"So it is said, by many who have studied its position. They aver that when a high tide, a westerly wind, and the breaking up of the ice in Lake Ladoga shall all come together, the streets of St. Petersburg will be not less than twenty feet under water, and Russia will be obliged to select another site for her capital. But as it is not likely that all these things will happen during our visit, we won't borrow any trouble about the matter."

"I have read," said Fred, "that in that inundation the prisoners in the fort were drowned in their cells. The lower part of the fort was flooded, was it not?"

"Yes," the Doctor answered; "but so many romances have been written on the subject that it is difficult to get at the exact truth. It is very likely that the prisoners in the lower cells of the fort were drowned, and I believe the authorities admit that such was the case. In the Paris Exhibition of 1867 there was a startling picture representing the death of a Russian princess who was imprisoned there at the time. She is represented standing on her little bed surrounded by rats that have been driven from their holes by the flood. The water is nearly up to the level of the bed, and is pouring in at the grated window. The picture haunted me for years after I saw it, and even now it occasionally comes up in my dreams. I haven't thought of it for some time, but this question of yours has revived it."

STATUE OF PETER THE GREAT.

They continued their walk towards the Neva, with an occasional glance at the needle-like spire that rises above the Admiralty buildings. They came out into Admiralty Square, a large open space, which gave them a view of the Admiralty buildings, the Church of St. Isaac, the equestrian statue of Peter the Great, and the Winter Palace, together with one of the bridges spanning the Neva to the islands opposite.

"Which shall we see first?" queried the Doctor of his young companions.

"Whichever you think best," answered Frank, to which Fred nodded approval.

"Our time just now is limited," said the Doctor, "and perhaps we will satisfy ourselves with the statue of Peter the Great. But as we walk about we must not fail to take in the general view, which is of unusual interest."

The statue is well known through its frequent representation in engravings, and is one of the most remarkable monuments of the Imperial city. It was ordered by the Empress Catherine, and was cast by Falconet, a Frenchman. The inscription upon it reads—

"PETRU PERVOMU.—EKATERINA VTORYA."

(To Peter I.—By Catherine II., MDCCLXXXII.)

Evidently Catherine had a sufficient idea of her consequence, as the letters which make her name are considerably larger than those of her illustrious sire's.

"The horse," said Fred, in his note-book, "is on the brink of a precipice, where he is being reined in by his rider. Peter's face is towards the Neva, while his right hand is directed to the city which he built. Under the horse's feet is a serpent, which typifies the difficulties the Czar has overcome. The horse is balanced on his hind legs and tail, his forefeet being clear from the rock. It is said that the weight of the statue is about ten thousand pounds.

"The statue stands on a block of granite that originally weighed fifteen hundred tons, and was brought from Finland. The block is fourteen feet high, twenty feet broad, and forty-three feet long. It consists of two pieces that have been carefully joined together, and the operation of moving it was a triumph of engineering skill.

"I have read a good story apropos of this monument—about two boys who belonged to an English ship that was lying at the quay beyond the statue. They had wandered off into the city and lost their way, and in order to get back they engaged a carriage. But after engaging it they were in trouble, as they could not tell the driver where to go.

"Two sailors from the same ship happened along, and to them the boys told the story of their perplexity. The sailors were in the same predicament, as they wanted to get back to the ship, and didn't know which way to go.

IMPROVISING A STATUE.

"If we only knew what the Russian is for that statue,' said one of the boys, 'we could make him understand.'

"They tried all the words they knew, but to no purpose. Suddenly an idea occurred to one of the sailors. He asked the other to get down on all-fours, which he did, wondering what was the matter with his comrade. Jack mounted his friend's back as though he were a steed, and took the attitude of Peter the Great as nearly as he could remember it. The other sailor caught at the idea, and reared slightly on his feet in the position of Peter's horse. The isvoshchiks comprehended what was wanted, and roared with delight; the two sailors jumped into a drosky, which followed the carriage containing the boys, and in due time the party arrived safely at its destination."



CHAPTER IV.

**DINNER IN A RUSSIAN RESTAURANT.—CABBAGE SOUP, FISH PIES,
AND OTHER ODD DISHES.—THE SAMOVAR AND ITS USES.—
RUSSIAN TEA-DRINKERS.—JOLTAI CHAI.—ALEXANDER'S
COLUMN.—FORTRESS OF STS. PETER AND PAUL.—IMPERIAL
ASSASSINATIONS.—SKETCHES OF THE PEOPLE.—RUSSIAN
POLICE AND THEIR WAYS.**

Instead of returning to the hotel for dinner, our friends went to a *traktir*, or Russian restaurant, in a little street running out of Admiralty Square. The youths were anxious to try the national dishes of the country, and consequently they accepted with pleasure Doctor Bronson's suggestion relative to their dining-place.

"The finest and most characteristic restaurants of Russia are in Moscow rather than in St. Petersburg," said the Doctor, as he led the way to the establishment they had decided to patronize. "St. Petersburg has a great many French and German features that you do not find in Moscow, and when we get to the latter city we must not fail to go to the 'Moskovski Traktir,' which is one of the most celebrated feeding-places of the old capital. There the waiters are clad in silk shirts, or frocks, extending nearly to the knee, over loose trousers of the same material. At the establishment where we are now going the dress is that of the ordinary French restaurant, and we shall have no difficulty in finding some one who speaks either French or German."

They found the lower room of the restaurant filled with men solacing themselves with tea, which they drank from glasses filled and refilled from pots standing before them. On each table was a steaming *samovar* to supply boiling water to the teapots as fast as they were emptied. The boys had seen the *samovar* at railway-stations and other places since their entrance into the Empire, but had not thus far enjoyed the opportunity of examining it.

TEA-SELLERS IN THE STREETS.

"We will have a *samovar* to ourselves," said the Doctor, as they mounted the stairs to an upper room, "and then you can study it as closely as you like."

The Russian bill of fare was too much for the reading abilities of any one of the trio. The Doctor could spell out some of the words, but found they would get along better by appealing to one of the waiters. Under his guidance they succeeded very well, as we learn from Frank's account of the dinner.

"Doctor Bronson told us that cabbage soup was the national dish of the country, and so we ordered it, under the mysterious name of *tschee e karsha*. The cabbage is chopped, and then boiled till it falls into shreds; a piece of meat is cooked with it; the soup is seasoned with pepper and salt; and altogether the *tschee* (soup) is decidedly palatable. *Karsha*, is barley thoroughly boiled, and then dried over the fire until the grains fall apart. A saucerful of this cooked barley is supplied to you along with the soup, and you eat them together. You may mingle the *karsha* with the *tschee* as you would mix rice with milk, but the orthodox way of eating is to take a small quantity of the *karsha* into your spoon each time before dipping it into the soup. A substantial meal can be made of these articles alone, and there are millions of the subjects of his Imperial Majesty the Czar who dine to-day and many other days in the year on nothing else. The Emperor eats *tschee*, and so does the peasant—probably the Emperor has it less often in the year than does his poor subject; but the soup is of the same kind, except that very often the peasant cannot afford the important addition of meat."

RUSSIAN RESTAURANT AT THE PARIS EXPOSITION.

"Don't forget," Fred interposed, when the foregoing description was read to him—"don't forget to say that they served us a little cup or mug of sour cream along with the *tschee*."

"Yes, that's so," responded Frank; "but I didn't like it particularly, and therefore came near forgetting it. We remember best the things that please us."

"Then perhaps you didn't like the *zakushka*, or appetizer, before dinner," said the Doctor, "as I see you haven't mentioned it."

"I hadn't forgotten it," said the youth, "but was going to say something about it at the end. You know the preface of a book is always written after the rest of the volume has been completed, but as you've called attention to it, I'll dispose of it now. Here it is:

"There was a side-table, on which were several plates containing relishes of different kinds, such as caviare, raw herring, dried beef, smoked salmon cut in little strips or squares, radishes, cheese, butter, and tiny sandwiches about the size of a half-dollar. A glass of cordial, of which several kinds were offered, goes with the *zakushka* for those who like it; the cordial and a few morsels of the solid

things are supposed to sharpen the appetite and prepare it for the dinner which is to be eaten at the table.

AN OUT-DOOR TEA-PARTY.

"The *zakushka* is inseparable from a dinner in Russia, and belongs to it just as much as do any of the dishes that are served after the seats are taken. While we were standing around the side-table where it was served at our first dinner in St. Petersburg, Doctor Bronson told us a story that is too good to be lost. I'll try to give it in his words:

"There was once a Russian soldier who had a phenomenal appetite; he could eat an incredible quantity of food at a sitting, and the officers of his regiment used to make wagers with strangers about his feeding abilities. They generally won; and as the soldier always received a present when he had gained a bet, he exerted himself to the best of his ability.

"One day the colonel made a wager for a large amount that his man could eat an entire sheep at a sitting. The sheep was selected, slaughtered, and sent to a restaurant, and at the appointed time the colonel appeared with the soldier. In order to help the man along, the keeper of the restaurant had cooked the different parts of the sheep in various ways; there were broiled and fried cutlets, roasted and boiled quarters, and some stews and hashes made from the rest. Dish after dish disappeared. When almost the entire sheep had been devoured, the soldier turned to the colonel and said,

"If you give me so much *zakushka* I'm afraid I sha'n't be able to eat all of the sheep when they bring it."

"But to return to soups. In addition to *tschee*, the Russians have *ukha*, or fish soup, made of any kind of fish that is in season. The most expensive is made from sterlet, a fish that is found only in the Volga, and sometimes sells for its weight in silver. We tried it one day, and liked it very much, but it costs too much for frequent eating except by the wealthy. A very good fish soup is made from trout, and another from perch.

"After the soup we had a *pirog*, or pie made of the spinal cord of the sturgeon cut into little pieces about half as large as a pea. It resembles isinglass in appearance and is very toothsome. The pie is baked in a deep dish, with two crusts, an upper and an under one. Doctor Bronson says the Russians make all kinds of fish into pies and patties, very much as we make meat pies at home. They sometimes put raisins in these pies—a practice which seems very incongruous to Americans and English. They also make *solianka*, a dish composed of fish and cabbage, and

not at all bad when one is hungry; red or black pepper liberally applied is an improvement.

"What do you think of *okroshka*—a soup made of cold beer, with pieces of meat, cucumber, and red herrings floating in it along with bits of ice to keep it cool? Don't want any. Neither do we; but the Russians of the lower classes like it, and I have heard Russian gentlemen praise it. Many of them are fond of *batvenia*, which is a cold soup made in much the same way as *okroshka*, and about as unpalatable to us. We ordered a portion of *okroshka* just to see how it looked and tasted. One teaspoonful was enough for each of us, and *batvenia* we didn't try.

"After the *pirog* we had cutlets of chicken, and then roast mutton stuffed with buckwheat, both of them very good. They offered us some boiled pig served cold, with horseradish sauce, but we didn't try it; and then they brought roast grouse, with salted cucumbers for salad. We wound up with Nesselrode pudding, made of plum-pudding and ices, and not unknown in other countries. Then we had the *samovar*, which had been made ready for us, and drank some delicious tea which we prepared ourselves. Now for the *samovar*.

RUSSIAN MUJIKS DRINKING TEA.

"Its name comes from two words which mean 'self-boiling;' and the *samovar* is nothing but an urn of brass or copper, with a cylinder in the centre, where a fire is made with charcoal. The water surrounds the cylinder, and is thus kept at the boiling-point, which the Russians claim is indispensable to the making of good tea. The beverage is drunk not from cups, but from glasses, and the number of glasses it will contain is the measure of a *samovar*. The Russians rarely put milk with their tea; the common people never do so, and the upper classes only when they have acquired the habit while abroad. They rarely dissolve sugar in their tea, but nibble from a lump after taking a swallow of the liquid. A peasant will make a single lump serve for four or five glasses of tea, and it is said to be an odd sensation for a stranger to hear the nibbling and grating of lumps of sugar when a party of Russians is engaged in tea-drinking.

"We sat late over the *samovar*, and then paid our bill and returned to the Square. Doctor Bronson told us that an enormous quantity of tea is consumed in Russia, but very little coffee. Formerly all the tea used in the Empire was brought overland from China by way of Siberia, and the business enabled the importers of tea to accumulate great fortunes. Down to 1860 only one cargo of tea annually was brought into Russia by sea, all the rest of the importation being through the town of Kiachta, on the frontier of Mongolia. Since 1860 the ports of the Empire

have been opened to tea brought from China by water, and the trade of Kiachta has greatly diminished. But it is still very large, and long trains of sledges come every winter through Siberia laden with the tea which has been brought to Kiachta on the backs of camels from the districts where it is grown.

PLANT FROM WHICH YELLOW TEA IS MADE.

"There is one kind of the Chinese herb, called *joltai chai* (yellow tea), which is worth at retail about fifteen dollars a pound. It is said to be made from the blossom of the tea-plant, and is very difficult to find out of Russia, as all that is produced comes here for a market. We each had a cup of this tea to finish our dinner with, and nothing more delicious was ever served from a teapot. The infusion is a pale yellow, or straw-color, and to look at appears weak enough, but it is unsafe to take more than one cup if you do not wish to be kept awake all night. Its aroma fills the room when it is poured out. All the pens in the world cannot describe the song of the birds or the perfume of the flowers, and so my pen is unable to tell you about the aroma and taste of *joltai chai*. We'll get a small box of the best and send it home for you to try."

It was so late in the day when our friends had finished their dinner and returned to the Square, that there was not much time left for sight-seeing. They were in front of the Winter Palace and St. Isaac's Church, but decided to leave them until another day. Fred's attention was drawn to a tall column between the Winter Palace and a crescent of lofty buildings called the *État-major*, or staff headquarters, and he asked the Doctor what it was.

COLUMN IN MEMORY OF ALEXANDER I.

"That is the Alexander Column," was the reply to the question. "It is one of the largest monoliths or single shafts of modern times, and was erected in 1832 in memory of Alexander I."

"What a splendid column!" said Frank. "I wonder how high it is."

Thereupon the youths fell to guessing at the height of the column. After they had made their estimates—neither of them near the mark but considerably below it—Doctor Bronson gave them its dimensions.

"The shaft, without pedestal or capital, is fourteen feet in diameter and eighty-four feet high; it was originally one hundred and two feet high, but was reduced through fear that its length was out of proportion to its diameter. The base and pedestal are one single block of red granite about twenty-five feet high, and the capital is sixteen feet high. The angel above the capital is fourteen feet tall, and

the cross in the hands of the angel is seven feet above it. With the platform on which it rests, the whole structure rises one hundred and fifty-four feet from the level of the ground."

"They must have had a hard time to make the foundations in this marshy ground," one of the boys remarked.

"They drove six rows of piling there, one after the other, before getting a foundation to suit them," said the Doctor. "The shaft alone, which was put up in the rough and finished afterwards, is thought to weigh about four hundred tons, and the pedestal and base nearly as much more. Unfortunately the shaft has suffered from the effects of the severe climate, and may be destroyed at no distant day. Several cracks have been made by the frost, and though they have been carefully cemented, they continue to increase in size. Pieces have fallen from the surface of the stone in the same way that they have fallen from the Egyptian obelisk in New York, and it is very evident that the climate of St. Petersburg is unfriendly to monuments of granite."

The bronze on the pedestal and capital is from Turkish cannon which were melted down for the purpose. The only inscription is in the few words,

"TO ALEXANDER THE FIRST, GRATEFUL RUSSIA."

Frank made a sketch of the monument together with the buildings of the *État-major* and a company of soldiers that marched past the foot of the column. Doctor Bronson said the soldiers belonged to the guard of the palace, where they had been on duty through the day, and had just been relieved.

From the column and the buildings surrounding it the trio of strangers walked to the bank of the river and watched the boats on the water, where the setting sun slanted in long rays and filled the air with the mellow light peculiar to high latitudes near the close of day. It was early in September, and already the evening air had a touch of coolness about it. St. Petersburg is in latitude 60° North, and consequently is quite near the Arctic Circle. Doctor Bronson told the youths that if they had come there in July they would have found very little night, the sun setting not far from ten o'clock and rising about two. In the four hours of night there is almost continuous twilight; and by mounting to the top of a high building at midnight one can see the position of the sun below the northern horizon. Any one who goes to bed after sunset and rises before sunrise would have very little sleep in St. Petersburg in summer.

"On the other hand," said the Doctor, "the nights of winter are very long. Winter is the gay season here, as the city is deserted by fashionable people in summer, and one is not expected to make visits. The Imperial court goes away; the Emperor has a palace at Yalta in the Crimea, and there he passes the autumn months, unless kept in St. Petersburg or Moscow by the affairs of the nation. They have some public festivities here in summer, but not generally, most of the matters of this kind being reserved for the winter."

PETER THE GREAT.

Boats were moving in all directions on the placid waters of the river, darting beneath the magnificent bridge that stretches across the stream, and carrying little parties, who sought recreation or were on errands of business. On the opposite side of the Neva, and beyond the Winter Palace, was the grim fortress of Sts. Peter and Paul, with whose history many tales of horror are connected, and where numerous prisoners of greater or less note have been confined. "It was there," said Doctor Bronson, "that Peter the Great caused his son Alexis to be put to death."

"Caused his son to be put to death!" exclaimed the youths together.

"Yes, it is generally believed that such was the case," the Doctor answered, "though the fact is not actually known. Alexis, the son of Peter the Great, was opposed to his father's reforms, and devotedly attached to the old superstitions and customs of Russia. Peter decided to exclude him from the throne; the son consented, and announced his desire to enter a monastery, from which he managed to escape to Austria, where he sought the protection of the Emperor of that country. Peter sent one of his generals in pursuit of Alexis; by a combination of threats and promises he was induced to return to St. Petersburg, where he was thrown into prison, and afterwards tried for high-treason and condemned to death. Peter pardoned but did not release him. On the 7th of July, 1718, he died suddenly, and it was and is now generally believed that he was poisoned or beheaded by his father's order."

"And was he really guilty of high-treason?" Fred asked.

"According to Russian law and custom, and particularly according to the law and custom of Peter the Great, he certainly was," Doctor Bronson replied. "Remember, the Emperor is autocratic in his power, at least in theory, and in Peter's time he was so actually. The will of the founder of the Russian Empire was law; Alexis was opposed to that will, and consequently opposed to the Imperial law. The progress of Russia was more in the eyes of Peter than the life

of any human being, not even excepting his own son, and the legitimate heir to the throne. The proceedings of the trial were published by Peter as a justification of his act.

ASSASSINATION OF PETER III.

"Peter II., the son of Alexis and grandson of the great Peter, died suddenly, at the age of fifteen; Peter III., grandchild of Peter the Great through his daughter Anna, was the husband of the Empress Catherine II.; but his reign was very short. His life with Catherine was not the happiest in the world, and in less than eight months after he became Emperor she usurped the throne, deposed her husband, and caused him to be strangled. Catherine was a German princess, but declared herself thoroughly Russian when she came to reside in the Empire. If history is correct, she made a better ruler than the man she put aside, but this can be no justification of her means of attaining power.

PAUL I.

"Her son, Paul I., followed the fate of his father in being assassinated, but it was not by her orders. She brought him up in complete ignorance of public affairs, and compelled him to live away from the Imperial court. Until her death, in 1796, she kept him in retirement, although she had his sons taken to court and educated under her immediate supervision. Treatment like this was calculated to make him whimsical and revengeful, and when he became emperor he tried to undo every act of his mother and those about her. He disbanded her armies, made peace with the countries with which she was at war, reversed her policy in everything, and became a most bitter tyrant towards his own people. He issued absurd orders, and at length his acts bordered on insanity.

"A conspiracy was formed among some of the noblemen, who represented to his son Alexander that it was necessary to secure the abdication of his father on the ground of incapacity. Late at night, March 23d, 1801, they went to his bedroom and presented a paper for him to sign. He refused, and was then strangled by the conspirators. Alexander I. was proclaimed emperor, and the announcement of Paul's death was hailed with delight by his oppressed subjects. Among the foolish edicts he issued was one which forbade the wearing of round hats. Within an hour after his death became known, great numbers of round hats were to be seen on the streets.

"You've had enough of the history of the Imperial family of Russia for the present," said the Doctor, after a pause, "and now we'll look at the people on the streets. It is getting late, and we'll go to the hotel, making our observations on the

way.

RUSSIAN AND FINN.

"Here are distinct types of the inhabitants of the Empire," the Doctor remarked, as they passed two men who seemed to be in animated conversation. "The man with the round cap and long coat is a Russian peasant, while the one with the hood over his head and falling down to his shoulders is a Finn, or native of Finland."

"How far is it from here to Finland?" Frank asked.

"Only over the river," the Doctor replied. "You cross the Neva to its opposite bank, and you are in what was once the independent duchy of Finland, but has long been incorporated with Russia. When Peter the Great came here he did not like to be so near a foreign country, and so made up his mind to convert Finland into Russian territory. The independence of the duchy was maintained for some time, but in the early part of the present century Russia defeated the armies of Finland, and the country was permanently occupied. Finland has its constitution, which is based on that of Sweden, and when it was united with Russia the constitutional rights of the people were guaranteed. The country is ruled by a governor-general, who is appointed by Russia; it has a parliament for presenting the grievances and wishes of the people, but all acts must receive the approval of the Imperial Government before they can become the law of the land."

DVORNIK AND POSTMAN.

"What are those men standing in front of a building?" said Fred, as he pointed to a fellow with a broom talking with another in uniform.

"The one in uniform is a postman," was the reply, "and the other is a *dvornik*, or house guardian. The *dvornik* sweeps the sidewalk in front of a house and looks after the entrance; he corresponds to the porter, or *portier*, of other countries, and is supposed to know the names of all the tenants of the building. The postman is reading an address on a letter, and the *dvornik* is probably pointing in the direction of the room occupied by the person to whom the missive belongs."

"I have read that letters in Russia are examined by the police before they are delivered," said one of the boys. "Is that really the case?"

"Formerly it was, or at least they were liable to examination, and it probably happens often enough at the present time. If a man is suspected of treasonable practices his correspondence is liable to be seized; unless there is a serious charge against him, it is not detained after examination, provided it contains

nothing objectionable. The Post-office, like everything else in Russia, is a part of the military system, and if the Government wishes to do anything with the letters of its subjects it generally does it. The correspondence of foreigners is rarely meddled with. Writers for the foreign newspapers sometimes complain that their letters are lost in the mails, or show signs of having been opened, but I fancy that these cases are rare. For one, I haven't the least fear that our letters will be troubled, as we have no designs upon Russia other than to see it. If we were plotting treason, or had communications with Russian and Polish revolutionists in France or Switzerland, it is probable that the Government would not be long in finding it out."

"What would happen to us, supposing that to be the case?" Frank inquired.

"Supposing it to be so for the sake of argument," the Doctor answered, "our treatment would depend much upon the circumstances. If we were Russians, we should probably be arrested and imprisoned; but as we are foreigners, we should be asked to leave the country. Unless the matter is very serious, the authorities do not like to meddle with foreigners in any way that will lead to a dispute with another government, and their quickest way out of the difficulty is to expel the obnoxious visitor."

"How would they go to work to expel us?"

LODGINGS AT THE FRONTIER.

"An officer would call at our lodgings and tell us our passports were ready for our departure. He would probably say that the train for the frontier leaves at 11 A.M. to-morrow, and he would expect us to go by that train. If the case was urgent, he would probably tell us we must go by that train, and he would be at the hotel at ten o'clock to escort us to it. He would take us to the train and accompany us to the frontier, where he would gracefully say good-by, and wish us a pleasant journey to our homes. If matters were less serious, he would allow us two or three days, perhaps a week, to close our affairs; all would depend upon his orders, and whatever they were they would be carried out.

ORDERED TO LEAVE RUSSIA.

"Before the days of the railways objectionable parties were taken to the frontier in carriages or sleighs, the Government paying the expense of the posting; and no matter what the hour of arrival at the boundary, they were set down and left to take care of themselves. An Englishman who had got himself into trouble with the Government in the time of the Emperor Nicholas, tells how he was dropped just over the boundary in Prussia in the middle of a dark and rainy night, and left

standing in the road with his baggage, fully a mile from any house. The officer who accompanied him was ordered to escort him over the frontier, and did it exactly. Probably his passenger was a trifle obstinate, or he would not have been left in such a plight. A little politeness, and possibly a few shillings in money, would have induced the officer to bring him to the boundary in the daytime, and in the neighborhood of a habitation.

"Expelled foreigners have rarely any cause to complain of the incivility of their escorts. I know a Frenchman who was thus taken to the frontier after a notice of two days, and he told me that he could not have received greater civility if he had been the guest of the Emperor, and going to St. Petersburg instead of from it. He added that he tried to outdo his guardians in politeness, and further admitted that he richly deserved expulsion, as he had gone to the Empire on a revolutionary mission. On the whole, he considered himself fortunate to have escaped so easily."

The conversation led to anecdotes about the police system of Russia, and at their termination our friends found themselves at the door of the hotel. Naturally, they shifted to other topics as soon as they were in the presence of others. It was an invariable rule of our friends not to discuss in the hearing of any one else the politics of the countries they were visiting.



CHAPTER V.

NUMBER AND CHARACTER OF THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE.—PAN-SLAVIC UNION.—ST. ISAAC'S CHURCH.—ITS HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION.—THE WINTER PALACE AND THE HERMITAGE.—SIGHTS IN THE PALACE.—CATHERINE'S RULES FOR HER RECEPTIONS.—JOHN PAUL JONES IN RUSSIA.—THE CROWN JEWELS AND THE ORLOFF DIAMOND.—ANECDOTES OF THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS.—RELICS OF PETER THE GREAT.—FROM PALACE TO PRISON.—TOMBS OF RUSSIA'S EMPERORS.—A MONUMENT AND AN ANECDOTE.

When the subject of the police was dropped by our friends, Frank asked a question about the Russian people and their origin. The Doctor answered that the topic was a broad one, as the Empire contained more than a hundred different nations and tribes of people, and that they spoke forty distinct languages. Many of the smaller tribes were assimilating with the Russians and losing their distinctiveness, even though they preserved their language; but this was by no means the case throughout the Empire.

"Not in Poland, I think," said Frank, "judging by what we saw and heard, and probably not in Finland."

"Quite right," added Doctor Bronson; "and the same is the case with the German population in the Baltic provinces. Though they have long been an integral part of the Empire, there are thousands of the inhabitants who cannot speak Russian, and refuse to teach it to their children. They are less revolutionary in their ways than the Poles, but none the less desirous of preserving their national characteristics.

"The population of Russia is about one hundred millions," he continued, "and it is spread over an area of nearly if not quite seven million square miles of land. Russia occupies about one-eighth of the land surface of the globe, but is very thinly inhabited. European Russia, including Poland, Finland, and other provinces, covers two millions of square miles, while Siberia, or European Asia, extends over at least five millions. This does not include the disputed territory of the last few years in Central Asia. It is pretty certain to come under the rule of

the Emperor, and will add another half-million, if not more, to his dominions.

FINLAND PEASANTS IN HOLIDAY COSTUME.

"The inhabitants are very unevenly distributed, as they average one hundred and twenty-seven to the square mile in Poland, and less than two to the mile in Asiatic Russia. About sixty millions belong to the Slavic race, which includes the Russians and Poles, and also a few colonies of Servians and Bulgarians, which amount in all to less than one hundred thousand. The identity of the Servians and Bulgarians with the Slavic race has been the excuse, if not the reason, for the repeated attempts of Russia to unite Servia, Bulgaria, and the other Danubian principalities with the grand Empire. The union of the Slavic people under one government has been the dream of the emperors of Russia for a long time, and what could be a better union, they argue, than their absorption into our own nation?"

Fred asked who the Slavs were, and whence they came.

INHABITANTS OF SOUTHERN RUSSIA.

"According to those who have studied the subject," Doctor Bronson answered, "they were anciently known as Scythians or Sarmatians. Their early history is much obscured, but they seem to have had their centre around the Carpathian Mountains, whence they spread to the four points of the compass. On the north they reached to the Baltic; westward, they went to the banks of the Elbe; southward, beyond the Danube; and eastward, their progress was impeded by the Tartar hordes of Asia, and they did not penetrate far into Siberia until comparatively recent times. With their extension they split up into numerous tribes and independent organizations; thus their unity was lost, and they took the form in which we find them to-day. Poles and Russians are both of the same race, and their languages have a common origin; but nowhere in the world can be found two people who hate each other more heartily. However much the Russians have favored a Pan-Slavist union, you may be sure the Poles look on it with disfavor.

"The ancient Slavonic language has given way to the modern forms in the same way that Latin has made way for French, Italian, Spanish, and other tongues and dialects with a Latin origin. In fact those languages hold the same relation to Latin that Polish, Russian, Servian, and Bulgarian hold towards ancient Slavonic. The Romish Church uses Latin in its service, and the Russo-Greek Church uses the old Slavonic; the Poles, Bohemians, and others have adopted the Roman alphabet, but the Russians use the Slavonic characters in a modified

form. The Russian alphabet has thirty-six letters, some being Roman, others Greek, and others Slavonic. After you have learned the alphabet and can spell out the signs on the shops and street corners, I'll tell you more about the language."

It was getting late, and the party broke up a few minutes after the foregoing conversation. Before they separated, Doctor Bronson suggested to the youths that he should expect them to read up the history of Russia, and not forget the Romanoff family. "The Romanoffs," said he, "are the reigning family of Russia, just as the Guelphs are of England and the Hapsburgs of Austria."

It was speedily arranged that Frank would devote special attention to the first-named subject, while Fred would assume the responsibilities of the latter. "And while you are on the subject," the Doctor added, turning to Fred, "see if you can find about the origin of the Orloff family, which is one of the most interesting traditions that has been handed down."

Fred promised, and the party separated for the night.

They were all up in good season the next morning, and after a substantial breakfast, in which the *samovar* had a prominent place, they set out for a round of sight-seeing in the modern capital of Russia.

ST. ISAAC'S CHURCH AND ADMIRALTY SQUARE.

Returning to Admiralty Square, they visited the Church of St. Isaac, accompanied by the guide they had engaged at the hotel. The man was of Russian birth, and spoke English with considerable fluency. Evidently he understood his business, as he told the history of the sacred edifice with a careful adherence to dates.

"Peter the Great built a wooden church on this very spot," said the guide, "in 1710, but it was destroyed by fire. Afterwards the great Catherine erected another, which was finished in 1801; but it only remained eighteen years. The present building was begun in 1819, and its completion took nearly forty years. It was consecrated in 1858, and is considered the finest church in the Empire."

"The last statement might be disputed by some of the citizens of Moscow," said the Doctor to the youths, "but there is no question about the church being the finest in St. Petersburg. Observe its admirable proportions," he continued. "It is in the form of a Greek cross, with its four sides of equal length, and the architect who planned it certainly had a correct eye for his work."

"You observe," said the guide, "that each of the four entrances is approached by

three flights of stone steps, leading up from the level of the square. Each of these flights of steps is cut from a single block of Finland granite."

The youths made note of this fact as they wondered how the huge masses of stone were brought from their quarries; and they also noted that the four entrances of the church were between pillars of granite sixty feet high and seven feet in diameter, polished to the smoothness of a mirror. An immense dome forms the centre of the edifice. It is of iron, covered on the outside with copper, and this copper is heavily plated with pure gold. It is the dome which first caught the eyes of the travellers as they approached the city, and forms an important landmark from every direction. The cupola rests on thirty granite pillars, which look small enough when seen from below, but are really of great size.

PRIEST OF THE CHURCH OF ST. ISAAC.

In the inside of the church are paintings by Russian artists, and there are two columns of malachite fifty feet high, and of proportionate diameter—the largest columns of this costly mineral anywhere in the world. Immense quantities of malachite, lapis-lazuli, and other valuable stones are used in the decoration of the church, and our friends thought that if there was anything to criticise it was the great amount of ornamentation and gilding in the interior. "But I have no doubt," wrote Fred in his note-book, "that this display has its effect upon the worshippers in the church, and particularly among the poor peasants and all others of the humbler classes. In all the countries we have visited, whether of the Christian, Moslem, Buddhist, or other faith, we have found the religious edifices adorned in the most costly manner, and there is no reason why Russia should form an exception to the general rule. Many of the paintings, columns, and other decorations of this church were the gift of wealthy Russians, while others were paid for by the contributions of the people, or from the funds in Government hands."

From the Church of St. Isaac our friends went to the Hermitage and the Winter Palace, the latter being named in contradistinction to the Summer Palace, which is at Tsarskoe-Selo, a few miles from the capital. We will see what the youths had to say of their visit to these edifices. Fred will tell the story.

CATHERINE II. OF RUSSIA.

"To describe all we saw there would take a fair-sized volume," said Fred, "and we will only tell what impressed us most. The palace was built in a great hurry, to take the place of the one that was burned in 1837. It was ready for occupation in 1839; and when you know that it is four hundred and fifty feet long by three hundred and fifty wide, and rises to a height of eighty feet, you will agree with us that the Russians are to be praised for their energy. Our guide had procured the necessary ticket for admittance, and we passed in through an enormous gateway opposite the Column of Alexander. Two servants in livery showed us through the halls and galleries, and for hours we wandered among pictures which represent the victories of Russia over its enemies, and amid costly furniture and adornments, till our feet and eyes were weary. The Throne-room of Peter the Great is one of the finest of the apartments, and the Hall of St. George is the largest. It measures one hundred and forty feet by sixty, and is the scene of the grand balls and receptions which the Emperor gives on state occasions. There is a beautiful apartment, known as the drawing-room of the Empress. Its walls and ceiling are gilded, and the whole work about it seems to have been

done without regard to expense.

"One of the halls contains portraits of the rulers of Russia from Peter the Great down to the present time; another, the portraits of the generals who fought against the French in 1812; another, the portraits of all the field-m Marshals of the armies by which Napoleon was conquered; and others, the battle-scenes before mentioned. I observed that Russia was not unlike France, Germany, and other countries in representing very prominently the battles where she triumphed, and ignoring those where she was defeated. The guide told us that at the state balls in the palace sit-down suppers are provided for all the guests, even if there are two or three thousand of them. Sometimes the supper-hall is converted into a garden by means of trees brought from greenhouses. The guests sit at table beneath the foliage, and can easily forget that they are in the middle of a Russian winter.

"Doctor Bronson says the Russians are very fond of plants in their dwellings, the wealthy expending large sums on greenhouses and conservatories, and the poorer people indulging in flower-pots, which they place in all available spots. The wealthy frequently pay enormous prices for rare exotics. We have seen a good many flower-stores along the Nevski Prospect and in other streets, and are ready to believe that the Russians are great admirers of floral products. Their long, cold, and cheerless winters lead them to prize anything that can remind them of the summer season.

"At the entrance of one of the halls there is a tablet on which are the rules which Catherine II. established for the informal parties she used to have at the Hermitage. Catherine had literary aspirations, and her parties were in imitation of the *salons* of Paris, which have a wide celebrity. Here is a translation of the rules, which I take from Murray's 'Hand-book:'

"1. Leave your rank outside, as well as your hat, and especially your sword.

"2. Leave your right of precedence, your pride, and any similar feeling, outside the door.

"3. Be gay, but do not spoil anything; do not break or gnaw anything.

"4. Sit, stand, walk as you will, without reference to anybody.

"5. Talk moderately and not very loud, so as not to make the ears and heads of others ache.

"6. Argue without anger and without excitement.

"7. Neither sigh nor yawn, nor make anybody dull or heavy.

"8. In all innocent games, whatever one proposes, let all join.

"9. Eat whatever is sweet and savory, but drink with moderation, so that each may find his legs on leaving the room.

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"10. Tell no tales out of school; whatever goes in at one ear must go out at the other before leaving the room.

"A transgressor against these rules shall, on the testimony of two witnesses, for every offence drink a glass of cold water, not excepting the ladies, and further read a page of the "Telemachiade" aloud.

"Whoever breaks any three of these rules during the same evening shall commit six lines of the "Telemachiade" to memory.

"And whoever offends against the tenth rule shall not again be admitted.'

"The 'Telemachiade' which is prescribed as a penance was the work of a Russian poet of Catherine's time, who does not seem to have enjoyed the Imperial favor. It is said that invitations to these parties were much sought; but, in spite of all her efforts, the Empress could not induce her guests to forget entirely that she was their sovereign. However, she managed to make her parties much less formal than anything ever known before at the Imperial Palace, and this was a great deal to accomplish in such a time and in such a country.

RECEPTION OF JOHN PAUL JONES BY THE EMPRESS CATHERINE.

"I may remark, by-the-way, that the Empress Catherine was the first sovereign of Russia to invite an American officer into the Imperial service. That officer was the celebrated John Paul Jones, a Scotchman by birth but an American citizen at the time of the Revolutionary war. The havoc he wrought upon the British fleets attracted the attention of the Russian Government, and after our war was over he received an intimation that he could find employment with the armies of the Empress. He went to St. Petersburg, was received by Catherine at a special audience, and accorded the rank of admiral in the Imperial Navy. Russia was then at war with Turkey. Admiral Jones was sent to command the Russian fleet in the Black Sea, and operate against the Turkish fleet, which he did in his old way.

RUSSIAN ATTACK ON THE TURKISH GALLEY.

"The Russians were besieging a town which was held by the Turks, who had a

fleet of ships supporting their land-forces. Jones dashed in among the Turkish vessels with a boarding-party in small boats, backed by the guns of his ships and those of the besieging army. He captured two of the Turkish galleys, one of them belonging to the commander of the fleet, and made such havoc among the enemy that the latter was thoroughly frightened. Unfortunately, Jones incurred the displeasure of Potemkin, the Prime-minister, and favorite of the Empress, and shortly after the defeat of the fleet he was removed from command and sent to the Baltic, where there was no enemy to operate against.

"But I am neglecting the palace in following the career of an American in the service of Russia.

THE ORLOFF DIAMOND.

"We asked to see the crown jewels of Russia, and the guide took us to the room where they are kept. One of the most famous diamonds of the world, the Orloff, is among them, and its history is mixed up with a good deal of fable. The most authentic story about this diamond seems to be that it formed the eye of an idol in a temple in India, whence it was stolen by a French soldier, who sold it for two thousand guineas. It then came to Europe, and after changing hands several times was bought by Prince Orloff, who presented it to the Empress Catherine. The Prince is said to have given for the diamond four hundred and fifty thousand rubles (about four hundred thousand dollars), a life annuity of two thousand rubles, and a patent of nobility. It weighs more than the famous Koh-i-noor of England, but is not as fine a stone. There is a faint tinge of yellow that depreciates it considerably, and there is also a flaw in the interior of the stone, though only perceptible on a careful examination.

"The Imperial crown of Russia is the most interesting crown we have anywhere seen. The guide told us how much it was worth in money, but I've forgotten, the figures being so large that my head wouldn't contain them. There are rubies, diamonds, and pearls in great profusion, the diamonds alone being among the most beautiful in the world. There are nearly, if not quite, a hundred large diamonds in the crown, not to mention the smaller ones that fill the spaces where large ones could not go. The coronet of the Empress is another mass of precious stones worth a long journey to see. There are other jewels here of great value, among them a plume or aigrette, which was presented to General Suwarroff by the Sultan of Turkey. It is covered with diamonds mounted on wires that bend with each movement of the wearer. What a sensation Suwarroff must have made when he walked or rode with this plume in his hat!

"From the crown jewels we went to a room whose history is connected with a scene of sadness—the death of the Emperor Nicholas. It is the smallest and plainest room of the palace, without any adornment, and containing an iron bedstead such as we find in a military barrack. His cloak, sword, and helmet are where he left them, and on the table is the report of the quartermaster of the household troops, which had been delivered to the Emperor on the morning of March 2, 1855, the date of his death. Everything is just as he left it, and a soldier of the Grenadier Guards is constantly on duty over the relics of the Iron Czar.

NICHOLAS I.

"If what we read of him is true, he possessed one characteristic of Peter the Great—that of having his own way, more than any other Emperor of modern times. He ascended the throne in the midst of a revolution which resulted in the defeat of the insurgents. They assembled in Admiralty Square, and after a brief resistance were fired upon by the loyal soldiers of the Empire. Five of the principal conspirators were hanged after a long and searching trial, during which Nicholas was concealed behind a screen in the court-room, and listened to all that was said. Two hundred of the others were sent to Siberia for life, and the soldiers who had simply obeyed the orders of their leaders were distributed among other regiments than those in which they had served.

"Through his whole reign Nicholas was an enemy to free speech or free writing, and his rule was severe to the last degree. What he ordered it was necessary to perform, no matter what the difficulties were in the way, and a failure was, in his eyes, little short of a crime. He decided questions very rapidly, and often with a lack of common-sense. When the engineers showed him the plans of the Moscow and St. Petersburg Railway, and asked where the line should run, he took a ruler, drew on the map a line from one city to the other, and said that should be the route. As a consequence, the railway is very nearly straight for the whole four hundred miles of its course, and does not pass any large towns like the railways in other countries.

"A more sensible anecdote about him relates an incident of the Crimean war, when the Governor of Moscow ordered the pastor of the English Church in that city to omit the portion of the service which prays for the success of British arms. The pastor appealed the case to the Emperor, who asked if those words were in the regular service of the English Church. On being answered in the affirmative, he told the pastor to continue to read the service just as it was, and ordered the governor to make no further interference.

"His disappointment at the defeat of his armies in the Crimean war was the cause of his death, quite as much as the influenza to which it is attributed. On the morning of his last day he received news of the repulse of the Russians at Eupatoria, and he is said to have died while in a fit of anger over this reverse. Though opposed to the freedom of the Press and people, he advised the liberation of the serfs; and before he died he urged his son and successor to begin immediately the work of emancipation.

"The Hermitage is close to the palace, and is large enough of itself for the residence of an emperor of medium importance, and certainly for a good-sized king. The present building is the successor of one which was built for the Empress Catherine as a refuge from the cares of State, and hence was called the Hermitage. It is virtually a picture-gallery and museum, as the walls of the interior are covered with pictures, and there are collections of coins, gems, Egyptian antiquities, and other things distributed through the rooms.

PETER III.

"The room of greatest interest to us in the Hermitage was that containing the relics of Peter the Great. There were the turning-lathes whereon he worked, the knives and chisels with which he carved wood into various forms, together with specimens of his wood-carving. His telescopes, drawing-instruments, walking-stick, saddle, and other things are all here, and in the centre of the room is an effigy which shows him to have been a man of giant stature, as does also a wooden rod which is said to be the one with which he was actually measured. There is a carriage in which he drove about the city, the horse he rode at the battle of Pultowa, and several of his favorite dogs, all stuffed and preserved, but not in the highest style of the taxidermist. There are casts taken after Peter's death, several portraits in oil and one in mosaic, and a cast taken during life, and presented by Peter to his friend Cardinal Valenti at Rome. It was missing for a long time, but was finally discovered about the middle of this century by a patriotic Russian, who bought it and presented it to the gallery.

"There is a clock in the same room which is said to have contained at one time the draft of a constitution which Catherine the Great intended giving to her people. Immediately after her death her son and successor, Paul, rushed to the clock in her bedroom, drew out the paper, and destroyed it. At least this is the tradition; and whether true or not, it is worth knowing, as it illustrates the character of Paul I."

Our friends imitated the course of many an Imperial favorite, not only in Russia,

but in other countries, by going from a palace to a prison, but with the difference in their case that the step was voluntary.

As they crossed the bridge leading from the Winter Palace in the direction of the grim fortress of Sts. Peter and Paul, Doctor Bronson told the youths that Peter the Great shut up his sister in a convent and exiled her minister, Prince Galitzin. "Since his time," the Doctor continued, "his example has been followed by nearly every sovereign of Russia, and a great many persons, men and women, have ended their lives in prison or in exile who once stood high in favor at the Imperial court. Catherine was accustomed to dispose of the friends of whom she had wearied by sending them to live amid Siberian snows, and the Emperor Paul used to condemn people to prison or to exile on the merest caprice. Even at the present day the old custom is not unknown."

CIRCASSIAN ARMS AS TROPHIES OF BATTLE.

"We were not admitted to the cells of the fortress," said Frank, in his account of the visit to the place, "as it was 'contrary to orders,' according to the guide's explanation. But we were shown through the cathedral where the rulers of Russia from the time of Peter the Great have been buried, with the exception of Peter II., who was buried at Moscow, where he died. The tombs are less elaborate than we expected to find them, and the walls of the church are hung profusely with flags, weapons of war, and other trophies of battle. The tombs mark the positions of the graves, which are beneath the floor of the cathedral. Naturally the tombs that most attracted our attention were those of the rulers who have been most famous in the history of Russia.

"We looked first at the burial-place of the great Peter, then at that of Catherine II., and afterwards at the tomb of Nicholas I.; then we sought the tomb of Alexander II., who fell at the hands of Nihilist assassins, and after a brief stay in the church returned to the open air. The building is more interesting for its associations than for the artistic merit of its interior. Its spire is the tallest in the Empire, with the exception of the tower of the church at Revel, on the Baltic coast. From the level of the ground to the top of the cross is three hundred and eighty-seven feet, which is twenty-six feet higher than St. Paul's in London.

"The spire alone is one hundred and twenty-eight feet high, and very slender in shape. It was erected more than a hundred years ago, and the church itself dates almost from the time of the foundation of the city. Fifty or more years ago the angel and cross on the top of the spire threatened to fall, and a Russian peasant offered to repair them for two hundred rubles. By means of a rope and a few

nails, he climbed to the top of the spire and performed the work, and nobody will say he did not earn his money. A single misstep, or the slightest accident, would have dashed him to certain death.

"When we left the church and fortress," continued Frank, "we felt that we had had enough for the day of that kind of sight-seeing, so we drove through some of the principal streets and went to the Gostinna Dvor, where we wished to see the curiosities of the place and make a few purchases.

STATUE OF NICHOLAS I.

"Near St. Isaac's Church we passed the famous equestrian statue of the Emperor Nicholas, in which the sculptor succeeded in balancing the horse on his hind feet without utilizing the tail, as was done in the case of the statue of Peter the Great. The Emperor is in the uniform of the Horse Guards. The pedestal is formed of blocks of granite of different colors, and there are bronze reliefs on the four sides representing incidents in the Emperor's life and career. On the upper part of the pedestal at each of the corners are emblematical figures, and just beneath the forefeet of the horse is a fine representation of the Imperial eagle. The whole work is surrounded with an iron fence to preserve it from injury, and altogether the statue is one of which the city may well be proud."

While the party were looking at the Imperial arms just mentioned, Fred asked why the eagle of Russia is represented with two heads.

"It indicates the union of the Eastern and Western empires," the Doctor answered, "the same as does the double-headed eagle of Austria. The device was adopted about four centuries ago by Ivan III., after his marriage with Sophia, a princess of the Imperial blood of Constantinople.

"By-the-way," the Doctor continued, "there's a story of an Imperial grand-duke who went one day on a hunting excursion, the first of his life, and fired at a large bird which rose before him. The bird fell, and was brought by a courtier to the noble hunter.

"'Your Imperial Highness has killed an eagle,' said the courtier, bowing low and depositing the prey on the ground.

"The grand-duke looked the bird over carefully, and then turned away with disdain. 'That's no eagle,' said he, 'it has only one head.'"

What our young friends saw in the Gostinna Dvor will be told in the next chapter.



CHAPTER VI.

**THE GOSTINNA DVOR.—ITS EXTENT AND CHARACTER.—
PECULIARITY OF RUSSIAN SHOPPING.—CURIOUS CUSTOMS.—
OLD-CLOTHES MARKET.—HAY-MARKET.—PIGEONS IN RUSSIAN
CITIES.—FROZEN ANIMALS.—CHURCH AND MONASTERY OF ST.
ALEXANDER NEVSKI.—A PERSIAN TRAIN.—A COFFIN OF SOLID
SILVER.—THE SUMMER GARDEN.—SPEAKING TO THE EMPEROR.
—KRILOFF AND HIS FABLES.—VISIT TO A RUSSIAN THEATRE.
—"A LIFE FOR THE CZAR."—A RUSSIAN COMEDY.**

"Before I describe the Gostinna Dvor of St. Petersburg," said Fred in his notebook, "let me premise by saying that every Russian city or town has an establishment of the same kind. It is a good deal more than the market-place with us, and seems to combine the bazaars of the East with the shops of the West. In an ordinary town the Gostinna Dvor occupies a single large building at or near the centre of population; the larger the town or city the greater will be the commercial needs of the people, and consequently a city like Moscow or St. Petersburg will have a Gostinna Dvor that dwarfs all ordinary markets into insignificance.

"The one at St. Petersburg occupies an enormous building, which might almost be called a series of buildings, fronting on the Nevski Prospect, but entered also from other streets. There are said to be ten thousand merchants and their employés in the building, and certainly the number is little if any exaggerated. We walked among the rows of shops till our feet ached with weariness, and still there were many other rows of shops to be visited. Sometimes the shopmen were importunate, but usually they did not disturb us unless we stopped to look at something. The building is two stories high, the lower floor being used for retail purposes and the upper for the storage of goods. Owing to the danger of a conflagration and the great destruction that would ensue, we were told that no fire is allowed here in winter. Then the merchants and their clerks wear furs and thick clothing when at their business, and shoppers are not expected to lay aside their wraps while making purchases.

"'What do you buy in the Gostinna Dvor?' I hear some one asking.

"Everything that one could wear or use in Russia,' I should reply, 'together with a great many things whose use it would be impossible to imagine.' Some one writing on this subject says you may come naked into the Gostinna Dvor, bringing only a pocket-book stuffed with money, and leave it in an hour dressed in whatever garments you choose, wear all the jewellery your tastes may dictate, and ride away in a coach drawn by four horses, with driver and footmen in livery, all obtained in the building we are now visiting, or in one of its annexes. Nay, more; you can engage a residence of palatial character from accommodating house agents stationed here, and furnish it completely from the stock on hand in the Gostinna Dvor. Pictures, chairs, sofas, curtains, tapestry, kitchen utensils, library, anything and everything you want, are all ready for sale, and only await purchasers. Your wife and children, 'sisters, cousins, and aunts,' can here be provided with wardrobes, elaborate or economical, as your purse will justify, and so with all the servants of the household, regardless of their number.

POLITENESS IN THE MARKET-PLACE.

"Officers of every grade, rank, and arm of the service can be uniformed here, and their garments may be brand-new, second-hand, or so old that they will subject the wearer to punishment on account of his shabbiness. Decorations are to be bought, at least the insignia thereof, and the seller will ask no questions. The purchaser wears them at his peril if he does not possess the proper diplomas, since the unauthorized wearing of decorations is as serious a matter in Russia as in other Continental countries. The Emperor Nicholas was fond of visiting the Gostinna Dvor accompanied by a single orderly. One day he saw a young officer wistfully eying a decoration in one of the windows, and told the orderly to ascertain his name. Inquiry showed that the officer stood well with his superiors, was faithful in the performance of his duties, and the result was he received the coveted bauble directly from the hand of the Emperor.

"Perhaps you wonder why the Russian market is so extensive, and what must be the habits of the people to sustain such a commerce. This is the way it is explained:

"A Russian rarely buys anything till just as he wants it, and then he cannot wait to have it made. In England or America a man desiring to furnish a fine house would be weeks or months collecting his furniture, ordering some to be made, and buying the rest from time to time when he found what suited him. Under similar circumstances, a Russian drives to the Gostinna Dvor, and makes his selections from what he finds there.

"The Russians are said to be more capricious than people of other nationalities in the matter of their movements from place to place. A wealthy Russian will fit up a house at great expense, buying his furniture in the manner described. In a few months he decides to travel for his health, or go to the country, and the whole equipment is sent to the Gostinna Dvor and sold for what it will bring. It may be so little used that it can be sold again by the dealer as new, and of course the dealer makes a large profit on the transaction. When the man comes back to the city he furnishes anew, and thus the business of the bazaar is maintained. Fortunes come and go very quickly in Russia, and so the work of fitting and dismantling is continuous.

"The best goods are in the Gostinna Dvor proper, while the inferior ones are in the annexes. Some of the shops have fixed prices, but in most of them there is a system of bargaining which is not agreeable to the traveller from the Occident. He is never certain that he has paid the proper price, even when he has brought the merchant down to what appears to be his lowest figure.

IMPORTUNING A VISITOR.

"We bought a few articles of Russian manufacture to send home to our friends. Among them were *samovars*, inlaid goods from Tula, embroidered slippers and sashes from the Tartar provinces, malachite and lapis-lazuli jewellery, and some Circassian ornaments of silver. Many of the articles sold in the Gostinna Dvor are of English, German, and French manufacture, which are largely increased in price owing to the duties placed upon them by the custom-house.

"Our guide directed us from the rear of the building along the *Bolshoia Sadovaia*, or Great Garden Street, which is a line of shops and bazaars, to the *Sennaia Ploshad*, or Hay-market. This is a large open place or square, which is less interesting now than in winter. In summer it is devoted to the sale of hay and live-stock, but in winter it is filled not only with the hay, grain, and live-stock of summer, but with frozen animals, which form the principal food of the inhabitants of the city. Here is what one traveller has written about the frozen market:

FROZEN ANIMALS IN THE MARKET.

"On one side you see a collection of frozen sheep—stiff, ghastly objects—some poised on their hoofs like the wooden animals in a child's "Noah's Ark;" others on their sides, with their legs projecting at right angles to their bodies; others, again, on their backs, with their feet in the air like inverted tables. The oxen are only less grotesque from having been cleft down their backs—an operation

which seems to take them out of the category of oxen and place them in that of beef. The pigs are drawn up in line against the wall, standing on their hind legs, with their forefeet extended above their heads, like trick-dogs going through their performances.

"The partridges, quails, grouse, wood-hens, and other birds are lying together in a frozen mass, and by their side are ducks and geese with outstretched necks so straight and stiff that you might take one of these harmless creatures by the bill and, using it as a bludgeon, knock down your enemy with its body. The fowls have been plucked, plunged into water, and left to freeze; thus they are completely encased in ice, and in that condition will keep for any length of time as long as the weather continues cold.'

"Frozen fish are piled in heaps like stove-wood, and frozen cabbages are rolled around like cannon-shot. A calf stands in front of a butcher's stall in the attitude of walking away, but an examination shows that he is hard as a stone, and may have been standing there for weeks. Milk is sold in bricks, with a stick or string frozen into one corner; the purchaser may carry it home by means of this improvised handle, or he may wrap it in paper or his handkerchief. In fact everything that can be frozen yields to the frost, and the Russians find it a most convenient form of preservation. One of the odd sights of the frozen market is the itinerant vender of sucking-pigs, who carries these articles of trade hung around his neck or waist, as though they were ornaments rather than merchandise.

MARKET FOR OLD CLOTHES.

"There is a market for old clothes which reminded us of Chatham Street, in New York. The dealers had little stalls where the garments were exposed for sale, and there were a good many peddlers who walked about with the goods they desired to dispose of. The old-clothes market of St. Petersburg is said to be inferior to that of Moscow in the number and character of the Israelitish merchants in whose hands the business is concentrated. The one at Moscow is also called the Elbow-market, on account of the continued elbowing of those who go there. Though people were crowded closely together when we were in the market, we saw no indications of anything but good-nature. The Russians are polite to each other as well as to strangers, and it was amusing to see how the rough fellows, when meeting face to face, bowed as though they were great personages.

"And such flocks of pigeons as were flying all about! They tell us there are many more of them in winter than in summer, as the birds are then driven to the towns

and cities to find their food. The Hay-market is their favorite resort, since grain as well as hay is sold there, and the pigeons manage to get off with all that is scattered on the ground.

PIGEONS IN A RUSSIAN CITY.

"The pigeon or dove in Russia is a sacred bird. The Russians say that as the dove brought the olive-branch to the Ark, he should not be harmed, and it would be a great offence to kill one of these birds in the presence of an orthodox member of the Church. But all the grain that is scattered from the feed of the horses and in the market-place is not sufficient for the sustenance of the pigeons; many kind-hearted persons throw quantities of grain to them every morning, and not unfrequently it happens that a pious Russian will spend a considerable part of his income in this way. Kriloff, the Russian fable writer, is said to have supported all the pigeons of the Gostinna Dvor for some time at his own expense, or, more properly speaking, at that of his creditors.

"There are a great many magpies and crows mingling with the pigeons, and evidently considering themselves just as respectable. Pigeons, crows, and magpies fill the belfries of many of the churches, but not of all, and nobody seems able to say why they make the distinction. Some of the churches are fairly thronged with them, and they keep up a perpetual flutter around the roof from sunrise to sunset.

"There is a story that the magpies were driven out of Moscow by one of the priests under the following circumstances: The high-priest, or metropolitan, was about to lay the foundation of a new church, and when he reached the part of the ceremony where the mortar was to be placed on the stone, the golden trowel which had been brought for the occasion could not be found. A workman standing near was accused of the theft, and as nobody else could have stolen the trowel, the man was sent to Siberia. Some weeks later the precious tool was found by the bell-ringers in the great tower in the Kremlin, where it had been carried by a thieving magpie. The man was pardoned, and compensated for his suffering; the metropolitan placed the curse of the Church on the magpie, and thereupon all the magpies in Moscow flew away, and have not since been near the city. The story is told by the author of 'The Russians at Home,' and he adds that the magpies really do keep at a respectful distance from the ancient capital of Russia, and thus vouch for the truth of the story."

From the Gostinna Dvor our friends drove to the church and monastery of St. Alexander Nevski, at the extreme end of the Nevski Prospect. It occupies a large

area enclosed by high walls, and is said to be on the exact spot where the Grand-duke Alexander defeated the Swedes, about A.D. 1241. In due time he was canonized, and became St. Alexander. He was buried at Vladimir, where his remains rested until after the founding of St. Petersburg.

Peter the Great caused the bones of the saint to be transported to the new city on the banks of the Neva. St. Alexander became St. Alexander Nevski ("of the Neva"), and the church and monastery were established. One night the monks in charge of the church took the bones of the saint and started for Vladimir, declaring they had been told in a vision that the saint was not resting peacefully in the marshy soil of the new capital. Peter was not a man to be thwarted in his designs. He sent word to the monks that unless they returned immediately, bringing the bones with them, they would lose their heads. Knowing the man they had to deal with, they straightway had a new vision, which accorded with the wishes of the imperious Czar. They took the road back to St. Petersburg without delay, and sought and obtained the pardon of their august master.

Hear what Fred has to say about the church and its surroundings:

"The original church was of wood," writes Fred, "and was built about 1712; it was torn down a few years later, and replaced with a church of stone. The sovereigns of Russia each added something to the building and its surroundings, and the present cathedral was built by Catherine the Great. The work was done at great expense. Marble was brought from Italy for the interior decorations, and the malachite, lapis-lazuli, and other costly minerals were brought from Siberia and Persia. Some of the paintings are by Russian artists, and the rest by celebrated masters of Italy and other countries.

"An object of great interest is the shrine of St. Alexander Nevski. The coffin is of solid silver, and, with the surrounding ornaments of the same pure metal, is estimated to weigh more than a ton and a half. The crown of the saint is preserved here, and also the bed on which Peter the Great died, and there are many interesting objects associated with the memory of nearly all the rulers of Russia.

"There is a library of ten or twelve thousand volumes, together with a large number of manuscripts relating to the history of the Empire. In the monastery are the cells of some fifty or sixty monks who reside here and have charge of a religious school which is open to students preparing to enter the service of the Church. The chapel contains the tombs of Suwaroff and other generals, and also of many members of the Imperial family. There are tombs of several noble

families of Russia; that of the Narishkins bears the inscription,

""FROM THEIR RACE CAME PETER THE GREAT.'

"An occurrence of comparatively recent times is associated with this church. Alexander Griboyedoff, born at Moscow about 1795, was a celebrated poet and dramatist, whose merits were acknowledged by his appointment as Minister to Persia in 1828. In February of the following year he and all the Russians who accompanied him were murdered in Teheran, in consequence of a riotous outbreak of the populace. The Russian Government demanded satisfaction, which was given in the shape of a long train of beasts of burden loaded with presents, and accompanied by a prince of the Shah's household. There were also many fine horses for saddle purposes, and a collection of wild animals peculiar to Asia. The train was months on its way, and reached St. Petersburg in the winter. A procession was made to this church, and certainly it was the most remarkable that this northern city had ever seen.

PERSIAN HORSES PRESENTED BY THE SHAH.

"Pearls, embroideries in gold and silver, shawls, and other costly fabrics, were carried on silver dishes in the hands of gorgeously dressed Persians; elephants bearing towers filled with Persian warriors, or laden with the gifts of the Persian court, were protected from the cold by boots and wrappings of leather; and the cages of the lions, tigers, and leopards were shielded by double coverings of the skins of Arctic bears. The Persian prince rode in an Imperial carriage drawn by six horses, and was escorted by a regiment of Russian grenadiers. A portion of the presents was bestowed upon this church, and the remainder went to the families of Griboyedoff and his companions.

"The Emperor comes in person to attend the service of mass in this church at least once a year. The choir is one of the best in the city, and the church is largely attended by the fashionable inhabitants of the capital. A service was going on as we entered the building, and we remained near the door until it ended. It was an impressive ceremonial, made doubly so by the historic interest of the surroundings."

RUSSIAN PEASANT GIRL.

A drive to the Summer Gardens followed the visit to the Church of Saint Alexander Nevski. Several theatres and other public buildings were passed on the way, but they concluded not to stop to examine them. "One building is very

much like another in St. Petersburg," said the Doctor; "and unless there is some special interest connected with it, or a peculiar feature of architecture, it is not worth while mixing it up with your recollections of the Winter Palace and the Hermitage."

RUSSIAN NURSE-MAID AND CHILDREN.

It was a pleasant afternoon, and the Summer Gardens were filled with people enjoying the open air. There were nurse-maids with children, peasants alone or in couples, or groups, well-to-do persons of the middle classes, officers and soldiers—in fact a fair representation of the whole population. The Emperor sometimes comes here for a walk, but of late years his visits have been less frequent than formerly, on account of the fear of assassination. It is forbidden to speak to the Emperor while he is on the promenade, and any one violating the rule will be arrested immediately.

It is said that one day while the Emperor was walking in the Summer Gardens he met and recognized a French actor with whose performance he was greatly pleased. He spoke pleasantly to the actor, and the latter replied, expressing his satisfaction at this mark of the Imperial favor. The Emperor then went on his way. The police immediately pounced upon the performer, and carried him away to prison for violating the rule!

"But the Emperor spoke to me first," the man protested over and over again to no purpose.

"You spoke to the Emperor, which is contrary to the law," was all the explanation he could obtain.

Nicholas went that night to the theatre to hear his favorite, but the latter did not appear. No one could tell where he was, and his Majesty returned disappointed to the palace.

In the morning the unfortunate actor was released, and the story somehow reached the Imperial ears. Nicholas sent for the victim of the arrest, apologized for the action of the police, and asked what reparation he could make for the actor's night in prison.

"Never speak to me again in the public garden," was the reply. The Emperor laughed, and made the required promise. Next day he sent the equivalent of a month's salary to the actor, together with a diamond ring of no small value.

In one corner of the garden is a monument to the memory of Kriloff, the Russian fabulist. The youths asked the Doctor to tell them about Kriloff, which he did as

follows:

"Kriloff was the most famous writer in Russia in the first half of the present century," said the Doctor, "and he is probably better known to-day among all classes of the population than any other man of letters. Forty thousand copies of his works were sold between 1830 and 1840, in editions of various kinds, and went to all parts of the Empire. There was hardly a child of the educated classes who was not familiar with his stories, and they were circulated 'by word of mouth' among the peasantry, to whom reading was an unknown accomplishment; and before they were issued in books, his fables were published in newspapers and magazines, so that the aggregate circulation was very large."

Fred asked what was the nature of the stories told by the famous man whose statue they were regarding.

SOME OF KRILOFF'S FRIENDS.

"They were fables," the Doctor answered, "after the manner of Æsop's and La Fontaine's. He had written editorials and literary essays for various publications, but never made a 'hit' until about his fortieth year, when he took some fables from La Fontaine and adapted them to the conditions of life in Russia. He showed them to a friend, who printed them in *The Moscow Spectator*, where they attracted much attention. Kriloff was encouraged to continue this style of writing. For the rest of his life his literary labors were almost wholly devoted to fables. He died in November, 1844, at the good old age of seventy-six.

KRILOFF'S CHARACTERS IN CONVENTION.

"At his funeral the streets were crowded, and the Church of St. Isaac could not hold all who came to take part in the services. Soon after his death a popular subscription was started, and the children of all classes contributed to it. The money was expended for the erection of the statue[Pg 123]

[Pg 124] before us. You observe that the space around it is the favorite play-ground of the children, and no more appropriate spot could have been chosen."

The statue represents Kriloff in a dressing-gown, seated in an arm-chair, with his head slightly inclined forward, and looking pleasantly downward. The pedestal of the monument is adorned with reliefs of the animals that figured in his fables—oxen, horses, cows, sheep, donkeys, foxes, wolves, hens, lions, etc., and thereby hangs a story:

The Emperor Nicholas was fond of choosing as his ministers and advisers men

who were not likely to oppose any of his measures. The incompetency of his ministry was notorious both in Russia and other countries. When his successor, Alexander II., ascended the throne, he was asked why he did not retain the ministry of Nicholas instead of choosing a new one. He replied, "My father was a man of such transcendent ability that he could afford to surround himself with incompetent men; I feel my weakness, and must have the best talent in the Empire to assist me."

When the equestrian monument to the memory of Nicholas was under consideration, it was proposed to adorn its pedestal with the portraits of his ministers, but the proposal was vetoed, when some one suggested that if the monument were so adorned it might be mistaken for that of Kriloff.

"Krilloff's fables," the Doctor continued, "were aimed at official and social abuses and absurdities. Many that he wrote were never produced, as all had to receive the approval of the censor before they could be issued. I told you that in ten years forty thousand copies of his works were sold, and it is probable that the present sale amounts to several thousand annually. Kriloff is read not only by Russian children but by people of all ages, and the fables have been translated into all the languages of Europe."

On the way back to the hotel our friends stopped at a book-store and bought a copy, in English, of the book in which their interest had been aroused. Some of the fables were incomprehensible to them, on account of their ignorance of Russian manners and customs, and of the system of government; but this was not the case with the greater number. They had a hearty laugh over several of the anecdotes, and voted the book to be well worth preserving.

Here are some of the fables with which they were amused. We will condense them, as they are sometimes rather long drawn out in the original.

A donkey meets a nightingale in the woods, and asks her to favor him with a song. She complies, and sings her sweetest. The other birds come and listen, but the donkey shakes his head and says, "Your voice is very fair, but you should take lessons of the village cock." The moral may be thus rendered in English:

"What most the poet fears,
Is the critic with long ears."

Another fable tells how the swan, the crab, and the pike agreed to draw a load; but when the time came for the effort the pike dived into the water, the swan flew into the air, while the crab went backward after the manner of his kind. At the end Kriloff says,

wrong,

long,

present day."

"Which was right and which was

I really can't pretend to say;
But this I know, they labored

And the load stands still to the

The fable of "The Two Boys" tells how two youths are trying to get at some nuts in a tree, but the limbs are beyond their reach. One suggests that he will climb up on the back of the other, and then can gather nuts for both; but as soon as he is seated among the limbs he falls to eating the nuts at his leisure, and throws only the shells to his companion. The moral is obvious, and Kriloff adds that he has known men thus raised to profitable positions who had not the grace to throw even the shells to those who had assisted them.

THE FOX AS A LAW GIVER.

In the fable of "The Pike," that voracious fish has been killing his inoffensive neighbors in the pond. He is taken in a tub of water and carried before the court for judgment. The court is composed of two donkeys and two goats, who grazed on the banks of the pond; and in order to make their decision an intelligent one, a skilful lawyer, the fox, is added to the court. People said that the fox was always plentifully supplied with fish, the pike giving him all he wanted.

The proof was overwhelming, and the judges decided that the pike must be hanged. "Oh, hanging's too good for him," said the fox, "give him something more severe; let the wretch be drowned."

"Certainly," exclaimed the judges; and thereupon the pike was thrown into the pond again.

ONE OF KRILOFF'S CHARACTERS.

In "The Fox and the Marmot," the fox complains to the marmot that he has been driven out of a poultry-yard which he had undertaken to protect. "It was a wretched place," says the fox; "I was awake all night; and even in the daytime I had hardly time to eat a mouthful. My health was suffering from my constant occupation, and, after all my trouble and fidelity, I am accused of stealing. What an infamous outrage! You know what I had to do there, and I ask if you could suspect me of the slightest act of dishonesty."

"Of course not," the marmot answers; "but I'm sorry to say that I've frequently seen feathers sticking in your mouth."

"Many an official," says Kriloff, "complains that his place is a hard one, and he is barely able to live upon his pay. Nevertheless in time he buys an estate and builds a house. You might have difficulty in proving that he accepted bribes or robbed the Government, but every one must admit that the feathers are quite visible around the gentleman's mouth."

Frank read this fable aloud, and then asked the Doctor if the moral would be understood by any office-holders in the United States. Doctor Bronson smiled as he answered that the fable was designed for Russia alone, but its circulation in New York and Washington could do no harm.

In the evening our friends went to one of the theatres to hear an opera that is a great favorite with the Russians. It is by Glinka, a Russian composer, and is entitled "*Jizn za Tsarya*" ("A Life for the Czar"). From "The Russians at Home" Fred learned that the opera was first produced in Moscow in 1843. The subject is

the devotion of a Russian peasant to the Czar Michael, the first ruler of the Romanoff family. A band of Polish invaders are seeking the Czar with the intention of killing him; they meet a peasant, whom they question as to the Czar's place of concealment. Suspecting their design, he offers to lead them to the spot; they follow, and he leads them to the centre of a forest from which they cannot find a way of escape. After getting them there, he announces that he has saved the life of the Czar at the sacrifice of his own. The invaders kill him on the spot, but the life of the Czar is saved. The story is a true one, and to this day the people of the village where the loyal peasant, Ivan Soussanin, lived, are exempt from taxes, and a monument has been erected to the memory of the man. The opera which chronicles his devotion is given in three acts, and its melodies are all strictly national. Our friends were delighted with the performance, and both Frank and Fred declared that for days afterwards several of the airs in "*Jizn za Tsarya*" were literally "running through their heads."

Another evening they went to one of the cheaper theatres, where Russian comedies and farces were given. Of course they could not understand the dialogue, but were quite interested in the action of the piece, which was decidedly vigorous. Fred said he was reminded of certain local dramas in New York, where the actors receive a great deal of pounding and rough handling, and Frank thought a good actor in Russia ought to have the flexibility and agility of a circus performer.

As a type of the plays that amuse the lower order of Russians, the following is a fair representation:

A mujik makes love to his master's maid-servant, much against the old gentleman's will. One day the master enters the kitchen and finds the mujik there. The whole family is called, the bull-dog is let loose upon the lover and seizes him by the coat, while all the members of the household proceed to pound him with saucepans, broomsticks, tongs, and other utensils that can be used for hostile purposes.

CLOSING SCENE IN A RUSSIAN PLAY.

Round and round goes the frightened mujik. The dog clings to the mujik's coat, the master seizes the dog by the tail, the mistress clutches the master by the coat, and so the whole trio is dragged by the victim. The rest of the party continue their pounding, which they alternate by throwing missiles in the shape of plates, potatoes, and anything else the kitchen affords.

The audience is wild with delight, especially as the blows fall quite as often on

the other characters as on the mujik. Finally the maid-servant comes to her lover's relief by throwing a bunch of fire-crackers among his enemies and blowing them up; thereupon the lover dashes through the door, carrying with him the adhering bull-dog, and the curtain falls amid rounds of applause.

KRILOFF'S STATUE IN THE SUMMER GARDEN, ST. PETERSBURG.



CHAPTER VII.

NEWSPAPERS IN RUSSIA.—THEIR NUMBER, CHARACTER, AND INFLUENCE.—DIFFICULTIES OF EDITORIAL LIFE.—THE CENSORSHIP.—AN EXCURSION TO PETERHOF, ORANIENBAUM, AND CRONSTADT.—SIGHTS IN THE SUMMER PALACE.—CRONSTADT AND THE NAVAL STATION.—THE RUSSIAN NAVY.—THE RUSSIAN ARMY: ITS COMPOSITION AND NUMBERS.—THE COSSACKS.—ANECDOTES OF RUSSIAN MILITARY LIFE.

The conversation about Kriloff and the visit to the opera naturally turned the thoughts of the youths in the direction of Russian literature, journalism, and dramatic productions. Frank was curious to know about the newspapers of the country, while Fred's first inquiry referred to the works of its poets, historians, and dramatists.

"We will begin with the newspapers," said Doctor Bronson, "and first I will speak of those published in St. Petersburg. They are all printed in Russian, with the exception of a little sheet in German, for the exclusive use of the German residents, and *Le Journal de St. Petersbourg*, the organ of the ministry of foreign affairs, and chiefly filled with official notices interesting to foreigners. It is printed in French, as most of the foreigners visiting Russia understand that language. It contains very little local news, and not much from the outside world. In fact journalism, as we understand it in America, is practically unknown in Russia. The best of the Russian dailies could not stand a comparison with the leading journals of a dozen American cities, and a single copy of the *Herald*, *Tribune*, *Times*, or *World*, of New York, contains more 'news,' as we call it, than all the papers of Moscow and St. Petersburg together."

"I suppose the censorship is largely responsible for this state of affairs," Frank remarked.

"You are quite right," the Doctor replied; "if the censorship did not exist there is no doubt that the papers would be much more enterprising than they are. They must not offend the Government, or they are liable to suppression. Editorials are generally submitted to the censor before going into type, and if approved they may be printed. If printed without approval, the publishers run the risk of

censure. For a first offence they are 'cautioned;' for a second they are cautioned and fined; and for a third offence the publication is suspended for a month, three months, or perhaps entirely. Consequently the papers cannot discuss public matters with any freedom, and they are entirely prohibited from publishing personal scandals, which form such an important part of the 'news' of several American papers I could name. In addition to cautions and fines, the editors are liable to imprisonment; and, taking all things into consideration, the way of the journalist is hard in Russia."

Fred asked the Doctor what were the principal papers of the capital.

PRESS-ROOM OF A DAILY NEWSPAPER.

"They change so often," was the reply, "that an answer made this year will hardly answer for next. Each member of the ministry has his organ; that of the foreign ministry, as before stated, is *Le Journal de St. Petersbourg*; while that of the War Department is the *Russki Invalid*; known to the outer world as the *Invalide Russe*. The organ of the Naval Bureau is published at Cronstadt, the great naval port of the Empire, and not at the capital; but as Cronstadt is only a few miles away, the locality is of little consequence. The *Golos* is generally understood to be the organ of the Ministry of the Interior; and as this department has the supervision of the press, this paper is said to have more freedom than its rivals. But even the *Golos* does not escape the hand of the censor, and its freedom of speech has several times brought it into trouble.

"What would be called a small circulation in America is a large one in Russia. There is not a daily paper in the Empire that averages a circulation of twenty-five thousand copies, and the leading papers of the two great cities have to content themselves with ten or fifteen thousand. I have been told that the daily papers of St. Petersburg do not circulate altogether more than eighty thousand copies daily outside the capital, and about fifty thousand in it. Remember, the mass of the population does not know how to read and write as in America, and consequently the circulation of the newspapers is confined to a small portion of the community.

INTERVIEWING AN EDITOR.

"A paper of great influence, probably the greatest in the Empire, is the *Moscow Gazette*. It is supposed to be the organ of the Emperor, with whom its editor, Mr. Katkoff, is on terms of intimacy. Important edicts of the Government are frequently foreshadowed in the *Gazette*, and the national and international pulses are often felt through its columns. But, with all its influence, the *Gazette* does

not circulate more than twenty thousand copies—at least according to the figures at my command. The *Moscow Gazette* is more frequently quoted by foreign writers than any other journal in Russia; and if it were published in French rather than in Russian, we should probably hear of it even more frequently than we do."

"It's a pity they don't give us a French edition of it," said Frank. "I would like very much to read the paper and know what it has to say, but of course I can't as long as it is in Russian. French is the diplomatic language, and I wonder they don't make an edition for foreign circulation."

"Did you ever hear," remarked the Doctor, with a smile, "of the attempt of Prince Bismarck to have German take the place of French as the language of diplomacy?"

Neither of the boys had heard the anecdote, which the Doctor gave as follows:

PRINCE GORTCHAKOFF.

"Shortly after the close of the Franco-German War, in 1870, Bismarck thought he would establish German as the diplomatic language, and with this object in view he made use of German instead of French in an official communication to Prince Gortchakoff, the foreign minister of Russia. Gortchakoff promptly replied to the communication, and wrote in Russian. Bismarck saw the joke, and desisted from further attempts to carry out his design."

"Returning to our subject," said the Doctor, "there are daily papers in the large towns of Russia, and weekly or semi-monthly papers in the smaller ones; but with its population of one hundred millions, the Empire has less than one-tenth as many newspapers as we have in the United States, and probably not more than one-fiftieth, or even one-hundredth, of the circulation."

"The first printing-press in Russia was set up in 1564. The first newspaper was printed at Moscow in 1704, and the second at St. Petersburg, a year later. Peter the Great abolished the use of the old Slavic characters for printing purposes, and personally supervised the casting at Amsterdam of the types in the Russian common language as we now find it."

"In addition to the newspapers there are many magazines and reviews in Russia, and some of them have a very large circulation. They contain articles on the condition of the country, biographical sketches of distinguished Russians, historical notices of cities and towns, scientific reports, travels, anecdotes, and

stories by Russian writers, together with translations of European or American works. 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' was published in one of the Russian magazines, and so were the stories of Dickens and other English authors. The magazines go to all parts of the Empire, and have a larger circulation, proportioned to that of the newspapers, than do periodicals elsewhere."

The conversation was brought to an end by the entrance of the guide, who said it was time to start for their proposed excursion to Peterhof. In a few minutes they were on the way to the station, and in due time were seated in the train which carried them to their destination.

Peterhof is on the shore of the Gulf of Finland, not far from Cronstadt; in fact the excursion included a visit to Cronstadt before the party returned to the city. The palace was begun in 1720, under the direction of Peter the Great. Nearly every sovereign of Russia has made additions and alterations, but the original palace remains, and its general characteristics are preserved. Even the yellow paint which Peter adopted is still in use, and the palace contains several relics of the great Czar, which are regarded with reverence by Russian visitors, and with interest by others.

"It was here that Peter the Great died," wrote Fred in his journal. "They showed us the bed whereon he breathed his last, and it was in the same condition as when he left it. It is not in the palace, but in a small building in the grounds, and it is said that in the same building the Empress Elizabeth sometimes amused her courtiers by cooking her own dinner. From another building, called Marly, Peter used to watch his fleet of ships at anchor near Cronstadt; and in another, The Hermitage, there is a curious arrangement, devised by Catherine II., so that a party at dinner did not need the aid of servants. You wonder how it was done?

"In front of each person at table there was a circular opening, through which a plate could be lowered to the kitchen or carving-room below, and replaced by another. Imagine, if you please, a miniature 'lift,' or elevator, for each place at table, and you will understand the arrangement. Thus a dinner of any number of courses could be served, and the party would be entirely by itself. Catherine used this dining-room when she wished to discuss State secrets with foreign ambassadors, and be sure that no listening servant could betray them.

CABINET AND CHAIR IN THE PALACE.

"The palace contains many tapestries, articles of porcelain, malachite, and other costly things, and there are many pictures representing battles fought in the latter part of the last century. One room contains nearly four hundred portraits of girls

in all parts of European Russia, which were painted by a French count who travelled through the Empire in Catherine's time. The wonderful thing about them is, that the artist who executed the pictures was able to represent the subjects in different attitudes, so that no two are alike.

"They showed us the tables and benches where several of the emperors played when they were children, and also the playthings that amused them.

ILLUMINATION IN A RUSSIAN PARK.

"The grounds are quite as interesting as the palace. They are beautifully laid out in gardens, dotted with lakes, cascades, fountains, and little parks. No description in words could do justice to the spot, which must be seen in an elaborate picture to be appreciated. The water-works are nearly as fine as the celebrated one at Versailles, or St. Cloud in France, and of course the Russians claim that they are superior. Occasionally in summer there is a festival given by the Emperor to some of his foreign guests; the grounds and the lake are lighted up with Chinese lanterns, and the display closes with an exhibition of fireworks of no small importance. Sometimes the Emperor goes around the lake in a boat propelled by oars-men, but usually contents himself by looking on from a pavilion near the edge of the water.

TAPESTRY AND FIRE UTENSILS AT PETERHOF.

"From Peterhof we drove to Oranienbaum, about six miles away, where we took the boat to Cronstadt. I can't begin to name all the palaces and chateaux on the road, as I was too busy with looking at them to remember what they were called; and besides, if I made a list it might be too long to be interesting. We visited two or three of them, but had not time for all; some were not open to strangers, as they were then occupied by their owners, and these Russian grand-dukes and duchesses are very exclusive in their ways.

"At Oranienbaum we found the little steamer which was to convey us to Cronstadt, five miles away; she puffed, as though conscious of her importance, but did not make very good speed, and we had plenty of time to study Cronstadt as we approached it. The city is not very large, nor is it particularly interesting. The chief objects of attraction are the tremendous fortifications, which are among the strongest in the world, and very extensive. They were begun by Peter the Great, in 1703, and there has hardly been a year since that time when labor on them has entirely ceased. The harbor was filled with ships belonging to the war fleet of Russia, and certainly they have a fleet to be proud of. There is a smaller port, called the 'Merchants' Harbor,' where the commerce of the city is

centred. It is an active place from May to November, when navigation is open, but when the Baltic is sealed with ice in the winter months, it must be the perfection of dreariness.

"Until quite recently ships drawing more than ten feet of water could not pass the bar of the Neva and ascend to St. Petersburg, but were compelled to anchor at Cronstadt. Recently a canal has been made, with a depth of twenty feet, so that a great many vessels which were formerly excluded on account of their size can ascend to the capital. During the Crimean war Cronstadt was blockaded by a French and English fleet; an attack was made on the forts of Cronstadt, but it was easily repulsed; and after that time the allies did nothing more than regard the forts from a safe distance. At Oranienbaum is a palace, from whose top the Emperor Nicholas used to watch the movements of the hostile fleet; the telescope he employed is still in the position where he left it on his last trip to St. Petersburg."

While our friends were looking at the naval harbor of Cronstadt and the splendid fleet at anchor there, Doctor Bronson reminded the youths that when Peter the Great ascended the throne Russia had no navy, and none of her people knew anything about building ships.

DOOR-WAY OF PETER'S HOUSE AT ZAANDAM, HOLLAND.

"I have read about it," said Frank, "and it was to learn the art of ship-building that he went to England and Holland."

"That is what history tells us," the Doctor answered. "He realized the inferior condition of a country without a navy, and sent intelligent young Russians to study the art of building and navigating ships. Not satisfied with what they learned, he left Russia for about a year and a half, which he spent in acquiring useful knowledge. He worked in a ship-yard in Holland disguised as a common workman, though it is generally believed that the officers in charge of the yard knew who he was. Afterwards he spent three months in an English ship-yard; and when he returned to his country he was accompanied by some five hundred shipwrights, riggers, sail-makers, and other laborers required in an establishment such as he wished to create. From this beginning came the navy of Russia. The foundation of the great fleet before us was laid by Peter the Great.

"The English and Dutch origin of Russian ship-building is shown in the English and Dutch names for the different parts of a ship. The deck, keel, mast, and many other nautical things are the same in Russian as in English; the Russians had no equivalent words, and naturally adopted the names from the country that

supplied the things named.

A STUDENT OF NAVIGATION.

"And I can tell you something still more curious," the Doctor continued, "as it was told to me by a Russian captain. While the ship-builders of Peter the Great were from England and Holland combined, the men to navigate the ships after they were built came almost wholly from the latter country. The result is that nearly all the evolutions of a ship, and the movements of the sailors to accomplish them, are in Dutch, or rather they have been adopted from Dutch into Russian. The Russian captain I have mentioned stated it to me in this way:

"A Dutch pilot or captain could come on my ship, and his orders in his own language would be understood by my crew: I mean simply the words of command, without explanations. On the other hand, a Dutch crew could understand my orders without suspecting they were in Russian."

"It is no wonder," said Fred, "that the Russians honor the memory of the great Peter, and that their largest ship of war bears his name. Am I right in regard to the ship?"

"It is the largest at present," replied the Doctor, "but there are three ships—the *Tchesme*, *Sinope*, and *Catherine II.*—to be completed in 1887, which will be larger than the *Peter the Great*. The latter is an iron-clad turret-ship of 8285 horse-power and 10,000 tons displacement. She carries eight guns, has two turrets, and her iron plating at the water-line is fourteen inches thick. She is three hundred and thirty feet long and sixty feet wide in her broadest part, and resembles the great mastless ships of the British navy, particularly those of the *Dreadnought* class. She was built at Cronstadt, in 1874; the other and larger ships I have named are on the ways at Sevastopol and Nicolaieff, on the Black Sea.

STEAM FRIGATE NEAR CRONSTADT.

"Without going into details, I will say that the Russian navy consists of two great divisions: the fleet of the Baltic and the fleet of the Black Sea. Each of these great divisions is subdivided into sections: the Baltic fleet into three, and the Black Sea fleet into two. The sections carry flags of different colors, white, blue, and red; this arrangement was taken from the Dutch, like the system of ship-building in Peter's time.

"At the beginning of 1885 the Baltic fleet consisted of two hundred and nine vessels, including thirty-three armor-clad and belted ships, forty-nine unarmored

frigates, corvettes, clippers, and cruisers, and ninety-five torpedo-boats. Gun-boats, transports, and various other craft completed the list. The Black Sea fleet included ninety-eight vessels, of which seven were armor-clad; then there are the vessels of the Caspian Sea and the Siberian flotillas; and altogether the Russian navy comprised at that time 358 vessels, armed with 671 guns, with a measurement of 196,575 tons, and engines of 191,976 horse-power.

"Before we drop the subject of Russia's navy," the Doctor continued, "perhaps you would like to hear about the *Popovkas*."

Neither of the youths had heard of these things, and wondered what they could be. Doctor Bronson relieved their perplexity by explaining that the *Popovkas* were a new style of iron-clad ship intended for the defence of harbors, rather than for rapid cruising at sea.

FRIGATE UNDER SAIL AND STEAM.

"They were the invention of Admiral Popoff, of the Russian navy," he remarked, "and hence comes their name. The first of them was built in 1873, at Nicolaieff, on the Black Sea, and was called the *Novgorod*. She is circular, with a diameter of one hundred feet, and carries two eleven-inch guns in a revolving turret like that of the *Monitor*. She measures two thousand tons, and has engines which propel her about six miles an hour. The other ship of this class is the *Admiral Popoff*, one hundred and twenty feet in diameter, carrying two twelve-inch guns in a revolving turret, and capable of steaming eight miles an hour. There is a gentle slope of the sides from the water's edge to the base of the turret, so that any other shot than a plunging one would be glanced off. As the ships have not yet been tried in battle, their advantages are only theoretical."

THE "DREADNOUGHT"—TYPE OF THE "PETER THE GREAT."

Frank asked how many officers and men were employed in the navy of the Czar.

"From the latest reports at hand," the Doctor answered, "there are twenty-nine admirals, vice-admirals, and rear-admirals, four hundred and four captains, and nine hundred and thirty-four lieutenants and midshipmen. Seventy-six admirals, one hundred and forty captains, and fifty lieutenants are employed on shore duty, and there are thirty-five captains and thirty-nine lieutenants and midshipmen serving in lines of commercial steamers subsidized by the Government; one thousand and ninety-four pilots, engineers, artillerists, and others complete the official list, and the men before the mast number twenty-four thousand five hundred and twelve. The sailors are obtained by conscription or by voluntary enlistment—generally the former—and required to serve nine years. Seven years

of this period are in active service, and two years in the reserve, whence the men may be called out in case of war."

"Please tell us something about the Russian army," said Fred, "as the army and navy are very closely related."

"I think you have had enough of statistics for one day," Doctor Bronson replied, "and if they are all in your journals your readers may be inclined to skip them. But at the risk of being tedious you cannot omit saying something about the military and naval forces of a nation which is the most thoroughly military and naval power of modern times. There is no throne in Europe more dependent upon the weapons of war than is that of Russia. Take away the army and navy, and Russia would follow the fate of Poland, and be speedily dismembered by her neighbors. England, France, Germany, and Austria would have made an end of Russia long ago but for the resisting power of which she is capable."

Frank and Fred declared that they would like to hear then and there about the army, and so the Doctor continued:

"The army of Russia previous to 1874 was drawn entirely from the classes of artisans and peasants by means of a conscription and the enrolment of the sons of soldiers. In that year a new law was approved by the Emperor making all men who had completed their twenty-first year, and were not physically exempt, liable to service. The purchase of substitutes is not permitted by the new law; each man drawn by the conscription is required to pass six years in active service and nine years in the reserve, making a total of fifteen years in all. While in the reserve the men are liable to be called out only in case of war, and if so called out, the younger are put into active service in the field, while the older ones are employed for garrisoning forts and other light work."

"Don't they have any exemption for the sons of rich men?" one of the youths inquired.

**Grenadier. Chasseur of the Guard. Fifer of the Guard. Dragoon. Cuirassier.
Hussar.**

THE RUSSIAN ARMY—REGULAR TROOPS.

"Theoretically there is none," the Doctor answered; "but in order to cover such cases, and particularly to provide officers for the army, it is arranged that young men with a fair education may be enrolled as volunteers for short terms during and from their seventeenth year of age. When their volunteer service is completed they may pass into the reserve, or be subjected to an examination for

commissions as officers either in the active army or the reserve. In the reserve, whether as officers or privates, they are liable to be called for duty any time before their thirty-sixth year."

Fred asked what proportion of the male population was taken for the army every year by means of the conscription.

"As before stated, every able-bodied man is liable," was the reply; "but it is generally found that a conscription of four in a thousand will produce from ninety thousand to one hundred thousand men. On a peace footing the active army contains about twenty thousand officers and five hundred and thirty thousand men; the reserve adds eight thousand and one hundred thousand to these figures respectively, so that the total peace footing is twenty-eight thousand officers and six hundred and thirty thousand men."

"And how much is the war footing?"

"The war footing, according to the latest figures, to give it exactly, is 41,551 officers and 1,176,353 men. Add to this the whole able-bodied militia liable to be called into service in case of necessity, and the available war forces of Russia amount to about 3,200,000. On the peace footing, the army has 129,736 horses and 1844 guns, which are increased in time of war to 366,354 horses and 3778 guns. In 1883 a census of the horses in fifty-eight provinces of European Russia showed that there were nearly fifteen millions of these animals fit for service in case of need."

COSSACK LANCERS AND RUSSIAN GUARD-HOUSE.

One of the youths wished to know something about the Cossacks, and whether they formed a part of the army or not.

"The Cossack is an irregular soldier," the Doctor replied, "though in some cases he is not a soldier at all. The origin of the Cossacks is unknown, some claiming that they belong to the Tartar, and others to the Russian race. The probability is that they are a combination of the two. They were first heard of in the tenth century, in the valley of the Don River; in the wars of Russia with the Turks and Tartars, about the fifteenth century, they showed a great deal of bravery and an excellent organization of a semi-military character.

"They are more Russian than Tartar in their language, religion, and customs. The rulers of Russia have not always found affairs running smoothly between themselves and the Cossacks, and when the latter felt they had not been properly treated they were not slow to rebel. A revolt was generally followed by an

emigration of the Cossacks into the Tartar country to the east, and in nearly every instance this emigration resulted in the addition of new territory to Russia."

"I believe I have read that the conquest of Siberia was accomplished in this way," said one of the youths.

"You are right," was the reply, "and the whole conquest hardly cost anything to the Government. About three hundred years ago a tribe of Don Cossacks rebelled, and under the guidance of Yermak, their hetman, or leader, crossed the Ural Mountains into Asia. They began a career of conquest, which was pushed so rapidly that in less than seventy years they and their descendants had carried their banner to the shores of the Okhotsk Sea. In the early part of their career they offered the conquered territory to the Czar, and received in return a pardon for their misdeeds on the Don. History furnishes no parallel to this conquest, which was made by a few hundred outlaws, and carried to a successful end with little assistance from others and no support from the Government. But to return to the Cossacks of to-day:

**Leaguin. Cossack of the Don. Circassian. Tartar Cossack of the Crimea.
Cossack of the Caucasus. Cossack of the Ural.**

THE RUSSIAN ARMY—IRREGULAR TROOPS.

"The Cossacks are a race of freemen. With only a few exceptions, none of them have ever been serfs. The whole land where they live belongs to them in common, and they have equal rights in hunting and fishing. They pay no taxes to Government, but in place of taxes are required to give a certain number of days' service in each year. Every Cossack feeds and equips himself at his own expense, and provides and feeds his horse. If called to serve outside the boundaries of his own country, he receives rations for himself and horse and a small amount of pay; but this ceases when he returns to his own land. The Cossacks have their own officers, which were formerly chosen by themselves, but are now appointed by the Government, the latter usually being careful to send officers such as the Cossacks approve.

"The military organization of the Cossacks is in ten great divisions called '*woisskos*,' that of the Don being the largest. Each *woissko* furnishes, according to its population, a certain number of regiments fully armed and equipped, and constantly under military discipline. These regiments must be prepared to march for active service ten days after being notified. Altogether in time of war the

Cossacks of the various parts of the Empire, available for war service, are about one hundred and fifty thousand men.

"They are splendid horsemen, and their best service is as cavalry. They can endure hunger, cold, and fatigue beyond ordinary soldiers, and are very troublesome to an enemy. In the retreat of Napoleon's army from Moscow they made great havoc, and many thousands of French soldiers fell beneath the Cossack lance and sabre. They have an undeserved reputation for cruelty, as they are probably no worse, and certainly no better, than other kinds of soldiers. War at its best is a cruel business, and in no age of the world has it been the custom for armies to refrain from hurting their enemies when it was in their power to do so."

This conversation occupied most of the time while the boat was steaming from Cronstadt to St. Petersburg. Seated near our friends was an officer whose coat did not show any buttons. It was fastened with hooks like those on a lady's dress, and Frank called attention to its peculiarity.

Doctor Bronson explained that the officer was of the Cossack branch of the service, this being the distinguishing feature of the Cossack uniform. The Cossack soldier wears a sheepskin coat, fastened with a girdle at the waist. He abhors buttons, and the uniform of the officers is made to conform to their tastes.

On the lower deck of the boat was a squad of soldiers, under command of a sergeant, who had probably been to Cronstadt on some official duty, and were now returning. Fred called attention to the singular hats worn by the soldiers, each hat having a high plate of brass in front, and reminding the youths of the hats worn by the soldiers in the comic opera of the "Grand-duchess of Gerolstein."

"It is not unlike a coal-scuttle in shape," said Fred, "and must be an uncomfortable piece of head-gear."

"That is a regiment which was organized in the time of the Emperor Paul," said the Doctor, "and the design of the hat was made by him—at least that is what a Russian officer told me. Observe that there is a perforation in the brass of each hat, as though made by a bullet, and some of the hats have two or three holes.

GRAND-DUKE MICHAEL.

"The tradition is," continued the Doctor, "that the regiment once showed cowardice when brought face to face with the French invaders during the war of

1812. In the next battle they were put in the front, and kept there; half their number were killed, and nearly every hat was perforated by a bullet. Since that time the helmets are preserved just as they were when the battle ended. When a new helmet is ordered to replace an old one, it is perforated just as was its predecessor. Hence the curious appearance of the soldiers of the grenadier regiment organized by Paul.

"The discipline of the Russian army is severe, and there are no better regiments, either for parade or fighting purposes, than those stationed in the neighborhood of the great cities. Reviews of the army are held frequently. When the Emperor goes in person to the grand review every year the sight is a magnificent one.

"The Russian Imperial family is full of soldierly qualities, which is not at all strange when we remember their training. Sometimes it is pushed to an extreme degree. The Grand-duke Michael, brother of the Emperor Nicholas, is said to have been one of the most rigid disciplinarians ever known; and whenever he inspected a division, not a button, or even the point of a mustache, escaped his notice. Parades were his delight, and he could ride at full gallop along the front of a line and detect the least irregularity. He used to say,

"I detest war; it interferes with parades, and soils the uniforms.'

"He disliked the Cossacks because they did not appear well at reviews; in his eyes their excellent fighting qualities were of minor importance.

"The Cossacks carry their cartridges in a row of pockets on the breasts of their coats, and not in cartridge-boxes, as do other soldiers. The Grand-duke thought a soldier's uniform was incomplete without a cartridge-box, probably for the reason that it gave him a certain amount of work to keep it clean and bright. This was another reason for his dislike of the irregular troops, which form such an effective arm of the service in time of war."

The steamer deposited its passengers at the quay near Admiralty Square, and our friends again trod the soil of St. Petersburg, after an interesting and instructive day in the environs of the city. Frank and Fred devoted the evening to writing out what they had learned during the trip to Peterhof and Cronstadt, and especially to making notes upon the army and navy of Russia. To refresh their memories, they referred to a copy of "The Statesman's Year-book," which happened to be in the room, and said they would cordially recommend it to others who might seek similar information.

IRON-CLAD STEAMER OF THE BALTIC FLEET.



CHAPTER VIII.

VISITING THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. PETERSBURG.—EDUCATION IN RUSSIA.—PRIMARY AND OTHER SCHOOLS.—THE SYSTEM OF INSTRUCTION.—RECENT PROGRESS IN EDUCATIONAL MATTERS.—UNIVERSITIES IN THE EMPIRE; THEIR NUMBER AND LOCATION.—RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.—TREATMENT OF THE JEWS.—THE ISLANDS OF THE NEVA, AND WHAT WAS SEEN THERE.—IN A TRAKTIR.—BRIBERY AMONG RUSSIAN OFFICIALS.

Next morning the party was out in good season. It had an appointment with a professor attached to the University of St. Petersburg for a visit to that institution. He was to take breakfast with them, and afterwards would escort them through the library and other rooms of the establishment. While they were at breakfast the professor entertained the youths with an account of the educational condition of Russia, which we will endeavor to repeat as nearly as it was remembered by Frank and Fred.

"On behalf of my country," said the professor, "I am sorry to say that we are behind England, Germany, Austria, and most other nations of Europe in the matter of general education, but not nearly as backward as we were in past years. We have no system of common-schools such as you have in the United States, and the mass of the population is practically without instruction beyond what they receive from the village priests. Down to the time of Alexander II. the village schools were controlled by the priests, and no one else could be a teacher in them. That progressive monarch issued an order requiring the schools to be given to the most capable applicants, whether priests or not. This was a great step in advance, as the priests were not unfrequently nearly as illiterate as the people they were set to instruct.

"To show how we are progressing, let me say that in 1860 only two out of every hundred recruits levied for the army were able to read and write; in 1870 the proportion had increased to eleven in a hundred, and in 1882 to nineteen in a hundred. In 1880 there were 22,770 primary-schools in the villages, with 1,140,915 pupils: 904,918 boys and 235,997 girls. The teachers were 19,511 men and 4878 women. Some of the primary-schools are entirely supported by the Government, and others partly by the Government and partly by a small tax

upon the parents of each pupil. The latter plan is not satisfactory, as it discourages poor people with many children from sending them to school, and it is probable that in a few years all the schools will be free."

LITTLE FOLKS AT SCHOOL.

One of the youths asked what was taught in the village schools of Russia.

"Reading and writing," the professor answered, "are the first things, as a matter of course; and then come arithmetic, grammar, and geography, in the order I have named them. Church and State are so closely connected in Russia that the primary education includes the form of prayer; it is a part of the daily exercise of the schools, except for those who profess other than the orthodox faith, and in former times children of dissenters were not allowed to attend the schools. Catholics, Lutherans, and others were instructed by their own teachers, and, failing this, they had no instruction whatever. At present children of any faith can attend the village schools, and where there is a mixed population the schools are divided.

"In 1850," the professor continued, "there were less than three thousand village schools in the Empire; the increase to more than twenty-two thousand in thirty years shows how rapid has been our progress. We have great hopes for the future, and at the end of another thirty years I trust you will find us not much behind the other countries of Europe."

LEARNING TO WEAVE.

Doctor Bronson asked about the higher instruction in Russia, and how it compared with that of other lands.

"One of the drawbacks to higher education in its broad sense," said the professor, "was the custom that prevailed, and still prevails to a great extent, for rich people to educate their children at home. Every nobleman who could afford it had a tutor for his boys and a governess for his girls. There is no country where tutors and governesses were more certain of employment than in Russia, and I have the assurances from them, a hundred times repeated, that they were better treated here than anywhere else. A tutor or governess is almost invariably made a member of the family, sits with them at table, is presented to visitors, forms a part of their social circle, and is made to feel thoroughly at home. Governesses are usually English or French, while tutors are generally French or Germans. The education of these home taught children begins at a very early age, and they naturally speak with fluency the language of their instructors; hence it follows that the Russians of the higher classes have, justly, the reputation of being the

best linguists of Europe."

As the professor paused, Frank remarked that he had observed how almost every Russian officer spoke French or German, and many of them spoke French, German, and English. "French seems to be almost universal among them," he added, "at least as far as I have been able to learn."

"That is true," said the professor, "and there are many Russians who speak French better than they do their own language. With French nurses in their infancy, French governesses or tutors as their years advance, and with their parents speaking French, it is not to be wondered at.

"The system of home education discouraged the education of the schools among the nobility, and it was only during the reign of Nicholas that a change was made. Count Oubaroff, Minister of Public Instruction under the Iron Czar, set the example by sending his own son to the University of St. Petersburg. The example was followed, and the attendance at the universities and normal schools increased rapidly. Nicholas gave the system a military character by decreeing that the students should wear cocked hats and swords, but this was abandoned by Alexander II. The policy of Nicholas was shown in the words of his instruction to Count Oubaroff, 'Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Nationality.'"

Fred asked how many universities and high-schools there were in the Empire.

MINERAL CABINET IN THE UNIVERSITY.

"There are nine universities," the professor answered, "situated at St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kief, Kazan, Wilna, Dorpat, Kharkov, Odessa, and Warsaw.^[2] The professors are paid by the Government, and the poor students have an allowance for their support. To be admitted to the universities, they must pass an examination in the course of instruction in the gymnasias or high-schools, which are in the provincial towns, about four hundred in all, or must have received equivalent instruction at home. The high-schools or gymnasias correspond to your academies or high-schools in America, and hold the same relation to the universities.

"Besides the universities, which confer degrees in law, medicine, mathematics, natural history, philology, and the Oriental languages, there are distinct schools of medicine and law, like the medical and law schools of other countries. There are four free high-schools for the education of women, and the applicants for admission are constantly in excess of the facilities for their instruction. There was a medical school for women, but it was closed in 1884 on account of its use as a means of disseminating revolutionary ideas."

Frank and Fred wished to obtain further information about the reason for closing this medical school, but they remembered that the professor would probably dislike to discuss the subject, as it had a political bearing, and so no question about it was asked.

Breakfast was over, and the party entered the carriage, which was waiting at the door, and were driven to the university.

"One thing I forgot to say," said the professor, as soon as they were seated in the vehicle, "and that was about education in Finland. The grand-duchy has a system of public instruction distinct from that of the rest of the Empire. It has a university at Helsingfors, high-schools in all principal towns, and elementary schools in the villages. Almost the entire population can read, and nearly every youth can write during his school-days, though he often forgets this accomplishment in later years.

PARLOR IN A HIGH-SCHOOL FOR WOMEN.

"To return to Russia, all through the Empire there are agricultural, mining, engineering, and other industrial schools, and there are also numerous military schools, which have a separate system of instruction. The cadets are transferred from the military gymnasias to the 'military schools,' in which they are educated

to qualify them for commissions as officers. There are three academies—for the staff, engineers, and artillery—and in these academies the higher branches of military science are taught. The religious schools are attached to the Church, and the instruction is managed by the clergy. Here we are at the university just as my impromptu lecture upon education in Russia has reached its end."

Our friends were introduced by their companion to several others of the faculty, and passed an hour at the university very pleasantly. They learned that the usual attendance was about four hundred, and the professors and lecturers numbered nearly thirty. In addition to what is usually taught in universities there were lecturers upon the Oriental languages. A goodly number of students give their attention to the Asiatic tongues, with a view to qualifying themselves for future usefulness in that direction. The Professor of Chinese was among those to whom our friends were introduced.

"He is an accomplished gentleman," said Frank in his note-book; "he speaks French and Russian as fluently as he does his native language, and his questions about America showed that he was well acquainted with the history of our country. The rest of the Oriental professors were in European dress, but the Chinese one was not. He was in the same garments he would wear at Shanghai or Peking, and his hair was plaited into an irreproachable pigtail.

PRIVATE ROOM OF A WEALTHY STUDENT.

"The halls were pleasant and spacious," continued Frank, "and the students that we saw had intelligent faces; they appeared much like the students at an English university, but we thought there was an expression of more earnestness in their faces. The professor told us that the young men who attended the university gave very little trouble in the matter of discipline, and the disgraceful pranks of students at Oxford and Cambridge were practically unknown in Russia. It is so recently that education has been in the reach of everybody in this country that its value is more appreciated than elsewhere.

LOWER RECITATION-ROOM.

"The library contains more than sixty thousand volumes, and there is a good scientific collection in the museum. The students have the privilege of visiting the Academy of Sciences, under certain restrictions, where they have access to a library of one hundred and fifty thousand volumes and an extensive museum. The latter has an Asiatic department, which contains many objects of great interest to students of matters pertaining to Asia. We went to the museum after seeing the university and looked at the remains of the Siberian mammoths,

which were found embedded in the ice where they had lain for thousands of years.

ONE OF THE PROFESSORS.

"Another educational institution of St. Petersburg is the School of Mines, which is supported by the Government and has about three hundred students. Its collection of minerals is said to be the finest in the world. There are single nuggets of gold worth thousands of dollars, great masses of solid silver, platinum, copper, and other metals, together with topaz, beryl, aquamarine, quartz, and other crystals in great variety and of unusual size and beauty. One crystal of beryl weighs five pounds and is valued at twenty-five thousand dollars.

DESCENDING A SHAFT.

"In the halls devoted to instruction there are models of mines, with the veins of ore, and the machinery for working them; the workmen are represented by little figures like dolls, and the whole is admirably executed. After looking at these models we were taken to the garden, where there is a section of a mine, through which we were guided by means of candles and torches. It required very little imagination for us to believe we were actually in a mine far below the surface of the earth, and that the veins of ore were real rather than fictitious. It must be of great advantage for the education of the students, and certainly we found it very instructive in the little time we were in it.

GALLERIES IN A MINE.

"What would you say if I told you that the richest public library of Europe is in St. Petersburg? Well, the Imperial Library may not be superior to all others, but those who ought to know say it is not inferior in any respect. It occupies a very large building on the Nevsky Prospect, and is open to the public like the great libraries of London, Paris, Vienna, and other cities. The custodian who accompanied us through the building said it contained nearly a million printed volumes, in all the languages of the world, and about thirty thousand manuscripts, some of them very old.

IN THE LIBRARY.

The foundation of this immense library was one of the spoils of war between Russia and Poland. It belonged to Count Zaleski, a Polish bishop, and contained three hundred thousand volumes. After the capture of Warsaw, in 1796, the library was removed to St. Petersburg, and since that time yearly

additions have been made, until it has reached its present condition. Among other things there is a collection of books relating to Russia in other languages than Russian. They number forty thousand, and cover all dates from the invention of the art of printing down to the present time. Then there are nearly one hundred thousand books in the Russian language, beginning with a volume of the 'Acts of the Apostles,' printed at Moscow in 1538.

"There is a prayer-book which belonged to Mary Queen of Scots, and which contains many notes in her handwriting. There are autographs of kings, queens, emperors, princes, and other persons of blue blood—so many that I can't begin to enumerate them. In fact there are so many things here that one might spend weeks in the library, and find something new and interesting every few minutes. The reading-room is well arranged, and has all the leading papers of Europe. To show its growth in popularity, let me say that it was visited by twenty thousand persons in 1854, and by seventy-three thousand in 1864. In more recent times as many as one hundred and fifty thousand persons have visited the reading-room in a single year.

A COLLEGE DORMITORY.

"Well, we have had enough for one day of schools, libraries, museums, and the like—so many of them that our heads are fairly swimming. Let us go home and think over what we have seen; if we remember a tenth part of it we shall be fortunate."

Naturally the conversation, after their return, related to what they had seen; and in this connection the Doctor gave the youths some interesting information.

"The university we have seen to-day," said he, "is not by any means the oldest in Russia, nor is it the largest. The honor of age and extent belongs to the University of Moscow, which was founded in 1755, while that of St. Petersburg was founded in 1818. The Moscow University has one thousand eight hundred students, and seventy-two professors and lecturers, and there are one hundred and fifty thousand volumes in its library. The Government gives about three hundred thousand dollars annually in aid of the Moscow University, and many of Russia's most celebrated men have been educated there.

"The oldest university in the Empire was at Abo, in Finland, but the buildings were destroyed in a great fire in 1827, and afterwards the university was established at Helsingfors. It was originally founded in 1630, eleven years before printing was introduced into Finland. Anciently there were some curious customs connected with the reception of a student at the University of Abo. He

was required to prostrate himself on the floor in front of one of the professors, who gave him a certain number of blows with a stick. The blows were more imaginary than real, and after they were given the student was ordered to rise, and to so conduct himself in future that he would never need a repetition of the indignity.

"The other universities of Russia are about like that of St. Petersburg, and do not need a special description. In all of them there is a department of study for those who wish to enter the service of the Church. At Dorpat there is a course of study for those of the Lutheran faith, and at Kazan, which has a considerable population of Tartars, Moslem students are admitted, and no interference is made with their religious belief. Some of the professors of the Oriental languages are Tartars, and I have been told that one of the rooms of the university is fitted up as a mosque.

"This is a good place to say," continued the Doctor, "that while the Russian Government makes an earnest effort to convert all its subjects to the faith of the Orthodox Greek Church, it rarely allows that effort to take the form of oppression. Sometimes it happens that an over-zealous priest goes beyond the limit; but as soon as his conduct is known to the proper authorities he is reprimanded, and replaced by one who is more cautious. The Polish exiles in Siberia are nearly all Catholics; the Government builds churches for them, and allows their priests (generally exiles like their co-religionists) to travel from place to place in the performance of their religious duties; and as long as they do not join in any political plots, or make other trouble for the authorities, they are allowed the greatest freedom. Among the peasant inhabitants of Siberia a Catholic church is called 'Polish,' while a Lutheran one is known as 'German.'

"The Moslem and Pagan inhabitants of Asiatic Russia have the most complete religious freedom; but sometimes, in their zeal to be on good terms with their rulers, they adopt the new religion without laying aside the old. I have heard of the chief of a tribe of Yakouts, a savage and idolatrous people in Northern Siberia, who joined the Russian Church and was baptized. He attended faithfully to all its observances, and at the same time did not neglect anything pertaining to his old belief. When about to make a journey, or to undertake any other enterprise, he offered prayers in the church, and then summoned the *shaman*, or Pagan priest of his tribe, to perform incantations and bribe the evil spirits not to molest him. On being questioned as to his action, he said he was not certain which belief was the right one, and he wanted to make sure by professing both."

One of the youths asked the Doctor about the treatment of the Jews in Russia. He

had read that they were greatly oppressed in some parts of the Empire, and that many of them had been killed for no other reason than that they were Jews.

"That is quite true," the Doctor answered; "but the outrages were the work of excited mobs, rather than acts authorized by the Government. There is much fanaticism among the lower orders of Russians, and they were roused to what they did by stories which the priests had circulated. In some of the riots the police and soldiers are accused of making no effort to restrain the mob; and as they and the rioters are of the same religion, there is doubtless good ground for the accusation.

JEWISH BURIAL-GROUND.

"The Jews were first admitted to Russia by Peter the Great, but they were expelled by his daughter, the Empress Elizabeth. They were readmitted by Catherine II., and the privileges she had given them were increased by Alexander I., who, in 1808 and 1809, issued decrees giving them full liberty of trade and commerce. The grant was revoked by Nicholas I., and during his time the Jews were subjected to much oppression. Alexander II. came to their relief, and restored some of their privileges. During and since his reign they have been fairly treated in matters of trade, but have been kept down in other ways. Only a certain number are allowed to practise medicine or keep drug-stores, and only a specified proportion of Jewish students is allowed at the schools and colleges.

CLOTHES-DEALER OF MOSCOW.

"A great deal of the trade of the country is in their hands, and they are noted, as everywhere else in the world, for their industry and frugality. They do not meddle with the politics of Russia, and the instances are exceedingly rare of a Jew being convicted of offences of a political character. In the army they make the best of soldiers, both for discipline and on the battle-field, where they are noted for their bravery. They are more numerous in Poland than in any other part of the Empire, but there is not a province of the whole country ruled by the Czar where they cannot be found. In their financial transactions they are not behind their brethren in other parts of the world; and wherever they are permitted to engage in mechanical pursuits they distance all their competitors."

A RUSSIAN TROIKA.

Just as the sun was setting, our friends took a carriage and drove to the Islands of the Neva, a favorite resort of the people in the warm months of the year. Great numbers of fashionable carriages were on the road, *troikas* being more numerous than any other variety. A *troika* is so called from the number of its horses, rather

than from the form of the vehicle. Three horses are harnessed abreast, the central one having above his head the inevitable *duga*, or yoke. In a well-trained *troika* the central horse trots, while the two others gallop, with their heads turned outward. It is a dashing and attractive team, and has already made its way into other countries than Russia.

The first part of the drive carried Doctor Bronson and his young companions through streets occupied by the poorer classes, but farther on they passed great numbers of pretty villas, which are the summer homes of the well-to-do inhabitants of the city.

A VILLA ON THE ISLAND.

There is an Imperial villa on one of the islands, and occasionally the Emperor gives a fête in honor of some event, or for the entertainment of a foreign guest. At such times the trees are filled with Chinese lanterns, and the entire building is a blaze of light. The people on the line of the road follow the Imperial example, and illuminate their houses, and the traveller who drives there might easily imagine that he had dropped into a section of fairy-land. Doctor Bronson told the youths that he was in St. Petersburg at the time of the marriage of the Emperor's son, the Grand-duke Vladimir, and one of the sights of the occasion was the illumination of the islands.

"We rode through three or four miles of illuminations," said the Doctor, "and it seemed as though they would never come to an end. At the very entrance of the islands we passed the summer residence of Count Gromoff, one of the millionaires of St. Petersburg, and found it transformed into a palace of fire. Not a tree or bush in the large garden in front of the house was without its cluster of lanterns, and one of our party remarked that it seemed as though half the stars in the sky had fallen and found a lodgement there. In the centre of the scene were the monograms of the Emperor and Empress, and of the newly-wedded pair, outlined in gas-jets; above and behind them was an Imperial mantle surmounted with a crown, and all made with the burning gas. Then the whole cottage was delineated with thousands of lights, and we agreed that never in our lives had we seen such a beautiful picture. Nothing ever produced on the stage of a theatre could equal it.

"Occasionally we came near the water, and wherever we did so it was covered with boats which were as freely illuminated as the trees and houses on shore. Boat-houses and bath-houses were similarly lighted up, and as they are numerous in this part of the Neva, they formed an almost continuous line along

the river's bank. We were compelled to go at a walk, as the streets and roads were crowded with vehicles, and consequently our drive through this city of lanterns occupied more than an hour."

Doctor Bronson gave other details of the celebration which we have not time to repeat, or, rather, they did not find a place in the note-books of the youths. The time was passed pleasantly in a contemplation of the scenes by the way-side—the pretty villas among the trees, the carriages and their occupants, the people on foot, or gathered in front of the houses or on the verandas, the crowds in the cafés and restaurants, which are scattered here and there over the islands, together with other sights that met their eyes. There was enough to make the fortune of an artist if he could have placed all the pretty pictures of the evening upon canvas, and preserved the glow of the northern sky and the twinkle of the lights. A few houses were illuminated, probably in honor of a patron saint, or to commemorate an event in the history of the owner of the establishment. While looking at these illuminations Frank and Fred tried to imagine the whole place lighted up as Doctor Bronson had described it on the occasion of the Imperial fête.

A RUSSIAN FAMILY.

After a ride of two hours or more, the party returned to the hotel, stopping a few minutes on their way to drink some tea at a *traktir*. Frank ventured to air the few Russian words he had acquired, and acquitted himself in fine style.

"*Dai te chai, poshowltz*" ("Give us tea, please"), he said, as they took their seats at the table.

"*Si chass*," replied the waiter, and in a few moments three glasses of steaming tea were before them.

The traveller in Russia will hear "*Si chass*" pronounced a good many times daily while he is in the Empire. It is like the French waiter's "*Tout de suite*" or the English one's "Coming, sir." Practically they mean the same thing. The literal translation of "*Si chass*" is "This hour;" and perhaps this will account for the fact that it is often an hour before a simple demand can be met. The waiter in Russia is no more reliable than in other countries, and not generally as intelligent as the man of the same occupation in a French café. Many of the servants in the hotels of St. Petersburg are French or German, instead of Russian; in the best hotels the Russian waiters almost invariably speak French or German, in addition to their own language.

When the tea-drinking was ended, Frank beckoned the waiter, and addressed him

with the inquiry, "*Skolka stoit*" ("How much does it cost?"). The waiter comprehended at once, and, somewhat to Frank's disappointment, placed on the table a written check on which was noted in figures the indebtedness of the party. The disappointment was not caused by the price of the tea (only five copecks the glass), but by the removal of the opportunity for the young man to make further airing of his Russian by displaying his knowledge of the spoken numerals. The printed or written figures of the Russian language are the same as those of other European nations, and a stranger can get along with them without the least trouble, even though he does not know a word of Russian.

Near the hotel they met a party consisting of two policemen and as many prisoners. The latter appeared to be under the influence of strong drink, and the policemen did not find it easy to make them move along. They were not quarrelsome or obstinate; in fact, their limbs were too weak to allow them to make any resistance.

"They'll have a job of street-sweeping to-morrow," said the Doctor, "unless the customs have changed since the first time I was here."

"Do they make prisoners sweep the streets?" one of the youths asked.

CULPRIT STREET-SWEEPERS.

"They did at that time, and quite likely they do so now," the Doctor answered. "Every person arrested for intoxication was required to sweep the streets the next day for a given number of hours, and it is a strange sight when, as sometimes happens, the sweepers are in the garments in which they have been wending their devious ways homeward from a ball, or perhaps from a party where fancy costumes have been worn. Generally speaking, you see few besides the mujiks, or lower classes, as the well-dressed people, with money enough in their pockets, can secure immunity by means of a bribe. A small donation to the proper officer will set them free; but if they have no money they must do their share of work with the rest."

"I have read that Russia is the land of bribes," said Fred—"bribes both great and small."

"It certainly has that reputation," was the reply, "and doubtless not without justice. The pay of the officials is very small, quite out of proportion to the expense of living, and the temptation is certainly great. A Russian once said to me that an official must steal in order to make an honest living; he did not mean it as a joke, but in sober earnest, though his language did not exactly express his meaning. He wanted to say that a man must accept pay for showing zeal in the

interest of any one whose affairs passed through his hands, and unless he did so he could not properly support himself and family.

A BUSINESS TRANSACTION.

"There is a story, of a German savant who was intimate with the Emperor Nicholas. The latter once asked him to point out any defects in the system of government, and the savant immediately suggested the universal system of bribery, which ought to be stopped. The Emperor shook his head, and said it was impossible to put an end to an evil which was so widely spread.

"'But your Majesty could issue an Imperial decree against bribery,' the savant replied, 'and that would prevent it.'

"'But I would have to begin,' said the Emperor, 'by bribing my Prime-minister to publish the decree, and then I would have to bribe everybody else to stop taking bribes.'

"I will tell you," the Doctor continued, "what I have been told by Russians; I do not vouch for the correctness of what they say, but have no doubt of their veracity. While I have had no business transactions that involved the payment of money to officials, I have some friends whose negotiations were altogether stopped, as they believe, by the fact that they would not give money to persons of influence.

"'If you have dealings with the Government,' so the Russians have told me, 'you must pay something to each and every man who has power to expedite or hinder your business. If you do not pay you will not prosper, and may be certain that your proposals will be rejected. But you should not offer the money directly to the official, as that would give great offence.'

"The question arises, 'What is the polite and proper way of doing such nefarious work?'

"The usual way is to make up your mind what you can afford to pay, and then put the money in a cigar-case along with two or three cigars. Having stated the business, you invite the man to smoke (everybody smokes in Russia), and then you hand him the cigar-case and turn your back to the window, or look intently at something on the table. He helps himself to a cigar, and also to the money, and then the affair goes on easily."

"What a rascally business!" exclaimed both the youths in a breath. Doctor Bronson fully echoed their sentiment, and said he earnestly hoped the condition

of things was not as bad as it is portrayed. "Alexander II. made a considerable improvement in many things during his reign," the Doctor continued, "and it is to be hoped that he reformed the official system of the Empire in this particular feature."

PETER THE GREAT DRESSED FOR BATTLE.



CHAPTER IX.

STUDIES OF ST. PETERSBURG.—MUJIKS.—"THE IMPERIAL NOSEGAY."—A SHORT HISTORY OF RUSSIAN SERFDOM.—ITS ORIGIN, GROWTH, AND ABUSES.—EMANCIPATION OF THE SERFS.—PRESENT CONDITION OF THE PEASANT CLASS.—SEEING THE EMPEROR.—HOW THE CZAR APPEARS IN PUBLIC.—PUBLIC AND SECRET POLICE.—THEIR EXTRAORDINARY POWERS.—ANECDOTES OF POLICE SEVERITY.—RUSSIAN COURTS OF LAW.

For the remainder of their stay in the capital Doctor Bronson and the youths were more leisurely in their movements than during the first few days. They dismissed the guide, as they felt that they could go around without his aid, though they occasionally re-engaged him for special trips when they thought their inexperience would be a bar to their progress.

In thus acting they followed out a plan adopted long before. On arriving in a strange city where time was limited, they engaged a guide, in order that they might "do" the stock sights of the place as quickly as possible. If they were to remain for some time they employed him during the first two or three days, and afterwards shifted for themselves. This is an excellent system, and is recommended to all readers of this volume who may have occasion to travel in foreign lands.

Having familiarized themselves with St. Petersburg, our friends usually spent the forenoon of each day at the hotel, and the afternoon and part of the evening in going about the streets, making calls, and otherwise improving their opportunities. The forenoon was by no means an idle time. Doctor Bronson was busy with his letters and other matters, while the youths were engaged in writing up their journals, preparing the histories which have been mentioned elsewhere, and making various notes and observations concerning what they saw or learned. In this way they accumulated much valuable material, and we are specially fortunate in being permitted to copy at will from what they wrote.

"We have found a great deal to interest us," said Frank in his journal, when he sat down to make a general commentary on what they had seen, "and I hardly know where to begin. Of course we have been much impressed with the great number

and variety of the uniforms of the officers and soldiers of the army; and though we have tried hard to recognize the different arms of the service at sight, we have not always succeeded. We wonder how the Emperor himself can know them all, but of course he must.

AN IMPERIAL NOSEGAY.

"We have looked for 'The Imperial Nosegay' which one traveller describes, but have failed thus far to find it. The story goes that one of the Emperors had a regiment composed of men whose noses were turned up at an angle of forty-five degrees; whenever a man was found anywhere in the Empire with that particular kind of nose he was at once drafted into the regiment. A good many of the peasants have the nose inclined very much in the air, but facial ornaments of the kind described for the famous regiment are not strictly the fashion.

"Fred thinks a regiment composed in this way ought to be good soldiers, as they would be able to smell the smoke of battle a long way off, and before other regiments would be aware of it. Certainly they ought to breathe easily, and this ability was considered of great importance by the first Napoleon. 'Other things being equal,' he used to say, 'always choose an officer with a large nose. His respiration is more free than that of the small-nosed man; and with good breathing powers, his mind is clearer and his physical endurance greater.' Perhaps he realized on his retreat from Moscow that many of his pursuers were of the kind he describes.

MUJIKS PLAYING CARDS.

"We have been much interested in the mujiks, or peasants—the lowest class of the population, and also the largest. Their condition has improved greatly in the last twenty or thirty years, if what we read and hear is correct. We had read of the system of serfdom in Russia before we came here, but did not exactly understand it. Since our arrival in St. Petersburg we have tried to find out about the serfs, and here is what we have learned:

"To begin at the end, rather than at the beginning, there are no longer any serfs in Russia, and consequently we are talking about something that belongs to the past. Serfdom, or slavery, formerly existed throughout all Europe—in England, France, Germany, Spain, and other countries. It has been gradually extinguished, Russia being the last Christian country to maintain it. Slavery still exists in certain forms in Turkey; but as the Turks are Moslems, and not Christians, I don't see why we should expect anything better in that country.

"Serfdom began later in Russia than in any other European country, and perhaps

that fact excuses the Russians for being the last to give it up. Down to the eleventh century the peasant could move about pretty much as he liked. The land was the property of all, and he could cultivate any part of it as long as he did not trespass upon any one else. In many of the villages the land is still held on this communistic principle, and is allotted every year, or every two or three years, by the elders. In some communities the land must be surrendered to the commune every nine years, while in others the peasant has a life tenancy, or what is called in law a fee-simple.

"I hear some one ask how it came about that serfdom was established.

"According to our authorities, it came from the state of the country, which was just a little better than a collection of independent principalities. The princes were cruel and despotic, and the people turbulent; murders of princes were very common; the princes could only protect themselves by organizing large body-guards, which gave each prince a small army of men around him. In course of time the officers of these body-guards became noblemen, and received grants of land. At first the peasants could move about on these estates with perfect freedom, but during the sixteenth century they were attached to the soil. In other words, they were to remain where they were when the decree was issued, and whenever the land was sold they were sold with it.

"It is said that the object of this decree was not so much in the interest of the land-owners as in that of the Government, which was unable to collect its taxes from men who were constantly moving about. Where the land belonged to the Government and not to individuals, the peasants living upon it became serfs of the Crown, or Crown peasants. Thus the Russian serf might belong to a prince, nobleman, or other person, or he might belong to the Government. Private estates were often mortgaged to the Government; if the mortgage was unpaid and the property forfeited, the serfs became Crown peasants instead of private ones.

PEASANT'S HOUSE IN SOUTHERN RUSSIA.

"There was a curious condition about serfdom in Russia, that while the man and his family belonged to the master, the land which he cultivated was his own, or at any rate could not be taken from him. The serf owed a certain amount of labor to his master (ordinarily three days out of every seven), and could not leave the place without permission. A serf might hire his time from his master, in the same way that slaves used to hire their time in America; but he was required to return to the estate whenever the master told him to do so. Many of the mechanics,

isvoshchiks, and others in the large cities before the emancipation were serfs, who came to find employment, and regularly sent a part of their wages to their masters.

"Sometimes the masters were very severe upon the serfs, and treated them outrageously. A master could send a serf into exile in Siberia without giving any reason. The record said he was banished 'by the will of his master,' and that was all. A woman, a serf on an estate, who had a fine voice, came to Moscow, and found a place in the chorus at the opera-house. She gradually rose to a high position, and was earning a large salary, half of which she sent to her master. Out of caprice he ordered her back to the estate, where she resumed the drudgery of a peasant life. He refused all offers of compensation, and said his serf should do what he wished.

"Another serf had established a successful business in Moscow, where he was employing two or three hundred workmen. The master allowed him to remain there for years, taking for his compensation a large part of the serf's earnings, and finally, in a fit of anger, ordered the man home again. The man offered to pay a hundred times as much as he could earn on the estate, but the master would not listen to it, and the business was broken up and ruined.

"Things went on in this way for two or three centuries. Various changes were made in the laws, and the condition of the serfs, especially of those belonging to the Crown, was improved from time to time. At last, in 1861, came the decree of emancipation from the hands of Alexander II., and the system of serfdom came to an end.

"It was not, as many people suppose, a system of sudden and universal freedom. The emancipation was gradual, as it covered a period of several years, and required a great deal of negotiation. The land-owners were compensated by the Government for their loss; the serfs received grants of land, varying from five to twenty-five acres, with a house and a small orchard, and the result was that every agricultural serf became a small land-owner. Private or Government serfs were treated alike in this respect, and the condition of the peasant class was greatly improved.

"Since they have been free to go where they like, the serfs have crowded to the cities in search of employment, and the owners of factories and shops say they can now obtain laborers much easier than before. Manufacturing interests have been materially advanced along with agriculture, and though many persons feared the results of the emancipation, it is now difficult to find one who would

like to have the old state of things restored.

"Russian emancipation of the serfs and American abolition of slavery came within a short time of each other. Both the nations have been greatly benefited by the result, and to-day an advocate of serfdom is as rare in Russia as an advocate of slavery in the United States."

Frank read to his cousin the little essay we have just quoted; then he read it to the Doctor, and asked whether it would be well to insert it in his journal.

"By all means do so," the Doctor replied. "There are not many people in America who understand exactly what serfdom was, and your essay will do much to enlighten them."

Accordingly Frank carefully copied what he had written. Impressed with Doctor Bronson's suggestion, we have reproduced it here, in the confidence that our youthful readers will find it interesting and instructive.

PEASANTS' HUTS.

"You can add to your account of serfdom," said Doctor Bronson, "that when it was established by Boris Godounoff, in 1601, it was regarded by both peasant and noble as a great popular reform, and welcomed with delight. His decree went into force on Saint George's Day, in the year named, and its principal provision was that every peasant in the Empire should in future till and own forever the land which he then tilled and held. It was an act of great liberality on the part of the Czar, for by it he gave up millions of acres belonging to the Crown and made them the property of the peasants.

"The serf of the Crown was to till the land, build his house, pay his taxes, and serve as a soldier whenever wanted; the private serf existed under very nearly the same conditions, with the difference that his life might be more oppressed under a cruel master, and more free under a kind one, than that of the serf of the Crown. This was what happened in many instances; and as the masters were more likely to be cruel than kind, and their tendency was to make as much as possible out of their possessions, the Crown serf was generally better off than the private one.

ESTHONIAN PEASANTS.

"In the beginning the system was really the reform which was intended, but very soon it was subject to many abuses. Year by year things grew worse: owners violated the law by selling serfs away from their estates; the masters exacted from their serfs every copeck they could earn, flogged them if they lagged in

their labor, and often caused them to be severely punished or exiled on the merest caprice. Peter the Great introduced some changes with the best intentions, but they only made matters worse. He stopped the sale of serfs from the estates, which was an excellent step; at the same time he ordered that all taxes should be collected in a lump from the master, who should have the power in turn to collect from the serfs. The evil of this enactment was very soon apparent; Peter's successors struggled with the problem, but none made much headway until Alexander II. came with his act of emancipation, which you have just mentioned.

"There were several conditions attached to the freedom of the serf under Alexander's decree," the Doctor continued, "which are not generally understood. To prevent the peasant resuming again the nomadic life which serfdom was intended to suppress, it was ordered that no peasant could leave his village without surrendering forever all right to the lands, and he was also required to be clear of all claims for rent, taxes, conscription, private debts, and the like. He was to provide for the support of any members of his family dependent upon him whom he left behind, and also present a certificate of membership in another commune, or exhibit the title-deeds to a plot of land of not less than a given area.

"These requirements were found an excellent restriction, as under them only the thrifty and enterprising serfs were able to clear off all demands upon them and pay the amount required for entering another community. Men of this class found their way to the cities and larger towns, where many of them have risen in wealth and influence, while the quiet, plodding peasants who remained on the estates and tilled their lands have generally prospered. A gentleman who has studied this question wrote recently as follows:

"Opposite and extreme opinions prevail as to the results of emancipation; yet, on massing and balancing his observations on the whole, a stranger must perceive that under emancipation the peasant is better dressed, better lodged, and better fed; that his wife is healthier, his children cleaner, and his homestead tidier; that he and his belongings are improved by the gift which changed him from a chattel to a man. He builds his cabin of better wood, and in the eastern provinces, if not in all, you find improvements in the walls and roof. He paints the logs, and fills up the cracks with plaster, where he formerly left them bare and stuffed with moss. He sends his boys to school, and goes himself more frequently to church.... The burgher class and the merchant class have been equally benefited by the change. A good many peasants have become burghers, and a good many burghers merchants. All the domestic and useful trades have been quickened into

life. More shoes are worn, more carts are wanted, more cabins are built. Hats, coats, and cloaks are in higher demand; the bakeries and breweries find more to do; the teacher gets more pupils, and the banker has more customers on his books."^[3]

ALEXANDER II., THE LIBERATOR OF THE SERFS.

With a few more words upon serfdom and its relation to other forms of slavery, the subject was dropped, and our friends went out for a walk. As they passed along the Nevski they were suddenly involved in a crowd, and half forced into the door of a shop which they had visited the day before. They were recognized by the proprietor, who invited them to enter and make themselves comfortable. "The Emperor is coming in a few minutes," he explained, "and the police are clearing the way for him."

One of the youths asked if it was always necessary to clear the streets in this way when the Emperor rode out.

ALEXANDER III., EMPEROR OF RUSSIA.

"Not by any means," the shopkeeper replied, "as he often rides out in a drosky, with only a single attendant following him. He goes at full speed along the street, and his progress is so rapid that not one person in twenty can recognize him before he gets out of sight. If he goes less rapidly he is followed by several officers; and when he rides in a carriage with two or more horses, he is accompanied by his body-guard of Circassians, or by a company or section of Cossacks.

"Nicholas and Alexander II. used to drive about quite frequently in a drosky, which was much like the ordinary ones on the streets, except that it was neater and more costly, and drawn by the finest horse the Empire could produce. Since the assassination of Alexander II., and the plots of the Nihilists against the Imperial life, we rarely see the Emperor driving in this way, as it would afford too much opportunity for assassins. Alexander III. generally rides in a carriage, accompanied by some of his officers and surrounded by his body-guard. Ah! here they come."

As he spoke a squadron of cavalry came in sight, and soon passed the shop. Behind the cavalry was a carriage, drawn by two spirited horses. The Emperor occupied the rear seat, while two officers faced him on the front seat, and another officer, or possibly an orderly, was on the box with the driver. The crowd applauded as their ruler rode slowly by them, and to hear the plaudits one could

readily believe that the Emperor is thoroughly beloved by his subjects. He acknowledged the cheering by occasionally raising his hand in a military salute. Frank thought he saluted in rather a mechanical way, from force of long habit. The youths said they would have recognized him by his portraits, though they were hardly prepared for the care-worn look which was depicted on his features.

"After all," whispered Frank to Fred, "one can't be surprised at it, and I don't know who would want to change places with him. He must live in constant thought of assassination, and every step he takes must be carefully watched by those about him. So many plots have been made against his life, and so many persons of importance have been implicated in them, that he cannot know how soon a new one will be formed, and can never tell who about him is faithful. 'Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.'"

Behind the carriage was a company of body-guards in Circassian chain-armor, and with weapons that belonged apparently to a past age. Fred eagerly asked who and what these men were.

"They are *Cherkass*, or Circassians," replied the shopkeeper, "and were formerly at war with Russia. You have read of Schamyl, the Circassian general, who gave Russia a great deal of trouble for a long time, have you not?"

BATTLE BETWEEN RUSSIANS AND CIRCASSIANS.

"Certainly," Fred answered, "I was reading about him only this morning. He was born about 1797, and from 1828 till 1859 he carried on a defensive war against the Russians, but was finally overpowered by greatly superior numbers. He used to avoid regular battles, and caused a great deal of damage to the Russians by ambuscades, surprises, and similar warfare."

SCHAMYL'S VILLAGE IN THE CAUCASUS.

"That was exactly the case," said their informant, "and the Russians always acknowledged that he was an accomplished leader both in a military and political sense. When he surrendered, in 1859, the Emperor invited him to St. Petersburg, and gave him a residence at Kalooga, with a handsome pension. He was made a regular guest at court, was treated with great distinction, and soon became as ardent in the support of Russia as he had formerly been in opposing her. He was placed in command of the Emperor's body-guard, which he organized from the warriors that had formerly served under him. Schamyl died in 1871, but the organization of the guard was continued. It is whispered that the Circassians have been replaced by Russians who wear the old uniform; but certainly, to all outward appearances, the guard remains the same. At any rate it is picturesque, and that is an important consideration."

The crowd that lined the sidewalk was kept well in hand by the police. The shopkeeper said that any man who tried to break through the line would be arrested at once; and no doubt the knowledge of this rule served materially to preserve order. Russian policemen are not to be trifled with.

The route that the Emperor is to take when riding out is never known in these latter days, through fear of plots against his life. The precaution is a very proper one, but it requires a large police force to guard all the avenues and streets by which he may pass. Orders are sent for the police to prepare three or four routes, one only being traversed, and the direction is not given to the leader of the escort until the Emperor is seated in the carriage. Sometimes none of the routes which have been guarded are taken, and the Emperor enjoys a ride with nothing but his escort for his protection. It is said the Czar is averse to all this precaution, but is guided by the wishes of the Imperial Council and the members of his household.

Our friends thanked the shopkeeper for his politeness and information, and, as the crowd had melted away, continued their walk. Frank observed that the police did not move away, and this fact led him to surmise that the Emperor intended returning by the same route.

"Of course that is quite possible," said the Doctor, in response to Frank's suggestion, "but it is not worth our while to remain on the chance of his doing so. It is more than likely he will return to the palace by another road; and even if he comes through the Nevski we could see no more than we have seen already. Besides, we might arouse suspicion in the minds of the police by remaining long on this spot, and suspicion, however groundless, is not desirable. When the Emperor goes out the police have orders to arrest every one whose conduct is in the least degree questionable, and so we had better continue our walk."

They suited their actions to the Doctor's word, and did not tarry on the Nevski. Very soon they met another cortege, which they ascertained to be the escort of the Chief of Police.

THE EMPRESS MARIE FÉODOROVNA, WIFE OF ALEXANDER III.

They had a curiosity to see his face, but were disappointed, as he was closely surrounded by his officers and men. Doctor Bronson remarked that the Chief of Police was the most powerful man in Russia, next to the Emperor.

"How is that?" Fred asked. "I thought the most powerful man next to the Emperor was the commander-in-chief of the armies."

"There is this difference," the Doctor answered, "that the Chief of [Pg 187] [Pg 188] Police is the only man in Russia who has the right to go into the Emperor's presence at any hour of the day or night. Not even the Field-marshal-in-chief of the Army or the Grand Admiral of the Navy can do that.

"The Ministers of War, Navy, and Foreign Affairs have a right to an audience with the Emperor every day, while the Ministers of Education, Railways and Telegraphs, Finance, and other home matters, can only see him once or twice a week. But at any hour of the day the Minister of Police can send his name, and immediately follows the messenger into the Emperor's office; at any hour of the night he may have the Emperor waked and told that the Minister of Police has an important communication to make."

"Do you suppose that is often done?" one of the youths inquired.

"Probably not very often," replied Doctor Bronson, "but how frequently the outside public cannot possibly know. In ordinary times it is not likely the minister would ever exercise his right, as it is not wise to wake an emperor from a sound sleep, especially when you have bad news for him. But when assassins are making plots all around the capital and palace, the Emperor's safety may easily require that he should have a personal warning. In such case the Minister

of Police would not hesitate to perform his duty."

RUSSIAN PEASANTS AT THEIR RECREATION.

Their walk took them to the Summer Gardens, where they sat down on one of the benches and watched the groups of children and nurse-maids, together with other groups of old and young that comprised the visitors to the place. As they sat there the conversation recurred to their recent topic, the police.

"The public police is organized very much like the same service in other countries. There are some points of difference, but they are not great enough to be mentioned at length. One objection to the Russian public police is that in the cities and large towns the policemen are nearly all soldiers who have served their time in the army, and receive police appointments as rewards. Their long service in the army imbues them with the greatest deference to the uniform of an officer, no matter what its wearer may be. The result is the policemen salute every officer that passes, and thus their attention is drawn from their duties; furthermore, an officer can misbehave himself as much as he pleases, and run very little risk of being arrested like an ordinary offender."

"What can you tell us about the secret police?" one of the youths asked.

"WHO IS THE SPY?"

"I can't tell you much about it," was the reply; "and if I could it would not be a secret police. It used to be a saying that where three men were together one was sure to be a spy, and one or both the others might be. The spies were in all classes of society, and paid by the police. They did not know each other, and it quite often happened that two of them would report against each other, doubtless to the amusement of the officials who compared their documents. If common gossip is true, the evil was greater in the time of Nicholas than under any other emperor, but many people say it is about as bad at one time as another.

"The clerk in the hotel, the waiter in the restaurant, the shopkeeper who was so polite to us, the tailor, hatter, boot-maker, milliner, or any other tradesman, any or all of them—women as well as men—may be in the employ of the Government, and report your movements and conversation. Nobody knows who is a spy, and nobody knows who is not. Consequently it is an excellent rule in Russia never to say anything in the hearing of any one else than ourselves that can be called in question. Mind, I don't know of my own knowledge that there is such a thing as a secret police, nor that such a person as a police spy exists in Russia. Having never said or done anything to which the Emperor or his most zealous officer could object, I have no fear of being interfered with.

"Here are some of the stories which were current in the time of Nicholas:

"A retired officer of the English army lived for several years in St. Petersburg. His manners were genial, and he made many friends both among the foreigners living here and those who visited Russia. He died suddenly one day, and one of his countrymen who was present at the time took charge of his effects. His papers revealed the fact that he was a spy of the Government, and was specially employed to watch foreigners.

"Soon after the Revolution of 1848 a party of French gentlemen in St. Petersburg met at the house of one of their friends. They had songs and speeches, and a pleasant evening generally; and as all were intimate, and of the same nationality, they were not at all cautious about their conversation. The only servants present were Russians, and none of them was known to understand French. Next morning the host was summoned to the Police Bureau, where he was politely received. The official read off the list of persons present, and a very accurate report of the songs, toasts, and speeches of the evening. Then he asked the host if the account was correct. The latter tremblingly answered that it was, and was then told he had been very imprudent—an assertion he could not well deny. He was dismissed with a caution not to repeat the imprudence, and you may be sure he did not. He never gave another party, and never could he guess whether the spy was one of his guests and compatriots, or one of the servants who understood French while pretending to be ignorant of it.

"A great reform has taken place, and matters which were formerly in the control of the police are now managed by courts of law. Trial by jury has been established, and though there are many hinderances on account of the scarcity of lawyers and judges and the ignorance of jurors, the system is working well. The law-schools are filled with students, and in a few years the machinery of the courts will not be unlike that of other lands.

OFFICERS SITTING IN JUDGMENT.

"But the police power is still too great for the safety of the people, and probably no persons are more aware of it than are the Emperor and his advisers. The police can imprison or exile a man for 'administrative purposes' without any trial whatever, and without even letting him know the nature of his offence. The police may, in certain cases, revise a sentence which has been decreed by a court, and punish a man who has been acquitted after trial, but they do not often exercise the right.

"The author of 'Free Russia' says that while he was staying at Archangel an actor and actress were brought there one day and set down in the public square, with orders to take care of themselves, but on no account to leave town without the governor's permission. They had been sent from the capital on a mere order of the police, without trial, without even having been heard in defence, and with no knowledge of the offence alleged against them. They had no means of support, but managed to eke out an existence by converting a barn into a theatre, and giving performances that hardly rose to the dignity of the name of plays.

"An agent of the police had driven up to their doors and told them to get ready to start for Archangel in three hours. That was all; in three hours they were on their way to exile.

"The same writer said there was also at Archangel a lady of middle age who had been banished from St. Petersburg on the mere suspicion that she had been concerned in advising some of the students at the university to send an appeal to the Emperor for certain reforms which they desired. There was no other charge against her, and those who made her acquaintance at Archangel were impressed with her entire innocence, as she did not possess in any way the qualities necessary for intrigue. Like the actor and actress just mentioned, she had had no trial, and no opportunity to be heard in defence.

"A young novelist named Gierst published some stories which evidently gave offence. He was called upon at midnight, and told to get ready to depart immediately. Away he went, not knowing whither, until the horses stopped at the town of Totma, six hundred miles from St. Petersburg. There he was told to stay until fresh orders came from the Ministry of Police. None of his friends knew where he had gone; his lodgings were empty, and all the information that could be obtained was from a servant who had seen him start. His letters were seized, the newspapers were forbidden to say anything about him, and it was only by a ruse that he was able to let his friends know where he was.

"Any number of these incidents are narrated," the Doctor continued, "and they all show the dangerous power that is in the hands of the police. It is said that it would have been curtailed years ago but for the rise and spread of Nihilism, which has rendered it necessary to continue the privilege of the police to revise sentences, or imprison and exile without trial, 'for administrative purposes.' Let us hope that the better day will come very soon."

"I join heartily in that hope," said Frank. Fred echoed the words of his cousin, and they rose and continued their promenade.

RUSSIAN GRAND-DUKE AND GRAND-DUCHESS.

CHAPTER X.

**WINTER IN RUSSIA.—FASHIONABLE AND OTHER FURS.—
SLEIGHS AND SLEDGES.—NO SLEIGH-BELLS IN RUSSIAN CITIES.
—OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE NEVA.—RUSSIAN ICE-HILLS.
—"BUTTER-WEEK."—KISSING AT EASTER.—AN ACTIVE KISSING-
TIME.—RUSSIAN STOVES AND BATHS.—EFFECTS OF SEVERE
COLD.—THE STORY OF THE FROZEN NOSE.—HOW MEN ARE
FROZEN TO DEATH.**

While greatly enjoying their summer visit to St. Petersburg, Frank and Fred regretted that they did not have the opportunity of seeing the capital in winter. They heard much about the gayety of the winter season, and wondered if their journeyings would ever bring them there at the time when the snow covered the ground and the Neva was sealed with ice.

For their consolation Doctor Bronson told them of his winter experience of the city. His story was about as follows:

"I arrived here in the latter part of January, when the temperature was running very low. The ordinary mercury thermometer, which freezes at 39° below zero, was of no use, as the mercury would be frozen solid almost every day. Spirit thermometers are the only practicable ones for northern Russia, and during my stay here they marked -53° Fahrenheit. This is an unusual and extreme figure, the mean winter temperature being about 18° above zero. The average summer temperature is 62°, and the extreme summer figure 99°.

"Everybody wears furs or sheepskins in winter; they are donned when the frosts come, and not laid aside till the trees are budding. Furs are for the rich, or those who pretend to be so, and sheepskins for the lower classes. Both kinds of garments are worn with the fur or wool inside; the fur coat or cloak has a backing of cloth, while the sheepskin coat has only the skin of the animal without any cloth addition."

One of the boys asked what kinds of furs were most in use.

"Nearly everything that bears the name of fur," was the reply; "but fashion rules here as everywhere else, and it often happens that a fur will be in great demand

at one time and quite neglected a few years later. Sable is the most expensive fur, and a coat or cloak lined with it is worth all the way from five hundred to five thousand dollars, depending upon the excellence of the skins. Another fur, that of the black fox, is still more costly; but as it is worn only by the Imperial family and the highest nobility, it does not come into our category.

FUR-BEARING SEALS.

"Coats lined with astrachan (the soft wool of very young lambs) are fashionable, and bring high prices. I have known of coats of this kind selling for six or eight hundred dollars each. I took to America a cap of astrachan wool; it cost me about three dollars, and with my inexperienced eye I could not distinguish it from one that sold for ten times as much. My Russian friends could readily detect the difference; but as I was buying the cap for American and not for Russian use, I was quite content with my purchase."

"Why is this fur or wool called 'astrachan?'" one of the youths asked.

SEA-OTTER.

"It comes here from Astrachan, at the mouth of the Volga," said the Doctor. "Its preparation is one of the industries of Central Asia, for which Astrachan is the great market. This fur is black, and remarkably soft and silky. The lamb is killed immediately after he sees the light, and the younger he is at the time of his death the finer and more valuable is the skin. Persia supplies large quantities of this fur, and it varies from black to gray or white.

THE BEAVER.

"I mentioned the black fox as a very costly fur. The Emperor has a cloak which is valued at ten thousand dollars; only an emperor or some one else with plenty of money at his command could afford such a garment. The fur of the black fox is rarely seen outside of Russia, as only a small quantity of it comes to market. Plenty of counterfeit fur of this kind can be found in England; it is made by dyeing the skin of the common fox, and the work is done so skilfully as to defy detection by any one not an expert in the fur trade.

THE ERMINE.

"Sea-otter, mink, marten, beaver, fur-seal, lynx, and raccoon are the furs in general use for lining garments in Russia. Otter, seal, and mink furs are expensive, and so is that of another animal I had almost omitted from the list, the ermine. Ermine fur was formerly the badge of royalty, and in some countries it could be worn only by the members of the Royal or Imperial family, or by the

judges in the high courts. In England you often hear the judges spoken of as 'wearers of the ermine;' the fur has been used for lining the robes of the judges, its snowy whiteness being considered an emblem of purity. The tip of the tail of the ermine is black, and in making robes the white surface is dotted at regular intervals with the black tips. Where they are not sufficient for the purpose, the paws of the Astrachan lamb are used instead.

THE RACCOON.

"The fur you see most frequently in Russia in the winter season is that of the raccoon. I bought a coat lined with this fur when I arrived in St. Petersburg, and paid the equivalent of eighty dollars for it. I did not recognize the skin as that of a compatriot, and was only aware of its origin when informed by a Russian friend. A fur-dealer in New York afterwards told me that half a million raccoon-skins are sent annually to London, and nearly all of them find their way to Russia.

"Another animal whose fur comes from America to Russia is that odoriferous creature, the skunk. A friend of mine bought a coat of this kind under the impression that the fur grew on the back of a young bear. In cold weather, and out-of-doors, it was all right, and no one could have known the difference; but when the weather grew warm, and a thaw made the atmosphere moist, my friend's coat was not a pleasant article of wear. I believe he sold it to the manager of a glue factory, whose nose had lost its sensitiveness through his peculiar occupation.

"So much for the materials, and now for the garment. A Russian *shooba*, or cloak, extends from the head to the heels of the wearer; the sleeves cover the finger-tips, or very nearly so, and the collar, when turned up, will completely encircle and conceal the head. The head-covering is a cap of the pattern you see often in pictures, and once called in America the 'pork-pie.' The coat is excellent for riding purposes. One can walk a short distance in such a garment, but it is really inconvenient for a promenade.

"But as everybody who can afford to ride does so, the awkwardness of the *shooba* is of little consequence. The streets abound in sledges, and you may be whisked here, there, and everywhere at a very rapid rate for a reasonable price. The streets are far gayer in winter than in summer, for the reason that there are so many more vehicles in motion, and I know of no more active spectacle than the Nevski on a clear day in January."

"The bells on the sleighs must make a merry tinkling," said one of the boys, with

a smile.

"Quite wrong," said the Doctor, returning the smile, "as there are no bells at all."

"No bells on the sleighs!" was the surprised reply. "Then the law is not like ours in America?"

"Exactly the reverse," answered the Doctor. "In the United States we require them, and in Russia they forbid them. We argue that unless bells are worn on the horses the approach of a sleigh could not be perceived; the Russians argue that in the confusion caused by the sound of bells one could not hear the warning shout of the driver, and would be liable to be run over. Both are right; sleighs are not sufficiently numerous with us to cause confusion, while in Russia their great numbers would certainly bring about the result the Russians dread.

"But it is in the cities and towns only," the Doctor continued, "that the bell is forbidden. On the country roads any one travelling in a post-carriage carries bells on the *duga*—the yoke above the neck of the shaft-horse—but he must remove them before entering a town. Most of these bells are made at Valdai, a town on the road from St. Petersburg to Moscow, and the place of their origin is preserved in some of the sleighing songs of the country.

"Balls, parties, receptions, dances, dinners, theatricals, operas, anything and everything belonging to fashionable life, can be found in St. Petersburg in winter. Any one with introductions can be as gay as he wishes, and it is a wonder to a quiet and ease-loving man that the Russians can survive this sort of thing year after year. A fashionable Russian rarely gets to bed before two or three o'clock in the morning; it is true he may sleep late, but if he has any official engagements his hours of slumber will be few. A winter in St. Petersburg is a heavy drain on one's vital forces, and also upon the pocket. Living is dear, and it is well said that this city is the most costly capital of Europe, with the possible exception of Madrid.

"The Neva freezes near the end of October or early in November, and remains frozen until May. Nobody is allowed to venture on the ice until it has been officially declared that the river is frozen over; and in the spring, when the ice melts, the official declaration is necessary before a single boat can put out from shore, or even be launched. When the river is opened there is an elaborate ceremony, and a part of the performance includes taking a glass of water from the river and presenting it to the Emperor. His Majesty drinks the water and fills the glass with gold coin. It was observed that the size of the glass increased annually, until it assumed the proportions of a respectable flower-vase. The

Imperial stomach could not hold so much water at once, and the Imperial purse objected to the price. A compromise was effected by fixing a certain sum to be paid, instead of filling the glass with gold.

"Skating and riding on the ice have a prominent place in the amusements of Russia in winter. Coasting on artificial ice-hills is also a standard sport, in which all classes of people take part. It is especially in order during 'Butter-week' and the Easter festivities, and is one of the winter sights of all cities in the Empire."

"How do they make these ice-hills?" Fred asked.

RUSSIAN ICE-HILLS.

"A scaffold is raised to the height of thirty or forty feet, the posts being set in holes drilled in the frozen earth or pavement, and fixed in their places by pouring water around them. In a few minutes the water is converted into ice and the post is immovable. On one side of the scaffold there are steps for ascending it, and generally there is a track at the side for drawing up the sleds. The other side slopes off very steeply at the start; then it becomes more gentle, and finally extends a considerable distance on a level.

"Blocks of ice are laid on the slope; water is poured over them to be converted into ice and make a smooth surface; and when the slide is completed and opened it is thronged by patrons. It takes away one's breath at first when he is pitched over the edge of the slope and finds himself rushing with a speed surpassing that of a railway-train. The impetus gained in the first part of the descent is sufficient to carry the sled a long distance on the level. I tried the slide two or three times, and think if I had been ten or twenty years younger I should have enjoyed it very much."

"Where do they put up these ice-hills?" Frank inquired.

"Several are erected in Admiralty Square," said the Doctor, "and others in various other squares and along the bank of the river. They are frequently arranged so that the level part of the slide is over the ice of the Neva, and care is taken that the track shall be smooth as glass. There are usually two of these hills side by side, the slides being in opposite directions.

"Those I speak of are for the general public. Smaller slides are in the court-yards of private houses, and there are imitations of them in many summer-houses, where polished wood takes the place of ice. One of the slides in the Imperial palace is of mahogany, which has been polished till it shines like a finely finished bureau or wardrobe.

SOLDIERS OFF DUTY—BUTTER-WEEK.

"The time to see St. Petersburg in all its winter glory is during '*Maslinitza*,' or 'Butter-week,' which ushers in the 'Great Fast' preceding Easter. The whole population is engaged in enjoying itself. *Blinni*, or pancakes, are the favorite articles of food, and thousands of digestions are upset by the enormous quantities of these things that are devoured. They are made of flour and butter, fried in butter, and eaten with butter-sauce. Butter and other fatty foods are in order through the week; and from a sanitary point of view this great consumption of grease, followed by seven weeks of fasting, leads to frightful results. Statistics show that the mortality rate is largely increased at this time of the year, and certainly it is not to be wondered at. Rich and poor alike give themselves up to butter, and the only difference is that the rich have the best qualities of the article, and sometimes a greater quantity.

"The rich people sometimes have *blinni* parties during the festive season. I once attended one of these affairs at the invitation of a Russian friend. When we met in the parlors I was surprised that so few were present, as I had dined there before and knew he could accommodate twice the number. But I saw the reason when the word was given that the pancakes were ready and our host led the way.

"We were not taken to the dining-room but to the kitchen, and then it was explained that *blinni* parties are given in the kitchen, and no more people are invited than the place can accommodate. The *blinni* are eaten on the spot, as fast as they are cooked, and it is a prime object to have them hot from the griddle. We had a very jolly time there, but for several days my stomach was like an embryo Vesuvius in consequence of making a whole meal of this rich food. Think of an entire dinner of buckwheat-cakes or fried 'turnovers,' the stuff that dreams are made of."

THE EASTER KISS—AGREEABLE.

One of the boys wished to know about the Easter kissing for which Russia is famous.

THE EASTER KISS—IN THE FAMILY.

"Well, it is one of the sights of Russia, with agreeable and disagreeable features. It is not literally the case that everybody kisses everybody else, but that statement is not so very far out of the way after all. I passed through one Easter, and it was quite enough for a lifetime. I was kissed by men and women almost innumerable. If the kissing could have been confined to the young and pretty women, or even to the comely ones of middle or advanced life, I should have

borne the infliction patiently; but when I was obliged to receive the salutation from men, of all ages and all conditions of cleanliness, or its reverse, it was too much for comfort. All Russia kisses all the rest of Russia at Easter, and any foreigner who may be here at the time is treated like a subject of the Czar. The old adage that 'Kissing goes by favor' is entirely set aside; custom makes it well-nigh universal."

THE EASTER KISS—DIFFICULT.

"When does the ceremony begin, and how long is it kept up?" said one of the youths.

THE EASTER KISS—DISAGREEABLE.

"It begins at midnight, as the clock sounds the hour of twelve and ushers in the Easter day. A little before midnight the whole of Russia goes to church. The Emperor and all his family assemble in the Imperial chapel, and every church and chapel in the Empire is filled. As the clock begins striking the hour the whole congregation is wrapped in silence; at the last stroke of the bell the doors of the sanctuary of the church are thrown open and the waiting priests come forth.

"*'Christus voskress'* ('Christ is risen') is intoned by the priests, and the song is taken up by the choir, to be followed by the response, *'Christus voskress ihs mortvui'* ('Christ is risen from the dead'). The priests walk through the congregation repeating the words and swinging their censers.

"The beginning of the chant is the signal for the kissing. Friends and acquaintances are generally standing together, and each kisses every other one of the group. Those who have the slightest possible acquaintance kiss each other, and at each and every kiss the two phrases I have given are repeated. At the same instant that the signal is given by the opening of the doors of the sanctuary, the churches are illuminated both inside and out, every bell is rung, and the pealing of cannon and the flashing of rockets show how much the festival is a national one.

"The kissing is continued through the night and all the next day, and even for several days all relatives, friends, and acquaintances salute each other with *Chritus voskress* and a kiss; every *isvoshchik*, porter, dustman—in fact every peasant of every name and kind kisses every other peasant he has ever known, and a great many whom he never saw before. Clerks in the public offices kiss each other, officers and soldiers of the army salute in the same way, the general kissing all his subordinate officers, the colonel of a regiment kissing all the

officers beneath him, and also a deputation of the soldiers, while the captain and lieutenants kiss all the soldiers of their companies. The same order is observed in the navy and in all the official ranks, and the number of osculations in the Empire in that one day of the year is quite beyond the power of calculation."

"Are the Emperor and Empress subject to the same rule as other people?" was the very natural inquiry which followed.

THE EMPEROR'S EASTER KISS.

"Certainly," was the reply; "the ceremony is closely connected with the religion of the country, and as the Emperor is the head of the Church, he could not possibly secure exemption from this ancient custom. The Emperor and Empress must salute all the members of the Imperial family as a matter of course, and also all the court officials and attendants; and after this ceremony is over the Empress must give her hand to be kissed by every officer above the rank of colonel who has the right of attendance at court. The Emperor kisses all his officers on parade, and also a delegation of soldiers selected as representatives of the army. The military parades for the Imperial kiss last several days, as it would be impossible to go through the ceremonial with all the regiments around St. Petersburg in a single revolution of the earth.

"Easter makes an end of the long fast of seven weeks, which has been kept by all faithful members of the Church with great rigor. The lower classes refrain even from fish during the first and last weeks of the fast, and also on Wednesdays and Fridays of the other five. It is no wonder that they precede it with the festivities of 'Butter-week,' so that the recollection of the good time they have had will be a consolation during the fast. With the kissing of Easter begins a period of feasting, both in eating and drinking, which is by no means famous for its moderation. Many of the mujiks are sadly intoxicated before the setting of the sun at Easter, and they are by no means the only persons who exhibit the effects of too liberal potations."

From Easter and its kisses the conversation wandered to other subjects. Fred asked how the houses were kept warm in the intense cold of a Russian winter.

PEASANT GIRL IN WINTER DRESS.

"Some of the more modern buildings of St. Petersburg and Moscow," said the Doctor, "are warmed by furnaces not unlike those used in America. But the true *peitchka*, or Russian stove, is of brick, and is generally built so as to form the common centre of three or four rooms and warm them all at once. In the huts of

the peasants the top of the stove is utilized as a bed, and it is usually large enough for three or four persons to lie there with comparative comfort."

"Do they keep the fire going there all the time during the winter?"

"Not exactly," was the reply, "though in a certain sense they do. Every morning the fire is kindled in the stove, which resembles an enormous oven, and is kept burning for several hours. When it has burned down to a bed of coals, so that no more carbonic gas can be evolved, the chimney is closed, and port-holes near the top of the stove are opened into the room or rooms. The hot air comes out and warms the apartments, and there is enough of it to keep a good heat for twelve or fifteen hours.

"The port-holes must be carefully closed during the combustion of the wood, in order to prevent the escape of poisonous gas. Sometimes they are opened when there is still some flame burning. A Russian will instantly detect the presence of this gas, and open a window or rush into the open air, but strangers, in their ignorance, are occasionally overpowered by it.

"Several instances are on record of strangers losing their lives by *ougar*, as the Russians call this poisonous gas from the stove. Among them, some twenty years ago, was the son of a Persian ambassador, who was smothered in one of the principal hotels of Moscow. When a person is overpowered by *ougar*, and found insensible, he is carried out-of-doors and rolled in the snow—a severe but efficacious remedy.

"Then, too, the cold is excluded by means of double or triple windows, little cones of paper filled with salt being placed between the windows to absorb whatever moisture collects there. Russian houses are very poorly ventilated, and frequently, on entering from the open air, you are almost stifled by the foul atmosphere that seems to strike you in the face like a pugilist.

"It is probably the condition of the air in which they live, combined with late hours and the exactions of fashionable life, that gives such an aspect of paleness to nearly all the Russian women above the peasant class. A fresh, ruddy complexion, such as one sees almost universally throughout England, and quite generally in America, is almost unknown among Russian ladies. If the Emperor would issue a decree requiring the houses of the Empire to be properly ventilated, he would confer a blessing on his faithful subjects, and save or prolong thousands of lives.

"The peasants sometimes use their stoves for baths," said the Doctor, to the great surprise of his youthful auditors.

"How is that possible?" one of them asked. "Do they fill the stove with water the same as they would a bath-tub?"

"Not exactly," the Doctor answered, smilingly. "You know the character of the Russian bath as we find it in New York and other American cities?"

"Certainly," was the reply. "It is a room filled with steam, and with a series of benches on which you lie and are heated, the highest bench being hottest of all."

A BATH IN THE EAST.

"The Russian bath of the best class here," said Doctor Bronson, "is arranged in the same way. The more primitive bath is simply a room with benches, and a fire on a pile of hot stones. Water is thrown over the stones and converted into steam, and the finishing touch is to mount to the topmost bench while an attendant deluges the stones with water and raises a cloud that threatens to scald you. The most profuse perspiration is the result, and the bath is no doubt a great sanitary institution. The Turkish bath is much like the Russian, hot, dry air taking the place of steam.

"Taken properly, the Russian bath has no bad effects, and is beneficial in rheumatism, gout, certain forms of neuralgia, and several other diseases. It is a wonderful restorative when you have been shaken up in carriages on Russian roads, and an excellent thing after a journey of any kind. Every good Russian considers it his duty to bathe once a week, but he does not always adhere to the rule.

"In every village there is a bath-house which is the general property of the villagers, and maintained by popular contribution. When a peasant has no bath-house he creeps into his stove, bakes himself on the hot ashes, and after perspiring freely crawls out and is drenched with water. Nearly every private house has its bath, which is generally in a small building in the yard, rather than in the dwelling-house. In all the large cities there are numerous bathing establishments, some of them fitted up in gorgeous style, while others are of the plainest and cheapest sort. The Russians are quite gregarious in their bathing habits, and think no more of taking a bath in the presence of each other than of dining in a restaurant."

"Is it true that the Russians finish a bath by having iced water poured over them, or by taking a plunge into it?"

"It is the custom to close the pores of the skin by means of cold, but not ice-cold

water. The attendant begins the work of the bath by throwing water over you, first warm, then hot, then hotter, and then hottest. This drenching is followed by the steaming process and a gentle flogging with birchen rods or switches to stimulate perspiration. Then you are soaped and scrubbed, the scrubbing being performed usually with birchen shavings, which are thoroughly and vigorously applied.

"After this you are again drenched with buckets of water, beginning with warm and going on a descending scale to cold, so that there shall be no shock to the system. Men have rushed from the bath into a snow-bank, but this is not the custom; the peasants frequently leave the bath to take a swim in the river, but only in mild weather. No doubt there have been cases of bathing voluntarily through the ice or in iced water, but you must search far and wide to find them."

Frank remarked that he thought one should exercise great care in going into the open air in winter after taking a bath. Doctor Bronson explained that this was the reason of the drenching with cold water, so that the pores of the skin would be closed and the chances of taking cold greatly reduced.

"It is quite a shock to the system," said the Doctor, "to pass from in doors to out, or from out doors to in, during the Russian winter. The houses are generally heated to about 70° Fahrenheit; with the thermometer at zero, or possibly ten, twenty, or more degrees below, it is like stepping from a furnace to a refrigerator, or *vice versa*. But the natives do not seem to mind it. I have often seen a mujik rise from his couch on the top of the stove, and after tightening his belt and putting on his boots and cap, mount the box of a sleigh and drive for two or three hours in a temperature far below zero."

"I have read somewhere," said Fred, "about the danger of losing one's ears and nose by frost, and that it is the custom in St. Petersburg and Moscow to warn any one that he is being frozen. Did you ever see a case of the kind?"

RUSSIAN STREET SCENE IN WINTER.

"It is a strange circumstance," replied the Doctor, "that nearly every tourist who has been in Russia, even for only a week or so, claims to have seen a crowd running after a man or woman, calling out '*Noss! noss!*' and when the victim did not understand, seizing him or her and rubbing the nose violently with snow.

"One writer tells it as occurring to a French actress; another, to an English ambassador; another, to an American politician; and in each case the story is varied to give it a semblance of truth. I was in Moscow and St. Petersburg during January and February; and though constantly watching to see somebody's nose

pulled, was doomed to disappointment. I asked my Russian friends about it, and none of them was wiser than I. One said it might happen once in a great while, but it was safe to conclude that everybody knew enough to take care of his own nose."

Frank asked how one could tell when his nose was freezing, or how observe the freezing of another's.

"The nose and ears become numb and turn white," was the reply, "and that indicates the beginning of the freezing. When this is the condition nothing but a vigorous rubbing to restore the circulation will prevent the loss of those organs. It is for protection from the frost that the Russians keep their faces wrapped in furs; and if a man has any doubt about the condition of his facial attachments he will touch them occasionally to make sure. When you pinch your nose and do not feel the pinch, it is time to rub with snow, promptly and with energy.

"Severe cold is very inconvenient for the wearer of a mustache, as he speedily gathers a great quantity of ice there by the congelation of the moisture of his breath. A man's beard becomes a frozen mass in a little while. Beard and furs frequently freeze together, and render a sudden turn of the head a matter of great annoyance. Ladies find their veils stiffening into something like wire gauze when the thermometer runs low. They disdain the bonnet of London or Paris, and sensibly enclose their head in hoods lined with fur, and having capes descending well into the neck.

"Horses become white in a short time, no matter what may be their real color, from the formation of frost all over their bodies. Their breath suggests steam more than anything else, and the long hairs around their noses are turned into icy spikes. In the severest weather pigeons have been seen to fall to the ground paralyzed with the cold, but it is quite likely that their flights were forced, and the birds were half frozen before taking wing."

Frank asked if it often happened that people were frozen to death in these Russian winters.

"Occurrences of this kind probably take place every year," was the reply, "but from all I have been able to learn I believe the number is exaggerated. In many cases it is the fault of the frozen ones themselves; they have been rendered insensible or careless by stimulants, and gone to sleep in the open air. The tendency to sleep when one is exposed to severe cold should be resisted, as it is very likely to be the sleep of death.

LOST IN A SNOW-STORM.

"There is a story of two travellers who saw a third in trouble; one of them proposed to go to the relief of the man in distress, but the other refused, saying he would not stir out of their sleigh. The first went and relieved the sufferer; his exertions set the blood rushing through his veins and saved him from injury by the cold, while the one who refused to render aid was frozen to death.

"It is a curious fact," said the Doctor, in closing his remarks upon the Russian winter, "that foreigners coming here do not feel the cold at first. They walk the streets in the same clothing they would wear in London or Paris, and laugh at the Russians wrapping themselves in furs. At the same time the Russians laugh at them and predict that if they stay in the country for another season they will change their ways. A stranger does not feel the cold the first winter as sensibly as do the Russians, but in every succeeding season of frost he is fully sensitive to it, and vies with the natives in constant use of his furs."

CHAPTER XI.

LEAVING ST. PETERSBURG.—NOVGOROD THE GREAT: ITS HISTORY AND TRADITIONS.—RURIK AND HIS SUCCESSORS.—BARBARITIES OF JOHN THE TERRIBLE.—EARLY HISTORY OF RUSSIA.—AN IMPERIAL BEAR-HUNT.—ORIGIN OF THE HOUSE OF ROMANOFF.—"A LIFE FOR THE CZAR."—RAILWAYS IN RUSSIA FROM NOVGOROD TO MOSCOW.

A day was appointed for leaving St. Petersburg. Notice was given at the office of the hotel, and the passports of the three travellers received the necessary indorsements at the Police Bureau. Trunks were packed and bills settled, and at the proper time a carriage conveyed the party to the commodious station of the Imperial Railway from the new capital of Russia to the old. But they did not take their tickets direct for Moscow.

As before stated, the railway between the two great cities of the Czar's dominions is very nearly a straight line, and was laid out by the Emperor Nicholas with a ruler placed on the map and a pencil drawn along its edge. There is consequently no city of importance along the route, with the exception of Tver, where the line crosses the Volga. Novgorod, the oldest city of Russia, is about forty miles from the railway as originally laid out. Until within a few years it was reached by steamers in summer from Volkhova Station, seventy-five miles from St. Petersburg. In winter travellers were carried in sledges from Chudova Station (near Volkhova), and to novices in this kind of travel the ride was interesting.

Latterly a branch line has been completed to Novgorod, and one may leave St. Petersburg at 9 A.M. and reach Novgorod at 6 P.M. The pace of the trains is not dangerously fast, and accidents are of rare occurrence. Between Moscow and St. Petersburg (four hundred and three miles) the running time for express trains is twenty hours, and for way trains twenty-three to twenty-five hours. Nine hours from St. Petersburg to Novgorod (one hundred and twenty miles) should not startle the most timorous tourist.

Doctor Bronson had told the youths some days before their departure that they would visit Novgorod on their way to Moscow. He suggested that he desired

them to be informed about its history, and soon after the train started he referred to the subject.

WORKMEN OF NOVGOROD—GLAZIER, PAINTER, AND CARPENTERS.

"It is rather an odd circumstance," said Frank, "that the oldest city in Russia is called Novgorod, or 'New City.' *Novo* means 'new,' and *Gorod* is Russian for 'city.' It received its name when it was really the newest town in Russia, and has kept it ever since."

"It is also called Novgorod Veliki," said Fred, "which means Novgorod the Great. In the fifteenth century it had a population of four hundred thousand, and was really entitled to be called the great. At present it has less than twenty thousand inhabitants, and its industries are of little importance compared to what they used to be."

"It has a trade in flax, corn, and hemp," the youth continued, "and its manufactures are principally in tobacco, leather, sail-cloth, vinegar, and candles. In former times an important fair was held here, and merchants came to Novgorod from all parts of Europe and many countries of Asia. Afterwards the fair was removed to Nijni Novgorod, on the Volga, and the ancient city became of little consequence except for its historical interest."

"The Slavs founded a town there in the fourth century," said Frank. "About the year 862 the Russian monarchy had its beginning at Novgorod; in 1862 there was a millennial celebration there, and a magnificent monument was erected to commemorate it."

"This is a good place for you to tell us about the early history of Russia," said the Doctor.

AN OLD NORSE CHIEF.

"I have been studying it," Frank replied, "and find that previous to the ninth century the country was occupied by the Slavs, who founded the towns of Novgorod and Kief. Each of these places was the capital of an independent Slavic principality. Very little is known of the history of the Slavs in those times. The Varangians, a northern people, made war upon them. The Slavs resisted, but finally invited Rurik, the Prince of the Varangians, to come and rule over them. The Northmen, or Varangians, were called 'Russ' by the Slavs, and from them the new monarchy was called Russia. Rurik came with his two brothers, Sineus and Truvor, and at Novgorod laid the foundation of this empire that now covers

one-eighth of the land surface of the globe.

"The story is admirably told in verse by Bayard Taylor. I have copied the lines from his poetical volume, and will read them to you."

In a full, clear voice the youth then read as follows, having previously explained that Mr. Taylor was present at the millennial celebration already mentioned:

A THOUSAND YEARS.

Novgorod, Russia, Sept. 20, 1862.

storm and fire,	"A thousand years! Through
has grown,	With varying fate, the work
stone.	Till Alexander crowns the spire,
	Where Rurik laid the corner-
could not rust,	"The chieftain's sword, that
grew,	But bright in constant battle
august—	Raised to the world a throne
	A nation grander than he knew.
have,	"Nor he, alone; but those who
equal part:	Through faith or deed, an
heart;	The subtle brain of Yaroslav,
	Vladimir's arm and Nikon's
well	"The later hands, that built so
began,	The work sublime which these

mighty plan.

anew,

they trod,

view

Dwina's side;

long;

tide

bright with song;

cones;

free;

changing zones,

sea!

shade,

Rome,

obeyed.

And up from base to pinnacle
Wrought out the Empire's

"All these, to-day, are crowned

And rule in splendor where

While Russia's children throng to

Her holy cradle, Novgorod.

"From Volga's banks; from

From pine-clad Ural, dark and

Or where the foaming Terek's

Leaps down from Kasbek,

"From Altai's chain of mountain-

Mongolian deserts, far and

And lands that bind, through

The Eastern and the Western

"To every race she gives a home,

And creeds and laws enjoy her

Till, far beyond the dreams of

Her Cæsar's mandate is

"She blends the virtues they

impart,
combined,
—
mind.

wanderings cease;
fast;
of peace

know
vain,
blow
again!

expands,
hour—
lands
Power.

to tell
she trod—

And holds, within her life
The patient faith of Asia's heart

The force of Europe's restless

"She bids the nomad's

She binds the wild marauder
Her ploughshares turn to homes

The battle-fields of ages past.

"And, nobler yet, she dares to

Her future's task, nor knows in
But strikes at once the generous

That makes her millions men

"So, firmer based, her power

Nor yet has seen its crowning
Still teaching to the struggling

That Peace the offspring is of

"Build, then, the storied bronze,

The steps whereby this height
The thousand years that chronicle

God!

come—

—

drum

sea!—

grand,

unshorn;

land,

morn.'

The toil of Man, the help of

"And may the thousand years to

The future ages, wise and free

Still see her flag and hear her

Across the world, from sea to

"Still find, a symbol stern and

Her ancient eagle's wings

One head to watch the Western

And one to guard the land of

"Bear in mind," said Frank, after pausing at the end of the lines, "that the millennial celebration took place not long after the edict of emancipation was issued by Alexander II. This is what Mr. Taylor refers to in the third line of his poem.

"To go on with the story, let me say that Rurik and his descendants ruled the country for more than two centuries. They made war upon their neighbors, and were generally victorious, and in their time the boundaries of Russia were very much enlarged. Rurik and his sons were pagans. In the tenth century Christianity was introduced, and Olga, the widow of Igor, son of Rurik, was baptized at Constantinople. Her son remained a pagan. He was slain in battle, and left the monarchy to his three sons, who soon began to quarrel. One was killed in battle, and another was put to death by the third brother, Vladimir, who assumed entire control, and was surnamed 'The Great' on account of the benefits he conferred upon Russia."

Fred asked if Vladimir was a Christian.

"He was not," said Frank, "at least not in the beginning, but he subsequently became a convert to the principles of the Greek Church, married the sister of the

Emperor of Constantinople, and was baptized on the day of his wedding, in the year 988. He ordered the introduction of Christianity into Russia, and established a great many churches and schools.

VIEW ON THE STEPPE.

"Vladimir left the throne to his twelve sons, who quarrelled about it till several of them were murdered or slain in battle. The successful son was Yaroslav, who followed the example of his father by extending the boundaries of the country and introducing reforms. He caused many Greek books to be translated into Slavic, and ordered the compilation of the '*Russkaya Pravda*,' which was the first law code of the country. Nikon, whom Mr. Taylor mentions in the same line with Vladimir, was a Russian scholar and theologian of a later time, to whom the religion of Russia is much indebted.

"After Yaroslav's death there were many internal and external wars, during which Russia lost a great deal of territory, and the history of the country for a long period is a history of calamities. The Tartars under Genghis Khan invaded Russia, plundering towns and cities, murdering the inhabitants, and ravaging the whole country from the frontiers of Asia to the banks of the Vistula. Famine and pestilence accompanied war; in the year 1230 thirty thousand people died of the plague at Smolensk and forty-two thousand at Novgorod. Alexander Nevski defeated the Swedes and Livonians on the banks of the Neva. He was a prince of Novgorod, and one of the most enlightened of his time.

IVAN THE TERRIBLE.

"Moscow was founded about 1147, and grew rapidly, although it was repeatedly sacked by the Mongol invaders, who slew on one occasion twenty-four thousand of its inhabitants. The capital was established there, and under various rulers the war with the Mongols was continued to a successful end. Ivan III., surnamed 'The Great,' drove them out, and successfully repelled their attempts to return. His son and successor, Ivan IV., was surnamed 'The Terrible,' and certainly he deserved the appellation. We have mentioned him already in our account of what we saw in St. Petersburg.

"He was an energetic warrior, encouraged commerce, made treaties with other nations, introduced the art of printing, and invited many foreigners to reside in Russia and give instruction to the people. On the other hand, he was one of the most cruel rulers that ever governed a people, and seems to have rivalled the brutalities of the Mongols. Here are some of his cruelties that are recorded in

history:

"He hated Novgorod on account of the independent spirit of its people, and for this reason he put more than sixty thousand of its inhabitants to death, many of them with torture. Novgorod had maintained an independent government, quite distinct from that of the Grand-duchy of Moscow. Ivan III. and his son, Vassili, made war upon Novgorod and the other independent principality of Pskov, and Ivan IV. ('The Terrible') brought them to complete submission. The slaughter of the people of Novgorod was the closing act of the conquest.

"We will change Ivan to its English equivalent, John, and henceforth speak of this monster as John the Terrible. He was only four years old when he became Czar. During his infancy the government was conducted by his mother, under the direction of the House of Boyards (noblemen). When he was thirteen years of age a political party which was opposed to the Boyards suggested that he could rule without any assistance, and he at once took the control of affairs. Very soon he terrified those who had placed him on the throne, and they would have been gladly rid of him if they could.

"An English ambassador came to Moscow bringing the answer to a letter in which John had proposed marriage to Queen Elizabeth. The Queen rejected his offer, but in such a diplomatic manner as not to offend the sanguinary Czar. Her ambassador incurred the monarch's ill-will by neglecting to uncover before him, and it was accordingly ordered that the envoy's hat should be nailed to his head. Foreigners were better treated than were the subjects of John, and the ambassador was not harmed, though he was afterwards imprisoned.

"For his amusement John the Terrible used to order a number of people to be sewed up in bear-skins, and then torn to death by bear-hounds. For tearing prisoners to pieces he ordered the tops of several trees to be bent down so that they came together; the limbs of the unfortunate victim were fastened to these tops, each limb to a different tree. When they were thus tied up, the release of the trees performed the work intended by the cruel Czar."

"Isn't John's name connected with the Church of St. Basil at Moscow?" Fred asked.

"Yes," answered Frank; "it was built in his reign, and is considered one of the finest in the city. When it was finished John sent for the architect and asked if he could build another like it.

"Certainly I could,' the architect replied, with delight.

"Thereupon the monarch ordered the architect's eyes to be put out, to make sure that the Church of St. Basil should have no rival.

"Whether he was a kind husband or not we have no information, but he certainly was very much a husband. He had one Mohammedan and two Russian wives; and at the very time he sought the hand of Elizabeth, Queen of England, he proposed to marry the daughter of King Sigismund of Poland. What he intended doing if both offers were accepted we are not told, but it is not likely that bigamy would have had any terrors for a man of such ungovernable temper as he seems to have been.

ALEXIS MICHAILOVITCH, FATHER OF PETER THE GREAT.

"At his death his son and successor, Feodor, fell under the influence of Boris Godounoff, his brother-in-law, who assumed full power after a time, and renewed the relations with England which had been suspended for a while. Godounoff obtained the throne by poisoning or exiling several of his relatives who stood in his way or opposed his projects. Feodor is believed to have died of poison; he was the Czar from 1584 to 1598, but for the last ten years of this period he had practically no voice in State affairs. With his death the House of Rurik became extinct."

"Does the House of Romanoff, the present rulers of Russia, begin where that of Rurik ended?" the Doctor asked.

"Not exactly," was the reply, "as there was an interval of nineteen years, and a very important period in the history of the Empire. Several pretenders to the throne had appeared, among them Demetrius, who is known in history as the 'Impostor.' He married a Polish lady, and it was partly through her intrigues that Moscow fell into the hands of the Poles."

"And how were they driven out?"

"A butcher or cattle-dealer of Nijni Novgorod, named Minin, gathered a small army under the belief that he was ordered by Heaven to free his country from the invaders. He persuaded Prince Pojarsky to lead these soldiers to Moscow, and together they started. Their force increased as they advanced, and finally they expelled the Poles and redeemed the capital. The names of Minin and Pojarsky are very prominent in Russian history. Monuments at Moscow and Nijni Novgorod commemorate the action of these patriotic men, and tell the story of their work in behalf of their country.

MICHAEL FEODOROVITCH, FIRST CZAR OF THE ROMANOFF FAMILY.

"The incident on which Glinka's opera, 'A Life for the Czar,' is based belongs to this period, when the Poles overran Russia. The Czar who was saved was Michael Feodorovitch, the first of the Romanoffs, and he was elected to the throne by an assembly of nobles. The autocrat of all the Russias is descended from a man who was chosen to office by the form of government which is now much more in vogue in America than in the land of the Czar. Michael, the first of the Romanoffs, was the son of Feodor Romanoff, Archbishop of Rostov, and afterwards Patriarch of Moscow.

"There was nothing remarkable about the reign of Feodor, nor of that of his son Alexis. The latter was distinguished for being the father of Peter the Great, and for nothing else that I can find in history. Now we step from ancient to modern times. Peter the Great belongs to our day, and the Russia that we are visiting is the one that he developed. Under him the country became an Empire, where it was before nothing more than a kingdom. During his reign—"

They were interrupted by the stoppage of the train at a station, and the announcement that they must wait there an hour or more to receive some of the Imperial foresters, who were arranging for a bear-hunt.

Russian history was dropped at once for a more practical and modern subject, the Emperor of Russia, and his pursuit of the bear.

The Doctor explained to the youths that the Czar is supposed to be fond of the chase, and whenever a bear is seen anywhere near the line of the Moscow and St. Petersburg Railway he is made the object of an Imperial hunt. The animal is driven into a forest and allowed to remain there undisturbed. In fact he is kept in the forest by a cordon of peasants hastily assembled from all the surrounding country. As soon as the party can be organized, the hunt takes place in grand style.

The Imperial train is prepared, and an extra train sent out in advance, with the necessary beaters, soldiers, and others, and also a plentiful supply of provisions. The Imperial train contains the Emperor's private carriage and several other fine vehicles. There are carriages for the Emperor's horses, unless they have gone in the advance train, and there are guns and ammunition sufficient to slaughter half the bears in the Empire.

When the ground is reached the locality of the bear is pointed out, and the

Emperor rides fearlessly to the spot. He is accompanied by his staff and guests, if he happens to have any Royal or Imperial visitors at the time; but unless the guests are invited to do the shooting, the honor of killing the beast is reserved for the Emperor. Exceptions are made in case the bear should endanger the life of his Majesty, which sometimes happens. Bears have little sense of Imperial dignity, and a Czar is of no more consequence to an untamed bruin than is the most ordinary peasant.

"A gentleman who was stopping on an estate in the interior of Russia," said Doctor Bronson, "happened to be a witness of an Imperial bear-hunt several years ago, and told me about it. He said not less than five hundred Cossacks and peasants were employed in watching the bear, to keep him from straying, and the brute had become so accustomed to their presence that he stood quite still when approached by the Emperor, so that the latter delivered his shot at a distance of not more than a dozen yards. The animal was killed instantly, the ball penetrating his forehead and crashing through his brain.

"After the hunt the party rode to the house of the owner of the estate where the bear had been found, and enjoyed a hearty supper, and after the supper they returned to the capital. The body of the slain animal was dressed for transportation to St. Petersburg, where it was to be served up at the Imperial table.

TOO NEAR TO BE PLEASANT.

"I have heard of bears that did not run at the sight of man, but sometimes came altogether too near to be agreeable. One day a man who lay asleep on the ground was awakened by a bear licking his face. He sat up and was much terrified at the situation; the bear finally walked off, and left the man unharmed.

WOLF ATTACKING ITS HUNTERS.

"When the Emperor treats his Royal or Imperial guests to a wolf or bear hunt, the masters of ceremonies take good care that there shall be game in the forest. On one occasion, when the Crown-prince of Germany was a guest at the Winter Palace, the Emperor ordered a wolf-hunt for his amusement. The chase was successful, and two of the animals were driven so that they were shot by the guest.

"During their return to St. Petersburg, so the story goes, the Prince commented on the wonderful race of wolves in Russia. 'One of those I killed to-day,' said he, 'had the hair rubbed from his neck as if by a chain, and the other wore a collar.'"

"Are there many bears in Russia?" one of the youths inquired.

"The bear is found all over Russia," the Doctor answered. "The most common varieties are the black and brown bears, which are in Asiatic as well as European Russia; in northern Asia is the Arctic bear, which belongs to the sea rather than to the land. He is the largest of the family, but not the most formidable. The champion bear of the world for fighting qualities is the grisly, found only in North America.

"In some parts of Russia," the Doctor continued, "bears are so numerous as to do a great deal of damage. They destroy cattle and sheep, and not unfrequently attack individuals. They cause much havoc among fruit-trees and in grain-fields, and in localities where inhabitants are few they have things pretty much their own way. They are hunted with dogs and guns; traps are set for them, and poison is scattered where they can find and eat it. But in spite of the efforts of man against them they do not diminish in numbers from year to year, and the Emperor is able to have a bear-hunt about as often as he wants one.

"I have heard that in some parts of Siberia bears are caught and tamed, and then driven to market as one drives oxen or sheep. In a book of travels written by a Frenchman there is a picture of a dozen or more bears being driven to market, and the story is told in all soberness. French travellers are famous for a tendency to make their narratives interesting, even if veracity should suffer. There are exceptions, of course, as in everything else, but you may set it down as a good general rule, not to accept without question any extraordinary statement you find in a French book of travel."

In due time the journey was resumed, and the train reached Novgorod, where our travellers alighted. Novgorod stands on both sides of the Volkhov River, and is one hundred and three miles from St. Petersburg by the old post-road. It is not remarkable for its architecture, and is chiefly interesting for its historical associations and souvenirs.

OLD PICTURE IN THE CHURCH.

"We visited several of the churches and monasteries which make up the attractions of Novgorod," said Frank, in his journal. "The principal church is the Cathedral of St. Sophia, which was called in ancient times 'The Heart and Soul of the Great Novgorod.' The first cathedral was built here in 989; the present one dates from about 1045, when it was erected by order of the grandson of St. Vladimir. It has been altered and repaired repeatedly, but the alterations have not materially changed it from its ancient form. It is one of the oldest churches in

Russia, and is held in great reverence by the people.

"The church has suffered by repeated plunderings. It was robbed by John the Terrible, and afterwards by the Swedes; the latter, in 1611, killed two of the priests and destroyed the charter which had been granted to the cathedral more than fifty years before. In spite of these depredations, the church contains many relics and images, some of them of great antiquity. There are shrines in memory of Yaroslav, Vladimir, and other of the ancient rulers of Russia; the shrine and tomb of St. Anne, daughter of King Olaf of Sweden, and wife of Prince Yaroslav I.; and the shrines or tombs of many other saints, princes, archbishops, patriarchs, and other dignitaries whose names have been connected with the history of the church and the city. So many tombs are here that there is little room for more.

A BISHOP OF THE GREEK CHURCH.

"You would hardly expect one of the curious relics of a church to be the result of piracy, yet such appears to be the case in this sacred building. The doors leading into the Chapel of the Nativity are said to have been stolen from a church in Sweden by pirates. Several men from Novgorod belonged to the freebooting band, and brought these doors home to enrich the cathedral of their native place. The doors are of oak, covered with metal plates half an inch thick; the plates bear several devices and scrolls which we could not understand, but our guide said they were the armorial bearings of Swedish noblemen. There is another door, which is also said to have been stolen from a church, but its exact origin is unknown.

"In the sacristy they showed us an ancient copy of the four gospels on vellum, and a printed copy which is said to have come from the first printing-press ever set up in Russia. There were several flags and standards which once belonged to the princes of Novgorod, one of them a present from Peter the Great in 1693. There was once an extensive library connected with the cathedral, but it was taken to St. Petersburg in 1859. They showed us a collection of letters from Peter the Great to Catherine I. and his son Alexis, but of course we could not read them.

"There is a kremlin, or fortress, in the centre of the city, but it is not of great consequence. Near it is a tower which bears the name of Yaroslav; in this tower hung the *Vechie* bell, which summoned the *vechie*, or assemblage of citizens, when any public circumstance required their attention. We tried to picture the gathering of the people on such occasions. In the day of its greatness Novgorod

had four hundred thousand inhabitants, and its assemblages must have been well worth seeing. The vechie bell was carried off to Moscow by Ivan III., and many thousands of the inhabitants were compelled to move to other places. For a long time it hung in a tower of the Kremlin of Moscow, but its present whereabouts is unknown.

"I fear that a further account of our sight-seeing in Novgorod, so far as the churches and monasteries are concerned, might be wearisome, as it would be in some degree a repetition of the description of the cathedral; so we will drop these venerable buildings and come down to modern times and things. The most interesting of modern things in this old city is the Millennial Monument, which has been mentioned before.

MILLENNIAL MONUMENT AT NOVGOROD.

(From Appleton's American Cyclopædia.)

"The monument is one of the finest in the Empire, and some of the Russians say it surpasses anything else of the kind in their country. We could not measure it, but judged it to be not less than fifty feet from the ground to the top of the cross which surmounts the dome, forming the upper part of the monument. There are a great many figures, statues, and high-reliefs, which represent periods of Russian history. The great events from the days of Rurik to Alexander II. are shown on the monument, and there can be no doubt that the work is highly instructive to those who study it carefully.

"The monument was designed by a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and was chosen from a great number of sketches that were submitted for competition. The casting of the bronze was done by an English firm at St. Petersburg, and the expense was borne by the Government and a few wealthy citizens of Novgorod. As is usual in such cases, the Government contributed by far the greater part of the money."

After a day in Novgorod our friends continued their journey to Moscow. They returned to the main line of railway by the branch, and waited nearly two hours at the junction for the through train to the ancient capital.

At Valdai the youths bought some specimens of the famous Valdai bells; but it is safe to say that they were not equal to what could have been found at St. Petersburg or Moscow. Fred recalled their purchases of specimens of local manufactures in other parts of the world, and said the same rule would apply everywhere. The tourist who buys Toledo blades at the railway-station in Toledo,

eau-de-cologne at the famous city of the Rhine, bog-oak jewellery at Dublin, and *pâté de foie gras* at Strasburg, may generally count on being victimized.

At Tver the railway crosses the Volga. Frank proposed that as Tver is the head of navigation on that great river they should leave the train and float with the current to Astrachan, two thousand one hundred and fifty miles away. Doctor Bronson said a steamer would be preferable to floating; besides, they would have quite enough of the Volga if they started from Nijni Novgorod and avoided the navigation of the upper part of the stream.

RUSSIAN BOATS.

"And while we are on the subject of navigation," the Doctor added, "please bear in mind that by means of a system of canals connecting the lakes and rivers between this point and St. Petersburg, there is unbroken water transit between the Volga and the Neva. Merchandise can be carried in boats from St. Petersburg to the Caspian Sea without breaking bulk, and there are canals connecting the Volga with the Don and the Dneiper rivers in the same way. Russia has an excellent system of internal communication by water, and it was doubtless due to this that the railways in the Empire are a matter of very recent date.

"The first railway line in the Empire was from St. Petersburg to Tsarskoe-Selo, and was built in 1838. The St. Petersburg and Moscow Railway was begun in 1848, and down to the end of the reign of Nicholas less than three thousand miles of railway were completed in the whole Empire. Now there are nearly twenty thousand miles in operation, and the figures are increasing every year. Nearly fourteen thousand miles belong to private companies, and the remainder is the property of the Government. Some of the companies have a Government guarantee for the interest on their capital, while others are managed just like private railways in other countries."

At the last station before reaching Moscow passports were surrendered to the inspectors, and tickets were collected. The youths put their hand-bags and shawl-straps in readiness, and were ready to leave the carriage when the train rolled into the huge building which is the terminal station of the line. Our friends were in the ancient capital of Russia, and the home of many Czars.

PORTRAIT OF CATHERINE II. IN THE KREMLIN COLLECTION.



CHAPTER XII.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF MOSCOW.—UNDULATIONS OF THE GROUND.—IRREGULARITY OF THE BUILDINGS, AND THE CAUSE THEREOF.—NAPOLEON'S CAMPAIGN IN RUSSIA.—DISASTER AND RETREAT.—THE BURNING OF MOSCOW.—THE KREMLIN: ITS CHURCHES, TREASURES, AND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS.—ANECDOTES OF RUSSIAN LIFE.—THE CHURCH OF ST. BASIL.

From the railway-station the party went to a hotel which had been recommended as centrally situated and fairly well kept, but Frank and Fred said they should be cautious about praising it for fear that those who came after them might be disappointed. The hotels of Moscow are hardly equal to those of St. Petersburg. As the latter is the capital of the Empire, it naturally has a greater demand for hostelries of the highest class than does the more venerable but less fashionable city.

The first thing that impressed the youths was the undulating character of the ground on which Moscow is built, in pleasing contrast to the dead level of St. Petersburg. The streets are rarely straight for any great distance, and were it not for the inequalities one would not be able to see very far ahead of him at any time. But every few minutes a pretty view is afforded from the crest of one ridge to another; the depressions between the ridges are filled with buildings scattered somewhat irregularly, and there is a goodly number of shade-trees in the yards and gardens or lining the streets.

STREET SCENE IN MOSCOW.

St. Petersburg has an air of great regularity both in the arrangement of its streets and the uniformity of the buildings. Moscow forms a marked contrast to the younger capital, as there is little attempt at uniformity and regularity. You see the hut of a peasant side by side with the palace of a nobleman; a stable rises close against a church, and there is a carpenter's shop, with its half-dozen workmen, abutting close against an immense factory where hundreds of hands are employed. Moscow is a city of contrasts; princes and beggars almost jostle each other in the streets; the houses of rich and poor are in juxtaposition, and it is only a few short steps from the palace of the Kremlin, with its treasures of gold and

jewels, to the abodes of most abject poverty.

Frank and Fred were quick to observe this peculiarity of the ancient capital of the Czars, and at the first opportunity they questioned the Doctor concerning it.

"What is the cause of so many contrasts here which we did not see in St. Petersburg?" one of them inquired.

"That is the question I asked on my first visit," Doctor Bronson replied. "I was told that it was due to the burning of Moscow in 1812, at the time of its capture by Napoleon."

"How much of the city was burned?" Fred asked.

"The greater part of it was destroyed," was the reply, "but there were many buildings of stone and brick that escaped. Most of the churches were saved, as the Russians were reluctant to commit the sacrilege of burning edifices which had been consecrated to religious worship. Such of the churches as were consumed in the conflagration were set on fire by neighboring buildings rather than by the hands of the Russians."

"Then it was the Russians that burned Moscow, and not the French," said Fred. "I have read somewhere that it is all a falsehood that the Russians consigned their city to the flames."

"From all I can learn, both by reading and conversation," answered the Doctor, "I do not think there is any doubt of the truth of the generally accepted story. Napoleon arrived here on the 15th of September, and intended to spend the winter in Moscow to prepare for a spring campaign against St. Petersburg. His advance under Murat came in one day earlier. As soon as Napoleon arrived he took up his quarters in the Kremlin, while his troops were mostly encamped on the hills which overlook the city on the west.

BIVOUACKING IN THE SNOW.

"On the night of the 16th the governor, Count Rostoptchin, ordered the city to be set on fire—at least such is the general belief, though the official order has never been produced. The fire broke out in many places at the same time; the French soldiers tried to suppress it, but found it impossible to do so. Nearly twelve thousand houses were burned, besides palaces and churches. The inhabitants fled to the country in all directions, and there was no stock of provisions for the support of the French army.

"Napoleon found that he must evacuate the city and return to France. On the

19th of October he looked his last on Moscow from the Sparrow Hills on the west, and began his long and disastrous retreat. The winter came early, and was unusually severe. Hardly had he left the city before the ground was deep with snow, and from that time onward he was harassed by Cossacks, while his men perished of hunger and cold. Do you know how many men were lost in the Russian campaign of 1812?"

BATTLE BETWEEN FRENCH AND RUSSIANS.

"Yes," said Fred; "I have just been reading the history of the campaign.

"According to the narrative of the Count de Segur," the youth continued, "the army with which Napoleon invaded Russia comprised four hundred and twenty thousand men. Very nearly half of these were French; the other half consisted of Poles, Italians, Austrians, Bavarians, Saxons, and other troops allied with the French. One hundred and eighty-seven thousand horses were employed for the cavalry, artillery, and baggage. There were eighty thousand cavalry and the artillery numbered one thousand three hundred and sixty-two pieces. There were great numbers of carts and wagons drawn by oxen, and immense herds of cattle driven along for supplying beef.

"Three hundred thousand Russians gathered on the banks of the Niemen River to oppose the French advance, but the river was crossed without opposition. There was a battle at Smolensk, and another at Borodino, both of them being won by the French. At the battle of Borodino the loss on both sides amounted to eighty thousand killed and wounded. After that the Russians made no serious resistance. Napoleon entered Moscow without difficulty, and established his headquarters in the Kremlin, as you have said. On the battle-field of Borodino is a monument with this inscription:

**"'NAPOLEON ENTERED MOSCOW 1812; ALEXANDER ENTERED
PARIS 1814.'"**

"So much for the advance," the Doctor remarked; "now tell us about the retreat."

NAPOLEON RETREATING FROM MOSCOW.

"It was one of the most terrible retreats ever known in history. Out of all the Grand Army of nearly half a million men that crossed the Niemen in June, 1812, a little more than twelve thousand recrossed it in the following winter! It was estimated that one hundred and twenty thousand were killed in the various battles with the Russians, one hundred and thirty thousand died of disease, cold,

and hunger, and not far from two hundred thousand were captured, or voluntarily left the army and remained with the Russians. Many of the latter died within the next few years, and others settled in the country and never reached their homes again. On the line of the march of the Grand Army their descendants may be found to-day living in the villages where their fathers died, and thoroughly Russian in their language and habits. The Russians are said to have treated their prisoners kindly, and doubtless they had orders from the Government to do so."

Frank asked if the French army made any attempt to reach St. Petersburg.

ALEXANDER I.

"As before stated, it was Napoleon's intention," the Doctor answered, "to spend the winter in Moscow, and move upon St. Petersburg in the spring. But the burning of Moscow made it impossible for him to remain, and thus his plans were spoiled. Russia refused to make terms of peace with him, and some of his messages to the Emperor Alexander I. were not even answered. The Russians doubtless knew that cold and hunger would compel a retreat, and they could rely upon the winter and the Cossacks to make it disastrous.

"Russia had concluded a treaty of peace with Turkey, which would release a large army to fight against the French. She had also made a treaty with the King of Sweden, by which the troops of the latter would join the Russian army early in the spring, as soon as the weather and the roads would permit them to march. It was certain that Napoleon would be overwhelmed if he remained, and the only alternative was the retreat.

"The army that came to Moscow was about one hundred thousand strong; all the rest of the available forces of the Grand Army were left to garrison places on the road to the Niemen and to collect provisions. One hundred and sixty thousand men crossed the bridge at Smolensk in the march to Moscow; twenty thousand were killed on the road, and forty thousand were left to guard the magazines, hospitals, and stores at some four or five places. The terrible waste of war can be no better illustrated than in the story of Napoleon's campaign to Moscow. At Kovno, in Lithuania, is a monument with the inscription:

**"'NAPOLEON MARCHED THROUGH HERE WITH 700,000 MEN; HE
MARCHED BACK WITH 70,000.**

"And now," he continued, "I think you understand why Moscow presents so many irregularities in its architecture. In the spring of 1813 the people began to

build again, and everything was done in a hurry. Those who could afford the time and money necessary to build good houses were the few rather than the many. Most of the Russians had been impoverished in the war, and could only afford the cheapest of dwellings, while those who had not lost everything were desirous of obtaining shelter as soon as possible. The custom of that day has continued in a certain measure to the present, as you can see by looking around you."

For a knowledge of what our friends saw in Moscow we will refer as heretofore to the journals kept by the youths, together with extracts from their letters to friends at home.

"The first thing we wanted to see," said Fred, in his journal, "was the Kremlin, or ancient fortress of Moscow, on the bank of the river Moskva, from which the city is named. We saw many other things on the way there, but had no interest in them, and will leave their description to a later page. We were all eyes, ears, and thoughts for the Kremlin, and nothing else.

VIEW IN THE KREMLIN.

"Nobody can tell positively what the word 'kremlin' comes from, but it certainly means fortress or space enclosed with strong walls. The walls of the Kremlin of Moscow are about one mile and a half in circuit, and from fifty to sixty feet high; they are entered by five gates, of which the principal is the *spaski*, or 'Redeemer.' This gate was built in 1491, and over it there is a picture of the Redeemer of Smolensk. Our guide told us we must remove our hats as we passed through this gate-way, out of respect for the ways of the people. Formerly a failure to do so was severely punished, but now there is no compulsion about it. Not even the Emperor is exempt from the custom, and you may be sure we did not attract attention by our neglect.

A PRISONER ORDERED TO EXECUTION.

"It was in front of this gate that executions formerly took place, and the victims offered their last prayers to the Redeemer of Smolensk. Happily there are now no signs of these executions, and everything has an air of peace and happiness. The gate of next importance is the *Nikolsky*, or Nicholas Gate, which is ornamented and made sacred in the eyes of orthodox Russians by the picture of St. Nicholas of Mojaïsk. The gate was partly destroyed by order of Napoleon; a large quantity of gunpowder was placed under it and fired, but the explosion only split the tower in the middle and up to the frame of the picture. The glass over the picture and the lamp burning in front of it were not harmed. As the occurrence was considered in the light of a miracle, an inscription describing it was placed there by Alexander I.

"Another gate, called the *Troitska*, or Trinity, is memorable as the one by which the French entered and left the Kremlin in 1812. Several times it has been the passage-way of conquering armies. Besides the French in the nineteenth century, it admitted the Poles in the seventeenth, the Tartars in the sixteenth (1551), and the Lithuanians in the fourteenth centuries. Only a small part of the Kremlin was destroyed in the great fire of 1812; it was held by Napoleon's troops when the fire broke out, and when the invaders retired their attempts to blow up the walls and ignite the buildings did not succeed.

"After looking at the exterior of the wall and admiring the picturesque situation of the Kremlin, we passed through the gate, and went at once to the tower of Ivan Veliki (John the Great). We had been advised to see this tower first of all, as it was the best point from which to obtain a general view of the city.

THE KREMLIN OF MOSCOW.

"There is some doubt as to the antiquity of the tower, but it is generally believed to date from the year 1600, and to have been built by Boris Godounoff. It is in five stories, of which the upper is in the form of a cylinder, while the others are octagonal in shape. The top is two hundred and seventy feet from the ground, and is reached by a winding stairway.

"The guide called our attention to the bells in the tower; there are no less than thirty-four of them, and some are very large. In the second story hangs a bell known as the 'Assumption,' which weighs sixty-four tons; it is therefore four times as heavy as the great bell of Rouen, five times that of Erfurt, and eight times as heavy as the Great Tom of Oxford, the largest bell in England! The oldest of the other bells bears the date 1550; the vechie bell of Novgorod the Great once hung in this tower, but nobody knows where it is at present. The effect of the ringing of these bells at Easter is said to be very fine, as they are of different tones, and so arranged[Pg 239]

[Pg 240] that they make no discord. In the upper story are two silver bells, whose tones are said to be very sweet.

"We stopped a while at each of the stories to look at the bells and enjoy the view, and thus reached the top without much fatigue. But if we had been so weary as to be unable to stand, we should have been amply repaid for our fatigue. The view is certainly one of the finest we ever had from a height overlooking any city in Europe, with the possible exceptions of Paris and Constantinople.

"Moscow, with its undulating and irregular streets, with the Moskva winding through it in the shape of the letter S, with its four hundred churches and an immense variety of towers and domes and minarets, with the variations of palace and hovel already mentioned, and with the great buildings of the Kremlin forming the foreground of the scene, lay before and below us. It was Moscow (the Holy), the city of the Czars and beloved of every patriotic Russian; the city which has existed through Tartar, Polish, and French invasions; has risen from the ashes again and again; has been ravaged by famine, the plague, and the sword of the invader, but surviving all her calamities, welcomes the stranger within her walls, whose circuit is more than twenty miles. From the top of this tower we looked down upon seven centuries of historical associations.

"Listen to a fragment of the history of Moscow: It was plundered by the Tartars under Tamerlane, and many of its inhabitants were killed; again it fell into Tartar hands, and again was pillaged, and its inhabitants murdered. Twice under the Tartars (1536 and 1572) it was set on fire, and on both occasions many thousands of people perished by fire or sword. The Poles burned a large part of

the city in 1611, and in 1771 the plague carried off half the population. Is it any wonder that the Russians love their ancient capital, after all that it has suffered and survived?

THE GREAT BELL UNDERGROUND.

"We lingered for an hour or more in the tower, and then descended. Our next object of interest was the '*Czar Kolokol*,' or Great Bell, which stands at the foot of the Ivan Veliki Tower, and near the place where for a long time it lay buried in the earth. It is literally the great bell not only of Moscow but of the world.

"It has a strange history. It is said to have been cast originally in the time of Boris Godounoff, and a traveller in 1611 mentions a bell in Russia which required twenty-four men to swing the clapper. During a fire it fell to the ground and was broken; in 1654 it was recast, and weighed at that time 288,000 pounds. Twenty years later it was suspended from a wooden beam at the foot of the tower; the beam gave way during a fire in 1706, and the bell was again broken. The Empress Anne ordered it recast in 1733, but it only lasted four years. The falling of some rafters in 1737 broke the bell as we now see it, and it lay on the ground just ninety-nine years, or until 1836, when it was raised and placed in its present position by the Emperor Nicholas.

"And how large do you think it is?

"It is thought to weigh 444,000 pounds, or 220 tons; it is nineteen feet three inches in height, and sixty feet nine inches in circumference, or twenty feet three inches in diameter. Just stop and measure these figures with your eye in a barn or a large room of a house, and then realize what this great bell is.

VISITING THE GREAT BELL.

"Look at the picture of the bell, and see the piece that is broken out of it. This piece is six feet high, and both of us walked through the place left by its removal without any difficulty. There is an inscription on the bell which gives its history, and it presents also several sacred figures and the portraits of the Czar Alexis and the Empress Anne.

EMPRESS ANNE.

"From the Great Bell we went to the Nicholas Palace, which occupies the site of the one destroyed by the French at the time of their retreat, and then to the *Bolshoi Dvorets*, or Great Palace.

"The state apartments are numerous and gorgeous; their number is absolutely

bewildering, and so is the array of furniture, paintings, statuary, and other valuables that are gathered there. In the Emperor's cabinet there are pictures representing the battles of Borodino and Smolensk, and also of the French entering and leaving Moscow. There are halls dedicated to St. George, St. Alexander Nevski, and St. Andrew, all of them hung with battle-flags, and the last—the Hall of St. Andrew—containing the Emperor's throne. In some of the halls are paintings representing scenes in the history of Poland. They were brought from Warsaw, where they once hung in the Royal castle.

"They showed us the 'Red Staircase,' which is used by the Emperor on state occasions, and was the spot where in former times the Czar allowed the people to see him. Napoleon and his marshals ascended these steps when they took possession of the Kremlin, and it was from the top of the staircase that John the Terrible saw the comet which caused him to tremble with fear.

"Then they took us to the banqueting-room, where the Emperor dines with his nobles immediately after the ceremony of coronation, and beyond it to the *Terem*, which was formerly occupied by the wife and children of the Czar. It is now filled with articles of historic interest: the seals of Russian sovereigns, the certificate of the election of Michael, first of the Romanoffs, to the Russian throne, and several copies of the Evangelists, on parchment, and said to be five hundred years old.

"Near the Great Palace is the Treasury, which reminded us of The Hermitage of St. Petersburg, or the more famous Tower of London. It is filled with all sorts of curious things, many of them of enormous value. It has been said that the national debt of Russia could be paid from the sale of the pearls, diamonds, and other precious things in the Treasury of Moscow. Perhaps this is not strictly true, but certainly they would go a long way towards doing so.

"What we saw in the Treasury would take too long to tell; and besides, it would be a catalogue filling many pages of our note-books. Armor and weapons of all times and forms can be seen here. There are faded and tattered flags that tell of the glory of Russia; here is the flag carried by the soldiers of John the Terrible at the capture of Kazan; the flag under which Yermak conquered Siberia and added it to the Russian Empire; the flag which a little band of Cossacks carried to the shores of the Pacific Ocean more than two hundred years ago; and here are the flags which belonged to the Regiment of *Streletsi*, which rebelled against Peter the Great.

THE EMPRESS ELIZABETH.

"Here are thrones and coronation chairs in goodly number. The first is that of the Empress Elizabeth, and near it are the coronation chairs of Paul I. and Alexander II. In the centre of the room where these chairs are standing is the **baldachino**, under which the Emperor and Empress walk at their coronation, and at the farther end is a stand of colors given by Alexander I. to his Polish regiment, and afterwards captured at the storming of Warsaw, in 1831. The royal throne of Poland is in another room, along with the throne of Kazan, which is studded with pearls, diamonds, rubies, and turquoises, as are several other thrones. One throne contains over eight hundred diamonds and twice as many rubies, and it is by no means the most costly one in the collection. Near the thrones are the coronation robes worn by several of the emperors and empresses, and there is also a masquerade dress which belonged to Catherine the Great.

"We lingered over a glass case containing the decoration of the Order of the Garter and its diploma, which Queen Elizabeth sent to John the Terrible.

"Another gift from the good Queen to the cruel Czar was the state carriage which stands in one of the rooms of the Treasury, along with several other vehicles, all of the olden time. One is on runners, and large enough for a whole family; it has a table and benches covered with green cloth, and was used by the Empress Elizabeth in her journeys between St. Petersburg and Moscow.

"Enough of curiosities. We grew weary with seeing the relics of the rulers of Russia, though all were full of interest, and willingly followed our guide to the churches that stand within the walls of the Kremlin. The first is the Church of the Assumption, in which the emperors are crowned, and where the patriarchs formerly officiated. The church dates from 1475, and occupies the site of another which was erected one hundred and fifty years earlier. It has been altered and restored several times, but remains very much in shape and general appearance as it was four hundred years ago.

"In the church is a shrine of silver in memory of St. Philip, a patriarch of the Church, who had the temerity to rebuke John the Terrible for his misdeeds, and was imprisoned and put to death in consequence. The hand of St. Philip is exposed, and whenever the Emperor comes here he never fails to kiss the sacred relic.

"There are tombs and shrines in great number, and a large part of the religious history of Russia belongs to this building. Every Czar of the Empire, from John the Terrible to Alexander III., has been crowned here, and the most sacred pictures in the whole country are deposited along the altar screen.

CORONATION OF ALEXANDER III.

"Dean Stanley says of the Imperial coronation in the Church of the Assumption:

"The coronation, even at the present time, is not a mere ceremony, but an historical event and solemn consecration. It is preceded by fasting and seclusion, and takes place in the most sacred church in Russia, the Emperor, not as in the corresponding forms of European investiture, a passive recipient, but himself the principal figure in the whole scene; himself reciting aloud the confession of the orthodox faith; himself alone[Pg 245]

[Pg 246] on his knees, amid the assembled multitude, offering up the prayer of intercession for the Empire; himself placing his crown on his own head; himself entering through the sacred door of the innermost sanctuary, and taking from the altar the elements of the bread and the wine.'

"There are two other cathedrals in the Kremlin, that of the Archangel Michael and the Cathedral of the Annunciation. The three cathedrals, with the tower of Ivan Veliki, which has a chapel in its lower story, form a square, which is frequently called the Grand Square of the Kremlin. We visited the cathedrals in the order named, and it was quite appropriate that when we had finished with that of the Assumption, where the Czars are crowned, we should go to the Michael Cathedral, where, down to the time of Peter the Great, they were buried. The tombs are quite plain in appearance, a marked contrast to the elaborate decorations of the building, whose interior is covered with frescos which represent scenes in the lives of the Czars, together with their portraits.

"One of the tombs was covered with a black cloth, and we asked the guide what it meant.

"That is the tomb of John the Terrible,' said he, 'and the black cloth is to show that he assumed the cowl of a monk an hour or so before he died. He wanted to atone for his many cruelties, and this is the way he did it.'

"The guide further told us that in ancient times when any one wished to present a petition to the Czar he came to this church and placed the paper on one of the tombs. By a long-established custom which had the force of law, no one but a Czar could remove it. In this way the ruler could be reached when all other means of approaching him were unavailable. What a pity the custom does not continue to the present time!

PETER II.

"The only emperor buried here is Peter II., son of Alexis and grandson of Peter

the Great. As before stated, the Imperial burial-place has been at St. Petersburg since that city was founded.

"While the Czars were crowned in the Cathedral of the Assumption and buried in that of St. Michael, they were baptized and married in that of the Annunciation, which was the next we visited. Its floor is of jasper and agate, and it has nine cupolas, heavily covered with gilding. The cross on the centre cupola is said to be of solid gold—a statement open to a good deal of doubt, though by no means entirely improbable when we remember what treasures are stored in the Kremlin. The interior of this church is covered with frescos, and like the others is adorned with pictures set in precious stones.

"Mentioning the cupolas of this church reminds us that the cupolas of the Russian churches vary all the way from one up to thirteen, the number being nearly always odd. Usually they have five cupolas; the building is in the form of a Greek cross, and there is a cupola at each corner and another in the centre, the latter being the largest. The idea of the five cupolas came from Constantinople, whence the Russian Church derived its religion. The earliest church at Novgorod had five cupolas, and was copied from the Church of St. Sophia at Constantinople, which was converted into a mosque at the time of the Moslem conquest. The largest number on any of the churches of Moscow is on that of St. Basil, which has thirteen in all.

BISHOP IN HIS ROBES.

"There are other small churches and chapels in the Kremlin, but we had not sufficient time to examine them all. In the sacristy of the Holy Synod, which stands behind the Cathedral of the Assumption, we saw in glass cases the robes of the patriarchs of the Church, some of them dating back more than five hundred years. They are covered with pearls and all kinds of precious stones; one, which was presented by John the Terrible to the metropolitan Denys, is said to weigh fifty-four pounds in consequence of the great number of diamonds, pearls, emeralds, garnets, and other jewels which are fastened to it.

"The attendant left us quite alone in the room with all these valuables; the guide said this was the custom, but that we were by no means out of sight. Through holes in the ceiling watchful eyes were said to be peering, and any attempt to open the cases and remove the valuables would result in serious consequences. How much truth there was in his statement we do not know. We looked at the ceiling, but could not see any peep-holes, but for all that they may have been there.

"You wonder how it happened that the French did not carry away the treasures of the Kremlin when they retreated from Moscow. The fact is, most of the treasures were removed to Nijni Novgorod as the French advanced, and when they arrived there was not a great deal to plunder. They carried off many things, which were afterwards recaptured by the Russians during the retreat and restored to their places, but it was not until the French were completely out of the country that the valuables and relics which had been carried to Nijni Novgorod were returned.

"The invaders hacked at some of the frames of the holy pictures in the Church of the Assumption, and the marks of their knives are still visible. In the Cathedral of the Annunciation the French stabled their horses, and the other churches were used as barracks by the troops. The Kremlin was mined in several places, but the explosions did very little damage. Probably the French officers who had charge of the mining were in a great hurry and did not attend properly to their work.

"Our guide was a Russian; and after he had told us about the use of the cathedral as a stable, he led the way to the spot where the cannon captured from the French in the retreat are exhibited. 'There,' said he, 'are eight hundred and seventy-five cannon which were captured in the retreat of the Grand Army; three hundred and sixty-five of them—one for every day in the year—are French, one hundred and eighty-nine are Austrian, and the rest are from the various troops allied with the French at that time. Altogether they weigh about three hundred and fifty tons. A Frenchman proposed that they should be melted down and cast into a memorial column, but the Russians think they are better just as they are.'

"We agreed with him that it was very natural a Frenchman should make such a proposal and the Russians reject it. An amusing thing is that some of the guns bear the names 'Invincible,' 'Eagle,' 'Conqueror,' 'Triumph,' and the like, quite in mockery of their captive condition.

"Doctor Bronson said he was reminded of an incident that is said to have happened in an American navy-yard fifteen or twenty years after the war of 1812, between the United States and Great Britain.

"An Englishman was visiting the navy-yard, and while wandering among the cannon which lay peacefully in one of the parks, he found one which bore the British crown, with the stamp 'G. R.' beneath it. The stamp and crown told very plainly the history of the gun, but the Briton was doubtful. Turning to a sailor who was standing near, he remarked,

""It's easy enough to put that stamp on a gun of Yankee make.'

""How long do you think it would take?'

"About half an hour.'

"Well,' replied the sailor, 'we took forty-four of those guns, with the stamps already on, in just seventeen minutes.'^[4]

"The stranger had no more conundrums to propose.

GREAT GUN AT MOSCOW.

"There are seven monster cannon in front of one of the arsenals in the Kremlin that have probably never enjoyed the honor of being fired; certainly some of them would be likely to burst if filled with an ordinary charge of powder. The smallest weighs four tons and the largest forty tons. Some of them are unusually long in proportion to their diameter, and others are exactly the reverse. The largest was cast in 1586, if we may believe an inscription upon it, at the orders of the Czar Feodor; but whether it was intended for ornament or use is difficult to say. It is remarkable as a piece of casting; and the carriage is nearly as interesting as the gun. We enclose a photograph; and by comparing the cannon with the figures of the soldiers seated below the muzzle, you can get an idea of the colossal size of this piece.

THE CATHEDRAL AT MOSCOW.

"As we came out through the 'Holy Gate' of the Kremlin we were in front of the Church of St. Basil, the one whose architect is said to have been blinded by order of John the Terrible, to make sure that the structure should not be duplicated. It stands on the site of an ancient church where St. Basil was buried, in 1552. It was begun in 1555, and is said to have occupied twenty years in building.

"There is not anywhere in the world a more fantastic church than this; none of its towers and domes resemble each other, and they present all the colors of the rainbow. One of the cupolas is striped like a melon, while another suggests a pineapple; another is like an onion in shape and general appearance; another suggests a turban covered with folds; and still another might readily have been copied from an artichoke. The stripes are as strange as the forms, and the irreverent could be forgiven for calling this the Harlequin Church in consequence of its peculiar architecture.

"Napoleon ordered his engineers to destroy 'The Mosque,' as he called the Church of St. Basil, but for some unexplained reason the order was not carried out. In the chapel below the church is the shrine of the saint, but it presents nothing remarkable; and altogether the building is more interesting from an

external than from an internal view."

NAPOLEON'S RETREAT FROM MOSCOW.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE GREAT THEATRE OF MOSCOW.—OPERATIC PERFORMANCES.—THE KITAI GOROD AND GOSTINNA DVOR.—ROMANOFF HOUSE AND THE ROMANOFF FAMILY.—SKETCH OF THE RULERS OF RUSSIA.—ANECDOTES OF PETER THE GREAT AND OTHERS.—CHURCH OF THE SAVIOUR.—MOSQUES AND PAGODAS.—THE MUSEUM.—RIDING-SCHOOL.—SUHAREFF TOWER.—TRAKTIRS.—OLD BELIEVERS.—THE SPARROW HILLS AND THE SIMONOFF MONASTERY.

The best part of a day was consumed in the Kremlin and in the Church of St. Basil. Further investigation of old Moscow was postponed to the morrow.

In the evening our friends went to the Opera-house to listen to some national music, but more particularly to see the house, which is one of the curiosities of the city. The "*Bolshoi Teatre*" or "Great Theatre," is one of the finest opera-houses in the world. It was built in 1855-56, to replace the smaller opera-house which had been destroyed by fire about two years before. A few months after it was opened there was a performance in the theatre, entitled "1756 and 1856," to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the establishment of government theatres in Russia.

From the material in the possession of the youths, and by a careful use of eyes and note-books, Fred wrote the following account of the Moscow Opera-house, and added to the information about theatrical matters which appears in a previous chapter.

"The first recorded representation of a theatrical character in Russia is assigned to the reign of Alexis Michailovitch, father of Peter the Great. It was given in the house of the father-in-law of Alexis, but very little is known of its character. Russian writers say their first regular dramas were in the time of Feodor Alexeivitch (half-brother and predecessor of Peter the Great), and were written by the Czar's tutor. They were produced in one of the suburban palaces, and had a religious character, as we infer from the titles 'Prodigal Son,' 'King Nebuchadnezzar,' 'Three Men in the Fiery Furnace,' and 'The Golden Calf.' The Czar's tutor was a monk, and the plays were performed by the students attached

to the monastery.

DRESS OF PEASANTS—SCENE FROM A RUSSIAN OPERA.

"Peter the Great determined to develop the drama, and engaged a Hungarian actor, who happened to be at Moscow, to look after the matter. This actor went to Germany and engaged a troupe, and among them was a man who divided his time between theatrical affairs and ship-building. When he was not ship-building he was writing plays and managing Peter's theatre at Moscow, and he seems to have engaged in the two occupations with equal facility. Peter attended the performances accompanied by his officers. In order to encourage the drama there was no admission fee, the company being supported by the Government.

"At first the performances took place in a large hall of the Suhareff Tower. After a time a wooden theatre was built near the Kremlin, and performances were given regularly. The City of Yaroslav established a theatre of its own under the direction of Feodor Volkhoff, an actor who afterwards became famous in Russia. In 1752 he was summoned to St. Petersburg by the Empress Elizabeth, to direct performances at the court theatre, and in 1756 the Empress issued an Imperial order establishing a government theatre in the capital. The centennial of this event was the celebration referred to.

A DRESSING-ROOM OF THE OPERA-HOUSE.

"The Moscow Opera-house stands in a square by itself not far from the Kremlin. Carriages can be driven all around it, and there are three entrances for spectators besides the one reserved to the actors. The theatre is never crowded, as only as many tickets are sold as there are seats, and no money is taken at the doors. There are five rows of boxes besides the parquette, or ground-floor, and the gallery, which occupies the whole of the upper tier. We had our places in the parquette, and found them very comfortable. Each seat is a separate arm-chair, with plenty of space around it, so that one may walk about between the acts without disturbing his neighbors.

WORKING THE SHIP IN "L'AFRICAINNE."

"The waits between the acts were very long, according to our American ideas, but there was a reason for this. We found an attendant who spoke French, and through his assistance and his expectation of a fee we visited an unoccupied box on one of the principal tiers. The box had plenty of seating-room for half a dozen persons; the attendant said ten or twelve were frequently packed into it, but it was only unfashionable people who ever thought of thus crowding a box. Each box has a little cabinet or parlor back of it, where one may receive friends, and a

great deal of visiting goes on between the acts. The arrangement is an Italian one, and the same feature exists in opera-houses in other parts of Europe.

"To give you an idea of the size of the house, let me quote a few figures comparing it with the principal theatres of Milan, Naples, and London. The measurements are in English feet:

Diameter of ceiling, La Scala, Milan	70
Diameter of ceiling, San Carlo, Naples	73
Diameter of ceiling, Covent Garden, London	65
Diameter of ceiling, Moscow Opera-house	98
Opening of proscenium, La Scala, Milan	51
Opening of proscenium, San Carlo, Naples	58
Opening of proscenium, Covent Garden, London	50
Opening of proscenium, Moscow Opera-house	70

"The stage of the Moscow Opera-house is 126 feet wide and 112 feet deep. At Covent Garden Theatre the respective figures are 88 and 90 feet.

"We had a great deal of curiosity to see the famous drop-scene, which represents the triumphal entry of Minin and Pojarsky into the Kremlin, after the expulsion of the Poles from Moscow in 1612. It is a magnificent picture, painted by Duzi, a Venetian artist, and represents the two liberators on horseback near the Holy Gate of the Kremlin, surrounded by citizens of all classes and conditions. Prince Pojarsky looks like an Oriental, as he is dressed in the costume which was worn by the boyards or noblemen down to the time of Peter the Great. The peasant class are in their holiday dress; the women wear *sarafans* and *kokoshniks* which are quite like those worn by many of them at the present time, while the men are mostly in girdled *caftans*, just as we see thousands of them daily. French fashions have taken a hold among the nobility and wealthy people of Russia generally, but have no effect on the peasantry. The common people will probably adhere to their present costume until ordered by Imperial decree to adopt a new one.

MININ-POJARSKY MONUMENT.

"We spent nearly the whole time of the wait between the first and second acts in contemplating this picture, and found plenty to occupy us. We have already mentioned the Minin-Pojarsky Monument, which stands near the gate of the Kremlin, and reminds the people of an important event in their national history. Between the monument and the painting, the Russians are not likely to forget the

patriotism of the cattle-dealer and the Prince."

From the theatre our friends went straight to the hotel and to bed, tired enough with their day's exertions, but amply repaid for all their fatigue.

Next morning they were off in good season, or rather Frank and Fred were, as the Doctor decided to remain at the hotel, while the youths devoted the forenoon to sights that he did not especially care for. Having been in Moscow before, he was willing to leave some of the stock sights out of his programme.

Their first visit was to the bazaar, which bears the name of "*Kitai Gorod*" or "Chinese Town." The bazaar is often said to be so called because of the great number of Tartars doing business there—the descendants of the Mongols, who so long held Moscow in their hands.

According to some writers this belief is erroneous. They assert that, originally, all of Moscow was inside the Kremlin; but as the necessity came for extending the city, an order was given by Helena (mother of John the Terrible, and Regent during his minority) for enclosing a large space outside the Kremlin, which was to be named after her birthplace, Kitaigrod, in Podolia. Its walls were begun in 1535 by an Italian architect.

"We went," said Frank, "through the Gostinna Dvor of Moscow, which fills an enormous building in the Kitai Gorod, and is in some respects more interesting than that of St. Petersburg, though practically of the same character. The display of Russian goods is about like that in the capital city, though there is possibly a greater quantity of silver work, Circassian goods, and similar curiosities peculiar to the country. Much of the money-changing is in the hands of Tartars; where the changers are not of the Tartar race, they are generally Jews. Russian Tartars and Jews use the *abacus* in counting, and they work it with wonderful rapidity. We saw it in St. Petersburg, but it was not so much employed there as in Moscow. The abacus has undergone very little change in two or three thousand years. It was introduced by the Tartar conquerors of Russia, and promises to remain permanently in the Empire.

"What a quantity of silks, embroideries, silverware, and the like are piled in the bazaar! and what an array of clothing, household goods, furniture, and other practical and unpractical things of every name and kind! It was the Bazaar of St. Petersburg over again, with the absence of certain features, that suggested Western Europe and the addition of others belonging to the Orient. The second-hand market was encumbered with old clothes, pots, pans, boots, furniture, and odds and ends of everything, and we were so pestered by the peddlers that we

went through the place pretty quickly.

"The guide took us to Romanoff House, which was built near the end of the sixteenth century, and was the birthplace of Michael, the first Czar of the present reigning family. Of the original house only the walls remain; the interior was destroyed by the French, who plundered the building and then set it on fire, and only the great thickness and solidity of the walls preserved them.

"Romanoff House, as we saw it to-day, is an excellent example of the Russian house of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and in this respect it is very interesting. The last restoration was made in 1858-59, and the Government has spent quite an amount of money in putting it in order.

"It is four stories high, and built around a court-yard from which the rooms on the ground-floor are entered. In the basement are cellars for storing provisions, and on the floor above it are the kitchens, temporary store-rooms, and the like. In the next story are the rooms where the prince lived; they include a reception-room, rooms for servants, several smaller rooms, and also some secret recesses in the walls where silver plate and other valuables were kept. The rooms are adorned with utensils of former periods, together with many articles of silver and other metals that belonged to the Romanoff family long ago.

"The upper story is called the *terem*, a word which is equivalent to the Turkish *harem*. The terem was reserved to the women and children, but not so rigidly as is the harem among the Moslems. Beds, bedsteads, playthings, and articles of clothing are among the curiosities in the terem of Romanoff House. Among them are the slippers of the Czar and the night-gown of the Czarina, which are kept in a box at the foot of the bed according to the old custom.

"Romanoff House is in the Kitai Gorod, and from it we went to the place where Peter the Great witnessed the execution of many of his rebellious *streltzi*, or guards. Perhaps you would like to hear the story?

PETER'S ESCAPE FROM ASSASSINATION.

"I believe we have already mentioned something about the strained relations between Peter and his sister Sophia, and how she plotted his assassination, from which he escaped by riding away in the night. Peter shut Sophia in a convent before going on his tour to Holland and England to learn the art of ship-building and obtain other information to aid him in the development of the Russian Empire. He distributed his troops in the best way he could think of, and confided the administration of affairs to his most trusted officers.

"But even then he was constantly fearful of trouble. He knew the ambition of his sister, and the opposition that many of the old nobility had to his reforms, and he was well aware that many officers of the army did not favor his plans. Consequently, when news of the rebellion reached him at Vienna he was not entirely unprepared, and hastened homeward as fast as horses could carry him.

"The conspiracy included many nobles, officers, and others, together with the immediate advisers of his sister. The clergy were on the side of the conspiracy; they opposed the reforms, and preferred keeping things as they had been, rather than adopt the ways of Western Europe. It is said at present that the Russian Government would change the calendar from old style to new style, and make it conform to the rest of the civilized world, but for the opposition of the Church. The priests assert that it would cause a great deal of confusion with the saints' days, and therefore they refuse their approval of the measure.

"The streltzi had been distributed at points far removed from Moscow. Under pretence of coming to get their pay, they marched to the city, where they were met by General Gordon, an English officer who commanded the Government troops at the time. Gordon defeated the streltzi, and then by torturing some of the prisoners learned the history of the conspiracy. It was to place Sophia on the throne in place of Peter, and a great many persons were implicated in the scheme. News of the occurrence was sent to Peter at Vienna, and hastened his return as described.

PETER THE GREAT AS EXECUTIONER.

"On arriving in Moscow, he made the most searching inquiry, and by torturing some of those who had fallen into his hands he obtained the names of many others. There is no doubt that innocent persons were implicated, as the victims of torture are apt to tell anything, whether true or false, in order to escape from their pain. Those implicated were immediately arrested and put to death, many of them with torture. Nobles, ladies of rank, officers and soldiers, comprised the list. On the spot where we stood to-day hundreds of the streltzi were beheaded, and altogether several thousands of people were killed. Peter himself took part in the executions, if report is true. Once, at a banquet, he ordered twenty of the prisoners to be brought in, and a block arranged for the fearful ceremony. Then he called for a glass of wine. After drinking it, he beheaded the victim, who had been placed on the block, and then he called for another victim and another glass of wine. It is said that he was just one hour in performing the twenty executions; and after he had finished he went in person to the great square in front of the Kremlin, where other executions were going on.

"While he was witnessing one of these executions, one of the prisoners who was about to lose his head came forward as coolly as though he were entering a dining-hall. 'Make way for us,' he said, as he kicked the fallen heads from his path—'make way here, make way.'

"Just as the man lay down upon the block and the executioner raised his axe, Peter ordered the prisoner to be liberated. He pardoned him on the spot, remarking that there was good stuff in a man who could walk so gallantly to his own execution. Peter's prediction was correct; and who do you suppose the man was?

"His name was Orloff. He was a faithful adherent of Peter for the rest of his life, and rose to the command of his armies. He was the founder of the Orloff family, which has ever since been prominent in Russian matters, and continues so down to the present day. Various members of the family have been distinguished in land and naval warfare, and in diplomacy and home affairs. One of them was the intimate friend and adviser of Catherine II. He was a man of gigantic stature and great personal courage, and is said to have strangled with his own hands the unfortunate emperor Peter III., in order to place the disconsolate widow Catherine on the throne.

CATHERINE I.

"Catherine II. should not be confounded with Catherine I. It was Catherine II., surnamed 'The Great,' to whom I have just referred, as the conspirator who gained the throne by the murder of her husband. Catherine I. was the widow of Peter the Great, and mother of the Empress Elizabeth. She had great influence over the founder of the Empire, and though not always controlling his violent temper, she did much towards suppressing it on many occasions.

CATHERINE II.

"While we are in sight of Romanoff House let us run over the list of those who have held the throne since the first of this family ascended it. Here they are:

- "1. Michael Feodorovitch (first of the Romanoffs).
- "2. Alexis Mikailovitch (son of Michael).
- "3. Feodor Alexeivitch (son of Alexis).
- "4. Ivan Alexeivitch (brother of No. 3).
- "5. Peter Alexeivitch (Peter I., or, "The Great").
- "6. Catherine I. (widow of Peter I.).

- "7. Peter II. (grandson of Peter I.).
- "8. Anna (niece of Peter I.).
- "9. Ivan III. (imprisoned in his infancy, and afterwards assassinated).
- "10. Elizabeth (daughter of Peter I.).
- "11. Peter III. (great-grandson of Peter I.).
- "12. Catherine II.
- "13. Paul I. (son of Catherine II.).
- "14. Alexander I. (son of Paul I.).
- "15. Nicholas I. (brother of Alexander I.).
- "16. Alexander II. (son of Nicholas I.).
- "17. Alexander III. (son of Alexander II.).

"It is a circumstance worthy of note that in the thirty-seven years between the death of Peter the Great and the accession of Catherine the Great, Russia had three emperors and three empresses; the emperors reigned, but cannot be said to have ruled, only three and a half years altogether, while the empresses held the throne for the rest of the time. Catherine was Empress from 1762 till 1796; so that during the eighteenth century the Russian crown was worn by women for nearly seventy years.

GRAND-DUKE NICHOLAS ALEXANDROVITCH.

"The heir to the throne at present is too young to have made his mark in any way; and besides, he has had no opportunity, even if he were of age. His name is Nicholas; he is the eldest son of Alexander III., and when he ascends the throne he will be known as Nicholas II. He was born in 1868, and is said to be a young man of great promise.

"Four at least of the seventeen rulers named above were murdered, and there were suspicions of poisoning in the cases of two others. Consequently the description of the Government of Russia as 'despotism tempered by assassination' is not so very far from the truth.

"It is sometimes said that the Romanoff family is more German than Russian, in consequence of the marriages of the emperors with German princesses. Peter the Great was pure Russian; his son Alexis, father of Peter II., married a German princess, and their daughter Anne married a German duke. Anne and the German duke were the parents of Peter III., the husband of Catherine II.; Peter III. and Catherine were the parents of Paul, who married a German princess, and the example has been followed by all the emperors. The Russian poet Pushkin used to represent in an amusing way the Germanizing of the Imperial family, which was as follows:

"He placed in a goblet a spoonful of wine for the Czarevitch Alexis and a spoonful of water for his German wife. Then he added a spoonful of water for Anne's German husband, a third for Catherine II., and a fourth, fifth, and sixth for the German wives of Paul, Nicholas, and Alexander II. Were the poet alive to-day, he would add a seventh for the Danish wife of Alexander III., and an eighth for the wife of the young Nicholas, whoever she may be.

"However little Russian blood may be running at present in the veins of the Romanoff family, there is no question about the thoroughly Russian character of the persons most concerned. Born and bred in Russia, it would be strange if the men were otherwise than national in their feelings; and as for the women who have been married into the Imperial family, they seem to have left everything behind them when they came to make their homes in Muscovy. There was never a more thorough Russian than Catherine II. When she came to the Imperial court at the age of fifteen she immediately went to work to learn the language, and in after-life she used to say that if she knew of a drop of blood in her veins that had not become Russian she would have it drawn out.

"Before becoming the wives of the men of the Imperial family, all foreign

princesses must be baptized and taken into the Russian Church. The ceremony is a very elaborate one, and is made a state affair. The members of the Imperial family are present, together with many high officials, who appear as witnesses, and there can be no exceptions to the rule that requires the Emperor's bride to be of his religion. Family, home, religion, everything must be given up by the woman who is to become an Empress of Russia.

"Well, we will leave Romanoff House and the Kitai Gorod, and go to see something else. Our guide suggests the Church of the Saviour, which has only recently been completed. It was built to commemorate the retreat of the French from Moscow. Our guide, whose arithmetic is a good deal at fault, says they have been working at it for more than a hundred years.

"Though not so quaint as the churches we have seen, it is certainly the finest in the city. It is in the form of a Greek cross, and the central cupola, eighty-four feet in diameter, rises three hundred and forty-three feet above the ground. In front of the church there are statues of the Russian generals of the early part of the century; the outside is adorned with bronze reliefs, which are strangely divided between Scriptural subjects and the war of 1812. The interior of the building is finished with highly polished porphyry, lapis-lazuli, and other costly stones, and there is a profusion of paintings ornamenting the walls. We spent half an hour or more at the church, and were loath to leave it.

"In addition to its many churches of the Greek faith, Moscow is like St. Petersburg in containing churches representing all the religions of a Christian city, together with synagogues for the Jews and mosques for the Tartars. Some Chinese who once lived in Moscow had a pagoda, where they worshipped idols as in their own country, but our guide says there are no Chinese here at present. Of course we had not sufficient time for visiting all the churches of Moscow, and told the guide to take us only to those which were really remarkable. We saw perhaps a dozen in addition to those I have named. They were interesting to us who saw them, but I omit a description lest it might prove tedious.

"We went to the Museum, which has a library of one hundred and fifty thousand volumes, a collection of minerals, and a great number of paintings, engravings, and similar things. It did not impress us as much as did the Museum of St. Petersburg, but perhaps this is due to the fact that we were a good deal wearied after our long hours of sight-seeing, and were more desirous of a rest than anything else.

SKINNED AND STUFFED MAN.

"One of the curiosities of the place was a skinned and stuffed man in a glass case. It reminded us of the cases in which the dress-makers exhibit the latest styles of feminine apparel; and the figure, though dead, was more 'life-like' than the wax models to which we are accustomed. It is the real skin of a man who once lived and moved and was of goodly stature.

"From the Museum we went to the *Manège*, or riding-school, which is claimed to be the largest building in the world without any supporting pillars. Look at the figures of its measurement: length, 560 feet; width, 158 feet; height, 42 feet.

"Perhaps some of the great railway-stations of Europe or America can surpass these measurements, but we certainly don't know of one that can. The space is large enough for two regiments of cavalry to perform their evolutions; and in the winter season, when the weather is too severe for out-door exercise, this riding-school is in constant use. It is heated by stoves ranged around the sides of the room, and is ornamented with numerous trophies of war, and representations of men in armor. The roof is low and rather flat, and even when the sun is shining the light is poor.

"The Suhareff Tower, to which we next went, was chiefly interesting as a reminder of Peter the Great. At present it is utilized as a reservoir for supplying the city with water, and it performs its duty very well. It was formerly the north-western gate of the city, and a regiment of streltzi was kept here under command of Colonel Suhareff. When the streltzi revolted, in 1682, Suhareff's regiment remained faithful, and escorted Peter and his mother and brother to the Troitsa Monastery.

"In grateful remembrance for their devotion, Peter caused this tower to be built and named after the colonel who commanded at the time. The architect tried to make something resembling a ship, but did not succeed very well. Peter used to have secret councils of state in this tower, and it was here that comedies were performed in 1771 by the first troupe of foreign actors that ever came to Russia. It is also said—"

Here the journal stopped rather abruptly. Frank and Fred were summoned to go to the "*Troitska Traktir*" for dinner, and as they were both hungry and curious the journal was laid aside.

We have had the description of a Russian dinner in the account of what they saw in St. Petersburg. The dinner in Moscow was much like the one already described, but the surroundings were different. The waiters were in snowy frocks and trousers, and the establishment was so large that it was said to employ one

hundred and fifty waiters in the dining and tea rooms alone.

RUSSIAN BEGGARS.

Many of the patrons of the place were taking nothing but tea, and the *samovar* was everywhere. Frank and Fred thought they had never seen waiters more attentive than at this traktir. They seemed to understand beforehand what was wanted, and a single glance was sure to bring one of them to the table. They did a great deal more than the waiters do in Western Europe. They offered to cut up the food so that it could be eaten with a fork, and they poured out the tea, instead of leaving the patron to pour for himself. Frank observed that nearly every one who entered the place said his prayers in front of the holy picture. There is a picture in every room of the establishment, so that the devout worshipper is never at a loss.

Another day they went to the "*Moskovski Traktir*" a large restaurant similar to the Troitska, and containing an enormous organ which is said to have cost more than fifty thousand dollars. The Russians are very fond of music of the mechanical sort, and their country is one of the best markets of the Swiss makers of organs and music-boxes. In the best houses all through Russia expensive instruments of this kind can be found, and sometimes the barrel-organs are large enough to fill a respectably-sized room with machinery and fittings, and an entire house with sound. Probably the most costly mechanical musical instruments are made for Russians, and some of them give the effect of a whole orchestra. While the instrument in the traktir was in operation, both the youths said they could have easily believed the music to have been produced by a dozen skilled performers.

As they left the Moskovski Traktir the guide suggested that they would go to the restaurant of the Old Believers. Fred thus describes the visit:

"I must begin by saying that the Old Believers are a Russian sect who prefer the version of the Bible as it was up to the time of Nikon, rather than the one he introduced. The Government persecuted them greatly in past times, and even at present they are subjected to many restrictions. They are scattered through the Empire, and are said to number several millions, but the exact statistics concerning them are unattainable.

"In addition to their adhesion to the old form of the Scriptures they abhor smoking, refuse to shave their beards, attach particular sanctity to old ecclesiastical pictures, and are inveterate haters of everything not thoroughly Russian. They despise the manners and customs of Western Europe, which they

consider the synonyme of vices, and associate as little as possible with those who do not share their belief. In the country they form communities and villages by themselves, and in the cities they live in the same quarter as much as possible. They are an honest, industrious people, and thoroughly loyal subjects of the Emperor.

"In the traktir of the Old Believers we found the waiters wearing dark caftans instead of white ones, and the room was filled with Russians of noticeably long beards. Smoking is not allowed here under any circumstances; and as nearly all Russians who are not Old Believers are confirmed smokers, this curious sect has the place all to itself. We were politely treated by the waiters, and, at the advice of the guide, ventured to eat a *blinni*, for which the place is famous. It was so good that we repeated the order. Of course we had the inevitable *samovar*, and found the tea the best that any restaurant has thus far supplied. This traktir has an excellent reputation for its tea and cookery; the bill of fare is not large, but everything is of the best kind.

"There is a Tartar restaurant where horse-flesh is said to be served regularly; but whether this is true or not we did not try to find out. The place is kept by a Russian, so that the assertion is open to some doubt. Any one can go to the Tartar restaurant, but it is not frequented by Russians. The Tartars do not associate freely with the Russians, though there is no hostility between them. They seclude their wives after the Moslem fashion, and a Russian gentleman tells me that he has rarely had a glimpse of a Tartar woman, though he has lived near these people ever since he was born."

TARTAR COFFEE-HOUSE IN SOUTHERN RUSSIA.

For a general view of Moscow our friends took a drive to the Sparrow Hills, the spot whence Napoleon took his first and also his last look upon the city he came so far to conquer.

On the way thither they stopped at the Gardens, which are the property of the Galitsin family, and also at a small palace or villa which is the property of the Empress. These interruptions delayed them, so that it was near sunset when they reached the Sparrow Hills and had the city in full view. As they looked at the sunlight reflected from the hundreds of gilded domes, and the great city spread over the undulating ground, they realized what must have been the feelings of the French soldiers as they gazed upon Moscow after their long and perilous journey to the heart of Russia.

There is still higher ground from which to look upon the city at the Simonoff

Monastery, which has a belfry more than three hundred feet high. The monastery dates from 1390. It was once the most important church establishment in Russia, and possessed immense areas of land and as many as twelve thousand serfs. It was earnestly defended against the Poles in 1612, but was captured and plundered by them. It was a quarantine hospital in the plague of 1771, and a military one from 1788 to 1795.

The French burned several of its buildings, but they were soon restored. The extent of the place will be understood when it is known that there are six churches inside the walls. Our friends passed some time there looking at the antique silver, gold, and other ornaments, and the costly vestments which have been handed down from ancient times. They climbed to the top of the belfry, and had a view of the city which they are not likely to forget immediately.

The visit to the Simonoff Monastery was a preliminary to an excursion to the Troitska Monastery, which will be described in the next chapter.

GALLERY IN THE PALACE.



CHAPTER XIV.

A VISIT TO THE TROITSKA MONASTERY, AND WHAT WAS SEEN THERE.—CURIOUS LEGENDS.—MONKS AT DINNER.—EUROPEAN FAIRS.—THE GREAT FAIR AT NIJNI NOVGOROD.—SIGHTS AND SCENES.—MININ'S TOMB AND TOWER.—DOWN THE VOLGA BY STEAMBOAT.—STEAM NAVIGATION ON THE GREAT RIVER.—KAZAN, AND WHAT WAS SEEN THERE.—THE ROUTE TO SIBERIA.

The Troitska (Trinity) Monastery is about forty miles from Moscow, and reached by railway in little more than two hours. Our friends took an early start, intending to see the monastery and return the same day which is by no means difficult, as there are three trains each way every twenty-four hours. Fred had spent the previous evening in reading up the history of the place they were to visit. As soon as they were seated in the train he gave the following summary to his companions:

"The monastery was founded in 1342 by St. Sergius, a son of a Russian nobleman of Rostof, who was famed for his intelligence and piety. The Princes of Muscovy used to ask his advice in their contests with the Tartars, as well as in other matters. Dmitry of the Don sought his blessing before going to the battle of Kulikova, where he defeated the Tartars; he was accompanied by two monks, disciples of Sergius, who fought by Dmitry's side during the memorable battle. In consideration of the great services thus rendered, the monastery received grants of land and became very rich. St. Sergius died in 1392, and it is said that he remained a simple monk to the last.

"In 1408 the Tartars laid the monastery waste, and scattered the monks. They reassembled about fifteen years later, and the monastery was re-established. It has never since been recaptured, though it was besieged by thirty thousand Poles in 1608. The monks made a vigorous defence, and the siege was finally raised by a Russian force which came to their assistance. The French started from Moscow for the monastery in 1812, but only went about half way. The tradition is that the saint appeared miraculously, and covered the road leading to the monastery with such an array of soldiers in black that the French did not dare to attack them.

"While the Poles were in possession of Moscow in 1612, the monastery aided

the inhabitants with food and money. The Poles again sent an army to conquer the place, but it was repulsed by the monks without any assistance from the Russian soldiers. The plague and the cholera, which have both visited Moscow, have not entered Troitska, and consequently the place is much venerated for its sanctity.

COPY OF PICTURE IN THE MONASTERY.

"There is a legend that when the saint first came to the spot he met a huge bear in the forest; the bear rushed forward to destroy him, but suddenly paused, and from that moment the saint and the bear were friends. For the rest of their days they lived together, and when the saint died the bear remained on the spot, and gave evidences of the most earnest grief. This story is implicitly believed by the orthodox Russians, and the gentleman from whose writings I have taken it says he heard it from the lips of a Russian lady, and narrated so artlessly that it would have been painful to have expressed any doubt of its truth."

Other legends of the monastery, and incidents showing its prominence in Russian history, whiled away the time till the station at Troitska was reached. After a substantial breakfast at the railway-station, the party proceeded to the famous edifice, which is more like a fortress than a religious establishment. Its walls have a linear extent of nearly a mile; they are twenty feet thick, and vary in height from thirty to fifty feet. They would offer little obstruction to modern artillery, but it is easy to see that they could make a stout resistance to such cannon as the Poles possessed three centuries ago. There are towers at the angles, eight in all, and one of them is surmounted by an obelisk which bears a duck carved in stone, in remembrance of the fact that Peter the Great used to shoot ducks on a pond near the monastery.

For what they saw at Troitska we will refer to Frank's journal:

"There were crowds of beggars along the road from the railway-station to the gate of the monastery. It seems that the place is an object of pilgrimage from all parts of Russia, and the beggars reap a goodly harvest from those who come to pray at the shrine of the saint. Before the railway was opened, the high-road from Moscow seemed to pass through a double hedge of beggars, and the traveller was never out of hearing of their plaintive appeals for charity.

WINDOW IN CHURCH OF THE TRINITY.

"We were cordially welcomed to the monastery, and one of the monks, who spoke French, accompanied us through the place. There are ten churches within the walls, the oldest being the Church of the Trinity, and the largest that of the

Assumption. The shrine of St. Sergius is in the former. It is an elaborate piece of workmanship, of pure silver, weighing nine hundred and thirty-six pounds, and is so constructed that the relics of the saint are exposed. Near the shrine is a painting of the saint, that was carried in battle by Peter the Great and the Czar Alexis, and there is a record on a silver plate of other battles in which it was used.

PITY THE POOR.

"There are other pictures of the saint displayed on the walls of the church. The whole interior of the building is covered with ornaments in massive silver and gold, and it is no wonder the French made an effort to plunder the monastery when they learned of the treasures it contained. There is a representation of the Last Supper, in which the figures are of solid gold, with the exception of the Judas, which is of brass. The images are covered with pearls and precious stones in great profusion. In some cases they are so thickly spread that the metal can hardly be seen.

"In the Church of the Assumption is a two-headed eagle, which commemorates the concealment of Peter the Great under the altar during the insurrection of the streltzi. They showed us a well that was dug by St. Sergius, and discovered after its locality had been unknown for nearly three hundred years. Near the church is a tower two hundred and ninety feet high, and containing several bells, one of them weighing sixty-five tons. Russia is certainly the country of gigantic bells.

"A description of all the churches at Troitska would be tedious, especially as we have spoken of the two of greatest interest. The sacristy is in a detached building, and contains more curiosities than I could describe in a dozen pages. There are mitres, crowns, crosses, and other ornaments that have been given to the monastery by the various rulers of Russia or by wealthy individuals, many of them set with jewels of remarkable size and beauty. A copy of the Gospels, given by the Czar Michael in 1632, is in heavy covers, ornamented with designs in enamel; in the centre of the design on the front cover is a cross made with rubies, emeralds, and sapphires, and there is a similar though smaller cross on the back.

"The robes worn by the priesthood are as numerous and costly as those we saw at Moscow, and so are the ornaments that accompany them. The pearl head-dress which Catherine II. wore at her coronation is preserved here, and serves as an ornament on a priestly robe. There is a crown presented by Elizabeth, and an altar-cloth from John the Terrible. And so we could go on through a long list of magnificent gifts from kings and emperors, and an equally long array of

vestments worn by high dignitaries of the Church on state occasions.

"The piety of the pilgrims is shown by their adoration, not of these jewelled crowns and diadems, but of the wooden utensils and coarse garments which belonged to the founder of the monastery. These relics are distributed among the glass cases which contain the costly mementos we have mentioned, with the evident intention of setting forth as clearly as possible the simple ways of his life.

CURIOUS AGATE AT TROITSKA.

"One of the curiosities they showed us was a natural agate, in which there is the figure of a monk bowing before a cross. The cross is very clearly defined, and so is the cowed figure kneeling before it, though the latter would hardly be taken as representing anything in particular if regarded by itself. We examined it carefully to see if there was any deception about it, but could not detect it if there was. The monk, the cross, and the rock on which the cross stands appear to be wholly formed by the natural lines of the agate. The stone is about four inches high, and oval in shape; on one side it is rather dull and opaque, but it is bright on the other, and distinctly shows the eyes of the monk.

PAPER-KNIFE FROM TROITSKA. ST. SERGIUS AND THE BEAR.

"The monks of Troitska wear black caftans topped with high black hats without brims; black veils hang down over their shoulders, and nearly every monk wears his hair as long as it will grow. We saw them at dinner in their refectory, where one of the number read the service while the rest went on with their eating and drinking; they were talking freely among themselves, and did not seem to listen at all to the reader. In general they appear to be well fed and cared for, and, so far as we could observe, their life is not a rigorous one. They offered carvings in wood, ivory, and mother-of-pearl, and we bought several of these things to bring away as curiosities. Among them was a paper-knife, with the handle representing St. Sergius and the bear in the forest. The work was well done, and the knife will make a pretty ornament for somebody's desk in America.

"When we entered the refectory the monks invited us to dine with them, and we regretted that we had already breakfasted at the railway-station. There is a lodging-house for travellers attached to the monastery, and comparing favorably with a Russian hotel of the rural sort. Nothing is charged for the rooms, but the lodger who can afford it must pay for his food, and in addition he is expected to drop something into the contribution-box which the monks will show him before his departure. The cooking is said to be excellent, and the table as well supplied

as any in Moscow. They have a pilgrim's table, where one may dine free of charge, but the food is simple and limited in quantity.

"There is a studio of painting in the monastery, where the monks and their pupils, forty or fifty in all, were busily at work copying from religious subjects of both Greek and Latin origin. They are not confined to church paintings, as we saw portraits of the Emperor and other members of the Imperial family, and several battle-scenes in which Russian arms have figured. There is a very good painting representing the attack of the Poles upon the monastery, and another illustrating the defence of Sebastopol during the Crimean War.

SPECIMENS OF ECCLESIASTICAL PAINTING ON GLASS.

"The monastery was enormously rich at one time, not only in the treasures it possessed, but in grants of land and serfs which had been given by the Government. In 1764 it had one hundred and six thousand male serfs, and its lands covered many thousands of acres. Though losing its serfs, it has not been without compensation, and the monastery is handsomely supported, partly by an annual donation from the Government, and partly by the gifts of pious Russians."

Doctor Bronson and the youths returned to Moscow in the evening, as they had planned, and on the next day made their preparations for continuing their journey.

Their next place of destination was Nijni Novgorod, where they wished to attend the great fair, which was then in progress. They decided to go by the express train, which leaves Moscow in the evening and reaches Nijni Novgorod in the morning. The distance is about two hundred and seventy miles, and there is very little to see on the way.

RUSSIAN COOPER'S SHOP AND DWELLING.

The only place of consequence between Moscow and Nijni is Vladimir, named after Vladimir the Great. It has about fifteen thousand inhabitants, and is the centre of a considerable trade. Anciently it was of much political importance, and witnessed the coronations of the Czars of Muscovy down to 1432. Its Kremlin is in a decayed state, and little remains of its former glory, except a venerable and beautiful cathedral. Our friends thought they could get along with the churches they had already seen, and declined to stop to look at the Cathedral of Vladimir.

On arriving at Nijni they were met at the station by a commissioner from the

Hotel de la Poste, to which they had telegraphed for rooms. In the time of the fair it is necessary to secure accommodations in advance if one is intending to remain more than a single day. Tourists who are in a hurry generally come from Moscow by the night train, spend the day at Nijni, and return to Moscow the same evening. Thus they have no use for a hotel, as they can take their meals at the railway-station or in the restaurants on the fair grounds.

"This is practically the last of the great fairs of Europe," said the Doctor to his young companions as the train rolled out of Moscow. "Leipsic still maintains its three fairs every year, but they have greatly changed their character since the establishment of railways. They are more local than general, and one does not see people from all parts of Europe, as was the case forty or fifty years ago. The fairs of France and Germany have dwindled to insignificance, and now the only really great fair where Europe and Asia meet is the one we are about to visit."

Frank asked how long these fairs had been in existence.

"Fairs are of very ancient origin," the Doctor replied; "that of Leipsic can be distinctly traced for more than six hundred years. The word 'fair' comes from the Latin *feria*, meaning day of rest, or holiday, and the fairs for the sale of goods were and still are generally connected with religious festivals. The Greeks and Romans had fairs before the Christian era; fairs were established in France in the fifth century and in England in the ninth, and they were common in Germany about the beginning of the eleventh century, when they were principally devoted to the sale of slaves.

"Coming down with a single bound to the great fair of Russia, we find that there was an annual gathering of merchants at Nijni more than five hundred years ago. Long before that time there was a fair in Kazan, then under Tartar rule, but Russian merchants were prohibited from going there by order of John the Terrible. The fair of Nijni was removed to Makarieff, seventy miles down the river, in 1641, where it remained a long time. The monks of Makarieff controlled the fair until 1751, when it passed into the hands of the Government, and has remained there ever since.

"The fair at Makarieff was held on low ground near the town. Owing to an inundation in 1816, the Government restored the fair to Nijni, and decreed that it should be held annually between the 27th of July and the 22d of September. The ordinary population of Nijni is about forty thousand; two hundred and fifty thousand merchants, laborers, and others come to the fair, so that for two months of the year nearly three hundred thousand people are assembled here."

"How are they all accommodated with lodgings and food?" one of the youths asked.

NIJNI NOVGOROD DURING THE FAIR.

"The permanent town of Nijni Novgorod," said the Doctor, "is separated from Fair-town, if we may so call it, by the River Oka, which here joins the Volga. The fair is held on a tongue of land between the Volga and the Oka, and Fair-town and Nijni proper are connected by bridges of boats. It is a regular town or city, built for the purposes of trade. It has its governor, police force, fire brigade, and all the paraphernalia of a city, and the Government collects by means of a tax about fifty thousand dollars for the support of the organization."

"Then it is a city with a busy population for two months of the year, and a deserted town for the other ten?"

NIJNI NOVGOROD AFTER THE FAIR.

"Exactly so," was the reply; "Fair-town at Nijni in season and out of season will remind you of the difference between Coney Island or Long Branch in July and in January.

"We'll drop the subject till to-morrow," said the Doctor, and with this suggestion the conversation was suspended.

On their arrival at Nijni, where they expected to remain two or three days, the party went to the hotel as already stated, and then made a hasty survey of the stock sights of the place. They saw the Kremlin, which is a place of considerable strength, and contains the Governor's residence, the military barracks, law-courts, telegraph station, and other public buildings. There is a fine monument to Minin and Pojarsky, and in a church not far off is the tomb of the patriotic cattle-dealer.

Our friends climbed to the top of Minin's Tower (*Bashnia Minina*), where they had a magnificent view of the surrounding country, including the valleys of the Volga and Oka for a long distance, the permanent town and its Kremlin, the site of the fair, with its miles of streets, and its thousands of boats and barges tied to the river-bank. Frank recalled the view from the hill near Hankow, at the junction of the Han and Yang-tse in China, and pointed out many features of similarity. Fred said he was reminded of the junction of the Ganges and Jumna at Allahabad, and an appeal to the Doctor brought out a reference to the union of the Alleghany and Monongahela at Pittsburg.

The permanent town was quickly disposed of, as the youths were impatient to

inspect the great fair. For an account of what they saw we will again refer to their journals.

"What a cloud of dust there is here," said Frank, "and they say the dust turns to mud, and deep mud, too, after a heavy rain. They make a pretence of watering the streets when the weather is dry, but the work is not very well done; and besides, the vast number of people walking about keeps the ground in very active occupation.

"Nearly all the houses are of brick or iron, and great care is taken to prevent fires. The lower stories of the houses are used for shops, and the upper for storage, or for the residence of those who have hired the buildings. The sewerage system is said to be excellent, the sewers being flushed several times daily by water pumped from the river.

"The Governor's house is in the centre of this fair-town. Under it is a bazaar for the sale of goods from all parts of Europe and Asia, and we naturally took this house for the centre of trade. Along the streets and avenues there are shops of all kinds, and we seemed to be in the bazaars of all the Oriental countries we have ever visited, together with the shops and stores of all the Western ones. The list of the goods we saw would almost be a list of all the articles of trade throughout the civilized and uncivilized world, and we hesitate to begin. Name anything that you want to buy and the guide will take you to where it is sold.

"The mode of dealing is more Oriental than Occidental, as the merchants in any particular kind of goods are clustered together as in the bazaars of the East. For a mile or more there are warehouses filled only with iron, and very judiciously they are on the bank of the river, to save labor in handling and transportation. The tea-merchants are together, and so are the dealers in Bokharian cotton, Tartar sheepskins, Siberian furs, and other things on the long list we do not intend to write out in full.

"Restaurants of every name and kind are here, good, bad, and indifferent. The best is under the Governor's house, and we recommend it to any of our friends who follow in our footsteps and visit Nijni. There are Russian, Armenian, and Catholic churches, and there are mosques and pagodas, so that every visitor may suit himself in religious matters.

"As for the people we confess to some disappointment. The great majority are Russians, as a matter of course, but it is rather greater than we had looked for. We had thought we would see all the countries of Asia represented by their national dress, together with English, French, Germans, and other people of

Western Europe. All were there, it is true, but not in the numbers we had expected.

TARTAR MERCHANT.

"Kirghese, Bokhariots, Turcomans, and other people of Central Asia, were to be seen here and there, and so were Kalmuck Tartars, Armenians, Persians, and an occasional Chinese. But sometimes we could walk around for an hour or so without seeing anybody but Russians, or hearing any language except the one to which we have become accustomed since our arrival at St. Petersburg.

RETURNING FROM THE FAIR.

"We bought a few souvenirs of the place; but, so far as we could observe, the prices were quite as high as in the Gostinna Dvor of St. Petersburg or Moscow. It requires a great deal of bargaining, and a knowledge of prices beforehand, to avoid being cheated, and even then you can never be sure that you are fairly treated. The mode of dealing is emphatically Oriental, and a great deal of time is spent in dickering. Nobody seems to understand the advantages of fixed prices.

"It is said that the annual business at the fair of Nijni Novgorod amounts to three hundred millions of dollars, though it has somewhat diminished of late years. Much of the dealing is on credit, the goods being delivered at one fair and paid for at the next. Over a pot of tea transactions will be made that cover many thousands of dollars, and neither party has a scrap of paper to show for them. Collections through the courts would be next to an impossibility, and therefore personal honor is at a high premium. The merchant who fails to meet his engagements would be excluded from the fair, and thus deprived of the means of making new negotiations.

"The Government requires the bakers to report each day the amount of bread they have sold, and thus a rough estimate of the number of people present is obtained.

"There are two other fairs held at Nijni, but they are of comparatively little consequence. One, early in July, is devoted to horses; the other, in January, is for the sale of timber, wooden-ware, and boxes. The latter is held on the ice of the Oka. In January, 1864, the ice gave way and a great number of people and horses were drowned."

Two or three days were spent at the fair, and then our friends engaged passage on a steamboat to descend the Volga. The youths were surprised at the number and size of the steamers navigating this river, and still more surprised to find that

many of them were of American pattern. The first passenger steamers on the Volga were built by Americans, and were found so well adapted to the work required of them that the system has been continued. Some of the boats are of the Mississippi model, while others resemble those of the Hudson River. At first they had only side-wheel steamers, but in the last few years several light-draft stern-wheelers have been built (also by Americans) and found especially useful in threading among the numerous sand-bars at the period of low water.

Many boats of great power are used for towing barges up and down the river, and find plenty of employment during all the time the Volga is free from ice. Altogether, about five hundred steamboats of all classes are engaged in the navigation of the Volga.

It is sixteen hundred miles from Nijni to Astrachan, and the voyage usually takes five or six days. The boats do not run at night, on account of the difficulty of navigation, which is worse than that of the Lower Mississippi, and more like the Missouri than any other American stream. The fare (first class) on the best steamers is about twenty-five dollars, exclusive of meals, which will cost from twelve to twenty dollars more. Competition occasionally reduces the figures considerably, but, as a general thing, the Russians are too shrewd to conduct their business at a loss in order to injure that of a rival.

"We are on a fine boat, which reminds me of the very one that carried us from St. Louis to Memphis," writes Fred in his journal. "She is called the *Nadeshda* ("Hope"); and that reminds me it was the *Hope* on which I went from Memphis to Natchez, when Frank and I travelled down the Mississippi. Her captain speaks English, the steward speaks French, and we have learned enough Russian to get along very well with the servants without the aid of an interpreter. The cabins are large, clean, and comfortable, and altogether we expect to make a comfortable voyage.

"We left Nijni about noon, and the captain says we shall be twenty-four hours getting to Kazan, where he will stop long enough for us to see the place. As I write, we are passing Makarieff, formerly the seat of the great fair, but now of little importance.

"There are many boats and barges floating with the current in addition to the huge tows which are managed by the steamboats. The captain says that before steam navigation was introduced there was a great deal of towing by horse-power; and how do you suppose it was done?

LAUNCHING A RUSSIAN BARGE.

"There was an immense barge, with powerful windlasses or capstans, which were operated by horses walking in a circle as in the old-fashioned cider-mills. A huge cable, all the way from a quarter of a mile to two miles in length, would be sent up stream, and either anchored in the channel or fastened to a tree on shore. When all was ready the horses were set in motion, and the towing-barge, with all the boats and barges attached to it, slowly ascended against the current. Progress was very slow, but it was safe, as there was no danger from exploding boilers or overheated furnaces. As many as two hundred horses were sometimes employed by single barges.

TARTAR VILLAGE NEAR THE VOLGA.

"Our captain says that back from the river are many villages of Cheramess, a people of Tartar origin, who preserve many of their ancient customs. They are loyal subjects of the Government, and in nearly all their cottages one will find the portraits of the Emperor and Empress. In accordance with their custom of veiling women, they hang a piece of thin gauze over the portrait of the Empress.

"The summer road between Kazan and Nijni is on the south bank of the river; the winter road is on the ice, and is marked with green boughs placed in a double row, so that the road cannot be missed. These boughs are placed by the Administration of Roads, and no one can travel on the ice of the river until it has been officially declared safe. The south bank is quite abrupt, while on the north the country frequently stretches off in a level for a long distance. Most of the towns along the banks are said to have been founded by John the Terrible in his expedition for the capture of Kazan.

"We reached Kazan as promised soon after noon, and had the rest of the day for seeing the place. We were all ready when the boat touched the shore, and were off as soon as we secured a carriage. The city is about five miles from the river, but we found the drive to it not at all uninteresting. We passed through a suburb where a mosque and a church standing close together symbolized the friendly relations between the Russian and Tartar inhabitants.

"Kazan is a handsome city with about sixty thousand inhabitants, of whom one-third are Tartars. We drove through the Tartar quarter, and found it very much like the Russian, with the exception of the people in the streets and the signs on the shops. The buildings have the same general appearance, and were probably built by Russian architects. John the Terrible destroyed a large part of the city soon after its capture. He levelled everything in the Kremlin, including the tombs of the Tartar kings, and since his day the city has been swept by fire no less than

three times. Consequently there is very little of the ancient architecture; a portion of the Tartar wall of the Kremlin remains, and that is about all.

"Kazan is famous for its manufactures of leather, soap, candles, and other things, and there are said to be nearly two hundred factories in and around the city. It is specially celebrated for its tanneries, and annually turns out large quantities of 'Russia leather.'

TARTAR BAKER'S SHOP.

"We hadn't time to visit the University of Kazan, which has about five hundred students, and ranks first in the Empire for instruction in Oriental languages and literature. It has Persian, Arabic, Chinese, and other Oriental professors, and we were told that a student might study any one of twenty-six languages within its walls.

"Of course we could not neglect the cathedral, where is preserved a miraculous picture, which was found unscathed in the midst of the ashes after a great conflagration. On its head is a diamond crown, presented by Catherine II. Near the town is a pyramidal monument in memory of those who fell during the siege and capture of the city.

"Just at dusk we returned to the *Nadeshda*, where we found a substantial supper waiting for us, and made the acquaintance of a fellow-countryman, Mr. Hegeman, who was to be our companion for the remainder of the voyage. He was familiar with Russia, having lived in the country nearly twenty years, and travelled in all parts of it. He was well informed on every subject, and gave us a great amount of valuable statistics and descriptions. We talked until quite late in the evening; and when he joined us at breakfast the next morning the boat was steaming down the Volga and nearing the mouth of the Kama, where several passengers were to leave us.

"'They are going to Perm,' said the captain of the *Nadeshda*, 'and some of them are on the way to Siberia.'

"We asked if this was the way to Siberia, and the captain explained that it was one of the routes. 'Steamers ascend the Kama to Perm,' said he, 'and from Perm there is a railway to Ekaterineburg, which is on the Siberian side of the Ural Mountains. The line has been extended to Tumen, three hundred miles farther, and ultimately it will be pushed on till it reaches Irkutsk, on the shores of Lake Baikal, and close to the frontier of China.'

"How we wished we could make the journey through Siberia! Over the Ural

Mountains, across the Steppes, down the Amoor, and out into the waters of the Pacific Ocean! What a magnificent tour, and what strange things to see on the way!

"Mr. Hegeman heard our wish, and said he would tell us all about the trip across Siberia as soon as we were under way again. As the *Nadeshda* steamed down the Volga he gave us an account, which we have tried to preserve as nearly as possible in his own words."



CHAPTER XV.

**AVATCHA BAY, IN KAMTCHATKA.—ATTACK UPON
PETROPAVLOVSK BY THE ALLIED FLEET.—DOGS AND DOG-
DRIVING.—RAPID TRAVELLING WITH A DOG-TEAM.—
POPULATION AND RESOURCES OF KAMTCHATKA.—REINDEER
AND THEIR USES.—THE AMOOR RIVER.—NATIVE TRIBES AND
CURIOUS CUSTOMS.—TIGERS IN SIBERIA.—NAVIGATION OF THE
AMOOR.—OVERLAND TRAVELLING IN SIBERIA.—RIDING IN A
TARANTASSE.—A ROUGH ROAD.—AN AMUSING MISTAKE.—
FROM STRATENSK TO NERTCHINSK.—GOLD-MINING IN SIBERIA.**

"My first visit to the Russian Empire," said Mr. Hegeman, "was made from San Francisco across the Pacific Ocean. I sailed out of the Golden Gate in the direction of Kamtchatka, and after a voyage of thirty days we sighted the summit of Avatcha Mountain, a magnificent volcano that serves as a landmark to vessels approaching Avatcha Bay. This bay is one of the finest I have ever seen. I do not think it surpassed by the famous bays of Naples or Rio Janeiro."

A SIBERIAN VILLAGE.

Doctor Bronson nodded assent to Mr. Hegeman's opinion. He had been in Avatcha Bay, which he briefly described to the youths while Mr. Hegeman was lighting a cigar.

PETROPAVLOVSK, KAMTCHATKA.—MOUNT AVATCHA IN BACKGROUND.

"It is about ten miles across, and nearly circular," said the Doctor, "and its entrance from the ocean is nearly a mile in width. Avatcha Mountain is directly in front of the entrance, so that a navigator entering the bay has little more to do than steer straight towards the volcano and keep his vessel midway between the two sides of the entrance. Around the bay there are six or eight little harbors, completely landlocked. On one of these harbors is Petropavlovsk (Port of St. Peter and St. Paul), the principal place of trade in Kamtchatka. Once it had a population of two or three thousand. It was attacked by the allied fleets in the Crimean War, and suffered severely. After the war the naval headquarters were removed to Nicolayevsk, at the mouth of the Amoor."

A HERD OF REINDEER.

"There is an interesting bit of history connected with the attack upon Petropavlovsk," Mr. Hegeman remarked, as the Doctor paused.

"In the autumn of 1854 a combined fleet of six English and French ships attacked Petropavlovsk, and were twice beaten off by some land batteries and a Russian frigate moored in the harbor. Their commanders determined to make an assault by land with a strong force of sailors and marines. They attempted to take the town in the rear, but the Russian sharp-shooters created a panic among them, and drove the assailants over a steep bank about two hundred feet high.

"The English admiral committed suicide in consequence of his disappointment, and the fleet sailed away. Next year seventeen ships came there together, as the allies had determined to conquer the town at all hazards. The Russians abandoned the place and retired over the hills, but they left five or six hundred dogs behind them. The allied fleet remained at anchor for an entire day without venturing to land, as it was supposed that there must be a very large garrison to keep so many dogs."

"The baying of the dogs kept them at bay," whispered Frank to Fred.

"Yes," replied the latter, "kept them anchored in the bay."

"There was only one man, an American merchant, in the place when the allies landed. He remained to protect his own property, and had the American flag above his establishment. The allies burned all of the Government buildings and stores, but did not injure anything else."

Frank asked how they happened to have so many dogs in a small place like this.

"Dogs are the beasts of burden of the country," was the reply, "and without them the people would have much difficulty in getting about. The dogs of Kamtchatka are much like the Eskimo dogs in appearance, character, and qualities, and are employed for the same purposes. They draw sledges over the snow and ice in winter, and are capable of great speed and endurance. With a light load they can travel fifty miles a day for a week or more, and on some occasions they have been known to make a single trip of one hundred miles and more without resting. They are harnessed in pairs with a leader, and a team consists of anywhere from three to twenty-one dogs. A great deal depends on the leader, and he is always chosen from among the most intelligent of the dogs. An ordinary dog is worth from five to ten dollars, while a leader readily brings from forty to fifty dollars.

DOG TEAMS AND REINDEER.

"The best travelling I ever heard of with a dog-team," continued Mr. Hegeman, "was when a courier was sent to carry to Petropavlovsk the announcement of the Crimean War. Without changing teams he went from Boltcheresk to Petropavlovsk (one hundred and twenty-five miles) in twenty-three hours!"

One of the youths asked what the dogs lived upon.

"They live almost entirely upon fish," was the reply, "and they eat it in any condition—fresh, dried, or half decayed. Salmon are very abundant in Kamtchatka, and the cheapest thing for feeding the dogs. One fish a day is the ordinary allowance for a dog; but while he is on a journey he receives only half his usual ration. The natives all say that these animals travel better half fed than when fully nourished, and many persons do not give them anything whatever for an entire day before they are to start on a journey."

Many anecdotes about the dogs of Kamtchatka were given, and Frank and Fred were so interested in the subject that they forgot to note down what was said. When questioned about it afterwards, Frank said he learned

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[Pg 294] that it requires much experience to drive a dog-team; that the man who is to drive must feed his own dogs and make them know he is their master; that they will run away whenever they have the opportunity; and they have a

treacherous, thieving disposition. They are brave in large numbers, but always cowardly when alone. Epidemics among them are frequent, and sometimes whole tribes of natives are thus deprived of their dogs and unable to move about.

"For further canine particulars," said Frank, "we refer you to 'The Voyage of the *Vivian* to the North Pole and Beyond.' The youths who made that remarkable journey had considerable practical experience with dogs, and they personally visited Kamtchatka on their way to the Pole."

"Kamtchatka has about seven thousand inhabitants altogether," said Mr. Hegeman. "Twelve or fifteen hundred are Russians, and the rest belong to aboriginal tribes. They are chiefly engaged in hunting and fishing; there is very little agriculture in the country, as the climate is too cold to permit the cultivation of grain or garden vegetables. Kamtchatka is chiefly useful for its fur products. Five or six thousand sables are killed there every year, and considerable numbers of ermine, foxes, and other fur-bearing animals. Bears are numerous and dangerous, and so are wolves, which are very fierce in winter, though not at all troublesome in the summer-time. Earthquakes are not unfrequent in Kamtchatka, but they do little damage, and are looked upon more as amusements than anything else.

LIGHT-HOUSE AT GHIJIGHA.

"From Kamtchatka I went in a ship to Ghijigha, on the Okhotsk Sea," continued Mr. Hegeman. "Ghijigha is very much like Petropavlovsk, and has the same sort of population—a mixture of Cossacks, peasants, and natives. It is at the head of a narrow bay, and its light-house is nothing more than an octagonal hut with a fire on the roof. Many of the inhabitants are the descendants of exiles who were sent to the country down to about the middle of this century.

ERMINE-TRAP.

"In the time of Catherine the Great, many Poles were sent to Kamtchatka, and it is a curious circumstance that the first voyage from that country to a foreign port was made under the Polish flag. Several Poles seized a small ship in the harbor and put to sea. They had no nautical knowledge, and no instruments for navigation, but managed to reach Loo Choo, and afterwards the port of Macao, in safety.

"At Ghijigha there were more dogs and more fish. I had my choice to go by land to the mouth of the Amoor River, or by sea. I chose the latter course; if I had gone by land I should have divided my time between riding on reindeer, riding after dogs, or going on foot."

Fred thought it would be very nice to ride on a reindeer, and earnestly wished he could try it.

INTERIOR OF A NATIVE HOUSE.

"I think a very short trial would satisfy you," replied Mr. Hegeman; "at any rate it was enough for me. You have a saddle which is simply a pad without stirrups, and must maintain your balance by means of a stick that you rest on the ground as the animal walks. An inexperienced man falls off a dozen times an hour for the first few days, and even old travellers get a good many tumbles in the course of twenty-four hours. The saddle is directly over the shoulders of the beast, as it would break his back if placed where we ordinarily put the saddle on a horse. Consequently you are shaken at every footstep—an excellent thing for a dyspeptic, but not agreeable to a man in good health.

THE REINDEER.

"Between the Okhotsk Sea and the Arctic Ocean the wealth of the country is in reindeer. Some natives own as many as forty thousand of these animals, and herds of a thousand or more are not at all rare. The natives wander from place to place in search of pasturage. In summer the deer eat the mosses and shrubbery that spring up all over the country, and in winter they scrape away the snow to feed on the moss beneath it. The native uses the reindeer to ride upon or to draw his sledge; he eats the flesh of the animal, and makes clothing and tent-covering of his skin. In fact he cannot get along without the reindeer any more than could the native of Newfoundland exist without the codfish.

"But I was willing to let the natives have a monopoly of the reindeer for riding purposes, and took passage in a ship for the Amoor River.

"The Amoor is the greatest river of Siberia, and flows into the Pacific Ocean. It is navigable twenty-three hundred miles from its mouth, and receives several important streams from the south. In one part of its course it makes a great bend to the south, where it flows through magnificent forests containing several trees peculiar to the tropics. The tiger roams up to the south bank of the river at this point, and the reindeer comes down to it on the north; occasionally the tiger crosses the river and feeds upon the reindeer—the only place in the world where these two animals come together naturally."

"What a funny idea!" exclaimed Frank. "To think of tigers in Siberia!"

"Tigers are found elsewhere in Siberia," continued their informant. "In the museum at Barnaool, in the Altai Mountains, I saw the skins of two large tigers

that were killed in a Siberian farm-yard not far from that place, where they had come to kill one of the farmer's oxen. Tiger-hunting is a regular sport with the Russian officers in that part of Manjouria belonging to Siberia, and over a considerable part of the region bordering upon China and Persia. But to return to the Amoor.

FISH-MARKET AT NICOLAYEVSK.

"I remained several days at Nicolayevsk, the capital of the Maritime Province of Siberia, and a place of considerable importance. From there I ascended the river on a Russian steamboat, passing through the country of several tribes of people. There were Goldees, Gilyaks, and Manyargs, and others whose names would be like Greek to you, and therefore I will not bother you to remember them. They live by hunting and fishing, and have permanent villages on the banks of the river, in places where the fishing is best. In the fishing season they always have large quantities of fish hung out to dry, and consequently you can generally smell a native village before you see it.

SCENERY ON THE AMOOR.

"The boat landed near a Gilyak village, and I went to see how the natives lived. They were not particularly civil; in fact they hardly recognized our presence, but kept at work in the preparation of the morning's catch of fish as though nobody was looking on. There were a dozen or more wolfish-looking dogs, and we came near being bitten by the brutes. The natives made a pretence of driving the dogs off, but were not half as earnest as we were on the subject.

GILYAK WOMAN.

GILYAK MAN.

"They have some interesting customs and superstitions. They are pagans in religious matters, and worship idols and animals, and they have a reverence for the tiger, eagle, bear, and cat. They keep eagles in cages, and when they can catch a bear or tiger they use him for a religious ceremony, which ends with the animal being slaughtered. His flesh is eaten under the impression that it gives strength and courage to the eaters. They will not allow fire to be carried out of their houses, through fear of evil consequences, and they formerly had the custom of killing those who came to visit them. The more amiable he was, the greater was the chance of his being murdered."

Fred asked how it could be explained.

"Very easily, when you know the reason," was the reply. "They believe that the spirits of the dead remain where they left the body, and guard and protect the spot. When a man whom they liked was about to leave, they did not hesitate to kill him for the sake of retaining his spirit among them. A Russian priest was killed in this way, and the Government made the Gilyaks understand that they must put an end to the practice.

NATIVE BOAT—AMoor RIVER.

"The Gilyaks have small fields and gardens, and do a little agriculture, but their great reliance is upon the river, which supplies them with fish for food and clothing."

"How can fish supply clothing?" Frank asked, with a look of surprise.

"Easily enough," was the reply. "The Gilyaks and other people of the Amoor take the skins of fishes, beat them till the scales fall off, dress them with oil till they are pliable, and then fashion them into garments. I have seen some very good coats and jackets made of fish-skins. The prettiest Gilyak girl I saw (and she had no great beauty to boast of) wore a coat of fish-skin that was gathered closely in at the neck and held around the waist by a girdle. A few yards away you couldn't distinguish it from cloth.

GOLDEE CHILDREN.

"The Gilyaks row their boats by pulling alternately on the oars, while the Goldees, who are higher up the river, pull the oars simultaneously. The houses of the Goldees are superior in every way to those of the Gilyaks. They are warmed by means of wooden pipes passing beneath benches on three sides of the room, and serving as seats by day and beds at night. Like the Gilyaks, the Goldees live chiefly by fishing, but they give more attention to agriculture, and many of them have cows and horses. One day we passed a village where a large fleet of boats was engaged in fishing for salmon and sturgeon. Two men tried a race with the steamboat, and fairly beat us for a short distance, though we were making nine or ten miles against the current.

"The Russians have established villages along the Amoor at intervals of twenty or thirty miles, where the steamboats are supplied with wood. Some of these villages are close to the native ones, and the people live in perfect harmony. At one of our stopping-places I suggested that I would like to see the inside of a Goldee house, and the captain kindly accompanied me to the native village.

A GOLDEE MAN AND WOMAN.

"Guided by a Russian peasant, we picked our way among the drying fish, and reached the door. It was quite late in the evening, and all the people had gone to sleep. With some difficulty we roused the owner of the place, and persuaded him to admit us. Our guide carried a torch of birch bark, and as he held it aloft the sight revealed to us was a strange one.

"Twenty or thirty persons were asleep on the benches, or huddled together to stare at the intruders. The captain explained that the Goldees keep their houses very warm, and sleep with little clothing; and certainly it did not seem as if the whole party had bedding enough for one-quarter their number. There was a smouldering fire in the middle of the room, a large kettle, set in brickwork, was at one side, and the rafters were hung with nets and fishing implements. A vicious-looking dog stood growling in front of us, and needed only a word from his master to turn his growls into bites. I had no inclination to stay long, particularly as the atmosphere was by no means pure, and it did not seem exactly polite to rouse a gentleman in the night and compel him to open his house simply to gratify a stranger's curiosity.

"For a thousand miles or more the Amoor forms the dividing line between Russia and China, the former country being on the northern bank, and the latter on the southern. There is a Chinese town of some twenty thousand inhabitants at one point, and smaller towns and villages both above and below it.

"The whole valley of the Amoor was in the possession of the Chinese until 1853, when it was conquered by the Russians in a campaign that lasted less than two months, and was unaccompanied with loss of life. General Mouravieff, then Governor-general of Eastern Siberia, organized an expedition and sent it down the river in boats. The Chinese were wholly unprepared for it, and the Russians had everything their own way. Then colonists were sent to form the villages I have mentioned, and Russia was so firmly established that she could not be disturbed.

"And now, as you have doubtless studied the geography of Asia, will you tell me how the Amoor is formed?"

INAUGURATION OF GENGHIS KHAN.

"Certainly," answered Fred. "It is formed by the rivers Argoon and Shilka, just as the Ohio is formed by the Alleghany and Monongahela. The Argoon comes in from the south, and the Shilka from the north. Genghis Khan was born in the valley of the Argoon, and the armies that went to the Tartar conquest of Europe were originally mustered on the banks of that stream."

JUNCTION OF THE ARGOON AND SHILKA TO FORM THE AMOOR.

"The answer is correct," was the reply. "The spot where the rivers unite is called '*Oust-strelka*' ('Arrow-mouth'), owing to the shape of the tongue of land between the streams. The scenery is interesting, as the banks of the Argoon are steep, and the hills as far as one can see them are covered to their summits with dense forests.

"Our steamboat turned into the Shilka, and, after making a few unimportant landings, finished its voyage at Stratensk, twenty-three hundred miles above Nicolayevsk. The river voyage was at an end, and from this point to St. Petersburg was a land journey of five thousand miles. Horse-power was to be my mode of conveyance for more than four thousand miles—a prospect by no means pleasant.

"It was about the middle of October when I arrived at Stratensk, and bade farewell to river navigation in Siberia. By the advice of Russian friends I planned to go to Irkutsk, the capital of Eastern Siberia, before the snows fell, and there wait for the winter roads to become good enough for sledging.

"Irkutsk is about fourteen hundred miles from Stratensk, and there is a good wagon-road—at least it is called good in Siberia—connecting the two points. The road makes a detour around the southern end of Lake Baikal, and quite a distance is saved by crossing the lake on a steamer. I was told that I might have to wait a day or two to connect with the steamer, as it is not very regular in its movements.

"I had made the acquaintance of a Russian officer while ascending the Amoor, and long before reaching Stratensk it was arranged that we would travel together to the first provincial capital, where I intended stopping a few days. There I hoped to find some one else who was going in my direction, and thus would have the advantages of the companionship of some one who knew the language, and also to share the expense. It costs no more for two persons than for one, as the hire of horses and carriages is just the same, exactly as when you hire a cab in London or New York.

SCENE IN A POSTING STATION.

"From one end of Siberia to the other there is a post-road, with stations from ten to twenty miles apart, and there are similar roads leading from the great route to the towns north and south. A traveller must have a *paderojnia*, or road-pass, which he obtains from the Chief of Police at his starting-point. He pays at the rate of half a cent a mile for this road-pass, and it entitles him to the number of

horses named in the document. For these horses he pays a rate fixed by law, usually two cents a mile for each horse. Ordinarily a traveller can get along comfortably with two horses, but if the roads are bad, three, and sometimes more, are necessary."

Frank asked if the horses must be paid for at the time the *paderojnia* is taken.

"Not at all," was the reply. "The money is paid at each station to the *smotretal*, or station-master. It is paid in advance, or may be given to the driver at the end of the ride."

"A stranger must run a great risk of being cheated," said Fred; "the station-master could make the distance out much greater than it really is, and thus turn a dishonest penny very often."

"By no means can he do so," Mr. Hegeman answered, "if the stranger is on his guard. At every station there is an official certificate framed and hung up, showing the distance to the next station in both directions; the most enterprising efforts of the *smotretal* to cheat the traveller can be frustrated by a study of this document.

"And now for the means of conveyance," continued Mr. Hegeman. "Every station is required to keep a certain number of horses and drivers, and it must also have a stipulated number of wheeled carriages for summer, and sledges for winter use. The wheeled carriage is called a *telega*; it is a rough sort of a wagon on wooden springs, and gives a great deal of jolting to the mile. A ride of a thousand miles in a *telega* may be guaranteed to cure a very bad case of dyspepsia or kill the patient, and in some cases it might do both. The horses are driven at a breakneck speed, and the traveller finds himself tossed from side to side till he is bruised like a rolled orange. The *telega* is changed, along with the horses, at every station; the traveller and his baggage must be transferred, as the carriage and horses return to the station whence they came."

"It must be very disagreeable to make these changes," remarked one of the youths, "especially at night or in a storm."

A TARANTASSE.

"It is, indeed," was the reply; "and to obviate this the Russians have a vehicle called a *tarantasse*, which is larger, better made, and in every way more comfortable than the *telega*. A traveller going on a long journey, and able to afford the expense, buys a *tarantasse* at starting, and sells it at the end of his ride. He thus avoids the necessity of changing at every station; and if he has a servant

to attend to the payments and other matters, he can sleep through the night with comparative comfort.

"We started from Stratensk in a telega, as we could not find a tarantasse for sale or hire, and changed at the next station. Luckily for us, the smotretal had a tarantasse, which we hired as far as Stratensk, about sixty miles from our starting-point. It was old, and somewhat rickety, but it was better than nothing at all, and we gladly engaged it.

"There are three classes of paderojnia for the Russian post-roads. The highest is for Government couriers and great officials; the second for officials not on Government business; and the third for civilian travellers. My companion had a courier's pass, while I had a paderojnia of the second class; consequently his was the best to use.

"A traveller with a courier's pass is never detained for want of horses, while others must take their chances. The second-class passport takes precedence over the third, and in a very summary way at times.

"Suppose Smith has a second-class paderojnia, and Jones one of the third class. Smith reaches a station and finds Jones with a team ready to start. If there are no more horses, the station-master detaches Jones's horses and gives them to Smith; Jones must wait until he can be supplied; it may be an hour, a day, or a week.

CHANGING HORSES AT A SIBERIAN STATION.

"Three horses must always be kept ready for couriers, and the changes made very quickly. If all the horses belonging to a station are out when a lower-class traveller arrives, he must wait till a team returns and has rested. If he is willing to pay something extra rather than wait, he can be accommodated; the smotretal will obtain horses from the villagers at whatever advance on the regular price that he thinks the traveller will stand. Here is where the station-master has a chance to make something, and he usually makes it.

"The horses are small and shaggy, but they are capable of great speed and endurance. They are never blanketed, even in the coldest weather, and their hair is thick and soft like the fur of a fox. Sometimes they kept up a steady gallop from one station to another, and did not seem to suffer by the speed. Frequently they travelled ten miles an hour, and when we were going down hill they did better than that. The way to go from one hill to another is to dash down the slope and across the level at full gallop, and thus obtain an impetus for mounting the next. Many of the hollows have corduroy bridges over the little streams that flow through them, and when we crossed these bridges at full gallop the tarantasse or

telega received a very lively shaking."

Turning to Doctor Bronson, Mr. Hegeman suggested that the former should tell the youths about the search in Siberia for Sir John Franklin and his crew.

The Doctor smiled as he recalled the story, which he gave with a preliminary explanation:

"The Russians apply the term 'equipage' to any kind of vehicle, whether on wheels or runners. The same word is used in Russian as in French to denote the crew of a ship.

"A few years after the disappearance of Sir John Franklin, the English Admiralty requested the Russian Government to ascertain if any traces of that officer and his party had been found on the coast of Siberia. A general order was sent to all officials in Siberia to make inquiries about the 'English Captain John Franklin and his equipage.' In due time came reports that nothing could be found, except in a single instance, where a petty official wrote as follows:

"I have made the proper inquiries. I can learn nothing about the English captain, John Franklin, but in one of my villages there is an old sleigh that no one claims, and perhaps it is his equipage."

THE RIGHT OF WAY IN RUSSIA.

"To return to the road," said Mr. Hegeman, when the laugh created by the story had subsided. "We carried one, and sometimes two bells on the yoke of our shaft-horse, to indicate that we were travelling by post; every humbler vehicle was required to give us not only half but the whole of the road—at any rate, it was expected to do so. Sometimes we had it, and sometimes we did not; if the drivers of the approaching vehicles were awake they usually turned out, but very often they were asleep, and their horses had their own way. When this happened, our driver brought his whip-lash heavily across the sleeper as he passed him. The driver of a post-carriage has the right to thrash a common driver who does not get out of his way, and rarely lets the opportunity pass."

Fred suggested that in this way he probably obtained some revenge for the kicks and cuffs he received from his superiors. The rest of the party[Pg 309]

[Pg 310] assented to the idea of the youth. Doctor Bronson remarked that the most cruel of the slave-drivers of the Southern States of America in former times were the negro slaves who were placed in authority over their fellows, and he thought the same rule held good throughout the world in general.

GETTING OUT OF DIFFICULTY.

"It had been raining before we arrived at Stratensk, and consequently we found a great deal of mud on the roads. Several times we were mired, and had to send to neighboring farm-houses for additional horses, and twice we removed all our baggage and put our own shoulders to the wheel to get out of trouble. One of these performances was during a shower, and did not improve our condition or temper. I was ready to vote Siberian travelling a first-class nuisance, and felt downhearted at the immense distance that lay between me and the railway-station at Nijni Novgorod.

"To make things worse, our Cossack servant had placed our pillows and blankets on the wet ground, and piled heavy baggage on top. For this stupidity my companion, the captain, remonstrated in very strong language, but all that he said could not dry our property. At the next station we stopped for dinner; while we were eating our meal the dampened articles were somewhat improved by being placed in front of the kitchen fire.

"Once while descending a hill at full speed a wheel of the tarantasse came off, but no damage was done beyond bringing us to a very sudden stop. The two axles of the vehicle were about twelve feet apart, and connected by a pair of stout poles which had a great deal of 'spring' in them. Properly made, a tarantasse is by no means an uncomfortable vehicle to ride in, provided, of course, you are travelling over good roads."

"What did you get for dinner at the station?" Frank asked.

"We had the *samovar*, with some tea and sugar, from our own stock, and then we had boiled eggs and bread. They had some cold mutton, of which I ate liberally, as I had an appetite like a tiger, but my friend would hardly touch it. He told me that mutton was rarely eaten by the Russians, and during my journey through Siberia I do not remember seeing it on the table, except in a few of the way-side stations. This was all the more singular when there were great flocks of sheep in the country where we were travelling. The sheep belong principally to the Bourriats, a Mongol people who were the occupants of the country before the Russians went there.

"Eggs and bread are the only articles of food you can rely upon getting at the stations, and sometimes even the eggs are wanting. Bread is made from rye flour rather than from wheat, and its complexion is darker than that of the Boston brown bread of America. It is the bread of the peasant from one end of the Empire to the other, and a good many of the nobility prefer it to white bread. For my own part I never liked the black bread of Russia, but often ate it for lack of

anything else.

"Up hill and down dale we went, and on the second morning of our journey the broad and beautiful valley of the Nertcha River lay before us. Two or three miles above the point where the Nertcha joins the Shilka lies the town of Nertchinsk, a well-built place with five or six thousand inhabitants. It has an air of wealth and solidity, and large fortunes have been made there by men interested in gold-mining. We entered the town through an arched gate-way, and drove to the house of a rich gold-miner with whom my friend was well acquainted. Hardly had we thrown off our wrappings before the *samovar* was steaming on the table. We were urged to stay to dinner, and, much to my satisfaction, the invitation was accepted by my companion."

"Haven't I read about Nertchinsk as a place of exile?" said one of the youths.

"Quite likely you have," was the answer. "Nertchinsk and its gold-mines have a prominent place in the history of Siberian exile. Would you like to hear about it?"

"Of course we would," the youths eagerly responded. It was agreed that the journey through Siberia should be suspended until the new subject was disposed of.

VALLEY OF THE AMOOR ABOVE OUK-SE-ME.



CHAPTER XVI.

THE EXILES OF SIBERIA.—THE DECEMBRISTS AND THEIR EXPERIENCE.—SOCIAL POSITION OF EXILES.—DIFFERENT CLASSES OF EXILES AND THEIR SENTENCES.—CRIMINALS AND POLITICALS.—DEGREES OF PUNISHMENT.—PERPETUAL COLONISTS.—HOW EXILES TRAVEL.—LODGING-HOUSES AND PRISONS.—CONVOYS.—THRILLING STORY OF AN ESCAPE FROM SIBERIA.—SECRET ROADS.—HOW PEASANTS TREAT THE EXILES.—PRISONERS IN CHAINS.

"There are many errors in the popular mind of England and America concerning the system of exile to Siberia," said Mr. Hegeman, as he settled into a chair to begin his discourse on this interesting subject.

"One error is that exiles are treated with such cruelty that they do not live long; that they are starved, beaten, tortured, and otherwise forced into an early death.

"No doubt there have been many cases of cruelty just as there have been in prisons and other places of involuntary residence all over the globe and among all nations. Exiles are prisoners, and the lot of a prisoner depends greatly upon the character of his keeper, without regard to the country or nation where he is imprisoned. Siberia is no exception to the rule. With humane officials in power, the life of the exiles is no worse, generally speaking, than is that of the inmates of a prison in other lands; and with brutal men in authority the lot of the exile is doubtless severe.

"In the time of the Emperor Nicholas there was probably more cruelty in the treatment of exiles than since his death; but that he invented systems of torture, or allowed those under him to do so, as has been alleged, is an absurdity.

"Let me cite a fact in support of my assertion. After the revolution of 1825, just as Nicholas ascended the throne, two hundred of the conspirators were exiled to hard labor for life. They were nearly all young men, of good families, and not one of them had ever devoted a day to manual occupation. Reared in luxury, they were totally unfitted for the toil to which they were sentenced; and if treated with the cruelty that is said to be a part of exile, they could not have lived many months.

"The most of them were sent to the mines of Nertchinsk, where they were kept at labor for two years. Afterwards they were employed in a polishing-mill at Chetah and on the public roads for four or five years, and at the end of that time were allowed to settle in the villages and towns, making their living in any way that was practicable. Some of them were joined by their wives, who had property in their own right (the estates of the exiles were confiscated at the time of their banishment), and those thus favored by matrimonial fortune were able to set up fine establishments.

INTERIOR OF AN EXILE'S HUT.

"Some of the Decembrists, as these particular exiles were called, from the revolution having occurred in December, died within a few years, but the most of them lived to an advanced age. When Alexander II. ascended the throne, in 1856, all the Decembrists were pardoned. Some of them returned to European Russia after thirty-one years of exile, but they found things so changed, and so many of their youthful companions dead, that they wrote back and advised those who were still in Siberia to stay there. My first visit to Siberia was in 1866, forty-one years after the December revolution. At that time there were ten or twelve of the Decembrists still living, all of them venerable old men. One was a prosperous wine-merchant at Irkutsk; another had made a fortune as a timber-merchant; others were comfortable, though not wealthy; and two or three were in humble, though not destitute circumstances. Now, if they had been treated with the cruelty that is alleged to be the lot of all Siberian exiles, do you think any of them would have reached such an advanced age?"

Silence gave assent to the query. After a short pause, Frank asked what was the social standing of these exiles, the Decembrists.

EXILES PASSING THROUGH A VILLAGE.

"It was nearly, though not quite, what it was in European Russia before their exile," was the reply. "They were received in the best Siberian families, whether official or civilian, and were on terms of friendship with the officials in a private way. They were not invited to strictly official ceremonies, and this was about the only difference between their treatment and that of those who were not exiles. Of course I refer to the time when they were settled in the towns, after their term of forced labor was ended. Before that they were just like any other prisoners condemned to the same kind of servitude.

"There were two of the Decembrists (Prince Troubetskoi and Prince Volbonskoi) whose wives were wealthy, and followed their husbands into exile. When

relieved from labor and allowed their personal liberty, these princes came to Irkutsk and built fine houses. They entertained handsomely, were visited by the officials, went very much into society, and in every way were as free as any one else, except that they were forbidden to leave Siberia. Nicholas was not of a forgiving disposition, and not till he died were the Decembrists free to return to St. Petersburg.

A TOWN BUILT BY EXILES.

"A bit of social gossip adds to the interest of the Siberian life of Prince Volbonskoi. There was some incompatibility of temper between the prince and his wife, and for a long time they were not particularly friendly. She and the children and servants occupied the large and elegantly furnished house, while the Prince lived in a small building in the court-yard. He had a farm near the town, and sold to his wife such of the produce as she needed for household use."

Fred wished to know how many kinds of people are sent to Siberia.

"There are three classes of exiles," was the reply: "political, religious, and criminal offenders. The political ones include Nihilists and other revolutionists, and of course there is a great majority of Poles among this class; the religious exiles are certain sects of fanatics that the Government wishes to suppress; and the criminal ones are those who offend against society in all sorts of ways. None of them are ever called 'prisoners' or 'criminals' while in Siberia, and it is not often you hear them termed 'exiles.' In ordinary conversation they are called 'unfortunates,' and in official documents they are classed as 'involuntary emigrants.'

"There are about ten thousand 'involuntary emigrants' going every year from European Russia to Siberia. These include criminals of all kinds, a few religious offenders of the fanatical sort, and some Nihilists and other revolutionists. At every revolution in Poland the number of exiles for the next few years is greatly increased. After the revolution of 1863 twenty-four thousand Poles were sent to Siberia, and other revolutions have contributed a proportionate number."

"Do they all have the same kind of sentence, without regard to their offences?" one of the youths asked.

BANISHED FOR FIVE YEARS.

"Not at all," was the reply. "The lowest sentence is to three years' banishment, and the highest is to hard labor for life. Sentences vary all the way between these two categories—for five, ten, fifteen, or twenty years' banishment, without labor,

or for the same number of years with[Pg 317]

[Pg 318] labor. A man may be sentenced to a given number of years' banishment, of which a certain designated portion shall be to hard labor, or he may be sentenced for life, with no hard labor at all. The punishment is varied greatly, and, from all I hear, the sentence is rarely carried out to its fullest degree. The time of exile is not lessened until a general pardon liberates entire classes, but the severity of the labor imposed is almost always lightened.

BANISHED FOR THREE YEARS.

"Then, too, the exiles are distributed throughout the country, and not allowed to gather in large numbers. The object of the exile system is to give a population to Siberia, and not to cause the death of the banished individual. Every effort is made to induce the exile to forget the causes that brought him to Siberia, and to make him a good citizen in his new home. His wife and children may follow or accompany him into exile at government expense, but they cannot return to European Russia until he is personally free to do so. This permission is denied in the cases of the worst criminals who are sentenced to hard labor and must leave their families behind.

"Figures I was glancing at this morning show that in one year 16,889 persons were sent to Siberia, accompanied by 1080 women and children over fifteen years old, and by 1269 under that age. Of the whole number of exiles mentioned, 1700 were sentenced to hard labor, and 1624 were drunkards and tramps. The status of the rest is not given, but they were probably sentenced to various terms of deportation without labor.

"I should say further, in regard to this family matter, that an exile is regarded as a dead man in the place from which he is sent, and his wife, if she remains in Europe, is legally a widow, and may marry again if she chooses. The wifeless man in Siberia is urged to marry and become the head of a family, and whenever he marries, the Government gives him a grant of land and aids him in establishing a home. As long as an exile conducts himself properly, and does not try to escape, he does not find existence in Siberia particularly dreadful, provided, of course, he has not been sent to hard labor, and the officers in charge of him are not of a cruel disposition."

Frank asked what work was done by those sentenced to hard labor, and how the men lived who were simply exiles and had not a labor sentence attached.

COLONIST'S VILLAGE IN WINTER.

"Those sentenced to *katorga*, or hard labor, are employed in mines or on roads,

and in mills and factories of various kinds. Several years ago an order was issued that exiles should no longer be kept at work in mines, but I am told on pretty good authority that this humane decree has been revoked since the rise of Nihilism. In the mines of Nertchinsk, in the latter part of the last century and the early part of the present one, the labor was fearful. The prisoners were in pairs, chained together; they were often kept working in mud and water for fourteen or sixteen hours daily; their lodgings were of the poorest character, and their food was nothing but black bread and occasionally a little cabbage soup. The great mortality in the mines attracted the attention of the Government, and the evils were remedied.

"Down to the end of the last century, criminals condemned to the mines were marked by having their nostrils slit open, but this barbarity has not been practised for a long time.

"Those sentenced to lighter labor are engaged in trades, such as making shoes, clothing, or other articles. Those who are simply exiled without labor can work at their trades, if they have any, precisely as they would do at home. If they are educated men they may practise their professions, give instruction to young people, or find employment with merchants as book-keepers or other assistants in business. Some years ago the permission for exiles to engage in teaching anything else than music, drawing, and painting was revoked, when it was discovered that some of them had been using their opportunities to spread revolutionary doctrines. Whether this order is yet in force I do not know.

"The next thing to hard labor in Siberia is the sentence to become 'a perpetual colonist.' This means that the exile is to make his living by tilling the soil, hunting, fishing, or in any other way that may be permitted by the authorities; he must be under the eye of the police, to whom he reports at regular intervals, and he must not go beyond certain limits that are prescribed to him.

"The perpetual colonist has a grant of land, and is supplied with tools and materials for building a house; he receives flour and other provisions for three years, and at the end of that time he is supposed to be able to take care of himself. Where he is sent to a fertile part of the country, his life is not particularly dreadful, though at best it is a severe punishment for a man who has been unaccustomed to toil, and has lived in luxury up to the time of being sent to Siberia. Many of these colonists are sent to the regions in or near the Arctic circle, where it is almost continuous winter, and the opportunities for agriculture are very small. Only a few things can be made to grow at all, and the exile doomed to such a residence must depend mainly upon hunting and fishing. If

game is scarce, or the fishing fails, there is liable to be great suffering among these unhappy men.

"The friends of an exile may send him money, but not more than twenty-five roubles (about \$20) a month. As before stated, the wife of an exile may have an income separate from that of her husband, and if she chooses to spend it they may live in any style they can afford.

"Many criminal and political exiles are drafted into the army in much the same way that prisons in other countries are occasionally emptied when recruits are wanted. They receive the same pay and treatment as other soldiers, and are generally sent to distant points, to diminish the chances of desertion. Most of these recruits are sent to the regiments in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and a good many are found in the Siberian regiments.

"All money sent to exiles must pass through the hands of the officials. It is a common complaint, and probably well founded, that a goodly part of this money sticks to the hands that touch it before it reaches its rightful owner. The same allegation is made concerning the allowances of money and flour, just enough to support life, that are given to exiles who are restricted to villages and debarred from remunerative occupation."

EXILES LEAVING MOSCOW.

"Did you personally meet many exiles while you were in Siberia?" Frank inquired.

"I saw a great many while I was travelling through the country," Mr. Hegeman answered, "and in some instances had conversations with them. At the hotel where I stopped in Irkutsk the clerk was an exile, and so was the tailor that made an overcoat for me. Clerks in stores and shops, and frequently the proprietors, were exiles; the two doctors that had the largest practice were 'unfortunates' from Poland, and so was the director of the museum of the Geographical Society of Eastern Siberia. Some of the isvoshchiks were exiles. On one occasion an isvoshchik repeated the conversation which I had with a friend in French, without any suspicion that he understood what we were saying. Hardly a day passed that I did not meet an 'unfortunate,' and I was told that much of the refinement of society in the Siberian capital was due to the exiles. In talking with them I was careful not to allude in any way to their condition, and if they spoke of it, which was rarely the case, I always managed to turn the conversation to some other subject.

TAGILSK, CENTRE OF IRON-MINES OF SIBERIA.

"When on the road I met great numbers of exiles on their way eastward. Five-sixths of them were in sleighs or wagons, as it has been found cheaper to have them ride to their destinations than to walk. Those on foot were accompanied by their guards, also on foot; there was a wagon or sleigh in the rear for those who were ill or foot-sore, and there were two or more men on horseback to prevent desertions. Formerly all prisoners were obliged to walk to their destinations. The journey from St. Petersburg to Nertchinsk required two years, as it covered a distance of nearly five thousand miles."

"Do they sleep in the open air when on the road, or are they lodged in houses?" inquired Fred.

"There are houses every ten or fifteen miles, usually just outside the villages," was the reply. "In these houses the prisoners are lodged. The places are anything but inviting, as the space is not large. No attempt is made to keep it clean, and the ventilation is atrocious. In winter it is a shelter from the cold, but in summer the prisoners greatly prefer to sleep out-of-doors. Sometimes the guards will not grant permission for them to do so, owing to the danger of desertion, but the scruples of the guards may be overcome by a promise obtained from all that no attempt will be made to escape, and that everybody shall watch everybody else.

A SIBERIAN VALLEY.

"From fifty to two hundred exiles form a batch or convoy. They are sent off once or twice a week, according to the number that may be on hand. All the convoys of exiles go to Omsk, in Western Siberia, and from there they are distributed throughout the country—some in one direction and some in another. Those that travel on foot rest every third day, and the ordinary march of a day is about fifteen miles; those in carriages are hurried forward, only resting on Sundays, and not always then."

"Do the guards of a convoy go all the way through with the prisoners?"

"No, they do not; they go from one large town to another. In the large towns there are prisons which serve as depots where exiles are accumulated, and the distribution of prisoners is generally made from these points. The officers and soldiers in charge of a convoy take their prisoners to one of these depots and deliver up their charges; receipts are given for the number of men delivered, just as for so many boxes or bales of goods. The guard can then return to its starting-point, and the prisoners are locked up until the convoy is ready for the road again.

"The guards are responsible for their prisoners, both from escape and injury. If a man dies on the road his body is carried to the next station for burial, so that the station-master and others may certify to the death; and if a man is killed while attempting to escape, the same disposition must be made of his body.

"Some years ago a Polish lady who was going into exile fell from a boat while descending a river. She had a narrow escape from drowning, and the officer in charge of her was very much alarmed. When she was rescued from the water, he said to her, 'I shall be severely punished if you escape or any accident happens to you. I have tried to treat you kindly, and beg of you, for my sake, not to drown yourself or fall into the river again.'"

"But don't a good many escape from Siberia, and either go back to their homes or get to foreign countries?"

"The number of escapes is not large," Mr. Hegeman answered, "as the difficulties of getting out of the country are very great. In the first place, there is the immense distance from the middle of Siberia to Moscow or St. Petersburg, or, worse still, to Poland. Nobody can hire horses at a station without showing his *paderojnia*, and this is only issued by the police-master, who knows the name and probably the face of every exile in his district. Even if a man gets a *paderojnia* by fraud, his absence would soon be discovered, and his flight can be

stopped by the use of the telegraph.

"If an exile should try to get out of the country by going northward he would be stopped by the shores of the Arctic Ocean. If he goes to the south he enters China, or the inhospitable regions of Central Asia, where it is difficult, if not impossible, for a European to travel alone.

"Occasionally some one escapes by way of the Amoor River, or the ports of the Okhotsk Sea; but there are not many ships entering and leaving those ports, and the police keep a sharp watch over them to make sure that they do not carry away more men than they bring. I once met in Paris a Pole who had escaped from Siberia by this route. By some means that he would not reveal to me, he managed to get out of the Amoor River and cross to the island of Saghalin. The southern half of the island was then in possession of the Japanese, and he lived among them for several months. Then he got on board an American whaling-ship, and worked his passage to San Francisco, where he found some countrymen, who helped him on his way to Paris.

TWO EXILED FRIENDS MEETING.

"I know another man, a Russian nobleman, who escaped from Siberia and went back over the route by which he had come. For convenience I will call him Ivanoff, though that was not his name. He accomplished it in this way:

"He had concealed quite a sum of money about his person, which the guards failed to find after searching him repeatedly. His offence was political, and he was sentenced to twenty years' exile. While his convoy was on the road between Krasnoyarsk and Irkutsk, he arranged to change names with Petrovitch, a criminal who had been sentenced to three years' banishment, and was to remain near Irkutsk. Ivanoff was to go beyond Lake Baikal, whence escape is much more difficult. For one hundred roubles the criminal consented to the change, and to take his chances for the result.

"The substitution was made at the depot in Irkutsk, where the names were called off and the new convoys made out. The convoy for the trans-Baikal was first made up, and when Ivanoff's name was read the burglar stepped forward and answered the question as to his sentence. The officers who had accompanied them from Krasnoyarsk were not present, and so there was no great danger of the fraud being discovered; the convoy was made up, the new officers moved off, and that was the last my friend saw of his hired substitute.

ESCAPING EXILES CROSSING A STREAM.

"Ivanoff (under his new name of Petrovitch) was sent to live in a village about twenty miles from Irkutsk, and required to report twice a week to the police. He found employment with a peasant farmer, and managed to communicate with a friend in Irkutsk, though not without much difficulty. The peasant used to send him to market with the produce of the farm, as he found that Ivanoff could obtain better prices than himself; the fact was he generally sold to his friend, who purposely overpaid him, and if he did not find his friend he added a little to the amount out of his own pocket. Ivanoff and his friend haggled a great deal over their transactions, and thus conversed without arousing suspicion.

"Things went on in this way for some months, and the good conduct of the apparently reformed criminal won him the favor of the police-master to whom he was required to report. His time of reporting was extended to once a week, and later to once a month. This gave him the chance of escaping.

"By a judicious use of his money he secured the silence of his employer and obtained a paderojnia of the second class. The day after reporting to the police he went to fish in the Angara, the river that flows past Irkutsk and has a very swift current. As soon as he was missed his employer led the search in the direction of the river. The coat, basket, and fishing-rod of the unfortunate man lay on the bank; it was easy to see that he had been standing on a stone at the edge of the water, and the stone having given way the river had swallowed Ivanoff, and carried his body away towards the Arctic Ocean. Some money was in the pocket of the coat, and was appropriated by the officers.

IVANOFF'S CAVE.

"But instead of being drowned, Ivanoff was safely concealed in a cave under a large rock in the forest. He had found it on one of his hunting excursions, and had previously conveyed to it a quantity of provisions, together with some clothing supplied by his friend in Irkutsk. There he remained for a fortnight; then he went to Irkutsk, and started on his journey.

"People leaving Irkutsk frequently drive to the first station in their own vehicles, and there hire the carriages of the posting service. So one evening Ivanoff rode out to the station in a carriage hired in front of the hotel. He did not tell me, but I suspect that his friend supplied the carriage, and possibly handled the reins himself.

"At the station he boldly exhibited his paderojnia and demanded horses, and in a few minutes he was on the road. Safe? Well, he could never tell whether he was safe or not, as the telegraph might at any moment flash an order for his

detention.

"On and on he went. He pretended to be, and really was, in a great hurry. He was liberal to the drivers, but not over-liberal, lest he might be suspected. Suspicion would lead to inquiry, and inquiry would be followed by arrest. But he obtained the best speed that could be had for a careful use of money, and was compelled to be satisfied.

"Several times he thought he had been discovered, and his feelings were those of intense agony. At one of the large stations the smotretal came to him with an open telegram which said a prisoner was missing, and orders had been sent along the line to watch for him.

"Ivanoff took the telegram and read it. Then he noted down the description of the fugitive (happily not himself), and told the smotretal to take no further trouble till he heard from him, but to keep a sharp watch for all new arrivals. 'Unless I telegraph you from the next town,' said he, 'you may be sure that he has not passed any of the intervening stations.'

"He went on, and heard no more of the matter. At another point he fell in with a Russian captain going the same way as himself. The captain proposed they should travel together, for the double purpose of companionship and economy. Much as he disliked the proposal, he was forced to accede, as a refusal might rouse suspicion.

"Luckily for him, his new friend was garrulous, and did most of the talking; but, like most garrulous people, he was inquisitive, and some of his queries were decidedly unpleasant. Ivanoff had foreseen just such a circumstance, and made up a plausible story. He had just come to Siberia, and only three days after his arrival was summoned back by the announcement of his father's death. His presence was needed in St. Petersburg to arrange the financial affairs of the family.

EXILES AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.

"By this story he could account for knowing nobody in Siberia; and as he was well acquainted with St. Petersburg he could talk as freely as one might wish about the affairs of the capital. He was thrown into a cold perspiration at one of the stations, where his garrulous companion proposed, as a matter of whiling away the time after breakfast, that they should examine the register for the record of their journeys eastward. Ivanoff managed to put the idea out of his head, and ever after made their stay at the stations as short as possible.

"Imagine Ivanoff's feelings when one day the other said,

"Exiles sometimes escape by getting forged passports and travelling on them. Wouldn't it be funny if you were one? Ha! ha! ha!"

"Of course Ivanoff laughed too, and quite as heartily. Then he retorted,

"Now that you mentioned it, I've half a mind to take you to the next police-station and deliver you up as a fugitive. Ha! ha! ha! Suppose we do it, and have some fun with the police?"

"Thereupon the serious side of the affair developed in the mind of Mr. Garrulity. He declined the fun of the thing, and soon the subject was dropped. It was occasionally referred to afterwards, and each thought how funny it would be if the other were really a fugitive.

"They continued in company until they reached Kazan. There they separated, Ivanoff going to Nijni Novgorod and Moscow, and from the latter proceeding by railway to Smolensk and Warsaw. From Warsaw he went to Vienna. As soon as he set foot on the soil of Austria he removed his hat and, for the first time in many months, inhaled a full breath of air without the feeling that the next moment might see him in the hands of the dreaded police. He was now a free man."

"And what became of his companion?"

"When they separated at Kazan, the latter announced his intention of descending the Volga to Astrachan. It was fully a year afterwards that my friend was passing a café in Paris, and heard his assumed name called by some one seated under the awning in front of the establishment. Turning in the direction of the voice, he saw his old acquaintance of the Siberian road.

"They embraced, and were soon sipping coffee together. Ivanoff talked freely, now that he was out of danger of discovery, and astonished his old acquaintance by his volubility. At length the latter said,

"What a flow of language you have here in Paris, to be sure. You never talked so much in a whole day when we were together as in the hour we've sat here."

"Good reason for it," answered Ivanoff. "I had a bridle on my tongue then, and it's gone now. I was escaping from a sentence of twenty years in Siberia for political reasons."

"And that's what made you so taciturn," said the other. "I was escaping from the same thing, and that's what made me so garrulous. When we met at that station I

feared you might be on the lookout for me; and much as I hated doing so, I proposed that we should travel together.'

"They had a good laugh over the circumstances of their journey, where each was in mortal terror of the other. The one was talkative and the other silent for exactly the same reason—to disarm suspicion.

SIBERIAN PEASANTS.

"I could tell you other stories of escaping from exile, but this one is a fair sample of them all. Of those who attempt to leave the country not one in twenty ever succeeds, owing to the difficulties I have mentioned, and the watchfulness of the police. The peasants of Siberia will generally help an escaping exile, but they do not dare to do it openly. Many of them put loaves of bread outside their windows at night, so that the runaways can come and obtain food without being seen. They plant little patches of turnips near the villages for the same reason, and call them gifts to the 'unfortunates.' Whenever the soldiers find any of these turnip-patches they destroy them, in order to hinder the progress of fugitives.

"There is said to be a secret road or path through Siberia known only to the exiles; it is about two thousand miles long, avoids all the regular lines of travel, and keeps away from the towns and villages. It winds over plains and among the mountains, through forests and near the rivers, and is marked by little mounds of earth, and by notches cut in the trees.

"Those who travel this road must undergo great hardship, and it is said that not more than half who undertake it are ever heard of again. They perish of starvation or cold, or may venture too near the villages in search of food, and fall into the hands of the police. The path must be travelled on foot, as it is not sufficiently broad for horses; and when any part of it is discovered by the soldiers the route must be changed. The exiles have means of communicating with each other, and no matter how closely the authorities may watch them, an occurrence in one Siberian prison will soon be known at all others in the country."

Frank asked Mr. Hegeman if he had ever seen any prisoners in Siberia wearing chains?

SIBERIAN MILK-WOMEN.

"Many of them," was the reply, "especially in the prisons in the towns, and at the places where they are kept at hard labor. The simple exiles are not required to wear chains; it is only those condemned to hard labor for a long term of years

that are thus oppressed. By an old law of Russia the chains must not weigh more than five pounds; there is a belt around the waist, and from this belt a chain extends to an iron band around each ankle. The clanking of the chains, either on the road or in the prisons, has a most horrible sound.

"The continued use of this relic of barbarism is strenuously opposed by a great many Russians. With the exception of the 'ball and chain,' which is a form of military punishment everywhere, no other Christian nation now requires its prisoners to wear chains continually. If the Emperor of Russia would issue a decree that henceforth no prisoner shall be put in chains except for specially unruly conduct or other good cause, and abolish altogether the present regulations about chains, he would take a long advance step for his nation."

Doctor Bronson and the youths agreed with him. Fred was about to ask a question when one of the stewards made the announcement, "*Obed gotovey, gospoda!*" ("Dinner is ready, gentlemen!")

Siberia and its exiles were forgotten for the time, as the party adjourned to the dining-saloon of the steamer.

SIBERIA IN SUMMER.



CHAPTER XVII.

CHARACTER OF THE SIBERIAN POPULATION.—ABSENCE OF SERFDOM, AND ITS EFFECT.—A RUSSIAN FÊTE.—AMUSEMENTS OF THE PEASANTRY.—COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE.—CURIOUS CUSTOMS.—WHIPPING A WIFE.—OVERLAND THROUGH SIBERIA AGAIN.—CHETAH AND THE BOURIATS.—IN A BOURIAT VILLAGE.—VERCKNE UDINSK.—SIBERIAN ROBBERS.—TEA-TRAINS AND TEA-TRADE.—KIACHTA.—LODGED BY THE POLICE.—TRADE BETWEEN RUSSIA AND CHINA.

When the conversation about Siberia was resumed, Frank suggested that there must be a great many people in that country who were descended from exiles, since it had been for a long time a place of banishment, and the exiles were accompanied in many cases by their families.

"Your supposition is correct," said Mr. Hegeman; "the descendants of exiles are probably more numerous to-day than are the exiles themselves. Eastern Siberia is mainly peopled by them, and Western Siberia very largely so. All serfs exiled to Siberia under the system prevailing before the emancipation became free peasants, and could not be restored to their former condition of servitude.

"Many descendants of exiles have become wealthy through commerce or gold-mining, and occupy positions which they never could have obtained in European Russia. When I visited Irkutsk I made the acquaintance of a merchant whose fortune ran somewhere in the millions. He had a large house, with a whole retinue of servants, and lived very expensively. He was the son of an exiled serf, and made his fortune in the tea-trade.

"Many prominent merchants and gold-miners were mentioned as examples of the prosperity of the second and third generations from exiles. Of those who had made their own fortunes in the country the instances were by no means few. One, an old man, who was said to have a large fortune and a charming family of well-educated children, was pointed out as an illustration of the benefits of exile. Forty years before that time he was sent to Siberia by his master out of the merest caprice. In Siberia he obtained fortune and social position. Had he remained in Europe he would probably have continued a simple peasant, and

reared his children in ignorance.

AN EXILE PEASANT AND HIS FRIENDS.

"The advantages of Siberia are further shown by the fact that a great many exiles decline to return to European Russia after their terms of service are ended. Especially is this the case with those who are doing well financially, or have families with them, either from their old homes or by marriage in Siberia. I talked with several intelligent Poles, who said they did not intend returning to Poland. 'We were drawn unwillingly into the acts that caused our banishment,' they said, 'and may suffer again in the same way if we go home; in Siberia there are no disturbing influences around us, and we prefer to stay here.' On the other hand, the love of home is very strong with many exiles, and they take the first opportunity of leaving the country of their banishment."

Fred asked if they had the same system of serfdom in Siberia before the emancipation as in European Russia.

"At the time of the emancipation," said Mr. Hegeman, "there was only one proprietor of serfs in all Siberia; he was the grandson of a gentleman who received a grant of land, with serfs, from Catherine II. None of the family, with a single exception, ever attempted to exercise more than nominal authority, and that one was murdered in consequence of enforcing his full proprietary rights."

A SIBERIAN LANDSCAPE.

"Siberia was a land of freedom, so far as serfs were concerned. The system of serfdom never had any foothold there. The Siberians say that the superior prosperity enjoyed by the peasants of their part of Russia had a great deal to do with the emancipation measures of Alexander II. The Siberian peasants were noticeably better fed, clothed, and educated than the corresponding class in European Russia, and the absence of masters gave them an air of independence. Distinctions were much less marked among the people, and in many instances the officials associated familiarly with men they would have hesitated to recognize on the other side of the Ural Mountains."

"It sounds odd enough to talk about Siberia as a land of freedom," said Fred, "when we've always been accustomed to associate the name of the country with imprisonment."

Just then the steamer stopped at one of its regular landings; and as she was to be there for an hour or more, the party took a stroll on shore. There were only two or three houses at the landing-place, the town which it supplied lying a little

back from the river, upon ground higher than the bank.

It happened to be a holiday, and there was quite a group at the landing-place. The peasants were in their best clothes, and several games were in progress. Frank and Fred hardly knew which way to turn, as there were several things they wished to see all at once.

GIRLS PLAYING AT SKAKIET.

Some girls were in a circle, with their hands joined; they were singing songs which had a good deal of melody, and the whole performance reminded the youths of the "round-a-ring-a-rosy" game of their native land. Close by this group were two girls playing a game which was called *skakiet* in Russian. They had a board balanced on its centre, and a girl stood on each end of the board. The maidens jumped alternately into the air, and the descent of one caused her companion to go higher each time. Mr. Hegeman said it was a favorite amusement in the Russian villages. It required a little practice, as the successful performer must maintain a perfectly upright position. Two girls who are skilled at the game will sometimes keep up this motion for fifteen or twenty minutes without apparent fatigue.

Among the men there were wrestling-matches, which were conducted with a good deal of vigor. Frank observed that some of the wrestlers received very ugly falls, but did not seem to mind them in the least. The Russian peasantry are capable of rough handling. They are accustomed to it all their lives, and not at all disturbed by anything of an ordinary character. They resemble the lower classes of the English populace more than any other people.

The women are more refined than the men in their amusements. Singing and dancing are very popular among them, and they have quite a variety of dances. A favorite dance is in couples, where they spin round and round, until one of the pair drops or sits down from sheer fatigue.

A VILLAGE FESTIVAL.

As our friends strolled near the river-bank they came upon a group of women engaged in one of these dances. Three or four of the by-standers were singing, and thus supplied the music; two women stood facing each other in the centre of the group, each with her hands resting on her hips. One of the singers raised her hands, and at this signal the whirling began.

When this couple was tired out another came forward, and so the dance was kept up. Fred thought the dress of the dancers was not particularly graceful, as each

woman wore stout boots instead of shoes. They had already observed that the old-fashioned boot is not by any means confined to the sterner sex among the Russian peasantry.

Some of the women wore flowers in their hair, but the majority of the heads were covered with handkerchiefs. Doctor Bronson explained to the youths that a woman may wear her hair loosely while she is unmarried, but when she becomes a wife she wraps it in a kerchief, or encloses it in a net.

Naturally this explanation by the Doctor led to a question about marriage customs in Russia.

"Courtship in Russia is not like the same business in America," remarked the Doctor, in reply to the query. "A good deal of it has to be done by proxy."

"How is that?"

"When a young fellow wishes to take a wife, he looks around among the young women of his village and selects the one that best pleases him. Then he sends a messenger—his mother, or some other woman of middle age—to the parents of the girl, with authority to begin negotiations. If they can agree upon the terms of the proposed marriage, the amount of dowry the bride is to receive, and other matters bearing on the subject, the swain receives a favorable report. Sometimes the parents of the girl are opposed to the match, and will not listen to any proposals; in such case the affair ends at once, the girl herself having nothing to say in the matter. Quite likely she may never know anything about it.

"The whole business is arranged between the elders who have it in charge. The custom seems to be largely Oriental in its character, though partaking somewhat of the marriage ways of France and other European countries.

"Supposing the negotiations to have resulted favorably, the young man is notified when he can begin his visits to the house of his beloved. He dresses in his best clothes (very much as an American youth would do under similar circumstances), and calls at the appointed time. He carries a present of some kind—and the long-established custom requires that he must never make a call during his courtship without bringing a present. One of the gifts must be a shawl."

"In that case," said Fred, "the young men are probably favorable to short courtships, while the girls would be in no hurry. If every visit must bring a present, a long courtship would heap up a fine lot of gifts."

"That is quite true," Doctor Bronson replied, "and instances have been known

where the match was broken off after the patience and pocket of the suitor were exhausted. But he has a right to demand a return of his presents in such an event."

"And, as has happened in similar cases in America," Frank retorted, "he does not always get them."

"Quite true," said the Doctor, with a smile; "but the family playing such a trick would not find other suitors very speedily. Human nature is the same in all countries, and even the young man in love is shy of being defrauded."

RUSSIAN PEASANT WOMEN.

"But we will suppose everything has gone favorably," the Doctor continued, "and the suitor has been accepted. As a matter of fact, Russian courtships are short, only a month or two, and possibly for the reason you suggested. A day is fixed for the betrothal, and the ceremony takes place in the presence of the families of both the parties to the engagement. The betrothal is virtually a marriage ceremony, as it binds the two so firmly together that only the most serious reasons can separate them. The betrothal ceremony is at the house of the bride's parents, and is followed in due course by the wedding, which takes place in church.

"Custom requires that the bride shall supply a certain quantity of linen and other household property, while the husband provides the dwelling and certain specified articles of furniture. Between them they should be able to set up house-keeping immediately, but there are probably many cases where they cannot do so. Among well-to-do people the bride provides a dozen shirts, a dressing-gown, and a pair of slippers for her husband; she is supposed to spin the flax, weave it into cloth, and make the shirts; but, as a matter of fact, she buys the material, and very often gets the garments ready-made.

"For a day or two before the wedding, all the dowry of the bride is exhibited in a room set apart for the purpose; a priest blesses it with holy water, and friends call to gaze upon the matrimonial trophies. Among the middle and upper classes the bridegroom gives a dinner to his bachelor friends, as in some other countries, the evening before the wedding; the bride on the same evening assembles her companions, who join in singing farewell to her. The bridegroom sends them a liberal supply of candy, cakes, bonbons, and the like, and they indulge in quite a festivity.

"Among the peasants the companions of the bride accompany her to the bath on the evening before the wedding, and both going and returning she is expected to

weep bitterly and loudly. An English lady tells how she heard a Russian girl, who was about to be married, giving vent to the wildest grief, while her companions were trying to cheer her by singing. The lady felt very sorry for the poor maiden, and rejoiced when she passed out of hearing.

"A little later in the evening the lady went with a friend to call at the bride's cottage, and entered quite unannounced. The bride was supping heartily, her face full of expressions of joy; the Englishwoman was startled and still more surprised when the girl asked,

"'Didn't I do it well?'

"It then came out that the weeping was all a farce, though there may be cases where it is not so.

MAKING CALLS AFTER A WEDDING.

"On the day of the wedding the bride and groom do not see each other until they meet in church. After the ceremony the whole party goes to the house of the bride's parents, where a reception is held in honor of the event. When it is over, the young couple go to their own home, if they have one; the next morning all the parents and relatives go and take coffee with the newly married; then there are dinner-parties at the houses of both pairs of parents; other parties and dinners follow, and sometimes the feasting is kept up for a week or more. It is a trying ordeal for all concerned, and there is general rejoicing when the festivities are over.

"Among the peasantry it is the custom, at least in some parts of Russia, for the bride to present a whip to her husband the day after the wedding. This whip is hung at the head of the bed, and, if report is true, it is not unfrequently used."

"I remember seeing a whip hanging at the head of the bed in some of the houses we have visited," said Fred, "and wondered what it was there for."

"The curious thing about the matter is," the Doctor continued, "that a good many wives expect the whip to be used. The same lady I just referred to says that one of her nurse-maids left her to be married. A short time after the marriage she went to the *nachalnik*, or justice of the peace, of her village, and complained that her husband did not love her. The *nachalnik* asked how she knew it, and the young wife replied,

"'Because he has not whipped me once since we were married!'

CEREMONY AFTER A PEASANT'S WEDDING.

"Among the peasantry the married couple goes to the house of the owner of the estate to receive his blessing. He comes to the door and welcomes them as they bow in front of him till their foreheads nearly touch the ground."

The steamer's whistle recalled the party, and in a little while they were again on their voyage. Mr. Hegeman resumed the story of his ride through Siberia as soon as all were seated in their accustomed places.

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"I think we were at Nertchinsk," said he, "when we turned aside to the mines where the exiles were formerly employed."

"Yes," replied Fred; "you had just arrived at the house of the friend of your companion, and accepted an invitation to remain for dinner."

"That was it, exactly," responded the traveller. "We had an excellent dinner, and soon after it was over we continued on our journey. We sent back the tarantasse which we had hired from the station-master, and obtained a larger and better one from our host."

"Two nights and the intervening day brought us, without any incident worth remembering, to Chetah, the capital of the province of the trans-Baikal. It is a town of four or five thousand inhabitants, and stands on the Ingodah River, a tributary of the Shilka. Below this point the river is navigable for boats and rafts, and it was here that General Mouravieff organized the expedition for the conquest of the Amoor. A considerable garrison is kept here, and the town has an important place in the history of Siberian exile. Many of the houses are large and well built. The officers of the garrison have a club, and ordinarily the society includes a good many ladies from European Russia."

"I stopped two or three days at Chetah, and my courier friend continued his journey. Finding a young officer who was going to Kiachta, on the frontier of Mongolia, I arranged to accompany him, and one evening we started. I think I have before told you that a Siberian journey nearly always begins in the evening, and is continued day and night till its close. The day is passed in making calls, and usually winds up with a dinner at somebody's house. After dinner, and generally pretty late in the evening, the last call is made, the last farewells are spoken, and you bundle into your vehicle and are off."

THE MOUNTAINS NEAR CHETAH.

"From Chetah the road steadily climbed the hills, and my companion said we

would soon be over the ridge of the Yablonnoi Mountains, and in the basin of the Arctic Ocean. From the eastern slope of the mountains the rivers flow through the Amoor to the Pacific Ocean; from the western slope they run into Lake Baikal, and thence through the outlet of that lake to the great frozen sea that surrounds the pole. The cold rapidly increased, and when we crossed the ridge it seemed that the thermometer went ten degrees lower in almost as many minutes.

"The country through which we passed was flat or slightly undulating, with occasional stretches of hills of no great height. There are few Russian villages, the principal inhabitants being Bouriats, a people of Mongol origin, who are said to have been conquered by the hordes of Genghis Khan five hundred years ago. They made considerable resistance to the Russians when the latter came to occupy the country, but ever since their subjugation they have been entirely peaceful.

A BOURIAT VILLAGE.

"Some of the Bouriats live in houses like those of the Russians, but the most of them cling to the *yourt* or *kibitka*, which is the peculiar habitation of the nomad tribes of Central Asia. Even when settled in villages they prefer the yourt to the house, though the latter is far more comfortable than the former.

"We changed horses in a Bouriats village, where a single Russian lived and filled the office of station-master, justice of the peace, governor, secretary, and garrison. I took the opportunity of visiting a yourt, which proved to be a circular tent about eighteen feet in diameter, and rounded at the top like a dome. There was a frame of light trellis-work covered with thick felt made from horse-hair; at the highest point of the dome the yourt has an open space which allows the smoke to pass out, at least in theory. A small fire is kept burning in the middle of the floor during the day, and covered up at night; the door is made of a piece of felt of double or treble thickness, and hanging like a curtain over the entrance.

"I had not been two minutes inside the yourt before my eyes began to smart severely, and I wanted to get into the open air. The pain was caused by the smoke, which was everywhere through the interior of the tent, but did not seem to inconvenience the Bouriats in the least. I noticed, however, that nearly all their eyes were red, and apparently inflamed, and doubtless this condition was caused by the smoke.

"A family of several persons finds plenty of space in one of these tents, as they can be very closely packed. The furniture is principally mats and skins, which are seats by day and beds by night. They have pots and kettles for cooking, a few

jars and bottles for holding liquids, sacks for grain, half a dozen pieces of crockery, and little else. A wooden box contains the valuable clothing of the family, and this box, with two or three bags and bundles, forms the entire wardrobe accommodation.

"My attention was drawn to a small altar on which were tiny cups containing oil, grain, and other offerings to the Deities. The Bouriats are Buddhists, and have their lamas to give them the needed spiritual advice. The lamas are numerous, and frequently engage in the same callings as their followers. By the rules of their religion they are not permitted to kill anything, however small or insignificant. Whenever a lama has a sheep to slaughter he gets everything ready, and then passes the knife to his secular neighbor.

"The Bouriats are not inclined to agriculture, but devote most of their energy to sheep-raising. They have large flocks, and sell considerable wool to the Russians. Their dress is a mixture of Russian and Chinese, the conveniences of each being adopted, and the inconveniences rejected. They decorate their waist-belts with steel or brass, shave the head, and wear the hair in a queue, but are not careful to keep it closely trimmed. With their trousers of Chinese cut, and sheepskin coats of Russian model, they presented an odd appearance. The women are not generally good-looking, but there is now and then a girl whose face is really beautiful.

"We were called from the yourt with the announcement '*Loshadi gotovey*' ('Horses are ready'), and were soon dashing away from the village. Our driver was a Bouriat; he handled the reins with skill and the whip with vigor, and in every way was the equal of his Russian competitor. For two or three hundred miles most of our drivers were Bouriats, and certainly they deserve praise for their equestrian abilities. At many of our stopping-places the station-masters were the only Russians, all the employ  s being Bouriats."

Frank asked whether the Bouriats had adopted any of the Russian manners and customs, or if they still adhered to their Mongol ways.

A WANDERING PRIEST.

"They stick to their customs very tenaciously," was the reply, "and as for their religion, the Russian priests have made no progress in converting them to the faith of the Empire. Two English missionaries lived for many years at Selenginsk, which is in the centre of the Bouriat country, and though they labored earnestly they never gained a single convert.

"Buddhism is of comparatively recent origin among these people. Two hundred years ago they were *Shamans*, or worshippers of good and evil spirits, principally the latter, and in this respect differed little from the wild tribes of the Amoor and of Northern Siberia. About the end of the seventeenth century the Bouriats sent a mission to Lassa, the religious capital of Thibet, and a stronghold of Buddhism. The members of this mission were appointed lamas, and brought back the paraphernalia and ritual of the new faith; they announced it to the people, and in an astonishingly short time the whole tribe was converted, and has remained firm ever since.

"We spent a day at Verckne Udinsk, which has a church nearly two hundred years old, and built with immensely thick walls to resist the earthquakes which are not uncommon there. In fact there was an earthquake shock while we were on the road, but the motion of the carriage prevented our feeling it. We only knew what had happened when we reached the station and found the master and his employés in a state of alarm.

"The Gostinna Dvor contained a curious mixture of Russians and Bouriats in about equal numbers, but there was nothing remarkable in the goods offered for sale. An interesting building was the jail, which seemed unnecessarily large for the population of the place. A gentleman who knew my companion told us that the jail was rapidly filling up for winter. 'We have,' said he, 'a great number of what you call tramps in America; in summer they wander through the country, and live by begging and stealing, but in winter they come to the jails to be lodged and fed until warm weather comes again. After spending the cold season here they leave in the spring—as the trees do.'

"He further told us there was then in the jail and awaiting trial a man who confessed to the murder of no less than seventeen people. He had been a robber, and when in danger of discovery had not hesitated to kill those whom he plundered. On one occasion he had killed four persons in a single family, leaving only a child too young to testify against him."

Fred wished to know if robberies were common in Siberia.

"Less so than you might suppose," was the reply, "when there is such a proportion of criminals among the population. They are mostly committed in summer, as that is the season when the tramps are in motion. The principal victims are merchants, who often carry money in large amounts; officers are rarely attacked, as they usually have only the money needed for their travelling expenses, and are more likely than the merchants to be provided with fire-arms

and skilled in their use. My companion and myself each had a revolver, and kept it where it could be conveniently seized in case of trouble. We never had any occasion to use our weapons, and I will say here that not once in all my journey through Siberia was I molested by highwaymen.

CROSSING THE SELENGA.

"When we left Verckne Udinsk we crossed the Selenga, a river which rises in Chinese Tartary, and after a long and tortuous course falls into Lake Baikal, whence its waters reach the Arctic Ocean. There was no bridge, and we traversed the stream on a ferry. The river was full of floating ice, and the huge cakes ground very unpleasantly against the sides of the craft which bore ourselves and our tarantasse. The river was on the point of freezing; there was just a possibility that it would close while we were crossing, and keep us imprisoned until such time as the ice was thick enough to bear us safely. As this would involve a detention of several hours where the accommodations were wretched, the outlook was not at all pleasant.

"All's well that ends well; we landed on a sand-bank on the other side, and after a little delay the boatmen succeeded in getting our carriage on shore without accident. About six miles from the river the road divided, one branch going to Irkutsk and the other to Kiachta, our destination. Away we sped up the valley of the Selenga. The road was not the best in the world, and we were shaken a good deal as the drivers urged their teams furiously.

"On this road we met long trains of carts laden with tea. Each cart has a load of from six to ten chests, according to the condition of the roads, and is drawn by a single horse. There is a driver to every four or five carts, and he has a bed on the top of one of his loads. The drivers were nearly always asleep, and their horses showed a good deal of intelligence in turning out whenever they heard the sound of our bells. If they did not turn out they received a reminder from the whip of our driver, who always had an extra stroke for the slumbering teamster."

Frank asked where these carts were going.

"They were going to Irkutsk," said Mr. Hegeman, "and from that city the most of the tea they carried was destined for European Russia."

"Oh, now I remember," said Frank; "Doctor Bronson told us about the tea importation from China, and how it all came overland down to 1860, with the exception of one cargo annually."

"Many persons still prefer the tea brought by land, as the herb is thought to be injured by passing over salt-water, although packed in air-tight chests. At the time I speak of, not less than a million chests of tea were taken annually from Kiachta to European Russia, a distance of four thousand miles. To Kiachta it came on the backs of camels from the tea districts of China, so that camels and horses in great number were employed in the transport of tea.

"Each chest is covered with rawhide, which protects it from rain and snow, and from the rough handling and shaking it receives. Across Siberia it is carried in carts in summer, and on sledges in winter. The horse-caravans travel sixteen hours out of every twenty-four, and the teams rarely go faster than a walk. The teams are the property of peasants, who make contracts for the work at a certain price per chest.

"For the latter part of the way the road was hilly and sandy, and our progress was slow. About nine in the evening we reached Kiachta; and as there is no hotel there, we went to the police-master to obtain lodgings."

"Not at the police-station, I hope," said Fred.

"Not at all," Mr. Hegeman responded, with a slight laugh. "In many towns of Siberia there is not sufficient travel to make hotel-keeping profitable, and consequently there are no hotels. By custom and law the inhabitants are required to receive travellers who may require accommodation, and all such lodging-places are registered with the police. For this reason we went to the police-master and received the name of the citizen who was to be honored with our company.

FINDING LODGINGS AT KIACHTA.

"It was about ten o'clock when we reached the house, accompanied by two soldiers who brought the mandate of the office and showed us the way. Everybody was in bed, and it required a good deal of knocking to rouse the servants and afterwards the master, who came to the door in his night-shirt. He stood shivering while our explanations were made, and did not seem to realize his ludicrous appearance until we were admitted to the mansion and our baggage was landed."

Frank inquired if it was often necessary in Siberian towns to obtain lodgings in this way, and whether they were paid for?

"It was only the lateness of the hour and the fact that neither of us had ever been in Kiachta that compelled us to apply to the police-master. Travellers are unfrequent in Siberia, and the few strangers that go through the country are cordially welcomed. Officers are entertained by their fellow-officers, and merchants by their fellow-merchants. Lodgings obtained as we obtained ours are paid for exactly as they would be at a hotel. We were invited to move the next day, but were so well lodged that we chose to stay where we were.

"The morning after our arrival we delivered our letters of introduction and made

numerous calls, the latter including a visit to the *Sargootchay*, or Chinese Governor of Mai-mai-chin. Which of you has read enough about the relations between China and Russia to tell me about these two places—Kiachta and Mai-mai-chin?"

Frank was the first to speak, which he did as follows:

"Kiachta and Mai-mai-chin were built in 1727 for the purposes of commerce—Mai-mai-chin meaning in Chinese 'place of trade.' The towns are about a hundred yards apart, one thoroughly Russian and the other as thoroughly Chinese. From 1727 to 1860 nearly all the trade between the two empires was conducted at this point, and the merchants who managed the business made great fortunes. Women were forbidden to live in Mai-mai-chin, and down to the present day the Chinese merchants keep their families at Urga, two or three hundred miles to the south. The same restriction was at first made upon the Russian merchants at Kiachta, but after a time the rule was relaxed and has never since been enforced. Until quite recently, strangers were forbidden to stay overnight in Kiachta, but were lodged at Troitskosavsk, about two miles away."

"I should say right here," remarked Mr. Hegeman, "that my friend and myself were really lodged in Troitskosavsk and not in Kiachta. The latter place had about a thousand inhabitants, and the former four or five thousand. At a distance only Kiachta is mentioned, just as a man may say he lives in London or New York when his home is really in a suburb of one of those cities."

"I have read somewhere," said Fred, "that the Russian and Chinese Governments stipulated in their treaty that the products and manufactures of each country should be exchanged for those of the other, and no money was to be used in their commercial transactions."

"That was the stipulation," said Doctor Bronson, "but the merchants soon found a way to evade it."

"How was that?"

CHINESE CASH FROM MAI-MAI-CHIN.

"The balance of trade was greatly in favor of China, as the Russians wanted great quantities of tea, while they did not produce or manufacture many things that the Chinese could use. Furs were the principal articles of Russian production that the Chinese would take, but their demand for them was not enough to meet the Russian demand for tea. The treaty forbade the use of gold or silver coin

under severe penalties, but somebody discovered that it did not prohibit articles of Russian manufacture being made of those metals. So they used to melt gold and silver coin, and cast them into Chinese idols which were sold by weight. The Government prohibited the melting of its coin, and then the merchants bought their crude gold and silver directly from the miners. With this source of supply always at hand they were able to supply 'articles of Russian manufacture' without difficulty. As late as 1860 every visitor to Kiachta was searched, to make sure that he had no gold coin in his possession."

ARTICLES OF RUSSIAN MANUFACTURE.



CHAPTER XVIII.

GENERAL ASPECTS OF MAI-MAI-CHIN.—DINNER WITH A CHINESE GOVERNOR.—A THEATRICAL PERFORMANCE.—LAKE BAIKAL: ITS REMARKABLE FEATURES.—A WONDERFUL RIDE.—IRKUTSK.—ITS POPULATION, SIZE, AND PECULIARITIES.—SOCIAL GAYETIES.—PREPARATIONS FOR A LONG SLEIGH-RIDE.—LIST OF GARMENTS.—VARIETIES OF SLEIGHS.—FAREWELL TO IRKUTSK.—SLEIGHING INCIDENTS.—FOOD ON THE ROAD.—SIBERIAN MAILS.—ADVANTAGES OF WINTER TRAVELLING.—SLEIGHING ON BARE GROUND.—A SNOWLESS REGION.—KRASNOYARSK.

"You have been in China, I believe," said Mr. Hegeman, during the pause that followed the story of how the Russian and Chinese merchants circumvented the stipulations of the treaty.

SCENE IN A CHINESE TEMPLE.

"Oh yes," Frank responded. "We were at Peking, which is, I think, only eight hundred miles from Kiachta. We went from Peking to the Great Wall of China, so that we were less than seven hundred miles from the point where you called on the Sargootchay. You can learn about our journey in 'The Boy Travellers in Japan and China.'"

"I shall read the book with great pleasure," was the reply, "now that I have met the youths whose travels are described in it. As you have seen the Chinese at home, and know their manners and customs, I won't take your time by telling you what I saw in Mai-mai-chin, which is just like any other Chinese city in nearly every respect.

"I may add that it is said to be the cleanest town in all China. It is only half a mile square, carefully laid out, and its streets are swept daily. Only the merchants and their employés, with a small garrison of soldiers, are allowed to live there, and consequently there is no poor population such as you always find in the other cities of the Empire."

"That must be a great relief," Fred remarked. "Wherever we went in China we

saw so much degradation and suffering that it destroyed a great deal of the pleasure of the journey."

"I didn't see a beggar in Mai-mai-chin," continued Mr. Hegeman, "nor anybody who looked like one. There were plenty of laborers employed in handling the tea and other merchandise, but they all appeared to be well cared for. Outside the town there was quite a camp of Mongolians with their camel-trains, which are employed in the transportation of goods across the great desert of Gobi.

"The Sargootchay invited me to dinner, and I went there with the Governor of Kiachta and some of his officers. The Sargootchay was polite, and we tried to talk, but had a good deal of difficulty in doing so on account of the numerous translations.

"What I thought in my own language I said in French to one of my Russian friends. He spoke in Russian to his Russian-Mongol interpreter, who spoke in Mongol to the Mongol-Chinese interpreter of the Sargootchay. Remarks and responses thus had to pass through four tongues to reach their destination.

THEATRE AT MAI-MAI-CHIN.

"The dinner was probably like what you had at Peking or Canton, and so I will not take the time to describe it. After dinner we went to the theatre, where we sat under a canopy and witnessed a performance which included, among other things, a procession of fictitious wild beasts. That they were very fictitious was shown by the accident of the tiger's mask falling off and revealing the head of an astonished man.

THE TIGER.

"The thermometer was below the freezing-point, and as the theatre was in the open air, I was very glad that the performance was short.

"From Kiachta I returned to Verckne Udinsk, and then proceeded to Irkutsk by way of Lake Baikal. This lake is said to be the largest body of fresh water in Asia. It is four hundred miles long by about fifty broad, and is fourteen hundred feet above the level of the sea. The quantity of water flowing into it is said to be ten times as much as passes from it by its outlet, the Angara River. What becomes of the other nine-tenths is a mystery that has puzzled many scientific men; none of them have been able to establish a theory which the others have not completely upset.

"I crossed the lake in a steamboat, and during the voyage listened eagerly to the description of the winter passage which is made on the ice. I will give it as

nearly as I can remember in the words of my informant, a gentleman who filled the position of Superintendent of Public Instruction in Eastern Siberia:

A NATURAL ARCH ON LAKE BAIKAL.

"The lake does not freeze over until quite late in the autumn, and when it does the whole surface is congealed in a single night. In a few days the ice is from three to six feet thick, and perfectly transparent. The first time I crossed it was from the western to the eastern shore. The former is mountainous, while the latter is low and flat. As we began our ride the land on the other side was quite invisible, and it seemed to me very much like setting out in a sleigh for a voyage from Queenstown to New York. When I leaned over and looked downward, it was like gazing into the depths of the ocean. It was not until I alighted and stood on the firm ice that I could dispel the illusion that we were gliding over the unfrozen surface of the lake, as the natives believe its guardian spirit walks upon the waters without sinking beneath them.

"At night every star was reflected as in a mirror, and I saw the heavens above me, beneath me, and all around. As the rising moon lighted up the faint horizon of ice and sky, I could half believe I had left the world behind me, and was moving away through the myriads of stars towards the centre of another solar system distinct from our own.'

"The natives have many superstitions concerning the Baikal," Mr. Hegeman continued. "In their language it is the 'Holy Sea,' and they consider it sacrilege to call it a lake. It is very deep, soundings of two thousand feet having been made without finding bottom. It is more like a sea than a lake in some of its peculiarities; gulls and other ocean birds fly over it, and it is the only body of fresh water on the globe where the seal abounds. There are banks of coral in some parts of it, in spite of the high northern latitude and the constant coldness of the water. The natives say that nobody is ever lost in the lake; any one drowned in its waters is thrown up on the shores."

"It must be a long drive from one side of the lake to the other," one of the youths remarked.

"It is, indeed," was the reply. "Formerly they had a station on the ice in the middle of the lake, which was removed at the approach of spring. One season the ice broke up unexpectedly, and the entire station, with all its men and horses, was swallowed up. Since that time no station has been kept there in winter, and the entire journey across, about fifty-five miles, is made without a change. The horses are carefully selected, and as the road is magnificent they go at great

speed, stopping only two or three times for a rest of a few minutes.

CAVERNS ON LAKE BAIKAL.

"The western shore is mountainous, and in places very picturesque. There are steep cliffs that come down to the water, and in some of these cliffs you find caverns and arches which recall the pictured shores of Lake Superior. Earthquakes are not unfrequent, and many persons believe that the lake occupies the crater of an extinct volcano whose internal fires are determined to keep themselves in remembrance. A village on the shore of the lake was destroyed by one of the shocks. Half of it was carried below the level of the water, and the other half thrown up to a considerable height above its former position.

"So much for this remarkable lake. From the western shore to Irkutsk (about forty miles) the road follows near the bank of the Angara, which is very swift. The river does not freeze until after the lake has been covered with ice, and for two or three miles below the point where it emerges from the lake it never freezes even in the severest winters. There is a great rock in the stream at this point which is regarded with superstition by the aboriginal inhabitants. They perform religious ceremonies when passing it, and formerly it was a place of sacrifice. Hundreds, if not thousands, of men, women, and children have been tossed from this rock to be drowned in the swift current flowing below it.

"It had been my original plan to reach Irkutsk on wheels, and remain there till the winter roads were formed, so that I could continue from that city in a sleigh. A snow-storm began an hour before I reached the city, and indicated that I had made a very good calculation; it cleared up soon after we passed the gate-way, and for several days thereafter the weather was delightful. My reception was most cordial; Americans were rare visitors in the capital of Eastern Siberia, and I was the first that many of the people had ever seen."

One of the youths remarked that he believed Irkutsk was a city of considerable size and importance.

PART OF IRKUTSK.

"It is the largest city in Siberia," said Mr. Hegeman, "and has a population of about thirty-five thousand. The Governor-general of Eastern Siberia lives there. He has many officers attached to his staff. There are many wealthy citizens. The houses are large, well built, and furnished, and the style of living is liberal.

"The winter opens with a long list of balls, parties, dinners, concerts, and other festivities, which are kept up until the coming of the Lenten season. Every

family keeps open house through the winter, and it is customary to drop in whenever one chooses, and take tea at eight o'clock. There is no formality about the matter. One of the ladies of the house presides at the *samovar*, and the others of the party are scattered around the parlors wherever it is most convenient or agreeable to be. My recollections of Irkutsk are of the most pleasant sort, and I greatly regret the place is so far away that one cannot easily revisit it.

VIEW OF THE PRINCIPAL SQUARE IN IRKUTSK.

"Since I was there Irkutsk has suffered by a fire that destroyed more than half the buildings, and caused a vast amount of distress. For a time it was thought the city would not be rebuilt, but I hear that it is being restored very rapidly, and in a few years will be more attractive than it was before the conflagration.^[5]

DRESSED FOR THE ROAD.

"When the winter roads were reported in a condition for travelling I began my preparations for leaving Irkutsk on a sleigh-ride of thirty-six hundred miles. The thermometer went to twenty degrees below zero soon after the first fall of snow, and my Russian friends told me to prepare for forty below. Under their advice I employed a tailor who knew his business, and when his work was completed my room resembled a clothing store of modest proportions. Here is what I bought: A sheepskin coat with the wool inside; the garment fell below my knees, was without a collar, and buttoned tight around the neck. It was intended for wearing outside my ordinary suit of clothing. Outside of this was what the Russians call a *dehar*; it was made of deer-skin, with the hair outward, and as I walked it swept the floor like a lady's ball-dress. The sleeves were six inches longer than my arms, and very inconvenient when I wished to pick up any small article; the collar was a foot wide, and when turned up and brought around in front completely concealed my head. Then I had a fur cap, circular in shape and with lappets for covering the ears. A lady made, from a piece of sable-skin, a mitten for my nose.

"For my foot-gear I discarded my leather boots. Outside of my ordinary socks I had a pair of squirrel-skin socks with the fur inside, sheepskin stockings with the wool inside and reaching to the knee, and outside of these were deer-skin boots, with the hair outside, and reaching up nearly to the junction of my lower limbs. Added to these garments for excluding cold was a robe of sheepskins with the wool on, and backed with heavy cloth. It was seven feet square, and something like a dozen skins were required for making it. At one end it was shaped into a

sort of bag for receiving the feet."

Fred suggested that such a costume must be very inconvenient for walking, and it must be no easy matter to enter and leave a sleigh when thus wrapped for a cold night.

"You are quite right," said Mr. Hegeman; "it is the work of a minute or more to turn over at night and change one's position, excepting, of course, when the sleigh turns over first."

"Did that happen often?"

"Fortunately not," was the reply, "but the few experiences of this kind that I had were quite sufficient. One night we were upset while going at full speed down a hill. I was asleep at the time, and without the least warning found myself in a mass of baggage, hay, furs, and snow. My first thought was that an earthquake had hit us, and it was several seconds before I realized what had happened. One of the horses broke loose and ran away; the driver mounted the other and went after the fugitive, and for half an hour my companion and myself were left alone with the sleigh and its contents. We kept ourselves busy trying to get things to rights, and as we had only the light of the stars to work by, we did not get along rapidly.

"We found one of the shafts and also a fender broken; otherwise the vehicle had suffered no material damage. But I'm getting ahead of the story.

"I arranged to leave Irkutsk with some Russian friends who were going to Krasnoyarsk, the next provincial capital. After getting my furs, the next thing was to buy a sleigh, and again I took advice.

A VASHOK.

"There is a sleigh called a *vashok*, which is much like a small omnibus. It has doors at the side and is very capacious, but it has the disadvantage that you are completely enclosed in it, and can see nothing of the country you are passing through. A better vehicle is the *kibitka*, a sort of tarantasse on runners, and suggestive of the American chaise in the arrangement of its front. There is a hood which can be lowered and fastened to an apron rising from the wooden box, in which your feet are pushed when you enter the vehicle. By day you can see the country and enjoy the fresh air, and at night or in storms you close the hood and are very well protected from the weather. Ladies and invalids prefer the *vashok*, while healthy men have a decided liking for the *kibitka*.

MY KIBITKA.

"At the rear of the kибitka there is usually a frame of poles, covered with a net of half inch rope. It is a convenient receptacle for extra baggage, and also serves to break the force of horses running against the sleigh from behind.

"The driver of the vashok sits on a seat much like that of an ordinary carriage, while on the kибitka he is seated on the boxed front, with his feet hanging over the side. The position is one that requires constant vigilance to prevent falling off. The driver of a vashok might possibly sleep a little without danger, but not so the driver of a kибitka.

"My kибitka was made in European Russia, and was said to have travelled six thousand miles before I owned it. In my possession it went thirty-six hundred miles, and was certainly good for several thousand more. In the whole ride it cost me about five dollars for repairs, principally to the shafts and fenders. I gave eighty roubles for the sleigh in Irkutsk, and sold it at Nijni Novgorod for ten.

FAREWELL TO IRKUTSK.

"The day of my departure was spent in making farewell calls and getting the baggage in readiness. A Russian gentleman was to accompany me in my sleigh; two ladies, mother and daughter, were to be in another; and two servants of the ladies, a man and a maid, were to be in a third. The ladies lived in Irkutsk, and we were to dine at their house and start from it. At the appointed time we went there.

"There was a gay party at the dinner, and when it was over the starting signal was given. All present seated themselves around the parlor, and a few moments were given to silent prayer, the travellers asking, and the others wishing for them, a safe journey. On rising, all who professed the religion of the Eastern Church made the sign of the cross before the *ikon*, or holy picture, and bowed towards it. Every true Russian scrupulously observes this ceremony before starting on a journey, whether by land or water.

"The Angara sweeps gracefully around two sides of Irkutsk, and many of the houses are on the bank. There is a swinging ferry to connect the opposite shores; the boat is at the end of a strong cable, anchored nearly a mile up the stream, and it is swung across through the force of the current against its sides. Starting for Moscow it is necessary to cross the river, and I was told there would be some friends at the ferry to see me off. We had a good deal of seeing off, as nearly a dozen sleighs, filled with friends of my companions, were to accompany us to the first station.

"When we reached the bank it was the close of the day; in fact, dusk was about

coming on. The ferry-boat was coming from the other shore. I looked, and saw it was dressed in flags and Chinese lanterns; I looked again, and there were American flags!—four American flags and one Russian. It was the first time my national standard had ever been hoisted at Irkutsk.

"There was a lump in my throat and a film over my eyes as I raised my cap and tried to give three cheers. My voice proved to be husky, and the effort was not crowned with distinguished success. It was a surprise planned by several of my Russian friends; when it was all over, I remembered how one of the ladies had asked me several days before how the American flag was made, and obtained from me a drawing showing the arrangement of stripes and stars. There wasn't an American flag in Irkutsk, and they had caused these to be made for the occasion."

"What a hospitable people they must be at Irkutsk!" said Frank. Fred echoed the sentiment, and so did Doctor Bronson. The latter said it was only those who had been a long time from home who could appreciate the feeling that comes over a man when he sees his country's flag thus displayed.

"After many expressions of good-will and good wishes for everybody, and hand-shakings without number, our sleighs were driven on the ferry-boat, and we swung across the Angara. At the first station we made a merry party till a late hour; then the friends who came to see us off returned to Irkutsk, while we travellers took to our sleighs and went comfortably to sleep, while our horses dashed gayly over the smooth road.

"For the first fifty miles after leaving Irkutsk the road follows the bank of the Angara; at times we were close to the dark waters, and never far away from them. A dense fog, or frost-cloud, lay on the river; the night was cold, and the moisture congealed on everything where it could find a resting-place. In the morning every part of my sleigh save the running portion was white with hoar-frost. Each little fibre projecting from the canvas and matting that formed the cover had been turned to a stalactite or a stalagmite, and the head of every nail and bolt resembled oxydized silver. Horses were white without regard to their natural color, and even the garments of the drivers had come in for their share of the congelation.

WORK OF THE FROST-KING.

"Many times afterwards I had occasion to remark the beauties of the work of the frost-king. Houses and fences were cased in ice, its thickness varying with the condition of the weather. Trees and bushes were covered with crystals, and in the

morning sunlight they sparkled as though coated with diamonds. Sometimes the trees resembled fountains caught and frozen when in full action. The pictured delineations of the frost had all the varieties of the kaleidoscope, but without its colors.

"During the night I slept well, in spite of several severe thumps received from sleighs going in the other direction. Russian sleighs are so built that two of them can run together with considerable force without serious consequences. Look at the picture of a vashok and you will understand it.

"The runners are about thirty inches apart, and generally shod with iron. On each side there is a fender, which consists of a stout pole fastened to the forward end of the runner, and extending downward and outward to the rear, where it is about two feet from the runner and held by strong braces. On a level surface it is just clear of the snow, but when the vehicle tips ever so little the fender sustains the weight and prevents an overturn. When two sleighs moving in opposite directions come together, the fenders slip against each other like a pair of fencing foils.

"Occasionally the shock of meeting is so severe that the fenders are broken. An accident of this kind happened one day to my kibitka, the fender on one side being completely torn off. At the next station I summoned a carpenter and had the missing fender restored and made stronger than it was before."

Frank asked how the traveller's baggage was carried in a Siberian sleigh?

"Baggage is spread over the bottom of the sleigh," said Mr. Hegeman, in reply to the question. "Wooden and other solid trunks must be discarded, and in their place the Russians have what they call *chemidans*. The chemidan is made of soft leather, very broad and flat, and must not be filled with fragile articles. For ladies' bonnets and other crushable things there are chemidans which more resemble the packing-case of a framed picture than anything else; they fit easily into the bottom of a sleigh or tarantasse, and are strong enough to bear the weight of the traveller. Baggage is spread over the bottom of the vehicle, and the chinks and crevices are filled with straw or hay to make as level a surface as possible. Over this is spread a rug of sheepskins. There is no seat as in an ordinary vehicle, but you sit there very much as you would on the carpet in the corner of a room. Each traveller has a corner of the sleigh, and wedges himself into a comfortable position by means of pillows; he may lie down, recline, or sit bolt upright as he chooses."

"Did you carry your provisions for the road, or could you rely upon the stations

to furnish them?" Fred inquired.

INTERIOR OF A RUSSIAN INN.

"We could rely upon the stations for the *samovar* with hot water, and for bread and eggs," was the reply, "the same as in the tarantasse journey I have already described, but everything else that we wanted had to be carried along. We had our own tea and sugar, likewise our roast-beef, cabbage-soup, and *pilmania*."

"What is *pilmania*?"

"The best thing imaginable for this kind of travelling. It consists of a piece of cooked meat—beef or mutton—about the size of a grape, seasoned and wrapped in a thin covering of dough, and then rolled in flour. We had at starting nearly a bushel of these dough-covered meat-balls frozen solid and carried in a bag. When we reached a station where we wished to dine, sup, or breakfast, we ordered the *samovar*, and said we had *pilmania*, before getting out of the sleigh. A pot of water was immediately put on the fire and heated to the boiling-point; then a double handful of our *pilmania* was dropped into the pot, the water was brought to the boil again and kept simmering for a few minutes. The result was a rich meat-soup which Delmonico could not surpass.

"The bag containing the frozen *pilmania* seemed to be filled with walnuts. Our cabbage-soup was in cakes like small bricks, and our roast-beef resembled red granite. We carved the beef with a hatchet, and then thawed out the slices while waiting for the *samovar*. We had partridges cooked and frozen. With all the articles I have named for dinner, what more could we wish, especially when we had appetites sharpened by travelling in the keen, pure air of Siberia?"

"Wasn't there danger, while you were in the stations eating your meals, that things would be stolen from the sleigh?" was the next interrogatory by one of the youths.

MAIL-DRIVER AND GUARD.

"I had fears of that before starting," was the reply, "but my friends assured me that thefts from vehicles on the post-roads were very rare. There were always several employés of the station moving about, or engaged in harnessing or unharnessing the teams, so that outsiders had little chance to pilfer without being discovered. The native Siberians have a good reputation for honesty, and the majority of those exiled for minor offences lead correct lives. According to my experience, the Siberians are more honest than the inhabitants of European Russia. After passing the Ural Mountains we always employed somebody to

watch the sleigh while we were at meals in the station, which we did not do while in Siberia.

"The gentleman who rode with me was an officer in the Russian service; he, like myself, carried a second-class paderojnia, but the ladies had only a third-class one. On the second day of our journey, just as we had finished dinner and our teams were ready to start, it was announced that the post with five vehicles was approaching. We donned our furs very quickly, while our servants gathered up our part of the dinner equipment. Leaving enough money on the table to pay for what we had received from the station, we bundled into our vehicles and hastened away. There was no danger of our losing the two teams which had been secured on the second-class paderojnias, but we were not at all certain about the other. If there had not been sufficient horses at the station for the post, our third team would have been taken from us, and we might have waited for hours before obtaining horses. The best way of solving the problem was to be out of the way when it came up for solution. As the man said of a railway accident, 'Presence of mind is good, but absence of body is better.'

DISTANT VIEW OF A SIBERIAN VILLAGE.

"We obtained excellent speed from the horses where the roads were good, as we gave a fee to the drivers at the end of their routes, proportioning it according to the character of their service. My sleigh generally took the lead, and we always promised a liberal gratuity for extra rate of progress. The regulations require that vehicles not on Government service shall go at a pace of ten versts (six and two-third miles) an hour, provided the roads are in good condition. If a driver just came up to the regulations and no more, we gave him eight or ten copecks; if he was accommodating and energetic, we increased his gratuity accordingly. Fifteen copecks was a liberal reward, twenty munificent, twenty-five princely, and thirty imperial. We went at breakneck pace where the roads permitted, and often where they did not. Occasionally we stimulated the drivers to a race, and then our progress was exciting, as well as dangerous.

"The post was carried twice a week each way, and we frequently encountered it. The bags contained merchandise in addition to letters and newspapers, as the Government does a sort of express business through the post-office, to the great convenience of the public. This accounted for the large number of vehicles employed. Travellers may purchase tickets and have their carriages accompany the post, but in so doing they are liable to a good many extortions. Each convoy is accompanied by a postilion or guard, who is responsible for its security; he is usually a soldier, and must be armed to repel robbers. Sometimes these postilions

were so stuck around with pistols that they resembled travelling arsenals, and must have been very dangerous to themselves."

Frank asked how many horses were required for the service of the post at each station.

"The rules require each station-master to keep ten troikas, or thirty horses, ready for use; many stations had forty or fifty horses each, and the villages could generally supply any reasonable demand after those in the station were exhausted. Fourteen *yemshicks* (drivers) are kept at every station; they are boarded by the smotretal, and receive about four dollars each a month, in addition to whatever gratuities they can pick up. When the post was expected they generally whispered that fact to our man-servant, so that we could get away as soon as possible. They preferred our service to that of the post, as we could be relied upon for gratuities, while none were obtainable from the inanimate bags of the Government mail.

"Our good road lasted for two days and into the early hours of the third; then the snow became very thin, and at times we were dragged over bare ground for considerable distances. From very cold the weather turned to warm, and threatened to spoil our provisions as well as the roads.

"Winter is by far the best time for travelling in Siberia, though at first thought one would suppose the summer preferable. In summer the weather is hot, there are clouds of dust when no rain falls, and long stretches of mud when it does; there are swarms and swarms of mosquitoes, flies, and all sorts of winged things that trouble traveller and horses to a terrible degree. There is one kind of fly that drives the horses into a frenzy, so that they sometimes break away from the carriages or become unmanageable. A Russian gravely told me that this Siberian horsefly could bite through an iron stove-pipe without hurting his teeth, but I'm inclined to doubt it.

SOLDIERS IN SIBERIAN FERRY-BOATS.

"Then, too, there are many streams to be crossed by fording or ferrying, and often there are long delays at the ferries. Fresh provisions can only be carried for a day or two at most, and a traveller must load his vehicle with a liberal stock of canned goods or run the risk of a very hard time. The frost seals up the rivers, causes the mosquitoes, flies, dust, mud, and kindred annoyances to disappear, and preserves your provisions for an indefinite period, except when a 'thaw' comes on. If you ever make a journey through Siberia, by all means make it in winter.

"The last hundred miles of our ride, from Irkutsk to Krasnoyarsk, was made over more bare ground than snow. In some places we had five or six horses to each carriage, and even then our progress was slow. Fortunately it became cold again, but the sky was cloudless; we longed for snow to cover the ground and improve the condition of the roads.

"The last morning we took breakfast at a station fifty versts from Krasnoyarsk, and learned that for the last thirty versts before reaching the city there was absolutely no snow. Very curiously the snow extended up to the door of the station, and disappeared not more than a yard beyond it! Looking one way there was bare ground; looking the other the road was good for sleighing.

VIEW OF KRASNOYARSK FROM THE OPPOSITE BANK OF THE YENISEI.

"Over cakes and tea we arranged our programme, which resulted in the ladies leaving their vashok until their return to Irkutsk, and riding into town on a telega. My sleigh and the other were unloaded, the baggage was piled into telegas, the sleighs were mounted on wagons which we hired from the peasants, and with very little trouble the whole difficulty was adjusted. Altogether we were not at the station more than an hour, and at least half that time was taken for lunch."

Fred asked how it happened that there was good sleighing in one direction and hardly any snow in the other.

"It is a climatic peculiarity," Mr. Hegeman explained, "and is not confined to that locality. You remember I mentioned Chetah, the first provincial capital as you go west from the Amoor River. At Chetah very little snow falls in the winter, and sometimes for the entire year wheels must be used. Krasnoyarsk is in the valley of the Yenisei River, and they told me that very little snow falls within twenty miles of the town, and in some winters none at all. I must leave the scientific men to explain it.

"I heard a story at Krasnoyarsk of an Englishman who was travelling alone through Siberia a few winters before the time of my visit. Finding no snow there on his arrival, he decided to wait until it fell, and the roads would be good enough for him to proceed. He waited days and days, but no snow. The days grew into weeks, and the weeks into months, but still no snow. He remained sullenly at the hotel or wandered about the streets; the hotel-keeper did not enlighten him, as he was a good customer, and the stranger did not seek counsel of any one else. He might have been there to this day had he not met in the hotel a fellow-countryman who was travelling eastward. The latter explained the

climatic conditions of the place to his long-detained compatriot, and then the latter made arrangements for proceeding on his journey.

"Before I forget it," continued Mr. Hegeman, "let me say that the Russians have several songs in which the delights of sleighing are described. Here is one of them, which may possibly need the explanation that the duga is the yoke over the shaft-horse's neck, and Valdai is the place where the most famous bells of Russia are cast. You already know that a troika is a team of three horses harnessed abreast—

road,	"Away, away, along the
sweet,	The fiery troika bounds; While 'neath the duga, sadly
	The Valdai bell resounds.
town,	"Away, away, we leave the
behind,	Its roofs and spires,
dance around	The crystal snow-flakes
wind.	As o'er the steppe we
stars	"Away, away, the glittering
above;	Shine greeting from
we glide,	Our hearts beat fast as on
	Swift as the flying dove.'

"I will tell you of a sleigh-ride in which there is less poetry than in the song I have quoted.

"An English gentleman was stopping with some Siberian friends, and one day it was proposed to take a ride in a sledge. The Englishman had taken his seat and the driver was about mounting to his place, when the horses made a sudden start and dragged the reins from the driver's hands.

A DANGEROUS RIDE.

"All that the Englishman could do was to hold on, and this he did to the best of his ability. The horses made straight for a ravine two or three hundred feet deep; the unfortunate passenger and his friends thought he was going to certain death, but as they reached the edge of the ravine the horses whirled about and ran in the opposite direction.

"The sledge in turning was swung over the abyss, and hung for an instant in the air; the team ran two or three miles before it was stopped by one of the horses stumbling among some logs. Severely bruised and with his hand half crushed, the Englishman got out of the sledge, and concluded he had had all the riding he desired for that day at least."



CHAPTER XIX.

POSITION AND CHARACTER OF KRASNOYARSK.—A LESSON IN RUSSIAN PRONUNCIATION.—MARKET SCENE.—SIBERIAN TREES.—THE *OUKHABA*.—A NEW SENSATION.—ROAD-FEVER AND ITS CAUSE.—AN EXCITING ADVENTURE WITH WOLVES.—HOW WOLVES ARE HUNTED.—FROM KRASNOYARSK TO TOMSK.—STEAM NAVIGATION IN SIBERIA.—BARNAOOL.—MINES OF THE ALTAI.—TIGERS AND TIGER STORIES.—THE *BOURAN*.—ACROSS THE BARABA STEPPE.—TUMEN AND EKATERINEBURG.—FROM EUROPE TO ASIA.—PERM, KAZAN, AND NIJNI NOVGOROD.—END OF THE SLEIGH-RIDE.

Frank asked what was meant by the word Krasnoyarsk: was it derived from a river, a mountain, or did it belong to an individual?

"*Krasnoe*," said Mr. Hegeman, "means 'red,' and Krasnoyarsk gets its name from the red cliffs of the Yenisei on which it stands. All around the town the soil is of a reddish hue, and so are the hills that form the horizon in every direction. The Yenisei is a fine river, one of the largest in Siberia, and where it passes Krasnoyarsk it is fully half a mile wide. In summer there are two or three steamboats running to the Arctic Ocean from a point a little below Krasnoyarsk; rapids and shoals prevent their coming up to the town. The tributaries of the river are rich in gold deposits, and many of the residents have grown wealthy by gold-mining.

"Krasnoyarsk has a population of about twelve thousand, and in a general way is a sort of pocket edition of Irkutsk. It is the capital of the province of Yeniseisk, and the centre of trade for a wide extent of country. Markets, churches, and buildings in general are like those of Irkutsk, and there is an appearance of prosperity throughout the place."

Fred asked how it happened that the names of nearly all the towns in Siberia ended in "sk." They had been hearing about Irkutsk, Yeniseisk, Selenginsk, and he didn't know how many others.

Dr. Bronson came to the young man's relief as follows:

"I think you learned in St. Petersburg that the termination 'sk' is equivalent to 'of' in English?"

"Certainly," replied Fred, "I learned that 'vitch' means 'son of.' Paul Ivanovitch, for example, being Paul, son of Ivan. I understand also that Alexandrovsky was named after Alexander, Petrovski after Peter, Nicolayevsk after Nicholas, and so on through the list of Russian saints and emperors. But I've not heard of any distinguished personages with the names I've just quoted belonging to towns or cities."

BEGGAR AT A SIBERIAN STATION.

"These Siberian names really assist the memory in a geographical way," the Doctor answered, "as they tell us where the town is located. Selenginsk is on the Selenga River; Irkutsk is on the Irkut, where it empties into the Angara; Yeniseisk (province) is in the valley of the Yenisei, and the town of that name is on the river's bank. In the same way Omsk is on the Om, Tomsk on the Tom, Tobolsk on the Tobol, Irbitsk on the Irbit, and Kansk on the Kan. The list could be extended to great length."

"I must make a note of that," said Fred, "as it will be of use to students of geography in the schools at home. But what hard words they are to pronounce!"

"They are not as difficult as they seem at first sight," said the Doctor. "The chief difficulty comes from our knowing they are Russian, and expecting they will twist our tongues. Three consonants together are terrible—in Russian; in English they are easy enough."

"I quite agree with you," said Mr. Hegeman. "After I went to America, on my return from Siberia, many of my friends complained of the jaw-breaking names of the places I had visited, and declared they never could speak them. A lady of my acquaintance tried in vain to pronounce Irkutsk; its three consonants, *t*, *s*, and *k*, were too much for her, but she had not the slightest difficulty in asking me about the fasts and feasts of the Church. The *s*, *t*, and *s* of 'fasts' and 'feasts' are consonants, and just as difficult of pronunciation as the others; but the one set is Russian and the other 'English, you know.'

"Let me suggest an easy way of wrestling with the Russian terminals *tsk*, *nsk*, *msk*, and the like:

"If you're struggling with Irkutsk take the word 'coot,' which is perfectly familiar to you. Put an *s* to it and make 'coots,' and then a *k* to that and make 'cootsk' or 'kutsk.' With the prefix *er* you have the capital of Eastern Siberia before you.

"In the same way dispose of Kansk by building up the word 'can' till you have reached the end. The other terminals which seem so difficult may be rendered perfectly innocuous to the organs of speech if kindly and intelligently treated.

"To return to Krasnoyarsk and its snowless district.

"A description of the place, its buildings, markets, and other features would be nearly a repetition of that of Irkutsk, but on a smaller scale. In the market I was particularly interested in the character and abundance of the fish offered for sale. Among them were pike, sturgeon, perch, and others with which I was familiar, and there was one fish which closely resembled the smelt. Another that I had never before seen had a bill resembling that of a duck and a long and thin body. All these fishes came from the Yenisei or its tributaries; some of them dwell permanently in the river, and others ascend in the summer from the Arctic Ocean.

"There is a fish called *omulli* by the Russians, and evidently a member of the trout family. It lives in the smaller streams of Siberia, and furnishes a caviar that is greatly prized. The *omulli*'s caviar is of a golden color, and quite in contrast with the black caviar made from the roe of the sturgeon.

"The Yenisei at Krasnoyarsk has a swift current, and resembles the Mississippi at St. Louis, according to the descriptions they gave me. Of course I could not verify the statement, as the river was frozen over at the time of my visit. The width and volume of the Yenisei gave interest to a story which was told by one of the residents:

POLICEMAN AT KRASNOYARSK.

"One of the good citizens of Krasnoyarsk had been attending a wedding on the other side of the river, and started for home rather late at night, with the intention of reaching the ferry about daylight. He was in a telega drawn by two horses; on the way from the wedding he fell asleep, and the horses took their own course. When they reached the river they were doubtless hungry, and impatient to return to their stable. The ferry-boat was on the other side, and the animals did not choose to wait. They plunged in and started across; the telega, being wholly of wood, had sufficient buoyancy to keep it afloat, but the occupant was awakened by the cold bath. Though frightened half to death, he had the good sense to lie perfectly still and make the best of the situation; the hardy beasts took him safely over, but he never cared to repeat the adventure. The few individuals that saw him coming in the early daylight could hardly believe their eyes; and one, at least, thought it was Neptune in his chariot ascending the waters of the Yenisei."

"Another illustration of the excellence of the horses of Siberia," said Fred. "I long to travel in that country, and have the experience of riding behind them."

Frank asked Mr. Hegeman if there were any high mountains in the neighborhood of Krasnoyarsk.

HILLS NEAR A SIBERIAN RIVER.

"There are not," was the reply, "only some low hills and rounded peaks that do not rise to the height and dignity of mountains. I believe most geographers are agreed on applying the term 'mountain' only to elevations of fifteen hundred feet and more, everything below that figure being called a hill. Under this restriction there are no mountains on the road through Siberia between Lake Baikal and the Ural range. Most of the country is flat and uninteresting; sometimes it is a perfectly level plain, and in other places it is undulating like a rolling prairie in Kansas or Nebraska. Along the rivers it is broken by ranges of hills, but as soon as you go back from the rivers you come to the plain again.

"Hour after hour, and day after day, we rode over this monotonous country, the landscape, or rather snowscape, presenting very little to attract the eye. This feature of the country makes the Siberian journey a dreary one, not unlike the journey from the Missouri River to the Rocky Mountains before the days of the transcontinental railway."

Fred asked if this level part of Siberia was treeless like many portions of our Western country.

"There is a vast amount of treeless land," said Mr. Hegeman, in response to the inquiry, "but it is not all of that sort. There are many forests of birch, pine, spruce, and larch. In some localities birch is the only wood for building purposes, in others larch, and in others pine or spruce. Other Siberian trees are willow, fir, poplar, elm, and maple. Central and Southern Siberia are well wooded, but the farther we go towards the north the fewer trees do we find. The plains bordering the Arctic Ocean are treeless; the poplar disappears at 60° north latitude, the birch at 63°, and the pine and larch at 64°."

"I thought I had read about a species of cedar that grows over the plains to the far North," said the Doctor, "and that it serves to make that region habitable by furnishing fuel for the natives."

"I was about to mention the trailing cedar," said Mr. Hegeman. "The Russians call it *kedrevnik*, and some of the native tribes regard it as a special gift of Providence. It spreads on the ground like a vine, and has needles and cones

similar to those of the cedar; the trunks are gnarled and twisted, very difficult to cut or split, but vastly preferable to no wood at all. Thousands of miles of country are covered with the trailing cedar, and in winter it is found by digging in the snow.

"On leaving Krasnoyarsk," continued Mr. Hegeman, "I travelled with a gentleman who had been northward to the shores of the Arctic Ocean during the previous summer, he accompanying me in my sleigh, while his own was occupied by a servant and a goodly amount of baggage. For thirty miles there was no snow, and so we mounted our sleighs on wagons and sent them to the beginning of the snow road, while we followed in a telega a few hours after their departure. We overtook them just at the beginning of the snow road, and were glad enough to change from the telega. The vehicle had no springs, and we were shaken in it worse than if tossed in a blanket. The frozen ground was rough, and reminded me of a nutmeg-grater on a Brobdingnagian scale.

"We had started with the intention of overtaking the sleighs before sunset, but our slow progress over the rough roads had so delayed us that the evening was well advanced before our destination was reached. The transfer of baggage was made in the moonlight; one or two small articles disappeared in the operation, but whether stolen or accidentally lost we never knew.

JUMPING AN "OUKHABA."

"In Irkutsk I had been told that a new sensation awaited me in the Siberian *oukhaba*, and I found it on the first night's travelling after leaving Krasnoyarsk. What do you suppose it was?"

Both the youths shook their heads and said they didn't know, while Doctor Bronson preserved a discreet silence.

"The oukhaba of the Siberian road," Mr. Hegeman explained, "is the equivalent of the 'hog-wallow' of the American one; the former is formed in the snow, and the latter in the bare ground. It is caused by the snow lying in drifts or ridges when it is blown by the wind, and also by the roads being worn with much travel. The road is a succession of ridges and hollows; the drivers go at full speed, without the slightest regard to the pitching and tossing of the sleigh, and the result is a severe trial of one's nerves. The motion causes a rush of blood to one's head, and develops what the Russians call 'the road-fever.'

"I did not escape the road-fever, and to this day I shudder when thinking of this part of my experience, the most disagreeable feature of the journey. My body was sore and stiff; at every jolt it seemed as though the top of my head would fly

off; sleep was next to impossible; and when I did manage to slumber, my dreams were something frightful. My temper was spoiled, and a quarrel might have been created with anything and anybody without the least effort. The fever runs its course in two or three days, but may last longer; as long as the roads are bad the inexperienced traveller is liable to it. Sometimes the sleigh made a clear jump of five or six feet, and the wonder was that the vehicle did not go to pieces and leave us hopelessly wrecked."

Fred asked if any wolves were seen in this part of the journey or elsewhere in Siberia.

"Occasionally we saw wolves," was the reply, "but not often. There are plenty of wolves in Siberia, but they have enough to live upon in the game that abounds everywhere, so that they are not likely to attack travellers. Siberian and American wolves are much alike, but the former are said to be larger and fiercer than their American cousins.

"I can tell you some wolf stories, but they do not belong to Siberia. It is only in Western Russia and in Poland that travellers are attacked by wolves, and then only in the severest winters, when game is very scarce and hunger has made the animals desperate."

"Please tell us one of those stories," said Frank. "I have read accounts of men being chased by wolves, but have just now forgotten what they were."

The request was echoed by Fred, and Mr. Hegeman kindly gratified their wish.

"To begin with," said he, "the horses are the object of attack and not the men in the vehicle; but of course when the horses are overpowered the wolves make no distinction and devour everything edible. When desperate they will venture to the farm-yards to kill sheep and cattle. Their favorite article of food, other than wild game, is a pig, and the squealing of a pig is an appeal that no hungry wolf can resist.

WOLVES ATTACKING A BUFFALO.

"Advantage of this propensity is taken by those who go out to hunt the wolf for amusement. On a moonlight night two hunters go out with an open sledge drawn by two horses; they carry their guns, with plenty of ammunition, a pig tied by the feet, and a bag of hay, together with furs and robes to keep them warm. When they reach the middle of the forest where the wolves abound, the horses' heads are turned towards home, the bag of hay, fastened to a rope from twenty to forty feet long, is thrown out, and the pig's ear is pinched until the poor creature

squeals in his loudest tones. If a wolf is within hearing he comes at once, and if there are other wolves they follow him and his example. The pig's ear is continually twisted; the squealing resounds through the forest, and when the wolves come in sight they mistake the bag of hay for the animal they seek. They rush for it, and as they come within range are shot down. The sleigh does not stop to pick up the game, but continues its course at a walk or slow trot, provided the driver can restrain the terror-stricken horses. The next day the dead wolves, if any, are gathered for the sake of their skins.

"Sometimes a dozen or more wolves will be killed in this way in a single night, but more frequently the hunters return empty-handed. Sometimes the wolves come in great numbers, and with so much fierceness that the hunters are obliged to flee for their lives—not always successfully.

"And now comes the wolf story I promised; it was told to me by a Russian officer some years ago, and I will endeavor to give it as nearly as possible in his own words. Imagine that he is talking to you as he talked to me:

"I was stopping for a part of the winter at the house of a fellow-officer near Vilna, where he had a large estate. His name was Selmanoff, and he was noted for his excellent horsemanship and his love for all kinds of hunting sport.

"The winter was one of the worst that had been known for a long while, and two or three times we heard of travellers through the forest having been pursued by wolves. Of course this led to a wolf hunt, which Selmanoff proposed and I heartily accepted.

"We made our preparations, selecting a broad sledge open all around, and formed of wicker-work, so that it was light as well as strong. We carried two short, smooth-bore guns of large calibre—rifles are not desirable on these hunts, as it is impossible to take accurate aim from the moving sledge in the moonlight. The guns were breech-loaders, and the charge was a heavy one of buck-shot and ball.

"We had two horses, young and powerful beasts, and the driver was one of the best on the estate. After dining heartily we started about sunset and drove some twenty miles or so into the middle of the forest, over a good road which had been trodden by the peasants carrying their produce to the market at the nearest town. Our decoy pig lay quietly among the furs, and gave no sign of his presence save an occasional grunt of dissatisfaction at his uncomfortable position.

A SIBERIAN WOLF.

"At the spot where the hunt was to begin we turned about and threw out our bag of hay; then we twisted the pig's ear and he protested with a loud squeal.

"An answering howl came from the forest, and seemingly not a dozen yards away. Another howl and another followed quickly, and then the air was full of them.

"In a minute or so a dark form was revealed on the snow behind us, and making straight for the hay-bag. Selmanoff gave me the first fire, and I took it. The wolf fell at my shot just as he was within a few yards of the bag.

SUMMER AND WINTER IN RUSSIA.

"But another came, and then another, and in a few minutes there were a dozen or more in sight. We shot them as fast as they came within range, but the numbers did not diminish. The shooting and the howling of the wolves frightened the horses, and the driver had a difficult task to restrain them.

"As the wolves increased in number, we saw we were in danger; the extent of the pack was far beyond our expectation, and the long-continued hunger of the brutes had made them very fierce. The shooting of one after another did not seem to restrain their ardor in the least; those that were untouched by our shot dashed madly ahead, and showed a determination to appease their hunger at all hazards.

"Selmanoff told the driver to increase the speed of the horses. He gave the order not a moment too soon. Just as the horses were put to a gallop, several wolves sprang from the forest at our side, and if we had been going slowly they would have easily reached the sleigh. As it was, we passed within a few feet of them, and their howls of angry disappointment rang in our ears.

"We cut the rope that held the hay-bag; it detained our pursuers only a few moments, as they quickly discovered it was not what they wanted.

"On they came again. We loaded and fired as fast as we could; there was no occasion to take accurate aim, as the road behind us was fairly filled with wolves, and it was quite sufficient to point our guns at the dark mass revealed against the snow.

"We had made six or eight miles on our return, when an additional danger that threatened us was suggested by my friend. There was a sharp angle in the road a mile or so ahead of us, and, at the pace we were proceeding, the sledge would certainly be upset in going around the angle. As we approached the point of peril we ceased firing, laid our guns among the furs, ordered the speed of the horses to

be slackened—no easy thing to accomplish—and then both of us hung out as far as possible on the inner side of the sledge, to keep it from going over.

"As we made the turn the sledge was poised for some distance on one of its runners, and if we had not taken all the precautions I have named, it would have gone over. From this point was a clear and comparatively straight run homeward of ten or twelve miles, and the horses were put to their best work. They had no need of urging, as they knew the danger that threatened as well as we did.

"One horse stumbled and fell; he was up in an instant, but not before the wolves had actually reached the sledge. One of them jumped directly at it, but as he did so I pressed the muzzle of my gun to his head and fired. Another sprang upon the fallen horse as he was rising to his feet, but was shaken off before he obtained a good hold with his fangs.

"The servants of the chateau heard us coming at full speed and our rapid firing. They knew something was the matter, and as we neared the house they began shouting and waving lanterns. The wolves slackened their speed and gave up the chase, but not until we were within a hundred yards of safety.

VILLAGE ON A RUSSIAN ESTATE.

"We dashed into the court-yard, the gates were closed, and then Selmanoff and I, both fainting from exhaustion after our terrible ride, were assisted from the sledge and into the house. You may be sure that since then I have never wished to undertake a wolf-hunt of this sort."

"An excellent story," said Frank. "It is certainly better than those wherein people are obliged to draw lots to see who shall be sacrificed to the wolves in order that the others may escape."

"I agree with you," said Fred. "There's quite enough of the sensational in having everybody get away safely after an exciting run, instead of being eaten up by their pursuers. If only the wolves are killed it is all right, as they are enemies of the human race, and do no good to any one except to furnish skins for sleigh-robbers, rugs, and other useful or ornamental things."

It was agreed unanimously that the best known use for a wolf was to convert his skin into something of the kind described. When this decision had been reached, the conversation reverted to the sleigh-ride through Siberia.

"We left the road in pursuit of wolves, while travelling westward from Krasnoyarsk," said Mr. Hegeman.

"Jumping oukhabas," suggested one of the youths.

"Yes, that was it exactly. Well, we jumped oukhabas, rode over bare ground, were caught in a snow-storm, and had a tough time generally till we reached Tomsk, the next provincial capital. It takes its name from the river Tom on which it stands, and is a prosperous place with about twenty thousand inhabitants.

"As at Irkutsk, there are many wealthy merchants in the city, and also a fair number of citizens who have made fortunes by mining for gold. The houses are spacious and well-built, and there is a large 'gymnasium,' or high-school, for boys, and an 'institute,' or high-school, for girls. Many private teachers find employment in rich families who prefer educating their children at home. Tomsk may be regarded as the most important place in Siberia next to Irkutsk.

"There is a line of water communication between Tomsk and Tumen, a thousand miles to the westward, but of course it is only available in summer. Fifteen or twenty steamboats are engaged in the traffic; they descend the Tom to the Ob, and the Ob to the Irtysh, which they ascend to the Tobol. Then they follow the Tobol to the Tura, and the Tura to Tumen. With barges in tow, the journey occupies twelve days; without them it is made in a week. Travellers are so few that it does not pay to run boats for passengers alone, and all the boats in use when I was there were mainly for freight purposes, and had limited space for passengers. If you look at the map of Siberia, you will see that it possesses an excellent system of water communication.

A SLIGHT MISHAP.

"The only navigation of the Tom that I saw was by a native who had fallen through a hole in the ice and just crawled out. He stood dripping on the edge for a moment, as though uncertain what to do; then, evidently realizing his danger, he sprang on his sledge and rode away, to reach home before he was frozen solid.

"At the suggestion of my companion we decided to go to Barnaool, which lies about three hundred miles south of the main road, and is the centre of the Russian mining region of the Altai Mountains. We remained a day at Tomsk, in order to see the Governor and obtain his permission to leave our route, which was readily granted.

"We started in the evening, and forty-four hours later drove into Barnaool and alighted at the hotel. An officer who left Tomsk a few hours in advance of us, kindly notified the station-masters of our approach, and thus caused them to have horses in readiness. If he had not done so we should have been seriously

delayed, as the regulations require only three troikas to be kept at the stations on the side road, while ten are maintained along the great route. For the last part of the way the drivers took us to houses of their friends instead of going to the post-stations. The peasants through Siberia have a good many horses, and are glad to earn money in this way by transporting travellers.

SUMMER VIEW NEAR BARNAOOL.

"Barnaool is a prosperous town, depending partly upon the gold-mining interest, and partly upon trade with the Kirghese and other people of Central Asia. It has a Club, a Geographical Society, a large and interesting museum, together with smelting-works, factories, and machine-shops connected with the mining interests. Social conversation has a good deal to do with gold and silver and other precious things, and in summer many of the officials are absent at the mining establishments in the mountains. The society is similar to that of Irkutsk, and fully as accomplished and hospitable. They told me I was the first American that had ever been in Barnaool, and I was most heartily welcomed and made to feel at home.

"One day a gentleman invited me to call at his house, and said his daughters were under the impression that Americans were black. 'I will not undeceive them,' said he, 'and if they appear astonished when they see you, you will understand it.'

"When I called at the house and was presented to the family, I was immediately surrounded by three or four little girls, and they looked with great curiosity at my face. Finally one of them sidled up to her mother and said something, of which I caught the words, '*Nee chorney*' ('Not black')."

After Frank and Fred had laughed over this little anecdote, their informant explained that the impression that Americans were black was not confined to the family of this gentleman at the foot of the Altai Mountains. He said he had been told of it on several occasions, not only in Siberia but in European Russia; but it was almost always confined to the lower class of people, or to children who had received their information from servants.

"I had an odd experience of this impression about our national color a few years ago," said Doctor Bronson. "It was in a small city of Austria where strangers do not often penetrate, and our countrymen are not as well known as in Vienna and Paris.

"I was making a purchase in a shop, and while chatting with the saleswoman she asked my nationality. I told her I was an American. She shook her head

doubtingly, and said she thought I must be an Englishman, as I 'didn't look like an American.'

"'Why don't I look like an American?' I asked.

"'There was an American gentleman here a few months ago,' said she, 'and he was just as black as your hat.'

"I didn't follow the topic further," said Doctor Bronson, "but concluded to let her have her own opinion about my national complexion."

"One of the most interesting things I saw at Barnaool," said Mr. Hegeman, resuming the subject of conversation, "was the Government Museum. I spent the greater part of a day there, and only had time to glance over the admirable collection. There is a mining department which contains models of all the machinery used in gold-mining, and in many instances the machines themselves. Some of the machines are nearly a hundred years old, and almost identical with those in use to-day. There is a letter from the Empress Elizabeth, bearing her autograph, giving directions about the working of the mines in her time; it is kept in an ivory box on the table around which the Mining Board holds its sessions. The first discoveries of precious metals in the Altai region were made by one of the Demidoffs, who was sent there by Peter the Great. A monument in the public square of Barnaool records his services and keeps his memory green.

"There are models of mines similar to those in the Mining School at St. Petersburg, so that the student can see what kind of work is before him. They showed me a steam-engine which is said to have been made at Barnaool in 1764, for the purpose of blowing the furnaces; the director of the museum claimed that it was on the principle adopted by James Watt in 1765, and therefore, he argued, the credit of the improvement upon the old engine of Newcomen should be given to Siberia rather than to Scotland.

ATTACKED BY A TIGER.

"Very interesting was the collection of natural history, which included the skins of two enormous tigers killed a few years before in one of the Southern districts of Western Siberia. Both these tigers had histories, and were supposed to be murderers; one of them fell after a long fight in which he killed one of his assailants and wounded two others. The other tiger had sprung upon a man who was riding one horse and leading another; the man escaped by leaving the led horse for the tiger to devour. He rode to the nearest village where he could obtain weapons and assistance, and then returned to the locality of the attack. Carefully creeping through the tall grass, he found the tiger busy over his meal; every few

moments he raised his head and paused to listen for the sound of approaching footsteps, but so cautiously did the hunter proceed that he was not heard.

"He managed to get within ten yards of the ferocious beast, and then by a well-directed shot stretched him on the ground. The fame he obtained for his prowess, and the money from the sale of the skin to the museum, compensated him for the loss of the horse, but it must be remembered that he ran a great risk in searching for the tiger as he did.

BEARCOOTS AND WOLVES.

"There were in the museum some fine specimens (stuffed) of the bearcoat, an enormous eagle of the Altai Mountains. It is considerably larger than the American eagle, and strong enough to kill easily a deer or a wolf. The Kirghese tame these eagles and employ them for hunting purposes, just as hawks were employed in England centuries ago. A bearcoat will swoop down upon a full-grown deer and kill him in a few minutes; a deer running at full speed can be overtaken by a bearcoat in a course of little more than a mile, when he has the advantage of fully a mile at the start.

"Sometimes when a pack of wolves has run down a deer and killed it, a pair of bearcoots will appear and take possession of the game. Two bearcoots are a match for a dozen wolves, and the latter acknowledge their inferiority by getting out of the way immediately.

"Some experiments on the power of the bearcoat to resist poison were made at Barnaool shortly before my visit. Half a grain of curara (deadly poison from Brazil) had no effect beyond increasing the bird's appetite. Four grains of strychnine caused his feathers to tremble fifteen minutes after swallowing the stuff, and five hours later threw him into convulsions from which he recovered next day. A week later seven grains of curara had no effect upon him for two days; then he went into convulsions, which lasted several hours and ended with his death.

THE STEPPE IN SUMMER.

"But we are staying too long at Barnaool, and must go to the road again. From Barnaool we went northward and westward to Tumen over the great Baraba Steppe; it is but a steppe from one place to the other, but the distance is a thousand miles, and we were a week in making it. We were caught in a *bouran*, or storm, analagous to the Texas norther or the *bora* of Trieste. The wind blew violently, the snow whirled in blinding masses; the road was so buried that several times we lost our way, and finally concluded it safest to wait at a station

till the storm was over. Happily we were not long delayed.

"In summer these *bourans* or *ouragans* (a word which is probably of the same origin as *hurricane*) are sometimes so severe that they sweep dry the bed of a small river in a few minutes, and create large clouds of dust as they pass over the land. The one we encountered was from the south, and therefore warm. A northern *bouran* in winter is something terrific, as the thermometer goes very low and the intense cold added to the wind is destructive to animal life. Men and horses have been lost in these *bourans*, and I was cautioned not to venture to face them if I could avoid doing so.

"Many Tartars live on the Baraba Steppe, but we saw few of them, as we changed horses at the houses of the Russian peasants. There was formerly a very small population of Russians on the steppe between Tumen and Tomsk; the Governor-general of Siberia persuaded Catherine the Great to give him all the conscripts of a levy instead of sending them to the army. He settled them with their families in villages along the route across the steppe, and the present population consists of the descendants of these people, together with exiles and voluntary emigrants of the present century.

"Grain is produced in abundance on the steppe. Wheat, rye, and oats are often as low as ten or twenty cents a bushel, as there is no market for produce beyond what can be sold to travellers. A railway is one of the hopes of the future, and when it comes the steppe will be prosperous. A great deal of hemp and flax is raised there; I bought about sixty feet of half-inch rope for thirty cents at one station, and afterwards learned that I paid too much. Our harness was constantly breaking, and every few days it was necessary to buy a quantity of rope for purposes of repair. A Russian mujik will perform wonders of harness-mending if you give him plenty of rope.

"I will not weary you with describing in detail the rest of the long sleigh-ride. Through Tumen we went without delay, and from that place to Ekaterineburg we had no incident of consequence. At Ekaterineburg we stopped a day, and passed several hours among the shops devoted to the sale of semi-precious stones, which are cut into all sorts of fantastic shapes. The town is as famous for these things as is Cologne for the perfumed spirit that bears its name, Naples for coral, or Benares for brass-ware. More than a thousand workmen are engaged by private employers or by the Government in this industry. The *Granilnoi Fabric*, or Government Lapidary Establishment, was closed at the time of my visit, which happened during Christmas week. I understand it has since been sold, and is now in private hands.

SPECIMEN OF ROCK-CRYSTAL.

"Itinerant dealers in the streets offer the cut crystals to strangers, and the waiters at the hotels have stocks of them for sale. The collections at the dealers are a bewildering array of amethyst, beryl, topaz, tourmaline, chalcedony, jasper, aquamarine, malachite, quartz, and other stones. There are seals, paper-weights, beads, vases, statuettes, brooches, buttons, charms, and an endless variety of ornamental things.

"There were imitations of leaves, flowers, and grapes tastefully arranged together, and formed of differently colored stones; there were miniature caves and grottos in which the stones were artistically grouped; and there were busts of the Emperor of Russia and other high personages in the Empire, together with busts of the reigning sovereigns of Europe. Learning that I was an American, the proprietor of one establishment showed me a half-finished bust of President Lincoln cut in topaz and about six inches high.

"We left Ekaterineburg one evening, and about midnight passed the ridge of the Ural Mountains and entered European Russia. The Urals at this point are a succession of low hills covered with fir-trees, and as you look at the range from Ekaterineburg you would not suspect you were in the neighborhood of mountains. North and south of this point the mountains become more steep, but they nowhere attain to great heights. All this part of the Urals is rich in minerals; there are extensive mines of iron, copper, and gold, those of iron being of the greatest, and the gold-mines of the least importance.

"A very large part of all the iron used in Russia comes from the Urals, and the same is the case with the copper. The copper-money of the Empire is coined at the *Moneta Fabric*, or mint, at Ekaterineburg, and from an immense foundry a few miles away comes the Russian sheet-iron which is so popular in America for the manufacture of parlor stoves and stove-pipe. The Urals contain the only mines where malachite is found in quantities of any consequence, and when you look at a piece of this beautiful oxide of copper you can be almost absolutely certain that it came from the neighborhood of Ekaterineburg. A mass of malachite weighing more than four hundred tons was found there about the middle of the present century, the largest single piece ever discovered.

MONUMENT AT THE BOUNDARY.

"At the boundary between European and Asiatic Russia there is a stone monument with the word EUROPE on one side and ASIA on the other. It is only seventeen hundred feet above the level of the sea, and was erected to

commemorate the visit of the Emperor Alexander I. to his Siberian dominions. I stepped from the sleigh and stood for a few moments with a foot in either continent, but though I made careful observation I could not discover any difference between the soil, climate, productions, manners, customs, or social conditions of the Occident and Orient of the Old World.

WESTERN SLOPE OF THE URAL MOUNTAINS.

"Down the Western slope of the Urals we drove as fast as our horses could carry us, making brief halts to change horses at the stations, jumping oukhabas that threatened to shake us and our vehicles to pieces, repelling the advances of beggars that solicited us at every stopping-place, riding sometimes for many miles at a time between double rows of birch-trees which the Government has planted to mark the roads and prevent the snow from drifting, and now and then coming temporarily to grief through the breaking of our harness. We found the stations more numerous and more commodious than in Asiatic Russia, the country more densely peopled, and as the days of fasting had given way to days of feasting, we found an abundance of provisions wherever we stopped. We carried now only our tea and sugar, as everything else was easy to procure.

"We passed through Perm at night and in a snow-storm, and my recollections of the place are consequently few. From Kazan my road lay along the frozen surface of the Volga to Nijni Novgorod, where the sleigh-ride was to terminate.

"Sometimes the sleigh was left on the ice of the river while the drivers went to the station on the bank to change horses, and sometimes it was driven up the sloping road and then down again. Going up was all right, but descending was occasionally perilous.

DESCENDING A HILL SIDE ROAD.

"The sleigh manifested a tendency to go faster than the horses; there was usually no protecting wall or rail at the outer edge of the slope, and more than once we narrowly escaped being pitched down a steep cliff of frozen earth to the solid ice fifty or a hundred feet below. At such times the way of safety lay in forcing the horses ahead, in the hope that they would overcome the sideling motion of the sleigh. As there was a chance that they might stumble, and throw horses, sleigh, passengers, baggage, and driver all in a heap, the alternative was nearly as bad as the preliminary danger.

BAPTIZING THROUGH THE ICE.

"On the 6th of January we passed several places where baptizings through the

ice were in progress. This is one of the days that the Church consecrates to baptismal ceremonies, and throughout the Empire many thousands of devout worshippers are plunged into the icy water. We did not stop to witness the ceremony, but caught a glimpse of a priest reading from a book, while another was holding by the hands a man whose head just rose above the surface of the water. As fast as the baptized ones emerged from the hole through the ice they ran rapidly to the village, a short distance away.

"There at last are the domes of Nijni Novgorod, and there I say farewell to my sleigh.

END OF THE SLEIGH-RIDE.

"I have passed two hundred and nine stations, with as many changes of horses and drivers. More than seven hundred horses have been attached to my sleigh, and drawn me over a road of all degrees of goodness and badness. In forty days from Irkutsk I have spent sixteen in the towns and villages on the way. I have slept twenty-six nights in my sleigh, with the thermometer varying all the way from 35° above zero to 44° below, and have passed through four severe storms and perhaps a dozen small ones.

"Including the detour to Barnaool, my sleigh-ride was thirty-six hundred miles long. From Stratensk around by Kiachta to Irkutsk I travelled about fourteen hundred miles in wheeled vehicles, so that altogether my land journey from the steamboat at Stratensk to the railway at Nijni covers a distance of five thousand miles.

"And now," said Mr. Hegeman, in conclusion, "if you want to cross Siberia you can do it more easily than when I made the journey. From Perm, which you can reach by steamboat in summer, there is a railway to Ekaterineburg, and it will shortly be finished to Tumen, if it is not already.^[6] From Tumen take a steamboat to Tomsk, if you don't mind roughing it a little, and from Tomsk your land journey need not be terrifying. You can easily make out the rest of the route by taking my own in reverse. Whether you descend the Amoor or cross the Desert of Gobi to Peking, you will have enough of novelty to compensate you for the fatigue."

The youths thanked Mr. Hegeman most heartily for the entertaining account he had given them of his journey through Siberia. Doctor Bronson added his acknowledgment to that of the youths, and the thoughts of the party were again turned to what was occurring around them.

CHAPTER XX.

DOWN THE VOLGA AGAIN.—RUSSIAN RECEPTION CEREMONY.—SIMBIRSK, SAMARA, AND SARATOV.—GERMAN SETTLERS ON THE VOLGA.—DON COSSACKS.—ASTRACHAN.—CURIOUS POPULATION.—VOYAGE ON THE CASPIAN SEA.—THE CASPIAN PETROLEUM REGION.—TANK-STEAMERS.—INTERESTING FACTS AND FIGURES OF THE NEW PETROLIA.—PRESENT PRODUCT OF THE BAKU OIL-FIELDS.—EXCURSION TO BALAKHANI, AND VISIT TO THE OIL-WELLS.—TEMPLES OF THE FIRE-WORSHIPPERS.—ANTIQUITY OF THE CASPIAN PETROLEUM REGION.—MARCO POLO AND OTHER AUTHORITIES.

While our friends were listening to Mr. Hegeman's account of the journey through Siberia, the boat was continuing steadily on her course down the Volga. One of her passengers was a Russian count on the way to his estate, from which he had been absent for nearly two years. He had notified his people of his coming, and when the steamer stopped at the village where he was to land, there was quite an assemblage ready to meet him.

Doctor Bronson ascertained that they would remain at the landing an hour or more, as there was a considerable amount of freight to be put on shore. The party prepared to spend the time on land, and quite unexpectedly Frank and Fred were treated to a curious and interesting spectacle. It was the welcome of the count by his people, in accordance with Russian custom.

As he ascended the bank to the village, he was met by a procession of men, women, and children. It was headed by four venerable men with long, flowing beards, and dressed in the sheepskin coats with which we have been made familiar. One of the men in front carried a dish on which was a loaf of bread, and his comrade had another dish filled with salt. One man of the second couple carried a jug or pitcher of water. The Doctor explained to the youths that the presentation of bread, salt, and water was a ceremonial of Russian hospitality of very ancient date.

OFFERING OF THE VILLAGERS.

The men bowed low as they approached the count; on his part he urged them to stand upright and regard him as their friend. They halted directly in front of him, and then the bearer of the bread spoke in dignified tones as follows:

"We come, most noble master, to give the welcome of our village, and present you such food as we can offer, according to the ancient custom of our country."

In a few kindly words the count thanked them for their hospitality, and wished that their lives would be prosperous and happy. Then he cut a slice out of the loaf of bread and ate it, after dipping it in the salt. Next he drank a glass of the water, pouring it from the pitcher with his own hands. When he had finished he again thanked the men for their hospitality, and asked them to give his good wishes to all the people. This ended the ceremony, and the count was then at liberty to enter the carriage that stood waiting, and ride to his house, some distance back from the river.

Doctor Bronson explained that bread and salt have a prominent place in Russian ceremonials, not only of welcome, but at weddings and on other occasions. The bread is invariably the rye or black bread of the country, and the guest to whom it is offered would show great rudeness if he declined to partake of it. A knife lies on the top of the loaf; the guest himself cuts the loaf, and must be careful to dip the slice in the salt before placing it in his mouth.

In their descent of the Volga, our friends passed a succession of villages on either bank, and occasionally a town or city of importance. The day after leaving Kazan they stopped at Simbirsk, the capital of the province of the same name, and the centre of a considerable trade. It is on the right bank of the river, and has a population of twenty-five or thirty thousand.

About a hundred miles farther down the Volga is Samara, which generally resembles Simbirsk, but is larger, and possesses a more extensive commerce. A railway extends from Samara to Orenburg, on the frontier of Siberia. On the other side of the Volga Samara is connected with the railway system which has its centre at Moscow. With railway and river to develop its commerce, it is not surprising that the place is prosperous, and has grown rapidly since the middle of the century.

Mr. Hegeman told the youths that many Swiss and Germans were settled along this part of the Volga, and he pointed out some of their villages as the boat steamed on her course. The Government allows them perfect freedom in religious matters, and they have an excellent system of schools which they

manage at their own expense and in their own way. In other respects they are under the laws of the Empire, and their industry and enterprise have had a beneficial effect upon their Muscovite neighbors. The first of these settlers came here more than a hundred years ago; their descendants speak both German and Russian, and form quite an important part of the population.

Larger than Simbirsk and Samara rolled into one is Saratov, about a hundred miles below the city we have just described. It contains nearly a hundred thousand inhabitants; its houses are well built and spacious, and its streets are unusually broad, even for Russia. Our friends took a carriage-ride through the city, visited several of its sixteen or eighteen churches, and passed an hour or more in one of the factories devoted to the manufacture of leather goods.

Frank and Fred thought the churches were fully equal to those of any other Russian city they had seen, with the exception of a few of the most celebrated, and they greatly regretted their inability to make a fuller inspection of the place. But they consoled themselves with the reflection that they had seen the principal cities of the Empire, and the smaller ones could not offer many new and distinctive features.

In the province of Saratov they were on the border of the region of the Don Cossacks, and at some of the landings they had glimpses of this primitive people. Their country did not seem to be well cultivated, and Doctor Bronson told the youths that the Don Cossacks were more noted for skill in horsemanship than for patient industry. They prefer the raising of cattle, sheep, and horses to the labor of the field, and though many of them have accumulated considerable wealth they have little inclination for luxurious living.

SHOEING AN OX.

An amusing scene at one of the landings was the Cossack method of shoeing an ox. Frank thus describes it:

"The poor beast was flung upon his side and firmly held down by half a dozen men, while his legs were tied together in a bunch. Then he was turned upon his back, so that his feet were uppermost, giving the blacksmith an excellent opportunity to perform his work. The blacksmith's 'helper' sat upon the animal's head to keep him from rising or struggling; the unhappy ox indicated his discomfort and alarm by a steady moaning, to which the operators gave not the least attention.

KNIFE-WHIP.

"At a shop in one of the villages we bought some souvenirs. Among them was a whip with a short handle and a braided lash, with a flat piece of leather at the end. The leather flap makes a great noise when brought down upon a horse's sides, but does not seem to hurt him much; crackers, like those on American and English whips, seem to be unknown here, at any rate we did not see any.

"The handle of the whip is sometimes utilized as the sheath of a knife. The one we bought contained a knife with a long blade, and reminded us of the sword-canes of more civilized countries."

"We stopped at Tsaritsin," said Fred, in his journal, "and had a short run on shore. At this point the Volga is only forty miles from the river Don, which empties into the Sea of Azof, and is navigable, in time of high water, about eight hundred miles from its mouth. There is a railway connecting the rivers, and also a canal; the latter is much longer than the railway, and was made by utilizing the channels of some little streams tributary to the rivers, and connecting them by a short cut.

"The Don is connected with the Dneiper as well as with the Volga; the three rivers form an important part of the great net-work of water communication with which Russia is supplied. The Dneiper enters the Black Sea at Kherson, near Odessa; next to the Volga it is the largest river of European Russia, and flows through a fertile country. It is about twelve hundred miles long, and its navigation was formerly much obstructed by rapids and other natural obstacles. Many of these hinderances have been removed by the Government, but the river has lost some of its commercial importance since the railways were established.

"From Tsaritsin to Astrachan there is not much of interest, as the country is generally low and flat, and the towns and villages are few in number. Much of the country bordering the river is a marsh, which is overflowed at the periods of the annual floods, and therefore is of little value except for the pasturage of cattle.

"As we approached the mouth of the Volga we found the river divided into many channels; in this respect it resembles the Nile, the Ganges, the Mississippi, and other great watercourses of the globe. On one of these channels the city of Astrachan is built. It is not on the mainland, but on an island. Another channel passes not far from the one by which we came, and maintains a parallel course for a considerable distance.

ARMENIAN BISHOP OF ASTRACHAN.

"Astrachan is the most cosmopolitan city we have seen in Russia, even more so

than Kazan. The character of its seventy or eighty thousand inhabitants may be understood when I tell you that it has thirty-seven Greek churches, two Roman Catholic, two Armenian, and one Protestant, and is the seat of a Greek archbishop and an Armenian bishop. Then it has an Indian temple, fifteen mosques, and a Chinese pagoda. It has a botanical garden, an ecclesiastical school, schools of all the grades peculiar to the large towns of Russia, a naval academy, and I don't know how many other institutions. Books are printed here in Russian, Tartar, and other languages, and as you walk through the bazaars your ears are greeted by nearly all the tongues of Europe and Asia.

"To get at the cosmopolitan peculiarities of the city we were obliged to go through narrow and dirty streets, which somewhat marred the pleasure of our visit. In this respect Astrachan is more Oriental than Russian; its history dates beyond the time of the Russian occupation of the lower Volga, and therefore we must expect it to have Oriental features in preponderance.

"In commercial matters Astrachan is important, as it stands between Europe and Central Asia, and exchanges their goods. Great quantities of raw and embroidered silks, drugs, rhubarb, hides, sheepskins, tallow, and other Asiatic products come here, and in return for them the Russians dispose of cotton and other manufactures suited to the wants of their Kirghese and Turcoman subjects or neighbors.

"We are told that there are more than a hundred manufacturing establishments in Astrachan. Vast quantities of salt are made here or in the immediate vicinity, and the fisheries of the Volga and the Caspian Sea, which is only twenty miles away, are among the most important in the world. Unfortunately the harbor is so much obstructed by sand that only vessels of light draught can reach it from the Caspian. Since the opening of the railway connecting the Caspian with the Black Sea, much of the commerce which formerly came to Astrachan is diverted to the new route.

"We landed from the steamer and were taken to a hotel which promised very poorly, and fully sustained its promise. But any lodging was better than none at all, and as we were to remain only long enough to get away, it didn't much matter. We breakfasted on the steamer just before leaving it, and had no use for the hotel for several hours.

A TARTAR KHAN.

"In our sight-seeing we went to a Tartar *khan*, or inn, a large building two stories high and built around a court-yard, in accordance with the Tartar custom. The

court-yard receives wagons and horses, while the rooms that front upon it are rented to merchants and others who desire them. The master of the place will supply food to those who expressly ask for it, and pay accordingly, but he is not expected to do so.

"Travellers pick up their food at the restaurants in the neighborhood, and either bring it to their quarters or devour it at the place of purchase. A corridor runs around each story of the khan, and the rooms open upon this corridor.

TARTAR POSTILIONS.

"Under one of the stair-ways there is a room for the Tartar postilions who care for the horses of travellers. With their round caps, loose garments, and long pipes they formed a picturesque group around a fire where one of their number was watching the boiling of a pot which probably contained their dinner.

TARTAR PALACES IN SOUTHERN RUSSIA.

"In the last few years Astrachan has developed quite an important trade in petroleum, in consequence of the working of the wells at Baku, on the western shore of the Caspian. Steamers and sailing-vessels bring it here in immense quantities, and from Astrachan it is shipped by the Volga to all parts of Russia, and also to Germany and other countries. There are several machine-shops for the repair of steamships, steamboats, and barges engaged in the oil trade. The oil business of the Caspian region is growing very rapidly, and promises to make a serious inroad upon the petroleum industry of the United States.

GYPSY FAMILY AT ASTRACHAN.

"There is a line of steamers on the Caspian Sea for the transport of petroleum; they are constructed with tanks in which the oil is carried in bulk, and their engines are run by petroleum instead of coal. Their accommodations for passengers are limited, but as the voyage is made in a couple of days we were not particular, and took places on the first vessel that offered.

"Owing to the shallowness of the lower Volga the oil-steamers, excepting some of the smaller ones, do not come to Astrachan, but transfer their cargoes at 'Diavet Foot' (Nine Feet), which is so called from its depth of water. Diavet Foot is eighty miles from Astrachan, and on a shoal which spreads out like a fan beyond the mouth of the Volga. A small steamer having several barges in tow took us to the shoal, where we were transferred to the *Koran*, a handsome steamer two hundred and fifty-two feet long and twenty-eight feet broad. There was a large fleet of river-boats, barges, and sea-steamers at Diavet Foot, and we

watched with much interest the process of transferring kerosene from the tank-steamers which had brought it from Baku to the barges for conveyance up the river."

An English gentleman, who was connected with the petroleum works at Baku, kindly gave the youths the following information:

AN OIL-STEAMER ON THE CASPIAN SEA.

"There are nearly a hundred steamers on the Caspian engaged in the oil traffic. They are of iron or steel, average about two hundred and fifty feet in length by twenty-seven or twenty-eight in breadth, and carry from seven hundred to eight hundred tons (two hundred thousand to two hundred and fifty thousand gallons) of petroleum in their tanks. Their engines are of one hundred and twenty horsepower, and make a speed of ten knots an hour; they use petroleum for fuel, and it is estimated that their running expenses are less than half what they would be if coal were burned instead of oil. The steamers were built in Sweden or England, and brought through from St. Petersburg by means of the canals connecting the Volga with the Neva. Some of the largest steamers were cut in two for the passage of the canals, the sections being united at Astrachan or Baku.

"The oil-steamers for river work are from sixty to one hundred and fifty feet long; they are fitted with tanks, like the sea-steamers, and are powerful enough for towing tank-barges in addition to the transport of their own loads. They run from Diavet Foot to Tsaritsin, four hundred miles up the Volga, the first point where there is railway connection to Western Europe. Some of them proceed to Kazan, Nijni Novgorod, and other points on the upper Volga, and also through the canals to St. Petersburg, but the greater part of them land their cargoes at Tsaritsin.

"When you get to Baku you will see how rapidly the loading of the steamers is performed. When a steamer is ready for her cargo, an eight-inch pipe pours the kerosene into her tanks, and fills her in about four hours. Then she starts for Diavet Foot, where the oil is pumped into the river steamers and barges; she fills her tanks with fresh water, partly in order to ballast her properly, and partly because water is very scarce at Baku, and then starts on her return. Five or six days make a round trip, including the loading and unloading at either end of the route.

"At Baku the water is pumped into reservoirs, to be used in the refineries or for irrigating the soil in the vicinity of the works, and then the steamer is ready for her load again. From Tsaritsin the oil is carried in tank-cars similar to those you

have in America. I can't say exactly how many tank-cars are in use, but think the number is not much below three thousand. Twenty-five cars make an oil-train, and these oil-trains are in constant circulation all over the railways of Russia and Western Europe."

Frank asked if the enterprise was conducted by the Government or by individuals.

"It is in the hands of private parties," said the gentleman, "who are generally organized into companies. The leading company was founded by two Swedes, Nobel Brothers, who have spent most of their lives in Russia, and are famous for their ingenuity and enterprise. The petroleum industry of Baku was practically developed by them; they originated the idea of transporting the Baku petroleum in bulk, and the first tank-steamer on the Caspian was built by them in 1879, according to the plans of the elder brother.

TANKS AT A STORAGE DEPOT.

"Bear in mind that the Volga is frozen for four months in the year, at the very time when kerosene is most in demand for light. Nobel Brothers arranged for a system of depots throughout Russia and Germany, where oil could be stored in summer for distribution in winter. The largest of these depots is at Orel, and there are four other large depots at St. Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw, and Saratov.

"The depot at Orel can receive eighteen million gallons, and the four other large depots about three million gallons each. The smaller depots, together with the depot at Tsaritsin, make a total storage capacity of between fifty and sixty million gallons of petroleum available for use when the Volga is frozen and traffic suspended.

VIEW IN AN OIL REGION.

"All this was done before the completion of the railway between the Caspian and Black seas. The line from Batoum, on the Black Sea, by way of Tiflis to Baku, on the Caspian, was opened in 1883, and immediately about two hundred tank-cars were set to carrying oil to where it could be loaded into steamers for transportation to the ports of the Mediterranean and to England. A pipe-line similar to what you have in America to connect your oil regions with the seaboard, will probably be established before long between Baku and Batoum; the oil will be pumped from Baku to the crest of the pass through the Caucasus Mountains, and from there it will run by gravity like a mountain stream down to the shores of the Black Sea. There it can be loaded into tank-steamers, or placed

in barrels for distribution wherever it can find a market.

BITS FOR DRILLING WELLS.

"Perhaps I may be building castles in the air," said the gentleman, "since I am not of your nationality, but I look upon the European market for American petroleum as doomed to destruction. The Baku petroleum has driven your American product from Russia, and is rapidly driving it from the markets of Germany, France, and Austria. We think it quite equal to your petroleum, and in some respects superior. American oilmen claim that theirs is by far the better article, and as each side can bring the opinions of scientists to prove the correctness of its claim, the question resolves itself into one of cheapness of production and transportation. For the market of Europe and Asia we think we have a great advantage in being nearer to it. It is as far from Batoum to England as from New York, and therefore you may be able to supply Great Britain with petroleum, by reason of the cost of transportation.

"Two plans are under consideration for overcoming the disadvantages of the closing of the Volga route by ice for one-third of the year. Look on the map of Russia and see the position of Vladikavkaz at the foot of the Caucasus Mountains. The railway reaches that point, and it has been proposed to extend it to a connection with the Batoum-Baku line at Tiflis, a distance of one hundred and ten miles. The line would be very costly, as it must run through the Caucasus range; a longer but less expensive line would be from Vladikavkaz to Petrovsk, on the shore of the Caspian Sea, half way between Baku and the mouth of the Volga. It could be reached in a day by the tank-steamers from Baku, and communication is open for the entire year.

"Since either of these lines would be useful for strategic purposes as well as for commerce, it is probable that one or both of them will be built within the next few years. They would be useful for the supply of Russia and Germany in the winter season, and render the enormous storage depots less necessary than they are at present.

A SPOUTING WELL.

"The Baku petroleum is utilized not only for making kerosene, but for the manufacture of lubricating oils and for liquid fuel for steam-ship, railway, and other purposes. The oil refuse is burned on the steamer, and railways; for the last two or three years it has been employed by the Tsaritsin-Griazi Railway[Pg 417]

[Pg 418] Company in its locomotives, where it has completely taken the place of coal. It is the only fuel used by the Trans-Caucasian railway from Baku to

Batoum and Poti, and wherever it has been tried in competition with coal brought from great distances, it has been adopted. I wonder you don't make use of it in America."

DERRICK AND TANKS IN THE AMERICAN OIL REGION.

Doctor Bronson suggested that probably the reason why liquid fuel had not taken the place of coal in America, was in consequence of the relative prices of the two substances. "In Russia," said he, "coal is dear; in America it is cheap, and our coal-fields are exhaustless. Three hundred thousand tons of coal have been carried annually from England to the Black Sea; it retails there for ten or twelve dollars a ton, which would be an enormous price in America. Now what will your petroleum fuel cost at Batoum?"

"The present price," said his informant, "is twenty-six English shillings (nearly seven dollars) a ton. Weight for weight, it is cheaper than coal; one ton of it will make as much steam as two tons of coal, and thus you see there is an enormous saving in cost of fuel. Then add the saving in wages of stokers, the additional space that can be given to cargo, and the gain in cleanliness, as the liquid fuel makes neither smoke nor cinders.

"The Russian Government is making experiments at Sebastopol with a view to adopting *astaki*, as petroleum refuse is called, as the fuel for its men-of-war. I predict that as fast as the furnaces can be changed you will see all steamers on the Black Sea burning the new substance instead of the old. Come with me and see how the liquid fuel works."

"He led the way to the engine-room of the steamer," said Frank, in his journal, "and asked the engineer to show us how the machinery was propelled.

"The process is exceedingly simple. Small streams of petroleum are caught by jets of steam and turned into vapor; the vapor burns beneath the boilers and makes the steam, and that is all. The flow of steam and oil is regulated by means of stopcocks, and steam can be made rapidly or slowly as may be desired.

"Our friend told us that a fire of wood, cotton-waste, or some other combustible is used to get up steam at starting. This is done under a small boiler distinct from the main ones, and it supplies steam for the 'pulverizer,' as the petroleum furnace is called.

"When steam is on the main boilers the small one is shut off and the fire beneath it is extinguished. Even this preliminary fire is rendered unnecessary by a newly invented furnace in which a quantity of hydro-carbon gas is kept stored and in

readiness. We were told that the action of the pulverizer is so simple that after the engineers have adjusted the flame at starting and put the machinery in operation, they do not give them any attention till the end of the voyage. One stoker, or fireman, is sufficient to watch all the furnaces of a ship and keep them properly supplied with astaki."

A good many additional details were given which we have not space to present. The study of the petroleum question occupied the attention of the youths during the greater part of the voyage, and almost before realizing it they were entering the Bay of Baku, and making ready to go on shore.

Frank and Fred were astonished at what they saw before them. Baku is on a crescent-shaped bay, and for a distance of seven or eight miles along its shores there is a fringe of buildings on the land, and a fringe of shipping on the water. Thirty or forty piers jut from the land into the bay; some of the piers were vacant, while others had each from three to half a dozen steamers receiving their cargoes or waiting their turns to be filled. Not less than fifty steamers were in port, and there were several hundred sailing craft of various sizes and descriptions riding at anchor or tied up at the piers. It was a busy scene—the most active one that had greeted their eyes since leaving the fair at Nijni Novgorod.

They landed at one of the piers, and were taken to a comfortable hotel facing the water, and not far away from it. The youths observed that the population was a cosmopolitan one, quite equal to that of the fair-grounds of Nijni; Russians, Armenians, Turcomans, Kirghese, Persians, Greeks, all were there together with people of other races and tribes they were unable to classify. The streets were filled with carts and carriages in great number, and they found on inquiry that almost any kind of vehicle they desired could be had with little delay.

Doctor Bronson and his young friends had visited the petroleum region of their own country, and very naturally desired to see its formidable rival. They learned that the wells were eight or ten miles from Baku, and as it was late in the day when they arrived, their visit was postponed till the following morning.

Securing a competent guide they engaged a carriage, and early the next day left the hotel for the interesting excursion. We will quote Frank's account of what they saw:

AN OIL REFINERY WITH TANK CARS.

"We found the road by no means the best in the world," said the youth, "as no effort is made to keep it in repair, and the track is through a desert. On our right

as we left Baku is the *Chorney Gorod*, or Black Town, which contains the refineries; it reminded us of Pittsburg, with its many chimneys and the cloud of smoke that hung over it. Then we crossed the track of the railway, and the lines of pipe that supply the refineries with oil. Right and left of us all over the plain there are reservoirs and pools of petroleum; there are black spots which indicate petroleum springs, and white spots denoting the presence of salt lakes. By-and-by we see a whole forest of derricks, which tells us we are nearing Balakhani, the centre of the oil-wells.

TARTAR CAMEL-CART AT BAKU.

"Passing on our left the end of a salt lake five or six miles long, we enter the region covered by these derricks, and our guide takes us to the Droojba well, which spouted a stream of petroleum three hundred feet high when it was opened. Two million gallons of petroleum were thrown out daily for a fortnight or more from this one well, and two months after it was opened it delivered two hundred and fifty thousand gallons daily. Our guide said it ruined its owners and drove them into bankruptcy!

"You will wonder, as we did, how a discovery that ought to have made a fortune for its owners did exactly the reverse. We asked the guide, and he thus explained it:

"The Droojba Company had only land enough for a well, and none for reservoirs. The oil flowed upon the grounds of other people, and became their property. Some of it was caught on waste ground that belonged to nobody, but the price had fallen so low that the company did not realize from it enough to pay the claims of those whose property was damaged by the débris that flowed from the well along with the petroleum. In this region considerable sand comes with the oil. The sandy product of the Droojba well was very large, and did a great deal of damage. It covered buildings and derricks, impeded workings, filled the reservoirs of other companies or individuals, and made as much havoc generally as a heavy storm.'

ANCIENT MOUND NEAR THE CASPIAN SEA.

"The process of boring a well is very much the same as in America, and does not merit a special description. The diameter of the bore is larger than in America; it varies from ten to fourteen inches, and some of the wells have a diameter of twenty inches. Oil is found at a depth of from three hundred to eight hundred feet. Every year the shallow wells are exhausted, and new borings are made to greater depths; they are nearly always successful, and therefore, though the

petroleum field around Balakhani is very large, the oil speculators show no disposition to go far from the original site. To do so would require a large outlay for pipe-lines, or other means of transporting the product, and as long as the old spot holds out they prefer to stick to it.

CURIOUS ROCK FORMATIONS.

"Our guide said there were about five hundred wells at Balakhani; there are twenty-five thousand wells in America, but it is claimed that they do not yield as much oil in the aggregate as the wells in this region.

"From the wells the oil is conducted into reservoirs, which are nothing more than pits dug in the earth, or natural depressions with banks of sand raised around them. Here the sand in the oil is allowed to settle; when it has become clear enough for use the crude petroleum is pumped into iron tanks, and then into the pipe-lines that carry it to the refineries in Chorney Gorod.

"Some of the ponds of oil are large enough to be called lakes, and there are great numbers of them scattered over the ground of Balakhani. The iron cisterns or tanks are of great size; the largest of them is said to have a capacity of two million gallons.

"There is no hotel, not even a restaurant, at Balakhani, and we should have gone hungry had it not been for the caution of the hotel-keeper, who advised us to take a luncheon with us. The ride and the exertion of walking among the wells gave us an appetite that an alderman would envy, and we thoroughly enjoyed the cold chicken, bread, and grapes which we ate in the carriage before starting back to the town. We reached the hotel without accident, though considerably shaken up by the rough road and the energetic driving of our Tartar coachman."

While Frank was busy with his description, Fred was looking up the history of the oil-wells of Baku. Here is what he wrote concerning them:

MODERN FIRE-WORSHIPPERS—PARSEE LADY AND DAUGHTER.

"For twenty-five hundred years Baku has been celebrated for its fire-springs, and for a thousand years it has supplied surrounding nations and people with its oil. From the time of Zoroaster (about 600 B.C.) it has been a place of pilgrimage for the Guebres, or Fire-worshippers, and they have kept their temples here through all the centuries down to the present day. At Surukhani (about eight miles from Baku and four or five from Balakhani) there are some temples of very ancient date; they stand above the mouths of gas-wells, and for twenty centuries and more the Fire-worshippers have maintained the sacred flame there without once

allowing it to become extinct. On the site of Baku itself there was for centuries a temple in which the sacred fire was maintained by priests of Zoroaster until about A.D. 624. The Emperor Heraclius, in his war against the Persians, extinguished the fires and destroyed the temple.

"Since the eighth century, and perhaps earlier, the oil has been an article of commerce in Persia and other Oriental countries. Read what Marco Polo wrote about it in the thirteenth century:

"On the confines of Georgine there is a fountain from which oil springs in great abundance, inasmuch as a hundred ship-loads might be taken from it at one time. This oil is not good to use with food, but 'tis good to burn, and is used also to anoint camels that have the mange. People come from vast distances to fetch it, for in all countries there is no other oil.'

"It is probable that the good Marco means camel-loads rather than ship-loads—at least that is the opinion of most students of the subject. The fire-temple of the Guebres is a walled quadrangle, with an altar in the centre, where the fire is kept; the sides of the quadrangle contain cells where the priests and attendants live, and in former times there were frequently several thousands of pilgrims congregated there. We were told that the place would not repay a visit, and therefore we have not gone there, as we are somewhat pressed for time, and the journey is a fatiguing one.

A BURNING TANK.

"For a considerable space around the temple there are deep fissures in the ground whence the gas steadily escapes. Before the Russians occupied [Pg 425]

[Pg 426] the country there was an annual sacrifice by the Fire-worshippers. A young man was thrown into one of the fissures, where he perished, though some writers assert that he leaped voluntarily, through the persuasion of the priests.

"Though famous through many centuries, and carried thousands of miles east and west for purposes of illumination, the oil of Baku was never gathered in large quantities until the present century, and the exploitation of the oil-fields on a grand scale is an affair of the last twenty years.

A FALL IN OIL.

"In 1820 it was estimated that the yield of the Baku oil-wells was about four thousand tons of naphtha, of which the greater part was sent to Persia. The annual production remained about the same until 1860, when it was 5484 tons; in 1864 it was 8700 tons; in 1870, 27,500; and in 1872, 24,800 tons. Down to

that time the Government held a monopoly of the oil-fields, and levied a royalty for operating them. In 1872 the monopoly was removed, and the lands were offered for sale or long lease.

A RISE IN OIL.

"There was a rush of speculators to the oil fields, stimulated by the knowledge of what had been accomplished in America. Sixty-four thousand tons were produced in 1873, 94,000 in 1875, 242,000 in 1877, 420,000 in 1880, 800,000 in 1883, and over 1,000,000 tons in 1884. In 1885 the total quantity of raw petroleum pumped or received from the wells was 105,000,000 poods, or nearly 2,000,000 tons. Twenty-seven million poods, or nearly 500,000 tons, were distilled at Baku. The largest portion, two thirds at least, was sent off by sea to Astrachan, and thence up the Volga, to be forwarded by tank-cars for distribution to all parts of Russia and to Baltic ports, and thence to Germany and England. About 7,250,000 poods have been shipped by the Trans-Caucasian Railway to Batoum, on the Black Sea, going thence to the Danube, to Odessa, to Marseilles, and some by the Suez Canal to India and China. Every day large trains of tank-cars leave Baku *via* Tiflis for Batoum, and a pipe-line from Baku to Batoum may be looked for before long.

"Down to 1870 the oil was taken from pits which were dug like ordinary wells; boring began in that year on the American system, and the first bored well went into operation, the oil being pumped out by the ordinary pumping machinery.

"The first flowing well, or *fontan* (fountain), as it is called here, was struck in 1873. In that year there were only seventeen bored wells in operation, but by the end of 1874 there were upward of fifty. The flowing wells cease to flow after a time, varying from a few weeks to several months; one well spouted forty thousand gallons of oil daily for more than two years, and afterwards yielded half that amount as a pumping well. The history of many wells of this region is like a chapter from the 'Arabian Nights.'

"We are in the midst of oil, and shall be as long as we remain at Baku. There are pools of oil in the streets; the air is filled with the smell of oil; the streets are sprinkled with oil, as it is cheaper and better than water; ships and steamers are black and greasy with oil, and even our food tastes of oil. Everybody talks oil, and lives upon oil (figuratively, at least), and we long to think of something else."

NOTE TO SECOND EDITION.—Since the first edition of this book was printed the following telegram has been received: "Baku, October 5, 1886. At

Tagieff's wells a fountain has commenced playing at the rate of thirty thousand poods of petroleum an hour. Its height is two hundred and twenty-four feet. In spite of its being five versts from the town, the petroleum sand is pouring upon the buildings and streets." Thirty thousand poods are equivalent to one hundred and twenty-five thousand gallons; multiplied by twenty-four it gives the unprecedented yield of three million gallons a day. Estimating thirty gallons to the barrel, we have a well flowing one hundred thousand barrels of oil daily! This is something never dreamed of by the wildest petroleum speculator in America. A single well of the Baku district is producing more oil than the aggregate of all the petroleum wells in the United States.

Plans for a pipe line from Baku to Batoum, with an annual capacity of one hundred and sixty million gallons, have been completed, and the work will be pushed as rapidly as possible. The successful operation of this pipe line can hardly fail to have a serious effect upon the petroleum industry of America.



CHAPTER XXI.

A GLANCE AT CENTRAL ASIA.—RUSSIAN CONQUEST IN TURKESTAN.—WAR AND DIPLOMACY AMONG THE KIRGHESE TRIBES.—RUSSIAN TAXES AND THEIR COLLECTION.—TURCOMAN AND KIRGHESE RAIDS.—PRISONERS SOLD INTO SLAVERY.—FORTIFIED VILLAGES AND TOWERS OF REFUGE.—COMMERCE IN TURKESTAN.—JEALOUSY OF FOREIGNERS.—TRAVELS OF VÁMBÉRY AND OTHERS.—VÁMBÉRY'S NARROW ESCAPE.—TURCOMAN CHARACTER.—PAYMENTS FOR HUMAN HEADS.—MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AMONG THE TURCOMANS.—EXTENT AND POPULATION OF CENTRAL ASIA.

When our friends had completed their study of the Petrolia of Europe they looked around for new worlds to conquer. Being in Russia, they followed Russian tendencies, and turned their eyes in the direction of Central Asia.

"Wouldn't it be a splendid trip," said Frank, "to go through Central Asia to India and the Far East? How long would it take, and would it be very expensive?"

"I'm afraid there would be too many difficulties in the way," replied the Doctor, with a smile. "In the first place the Russians are not inclined to allow men of other nationalities to see what they are doing in the disputed country between their possessions and those of the English. They would treat us very politely, but, in one way and another, would keep us from crossing Afghanistan to the English lines. We should not be welcome visitors among the English in Northern India. Most of them regard Americans as more friendly to Russia than to England in whatever concerns Central Asia, and the English officials in the disputed country would not aid our movements."

"What would be our facilities for travelling, supposing we met with no official opposition?"

"Starting from Baku," replied the Doctor, "we could cross the Caspian to Mikhailovsk in a steamer in from sixteen to eighteen hours. Mikhailovsk is in what was once the Turcoman country, but is now Russian territory. It was permanently occupied in 1869, and since that time Russia has been extending her possessions until she is now at the borders of India, with only a narrow strip

of territory between the English possessions and her own.

CAMP SCENE NEAR THE ALTAI MOUNTAINS.

"From the time of Peter the Great to the present," the Doctor continued, "Russia has been steadily pressing farther and farther into Asia. If inclined to be a punster, I should say she has advanced steppe by steppe; the Kirghese and Turcoman steppes have been conquered one after another—sometimes by fighting, and sometimes by diplomacy, but more frequently by a skilful combination of both forms of conquest. The Russians have a thorough knowledge of Asiatic people, probably because they have so much Asiatic blood in their own veins, and in their dealings with the savage or half-civilized natives of this vast country they manage things much better than the English do.

"A large part of the Kirghese country was won without actual fighting, though with military assistance. It was generally in this wise:

"Two tribes might be at war with each other, and Russia, after some negotiation, would come to the aid of the weaker. The presence of a Russian battalion of cavalry would be quite sufficient to frighten the stronger tribe into keeping the peace, as its chief would understand that resistance might cost him his dominions. Having made matters quiet, the Russian commander would propose to leave, and let the chief whose cause he had been espousing take care of himself.

A KALMUCK PRIEST.

"The chief would then see for the first time the uncomfortable situation he would be in with the retirement of his ally; the stronger tribe would assail him, and be all the more bitter against him on account of his alliance with the Russians. He begged the Russians to stay. After some hesitation they consented, provided the management of affairs was handed over to them. They generally received what they wanted, and then proceeded to conquer the other tribe and make themselves master over both.

"Sometimes the Russians follow another policy; they establish themselves with the weaker tribe, make peace between the two factions, and then build a fort and coolly announce that they will remain permanently. The tribes find it useless to resist, and thus they become subject to Russia."

"Don't the English accuse the Russians of stirring up trouble among the Kirghese and Turcoman tribes, so as to have an excuse for interference?" one of the youths inquired.

"I believe they do," the Doctor answered. "The Russians indignantly deny that such is the case; of course they would deny it, even if confronted with unquestionable proof.

SCENE ON THE EDGE OF THE KIRGHESE STEPPE.

"They have sent a great many military expeditions into Central Asia in the last fifty years. For a long time their base of operations was at Orenburg, on the frontier of Siberia, but latterly it has been transferred to the shores of the Caspian. Orenburg is now far in the rear, and its chief use is as a military post, from which order is maintained among the Kirghese.

"Some of the Russian expeditions have turned out disastrously, but they have always followed a disaster by a triumph. In one expedition every man was killed, captured, or perished of starvation or thirst in the desert, but immediately another army was put in motion, and the Russians more than recovered the prestige they had lost. The list of the battles fought in Central Asia is a long one, but longer still is the list of bloodless conquests made through Russian diplomacy.

"Khanates, chieftaincies, and principalities have been absorbed by Russia in her southward and eastward march over the steppes and along the valleys of the rivers. The cities of Tashkend, Samarcand, Khiva, Kokan, and Bokhara, have passed from the flag of the intolerant Moslem to that of the tolerant Russian, and with the cities have gone the khanates and principalities of which they were the capitals."

Fred asked if the subjugation of these territories had been beneficial to their inhabitants or not.

KIRGHESE GROUP.

"In every way it has been a benefit to them, and none of those who are peaceably disposed would care to return to their old condition. The Russian yoke is easy upon the necks of the inhabitants; the Russians make no interference with the religion, laws, manners, and customs of the people, excepting where they are manifestly cruel or tyrannical; they allow the natives to do exactly as they like, protect them in the possession of their property, give them facilities of trade never before enjoyed, and in every way better their condition.

"In place of the outrageous taxes formerly levied by the Moslem authorities whenever the khan or his officials wanted money, the Russians have a fixed annual tax which is never above the easy ability of the subject to pay; it is generally asserted that the taxes in Asia are much lighter than those of European Russia, to make sure that there shall be no discontent among the people. The Russian Government requires that every subject shall pay a tax, not so much for the value of the article received as an acknowledgment of subjection.

"In the settled portions of Russia the tax is payable in money, but in the wilder regions taxes are collected 'in kind.' On the shores of the Arctic Ocean and through all the northern part of Siberia the *yessak*, or tax, is one fox-skin; in Kamtchatka it was formerly one sable-skin, but since the increase in the price of the fur, one skin is received for every four inhabitants, who arrange the division among themselves. In some of the grain-growing parts of the Empire the tax is paid in grain; on the Amoor River it is paid in fish, and among the Kirghese and Turcomans it is paid in cattle, sheep, or horses, which constitute the circulating medium of the country.

KIRGHESE CHIEF AND FAMILY.

"In return for this tax, and provided the new subject in Central Asia behaves himself, he has the protection of a powerful government. The Russian Government has its faults, but it is immeasurably superior to the old way in which these countries were ruled.

"By the religion of the Moslem might makes right, and this was the foundation of the governmental system of the Kirghese and Turcoman tribes, together with the khanates previously mentioned. Robbery was a recognized means of making a living; not robbery by detail, as practised by highwaymen and burglars, but wholesale robbery in which entire tribes were concerned. Many thousands of people lived by raiding, and the raid was as legitimate a way of acquiring property as selling goods in a shop and making a profit on them."

CARAVAN IN RUSSIAN TERRITORY.

Frank and Fred made an exclamation of surprise as the Doctor continued:

"The Kirghese who occupy the region immediately south of the Altai Mountains, and are still found on the southern confines of the Baraba Steppe, are broken into many independent tribes; they are nomadic in their habits, wandering from place to place in search of pasturage for their immense flocks and herds. In winter they frequent the valleys among the outlying hills of the Altai Mountains, and in summer descend upon the plains. Many of the tribes live altogether on the plains, and their range covers many thousands of square miles.

"Quarrels were numerous among them, chiefly growing out of disputes about pasturage or water, and these are the quarrels in which the Russians interfered, both in the interest of humanity and the spread of their power. Frequently these disputes led to raids for purposes of plunder; quite as frequently one tribe would make a raid on another with which it was at peace for the sole object of robbery.

"Attacks were generally made at night, and if they were successful the robbers would drive off the flocks and herds of the tribe assailed. Men, women, and children were taken to be sold into slavery in the markets of Khiva and Bokhara, or kept among their captors. These slaves were treated with the greatest cruelty; they were severely beaten for the slightest offence or failure to perform what had been ordered, were poorly fed, and often compelled to wear chains. They were generally maimed for life, by means of a horse-hair run through the heel, in order to prevent their escape from captivity.

"All this business was brought to an end by the Russians when they occupied the Kirghese country. They compelled the tribes to live peacefully with each other, and if any dispute arose about water or pasturage it was referred to the Russian commander of the district for adjustment. If one tribe made a raid on another it was compelled to give up the stolen property, and furthermore a heavy fine was levied upon the raiders—half going to the Russian Government and half to the injured tribe. The Russians generally made the fine heavy enough to furnish a percentage for the officers who took the trouble to adjust the differences.

"Russian goods were introduced among these nomadic people, markets were opened, and every facility was offered for the increase of commerce. Long caravans were constantly in motion between Orenburg, Sempolatinsk, and other points in Russian territory, and Khiva, Bokhara, and Samarcand, far to the east. They traversed the Kirghese and Turcoman country, and wherever they went they found a material difference in the matter of safety, whether the territory was

under Russian rule or remained independent. If the latter, the caravans were constantly liable to attack and plunder; if the former, they were invariably free from molestation.

"The capture of Bokhara, Samarcand, and Khiva reduced the slave-markets of the Turcoman raiders, but by no means put an end to their plundering expeditions. The independent Turcomans were estimated to be about a million in number, divided into several tribes, who sometimes warred upon each other, but constantly upon the Persians and other peaceable people. In the wars between Khiva and Bokhara, Samarcand and Kokan, they took sides with those who would pay the most for their services.

KIRGHESE RAID ON A HOSTILE TRIBE.

"Down to very recently the whole of Northern Persia was subject to Turcoman raids, and agriculture was carried on under great difficulties.^[7] The raids were sometimes carried up to within a hundred miles of Teheran, or about five hundred miles inside the Persian boundary. They were organized months beforehand, and sometimes as many as five or six thousand men were engaged in a single enterprise. A raid was called a 'chapow' by the Persians; in the Turcoman language it was an 'alaman.'

"A Turcoman leader would announce his intention of making an alaman, but the route was always kept secret through fear of betrayal. The Turcomans are splendid horsemen, and while organizing an expedition they put their steeds under a system of training to enable them to make long and swift marches whenever occasion required. When everything was ready the party started; it travelled slowly until it reached the Persian frontier, and was often weeks on the way.

"Passing the frontier, the hard work of the campaign began. The region selected for the raid was reached as soon as possible; then the invading force was divided into small parties, and each had a particular village assigned to it. Their movements were made so as to catch the people at work in the fields, and capture the cattle before they could be driven into a place of safety. Not only the cattle, but all the men, women, and children that could be seized were taken. The old and useless were slaughtered without mercy; the young or able-bodied were carried off, to be sold into slavery. A wealthy Persian was held for a heavy ransom, but a poor man had no chance of redemption.

"The plundering was kept up as long as there was anything to steal, and then the expedition returned to its own territory. Sometimes in a single raid as many as a

hundred thousand horses, sheep, goats, and other animals were captured, and a thousand or more people were carried into slavery."

Frank asked if the Persian Government made no provision for the protection of its people.

"Very little," replied the Doctor; "the Persian troops were in the cities and large towns, which the Turcomans never attacked, and as there was no telegraph through the country, the raiders almost invariably got to a safe distance before a pursuit could be started. Very often the Persian officials on the frontier connived at the raids, and the people were forced to rely upon themselves for protection."

"In what way could they do anything against the robbers?" was the very natural query that followed this statement.

"Their villages are built of mud, and may be called forts," the Doctor replied. "The walls are from twenty to thirty feet thick, and about forty in height; they form a quadrangle, or circle, where cattle can be driven at night, and there is only a single door-way, too low to permit the passage of a man on horseback. The raiders never stop to besiege a place; all their work is done by a sudden dash, and the Turcoman would never think of dismounting to pass the low door-way. Inside there is a stone door which may be closed to prevent ingress; it is thick and strong, and once inside of their mud village the people are safe."

LASGIRD—A FORTIFIED VILLAGE IN NORTHERN PERSIA.

"Here is a picture of one of these villages," said the Doctor; "it is called Lasgird, and is about a hundred miles east of the capital of Persia. You will observe that there is a double tier of dwellings on the top of the circular wall; the enclosed space accommodates the cattle and other live-stock of the village, and is also utilized for the storage of grain. On the outside, near the top, there is a balcony made of projecting timbers covered with branches of trees; it has no outer railing, and must be a very unsafe place for a promenade. Inside of such a retreat the people had nothing to fear, as the Turcomans have no artillery and did not care to stay long enough to batter down the walls."

Fred remarked that it must be difficult for those at work in the fields at any distance to get to the village before they were overtaken by the raiders on their swift horses.

TOWER OF REFUGE.

"So it is," was the reply, "and to further protect themselves they had towers of refuge in their fields, where they could run in case of danger. Some of the towers

had ladders on the outside which were drawn up as the Turcomans approached, while others were entered by narrow door-ways similar to those of the villages. On the hills there were signal-towers where watchmen were stationed; when the dust of an approaching alaman was seen, the watchmen gave warning and the people fled for safety."

"What a life to lead!" said one of the youths. "Always apprehensive of danger, and never knowing when the murderous Turcomans might come!"

"It was much like the life of the early settlers of New England," said the Doctor, "when the Indians were liable to come at any moment, and the men carried their guns to church on Sunday. The same condition of things has continued until quite recently on our western frontier, and still exists in a few places in Texas and New Mexico. But the difference is that in our country it never lasted for many years in any one place, while in Persia the situation was the same for centuries.

"These Turcoman thieves hampered agriculture in the way I have described, and they also restricted commerce by plundering the caravans. Merchants travelled with an armed escort and in large numbers. Even this did not save them from attack, as a great caravan was unwieldy, and often the robbers would dart in and seize a few camels laden with merchandise while the escort was so far away in another part of the line that it could not rush to attack the marauders until they had finished their work and departed. And remember that for centuries trade has followed this dangerous route!

"A curious thing about these raids is that the departure of a plundering expedition was always accompanied by religious ceremonies. The Mollahs, or Moslem priests, gave their blessing to the thieves, and prayed for Allah's favor upon the enterprise. When the party returned laden with plunder, and driving slaves and stolen cattle in great number, the same priests offered prayers in thanks for Allah's blessing, and a portion of the proceeds of the expedition was set apart for the cause of religion."

FRAMEWORK OF TURCOMAN TENT.

"Then they must be of a different religion from the Persians," Fred observed, "as they would not be likely to make war upon people of their own faith."

THE TENT COVERED.

"Unfortunately for your theory, that was not the case," the Doctor answered. "Persians and Turcomans are all Moslems; they have different sects, just as have

the adherents of the Christian religion, but in a general way they may be said to be of the same faith. Moslems make war upon each other with very little hesitation; the only thing in which they appear to be united is in their hatred of all other religions than their own."

"I suppose they have not received travellers with any courtesy," said Frank. "Do they permit foreigners to visit their country and study its character?"

INTERIOR OF TENT.

"Not at all," was the reply, "if they can prevent it, and they are not at all particular about the mode of prevention. Of course, since the country was occupied by Russia there has been a change in this respect, and under Russian protection a stranger may travel there with comparative safety.

"In former times most of the Europeans who ventured into Turkestan (the collective name for the countries of Central Asia) paid the penalty of their temerity with their lives. Russians, Englishmen, Germans, and others perished, and not one explorer in ten returned to tell the story of his travels. Two English ambassadors, Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, ventured into Bokhara about 1840, and were murdered, the former after four years' imprisonment, and the latter after a twelvemonth.

"Stoddart was repeatedly tortured, and finally was promised his freedom if he would embrace the Moslem religion. To save his life he consented, and went through the required ceremony; the Emir of Bokhara continued to torture him, and finally ordered the heads of both Conolly and Stoddart to be cut off in the public square of Bokhara.

"Stoddart was executed first, and then the Emir offered Conolly his freedom if he would become a Moslem. 'No,' said he, 'I prefer to die. Stoddart became a Moslem and you have killed him. Go on with your work.' The Emir nodded to the executioner, and the work of execution was completed.

"Wood, another Englishman, who went to Bokhara to ascertain what had become of Stoddart and Conolly, was imprisoned for some time, and narrowly escaped with his life. A more fortunate explorer was Arminius Vámbéry, a Hungarian, who travelled through Central Asia disguised as a dervish from Constantinople. At the very outset of his journey he was obliged to wait for three-quarters of a year in Teheran before he could find the right kind of party to travel with. In his character of dervish he associated with pilgrims like himself, who wished to visit the Moslem shrines of Bokhara and Samarcand. They were twenty-four in number, and nearly all of them were distinguished for their poverty. They

intended to beg their way through the country and back again; Vámbéry had a little money, which he carefully concealed, as it would not be in accordance with his assumed character of dervish to be known to have any ready cash.

VÁMBÉRY'S RECEPTION BY TURCOMAN CHIEF ON THE CASPIAN SHORE.

"From Teheran they went north to the Turcoman country, which then extended westward to the shores of the Caspian Sea. On landing, they[Pg 443]

[Pg 444] were greeted by the Turcoman chief who ruled in that district; he was very hospitable, and entertained them for a whole month merely for the sake of having visitors.

"In a caravan of Turcoman horsemen they journeyed to Khiva, crossing a desert region where for days they had only the water they carried on their saddles. They fell short of water, and while their suffering was severe they were relieved by the chief of the caravan, who had an extra store concealed in his baggage. As he doled it out to the pilgrims he said it had always been his custom to carry an extra supply of water while crossing the desert, and distribute it when most needed. But this same man had proposed a few days before to leave Vámbéry to perish in the desert, on the mere suspicion that he was a European in disguise.

"Vámbéry gives an excellent description of the Turcoman character, which has been fully confirmed by other travellers, and later by the Russian conquerors of Turkestan. They are honest in their dealings with each other, and often display much tenderness; at the same time they are the most brutal of slave-masters and man-stealers, and capable of the severest cruelty. Vámbéry says that one day a Turcoman said it was a sin to destroy a basket in the desert, because it had once been the seat of a man on a camel; the same man denied a drop of water to a slave whom he had fed on salt-fish for two days, and his delight at the suffering of his victim was equal to that of a countryman over the antics of a clown at a circus.

RECEIVING PAYMENT FOR HUMAN HEADS—KHIVA.

"Some of the tribes, in their wars with each other, cut off the heads of those whom they slay in battle, and bring them home as trophies; Vámbéry happened to be present in Khiva when, one day, the Khan's treasurer was paying for human heads. As each warrior came forward he emptied his sack on the ground, and an accountant made note of the number of skulls and the name of their owner.

TURCOMAN TROPHY—A RUSSIAN HEAD.

"The payment was not in money, but in robes of honor, which were of different colors, according to the number of slain to each warrior's credit. Some received the robe of forty heads, others the robe of twenty, and others that of ten, five, or four. It was like the different degrees of the decorations awarded by the rulers of the nations of Europe, or the rewards of merit issued by a school-teacher to diligent and well-behaved pupils.

"Another time Vámbéry was in the public square of Khiva when about three hundred prisoners of war were brought in. They were separated into two divisions, those who had not reached their fortieth year, and were to be sold as slaves or given as presents, being placed in one category. They were chained together and led away, and then the old men were brought forward for punishment; and what do you suppose it was?

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"These gray-bearded old men were tied hand and foot and placed flat on their backs on the ground. Then their eyes were gouged out, the executioner kneeling on the breast of each to perform his dreadful work. Each time when he finished with a victim he deliberately wiped his knife on the latter's flowing beard. Vámbéry says the scene will make him shudder as long as he lives, and no wonder.

"And yet he found the people of Khiva full of pious charity. The same khan who had ordered this cruel treatment of prisoners of war, loaded the supposed dervish and his companions with presents, and showed them every kindness. When Vámbéry left in the direction of Bokhara, he was mounted on a good donkey, and had plenty of clothing, provisions, and money, which had been given him by the faithful.

"Vámbéry says he one day asked a robber who was noted for piety, how he could sell his brother religionists into slavery. The robber replied that the holy book, the Koran, was certainly more precious than man, and yet it was bought or sold for a few small coins. He added that Joseph, the son of Jacob, was a prophet, but was sold into slavery without being any the worse for it. His argument was forcible, and the stranger concluded it was best not to oppose it."

Frank asked how the women of the Turcoman tribes were treated by their lords and masters.

"Women among the Turcomans have an inferior position, as in all Moslem countries," the Doctor replied. "They are far more the slaves of their husbands

than their equals; sometimes they are treated with great kindness, but more frequently their lives are full of hardship. They perform most of the labor of the camp and village, the men being chiefly occupied with the care of the flocks and herds, making expeditions for the sake of plunder, or warring on neighboring tribes.

"Husbands sell their wives as they sell cattle or sheep, and the poor creatures have no redress for their wrongs. A husband buys his wife from her parents, and she has very little voice in the transaction; the price is generally based upon the social standing of the parties, and the ability of the purchaser to pay for the property. Among nearly all the nomad tribes of Turkestan the marriage ceremony includes a race for the bride; the game is called *Kökbüri* (green wolf), and is decidedly interesting.

KÖKBÜRI—A RACE FOR A BRIDE.

"The girl is mounted on a swift horse, and carries the carcass of a lamb before her on the saddle. She is given a certain start in advance of the bridegroom and his friends; they follow on horseback, and unless the bridegroom can take the lamb from her hands during the race the match is 'off.' She makes a show of resistance, and generally leads the party a long distance, but the affair having been negotiated beforehand, is pretty sure to end in the surrender of the lamb. In some tribes the girl must be lifted from the saddle by the bridegroom, who carries her on his own horse back to the point of starting.

"There is this difference in the treatment of the women of Turkestan and those of most other Moslem countries," the Doctor continued, "that they are not required to cover their faces. In Turkey, Egypt, and Arabia the Moslem woman who leaves her face uncovered commits an act of great impropriety, but this is not the case in Turkestan. Many of the women are quite pretty in their youth, but their good looks do not last long. The men are of good height and figure, and their manners are grave and dignified. The hair and beard are dark, and the complexion may be set down as a light shade of brown."

Frank asked how many tribes and people were included in Turkestan or Central Asia, and how great was the population.

VIEW OF THE CITADEL OF KHIVA.

"That is a very difficult question to answer," said the Doctor, "in fact it is impossible to do so exactly. The census-taker is unknown in Central Asia, except in the cities and towns; even there he does not enumerate the whole population, but only the heads of families and the men capable of bearing arms. Turkestan

includes all the country between the Caspian Sea and the 110th degree of longitude east, and from Siberia southward to Persia, Afghanistan, and Thibet. Turkestan means 'The land of the Turks.' On the maps it is generally divided into Eastern and Western Turkestan, the former lying partly in the Chinese Empire, and the latter covering the vast plain of the Caspian and Aral seas. The population is variously estimated at from eight to twelve millions. Russia has absorbed nearly all of Western Turkestan, and the Russian officials think they have at least eight millions of people in their new possessions.

"The tribes and provinces are divided and subdivided so that they are not easy to name. Western Turkestan was formerly known as Independent Tartary, and comprises the Turcoman steppes, the khanates of Khiva, Bokhara, Samarcand, and Kokan, together with Balkh and some smaller provinces which are in dispute between Russia and Afghanistan. These disputes have led to quarrels between Russia and England, and quite likely will lead to war at no distant day.

AN OZBEK HEAD.

"The people dwelling in Turkestan are mainly of the Turkish race; their language is Turkish, and the country was the seat of the race that spread its boundaries by a career of conquests, which did not stop until it entered Europe and pressed as far westward as the walls of Vienna. Briefly we may say the inhabitants of Turkestan are Ozbeks or Uzbeks (the dominant race), Turcomans, Kirghese, Karakalpaks, Tajiks, Persians, Kipchaks, and a few Arabs, Hindoos, and Jews. The Ozbeks are the most civilized people of the country, and are mainly settled in the cities and towns; they fill most of the official positions, and their leading families can trace their descent for centuries. The Persians are mostly descended from those who have been stolen by the Turcomans and sold into slavery, and the Arabs, Hindoos, and Jews may be regarded as wanderers who have been drawn there by business or accident.

"I have already told you something of the Kirghese, whose country was the first to be absorbed by Russia. The other people of Turkestan besides those just mentioned are not sufficiently numerous or important to deserve special description. If you wish further particulars, you will find them in Schuyler's 'Turkestan,' Vámbéry's 'Travels in Central Asia,' 'History of Bokhara,' and Shaw's 'High Tartary, Yarkand, and Kashgar.'"

The conversation was interrupted by a gentleman who called to ask if Doctor Bronson and his young friends would like to make a trip to the other side of the Caspian Sea. A steamer was to leave in two or three hours for Mikhailovsk, and

the next morning would see them landed in the country where, until quite recently, the Turcomans reigned and robbed at will.

The invitation was promptly accepted, and when the steamer left Baku our friends were among her passengers. What they saw and heard will be told in the next chapter.



CHAPTER XXII.

FRANK AND FRED IN THE TURCOMAN COUNTRY.—THE TRANS-CASPIAN RAILWAY.—SKOBELEFF'S CAMPAIGN, AND THE CAPTURE OF GEOK TEPE.—ENGLISH JEALOUSY OF RUSSIAN ADVANCES.—RIVERS OF CENTRAL ASIA.—THE OXUS AND JAXARTES.—AGRICULTURE BY IRRIGATION.—KHIVA, SAMARCAND, AND BOKHARA.—A RIDE ON THE TRANS-CASPIAN RAILWAY.—STATISTICS OF THE LINE.—KIZIL ARVAT, ASKABAD, AND SARAKHS.—ROUTE TO HERAT AND INDIA.—TURCOMAN DEVASTATION.—THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY QUESTION.—HOW MERV WAS CAPTURED.—O'DONOVAN AND MACGAHAN: THEIR REMARKABLE JOURNEYS.—RAILWAY ROUTE FROM ENGLAND TO INDIA.—RETURN TO BAKU.

MAP SHOWING THE RELATIONS OF RUSSIA AND ENGLAND IN THE EAST.

Our young friends were up early, in their eagerness to see the country of the Turcomans. They found themselves looking at a comparatively flat region, quite in contrast with the chain of the Caucasus, that filled the horizon to the west of Baku, and interposed a formidable barrier between the Caspian and Black seas. The steamer headed into a narrow bay which formed the harbor of Mikhailovsk, the new town whence the Trans-Caspian Railway takes its departure in the direction of India.

SAND-STORM IN THE DESERT.

Everything indicated the newness of the place. Houses, barracks, piers, railway-station, all were new, and many of the houses were not even finished. Russian soldiers and Russian officers were numerous in the crowd at the landing-place, and there were scores of mujiks busily engaged in handling goods destined for the railway or for the steamers, but they did not by any means have a monopoly of the labor market of Mikhailovsk. Tartars, Kirghese, Turcomans, Persians, and other Asiatics were there in considerable numbers. They appeared to be quite as industrious as the mujiks, and every way as keen to scent a job wherein money was to be earned.

It is an interesting circumstance that the Turcomans, now that they are forbidden to indulge in raiding, have turned their attention to steady industry, and promise to make good citizens. Whatever may be their faults, they are not a lazy people; they gave up their raiding habits very unwillingly; but when once convinced that they must live by industry, they seem to have accepted the situation.

TURCOMAN COURT OF JUSTICE.

Mr. Ivanovich, the gentleman who invited our friends to cross the Caspian, was connected with the management of the Trans-Caspian Railway, as the line from Mikhailovsk is called. During the voyage from Baku he gave the youths an account of the building of the railway, and matters connected with it, of which Frank made the following notes:

"The Trans-Caspian Railway," said Mr. Ivanovich, "owes its existence to a military necessity that arose in 1879. When the Russians first occupied the Turcoman country they built fortifications, and settled down to stay. General Skobelev always claimed that we made a great mistake in doing so; the Government did not think it safe to make a movement directly into the Turcoman country, and consequently several years were occupied in doing what Skobelev thought should have been done in one. The Turcomans knew nothing about regular warfare, and we might have crushed them in a little while with our trained battalions. But we waited so long that they learned how to fight, partly through our own instruction, and then it required the best of fighting to defeat them.

"It looked at one time as if the Turcomans would altogether prevent us from getting any foothold in their country beyond the shores of the Caspian. Skirmishes almost without number occurred, in which sometimes the Russians and sometimes the Turcomans had the best of the contest. Skobelev, then a captain, was one of those who landed at Krasnovodsk in 1869. He made more successes in the fighting with the Turcomans than anybody else; but in 1873 he was called away in the campaign against Khiva, and from that time to 1879 nothing of moment was accomplished.

KIRGHESE TOMB.

"In 1878 Tekme Sardar, a Turcoman chief, submitted to the Russians, and was received into their camp at Krasnovodsk. He remained there several months, and then, for some real or fancied injury, fled from the camp, and collected his followers with the determination to make war on the invaders. At a place called Geok Tepé he formed a junction with other chiefs, and established a camp.

"Tekme Sardar had made good use of his eyes during his stay among us. He showed his people how to build forts. About forty thousand Turcomans, with their families, collected at Geok Tepé, and threw up an immense earthwork exactly like the defences built by the Russians. General Lomakin advanced against this earthwork in 1879, and after a series of skirmishes outside the walls he attacked the Turcomans in their stronghold, and was severely repulsed. He retired to the shores of the Caspian, and thus ended the campaign for that year.

CHARGE OF RUSSIAN CAVALRY AGAINST TURCOMANS.

"General Skobeleff was then appointed to the command of the Turcoman[Pg 455] [Pg 456] district, and the Government told him he could have anything he wanted in men or munitions of war.

"The Government had a hundred miles of railway material somewhere on its south-western frontier, which was intended for use in case of the failure of the Berlin Congress. Skobeleff asked for this material, and it was at once transferred to the Caspian. He changed the base of operations from Krasnovodsk to Mikhailovsk, and at once began the construction of the line. The whole movement was made so quietly that hardly anything was known of the work until the track had been laid about half-way to Kizil Arvat, one hundred and forty-four miles from Mikhailovsk.

"Skobeleff could not wait for the completion of the railway. While the road was being constructed he pushed forward to Bami, a strong point in the Akhal oasis, where he built a fort, and gradually collected the materials for the siege of Geok Tepé. When everything was in readiness he advanced and began the siege, which lasted fully a month.

"Perhaps the following figures will interest you: The Russians were between eight and ten thousand strong, of all arms, infantry, cavalry, and artillery. The artillery comprised sixty-nine guns, while the Turcomans had no cannon to oppose them with. When the siege began, Skobeleff found that his cannon made little impression upon the clay walls of the fort, so he ordered his artillery to fire over the walls and into the enclosed space, in order to demoralize the people within as much as possible. In fighting against Asiatics, artillery always has a prominent part. Its moral effect in frightening them is certainly ten times as great as its destructive power.

RUSSIAN ARMY ON THE TURCOMAN STEPPES.

"During the siege the artillery fired from one hundred to five hundred shots daily, and the infantry used from ten thousand to seventy thousand rounds of

ammunition in the same time. Skobeleff sunk a mine under the rampart, and exploded more than a ton of gunpowder at a single blast. It made a wide breach, through which the Russian army poured into the fort, with very little opposition on the part of the Turcomans. The latter fled in the direction of Merv, but were pursued by the Russian cavalry. The slaughter is said to have been fearful, and the Russians say that twenty thousand Turcomans perished in the siege and capture of Geok Tepé. During the assault and pursuit the infantry fired 273,804 rounds, the cavalry 12,510, and the artillery 5,864; 224 military rockets were also used.^[8]

"Many careful students of the history of Central Asia," continued Mr. Ivanovich, "consider the siege and capture of Geok Tepé the most important[Pg 457] [Pg 458] victory ever achieved by the Russians in Turkestan. It opened the way for the Russian advance to the frontier of India, and carried the boundaries of the Empire southward to those of Persia. In the interest of humanity it was of the greatest importance, as it broke up the system of man-stealing and its attendant cruelties which the Turcomans had practised for centuries. The people of Northern Persia no longer live in constant terror of Turcoman raids; the slave-markets of Central Asia are closed, and doubtless forever."

Frank asked if the English Government was as well pleased with the result of the siege as were the Russians.

Mr. Ivanovich said he did not know exactly how the English regarded the victory, but from the tone of their press and the utterances of British statesmen, he did not think they would have mourned if the Russians had been repulsed. "England," said he, "is jealous of Russian advances in Turkestan. Lord Salisbury believed that the Turcoman barrier against Russia would last his lifetime, and many other English statesmen and officers shared his belief."

"No doubt they were very sorry for the sufferings of the Persians, who were sold into slavery after seeing their homes plundered and their fields devastated, but I question if they were willing, for political reasons, to see the Turcomans wiped out as they were at Geok Tepé. I think I have read much more in the English papers about the loss to English commerce by the Russian occupation of Central Asia than of the gain to humanity by the suppression of the Turcoman raids."

"The interests of British trade are the first consideration of the British statesman. Many thousands of Africans and Asiatics have died by British bullets and sabres that the commerce of England might be extended. Unless I mistake the temper of the British Government, I am afraid that the advisers of the Queen would prefer

the old state of things to the new on the Turcoman steppes. The sale of a thousand bales of Manchester cottons in the bazaars of Turkestan is of more consequence to England than the enslavement of a thousand Persians and the desolation of their homes.

"But that is wandering from the subject," said Mr. Ivanovich, with a smile. "I may be prejudiced, but can't help regarding England as a disturber of the peace all over the world, whenever the disturbance will benefit her trade. She doesn't believe in monopoly, except where she can be the monopolist, and for that reason she is jealous of the way we Russians are trying the monopoly business for ourselves. We have the trade of ten millions of Asiatics: no great thing to be sure, but we don't propose to hand it over to England just because she wants it. We have cotton factories and other manufacturing establishments, as England has, and the more markets we can have the better it will be for us."

The gentleman paused, and gave Fred an opportunity to ask if there were any navigable rivers in Turkestan, and, if so, what they were.

WINTER CAMP IN TURCOMANIA.

"There is no navigation worth the name," was the reply. "Central Asia contains only two rivers of any importance—the Oxus and the Jaxartes. The Oxus is sometimes called the Amoo Darya, or Jihoon, and the Jaxartes the Syr Darya. The Oxus is the largest; it rises in the Pamir district, in a lake fifteen thousand feet above the sea, and in the upper part of its course receives several tributary rivers that drain Bokhara and the north-eastern part of Afghanistan. It is about twelve hundred miles long, and flows into the Aral Sea; for the last eight hundred miles of its course it is navigable for small steamboats, but its mouth is divided into so many shallow channels that boats have great difficulty in entering it. The Russians have half a dozen steamers on the Aral Sea, and as many more light-draught steamboats for navigating the Oxus."

"Haven't I read that the Oxus formerly emptied into the Caspian Sea?" said Frank.

"Quite likely you have," said Mr. Ivanovich, "as there is little doubt that such was the case. The old bed of the Oxus can be distinctly traced, and geographers are generally agreed that the river entered the Caspian by three mouths. Ptolemy and Strabo both state distinctly that in their time the Oxus flowed into the Caspian, and formed the principal trade-route between Europe and Asia."

"How came it to change its course?"

TURCOMAN IRRIGATING WHEEL.

"Much of the region traversed by the Oxus is a desert, and the only agriculture possible there is by irrigation. In order to increase the area under cultivation, the Turcomans built dams that turned the Oxus in the direction of a vast plain which contains the Aral Sea. Since the occupation of the country by the Russians, it has been proposed to return the Oxus to its ancient bed, and bring it down to the Caspian. It is not likely that this will be done, as the result would be that the whole lower

[Pg 461] course of the Oxus, where there are many flourishing farms and gardens, would again become a desert waste. Much less water flows through the Oxus than in former times, and the engineers who have studied the question do not think the river would be navigable when returned to its ancient bed.

SCENE AT A FERRY ON THE OXUS.

"The other river of Central Asia, the Jaxartes, or Syr Darya, is smaller than the Oxus, and about eleven hundred miles long. It rises in the Pamir region, and empties, like the Oxus, into the Aral Sea. Its course is generally parallel to the Oxus, and in the same way it fertilizes a large area of what would otherwise be desert. Its volume has greatly diminished in the last few centuries, and is even known to be considerably less than it was sixty or eighty years ago. The Oxus enters the southern end of the Aral Sea, while the Jaxartes comes in considerably farther to the north. The diversion of these two rivers would probably result in drying up the Aral Sea, a shallow body of water two hundred and fifty miles long by half as many wide."

MAP OF THE RUSSO-AFGHAN REGION.

Fred asked if the Caspian was higher or lower than the Aral Sea.

"They are of the same level, or nearly so," was the reply, "though some engineers say the Aral is about one hundred and fifty feet higher than the Caspian, and the indications are that the two seas were formerly connected. The whole plain of Turcomania is thought to have been at one time an inland sea. At its southern extremity the Aral is bordered by an immense marsh, and it is through this marsh that the Oxus discharges its waters.

"Khiva stands near the Oxus, in the midst of beautiful gardens, all nourished by the water from the river. Khiva, Bokhara, Samarcand, and Kokan would become masses of ruins if the Oxus and Jaxartes were dried up, and you may be sure the Russians will give the subject careful consideration before disturbing the course of the waters. Nowhere in the world will you see more careful irrigation than

along these rivers, with the possible exception of the Nile valley. All through Central Asia the only possible agriculture is upon the watercourses, or where there are never-failing wells. Canals and irrigation-wheels are everywhere, and you will often see evidences of excellent engineering abilities in the construction of some of the artificial water-ways.

"General Annenkoff, the officer in charge of the construction of the Trans-Caspian Railway, has a scheme for creating a new oasis, capable of supporting two hundred thousand people, near the disputed boundary between Turkestan and Afghanistan. He proposes to turn one of the tributaries of the Oxus for that purpose, and is confident that he can make a fertile area of several hundred square miles by carefully utilizing the water of the stream."

On landing at Mikhailovsk, our friends were introduced to several Russian officers, some of whom had been in America, and who heartily welcomed the trio of travellers from that far-away land. They were invited to the club-house, where they were lodged and cared for; the town did not boast an hotel other than a very indifferent khan, which had all the discomforts of the Orient, with none of its good points.

Frank and Fred endeavored to find the time-table of the railway, with a view to making an excursion into Turkestan. Their inquiries were rewarded with the information that there was no regular time for running the trains, as the business transacted on the line was nearly all of a military character. But a train was to leave in the morning for Kizil Arvat, one hundred and forty-four miles, and if they cared to make the journey they were at liberty to do so.

Finding they would have time to go to Kizil Arvat and return before the departure of the steamer for Baku, they accepted the invitation, which included the Doctor as well as themselves. Early the next morning the train rolled out from the station; it consisted of a locomotive and ten or twelve carriages. One carriage contained the officers of a regiment of infantry that filled the remaining vehicles; the regiment was bound for the frontier, where England and Russia have latterly been discussing the question of the boundary, and a discussion of this kind is materially assisted by the presence of soldiers.

TURCOMAN WOMAN SPINNING.

We will refer to Fred's account of the railway journey in Turkestan.

"We were invited to seats in the carriage where the officers were riding. They did everything to make our journey agreeable, and we were indebted to them for a great deal of information about Central Asia. Some of them had been to the British frontier, and one had visited Cabul, Herat, and Candahar.

"The route of the railway was partly across the desert, and partly along the valleys of two or three small rivers of no special importance except for their usefulness in supplying water for the line. For a considerable distance the line lies near the Etrek, a river that was of great use to General Skobelev in his advance upon Geok Tepé. At times it is simply a dry channel, but water can generally be found by digging a few feet in the sand that forms, in the rainy season, the bed of the stream.

VILLAGE OF TURCOMAN TENTS.

"The country is a plain, with here and there a few hills not worthy to be called mountains. Sometimes the plain is flat for a long distance, and again it is undulating like the rolling prairies of our Western States. Vegetation is scanty at best, and a large part of the country is absolutely desert. The great need of Central Asia is water. If a million springs could be opened, all giving a copious flow like some of the great springs in our Rocky Mountains, the next ten or twenty years would see a great change in the aspect of Turkestan.

"One of the officers told me that the country was of the same general character all the way to the frontier of Afghanistan. 'The railway can be extended without trouble,' said he, 'as far as we wish to carry it. There's not an obstacle at all formidable to railway engineers.'

"I asked, with some hesitation, where they wished to carry their railway line. I knew the subject was not disconnected with politics, but the question was innocent enough, and he could answer it as he chose, and probably did.

THE NEW RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER.

"'We built the line,' said he, 'first to Kizil Arvat, one hundred and forty-four miles, and then extended it to Askabad, one hundred and ten miles farther. We are now building to Sarakhs, one hundred and eighty-five miles from Askabad, and there we may stop. Perhaps it will be pushed on to Herat, two hundred and two miles from Sarakhs, but it can not be under the present political situation. Afghanistan is under English control. You know the English Government gives

the Ameer of that country a large annual payment of money for his friendship; and until we are willing to give a higher bribe he is not likely to permit us to build railways in his territory.

"From Sarakhs our next line will be to Merv, the rich oasis that came under Russian control a few years ago, or possibly Merv may be reached by a branch from Askabad. Perhaps there will one day be a line from Merv to Samarcand and Bokhara, but this is far in the future. From Merv a railway may be run along the valley of the Murghab to Herat; but it is not a direct route, and we are much more likely to reach Herat by way of Sarakhs, along the valley of the Heri-Rud. Whichever way we take, the building of the road would not be at all difficult. The Murghab route has the disadvantage of being longer than that of the Heri-Rud, but its cost per mile would be much less, as the country is smoother.

"I suppose,' he continued, 'that there is a sort of race between England and Russia to get to Herat with a railway. England is building north from India, while we are building south from the Caspian. The terminal points of the two lines are now less than eight hundred miles apart, and it is very evident that the English and Russian locomotives will be whistling in the hearing of each other, and blowing steam in each other's faces, within the next few years.'^[9]

"If we were not confronted by diplomacy we could reach Herat considerably in advance of the English, as we have the shorter and easier line to build to get there. But with our scrupulous regard for treaties and agreements, we may be hindered in our railway building, and have the mortification of seeing our rivals there ahead of us. The English consider Herat the key to India, and are determined that we shall not possess it. We don't care much for it anyway, but are perfectly willing to place it beneath the sheltering wings of the Black Eagle.

"When you are considering Sarakhs,' he continued, 'remember that there are two places of that name. Old Sarakhs is a mass of ruins; only a single building remains, and that is a tomb in which the body of Abel is said to rest. Another tomb a few miles away is known as the tomb of Cain, and there is a tradition that the Garden of Eden was in the neighborhood of Sarakhs. The Russians have occupied Old Sarakhs, and will establish a military post there of considerable importance as soon as the railway is completed.

OLD SARAKHS.

"Old Sarakhs is near the Heri-Rud River, which here forms a dividing line between Persia and the Turcoman country. The Persians have built a town called New Sarakhs on their side of the river, and protected it by a fort; they keep a

small garrison there, and as we have no quarrel with Persia, and are not likely to have, it is quite sufficient for all purposes of peace.

"I wish you could go with me through that country and see the effect of the Turcoman raiding system which was continued through generations, and has only recently come to an end. Centuries ago the valleys of the Murghab and Heri-Rud contained a large population, and the same was the case over a wide extent of country.

"Ride where you will, you find the traces of irrigating canals in great number. In the third century this region was said to contain a thousand cities, probably an exaggeration, but indicative of the dense population it sustained, and might still sustain. In many places the valleys of the Murghab and Heri-Rud are several miles in width and perfectly flat. There are ruined canals all over these wide places, showing that they were once cultivated; they might be cultivated again and rendered fertile as of old by the same system that was once in vogue. The country is a desert because it is not tilled, and it is not tilled because it has no inhabitants. Turcoman raids have made the desolation by enslaving, killing, or driving away the people that once lived here.

SARIK TURCOMAN WOMAN.

"Since the raiding ceased the Sarik Turcomans, who were formerly as much addicted to it as any others, have turned their attention to agriculture. They have occupied parts of the Murghab Valley near Pul-i-Khisti and Ak Tapa, where they have cleared out the old irrigation canals, set their ploughs and other implements at work, and seem to be forgetting altogether their former mode of life. They have settled into villages, but live in khibitkas in preference to houses of mud or other solid materials. Considering their recent subjugation, they are quite friendly with the Russians; they know we will never allow them to resume their predatory life, but as long as they behave themselves they will find us to be kind masters, and our military and engineering work in their country will assure them a good market for their surplus produce.'

"I asked the gentleman to tell me the difference between Pul-i-Khisti and Pul-i-Khatun, which we had read so much about in the newspapers, at the time of the conflict between the Russians and Afghans.

"Pul-i-Khatun is on the Heri-Rud or Tejend River, a few miles south of Sarakhs. In the Persian language "pul" means bridge, and "khatun" lady, so that Pul-i-Khatun may be translated "Bridge of the Lady." The bridge that bears this name is said to have been erected in the time of Tamerlane, the great conqueror, at the

request of one of the ladies of his family. It is of brick, in six arches, and has not been repaired for a long time; the central arch is broken, but the others are in serviceable condition.

PUL-I-KHISTI AND AK TAPA.

"Pul-i-Khisti means "Bridge of Bricks," and is over the Murghab River, where that stream unites with the Kushk. It became famous as the scene of the fight between the Russians and Afghans, in the early part of 1885. Each party throws the blame of the affair upon the other; naturally enough I think the Afghans were at fault, but as I may be prejudiced on the subject it is not worth while to discuss it. Pul-i-Khisti is close to Penjdeh, which is nothing more than a mass of ruins where a town once stood; the Russians may be able to make something out of it, and the next time I go there I shouldn't be surprised to find a strong fort.

"The English wanted to make the boundary so that it would leave Penjdeh in the possession of the Afghans, but we persuaded them that the place would be safer in our hands than theirs. You will find on the map the boundaries as they have been arranged, and as long as England keeps to her agreement there is not likely to be any trouble. Of course we shall faithfully abide by our promises, but one can never tell when the treacherous Afghans will cross the boundaries and make depredations upon our peaceful subjects. Then we will defend our rights; it is for such defence we have built the railway on which you are now travelling, and we shall maintain a good-sized force of troops on or near the frontier. By means of our railways and steamers we can get to the frontier a great deal quicker than England can possibly reach it from her capital; and if she chooses to make war on us she will find us ready.

PENJDEH.

"With the Vladikavkaz Railway finished to Petrovsk on the Caspian, and the Trans-Caspian Railway completed to Sarakhs, we could bring troops from Moscow to the latter point inside of a week. There would only be the crossing of the Caspian, which is little more than a ferry, between Petrovsk and Mikhailovsk, to break the continuous journey by rail. From Sarakhs to Herat, as I before said, is about two hundred miles, which could be covered in two or three weeks by a Russian army. We think we can get to Herat more quickly than England can in case of war, but let us all hope that the necessity for the experiment may never come."

Fred thought there was a confident smile on the face of the Russian as he pronounced the above words. It was very evident that the Russians in Central

Asia had an abiding faith in their ability to take care of themselves in case of a conflict with England.

While conversing with another officer, the youths ascertained that he had accompanied the first Russian expedition to the Merv Oasis, or rather the expedition that converted that stronghold of the Turcomans into Russian territory, with the loss of only one man. The gentleman said the Oasis was watered by the Murghab, which practically terminated there; the river was diverted into a great number of little streams, and the country included in these streams formed the Oasis. The Mervis were more peaceable than their fellow Turcomans, but very jealous of strangers, and not willing to admit anybody to their limited territory.

They had a fort larger and stronger than the one against which Skobeleff's army was nearly shattered to pieces at Geok Tepé; it was an enclosure with high, thick walls of mud, and large enough to hold the whole population with their flocks and herds. The Oasis is about one hundred and twenty miles from Askabad and ninety from the nearest point on the Tejend; it was formerly incorporated with the surrounding provinces of Turkestan, but for many years has been independent.

COLONEL ALIKHANOFF.

"We wanted Merv," said the Russian officer to whom allusion has just been made, "but we didn't want to fight for it; so we resorted to diplomacy, and through the skill of General Komaroff and Colonel Alikhanoff, aided by a few others who were in the secret, we came into peaceful possession of the place. I have no doubt the Mervis are all very glad we are there, now that the thing has been done.

"Colonel Alikhanoff went from Askabad to Merv in company with a Russian merchant who had a dozen camels laden with goods. They remained there a fortnight, and then returned safely, accompanied by several delegates from the Mervis who wished to consult with the Russian commander at Askabad about some camels that had been stolen from them by the Persians. The delegates were kindly received, and went home with a favorable report which ultimately led to the occupation of Merv by a small force of Russian cavalry and infantry. A fort was built, and a bazaar opened for the exchange of Russian goods for the products of the Oasis, and ever since then the Russians and Mervis have been on terms of friendship. Of course there were some of the Mervis who opposed the advent of our soldiers, but they are now our earnest advocates, and would be the

last to ask us to leave.

THE GREAT HIGHWAY OF CENTRAL ASIA.

"Merv is about two hundred and forty miles from Herat, and if we should ever be obliged to march against that Afghan stronghold, the Oasis will be an excellent point to start from after accumulating the necessary stores and material of war. It promises to be a good centre of trade, and its importance was easy to comprehend when the English Government made such a fuss as it did about our taking it.

"Before we were established there," continued the officer, "an English newspaper correspondent, Edmund O'Donovan, went to Merv by way of Persia, and lived in the Oasis for five months. At first the people treated him coldly, but he gradually won their confidence and convinced them of his friendliness. They made him one of their elders, and appointed him to a place on the Governing Council; he has told the story of his residence among these strange people in an interesting volume entitled 'The Merv Oasis.'

"One of the most remarkable journeys ever made on the Turcoman steppes," said the gentleman in conclusion, "was accomplished by another newspaper correspondent, an American named MacGahan, during the campaign against Khiva in 1873. Without an escort, and accompanied only by a servant and two guides, he started from Fort Peroffsky, on the Jaxartes or Syr Darya River, near the Aral Sea, to overtake General Kaufmann's army, that had gone to the attack of Khiva. Its exact whereabouts were unknown; he had eight or ten days of desert travel before him, and if he had fallen into the hands of the Turcomans or Kirghese who roam over the desert, his fate would have been certain death.

"The Russians at Fort Peroffsky refused to allow him to start, as they considered it impossible for him to make the journey, and he was obliged to slip out of the place in the night. He had several narrow escapes, but managed to get through all right and join General Kaufmann's column just as the fighting before Khiva began. The officers told him the chances of his getting across the desert with his life were not more than one in a hundred. He remained with our army till the end of the Khivan campaign, and every officer who knew him felt that he had lost a personal friend when the news of MacGahan's death came a few years later. The story of his adventures is told in his book—'Campaigning on the Oxus and the Fall of Khiva.'

"In 1875 a similar journey was made by Captain Burnaby, an English officer of the Guards. He has given an admirable account of his experience in a book

entitled, 'A Ride to Khiva.'"

"Conversation such as this," writes Fred in his journal, "beguiled the tediousness of the ride over the flat and desolate region through which the railway passes. At the few oases where we stopped, we saw little villages of Turcomans, but they were so much alike that the descriptions you have already read will answer for them all. At Kizil Arvat we found an oasis containing altogether half a dozen square miles of tillable land, on which were several Turcoman villages, and a Russian town of perhaps a thousand inhabitants.

"We call the town Russian from the flag that waves over it, rather than from the nationality of those who live in it. They are Russians, Turcomans, Kirghese, Persians, Armenians, and Jews, and I don't know how many other races and kinds of people. There is a good deal of commerce, mostly in the hands of Armenians and Russians, but much less than when the railway terminated here. The business of Merv and the Penjdeh district is at the end of the railway; in this respect the commerce of Central Asia is much like that of our far-western country, and changes its base with each change of the means of transport.

TURCOMAN FARM-YARD.

"There is a fort at Kizil Arvat, and also a bazaar, and we are told that Askabad is similarly provided. Whenever the Russians establish themselves [Pg 476] [Pg 477] in any part of Turkestan, they build a fort and a bazaar side by side. Hardly has the army pitched its tents before the shops are opened and the natives are invited to come in and trade. All who come are kindly treated; in a little time whatever hesitation the natives may have possessed is gone, and the cheapness of the goods on sale converts the former enemies into friends. There is no doubt that Russia thoroughly understands the Asiatic nature, and deals with it accordingly.

MAP OF TURKESTAN, SHOWING ROUTE OF THE TRANS-CASPIAN RAILWAY.

"Most of our return journey to Mikhailovsk was made in the night, which we did not specially regret, where so much of the route was through the uninteresting desert. We were told that when the railway was started, it was intended to make a narrow-gauge line that would be taken up as soon as the capture of Geok Tepé had been accomplished. But the undertaking had not gone far before the plans were changed and a well-built railway, on the standard gauge of Russia, was the result. The line is well equipped with cars, and at no distant day will form a link in the overland route from England to India.

"When the Russian and Indian lines form a connection near Herat or Candahar, the Vladikavkaz Railway will be completed to Petrovsk, on the Caspian. The traveller may then go from London to Bombay or Calcutta in nine or ten days. His entire journey will be made by rail, with the exception of the passages of the English channel and the Caspian Sea, the former requiring two hours, and the latter an entire day. Russia is already talking of an extension of the line from Tsaritsin, along the lower Volga and around the northern end of the Caspian to a connection with the Trans-Caspian Railway. Should this line be made, the journey to India would be wholly a land route, with the exception of 'The Silver Streak,' between Dover and Calais."

While our friends are musing on the possibilities of the railway to India, and its benefits to commerce and civilization, they have recrossed the Caspian and are once more in the Petrolia of Europe. And now behold them seated in a train of the Trans-Caucasian Railway for a ride to Tiflis and the Black Sea.

A letter in the *New York Herald* of April 19, 1886, says:

"The Russians have established a military and naval station at Novi Golfe, on the Caspian, twenty-two versts north-west of Mikhailovsk, and connected it with the latter point by railway. In case of war with England, the Russians are prepared to strike heavy blows in Asia. They have two army corps in the Caucasus, and another in Turkestan ready for service on their south-eastern frontier. The vessels of the Kavkas and Mercury Steamship Company, Noble's naphtha fleet, and the Greek and Armenian vessels on the Caspian (which all fly the Russian flag), would be immediately pressed into the service. The Russians believe that, barring bad weather, they could, with these steamers and a number of [Pg 478]

[Pg 479] sailing-vessels in tow, transport sixty thousand men across the Caspian from Astrachan, Baku, and Petrovsk to Novi Golfe and Mikhailovsk in three days.

CROSSING A RIVER IN CENTRAL ASIA.

"The Russians would thus dispose of about one hundred and fifteen thousand men—Army of the Caucasus, sixty thousand; Turkestan, thirty thousand; and fifteen thousand Turcoman auxiliaries. These latter will supply the advance of the Russian columns heading southward from Askabad and Merv.

"The Russians have shown great tact and cleverness in the management of their Turcoman subjects. There is at Merv a skeleton army, or *cadre*, of

three hundred Turcomans, under the command of a Cossack officer named Kalotine. Of the three hundred, one hundred are from Merv, one hundred are Tekkes, and the remainder from other tribes. These men (irregular horse) remain in the service six months. During that time they are paid twenty-five roubles a month, and at its expiration are discharged with the rank of sergeant, but remain liable to military duty in time of war. This plan was adopted to secure good native non-commissioned officers for the fifteen regiments of irregular cavalry. The son of the last Khan of Merv is now a Russian sergeant. Ten native Turcomans hold the rank of captain in the Russian army, and four that of lieutenant, besides which many decorations have been given to those who took part in Alikhanoff's foray.

"The construction of the railway between Askabad and Merv presented great difficulties, on account of the absence of water in many places. To overcome this, artesian wells were dug. The width and current of the Tegend-Bud necessitated an iron bridge at Kara-Bend. The Trans-Caspian Railway is built upon the model of the Trans-Caucasian one, the stations on both being near together, solidly built and comfortable. There are sixteen stations between Mikhailovsk and Askabad (four hundred and twenty-two versts).

Mikhailovsk to

Mallakara	22	Versts.
Bala Ischen	35	"
Aidin	29	"
Paraval	15	"
Atchai-Komm	16	"
Kasandjik	31	"
Ossausan	16	"
Ouchak	23	"
Kizil-Arvat	30	"
Koteh	28	"
Barni	24	"
Arolman	30	"
Baharden	30	"
Keli-Atta	27	"
Geok-Tepé	25	"

Besmeni	21	"
Askabad	20	"

A NATIVE TRAVELLER.



CHAPTER XXIII.

**BAKU TO TIFLIS.—THE CAPITAL OF THE CAUCASUS.—
MOUNTAIN TRAVELLING.—CROSSING THE RANGE.—
PETROLEUM LOCOMOTIVES.—BATOUM AND ITS IMPORTANCE.
—TREBIZOND AND ERZERROOM.—SEBASTOPOL AND THE
CRIMEA.—SHORT HISTORY OF THE CRIMEAN WAR.—RUSSO-
TURKISH WAR OF 1877-78.—BATTLES IN THE CRIMEA AND SIEGE
OF SEBASTOPOL.—VISITING THE MALAKOFF AND REDAN
FORTS.—VIEW OF THE BATTLE-FIELDS.—CHARGE OF THE
LIGHT BRIGADE AT BALAKLAVA.—PRESENT CONDITION OF
SEBASTOPOL.—ODESSA.—ARRIVAL AT CONSTANTINOPLE.—
FRANK'S DREAM.—THE END.**

For fifty miles after leaving Baku the railway follows the coast of the Caspian Sea until it reaches Alayat, where the Government is establishing a port that promises to be of considerable importance at no distant day. The country is a desert dotted with salt lakes, and here and there a black patch indicating a petroleum spring. The only vegetation is the camel-thorn bush, and much of the ground is so sterile that not even this hardy plant can grow. Very little rain falls here, and sometimes there is not a drop of it for several months together.

At Alayat the railway turns inland, traversing a desert region where there are abundant indications of petroleum; in fact all the way from Baku to Alayat petroleum could be had for the boring, and at the latter place several wells have been successfully opened, though the low price of the oil stands in the way of their profitable development. After leaving the desert, a region of considerable fertility is reached. The streams flowing down from the mountains are utilized for purposes of irrigation, but very rudely; under a careful system of cultivation the valley of the Kura River, which the railway follows to Tiflis, could support a large population.

From Baku to Tiflis by railway is a distance of three hundred and forty-one miles, and the line is said to have cost, including rolling stock, about fifty thousand dollars a mile. In the work on the desert portion many of the laborers died from the effects of the extreme dryness of the atmosphere. The whole distance from Baku to Batoum, on the Black Sea, is five hundred and sixty-one

miles.

LOOKING DOWN ON THE STEPPE.

Tiflis is thirteen hundred and fifty feet above the level of the sea, and the point where the railway reaches its greatest elevation is eighteen hundred feet higher, or thirty-two hundred feet in all. The grades are very steep; there is one stretch of eight miles where it is two hundred and forty feet to the mile, and for a considerable distance it exceeds one hundred feet to the mile. It is proposed to overcome the steepest grade by a long tunnel which would reduce the highest elevation to little more than two thousand feet.

Our friends reached Tiflis in the evening, after an interesting ride, in spite of the monotony of the desert portion of the route. Frank will tell us the story of their visit to the famous city of the Caucasus.

"We were somewhat disappointed," said he, "with our first view of Tiflis. We had an impression that it was in the centre of a fertile plain surrounded by mountains; actually the ground on which it stands is not fertile, and the surroundings consist of brown hills instead of mountains. The sides of the hills are barren, and there would hardly be a shrub or tree in the city were it not for the system of irrigation which is maintained. The prettiest part of the city is the quarter occupied by the Germans, where there are rows and groups of trees and a great many luxuriant gardens. The Germans are descended from some who came here in the last century to escape religious persecution. Though born in Tiflis and citizens of Russia, in every sense they preserve their language and customs, and do not mingle freely with their Muscovite neighbors.

"There are about one hundred and ten thousand inhabitants in Tiflis; nearly one-third are Russians, rather more than a third Armenians, twenty-three thousand Georgians, and the rest are Germans, Persians, and mixed races in general. Most of the business is in the hands of the Armenians, and many of them are wealthy; nearly all speak Russian, and mingle with the Russians more harmoniously than do any of the others. The Persians live in a quarter by themselves, and it is by no means the cleanest part of the city. The Georgians preserve their dress and language, and, though entirely peaceful, are said to maintain the same hatred to Russia as when fighting to preserve their independence.

"Many of the officials in the Caucasus are Armenians, and some of the ablest generals of the Russian army belong to the same race. Gen. Loris Melikoff is an Armenian, and so are Generals Lazareff and Tergoukasoff, as well as others of

less importance. The Armenians have four newspapers at Tiflis, and four monthly reviews. There are nearly a million of these people in Russia and the Caucasus, and their treatment is in marked contrast to that of the eight hundred thousand Armenian subjects of Turkey who have been most cruelly oppressed by the Sultan and his officers.

"We had read of the beauty of the Georgians, who used to sell their daughters to be the wives of the Turks, and naturally looked around us for handsome faces. We saw them among the men as well as among the women; and we saw more handsome men than women, perhaps for the reason that men were much more numerous. The Georgians are a fine race of people, and so are all the natives of the Caucasus. The mountain air all the world over has a reputation for developing strength and intelligence among those who breathe it.

"Since the occupation of Georgia and the other parts of the Caucasus by Russia, the people are no longer sold as slaves for Turkish masters. Whatever may be the faults of the Russian rule, it is certainly far in advance of that of Turkey.

VIEW OF TIFLIS.

"Tiflis may be said to be in two parts, the old and the new. The former is on the bank of the river, and its streets are narrow and dirty; the new part is on higher ground, and has been chiefly built by the Russians since they obtained possession of the country. In this part the streets are wide, and lined with many handsome buildings; in the old part there are several Armenian churches and caravansaries, and the greater portion of the commerce is transacted there.

"We saw a great many Russian soldiers, and were told that a large garrison is always maintained in Tiflis, which is a central point from which troops can be sent in any direction. The Government offices and the palace of the Governor-general are in the Russian quarter, and of course there are plenty of Russian churches, with their gilded domes sparkling in the sunlight.

"We visited one of the churches, and also the Armenian Cathedral; we tried to see the interior of a mosque, but were forbidden admittance except on payment of more money than we chose to give. We drove to the hot baths, which are situated just outside the city; they are largely patronized, and have an excellent reputation for the relief of gout, rheumatism, and similar troubles. There are many hot springs in the neighborhood of Tiflis that have been flowing for centuries, without any change in temperature or volume.

"We wanted to go overland to Vladikavkaz, for the sake of the journey among the Caucasus, but our plans were otherwise, and we continued by railway to

Batoum. The mountains of this range are as picturesque as any we have ever seen. The passes are like those of the Alps or the Sierra Nevadas, and as we wound along the line of railway to the crest of the divide, every moment revealed a new and splendid picture. We had distant views of Elburz and Ararat, two of the most famous mountains of this region, and greatly regretted our inability to visit the latter, which is revered as the resting-place of Noah's Ark. Mount Ararat has been ascended by several travellers; they describe the journey as very fatiguing, but were amply repaid by the magnificent view from the summit.

"We left Tiflis dry and dusty, and the dry air remained with us till we crossed the ridge and began our descent. Then we entered the clouds, and as we passed below their level found ourselves in a pouring rain. The western slope of the Caucasus is a rainy region, while the eastern is dry. Baku has too little rain, and Batoum too much; the western slope is luxuriant, while the eastern is an arid desert, and the fertility of the former continues down to the shore of the Black Sea.

THE PASS OF DARIEL, CAUCASUS.

"Grapes and melons were offered at every station, at prices that were[Pg 485]
[Pg 486] a marvel of cheapness. Two cents would buy a large melon, and the same money was gladly accepted for a bunch of grapes which would furnish a dinner for a very hungry man. A great deal of wine is raised in this region; three hundred thousand acres are said to be devoted to the culture of the grape in the Caucasus, and about forty million gallons of wine are made annually. Wine is plenty and cheap; the Russians refuse to drink the wine of the Caucasus, just as Californians affect to despise that of their own State. We are told that a large part of the so-called foreign wine sold in Tiflis and other cities of the Caucasus is really the product of the country under fictitious labels.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE CAUCASUS.

"We have already mentioned the use of petroleum in the locomotives of the Trans-Caucasian Railway. Where we stopped for fuel and water the petroleum-tank was side by side with the water-tank, and there was no sign of wood-yard or coal-heap. A few minutes charged the tender with petroleum and water, in separate compartments, and then we moved on, just as on any other railway line.

"It is delightful riding behind a petroleum locomotive, as there are neither cinders nor smoke. After the fire is started the furnace door is not opened; the fireman regards the flame through a hole about two inches square, and regulates

it just as may be desired. They told us that steam could be more evenly maintained than with coal or wood; there was no excess of steam while waiting at stations, and consequently no necessity for 'blowing off.' Wonder what railway in America will be the first to adopt the new fuel?

"The Trans-Caucasian Railway was begun in 1871; its starting-point was at Poti, which has a poor harbor and stands in marshy ground, so that fevers and malaria are altogether too common. In 1878 Russia came into possession of Batoum, which has a good harbor, and immediately a branch line sixty miles long was built from that city to connect with the railway. Now nearly all the business has gone to Batoum. Poti is decaying very rapidly, but for military reasons it is not likely to be abandoned.

"By the treaty of Berlin Batoum was made a free port, and the Russians were forbidden to fortify it; but they have kept the Turkish fortifications, and not only kept them uninjured, but have repaired them whenever there were signs of decay. On this subject the following story is told:

"The casemated fortress which commands the port required to be strengthened in certain points, and the contractors were asked for estimates for the work. One man presented an estimate which he headed 'Repairs to Fortifications.' The general commanding the district immediately sent for the contractor, and said to him,

"'There are no fortifications in Batoum; they are forbidden by the treaty of Berlin. Your estimates must be for "garrison-barrack repairs." Remember this in all your dealings with the Government.'

RUINED FORTRESS IN THE CAUCASUS.

"We were only a few hours in Batoum, as we embraced the opportunity to embark on one of the Russian Company's steamers for Sebastopol and Odessa. Batoum is growing very rapidly, and promises to be a place of great importance in a very few years. The old town of the Turks has given place to a new one; the Russians have destroyed nearly all the rickety old buildings, laid out whole streets and avenues of modern ones, extended the piers running into the sea, drained the marshes that formerly made the place unhealthy, and in other ways have displayed their enterprise. We were told that there is a great deal of smuggling carried on here, but probably no more than at Gibraltar, Hong-Kong, and other free ports in other parts of the world.

RUINED CHURCH NEAR BATOUM.

"And now behold us embarked on a comfortable steamer, and bidding farewell to the Caucasus. Our steamer belongs to the Russian Company of Navigation and Commerce, which has its headquarters at Odessa; it sends its ships not only to the ports of the Black Sea, but to the Levantine coast of the Mediterranean, through the Suez Canal to India, and through the Strait of Gibraltar to England. A line to New York and another to China and Japan are under consideration; it is probable that the latter will be established before the Trans-Atlantic one. The company owns more than a hundred steamers, and is heavily subsidized by the Russian Government."

The first stop of the steamer was made at Trebizond, the most important port of Turkey, on the southern coast of the Black Sea. It has a population of about fifty thousand, and carries on an extensive commerce with Persia and the interior of Asiatic Turkey. Latterly its commerce has suffered somewhat by the opening of the Caspian route from Russia to Persia, but it is still very large.

Frank and Fred had two or three hours on shore at Trebizond, which enabled them to look at the walls and gardens of this very ancient city. Frank recorded in his note-book that Trebizond was the ancient Trapezus, and that it was a flourishing city at the time of Xenophon's famous retreat, which every college boy has read about in the "Anabasis." It was captured by the Romans when they defeated Mithridates. The Emperor Trajan tried to improve the port by building a mole, and made the city the capital of Cappadocian Pontus.

QUARANTINE HARBOR, TREBIZOND.

The Trebizond of to-day consists of the old and new town, the former surrounded by walls enclosing the citadel, and the latter without walls and extending back over the hills. It has two harbors, both of them unsafe at certain seasons of the year. A few millions of the many that Turkey has spent in the purchase of cannon and iron-clad ships of war would make the port of Trebizond one of the best on the coast of the Black Sea.

Great numbers of camels, pack-horses, and oxen were receiving or discharging their loads at the warehouses near the water-front. Fred ascertained on inquiry that there were no wagon-roads to Persia or the interior of Asiatic Turkey, but that all merchandise was carried on the backs of animals. One authority says sixty thousand pack-horses, two thousand camels, three thousand oxen, and six thousand donkeys are employed in the Persian trade, and the value of the commerce exceeds seven million dollars per annum.

VIEW OF ERZEROOM.

"We are only a hundred and ten miles from Erzeroom," said Fred, "the city of Turkish Armenia, which is well worth seeing. Wouldn't it be fun to go there and have a look at a place that stands more than a mile in the air?"

"Is that really so?" Frank asked; "more than a mile in the air?"

"Yes," replied his cousin, "Erzeroom is six thousand two hundred feet above the level of the sea, and two hundred feet higher than the plain which surrounds it. It had a hundred thousand inhabitants at the beginning of this century, but now has about a third of that number, owing to the emigration of the Armenians after the war between Turkey and Russia in 1829. It is frightfully cold in winter and terribly hot in summer, but for all that the climate is healthy."

"How long will it take us to get there?"

"About fifty hours," was the reply. "We must go on horseback, but can return in forty hours, as the road descends a great part of the way from Erzeroom to Trebizond. Isn't it strange that with such an immense trade as there is between that place and this—for the road to Persia passes through Erzeroom—the Turks have been content with a bridle-path instead of a wagon-road, or, better still, a railway. Besides—"

Further discussion of the road to Erzeroom and the possibilities of travelling it were cut short by the announcement that it was time to return to the steamer. An hour later our friends saw the coast of Asiatic Turkey fading in the distance, as the steamer headed for Southern Russia.

Her course was laid for Sebastopol, the city which is famous for the long siege it sustained during the Crimean war, and for possessing the finest natural harbor on the Black Sea. Doctor Bronson suggested that the youths should dispose of the time of the voyage by reading up the history of that celebrated war, and particularly of the siege and capture of Sebastopol.

The weather was fine enough to tempt them to idleness, but Frank and Fred had a rule that when they had anything to do they would do it. Accordingly they busied themselves with the books at their command, and made the following condensed account of the contest of Russia with the nations of Western Europe:

"The Crimea was conquered by Russia in the time of Catherine the Great, and immediately after the conquest the Russians began to fortify the harbor of Sebastopol (Sacred City). When they went there they found only a miserable Tartar village called Akhtiar; they created one of the finest naval and military ports in the world, and built a city with broad streets and handsome quays and

docks. In 1850 it had a population of about fifty thousand, which included many soldiers and marines, together with workmen employed in the Government establishments.

"In 1850 there was a dispute between France and Russia relative to the custody of the holy places in Palestine; there had been a contention concerning this matter for several centuries, in which sometimes the Greek Church and sometimes the Latin had the advantage. In 1850, at the suggestion of Turkey, a mixed commission was appointed to consider the dispute and decide upon it.

"The Porte, as the Turkish Government is officially designated, issued in March, 1852, a decree that the Greek Church should be confirmed in the rights it formerly held, and that the Latins could not claim exclusive possession of any of the holy places. It allowed them to have a key to the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, and to certain other buildings of minor importance.

TURKISH AUTHORITY.

"If you want to know how the Christian churches are now quarrelling about the sacred places in the East, read Chapters XXII., XXIII., and XXIV. of 'The Boy Travellers in Egypt and the Holy Land.'

"France accepted the decision, though she did not like it; Russia continued to demand that the Latin monks should be deprived of their keys, and finally insisted that the Czar should have a protectorate over the Greek Christians in Turkey. The Porte said such a protectorate would interfere with its own authority, and refused the demand; thereupon the Russian Minister left Constantinople on the 21st of May, 1853.

"This may be considered the beginning of the war between Russia and Turkey, though there was no fighting for several months.

"France came to the aid of Turkey; England came to the aid of Turkey and France. Representatives of England, France, Austria, and Prussia met at Vienna and agreed upon a note which Russia accepted; Turkey demanded modifications which Russia refused; Turkey declared war against Russia on the 5th of October, and Russia declared war against Turkey on the 1st of November.

"A Turkish fleet of twelve ships was lying at Sinope, a port on the southern shore of the Black Sea. On the 30th of November the Russians sent a fleet of eleven ships from Sebastopol which destroyed the Turkish fleet, all except one ship that carried the news to Constantinople. Then the allied fleets of the French and

English entered the Black Sea, and the war began in dead earnest. For some months it was confined to the Danubian principalities and to the Baltic Sea; on the 14th of September, 1854, the allied army landed at Eupatoria, in the Crimea, and the extent of their preparations will be understood when it is known that forty thousand men, with a large number of horses and a full equipment of artillery, were put on shore in a single day!

"On the 20th of September the battle of the Alma was fought by fifty-seven thousand English, French, and Turkish troops, against fifty thousand Russians. The battle began at noon, and four hours later the Russians were defeated and in full retreat. The Russians lost five thousand men, and the Allies about three thousand four hundred; the Allies might have marched into Sebastopol with very little resistance, but their commanders were uncertain as to the number of troops defending the city, and hesitated to make the attempt.

"On the 17th of October the siege began. A grand attack was made by the Allies, but was unsuccessful, and eight days later the famous charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava was made. On the 5th of November the Russians attacked the Allies at Inkermann, and were repulsed. The battle of Inkermann was fought in a fog by forty thousand Russians against fifteen thousand French and English. The latter had the advantage of position and weapons; the Allies frankly credited the Russian troops with the greatest bravery in returning repeatedly to the attack as their battalions were mowed down by the steady fire of the defenders.

"During the winter the siege was pushed, and the allied army suffered greatly from cholera, cold, and sickness. The siege continued during spring and summer; the Allies made an unsuccessful attack on the Malakoff and Redan forts on the 18th of June, 1855, and all through the long months there were daily conflicts between the opposing armies.

"The Russians sunk several ships of their fleet in the harbor of Sebastopol soon after the battle of the Alma, but retained others for possible future use. On the 8th of September the French captured the Malakoff fort, the English at the same time making an unsuccessful attack on the Redan. The Russians evacuated Sebastopol during the night, crossing over to the north side of the harbor, burning or sinking their fleet, and destroying their military stores.

"This gave the Allies the possession of the city, and though the two armies confronted each other for some time, there was never any serious fighting after that. Other warlike operations were conducted along the Russian shores of the Black Sea. Proposals of peace were made by Austria with the consent of the

Allies, and finally, on the 30th of March, 1856, the treaty of peace was signed at Paris. The Allies had begun the destruction of the docks at Sebastopol, but so extensive were those works that with all the engineering skill at their command they were not through with it until July 9th, when they evacuated the Crimea."

"Will that do for a condensed history of the Crimean War?" said Frank, as the result of their labors was submitted to the Doctor.

"It will do very well," was the reply. "Perhaps some of your school-mates who are not fond of history may be inclined to skip, but I think the majority of readers will thank you for giving it."

"Perhaps they would like a few words on the war between Turkey and Russia in 1877-78," said Fred. "If you think so we will give it."

Doctor Bronson approved the suggestion, and an hour or two later Fred submitted the following:

"In 1875 and '76 there were disturbances in Constantinople and in several provinces of European Turkey. The Sultan of Turkey was deposed, and either committed suicide or was murdered. There were revolts in Herzegovina and Bulgaria, and the troops sent to suppress these revolts committed many outrages. Serbia and Montenegro made war upon Turkey on behalf of the Christian subjects of the Porte; Russia came to the support of Serbia and Montenegro. There was a vast deal of diplomacy, in which all the great powers joined, and on several occasions it looked as though half of Europe would be involved in the difficulty.

VIEW OF SEBASTOPOL.

"Turkey and Servia made peace on March 1, 1877. The principal nations of Europe held a conference, and made proposals for reforms in[Pg 495]
[Pg 496] Turkey which the Porte rejected. Russia declared war against Turkey April 24, 1877, and immediately entered the Turkish dominions in Roumania and Armenia.

RUINS OF THE MALAKOFF, SEBASTOPOL.

"The war lasted until March 3, 1878, when a treaty of peace was made at San Stefano, near Constantinople. Many battles were fought during the war, and the losses were heavy on both sides; the severest battles were those of the Shipka Pass and of Plevna. The fortune of war fluctuated, but on the whole the successes were on the side of Russia, and her armies finally stood ready to enter Constantinople. Her losses were said to have been fully one hundred thousand men, and the cost of the war was six hundred million dollars.

"After the war came the Berlin Conference of 1878, which gave independence to some of the countries formerly controlled by Turkey, made new conditions for the government of others, regulated the boundaries between Russia and Turkey, giving the former several ports and districts of importance, and required the Porte to guarantee certain rights and privileges to her Christian subjects. England interfered, as she generally does, to prevent Russia from reaping the full advantages she expected from the war, and altogether the enterprise was a very costly one for the government of the Czar."

"A very good summary of the war," said the Doctor. "You have disposed of an important phase of the 'Eastern Question' with a brevity that some of the diplomatic writers would do well to study. You might add that for two centuries Russia has had her eye on Constantinople, and is determined to possess it; England is equally determined that Russia shall not have her way, and the other powers are more in accord with England than with Russia."

The steamer entered the harbor of Sebastopol, and made fast to the dock. Frank and Fred observed that the port was admirably defended by forts at the entrance. Doctor Bronson told them the forts which stood there in 1854 were destroyed by the Allies after the capture of the city, but they have since been rebuilt and made stronger than ever before.

As they neared the forts that guard the entrance of the harbor, a Russian officer who was familiar with the locality pointed out several objects of interest. "On the left," said he, "that pyramid on the low hill indicates the battle-field of

Inkermann; still farther on the left is the valley of the Alma; those white dots near the Inkermann pyramid mark the site of the British cemetery, and close by it is the French one. In front of you and beyond the harbor is the mound of the Malakoff, and beyond it are the Redan and the Mamelon Vert. Those heaps of ruins are the walls of the Marine Barracks and Arsenal; they are rapidly disappearing in the restoration that has been going on since 1871, and in a few years we hope to have them entirely removed."

There was quite a crowd at the landing-place, variously composed of officers, soldiers, and mujiks; the former for duty or curiosity, and the mujiks scenting a possible job. Our friends proceeded directly to the hotel, which was only two or three hundred yards from the landing-place. As soon as they had selected their rooms and arranged the terms for their accommodation, Dr. Bronson told the proprietor that they wished a carriage and a guide as soon as possible. A messenger was despatched at once for the carriage, while the guide was summoned from another part of the house.

"I suppose you will go first to the cemetery," said the host of the establishment.

"We don't care for the cemetery," said the Doctor, "until we have seen everything else. If there is any time remaining, we may have a look at it."

"Then you are Americans," exclaimed the landlord. "All Englishmen coming here want to go first to the cemetery as they have friends buried there, but Americans never care for it."

Doctor Bronson smiled at this mode of ascertaining the nationality of English-speaking visitors, and said it had been remarked by previous visitors to Sebastopol.

RUSSIAN CARPENTERS AT WORK.

When the guide and carriage were ready, the party started on its round of visits. From the bluff they looked down upon the harbor, which was lined with workshops and bordered in places by a railway track, arranged so that ships were laden directly from the trains, and trains from the ships. The railway connects with the entire system of the Empire. Doctor Bronson said that if it had existed at the time of the war, the capture of Sebastopol would have been out of the question. Russia had then only a primitive means of communication by wagon-road; she had an abundance of men and war material, but no adequate mode of transportation. The Crimean war taught her the necessity of railways, and she has since acted upon the lesson for which she paid such a high price.

COSSACKS AND CHASSEURS.

Frank and Fred climbed quickly to the top of the Malakoff, and the Doctor followed demurely behind them. The lines which marked the saps and mines of the Allies have been nearly all filled up, and the traces of the war are being obliterated. From the top of the casemate the guide pointed out many places of interest. With considerable animation he told how for twenty years after the war the ruins of the city remained pretty nearly as they were when the Allies evacuated the Crimea; whole squares of what had once been fine buildings were nothing but heaps of stones. But now Sebastopol is being restored to her former beauty, and every year large areas of the ruins are making way for new structures.

"Sebastopol will be a greater city than it ever was before," said Doctor Bronson, as they stood on the Malakoff. "It was a naval port before, and not a commercial one; now it is both naval and commercial, and by glancing at the map of the Black Sea you can perceive the advantages of its position."

Then the guide pointed out the new dock-yards and barracks, the warehouses and docks of "The Russian Company of Navigation and Commerce," the railway-station close to the shore of the harbor, and the blocks of new buildings which were under construction.

Then he showed the positions of Inkermann, the Tchernaya, and the Redan, and indicated the lines of the French and English attack. When the scene had been sufficiently studied, the party returned to the carriage and continued their ride. The driver was instructed to go to Balaklava, stopping on the way to show them the spot which history has made famous for the charge of the Light Brigade.

As they passed along the level plateau or plain of Sebastopol, they saw everywhere traces of the camps of the armies that besieged the city. The guide showed the route of the railway which connected the harbor of Balaklava with the camp, the wagon-roads built by the Allies, the redoubts that served as defences against attacks in the rear, and the ridges of earth which marked the positions of the huts where officers and soldiers had their quarters during the terrible winter of 1854-55.

Naturally the conversation turned upon the charge of the Light Brigade. One of the youths asked the Doctor what he thought of it.

"There has been a great deal of controversy about the matter," was the reply. "It is difficult to arrive at the exact facts, as Captain Nolan, who brought the order for the cavalry to advance, was killed in the charge. Comparing the statements of

all concerned in issuing, receiving, and executing the order, it is evident that the order was 'blundered' somewhere. This was the understanding immediately after the controversy; Tennyson's poem on the affair originally contained the following:

""Then up came an order
Which some one had
blundered.'

Afterwards these lines were stricken out, and do not appear in the poem as printed in the editions of Tennyson's works.

BRITISH SOLDIERS IN CAMP.

"The commander of the French army justly remarked of this charge, '*C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre*' ("It is magnificent, but it is not war"). Twelve thousand Russians had attacked the English with the intention of taking Balaklava and its port, but they were compelled to retire to the end of the valley. They had re-formed, with their artillery in front, and infantry and cavalry immediately behind. By the misunderstanding of the order of Lord Raglan, the British commander-in-chief, Lord Lucan, who commanded the cavalry division, ordered Lord Cardigan to charge with his light cavalry.

"In other words the light cavalry, six hundred and seventy strong, were to attack twelve thousand Russians with thirty cannon on their front. The charge was over a plain a mile and a half long, and the Russians had a battery of field artillery on each side of the valley within supporting distance of that at the end. Consequently there is an excellent description of the scene in Tennyson's lines,

""Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them,
Volley'd and thunder'd.'

"The charge was made very reluctantly by Lord Cardigan, as you may well believe, but he had no alternative other than to obey the order of his superior. There was never a more brilliant charge. The column advanced at a trot for the first half of the distance, and afterwards at a gallop; the Russian cannon made huge gaps in the ranks, but they were closed up, and on and on swept the heroes,

up to and beyond the Russian cannon—

smoke,

broke;

not,

"Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd:
Plunged in the battery-

Right thro' the line they

Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre-stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but

Not the six hundred.'

ALFRED TENNYSON.

"According to one authority, out of six hundred and seventy British horsemen that went to the charge, only one hundred and ninety-eight returned. Another authority gives the total loss in killed, wounded, and captured as four hundred and twenty-six. Five hundred and twenty horses were lost in the charge."

"Here is Balaklava," said the guide, as the carriage stopped at a turn in the road overlooking the valley.

Our friends stepped from the vehicle and sat down upon a little mound of earth, where they tried to picture the scene of the dreadful October day of 1854. Of the actors and spectators of that event very few are now alive.

The Doctor completed the recitation of the poem, and his youthful listeners felt down to the depths of their hearts the full force of the closing lines:

old,

made!

"Honor the brave and bold,
Long shall the tale be told,
Yea, when our babes are

How they rode onward.
When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they

All the world wonder'd.
Honor the charge they

made!

Honor the Light Brigade!
Noble six hundred!"

From the battle-field the party went to the village of Balaklava and hired a row-boat, in which they paddled about the little, landlocked harbor, and out through its entrance till they danced on the blue waters of the Euxine Sea. Frank and Fred could hardly believe that the narrow basin once contained a hundred and fifty English and French ships; it seemed that there was hardly room for a third of that number.

A BROKEN TARANTASSE.

On their return journey they passed a party with a broken tarantasse. They stopped a moment and offered any assistance in their power, but finding they could be of no use they did not tarry long. When they reached Sebastopol the sun had gone down in the west, and the stars twinkled in the clear sky that domed the Crimea. The next morning they rambled about the harbor and docks of the city, and a little past noon were steaming away in the direction of Odessa.

A day was spent in this prosperous city, which has a population of nearly two hundred thousand, on a spot where at the end of the last century there was only a Tartar village of a dozen houses, and a small fortress of Turkish construction. Odessa has an extensive commerce, and the ships of all nations lie at its wharves. Its greatest export trade is in wheat, which goes to all parts of the Mediterranean, and also to England. The Black Sea wheat formerly found a market in America, but all that has been changed in recent years through the development of the wheat-growing interest in our Western States and on the Pacific Coast.'

Immediately on their arrival they sent their passports to receive the proper permission for leaving the country. Everything was arranged in the course of the day, and on the following afternoon they embarked on a steamer that carried them to Constantinople.

THE BOSPORUS.

The second morning after leaving Odessa they entered the Bosphorus, the strait which separates Europe and Asia, and connects the waters of the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmora and the Mediterranean. As they looked at the beautiful panorama, which shifted its scene with every pulsation of the steamer's engine, Frank said he had had a dream during the night which was so curious that he wanted to tell it.

"What was it?" the Doctor asked.

"I dreamed," said Frank, "that England and Russia had become friends, and made up their minds to work together for the supremacy of the world. England had supplied the money for completing the railway to India; she had built a tunnel under the British Channel, and it was possible to ride from London to Calcutta or Bombay without changing cars. The Turks had been expelled from Europe; European Turkey was governed by a Russian prince married to an English princess; the principality had its capital at Constantinople, and a guarantee of neutrality like that of Belgium, to which all the great powers had assented. War and commercial ships of all nations could pass the Bosphorus and Dardanelles as freely as through the Suez Canal, and the restrictions made by the treaty of Paris were entirely removed. England and Russia had formed an offensive and defensive alliance, and all the rest of the world had been ordered to keep the peace. And they were keeping it, too, as they dreaded the combined power of England's money and Russia's men."

"A very pretty fancy!" said the Doctor. "What a pity it was all a dream!"

THE END.



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[2] Recently the Government decided to establish a Siberian university. It was to be opened at Tomsk in 1886, but there was great opposition to it by a large and influential party, who claim that a Siberian university would be a great peril to autocracy in Russia. They look upon Siberia as the source of many liberal, and therefore dangerous, ideas, and say the new university will greatly facilitate their development.

[3] "Free Russia," by Hepworth Dixon, p. 275.

[4] Referring to the battle between the *Constitution* and *Guerriere*, August 19, 1812.

[5] The fire occurred on July 6th and 7th, 1879. About thirty-six hundred buildings were destroyed, of which one hundred and more were of stone or brick, and the rest of wood. Six Russian churches were burned, and also two synagogues, one Catholic and one Lutheran church; five bazaars, the meat-market, museum, club-house, custom-house, and other public edifices were consumed. The loss was about fifteen millions of dollars, and many persons formerly in good circumstances were rendered penniless. The wealthy inhabitants who escaped loss or ruin gave liberally to relieve the general distress, and the Government made substantial provision for the unemployed.

[6] Since the above was written, the author has received a letter from M. Nicolai Ostrowski, Director of the Ural Railway, which says, "Since October 1, 1878, Perm and Ekaterineburg have been united by the Ural Railway. Since January 1, 1886, trains have been running regularly between Ekaterineburg and Tumen. A line is under construction from Samara to Ufa, which will probably be extended to Ekaterineburg or Tcheliabinsk, to form a direct line in the direction of Omsk, the capital of Occidental Siberia."

[7] In an article in HARPER'S MAGAZINE for March, 1886, Mr. William Simpson, an English artist and journalist, who went to the Afghan frontier with the Boundary

Commission, says it is only within a couple of years that the raiding was brought to an end. He frankly credits Russia with the suppression of the raiding system, and says she deserves the thanks of the civilized world.

[8] Marvin's "The Russians at the Gates of Herat."

[9] Early in 1886 the Central Asian Railway was completed to Kaakha, a distance of 590 versts (390 miles) from Mikhailovsk. The line was completed to Merv in April, 1886, and the echoes of the Turcoman oasis were awakened by the shriek of the locomotive. At the latest advices work was being pushed between Merv and Chardjuya, on the Oxus, and General Annenkoff had promised to complete the line to the banks of the historic river before the end of the year. The Emir of Bokhara has agreed to provide the material for a bridge across the Oxus, and the Russian engineers have completed the survey of the line as far as Samarcand. It is hoped that the railway will reach Bokhara and Samarcand by the end of 1887. The entire railway as planned will extend from Mikhailovsk, on the Caspian, by way of Kizil Arvat (245 versts), Askabad (445 versts), Kaakha (590 versts), to Merv (770 versts, or 510 miles); thence to Chardjuya, on the Amoo Darya (Oxus), and Bokhara to Samarcand, a total distance of 1065 versts (700 miles), of which no less than five-sevenths is practically now completed. All the rails, sleepers, and rolling material for the Trans-Caspian Railway are supplied from the Russian Crown depots. Apart from this, the total cost of making the line from the Caspian to the Oxus is estimated at 12,250,000 roubles, or about 16,000 roubles per verst.

The Russians have a grand scheme for another line of railway through Asia, which was originally proposed by M. de Lesseps. The first step would be to complete the railway connection along the lower Volga, between Tsaritsin and Astrachan. The Asiatic line would start from Astrachan, pass through Khiva, Bokhara, and Samarcand into Chinese Turkestan, where it would touch Tang-Kissar, Kashgar, and Yarkand, in addition to other cities and towns of lesser note. It would skirt the shores of Lake Lob, and after descending the valley of the Kan (Han) terminate at Hankow, on the banks of the Yang-tse-Kiang, six hundred miles above the mouth of the great river of China.

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