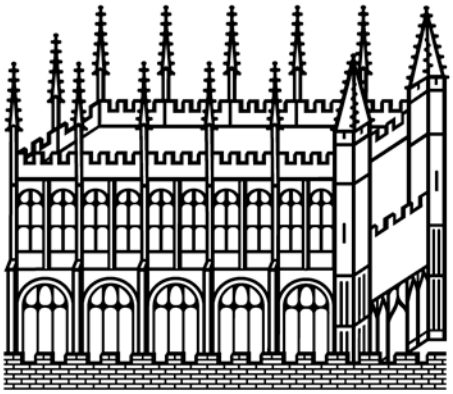

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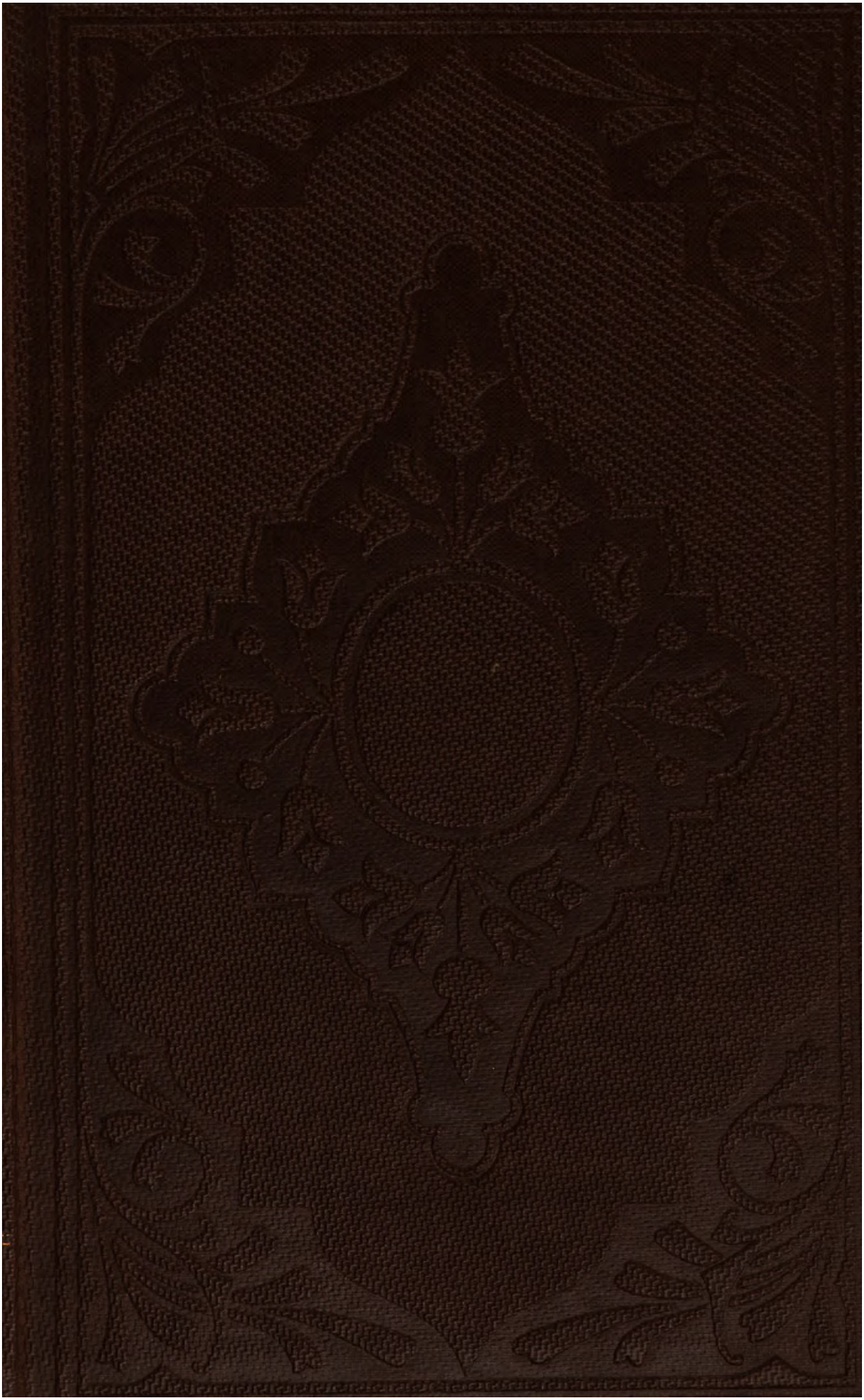

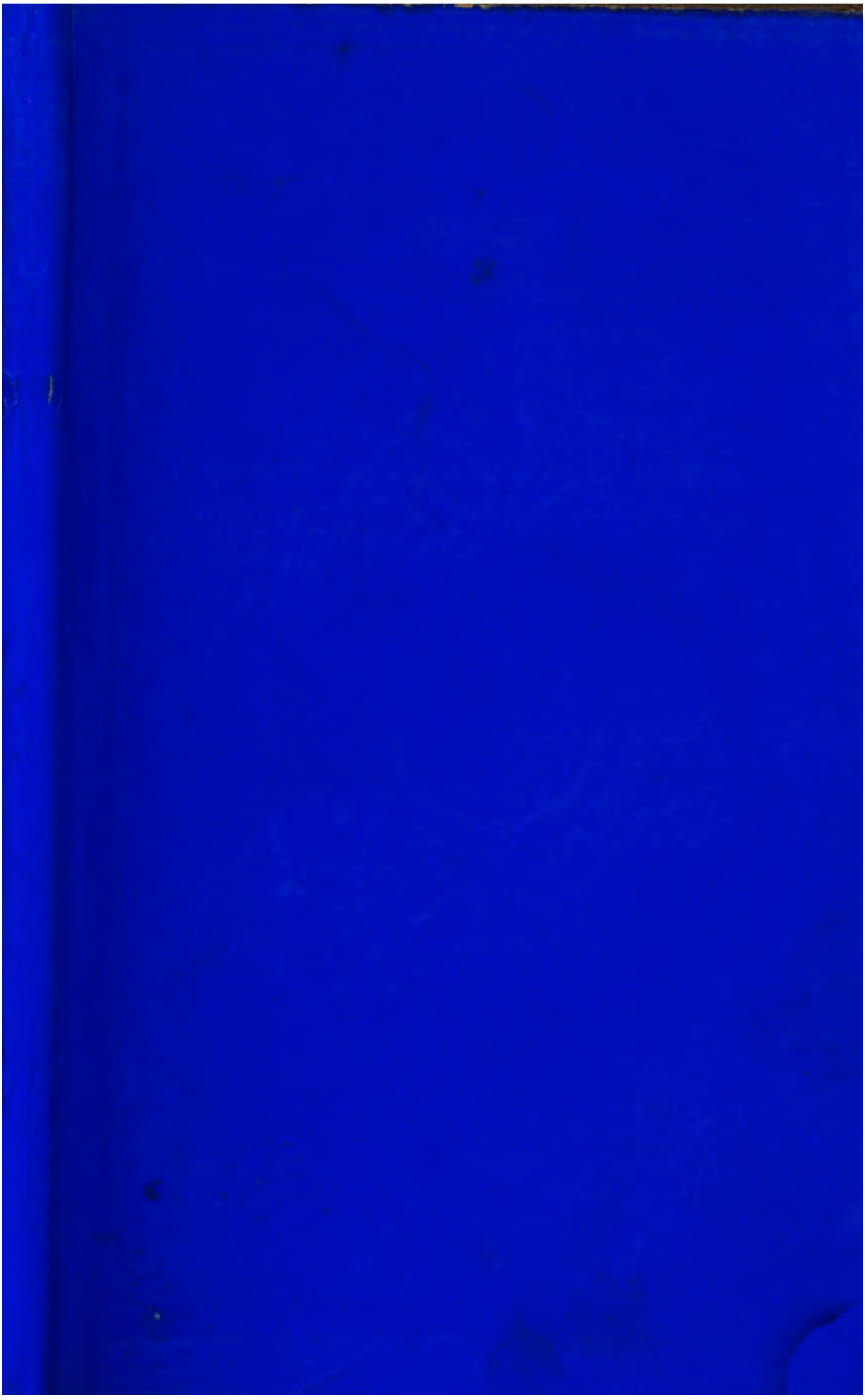

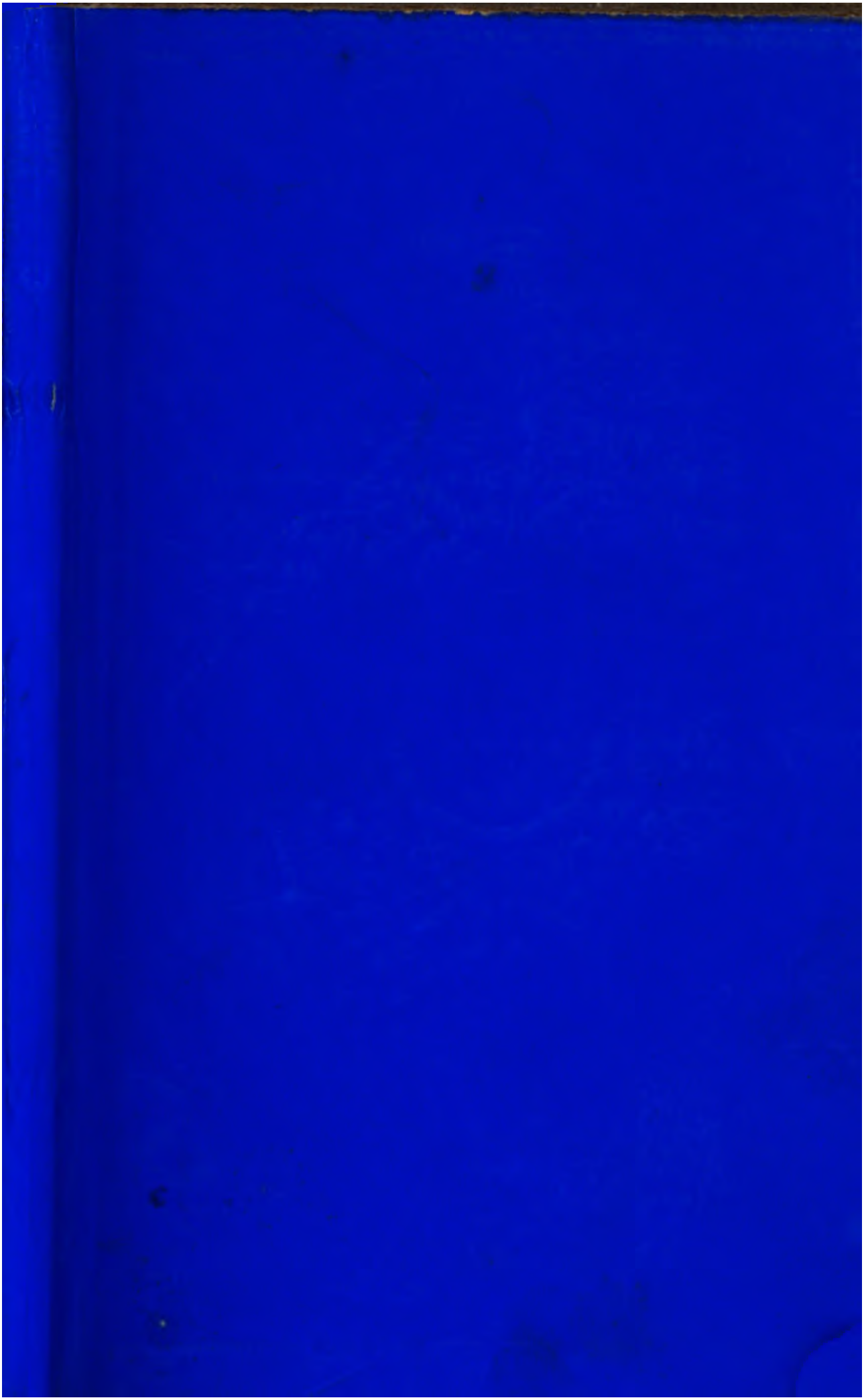

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MY EXILE

IN

SIBERIA.

BY ALEXANDER HERZEN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

Correspondence. . . . . 1—2

CHAPTER II.

The Hereditary Grand Duke in Wiatka — Tufeyeff's Fall—The Transportation to Wladimir—A Chief Official of a District under Trial. . . . . 3—32

CHAPTER III.

The First Month of My Sojourn at Wladimir. . 33—44

CHAPTER IV.

The Circle of Stankewitch—Belinsky and Bakounine—Hegel—The Discussions of Novgorod. . . 45—101

CHAPTER V.

The Warning—The Department for Heraldry—The Office of the Home Minister—The Third Expedition—General Dubelt—Count Benkendorf—Madame Scherebzoff—Second Exile. . . . . 102—181

CHAPTER VI.

Novgorod—The Regency—I am under My own Surveillance—The Secretaries and Paul I.—The Fatherly Government of the Land Proprietors—Count Araktjiyeff and the Military Colonies—The Cannibal Trial—My Leave. . . . . 182—218

CHAPTER VII.

Young Moscow again—The Sclavonians at Moscow, and P. Tchaadajef—The West and the East of Europe. 219—271

CHAPTER VIII.

Petersburgh again—A Commissioner of Police Officiating as *Valet de Chambre*—The Chief of the Police, Kakoschkin—Disorder in Order—Dubelt again—The Passport. . . . . 272—295

APPENDIX . . . . . 296—312

MY EXILE.

CHAPTER I.

Correspondence.

TWICE a week the post arrived at Wiatka from Moscow. With what deep emotion did I wait every time at the post-office for the distribution of the letters! How did I tremble in breaking the seal and searching among the letters, which came from home, if there was not a small note in them, beautifully written on thin paper!

And when I had got it, I did not read it in the post-office, but went slowly home, delaying the moment of reading and enjoying the idea that a note was there.

All those letters are preserved. They are left in Moscow. How should I like to read them once more, and yet—I tremble to touch them! Letters are more than recollections; in them the very blood of past events are congealed; they are the past itself as it has been—preserved in immortality.

Why then once more recognise, look and touch then? Why touch the bridal ornaments with a hand wrinkled by age?

CHAPTER II.

The Hereditary Grand Duke in Wiatka — Tufeyeff's Fall—The Transportation to Wladimir—A Chief Official of a District under Trial.

THE hereditary Grand Duke comes to Wiatka! The heditary Grand Duke travels through Russia to see his empire, and to be seen.

This news frightened all, particularly the governor. He was greatly embarrassed what to do, and committed an incredible mass of absurdities. He ordered the peasants who

were living near the road to be dressed in their Sunday dresses; he ordered the fences in the towns to be newly painted, and the sides of the streets to be newly paved.

In the town of Orloff, a poor widow, who was the owner of a small house, told the bailiff that she had no money for renewing the pavement before her house. The bailiff sent an account of it to the governor. The latter ordered the deal boards to be taken from the widow's house (the *trottoirs* are there made of wood) and, in case the deal boards were not sufficient, to make the repairs at the expence of government, and to force the widow to pay for it afterwards, though even her house should have to be publicly sold for that purpose. The auction did not take place; but the deal boards were taken from the widow's house.

About fifty wersts from Wiatka is a small

place, where the miraculous image of St. Nicholas of Chlynow appeared to the inhabitants of Novogorod. When the latter settled in Chlynow (this was the former name of Wiatka) they took with them the miraculous image, but it disappeared all at once, and reappeared on the river Welikaya, fifty wersts from Wiatka. The Novogorodians transported it once more to Wiatka ; and, at the same time, made a vow that, if the image should remain in Wiatka, it should be carried every year, on the 23rd of May in solemn procession, to the borders of the river Welikaya. This is the principal festivity in the district of Wiatka. On the eve of the holiday, the image of the saint is carried on a raft down the river, accompanied by the prelate and the whole of the clergy in full robes. Hundreds of boats, of different rafts and barks laden with peasants, men and

women, with Watiakes and citizens follow the floating image in variegated crowds. Before all is seen the bark of the governor, with a canopy, and covered with red cloth. This wild sight possesses something pleasing. Thousands of men, from the near and more remote districts, wait for the image on the borders of the Welikaya. All these crowds pass like nomades, in tumultuous groups, round the little village, and the most extraordinary thing is that a number of unbaptized Watiakes, Tcheremisses, even Tatars come there in order to adore the image. But in return, the festival has quite a Pagan appearance. Beyond the walls of the monastery, Watiakes and Russians sacrifice calves and sheep; they are slaughtered on the spot; a monk-priest delivers prayers over them, blesses and sanctifies the meat that is offered through a particular window from the inner

walls. This meat is divided in pieces amongst the people. Formerly it was given gratis; Now the monks take some kopecks for every piece, and thus it happens that a peasant who has brought a whole calf as a present, is now obliged to spend some money in order to have something to eat. In the court of the monastery, there sit numbers of beggars, cripples, blind and maimed of every sort, singing in chorus the song of Lazarus. Young sons of priests, and boys of the citizens have established themselves upon the grave-stones, beside the church, and there, provided with inkstands, they cry out, "For whom shall we write a prayer-book? who wants a prayer-book?"

Women and girls surround them dictating the names. The boys rattling their pens at a rare rate repeat, "Mary Mary, Akuline, Stephanida, Father John, Matrona; well aunt! now

thine—halloh ! you've give us only one kopeck ! we can't take less than a five kopeck piece : look only how many relations, how many !— John, Wasilisa, Jonas, Mary, Euphraxia, daughter Catherine !"

The church is crowded, and—strange mark of reverence !—there a woman presents her neighbour with a taper, with the express commission of surrendering it to the "guest ;"* another wishes it to be given to the "host." The monks are continually drunk during the whole procession. Whilst on the journey, they always stop at the large villages, and there they are entertained by the peasants to excess.

This national festival, to which the peasants have been accustomed for centuries, was now ordered by the Governor to be

* This means, the image that is come to pay a visit, or the other one which belongs to the church.

celebrated on another day, in order to regale the hereditary Grand Duke with the sight. The Grand Duke was expected to arrive on the 19th of May. "What can it matter to St. Nicholas, the Guest," thought the Governor, "if he goes this time three days earlier to St. Nicholas, the Host?" However, the consent of the prelate was necessary. Fortunately, this latter was a very obliging man, who found nothing to oppose to the Governor's plan of celebrating the 23rd of May on the 19th.

Tufeyeff sent to the Emperor a register of all the clever measures taken by him, for the reception of the Grand Duke. The father was to see how his son was to be honoured. The Emperor, on reading the account, grew very angry, and said to the Minister of Home Affairs: "The Governor and the Prelate are fools. The festival shall be kept on the

proper day." The Minister reproved the Governor, the Synod, the Prelate; and Nicholas "the Guest," kept up his old day.

Amongst the various instructions sent from Petersburg, there was an order to prepare in every town of the district, an exhibition of the productions of the country, and to classify them according to the three kingdoms of nature. This classification appeared most troublesome to Tufeyeff and his officials. In order to commit no error, he resolved, notwithstanding his dislike for me, to ask my advice. "Let us take honey, for instance," he said. "To what realm does honey belong?" When he saw, by my answers, that I possessed a wonderful knowledge about the three realms of nature, he asked me to undertake the management of the exhibition.

Whilst I thus occupied myself with the classification of wooden plates and Watiakish ornaments—of honey and cast-iron gates; and whilst Tufeyeff continued to take the most cruel measures to satisfy his Imperial Majesty—the latter deigned to arrive at Orloff, and immediately the terrible rumour of the arrest of the Bailiff of Orloff was spread through the town. Tufeyeff grew yellow, and his gait seemed to be somewhat uncertain.

About five days before the arrival of the hereditary Grand Duke at Orloff, the Bailiff had written to Tufeyeff, that the widow, whose deal boards had been taken out, was exasperated; and that a certain rich merchant, well known in that place, had proferred his intention of bringing the whole affair to the ears of the hereditary Grand Duke. As for the merchant, Tufeyeff acted

with exceeding prudence; he ordered the Bailiff to declare him under suspicion of being mad (he was probably very much satisfied with the example of Petroffsky), and to send him to Wiatka to be examined. Whilst the affair would have been prolonged intentionally, the Grand Duke would have left Wiatka; and the matter would have been terminated. The Bailiff did as he was ordered, and the merchant was immured in a mad-house at Wiatka. At last, the Grand Duke arrived. He treated Tufeyeff coldly; did not invite him to dinner; and immediately sent his doctor, Yenochin, to examine the imprisoned merchant. He knew the whole affair; the widow in Orloff had presented a petition to him; other merchants and citizens told him everything that had happened. Tufeyeff grew some degrees, more prostrate.

It was, indeed, a bad affair for him. The Bailiff had openly declared that he had got a written order of the Governor, for every measure he had adopted. Doctor Yenochin certified that the merchant was entirely well. Tufeyeff was lost.

In the afternoon, the Grand Duke came to look at the exhibition. Tufeyeff conducted him through the saloon, explaining everything in a confused way, and continually talking about a Tzaz Tochtamysh. When Tukowsky and Arseniyeff saw that this would not do, they turned to me with the request that I would show them the exhibition. I then acted as guide.

The features of the Grand Duke had not the expression of that narrow-minded severity, of that cold and uncharitable cruelty, which prevails in his father's face; they seemed rather to announce kindness and

indolence. He was about twenty years old, and a tendency to corpulence was already visible. The few words he addressed to me were civil, and spoken with a voice that had neither the hoarse broken tone of his uncle Constantine's address, nor betrayed his father's favourite custom of intimidating the listener from the beginning.

When he had left, Tukowsky and Arseniyeff asked me how I had happened to come to Wiatka. They were astonished to find reasonable powers of conversation in an official of the district of Wiatka. They offered immediately to speak to the Grand Duke about my situation; and they indeed did everything that was in their power. The Grand Duke proposed to the Emperor to allow me to live at Petersburg. The Emperor replied that this would be too great an injustice to the other exiles; but

in consequence of the Grand Duke's representation, he ordered me to be transported to Wladimir. This was, geographically, a relief—seven hundred wersts nearer home; but of this we will speak later.

In the evening, there was a ball in the aristocratic club. The musicians, who had been expressly sent for from a place in the neighbourhood, arrived completely drunk. The Governor disposed of them in the following way:—they were shut up twenty-four hours before the ball in the police house, and brought directly from there with a police guard to the ball-room, where they had to remain till the close of the ball, without a moment's leisure.

The ball proved to be stupid, poorly arranged, and badly managed, as is generally the case in small places, on extraordinary occasions. The policemen ran hastily to and

fro, the officials, in their gala uniforms, crowded the walls, the ladies gathered around the Grand Duke, as savages do around travellers.

A propos of the ladies, in one of the small places through which the Grand Duke passed, there was a luncheon prepared, after the exhibition. The Grand Duke ate nothing except a peach, the kernel of which he threw away through the window. Thereupon, the tall figure of a young official, known as a drunkard, and even now quite animated by spirits, stepped forward from the crowd, approached the window with a solemn step, took up the kernel, and put it in his pocket. After the luncheon, he approached one of the first ladies, and presented her with the kernel gnawed by his Imperial Highness. The lady is delighted. Thereupon he goes to a second, and a third, all are delighted. The official had bought five peaches, taken out the

kernels, and thus rendered six ladies happy. Which of them had the true kernel? Each of them entertained no doubt as to the authenticity of her own.

After the departure of the hereditary Grand Duke, Tufeyeff prepared himself to change his pachalick for a senator's seat; but it fell out otherwise, and worse.

Three weeks afterwards, the post from Petersburgh brought papers addressed to the "Superintendent of the district." The whole office was alarmed. The registrar of the chief district office came in haste to say that an ukase had arrived. The chief secretary ran to Tufeyeff. Tufeyeff said he was sick, and did not appear. One hour later, we learned that he was "dismissed" *sans phrase.*

The whole town was delighted at the downfal of the governor. His administration had something so impure, suffocating,

rotten, and contrary to law; and still it was disgusting to witness the joy of the officials. Yes, more than one donkey gave a kick at this wounded boar. Human littleness became as visible at this opportunity as at Napoleon's downfal, although the dimension of the circumstances were different. I had latterly been at open war with him, and he would certainly have sent me to some place like Kai, had he not been driven away himself. I had withdrawn from him, and had nothing to change in my behaviour towards him. But the others, who but yesterday lifted their hats when they saw his carriage from afar, who read his wishes in his eyes, smiled at his dog, presented his valet with their snuff-box, they now scarcely greeted him, and talked aloud of the many unlawful actions he had committed in common with them. All this is so old, and so constantly repeated through all ages and every-

where, that we are forced to acknowledge the depravity as a general disposition of human character; at least, we can no longer be astonished at it.

Soon after, a new governor came to Wiatka. He was a man of a very different nature, tall, stout, lymphatic, dissolute, about fifty years old, with a pleasant smiling countenance, and perfectly polished manners. He expressed himself with the utmost grammatical strictness, broadly, minutely, and with a clearness that was capable, by its excess, of confusing the most simple subject. He had been a pupil of the Lyceum, a companion of Pushkin, had served in the guards, bought the newest French books, liked to converse about important topics, and gave me, the day after his arrival, Tocqueville's work, "De la Démocratie en Amérique."

The change was a very striking one. There

were the same rooms; there was the same furniture; but, instead of the Tatar, with Tongusian exterior, and Siberian habits, there sat a *doctrinaire*, somewhat a pedant, but still an honourable man. This new governor was intelligent, but his intelligence sparkled, without a warm heart, like a clear winter day, which may be very agreeable, but does not ripen the fruit. Moreover, he was a terrible formalist—not an official formalist; one could rather say, a formalist of the second degree; but with all that, as tiresome as the others.

As the new governor was lawfully married, the government house lost its exclusive bachelor, and, at the same time, polygamic character. This, of course, turned all the counsellors to their she-counsellors. Bald headed old men boasted no longer of their adventures "à la Don Juan," but, on the

contrary, spoke with tenderness of their faded, boney, wrinkled, or corpulent wives, whose fat sometimes seemed to forbid the possibility of blood-letting.

Some years before the arrival of the governor at Wiatka, he had, all at once, been transfigured from a colonel of the Guards, into a civil governor of I don't know what district. He entered on his government without the least knowledge of business.

In the beginning, he undertook to read through everything, as beginners usually do. Then he chanced to meet with a paper from another district, which he read through once, twice, three times, without being able to understand it. He ordered his secretary to come, and gave it to him to read. The secretary was not better able to explain it than himself.

"What would you do, now, with this

paper, if I pass it over to your office?" asked he.

"I should despatch it to the third table; it belongs to the third table."

"Then, of course, the chief of the third table knows what it means?"

"Excellency, he has been at the head of it for seven years."

"Tell him to come to me."

The chief of the third table came.

He gave him the paper, and asked what was to be done.

The chief of the table looked furtively over the paper, and said that a request ought to be addressed to the Exchequer, and an order to the chief official of the district.

"But, what has to be ordered?"

The chief of the table grew embarrassed, and confessed, at last, that this would be

difficult to say, but, in writing, it would be easy to explain.

"Then, take a chair, if you please, and write the answer."

The chief of the table seized the pen, and filled up two papers almost in one stroke o the pen.

The governor took them, read them over and over again. It was impossible to find any common sense in them.

"Then I saw," he himself related, smilingly, "that it was indeed an answer on one of the papers; and I subscribed it in the name of 'Heaven.' Never again has this business been mentioned; the answer must have been perfectly satisfactory."

I parted from the society of Wiatka in the most friendly terms. In that distant place, I found, among the young merchants, two or three honest friends. I am sure

some of them still remember me, and have not forgotten what we talked about during whole evenings, in a small room, whilst, out of doors there was a cold of twenty-five to thirty degrees. They rivalled each other in showing sympathy and friendship to the exile. Several sledges accompanied me, on my departure, to the first station; and, notwithstanding my protestations, a whole lading of provisions and wine was put into my own.

The following day, I arrived at Soransk.

From this point, the road runs through endless pine-woods. The nights were moonlight; the ground was frozen; the small sledge glided quickly over the narrow road. Such woods I have never seen again. They extend, without interruption, to Archangelsk, whence rein-deer sometimes pass through them, to the district of Wiatka. Most of

the trees are suitable for building. The pines, wonderfully straight, flew past my sledge like soldiers, tall and snow-covered, and their pointed pinnacles looked out of the snow, like upraised daggers. You fall asleep, you awake—the regiments of pine-trees pass uninterruptedly, with a hurried step, past the sledge, shaking off the snow from time to time; and then comes the post station, in a small space cut out of the wood. There stands a little house behind the trees, seeming to have lost its way hither. The horses, tied to a pile, ring their little bells; some Tcheremiss boys rush out of the house, in their embroidered shirts, still half asleep. The Watiake postillion begins, in a hoarse voice, to quarrel with his companion; then he exclaims, "Aida! aida!"* commences a song

* Quicker, quicker.

of two notes—and again the eye meets with snow and pines—pines and snow.

But before I left the borders of the district of Wiatka, I had still to pay my adieus to the official caste, which, for the last time, presented itself in its full splendour.

We stopped at a station; the postillion began to unyoke the horses; a tall peasant figure showed itself in the hall of the house, and asked the postillion "who was travelling there."

"We don't know; from the district," was the answer.

Thereupon, the peasant turned to me, and asked in a rough voice:

"Who is the traveller?"

"What does it concern thee?"

"It signifies something to me, because of the order of the chief magistrate of the district, and because I am a servant of justice."

"Then go into the post-house; there is my passport."

The peasant went away; a moment afterwards he returned, and said to the postillion:

"Give him no horses."

Now, my patience was at an end. I sprang from my sledge, and went into the house. A half-drunken magistrate sat on a bench, and dictated something to his half-drunken clerk. On another bench, in a corner, sat, or rather lay, a man with chains on his hands and feet. Some empty bottles and glasses, some tobacco ashes, and heaps of papers were confusedly scattered all over the room.

"Where is the magistrate?" I asked aloud, as soon as I entered.

"Here is the chief magistrate," answered the half-drunken Lazareff, whom I had seen

in Wiatka; and he stared at me crossly and impertinently. But all at once he sprang towards me with outstretched arms.

(I must observe, that after Tufeyeff's dismissal, the officials, seeing my tolerably good understanding with the new governor, had begun to fear me a little.)

I pushed him back with my hand, and asked sternly:

"How could you give the order that I was to have no horses? What do you mean by making travellers stop on the high road?"

"But I have only been joking. Good gracious! are you not ashamed to be angry? Horses? Order the horses as you like. Why dost thou not move from the spot, rascal that thou art?" he cried to the servant of justice. "Please, do me the favour to drink a cup of tea with rum."

"I thank you."

"But have we no more champagne?" He rushed at the bottles — all were empty.

"What are you doing here?" I asked.

"An examination. You see this fellow here? He has murdered his father and his sister with an axe, in a fit of jealousy."

"But, for that reason you feast together?"

The chief magistrate grew somewhat embarrassed. I looked at the young Tcheremiss. He was a man of about twenty years; his perfectly Oriental face, with narrow sparkling eyes and black hair, betrayed not the least sign of cruelty.

Altogether this was so disgusting, that I returned hastily to the yard. The chief magistrate followed me directly, holding in one hand a glass, and in the other a bottle

of rum, and requesting me incessantly to drink. To get rid of him, I drank. He seized my hand, and said :

" Pardon me ! pray, do pardon me ! What is there to be done ! I trust you will not say anything to his Excellency, and throw a deserving man into misery ?"

Then he kissed my hand at least ten times, always repeating : " For God's sake, don't make a deserving man unhappy !"

I withdrew my hand with disgust, and said : " Be quiet. What desire have I to tell tales ?"

" But how can I be of service to you ?"

" In seeing that the horses are put to a little quicker."

" Quicker ?" he cried out ; " Aida, aida ;" and he ran himself to fasten the cords and the straps of the team.

I always remembered this incident.

When I was for the last time in St. Petersburg, in the year 1846, I was obliged to go to the Ministry of Home Affairs, where I had to obtain my passport for the foreign countries. Whilst I was speaking to the chief of one of the tables, a gentleman passed by, shaking the office aristocracy graciously by the hand, and greeting condescendingly the chief of the table.

"Is it possible?" thought I. "Can it be he?"

"Who is that?" I asked.

"Lazareff; an official of the minister for special commissions, and a great favourite of his."

"Has he not been chief magistrate in the district of Wiatka?"

"Yes."

"Well, I congratulate you. Ten years ago he kissed my hand."

M. Terowsky,* it must be acknowledged, knows how to choose his people.

* Minister of Home Affairs at that time.

CHAPTER III.

The First Month of My Sojourn at Wladimir.

When I walked forth from the post house in Kosmodemyansk, in order to step into the sledge, I found the horses put to in the Russian way, all three side by side. The middle horse shook the bells of its collar merrily. At Perm and Wiatka the horses are harnessed either one behind the other, or, two wheelers and one leader.

My heart beat aloud at the sight of our national team.

"Well!" said I, to the young fellow, who duly sat on one side of the coach-box, enveloped in his sheep-skin fur, without cap and with gloves having only a thumb, but so stiff that he could scarcely seize the piece of money which I held out to him; "well, now shew us how one of your sort can drive?"

"I'll do you honour, Sir. Halloo! my doves," he cried to the horses, and then turning abruptly to me, said "Now, Sir, hold firm! Now comes a mountain! There, I will shew you their heels!"

We had arrived at a very steep place on the shore of the Wolga, and were obliged to descend it, as the winter road led over the frozen river.

He really gave the reins to the horses. The sledge did not glide; but was thrown from the right to the left. The horses flew

down the mountain; the coachman was quite drunk with joy; and I, likewise, may Heaven pardon me! was delighted with it. Oh! Russian nature!

Thus I entered, "per" post, into the year 1838, the best and most serene year of my life. I will tell you how I welcomed it.

About eighty wersts before reaching Nijny-Novgorod, we went—that is to say, myself and my valet-de-chambre, into the room of the post-master to warm ourselves. Out of doors it was very frosty, and, moreover, windy. The post-master, a thin, sickly and miserable-looking man, devoted himself to the work of transcribing my passport into the post-book, dictating to himself every letter, and, notwithstanding, making a good many faults. I threw off my furs, and walked up and down the room in my enormous fur boots. Matwey warmed

himself near a red-hot stove. The post-master murmured; the wooden house clock ticked with a hesitating, low sound.

"Look at it!" said Matwey to me. "It will soon strike twelve; the new year! The new year! And you have perhaps forgotten who now drinks your health!"

"I will," he added, looking at me half-inquiringly, "fetch something from the travelling case, which they put into the carriage at Wiatka."

Without waiting for an answer, he went out of the room, and brought some bottles and a carpet-bag.

Matwey was more to me than a mere servant; he was a friend, a younger brother. He was a citizen of Moscow, and had been apprenticed to a bookbinder before he entered my service.

I knew that a refusal would grieve

Matwey, and I had, myself, nothing against celebrating thus a New-Year's day at the post-station. Is not a New-Year's day likewise a station on a journey?

Matwey had brought ham and champagne. The champagne proved to be entirely frozen, and the ham was so hard that it could have been cut with an axe. It was covered with a glittering crust of ice; but "*à la guerre, comme à la guerre!*"

The new year and new happiness! I could indeed drink to new happiness. Was I not on my way home? Did not every hour bring me nearer to Moscow? My heart was full of hope!

The frozen champagne did not please the postmaster, and I gave him a glass of rum in it, and this new "half and half" suited him extraordinarily. The coachman, whom I had also invited to participate, was still

more radical; he poured pepper into a glass of brandy, stirred it up with a spoon, swallowed it at one draught, sighed heavily, and said groaning, "that has stung me deliciously."

The postmaster himself put me into the sledge, and took such care of me that a burning light, which he held in his hand, fell into the straw which was in the sledge, and he could not find it again. He was in high spirits, and repeated several times, "Now you have made me likewise keep a New Year's day! now I also have celebrated a New Year's day."

The "stung" postillion seized the reins.

The following day, towards seven in the evening, I arrived at Wladimir, and descended at first at an hotel, at the same which Sologub* has so excellently described in his "Tarantass," with the extravagant Russian-French names

* A Russian Author.

for the dishes, and vinegar instead of Bordeaux wine.

"Somebody has asked for you this morning; I think they are waiting in the beer-room," said the waiter, after having read my name in the passport.

I could not possibly imagine who could have asked for me.

"Yes, there they are," added the waiter, stepping aside. However, at first sight, there appeared no men, but an immensely large tray, with various things upon it. Easter bread and cakes, oranges, apples, eggs, almonds, raisins, &c., &c., and behind it the gray beard and blue eyes of my father's Starost in the district of Wladimir, became visible.

"Garrilo Semonitch!" I exclaimed, and threw myself in his arms. This was the first man of our people, of those known to me

from older times, whom I had seen since my imprisonment and exile. I could not cease looking at the old man, nor leave off talking to him. He was an assurance to me that Moscow was near, that my home was near, that my friends were near. Three days ago, he had seen them all; then it could not be very far away!

With my settlement in Wladimir a new period of life began for me, pure, undisturbed, serious, solitary, filled only with love.

But this period belongs to another part of my life's remembrances; to a part which I dread to touch on, which I want strength to describe, and which I most probably shall pass on in silence.

Terrible events, devouring grief, can be more easily traced on paper, than perfectly clear, unclouded, sacred recollections. Can happiness be related?

Thus, do not expect from me long descriptions of my inner life at that time. Those are subjects of which I have never spoken with any one; not because they are secrets, but because they are mingled too deeply, too closely, with my whole fate; because they have interwoven themselves like capillary tubes with my whole being.

Others may, from their own heart, guess what is omitted. I have only to speak of external circumstances, and will only rarely indicate, by a word, or by a hint, the mysteries of the heart.

My wishes were at an end. It was enough for me that I lived in the present moment; I expected nothing from the morrow. I was also sure that it could not bereave me of anything. Individual life could not bestow happiness any longer—this was the limit. Change only could diminish it.

But fate is ever immoderate. "Misfortunes never come singly," says Shakespere, but in battalions; that is likewise true as regards happiness.

N—— came to spend some days with us, having found means to leave, for a short time, the province to which he had been exiled. He was then in the flower of his youth; soon after he had to pass through a severe and sad school; it was at moments, even then, as if he felt that misfortune was at hand, but he could still turn the feeling off, forget it, or fancy he was dreaming that the hand of fate that was already lifted up over him. I myself thought, at that period, that the clouds gathering over him would yet be dissipated; the feeling of security, without a shadow, belongs to all who are young, to all who are strong; it is the expression of an ingenuous

confidence in life, and in oneself. The consciousness of exercising an absolute sovereignty over one's own fate, lulls us to sleep, whilst the powers of evil or bad men, lead us silently to the verge of an abyss.

And it is perfectly right that man should not be aware of them, or know how to become aware of them. There is no perfect happiness allied with inquietude. Inquietude, it is true, gives a febrile excitement, which pleases us like the spasmodic expectation of a card at faro; but this is widely different from the calm and harmonious feeling of unlimited confidence and peace. Complete happiness is not like the ocean, agitated by storms, but like the tranquil surface of the waves, on a warm summer day. If it is a dream or not, an error, or a reality—but I value this haughty trust in life, as long as life has not yet protested, has not yet

awakened us from it. The Chinese enjoy a living death, through the dull dreams which opium gives them.

Our "trio" formed an astonishing harmony; there were no limits, none of those slight contradictions which, though scarcely visible, whisper, constantly, "thus far, and no farther!" and which end, by imposing limits. It was just for this reason, that we were so completely united, and so completely free.

Here terminates the lyrical part of our existence, the part entirely personal. Farther on, labour, success, encounters, a widely-extended circle, a long road, resolutions—farther still, children, cares, struggles; and, farther yet, all ends—on the one side is a grave—on the other, solitude.

CHAPTER IV.

The Circle of Stankewitch—Belinsky and Bakounine—Hegel—The Discussions of Novgorod.

In the beginning of the year 1840, we departed definitively from Wladimir, and the modest, the narrow Kliasma. I left our little nuptial town with a heavy heart. I foresaw that our simple and concentrated existence was at an end, and that we would be obliged to reef more than one sail.

N— was already at Moscow, surrounded by a large circle of young men. Although

among these new acquaintances, there was neither the unity, nor the intimacy prevailing among us before our imprisonment, nevertheless they treated N— with great sympathy.

N—'s nature, expansive, poetical, full of child-like nobility, varied, and with the very national "*laisser aller*," pleased alike by his qualities and by his faults. He was gifted (as we have said in the first volume) with a certain magnetism, at once attractive, mighty, feminine, which he exercised over his whole circle of friends. Without any particular reason, people were drawn towards him, and attached themselves to him. He was like a well-provided table, where every one found his place, recruited his strength, warmed himself, and went away—as a friend.

It is true that these acquaintances absorbed nearly all his time. He suffered from this; but he could not shut the door. On the

contrary, he received every one with his soft smile. People called that weakness. It is true, he lost a great deal of time through it; but how many sympathies and affections did he not gain by it, not only from more intimate friends, but also from the more indifferent and the weak? Well! in my opinion, such a life is equivalent to any grave and scientific occupation.

I could never understand why they accused N— of having done too little. The Sclavonians, in general, are a people of idlers, and do very little; perhaps, because their work is yet to come. The serious point of view is not that of workhouses, and of manufacturers.

I recollect, that during my university time, I sat once with Vadim* over a bottle of Rhine wine. Vadim grew sadder and sadder, and concluded by repeating, in a gloomy and

* Spoken of in the first volume.

most tragical way, the words of Don Carlos, taken from Julius Cæsar, "Twenty four years old, and not yet anything done for immortality." This circumstance, together with the "Hochheimer," occasioned our friend such a state of despair, that he dashed with all his might the "Römer"* on the table, and broke it, cutting his hand so deeply, that he bore the mark till his death.

All that is very well; but neither Julius Cæsar, nor Don Carlos and the Marquis of Posa, nor Vadim and myself have been able to explain why it is necessary to do anything for immortality. If there is anything to do, of course it must be done; but, to act only in order to leave a remembrance for mankind, all that is very vague.

What is business? The merchant knows

* A sort of drinking-glass, from which Rhine wine is drunk.

no affair more serious than commerce, the lawyer none more serious than a lawsuit; the military man, armed from head to foot in the midst of peace, and walking more like a stork than a man, is persuaded that he does something. I, for my part think that, to be the tie, the centre of a circle of men, in a world where all are isolated and none free, is a great work.

None have ever reproached me with idleness. Many things done by myself have had the advantage of pleasing; and can it be decided how much belongs to N— of all that I have done? how much my thought reflects the thought of N—, our conversations, our discussions, the nights which we passed in doing nothing, either in roving about the fields, and the streets, or doing less than nothing by resting a whole night near the table, glass in hand, without moving until the morning.

The circle of young men who surrounded N—, was not our old circle; only two of our old friends were present. Time, interest, and occupation, all were changed. The friends of Stanewitch were the foremost here; Bakounine and Belinsky were their leaders, each of them with a volume of the philosophy of Hegel in his hands, and with that intolerance of youth for the opinions of others, without which there can be no passionate and ardent conviction.

German philosophy was inoculated at the University of Moscow by a most remarkable man, the professor Pavloff. The chair of philosophy was abolished by an order of Nicholas in 1826. Pavloff had then to read a course of natural philosophy in general, and of agronomy.

It would have been difficult to learn natural philosophy by following his lectures,

and impossible to obtain a real knowledge of agronomy; but notwithstanding all that, his lessons were most useful. Pavloff stood at the entrance of the faculty for mathematical sciences, and received the students with the question, "You want to know nature; but what is nature, and what is knowing?" This was extremely important; for our young people who entered the university were entirely deficient in a philosophical education. Only the Seminarists* had philosophical instruction; but that was very erroneous.

In answer to these questions, Pavloff developed the doctrines of Schelling and of Oken, with such a plastic lucidity, as we find in no other natural philosopher. If he did not attain a perfect clearness on every point, it was not his fault, but the fault of the obscurity of Schelling's

* Those brought up in the seminaries, or schools of the clergy.

doctrines themselves. He might rather be accused of having arrested himself at this philosophical Mahabarata, and of not having passed through the severe trial of Hegel's logic. But, in general, we scarcely ever go beyond the introduction, and some general idea. This stopping at the beginning, this not finishing a work, these houses without roofs, and foundation stones without houses, is quite concordant with the national spirit of the Russians. Is it perhaps because our history itself only knocks at the outer gates, that we content ourselves with remaining in the hall?

One of Pavloff's pupils, Stankewitch, did what Pavloff himself had not done. Stankewitch, likewise one of the idlers, or the men who do nothing, was the first of Hegel's partizans amongst the Moscow youths. He studied German philosophy deeply and æsthe-

tically. Richly gifted with extraordinary faculties, he drew with him a considerable circle of friends in that direction. This circle was most remarkable; a whole phalanx of learned literary men and professors, amongst the number of whom, were Belinsky and Bakounine.

Till the time of exile, no great sympathy existed between our circle and that of Stankewitch. They did not like our almost exclusively political tendencies; we disliked their almost exclusively speculative views. They accused us of being Frondists and French, we called them sentimentalists and Germans. The first man, equally acknowledged by them and by us, who extended his hand amicably to both parties, and knew how to annihilate the last ground of the mutual misunderstanding, was T——; but when I arrived at Moscow, he was already in Berlin, and poor Stankewitch expiring on the shores

of the Lago di Como, not more than twenty-seven years old.

Stankewitch, being feeble in health, of a gentle character, a poet and a dreamer, was naturally inclined to prefer contemplation and abstract thoughts to living and more practical questions; his artistic idealism became him well; it was like the wreath for the dead upon his pale, death-predestined youthful brow.

The others were too healthy, and of a turn of mind not sufficiently poetical to arrest themselves for a long while on their passage through life upon speculative thoughts. The exclusively speculative tendency is quite opposed to the Russian character, and we shall soon see how the true Russian spirit worked upon the system of Hegel, how our lively nature kept up its own form in spite of all the philosophic cavils.

But in the beginning of the year 1840,

the young men who surrounded N——, had not yet conceived the thought of revolutionizing for the sake of spirit against the text; for life against abstraction.

The new acquaintances received me as people receive an emigrant, an old champion, a person who comes out of prison, who returns from banishment and exile; with an honouring condescension, with a willingness to accept me in their union; but with the resolution to yield in nothing, making allusions to theirs being of to day, and ours of yesterday, and requiring an unconditional acceptance of Hegel's phrenomenology and logic, as well as of their explanations of it.

They explained it, however, continually; there was no paragraph of all the three volumes of the logic, of the two of the æsthetics, of the Encyclopedia, which had not been

taken by storm during desperate discussions, lasting several nights. People who had loved each other, separated for weeks, because they could not agree as to the definition of "absolute spirit," and took for personal offence, opinions differing from theirs, on the "immanence," and on the "subjectivity of God." They had every trifling pamphlet sent them, that was published in Berlin, or other cities and country towns, in which a single word about Hegel was written; they read it through in a few days, until there were holes in it, until the leaves fell from it.

As Francœur wept with joy in Paris, when he heard that, in Russia, he was thought a great mathematician, and that the young generation used the same letters as himself, in all the algebraic operations, so ought all the forgotten philosophers, from the right and the left of the Hegelian school, to have

wept, if they could have known what battles and what tournaments they gave rise to in Moscow, how they were read, and how they were bought there.

Pavloff's principal merit consisted in the extraordinary lucidity of his exposition, a lucidity which, however, lost nothing of the depth of German thought. The young philosophers, on the contrary, adopted quite a conventional language; they not only transferred entire phrases, with the spirit of the foreign idiom, into the Russian, but they left, also, with the utmost naïveté, all the Latin words "in crudo," and gave them Sclavonic terminations, and the seven Russian cases.

I have a right to say this, because I was hurried along by the general current; I wrote just in the same way, and was astonished when the well-known astronomer, Perevoschikoff, calls this, "bird's language." No-

body would have consented, at that time, to avoid such phrases as the following: "the concretion of abstract ideas in the plastic sphere, represents those phases of the self-seeking spirit, in which he decides upon himself, raising himself from the natural immanency, to the harmonic sphere of the arts."

It was a curious thing, that all this, expressed in Russian, sounded more foreign than Latin, in the same way as General Ermoloff once counted, at the dinner, the Russian generals amongst the foreigners.

German science (and this was its principal fault) had adopted an artificial, heavy, scholastic language, principally because it lived in the monasteries of idealism, the academies. This language of the priestly science was a language for the believers, and none of its catechumens understood it. It was necessary to have a key for it, as for a cypher. This

key is no longer a secret; when folk had found it out, they were astonished to see that science said such reasonable things, and such plain ones, in that artificial dialect.

Feuerbach was the first who spoke plainly. The mechanical reproduction of that German clerical, learned dialect, was the more unpardonable, as the chief characteristic of our language consists in the extraordinary facility with which everything may be expressed in it—abstract thoughts, as well as inner lyrical sentiments; "the thoughts of life, which wander up and down, in silent nights, like softly swarming mice," as Furchlin says, in a poem; the cry of indignation, the sparkling wit, and overpowering passion.

Besides this corrupted language, another error went much deeper. Our young philosophers not only spoiled their phrases, but also their understandings. Transactions with

life became scholar-like, bookish; it was the learned understanding of common things which Gœthe has in so masterly a way mocked at in the conversation between Mephistophiles and the scholar. In fact, all immediate, plain, simple feelings were exalted into abstract categories, and returned thence without a drop of real, living blood in them, a pale, algebraic shadow.

All this, however, was naïve in its way, because it was thoroughly sincere. The man who went to take a walk in the fields, went in order to make his pantheistic feeling of unity resound through the "kosmos," and when he met an intoxicated soldier, or an old woman, who began a chat, the philosopher not only spoke to them, but he saw in them an incarnation of the popular substance in its immediate and its accidental appearance. The tear itself, breaking forth from beneath

the eyelid, was strictly placed in its right rank; either in that of "the mind" (Gemüth), or in the "tragical category of the heart;" and the same proceedings went on in art.

To know Gœthe, and particularly the second part of Faust (because it is inferior to the first, or more difficult to understand) was as necessary as to have a coat. The philosophy of music was upon the first plan. It was understood that they did not even mention Rossini; they condescended to hear Mozart, although they found him childish and poor; but they made philosophical examinations about every note of Beethoven, and highly esteemed Schubert, not so much for his beautiful melodies, as because he took philosophical texts for them; such as, "the Omnipotence of God," and "the atlas," &c. They banished also, together with Italian music, French literature, and in general, everything

French, and in that way, everything political.

From these notices, it is easy to conceive upon what battle-field we ought to have encountered and beaten each other. While the controversy went only so far as, that Gœthe was objective; but that his objectivity was subjective, and that Schiller was the most subjective of poets, but his subjectivity was objective, and *vice versâ*, so long all went well. The more passionate questions did not venture to appear. Hegel, in the time of his professorship at Berlin, partly because he grew older, and partly because he found himself very comfortable in his situation, forced his philosophy to overstep by far the plain of earthly things, and held himself in a centre, where all the contemporary interests and passions grew indifferent, like towns and villages seen from the lofty spheres of a

balloon. He did not like to encounter these desperate practical questions which it was so difficult to bring in accordance, and to which, however, it was so necessary to give a positive answer.

It is easy to understand how striking this dualism must have been in a science that tended to annihilate duality. Also this was no longer the real Hegel; the real Hegel was the modest professor at Jena, the friend of Hölderli, who saved his phemonology beneath his coat, when Napoleon entered the town; at that time his philosophy led neither to an Indian quietism, nor to a justification of the existent forms of the state, nor to a Prussian Christianity. At that time, he did not read his lectures about the philosophy of religion; but he wrote ingenious things in the manner of that article about "the hangman and the pain of death," which Rosen-

kranz has published in his Biography of Hegel.

Hegel retired to the sphere of abstraction in order not to be under the necessity of touching empirical conclusions and practical applications; and he chose therefore the quiet, yielding, passive ocean of the æsthetic. He scarcely ever went into the open air, and then wrapping himself up and staying only a few minutes, like a sick man, he left in dialetic confusion those questions especially which concern most contemporary men. Exceedingly poor understandings (Gans only was an exception) surrounded him; they mistook the letter for the spirit, and felt pleased with this empty dialectic play. Very likely the old man must have felt, conscience-stricken, and uneasy at times, in looking upon the short-sightedness of his too easily contented scholars. If the dialectic method is not the development

of the thought itself, so to say, "the education for thought," it remains a merely outward means for running the gauntlet through the ranks of categories of all kinds of things, a mere practice in logical gymnastics, as the Greek sophists exercised it, and the mediæval scholars who came after Abélard.

The philosophical phrase which did the greatest harm, and upon which German conservatives precipitated themselves in order to reconcile philosophy with the political part of Germany, "Everything existing is reasonable." This phrase was, differently expressed, the principle of the "sufficient causes" for the identity of logic with the facts. This badly understood sentence of Hegel became in philosophy like what once were the words of the Christian Girondist, St. Paul: "There is no might but from God." But when all might comes from God, and when the existing social

order can be justified by reason, then most naturally the fight against it can likewise be justified, because it is likewise existing. The formal acceptance of these two sentences, is a mere tautology. But tautology or not, they exactly lead to the acknowledgment of the existing power, and to the result that man folds his hands, which was also the conduct of the Berlin Budhists. These two sentences are directly opposed to the Russian spirit; but, in spite of that, our Moscow Hegelians adopted them in their sincere error.

Belinsky, an active, dialectically, passionate, antagonistic nature, preached at that time Indian quietness of contemplation and theoretical studies, instead of struggle. He believed in this view of things, and did not grow pale before the possible results, nor did he shrink back, either before moral inconvenience, or the opinion of others, which weak and dependent people

accustomed to fear so much. In his heart there was no fear, because he was strong and sincere, because his conscience was tranquil.

"Do you know," I said one day to him, thinking to convince him with my revolutionary ultimatum, "do you know that with your arguments, you could prove that the unnatural autocracy, under which we live, is quite reasonable and ought to exist."

"Without any doubt," answered Belinsky, and read to me "The Anniversary of Borodino," by Pushkin.

I could not stand this, and thenceforth an obstinate struggle began between us. Our disunion also dissolved the whole circle. Bakounine did his best to reconcile, to explain, to prevent the evil; it was in vain, there was no real peace. Belinsky, irritated and discontented, went to St. Petersburgh, and from there gave a last furious

discharge against us, which he called likewise "The Anniversary of Borodino."

I gave up all intercourse with him. Bakounine, although he likewise fought vigorously, became thoughtful, his revolutionary tact drove him to the other side. Belinsky reproached him for his weakness, his indulgence, and went on to such exaggerated expressions, that his own friends and admirers were frightened. The chorus, however, looked upon us with pride, shrugged their shoulders in a haughty way, and found us much "behind."

In the middle of these civil wars, I understood the necessity *ex ipsâ fonte bibere*, and began earnestly to study Hegel. I am even of opinion that the man who has not gone through the study of the "Chronology," by Hegel, and "The Contradictions of Political Economy," by Proudhon, who has not passed

through this cycle, not tempered this iron, is not a complete man, and not up to the evil of his age. When I had accustomed myself to this language, and adopted this method, I found that Hegel is much nearer to our point of view, than to that of his followers, such as he is in his first works, as he is when his genius runs away with him and carries him forward, forgetful of the Brandenbourg Gate. The philosophy of Hegel, a revolutionary algebra, delivers man in an extraordinary way, and takes away one stone after the other from the Christian world, from that world of traditions which have outlived themselves. But perhaps he has intentionally formalized his ideas so badly.

As in mathematics, only with more right, a man does not go back to the definition of space, force, and movement, but continues in the dialectic development of their qualities

and laws, so in the formal understanding of philosophy, if once accustomed to the principles, the adepts proceed with the conclusions. The inexperienced man not yet confused by the method, having at last become a custom, holds not strongly to these very dogmas, to these traditions, which are given as if they were thoughts. People who occupy themselves a long while in the way of making researches of this kind, are sure to be no longer impartial. It seems strange to them that others cannot understand "such clear things;" that, for instance, they cannot understand "that the soul is immortal when the individual dies;" that thought which has been explained with so much success in the book of the Berlin Michelet; or the still more simple truth, "that the absolute spirit is itself an individuality, but an individuality only attaining self-recognition through the

medium of the world, notwithstanding that it possesses internal self-conscience." All these things seemed quite easy to our friends, they smiled at our "French" opposition, and in such a way, that I became for some time quite silent, and worked away vigorously, in order to make myself master entirely of that philosophical jargon! Fortunately, scholasticism had as little success with me as mysticism. I strained their bow so much that the string gave way, and the bandage fell from my eyes. And what is more curious, some discussions with a lady brought me so far.

A year after those struggles, I made, in Novgorod, the acquaintance of a general. I made his acquaintance because he was not at all like a general.

Everything was gloomy in this house; the air was full of tears; death had visibly passed here. Grey hairs prematurely surrounded his

head, and his kind, but sad smile, expressed more suffering than wrinkles could have done. He was about fifty years of age. The trace of the doom which lopped off the branches of life, was still more visible upon the pale, haggard face of his wife. In this house all was too tranquil. The general occupied himself in mechanics. His wife, in the morning, gave French lessons to some poor girls. When they went away, she began to read. Flowers were the only things (and there were a great many of them) that spoke of another, brighter, perfumed life ; and there were also little playthings in a cupboard, but no one to play with them.

They had had three children. Two years before I knew them, a boy, nine years old and full of talents, died, and some months later the second child, of the scarlatina. The mother hastened to their country seat to save the last child, by change of air; a few days

later, she returned. Near her, in the carriage, lay a coffin.

Their life had lost its significance; it was ended. Its continuance was without necessity—without aim. It was supported merely by the pity of the one for the other. The only consolation that reached their hearts, was the deep conviction of each being necessary to the other, in order to bear their cross. I seldom saw a more harmonious match; but this had already become no longer a match. They were not united by love, but by the deep fraternity of misfortune. Their fate was closely tied and held fast by three cold little hands, and by the wide desert all around and before them. The childless mother gave herself entirely up to mysticism. She sought deliverance from her grief in the world of a mystic reconciliation; she, too, was deceived by the flatteries religion bestows upon the human

heart. With her, mysticism was no jest, no reverie; but it gave her back her children, and she defended them in defending her religion. But, as her mind was extraordinarily active, she also indulged in controversy, and knew her power.

I have met before and later in my life with many mystics of a different kind, from Witberg to the followers of Towiansky, who saw in Napoleon the military incarnation of God, and took off their hats in passing the column in the Place Vendôme at Paris, and to the now forgotten "Ma-Pa," who told me himself of his meeting with God, whom he fell in with on the road from Montmorency to Paris. Most of these people were very nervous and acted upon the nerves; they puzzled the imagination and the heart, mixed up philosophical ideas with an arbitrary symbolism, and did not like to come forth upon the open field of logic.

But on this very field stood the firm and fearless L— D—.

How and when she succeeded in obtaining such an artistical ability in dialectics, I don't know. In general, the development of women's minds is a secret at first; nothing but finery, dancing, jokes, and gossiping, novel reading, ogling and tears, and all at once the revelation of a gigantic will, of ripe thoughts, of a colossal spirit. The young girl, drawn on by passion, is no more; before you is a "Theroigne de Mericourt," a beauty ascending the peoples' tribune, or carrying away with her the revolutionary masses—a Princess Daschkoff, eighteen years old, on horseback, with a drawn sword in her hand, in the midst of rebellious bands of soldiers.

With L— D— everything was settled, she had no doubts, no uncertainty, no theoretical weaknesses. I don't think that either Jesuits

or Calvinists are more thoroughly consequent in the observance of their dogmas that she was.

Whilst she ought to have hated death, which had bereaved her of her children, she hated life. That is essential to the Christian faith; for that apotheosis of death, the despising of earth, the despising of the body, which Christendom preaches, has no other sense. This doctrine is the source of the persecution of every realistic living principle, of the persecution of enjoyment, of health, of pleasure, of the free consciousness of existence. L— D— went so far as no longer to love either Göthe or Puschkin.

Her attacks upon my philosophy came from a side quite different to the ordinary one. She assured me, ironically, that all the dialectic scaffolds and subtleties were the mere noise of drums, with which cowards are accustomed to deafen the anxiety of their

consciences. "They will never get anything by philosophy," she said; "neither a personal God, nor the immortality of the soul; and, at the same time, they have not the courage to be atheists, and to deny immortality. You are too much a man not to start before these consequences; a secret horror repels you from them; and, therefore you invent your logical miracles, in order to cover your eyes, and to obtain what religion, with childlike simplicity, bestows."

I objected, I disputed, but, in my conscience, I felt that my arguments were weak, and that she stood more firmly upon her ground than I did on mine. And, to complete my fate, a director of a medical board was introduced; a good creature, but one of the most ridiculous Germans I ever met with; he was a particular admirer of Oken and Carus; his judgments were quotations; he had for

everything an answer ready; he doubted nothing, and was persuaded that he perfectly agreed with me.

This doctor was quite horrified at our disputes; he grew the more angry, the less he could bring forward arguments to oppose them; he called L— D—'s views female caprice, told her to read "Schelling's Lectures on Academical studies;" and read to her, himself, fragments of "Burdach's Physiology," as proofs, that within man there existed an eternal, immaterial principle, and that, within nature there is some kind of God hidden.

L— D— had long since done with this alphabet of pantheism; she confused him, and smiled at me, while glancing toward the doctor. Certainly, she was more in the right than he was, and I conscientiously strained all my thoughts, and was angry when the doctor solemnly laughed. These

controversies, however, had for result: that I began anew with Hegel.

The torment of my uncertainty lasted no long time; the twilight of truth began to grow at once, and became brighter and brighter; I inclined to the side of my adversary, but not so as she would have liked it.

"You are perfectly right," I once said to her, "I am ashamed that I ever contended with you. It is quite understood that there is neither a personal God, nor an immortal soul, and, therefore, it was so very difficult to prove it. Look only yourself, how plain and natural everything now is without these arbitrary suppositions."

She was confused at my words, but soon composed herself, and said:

"I am sorry for you, but, perhaps, it is also best for you, and you will not long continue in this direction, for it is too empty and

hopeless. But our doctor," she added, smiling, "is incurable, to him the consequences are not dreadful; he is enveloped in such a mist, that he cannot see a single step beyond him."

But with all that, her face was paler than usual.

Two or three months passed, when W— came through Novgorod, and brought to me "Das Wesen des Christenthums," by Feuerbach. When I had read the first pages, I bounded with joy. Away with the masquerade attire! away with the stammering and the allegories! We are free men, but not like the slave of Xanthus; it is not necessary for us to have truth given us wrapped up in fables. In the heat of my philosophical passion, I began to write my series of articles on "Dilletante-ism in Science," in which I revenged myself also upon the doctor.

Now let us return to Belinsky. A few months after his departure from St. Petersburg, I likewise went there. I did not go to see him. W— was very sorry for my disunion with Belinsky. He understood that his absurd opinions were but a momentary weakness. I understood that likewise; but W— was more good-humoured than I was. At last, he succeeded by his letters in managing a meeting between us.

Our conversation was, at first, cold, disdisagreeable, forced; but neither Belinsky nor myself were great diplomatists. In the continuation of this superfluous chat, I mentioned the articles of the "Anniversary of Borodino." Belinsky jumped up from his seat, and, with a burning face, said naïvely to me:

"Well, thank Heaven, that it is spoken out! I with my stupid awkwardness did not know how to begin. You have conquered! Three

or four months at St. Petersburg have taught me better than all demonstrations. Forget these absurdities. It may be sufficient for you to hear that the other day I dined with one of my acquaintances, and met there an officer of engineers. The master of the house asked the officer if he wished to be introduced to me.

"'Is that the author of the 'Anniversary of Borodino?'"

"'Yes.'

"'No, I am much obliged to you,'" answered the officer, coolly.

"I had overheard all, and could not stand it. I pressed warmly the officer's hand, and said:

"You are a noble-minded man; I esteem you! What do you want more?"

From this moment, until the death of Belinsky we went hand in hand. Belinsky, as

might be expected from him, attacked with all the sharp satire of his speech, with all his inexhaustible energy, his former views. The situation of many of his former acquaintances was not to be envied. "More royalist than the king," they endeavoured with the courage of despair to save his theory; however, they did not refuse an honourable armistice. All serious and living people were on the side of Belinsky. Some obstinate formulists and pedants withdrew. Some of them went so far on with the German suicide of the dead scientific scholasticism, that they lost interest in everything, and disappeared without leaving a trace. Others became orthodox Panslavists. However strange the conjunction of Hegel with Stephen Jaworsky* may appear, it is not quite so impossible. The Byzantine theology is as

* The author of a work about the principles of the Greek Church in the time of Peter I.

much a mere outward casuistry, a game with logical forms, as are the dialectic formulas adopted by Hegel. The "Muscovite," a Panslavistic journal in Moscow, gave, in certain articles, solemn proofs how far even talented people can go, through the incestuous union between philosophy and religion, logic and autocracy.

Belinsky, however, did not forsake Hegel and his philosophy together with his limited comprehension of it. On the contrary, from this begins his living, striking, original combination of philosophical and revolutionary ideas. I look upon Belinsky as upon one of the most remarkable individuals of the period of Nicholas. Next to the liberalism of the year 1825, as it survived in Polevoi, next to the gloomy articles of Tchaadajeff appears the bilious negation of Belinsky, self-conquered by deep sufferings in a series of critical

articles. He touches all questions, everywhere sincere in his hatred against authority, and he often raises himself to the heights of poetical inspiration, particularly when he is angry. The books generally only serve him as material for some demonstration half-way, or he throws them away and puts some question.

So it was sufficient for him to read the verse from "Pushkin's Oneguine," "relations are such men," to call up to judgment the whole family life, and to develop to their minutest details the different positions of relations to each other.

There are certainly many who recollect his articles on "Tarantas," on "Parasha" by Turgenieff, or on "Dershawin." What fidelity to his principles is displayed in these articles, what a fearless energy and ability in swimming amidst the banks of censure, and what a boldness in the persecution of the literary

aristocracy; these authors of the three first classes, these state secretaries of literature, who are always ready to fight against their adversaries with any means; if anti-criticism will not suffice, then, at least, with a denunciation.

Belinsky scourged without pity for their trifling vanity, these affected, narrow-minded authors of eclogues, these amateurs of learning, of benevolence, of delicacy; he delivered up to mockery their dearly beloved thoughts, their poetical whims, the flowers that grew beneath their silver hair, their naïvety covered with the large riband of the order of St. Anne. But now they hated him for it.

The Panslavists or Slavophiles only began to exist officially after the struggles with Belinsky; he has ridiculed them even to the Murmolka (an old Sclavonian hat) and the Sipouns (the peasant's smock-frock,) both worn by the Slavophiles. It is known that Belinsky

wrote formerly in the "Patriotic Annals,"* and Kireiffsky, a Panslavist, began to edit his most distinguished journal under the title, "The European," which proves better than anything else, that in the beginning there were only trifling distinctions between them, and not differences of opinions or of parties.

The articles of Belinsky were impatiently looked for by the young people in Moscow and Petersburg towards the end of each month. Many times the students went into the cafés to ask if the "Patriotic Annals" were not yet there; the heavy volume went from hand to hand. "Is there an article of Belinsky's?" "Yes there is!" and then it was swallowed with feverish sympathy, with laughing, with disputes, and three or four finer subjects of blind faith were in the soul. Not in vain did the commander of the fortress of

* A Panslavonic Journal.

Petersburg once jokingly ask Belinsky, on meeting him on the Newsky promenade; "Well, when will you come to us? I have a good warm casemate quite ready for you!"*

I have before spoken in another book about Belinsky's development, and his literary activity; here I will add something about himself.

He was very timid, and lost himself, unobservedly among strangers, or in very large parties. He knew this, and wished to conceal it, and thus occasioned the most ridiculous things. H— once invited him to drive with him, and be introduced to a lady.

Whilst they were approaching the house, Belinsky grew quite thoughtful, asked if it was not possible to go another day, and complained of headache. H— knew what it

* Developement des idées Révolutionaires, Chap. VI. London, 1853.

meant, and accepted no excuse. When they leaped down from the sledge, Belinsky tried to escape, but H— took hold of his mantle, and brought him before the lady.

He appeared sometimes at the literary diplomatic soirées of an aristocratic man of letters, where people crowded who had nothing in common, but fear and aversion for each other; there were men employed in the different embassies, archæologists, painters, state councillors, taken from the most civilized of this class, half gendarmes, and half literary men, and entire gendarmes, and entire literary men.

The lady of the house looked with displeasure upon the vulgar taste of her husband, but she condescended to it, as Louis Phillipe condescended, in the beginning of his reign, to his electors, and invited to the balls at the Tuilleries, the whole *rez de chaussée* of the

waistband makers, the shopkeepers, the shoemakers, and other honourable citizens.

Belinsky was entirely lost in these evenings, finding himself between some Saxon ambassador, who spoke not a word of Russian, and some official of the third division, who understands even those words one does not speak. Belinsky was generally unwell two or three days after such a party, and cursed those who invited him to go.

Once on a New Year's eve, the master of the house had the idea of making punch *en petit comité*. When the principal guests were already departing, Belinsky was decided on going, but he found himself opposed by a barricade of furniture ; so he retired to a corner, and there a small table was put before him, with wine and glasses. Schukowsky,* in

* A celebrated poet and governor of the present Emperor, Alexander II.

white official trousers, with gold braid, sat down opposite to him. Belinsky tolerated this situation pretty long, but seeing no amelioration of his fate, he began softly to push the table with his chair, so as to open a passage for escape.

The table began to move, and at last fell down, and the bottle of Bordeaux poured out its red floods over Schukowsky's white pantaloons. The latter leaped up from his chair; a general confusion ensued; a servant precipitated himself with a napkin, in order to wipe Schukowsky's trousers, but only made the thing worse. Others were busied in gathering the broken glasses, and, in the middle of this tumult, Belinsky stole softly away, and, half dead, ran home on foot.

This dear Belinsky! How long he was grieved by such accidents! It was horrible to him to be reminded of them. He never smiled

at their recollection ; but shook his head, and ran up and down the room.

But the weak body of this shy man was inhabited by a mighty gladiator nature. He was a powerful fighter. He understood not how to preach, nor how to instruct : he panted for the struggle. He spoke poorly without opposition, without excitement ; but when he felt wounded, when his dearest convictions were attacked, when the muscles of his cheek began to tremble, and his voice to falter, then you ought to have seen him ! He threw himself upon his adversary like a panther, and tore him to pieces. He made him ridiculous and pitiful ; and, at the same time, he developed his own thoughts with extraordinary strength, and with abundant poetry.

Very often, such discussions ended sadly ; with the blood streaming forth from his chest, pale, breathless, his eyes fixed on those with

whom he spoke, he raised, with trembling hands, his handkerchief to his mouth, and paused, deeply vexed by the undeniable feeling of his physical weakness. How I looked, and how I pitied him in such moments!

Tyrannized over, on account of money, by his publisher, morally tyrannized over by the censor, surrounded in St. Petersburg by people of little sympathy with him, consumed by illness, for which the Baltic climate was fatal, Belinsky grew more and more irritated. He avoided strangers, was shy, even to savageness, and remained, sometimes during many weeks, in absolute inactivity.

Then the editor sent letter after letter, requesting the copy, and the serf-made man of letters took his pen, gnashing his teeth, and, trembling with indignation, wrote those venomous articles, those acts of accusation, which astonished his readers.

Very often he came, quite exhausted, to our house, lay down on the floor with my little son, and played with him for hours together. As long as we were alone, all was well; but if Belinsky only heard the bell, a convulsive grimace rushed over his face, and he began to look for his hat. Nevertheless, he stayed afterwards from Sclavonian weakness. But then, one word, one observation displeasing him, occasioned the most original scenes and discussions.

Once, he went to a dinner party, at a man of letters, in the Easter week. They had there a Lenten repast.

"Is it long since you have become so devotional?" he asked.

"We eat Lenten food, merely on account of the servants," the man of letters answered.

"Of the servants!" Belinsky said, and grew pale. "Of the servants!" he repeated, and

started from his place. "Where are your servants? I will tell them that you betray them. Open vice is better, and more humane, than this despising of the weak, the ignorant; this hypocrisy that supports ignorance. And you imagine yourselves free men? Away with you, on the same line with Tzars and the owners of slaves! Farewell! I eat no Lenten food to deceive other people. I have no servants."

One of the ultra-German-Russians was a doctor of our university, lately returned from Berlin. He was a good fellow, with blue spectacles; much affected, and most genteel. He had stopped for ever in his intellectual development, after having weakened his faculties by the study of philosophy, and philology; and, notwithstanding, this dull and tiresome pedant liked to talk a great deal.

Once, at a literary evening-party in the same house, where they ate Lenten food on ac-

count of the servants, the said doctor preached about some nonsense, "honestly and moderately." Belinsky lay stretched out on a little sofa in the corner; and when I passed near him, he took hold of me by the tail of my coat, and said:

"Dost thou hear what absurdities this monster says? It has sometimes tickled me to go and answer him, but for my chest which aches; and then there is such a crowd. Be thou my benefactor—act for me—ridicule him with some mockery; thou understandest this much better than I do—go and comfort me."

I laughed, and told him that one sent only bull-dogs to catch rats. I hardly knew the master of the house, and had scarcely heard what the other said. Towards the end of the evening, the doctor with the blue spectacles criticised Kalzow* a little for having abandoned

* A celebrated Russian poet, who was a peasant's son.

his national costume; and then he began to speak about the famous letter of Tchaadajeff, and concluded his absurd speech, made in that academical tone, which, of itself, already provoked insolence and mockery, with the following words:

"Whatever may be, I look upon this act as upon a despicable and abominable one. I cannot esteem such a man."

In the room there was but one man intimate with Tchaadajeff—this was myself.

I shall still have to say a great deal about Tchaadajeff. I always loved and esteemed him, and was beloved by him. I could not let this absurd observation pass unanswered. I asked the doctor drily, if he thought that Tchaadajeff wrote his articles intentionally, or not sincerely?

"Not in the least," answered the doctor. This was the opening of a disagreeable discus-

sion. I told him that the epithets, abominable and despicable, became abominable and despicable when they were applied to a man, who boldly uttered his opinion, and had suffered for it. He spoke "of the totality of a nation, of the unity of the fatherland, and of the crime it was to destroy this unity, of the sanctuary which ought not to be touched."

My further replies were cut off by Belinsky, who sprung up from his divan, approached me, pale as death, and said, tapping me on the shoulder, "so they betray themselves, the inquisitors, the censors—they put limits even to thought!" and now he burst forth, and spoke astonishingly, mingling deadly mockeries with the most serious observations. "What an unheard of insensibility this is," he said, "we are beaten with the stick—we are not offended—we are sent to Siberia—we are not offended, and now, seeing Tchaadajeff

touching the national honour — we immediately condemn him to silence; for speaking requires temerity—lackeys never speak. Why, then, in countries where sensibility is more developed than in Kostroma and Kaluga are people not so easily offended by words?"

"In civilized countries," the doctor said, with inimitable self-content, "prisons are ready for the fools who dare to offend what a whole nation respects, and I think that is well."

Belinsky seemed to grow taller, he was frightfully grand at that moment; folding his hands on his breast, and fixing his looks on the doctor, he said, in a hollow voice: "And in still more civilized countries, they have a guillotine, ready to execute those who find that well."

When he had said this, he threw himself in an arm-chair, and spoke no more. The master of the house grew pale when he heard

the word guillotine; the guests became agitated, a pause ensued. The doctor was annihilated, but in such very moments human self-love runs off with me. I knew somebody who advised people, when they had gone too far into a dispute, and began to terrify themselves, to move the tongue ten times in their mouth, before they spoke another word. But the doctor, not knowing this simple means, continued to rattle absurdities, addressing himself more to the others than to Belinsky.

Notwithstanding this intolerance, he said at last, "I am persuaded that you will agree with me that—"

"No," Belinsky said, "whatever you may say, I agree in nothing with you."

Every one laughed, and we made haste to go to supper.

Want and sufferings destroyed more and more the weak organization of

Belinsky. His face, particularly the muscles round his lips, and the sadly fixed looks, betrayed both the mighty working of the spirit, and the rapid disorganization of the body. When I saw him for the last time in Paris, in the autumn of 1847, he was very ill, and could hardly speak, and only for minutes the old energy was resuscitated, and his extinguishing flame sparkled up once more. In such moments he wrote his letter to Gogol.

The news of the revolution of February, 1848, found him still alive. He died taking this reflection of a conflagration for the dawn of the morning which he expected.

CHAPTER V.

The Warning—The Department for Heraldry—The Office of the Home Minister—The Third Expedition—General Dubelt—Count Benkendorf—Madame Scherebzoff—Second Exile.

AFTER having taken leave of me, my father told me once more: "Before everything, be prudent. Petersburgh is no longer what it was. Beware of every man, from the cab-driver to the persons you may happen to meet even at my friends. Spies are in all ranks. Be warned."

With such an epigraph, I mounted the stage-coach which was to take me to St. Peters-

burgh in the year 1839. Arriving at nearly nine o'clock in the evening, the third day after my departure from Moscow, I sent my servant with my luggage to an hotel; and taking a sledge for myself, I desired to be driven to Isaac's Square. I wanted to begin my acquaintance with Petersburgh at this place. Everything around was covered with deep snow; only the statue of Peter the First, on horseback, stood out sharply and darkly upon the white ground. The horse pranced upon its white rock; the cavalier pointed at something in the distance.

Why was the battle of the 26th of December fought on this place? Why was the first cry of the emancipation of the Russian people re-echoed from the height of this granite pedestal? Why was the square of the insurgents formed around Peter the First? Was it a reward for him, or a punishment? The 26th of De-

cember, 1825, was a consequence of the work interrupted on the 21st of January, 1725.* The cannons of Nicholas were directed against the statue, as well as against the insurrection. It is a pity that the cannonade did not also hit Peter the First—in bronze.

When I came to my hotel, I fonnd one of my cousins, who was already waiting for me. After having exchanged a few words, I, without too much reflection, said something about the 26th of December, and the Isaac's Place.

"How is my uncle?" asked my cousin "How have you left him?"

"Pretty well, as usual; thank you," I said, "he sends his best compliments."

While I answered thus, my cousin, without betraying the least emotion in his features, telegraphed to me with his eyes, a reproach, an advice, a warning. I followed his look,

* The day of the decease of Peter the Great.

and saw a heater of the stove, *en touloup*,* that is to say, bound in Russian leather, occupied in lighting the fire in the stove. He was entirely absorbed by this work, making bellows of his lungs, and then went out of the room, leaving behind him a puddle of water, which had thawed and run off from his boots. Then my cousin began to school me about my imprudence.

"Why touch such a dangerous subject in the presence of a servant of the hotel, and moreover in the Russian language?"†

When he left me, he added, that, in the same hotel, was a certain hair-dresser, a great tattler, and very fond of talking politics.

"He used to come to every stranger, offering a Muscovite pomade, hair-brushes, and I do not know what else. When I lived here, I

* A cloak of sheep-skin, without further coverture.

† In Russian society, the usual language is French.

bought some trifles in order to get rid of him as soon as possible."

"And to reward him; ah! and by the bye, the laundress? how is it with her, does she also belong to the corps of gendarmes?"

"Laugh! laugh! you will be the first to regret it, you are just back from exile, but they will give you about ten nurses."

"And it is sufficient," says the proverb, "to have seven for making the child lose an eye."*

The following day, I went to see my father's former agent; he was now an official of the Holy Synod, a man from Little Russia, who spoke Russian with a very bad accent; he was astonished about everything one said to him, and he never listened to anything but he raised, as evidence of his astonishment, two little fat hands, in the same way as mice, and all rodent animals do. Notwithstanding a

* A Russian Proverb.

sort of submission with which he spoke, he terminated by drawing me to the recess of a window, and telling me, after having assured himself that the door was shut;

"Do not be angry, please, but my long acquaintance with your father and his brothers, who all had the greatest kindnees for me, obliges me, so to say, to intreat you not to speak here about the unhappy affair you have had. Think for yourself to what purpose you would do so, now everything is passed like smoke; but you said some words about exile, and the cook was there. Oh, God! imagine only that I felt a little—much anxiety!"

"A charming place!" thought I, when I left the frightened official. Loose snow fell in flakes from heaven, a moist cold wind penetrated to my very bones, and carried off my hat and my mantle. The coachman, see-

ing scarcely at a yard's distance, winked his eyes, and inclined his head, crying, "Beware! beware!"

I recollected my father's advice, my cousin, official, and the "travelling sparrow," in the tale of George Sand, which asks the half frozen wolf in Lithuania: "why do you live in such a horrible climate?

"Liberty," the wolf answers, "makes me forget the climate."

The coachman was right. Beware! beware! how desirous I was of driving away in haste—in haste!

And I did not stay very long this time.

My father had sent me to terminate an affair in the heraldic department, and to introduce myself to the Count A. Strogonoff, who wished to place me in his ministry. Three weeks having elapsed, I had terminated everything, and found myself again in Wladimir.

The experiences I had made in Wiatka, were of great use to me in the heraldry. I knew, already, that this department resembled those quarters of London, which were the dwelling places of the officially acknowledged robbers, and could be changed by no revision, by no reform. They were taken by storm and purified, the houses were bought and levelled with the ground: the same ought to be done with the heraldic department. Moreover, because it is perfectly superfluous, a parasite office—a service for the promotion of service; an index for the regulations concerning rank; an archæological society for the researches of nobility; a chancery in the chancery.

My father's agent brought to me a tall old man in an uniform, from which every button hung only by one thread. He was dirty, and had already more than breakfasted, although

it was very early in the morning. He was corrector of the typography of the senate; correcting grammatical faults. He helped the upper secretaries in the side-scene to make faults. I agreed with him in half an hour's time, after having bargained with him, as if we had to treat about the bargain of horses, or of furniture. And with all that, he could not even answer decidedly for himself, but ran to the senate for instructions; and, when he had got them, he asked the "handsel."

"But, will they keep their promise?"

"Oh, I beg your pardon! What do you think of these gentlemen? That is not their custom: having received some proof of gratitude, they will fulfil a duty of honour," the corrector said, with such an offended tone, that I thought it necessary to soften him again by a little augmentation of gratitude.

"In the heralds' office," he observed, dis-

armed by my proceeding, " there was formerly a secretary, a most extraordinary man. Very likely you have heard of him ; he took remunerations most furiously, and everything went on when it came into his hands. Once, some official from the province came to the chancery, in order to speak of an affair ; and when he was about to leave, he furtively drew forth from beneath his hat a gray paper (bank-note.)"

" Why do you make such a secret of it?" the secretary asked, " as if it was a love letter. Well ! it is a gray bank-billet; so much the better. Let it be seen by the other petitioners: it will encourage them when they see that I accept the two hundred roubles, and that I arrange in return their affairs. Do you not think so?"

And he unfolded openly the bank-billet, folded it again, and put it in his pocket. The

corrector was right—the secretary felt the duty of honour.

I left Petersburg with a feeling akin to hatred; and still, there was nothing to be done. We must come and settle in that antipathic town.

In the beginning of the year 1840, I got, in Wladimir, the information that I was placed in the ministry of the Count Strogonoff.

I was not long in service. I disengaged myself from it as much as I could; and, therefore, I have not much to say about it.

The Chancery of the Minister of Home Affairs was, when compared to the Chancery of the Governor of Wiatka, like blackened boots to unblackened ones—the same leather, the same soles; only, the one dusty, the other varnished. Here, I saw no intoxicated officials, none who took money by pennies; but it always appeared to me, that, beneath these well-

fitting and well-made dress coats; beneath that well-combed hair, lived a dark, mean, envious, coward soul; so that my "chef de bureau" at Wiatka, seemed to me, to be more humane than they.

I sometimes thought, seeing my new colleague, how he, once at a festival, having somewhat cheered himself up with spirits, began to play on the guitar, a Russian song. He grew, at length, so enthusiastic, that he could stand it no longer, and began to dance quite by himself, like a madman. Why do the others never grow enthusiastic? why does their blood not boil? why do their heads not turn, from wine? Oh! they know something! they know how to walk a quadrille in a dancing class, with some little German milliner; they know how to represent "des hommes blasés;" they know how to make quotations from the verses of Tumalejeff and

Kukolnich ;* they are diplomatists, aristocrats, and " Manfreds." It is only a pity that the minister Daschkoff never could prevent these diplomatists and aristocratic Manfreds greeting him with honours equally degrading for him and them, at his entering the theatre, or meeting him in the streets.

The inhabitants of Petersburgh laugh at the costumes in Moscow; they are offended by the Hungarian paletôt, and the travelling cap, the long hair, the " civil " mustachios. Moscow is, in fact, a " civilian " town, somewhat loose, unaccustomed to discipline. Whether this is to be considered as an advantage, or a want, remains to be decided. Eternal sameness, absence of variety, personal, whimsical, peculiar, forms an outward order; all this is, in the highest degree, developed, in those most inhuman institutions, the soldiers' bar-

* Two very bad Russian poets in Petersburgh.

racks. Uniforms and uniformity, are the passion of despotism.

In no place is fashion so observed as in Petersburgh; this shows how unripe our development is; our way of dressing is foreign to us. In Europe people merely dress, we always are in costume, and, therefore, we are afraid of the sleeves being too large, or the collar being too narrow. In Paris, people fear nothing but being dressed without taste; in London, they fear nothing but catching a cold; in Italy, everybody goes as he likes. But was one to exhibit the lions of the Newsky promenade at Petersburgh, those battalions all alike in their fast buttoned coats, an Englishman would believe them to be a division of policemen.

I had plenty of time to make an effort when I entered into the ministry; the director of the chancery was a virtuous and lymphatic native

from the Isle of Dogs. He understood how to spread a pious *ennui* all around him. The chiefs of the different apartments ran busily to and fro with their *portefeuilles*, and scolded the *chefs de bureaux;* these latter wrote and wrote; they were really over-laden with work, and had the nice prospect of dying behind their tables; certainly, at least, but for some particularly happy incident, to sit there for about twenty years. In the Register Office, for instance, was an official, who noted, since thirty three years, the papers which were dispatched, and sealed envelopes.

My practice in "style" also here produced me some relief. The chief of the department having found out my entire incapacity for every other thing, charged me with the composition of the general account, and of the single accounts of the different departments. The foresight of the chiefs found it necessary

to light up and to explain future results, not leaving them to the arbitrariness of numbers and facts.

Nay, for instance, in a short sketch for such an account, it was said: "considering the number and the character of the crimes committed (neither number nor character was yet known) your Majesty will deign to look over the results of public morality, and to augment the activity of the officials, for the sole purpose of ameliorating the state of public morality."

Fate and Count Benkendorf saved me from participation in these untrue accounts. It came about thus: In the first days of December, at nine o'clock in the morning, my servant told me that a Commissary of the Police wanted to see me. I could not guess what it could mean, and let him come in. He showed me a rolled paper, on which was written, that he

had to invite me to come at eleven o'clock in the morning into the third division of the Emperor's own chancery.

"Very well," I answered, "that is near the chain-bridge?"

"Oh, do not trouble yourself about that!" he said. "I have my sledge at the door; I go with you."

"That is a bad affair," I thought; and I felt my heart contract itself in my breast. I went into the bed-room. My wife sat with the little one, who had just recovered from illness, on her lap.

"What is his business here?" she asked.

"Be not afraid."

My wife looked at me, and answered nothing; she grew pale; it flew over her face like a storm-cloud. She gave me the child, to bid him farewell.

In this minute, I learned how much more

sensible every stroke is for a man that has a family. The stroke strikes not him alone ; but he suffers for all, and involuntarily accuses himself for their sufferings. It is possible to vanquish, to suppress, to conceal this feeling ; but one must know what it costs. I went from home with an indefinite anxiety. It was very different when, six years before, I made my way with the Master of the Police, Müller, to the police house of Pretchistinski.

We drove over the chain-bridge, the summer garden, and turned into the house once belonging to Kutchabei, on one side of which the worldly inquisition of Nicholas was established. People once entering into the back door, where we now stopped, did not always go out of it again, or they perhaps went out of it in order to go to Siberia, or to perish in the Alexei Ravelin.

We went through all the great and little

court-yards, and arrived at last at the Chancery. The gendarme who stood at the door, paid no attention to the presence of the Chief Commissary, but called out one of the officials, to whom he gave a paper. This latter led him into the corridor, and engaged me to come with him. He led me to the director's room. Behind a large table, near which stood some arm-chairs, an old solitary man sat, haggard, grey-haired, with a prophecy of bad luck upon his face. He first read a paper, which he held in his hand, looking all through the affair very important: then he stood up and approached me. Upon his breast was a star of an order, from which I concluded that he must be the commander of a spy corps.

"Have you seen General Dubelt?"

"No."

He was silent, then looking into my eyes, and contracting his eyebrows, he asked me in

an almost suffocated voice—a voice which reminded me of the nervous sounds of Galitzin, junior, in the Moscow commission of trial;

"It seems it is not very long since you got permission to return to the capital?"

"Last year,"

The old man shook his head. "You profit badly by the Imperial favour. It seems that you depend upon once more going to Wiatka?"

I looked at him with astonishment.

"Yes, he continued, "you show a noble gratitude to government for your freedom."

"Indeed, I do not understand!" I said, losing myself in conjectures.

"You cannot understand what this means? that is very bad! what connections have you, what occupations? instead of showing the first time an extraordinary zeal to wash off the spots left behind by youthful error, instead of employing your capacities for the

public welfare, you continue to occupy yourself with politics, and to oppose government. Has experience taught you nothing? How then are you sure that in the number of those with whom you speak, there is not every time some rascal,* knowing nothing better, than to come the same minute hither with a denunciation?"

"If you can explain to me what all this signifies, you will greatly oblige me. I am torturing myself to understand what you are talking about, or to what you make allusions."

"Of what I talk? Hem! well tell me, did you hear that near the Blue Bridge, a policeman murdered a man in the night?"

"I did hear it," I answered quite naïvely.

"And you repeated it?"

"It seems so that I repeated it."

* I assure upon my honour that the word rascal was used by the honourable gentleman.

"With reasoning about it, I think."

"Probably."

"And with what reasonings? There is always the same inclination to blame government. I tell you openly, it does you honour that you confess so frankly; and it will be taken into consideration by the court."

"But, for heaven's sake!" I said, "what do I confess? The whole town talked about this story; they talked of it in the Chanceries of the Minister of Home Affairs, as well as in the magazines. Is it to be understood that I, likewise, talked of it?"

"To spread false and pernicious rumours, is a crime prosecuted by law?"

"It seems that you accuse me of having invented this tale?"

"In the account made to the Emperor, it is only said, that you helped to spread this pernicious rumour. But thereupon ensued

an imperial resolution, about your returning to Wiatka."

"You simply mean to frighten me," I answered. "How is it possible to exile, for such a trifle, a man with a family, at a thousand wersts distance, and, moreover, to judge and condemn him, without ever asking if it be true, or not?"

"You confessed it yourself."

"But how, the account was made, and the affair terminated, before you spoke to me?"

"Read it through, yourself."

The old man went to the table, searched in a heap of paper, drew coldly forth one of them, and gave it to me. I read it, and scarcely believed my eyes. Such entire absence of justice; such bold, impertinent illegality, was astonishing, even in Russia.

I was silent. Methought that even the old man felt, a little, the absurdity of the

case, so that he thought it better not to defend it any more; and, after being also silent, for a little while, he asked, at last,

"Methinks you said you were married?"

"I am married," I said.

"What a pity that we did not know that before. If there is, however, anything to do, the Count will do it. I shall repeat to him our conversation. You will have to leave Petersburgh, in every case."

He looked at me. I was silent; but I felt that my face burnt. What I could not say—what I withdrew into my heart—was probably to be seen upon my face.

The old man looked to the ground, then looked at me; and, all at once, said, with his apathetic voice, but in a way intended to be very civil, "I dare not retain you any longer. I wish, from all my heart, that you soon may learn more."

I hastened home. The most biting scorn raged in my heart; the feeling of that injustice, of my impotency, made me like a wild animal, at which a boy laughs, well sure that all the mighty forces of the tiger are not sufficient to break the bars of his cage.

I found my wife feverish; she fell ill from this very day; and, having been frightened once more the same evening, a few days afterwards, a premature confinement ensued, and she did not recover of it for three or four years after.

They say that the sensible "Paterfamilias," Nicholas, wept when his daughter died. And what a way of proceeding they have! what a passion—what an ostentation! They run in full speed; everything must be done in the utmost hurry—one thinks of an incendiary; the throne is overthrown—the Tzar's family is perishing—and all that without the least

necessity; it is merely "gendarmes'" poetry, the dramatic practice of the myrmidons; a splendid "mise en scène," as a proof of the zeal of faithful subjects—the running footmen, the rangers, the sporting dogs.

Sadly, we sat round a little table, on the evening of that day, when I had been called to the third division—my boy played with his toys; we spake little. All at once, the bell rang in such a manner, that we involuntarily shuddered. My servant ran to open the door; and, a minute afterwards, a "gendarme" officer flew into the room, his sword rattling, his spurs jingling, and began, with select words, to excuse himself to my wife:—"he could not even think—not suppose—he was not aware of there being a lady—children—exceedingly sorry."

The gendarmes are the flower of politeness. Were it not for the sacred duty of the service,

they would never make a denunciation, nor quarrel and fight with the jockeys and coachmen at the great exhibitions of carriages at the festivals. I knew this already, from the Krutinsky barracks,* where the officer was *désolé* at being obliged to have my pockets searched. Paul Louis Courier, in his time, had already observed, " that the hangmen and attornies were the civilest of people." " My dear hangman," the attorney writes, " you will kindly oblige me, if it gives you not too much trouble, by cutting off, to-morrow morning, the head of the said—" And the hangman hastens to reply, " that he will feel himself happy, if, with such a trifle, he can do anything pleasant to the attorney, and remains ever ready at his service, his most obedient hangman."

* In the First Volume.

" And the third remains for ever obedient without a head !"

" You are ordered to the General Dubelt !"

" When ?"

" Immediately, if you please."

" Mattei ! give me my mantle."

I pressed the hands of my wife. On her face were spots ; her hands burned. Why such haste, at ten o'clock in the evening ? Has a conspiracy been discovered ? Has somebody fled ? Is the precious life of Nicholas Paulowitsch in danger ? I, in my thoughts, now really excused the policeman-murderer; for, was it to be wondered, that one of the agents of such a government should kill two or three murderers ? Are the policemen of the second and third class better than their companions on the Blue Bridge ? Or, is even the policeman of all the policemen, better ? Dubelt sent for me, in order to tell me that Count

Benkendorf asked me to come to-morrow morning, at eight o'clock, to communicate to me the Imperial will.

Dubelt is of a most original appearance. He is, undoubtedly, more clever than the whole third division, and all the three divisions of the chancery together. His lean face, overshadowed with pending fair moustaches, his *blasé* looks, and, particularly, the deep wrinkles upon the cheeks and the brow, testify clearly that mighty passions raged in his bosom, before the blue uniform vanquished; or, to speak more exactly, covered them. His features had, at the same time, something of the wolf and of the fox—they expressed the cunningness, with the flexibility and temerity of those two beasts of prey together. He was always very civil.

When I entered his cabinet, he sat in his uniform, without epaulettes, and wrote, whilst

smoking a pipe. He immediately stood up, and requesting me to take a seat opposite to his, he began the following strange sentence:

"Count Benkendorf affords me an opportunity of making your acquaintance. I believe you saw Sartinsky this morning?"

"I did so!"

"I am very sorry that the reason which obliged me to invite you hither, is not an agreeable one for you. Your imprudence has again deserved the anger of his Majesty."

"I shall tell you, General, what I told Sartinsky. I cannot imagine, that you send me to exile, merely for having repeated a public rumour, which you very likely heard before me, and which you, perhaps, related likewise."

"Yes, I heard and related it, as to that we are equal; but here the difference begins. I repeated this absurd tale, with the assurance

that is was not true; but you made it a cause of accusation against the police. All that comes from the unhappy passion of traducing the government, a passion which has been developed in all of you, gentlemen, by the pernicious example of the west. Here it is not as in France, where government stands at drawn daggers with parties, and where they dare to fling the government into the mud. Our government is a paternal one; everything is performed as noiselessly as possible; we work with our best forces, that affairs may go on as quietly and plainly as they ever can; and nevertheless we meet with people who remain in this unsuccessful opposition, and who, unmindful of the disagreeable consequences, try to frighten public opinion, either by telling or writing that policemen murder people in the streets. Is this not true? It seems that you wrote about it."

"I deemed this a case of so little import-

ance, that I thought it not necessary to conceal it; and so, indeed, I wrote of it, and will even tell you to whom—to my father."

"The case was not at all important, of course; but you see of what consequence it was for you. The Emperor immediately recollected your family name, and that you had been in Wiatka, and ordered you should be sent back there. And for that purpose, the Count wished me to let you know that he expects you to-morrow morning at eight o'clock, in order to enable him to communicate to you the supreme will."

"And so it seems then settled that I am to return to Wiatka with my sick wife, and sick child, on account of an affair of which you yourself say that it is by no means important."

"But you are in service?" Dubelt asked, attentively looking at the buttons of my undress uniform coat.

"In the office of the Minister of Home Affairs."

"Since when?"

"Six months."

"And all that time you have been in Petersburgh?"

"The whole time.

"I had no idea of that!"

"You see," I said, smiling, "how modestly I behave."

Sartinsky did not know that I was married. Dubelt did not know that I was in service; but both knew what I spoke in my room—what I thought, and what I wrote to my father. The real reason of the proceeding was, that I had become acquainted with the Petersburgh literary men, and begun to print articles in reviews; and, above all, that I had been permitted to return from Wladimir to Petersburgh, by the intervention of the Count Strogonoff,

without any participation of the police, and that, after my arrival in Petersburgh, I did not go to present myself either to Dubelt or any other of the third division, as prudent people advised me to do. Dubelt interrupted me.

"By heavens! all the information which I have got concerning you were excellent. I spoke yesterday with Schukowsky, and may God grant me to hear my own sons spoken of, as he did of you!"

"And, with all that, I am to go to Wiatka?"

"You see, your misfortune is, that the report to the Emperor was already delivered before many circumstances were known. Go away, you must! That is not to be altered; but I think that Wiatka could be replaced by another town. I will talk about the matter with the count; he will go to-day to court. Everything that can possibly be done to facili-

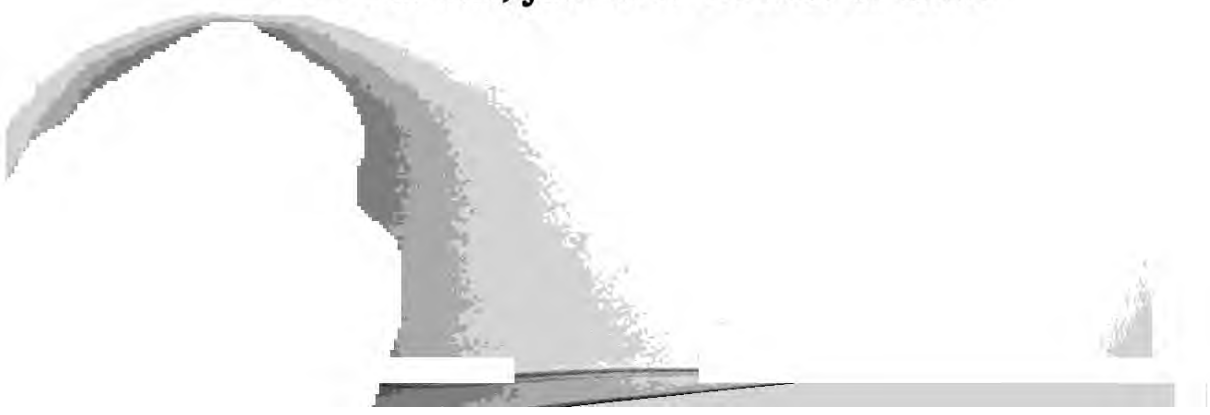
tate the affair, will be done. The count is a man of an angelic goodness"

I rose. Dubelt accompanied me to the door of the cabinet. Then I could not stand it any longer, and, stopping, I said to him:

"I have a request, General, when you want me, please not to send police-officers or gendarmes; they make such a noise, that they frighten people, particularly in the evening. And then, my sick wife would be more punished than any one else in the case of the policeman."

"Oh, dear, how disagreeable that is!" Dubelt answered. "They are all so awkward. Be assured that I never will send police-officers again. Then farewell till to-morrow. Do not forget to be at the Count's at eight o'clock. You shall see me there."

This was said, just as if we were to make



an agreement for going to Smurow's* to eat oysters.

The following day, at eight o'clock, I was in the first saloon of Benkendorf. I found there five or six persons, petitioners; gloomy and sorrowful they stood around the walls; they shuddered at the least noise, and stepped shyly back, and bowed respecfully to every passing adjutant. Among them was a woman, dressed in mourning, her eyes red with weeping; she sat with some rolled up papers in her hands; the papers trembled like autumn leaves. At three paces distance stood a tall but bent down man, about seventy, bare-headed, and his few remaining hairs already white; he wore a dark green military coat, with some rows of medals and crosses upon his breast. From time to

* A first rate restaurant in Petersburgh.

time he sighed heavily, shook his head, and murmured something to himself.

Some "friend or relation" of the house, that is to say, some lackey or official in service, sat balancing himself upon the chair, near the window. He rose when I entered, and when I looked into his face, I recognised him; this disgusting face had been shown to me in the theatre, he was one of the chiefs of the street spies. He asked me, "Have you some request to the Count?"

"I am here by his order."

"Your family?"

I named myself.

"Oh, very well," he exclaimed, with a tone as if he was receiving an old acquaintance. "Please make yourself comfortable. Will you not sit down? The Count will be here in about a quarter of an hour."

It was strangely quiet and gloomy in the

saloon. Daylight could not pierce through the mist and frozen window-glass. Nobody spoke a word; the adjutants were running to and fro; only the gendarme who stood at the door, made sometimes a noise with his accoutrements, tapping one foot on the other. Petitioners arrived. The official ran to every one to ask him particulars. One of the adjutants came up to him, and began in a whisper to tell him something, giving himself the appearance of a libertine. Very likely it was some filthy affair, because he interrupted his tale with a lacquey's soundless laughter, whilst the honourable official tried to prove that he could not stand it any longer, that he was dying with laughter, and exclaimed, "For heaven's sake, stop, stop! I can no more."

About five minutes later, Dubelt came, unbuttoned, as if he was quite at home. He glanced at the petitioners, whilst they bowed;

and, seeing me from afar, he said: "*Bon jour, M. H.; votre affaire va parfaitement bien.* It is in the best way."

Was I then to stay? I would have asked; but Dubelt disappeared again, before a word could be spoken. When he had left, a general entered the room in full dress, cleaned and adorned, in stays, in white trousers, with the scarf. I never saw a better general. If there should ever be in London an exhibition of generals, as they have had the baby exhibition at Cincinnati, I would advise to send him from Petersburgh.

The general went to the door, from which Benkendorf was to come, and there stood as petrified, in an immoveable position. I looked with the greatest curiosity at this ideal of a sergeant. How many soldiers must he have beaten in his career, in giving them the *dressure?* Whence do they take these men?

He was born for manœuvring with the musket, at the word of command. With him came, probably, his adjutant—the thinnest ensign that ever was seen in the world, with unheard of long legs, fair haired, with a little face, formed like an egg, and with an expression of much goodness, as remains sometimes with pet sons, who have never learned anything thoroughly. This honey-suckle tree, in uniform, planted itself at a respectful distance from the Master-General.

Dubelt re-entered the room in haste, now buttoned, and in full dress. He turned to the General, and asked what he wished; the General answered, with the regularity with which an ordnance soldier makes his report. "I got yesterday, from Prince Tchernisheff, the order to leave for the active army in the Caucasus, and I thought it my duty to present myself before my departure to the count."

Dubelt listened with a religious attention, and, slightly bowing, went out of the room, and re-entered almost immediately; and said:

"The Count is exceedingly sorry not to be able to receive you; he is much obliged to you, and he has charged me to wish you a happy journey."

At these words, Dubelt opened his arms, embraced the general, and touched twice, with his cheeks, the general's moustaches. The latter, thereupon, began his retreat, in the same ceremonious way; the young man with the egg's face, and the stork's legs, followed him. This scene recompensed me a little for the bitterness of the day. The military behaviour of the general, the farewell "par procuration," and the sly face of the old Reineke fox, kissing the stupid face of his excellency, were so ridiculous, that I could scarcely keep myself from bursting into laugh-

ter. Methought that Dubelt guessed it, and from that time began to esteem me.

At last, the door opened widely, and Count Benkendorf entered the room. The exterior of the chief of the "gendarmes" had nothing bad; it was that of the greatest part of the nobility from the Baltic provinces, and of the German aristocracy in general. His face was "chiffoné," and worn out; he had a deceptively kind look, as is sometimes the case with pliant and apathetic people. I am ready to believe, especially on recollecting the insignificant expression of his countenance, that Benkendorff did not all the evil he would have done, as being the commander of that terrible police, which stands beside and beyond law, and has the right to mingle in everything —but he did as little good; he had neither energy, nor will, nor heart, for that. The not saying a word in defence of the oppressed,

is, also, a crime, in the service of cold and unmerciful men, like Nicholas.

How many innocent victims have passed through Benkendorf's hands! how many have been ruined by him, from mere inattention and forgetfulness! he being always occupied with love affairs; and how many gloomy images, and heavy recollections, may have wandered through his head, and tormented him, on the steamer on which he, prematurely worn out and grown old, sought in changing his religion, the intercession of the Catholic Church, and its all pardoning indulgence, between his conscience and heaven.*

He thus addressed me:—

"His Imperial majesty has been acquainted with your taking part in the propagation of

*Count Benkendorf died on a steamer, on his way from Petersburgh to Germany, and, on the steamer, changed the Protestant for the Catholic creed.

rumours mischievous to the government. His Majesty, seeing that you have little changed for the better, deigns to order your return to Wiatka. I, however, according to the request of General Dubelt, and according to the references I have received concerning you, informed his Majesty of the bad state of health of your wife; and his Majesty the Emperor was so gracious, as to alter his determination. His Majesty interdicts you the capitals. You will be again under the control of the police; but your dwelling-place is to be fixed by the Minister of Home Affairs."

"Allow me to confess, quite frankly, that, even at this moment, I cannot believe that there is no other reason for my exile. In the year 1835, I was exiled, on account of a supper-party where I had not been; now, I am once more exiled, for having spoken of a story of which the whole town spoke. A strange fate!"

Benkendorf shrugged his shoulders, and, opening his hands, like a man who has exhausted all his proofs, interrupted me:

"I communicate to you the supreme will, and you answer me with reasoning! Of what use would any farther explanation be to you or me?—it would be lost words. There is nothing to be changed now. What your fate may be afterwards, depends, for the most part, upon yourself. And, as you yourself mentioned your first affair, so I recommend to you, in particular, prudence, in order not to provoke a third; for the third time you would not get off so easily."

Benkendorf bowed, with a gracious smile, and went on to the petitioners. He glanced at them, took the petitions, looked at them, and gave them to Dubelt, interrupting the explanations of the petitioners with the same gracious smile.

Many months did these poor people think of, and prepare themselves for this interview, upon which depended honour, fortune, family. What trouble had they taken, what efforts made, before they had been admitted. How many times had they knocked at street doors, driven away by the "gendarmes," or the porters: and how urgent must be the necessity that conducted them to the chief of the secret police!—probably, after all other lawful means had been exhausted. And now, this man dismisses them with some commonplace phrases, and very probably charged some chef-de-bureau to send the cause to some other office. And, after all, with what is this man so much occupied? Why is he in such haste?

When Benkendorf went to the old man with the medals, the latter fell on his knees, and said, "Your Grace, do consider my position."

"What a shame!" the Count thundered at him. "You dishonour your medals;" and, with a noble scorn, he passed him by, without ever taking his petition.

The old man rose slowly; his glassy look expressed terror and madness; his under lip trembled; he stammered something hardly audible.

How inhuman are such people, when they once take a fancy to be human!

Dubelt approached the old man, took the petition, and said, "Why on earth have you done that? Now, give me your petition, and I will look at it!"

Benkendorf went to the Emperor.

"What have I to do?" I asked Dubelt.

"The minister may choose which ever town he likes; we will not interfere. I congratulate you with all my heart, that it has terminated so well."

"You are very kind, indeed!"

From Benkendorf, I drove to the Minister of Home Affairs. Our director, as I have said, belonged to that type of Germans who have in themselves, something of the "lemures;" long members, awkwardness, and clumsiness. With that sort of people, the activity of the brain is exceedingly slow; they conceive with difficulty, and ruminate a long while before any result is seen. Unluckily, my affair was told him earlier than the paper from Count Benkendorf reached him; he, therefore, expected nothing of that kind, and immediately lost his composure, spoke incoherent things, observed that himself, and in order to correct it, said, "Allow me to speak German."

His speech now became grammatically more correct, but, by no means, clearer and more definite. I saw that two opposite feelings struggled in him. He understood, very well,

the injustice of the affair; but he thought it his duty to approve every measure of government. He would, however, not prove a barbarian, and, moreover, did not forget the eternal enmity between the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Secret Police. Consequently, it was no easy task to express such a confusion of sentiments; and he terminated with the open confession, that he could not say anything before he had spoken with the minister, and went to see him.

Count Strogonoff invited me to come to him, listened with great attention to the whole affair, and said:

"That is a mere trick of the police; but be tranquil. I have also a word to say to it."

I thought he would go to the Emperor, and speak about the affair. But so far ministers never go.

"I have just got the imperial order; there it

is. You see that I have the right to fix your place of destination, and to employ you in service. Where will you go ?"

" To Twer or Novgorod," I said.

" Of course, and as the employment depends likewise upon me, and as it is very likely all the same to you to which town you go, I shall give you the first vacancy in the office of government, that is to say, the highest place you can occupy according to your rank. Order, therefore," he said, smiling, " a uniform for yourself with an embroidered collar."

He played my game, but not my card. A week later, Strogonoff made a proposition to the Senate to name me counsellor of government at Novgorod.

After all, this was exceedingly ridiculous. How many secretaries, assessors, district and province officials, endeavoured and worked a long while, with constancy, and passionately,

for the purpose of obtaining this place; presents had been made for it, the most solemn promises had been given, and all at once the minister, executing at the same time an imperial order, and revenging himself upon the police, punishes a man with this advancement, throws—in order to gild over the pill—this place, to the feet of a person who accepts it with the firm resolution to get rid of it at the first opportunity.

From Strogonoff, I went to a lady. I must say a few words of this acquaintance of mine. Among the number of letters of recommendation, which I had got from my father when leaving for Petersburgh, there was one which I took ten times in my hand, replaced again in the portfolio, and deferred the visit for another day.

This letter was directed to a rich and important lady, of seventy years of age, whose

friendship with my father dated from times immemorial. He made her acquaintance at the Court of the Empress, Catherine II. later, they met in Paris, travelled sometime together, and came at last home to repose themselves about thirty years back. I, in general, was not fond of important people; but, still less of important women, and least of all, when they are seventy years of age. But my father had already asked me for the second time if I had been there, and so I took courage to swallow the draught.

A servant introduced me into a somewhat gloomy saloon, almost badly furnished, everything blackened and faded. It was evident that things had stood a long time in the same place. It reminded me of the house of an old aunt of mine. Age, not less than youth, leaves its traces upon everything that surrounds it. I awaited, with resignation, the

appearance of the old lady, preparing myself for tiresome questions, deafness, coughing, for complaints of the young generation, and, perhaps, for moral sermons. About five minutes afterwards, the door opened, and a tall old woman entered, with a firm step, and a severe countenance, which still bore the traces of an extraordinary beauty. Her demeanour, walk, and gestures, expressed an unbending will, a decided character, and a lively spirit. She looked at me inquiringly from head to foot, approached a little sofa, pushed with one movement of the hand the table away, and said, "Sit down here on the chair. A little nearer! I am an old friend of your father's, and like him very much."

Then she opened the letter, and gave it to me to read, because her eyes were suffering. The letter was written in French, and full of compliments of different kinds, in the

style of the "Chevalier Boufflair" recollections and allusions. She listened smiling, and said:

"*L'esprit ne vieillit pas chez lui*,—he is always the same; he was a very amiable man, and very *caustique*. And now he is continually sitting in his room, in his *robe-de-chambre*, and is a sufferer. I was in Moscow two years ago, and paid him a visit. 'Well,' he said, 'I have scarcely strength sufficient to receive you. I fade away;' and then, in our conversation, he forgot his illness entirely, and was quite animated. He spoils himself; that is all. He is not much older than I am. Perhaps, two or three years; and I am a woman, and yet stand upright. Yes; yes; much water has been flowing since that time,* of which your father speaks in his letter. Think yourself; I and he were among the

* This is a Russian Proverb.

best dancers of our time. The *Anglaises*, just then, were in fashion, and we danced them together at the Court of the Empress Catherine II. Can you imagine your father in a light blue dress coat, with powdered hair, and myself in a hoop petticoat? It was very agreeable to dance with him; he was a handsome man. He looked better than you. Do not be angry. At my age, one dares tell the truth; also, it is of no consequence for you:—you are a learned man. By the bye, tell me what affair was that with you? Your father wrote me something about it, when you were sent to Wiatka. I tried to speak to the Minister, Bludoff, about it. I do not know why you have been exiled; you know, with those people, all are state secrets."

In her behaviour was so much simplicity and frankness, that I, against all expectation, felt quite free and easy with her. I answered

her half jokingly, half seriously, and told her our story.

"He makes war with the students," she observed, "dreams of nothing but conspiracies, and the others are ready to discover them. They are always occupied with nonsense. He is surrounded with such vulgar people. Whence has he taken them? They have neither a name, nor a noble birth. Well then, my dear conspirator! were you as old as sixteen, when they sent you into exile?"

"Just twenty one," I answered, heartily laughing at her despising our political activity, Nicholas, as well as mine. "But I was the eldest of us all."

"Four or five students have frightened the whole government! It is a shame!"

After having conversed in this way, half an hour, I rose to take leave.

"Wait a little—wait a little," Madame

Scherebzoff said, with a still kinder tone, " you have not yet terminated your confession. How have you, then, carried off your bride ?"

" How do you know that ?"

" Oh, dear ! in this world one hears everything. Youth has its passions. I spoke at that time with your father. He was still angry ; but he is a clever man. He understood it, and as you are happy, ' what is there more to be asked ?' he said ; ' but when he came to Moscow against the Imperial order, had he been caught then, he would have been transported into a fortress.' ' Well !' I said, ' he is not caught, and so one ought to be satisfied with it. It is of no use to invent accidents that might have happened.' ' Well,' he said, ' you were all your life long, brave, *une tête chaude.*' ' Yes,' I said, ' and yet I finish my days no worse than any other one ; but to leave the young people without money

—that has no common sense.' 'Well, well,' he said, 'I will send them money. Do not be angry?' And now you must bring me your wife."

I thanked her, and said that I was alone at Petersburgh.

"Where do you live?"

"At Demuth's hotel?"

"And you dine there?"

"Sometimes there, sometimes elsewhere."

"It is not convenient for a married man to dine at restaurants. If it will not be too tiresome for you to come to an old woman, you can always come to me for dinner. I am very glad, indeed, to have made your acquaintance. I am obliged to your father for having sent you to me. You are an agreeable young man, and understand many things, although you are young; we will talk together on many subjects. Those people

from Court are very tedious; they can talk of nothing but the Court, orders, and such like empty subjects."

Thiers, in his history of the Consulate, relates rather minutely, and with truth, the assassination of the Emperor Paul. In this recital, he twice mentions a woman, the sister of Count Luboff, the last favourite of the Empress Catherine II.

Uncommonly beautiful, the young widow of a general, (who, if I mistake not, was killed in battle,) of an active and passionate nature, spoiled by her position, endowed with an extraordinary intellect, and a manly character, she became the centre of the malcontents at the time, of the savage and mad government of Paul I. Her house was the rendezvous of the conspirators, she instigated them, she was the medium of all the communications with the English Embassy. At

last, the police became suspicious, but warned in time, perhaps, by Count Pahlen himself, she had time to escape over the frontier. In the meantime, the conspiracy ripened, and she got the news of the death of Paul, whilst she was dancing at a ball, at the Court of the King of Prussia. Without in the least concealing her joy, she loudly proclaimed the happy event. The King was scandalized, and sent her off within twenty-four hours from Berlin. She went to England. Brilliant, spoiled by Court life, and tormented by her longing for a wide arena, she became the *lionne* in London, and played a very marked part in the impenetrable and inaccessible society of the English aristocracy. The Prince of Wales, that is to say, the King, George IV., was at her feet, and soon many more. Rich and riotous were the years of her life in the foreign countries, but they passed

away, and one flower after the other faded away.

With age came loneliness for her, heavy stroke of fate, solitude, and a dull life of recollections. Her son fell at Borodino. Her daughter died, and left her but one grand-daughter—the Countess Orloff. The old woman went every year in the month of August from St. Petersburg to Moschaisk to visit the grave of her son. Solitude and misfortune did not break down her character, they made it only more stern and unbending. She was like a tree in winter time, that preserves the outlines of its branches; the leaves fall off, the branches stand naked in the cold, but the mighty grandeur and the grand dimensions are the more boldly revealed, and the trunk, white with rime, supports itself, proud and gloomy, bending before neither wind nor storm.

Her long and agitated life, the immense amount of acquaintances and collisions developed her proud, but not altogether false point of view of life. She had her own philosophy, founded upon a certain contempt of men, whom, however, in consequence of her active character, she could not abandon.

"You do not yet know them," said she sometimes to me, whilst nodding towards all sorts of stout and thin senators and generals, "but I have had time to know them, and it is not so easy to deceive me as they think. I was not yet twenty years old, when my brother enjoyed the highest consideration of the Empress; she loved me much. Will you believe me that, at that time, old men with grey hairs, covered with orders, scarcely able to walk upon their feet, ran, one before the other, to fetch my shawl or my over-shoes. The Empress died, and

the following day my house was empty; they avoided me as the plague; no wonder, the fools! and yet they were the same persons as before. I took my way, wanted nobody, and went abroad. When I came back, the Lord visited me with great misfortune, but I saw no compassion in anybody, except two or three old friends. Now came a new government. You know Orloff is in high consideration at Court, at least they say so, I know not if it is true, but people believe it; they know that he is to be my heir, and that my grand-daughter loves me; and lo! a new friendship for me has sprung up, and they are rivalling again for the honour of giving me my furred cloak or my over-shoes. Oh! I know them thoroughly; but, you see, it is sometimes tiresome to be alone; I have weak eyes, cannot read, and am not always disposed to read, so I let them come,

for though they talk nonsense, time passes away with it."

Strange original ruin of another age! surrounded by a generation which has degenerated on the sterile and vulgar ground of court life in St. Petersburgh. She felt that she was above all who surrounded her, and she was right. For, if she shared the saturnalia of Catherine II., or the revelries of George IV., she also shared the danger of the conspiracy against Paul!

Her fault consisted, not in despising the empty people around her, but in mistaking the productions of the fruit garden of the winter palace, for our whole generation. At the time of Catherine II., the court and the guards, in fact, included, more or less, all that was civilized in Russia. This continued until 1812. Since then, Russian society has made an astonishing progress; war awakened consciousness—

consciousness produced the 26th of December, which split society into two halves, and not the best part remained with the court. Executions and cruel measures disgusted and drove away some; the new way of life, others. Alexander continued the civilized traditions of Catherine. Under Nicholas, the worldly aristocratic tone was supplied, on the one side, by a formal and boldly despotic one, on the other, by a meek submission; a mixture of the coarse and abrupt manner of Napoleon, with an absence of all dignity in bureaucracy. The new society, whose centre was Moscow, developed itself very quickly.

There is a remarkable book, which comes involuntarily to my mind, when I speak about Madame Scherebzoff, the "Memoirs of the Princess Daschkoff," printed forty years ago, in London. To this Memoir, are appended the letters of two sisters, the Misses

Wilmot, who lived with the Princess Daschkoff in the years 1805—10. These two Irish ladies were very well informed, and endowed with a great talent for observation. I wish very much that their Memoirs and Letters might be known in Russia.

Comparing the Moscow society before 1812 (spoken of in these letters), with that which I left in 1847, my heart beats with joy. There is no doubt, we have made an immense progress since that time. Then, a society of malcontents existed likewise; but it consisted of the dismissed, the sent away, of those kept quiet by force; now, it is a society of independants. The lions of that time were capricious oligarchists, the Count A. G. Orloff and Ostermann—"a society of shadows," as Miss Wilmot calls them; a society of statesmen who expired fifteen fifteen years ago in Petersburgh, and continue in Moscow to powder their

hair, to cover their breasts with ribbons of different orders, and to appear gravely at dinners and festivals, always "boudant" the government, and boasting of themselves, without having either power or wit. The lions at Moscow, since the year 1825, were Pranklin, Michael Orloff, Tchaadajeff, Yermaloff, Gogol. Formerly, society crowded with flattery into the house of Count Orloff, the ladies in "borrowed diamonds,"* the cavaliers not having the courage to sit down, without a particular permission, and looking at the Count's servants, who danced before them in masquerade dresses.

Forty years later, I saw that society crowding around the chair in one of the auditories in the Moscow University; the daughters of the ladies with "borrowed diamonds;" the sons of the cavaliers, who dared not sit down,

* Miss Wilmot.

followed, with passionate interest, the energetic and profound speeches of a young professor, and answered, with enthusiastic applause, every profound word, which moved the heart with bold and noble sensations.

Yes! this society—that gathered, from all parts, at Moscow, and crowded around the tribunes, where the young champion of science exposed stern doctrines, and prophesied the future, while considering the past—was not known by Madame Scherebzoff. She was so particularly kind, and listened so attentively to me, just because I was the first specimen of this world unknown to her. She was astonished at my language, at my conceptions. She esteemed in me the rising day of another Russia, a different one from that where the light of day fell only through the frozen glasses of the winter palace. Thanks be to her for this also.

I could write a whole volume of anecdotes which I have heard from Madame Schereb-zoff—with how many persons had she been connected, from the Count d'Artois to Ségur, from Lord Granville to Canning; and she looked upon all with a judgment quite her own, and quite original. I will confine myself to only a few, which I shall try to render, as much as possible, in her own words.

She lived on the Morskoi.* Once a regiment, with a band of musicians playing passed her house. She stepped to the window, and, looking upon the soldiers, said to me, "My country-house is not far from Gatschin; sometimes I take a drive there to repose myself. Before the house, I had a large square made, you know, in the English way, covered with grass.

* A street in Petersburgh.

Last year, I arrived there; and, just imagine, at six o'clock in the morning, I hear a strange banging of drums. I am half dead, half alive, in my bed; the drums come nearer and nearer; I ring the bell for my Kalmuck woman; she hurries in.

"My little mother,* what does this noise mean?" I ask her.

"Oh!" she says, "Michael Paulowitch (the Grand Duke) deigns to exercise his soldiers."

"Where?"

"On our court."

You see, he was pleased with my square; it was so nicely green and smooth. Now, imagine only, where a lady lives—old and infirm! to beat the drums at six o'clock in the morning! Very well, I thought, thou

* A very usual way of addressing favourite servants in Russia.

shalt not repeat this absurdity. I order my steward to come, and tell him, "Now, go immediately, and drive in the telega, to Petersburgh, hire as many Lithuanians as thou canst find, and let them begin, to-morrow, to dig a pond in the place of the square. I suppose he will think twice before having naval exercises below my window. They are all uneducated people."

It was quite natural that I went directly to Madame Scherebzoff, when I left Count Strogonoff, in order to tell her the whole story.

"For heaven's sake, what absurdities! Every hour they grow worse," she said, having listened to me till the end. "How is it possible to send into exile a man with a family for such a trifle. Wait a little. I will speak with Orloff about it. I rarely disturb him with a request; none of them like that; but once is no matter. Call again

in about two or three days ; I will communicate to you his answer."

On the second day, she sent for me. I found some guests with her. She had a white cambric handkerchief round her head, instead of the ordinary cap, that was the usual sign that she was in a bad humour ; she twinkled her eyes, and scarcely paid any attention to the councillors and generals, who had come to pay her homage. One of the guests, with a very self-satisfied expression, drew forth from his pocket a paper, and presented it to Madame Scherebzoff, saying :

"I bring you the rescript of yesterday to the Prince Peter Michailowitch. Would you condescend to read it?"

Did she hear or not? I do not know ; but she took the paper, unfolded it, took her spectacles, and knitting her brows with great exertion, she read :

"Pri-n-ce Pe-ter Mi-chai-lo-witch! Why do you give me that?—hm! That is not for me."

"I had the honour of telling you that this is a rescript."

"Oh Lord! my eyes are bad; I can hardly read the letters addressed to myself; and you force me to read the letters of other people."

"Will you allow me to read—I was not aware—in fact—"

"Dear me! why do you trouble yourself so vainly? What do I care for their correspondence? I shall soon see my last day! My head is full of very different things."

The gentleman smiled as people are wont to smile who have fallen into a trap; and he put the rescript again in his pocket.

Seeing that Madame Scherebzoff was in a very bad, and a very warrior-like disposition, the guests took leave one after the other. Left alone, she said to me:

"I invited you to come here in order to tell you that I have become a fool in my old days, promising you something, and having obtained nothing. You know the Russian proverb says, 'Without asking, the water does not go into a fort.' I spoke yesterday with Orloff about your cause. Do not expect anything."

At that moment, a servant entered, and announced the Countess Orloff.

"Oh! that is nothing; she is no stranger; I will go on telling you."

The Countess, a pretty woman, and still in the bloom of life, came and kissed the hand, and asked after the health of her grandmother. Madame Scherebzoff answered that she was very bad; and then, introducing me, she added:

"Sit down, dear. And the children are well?"

"They are well, thank God."

"You must excuse me, if I relate the event of yesterday. Then, you see, I told her husband that he ought to go to the Emperor and tell him what nonsense they are doing. But he defended himself hand and foot, against it, he said; 'that regards Benkendorf. I will speak with him about it if you like, but to trouble the Emperor is impossible, he does not like it, and it is not at all the custom.'"

"But," said I, "to speak with Benkendorf is nothing extraordinary, that I can do myself, but he has already outlived his reasoning powers, he knows not what he is doing, has nothing in his head but actresses; it is a shame for such an old fellow to be always courting and flirting. And as probably also now, he is occupied with them, he certainly has some such men, secretaries or others who must write denunciations against people, and then

he presents them to the Emperor. No," said I, " my friend, it is better that you do not speak to Benkendorf, it is precisely he who has entangled the whole affair; what can he do now?"

" ' Yes,' he said, ' that is the custom with us,' and then he began to talk some nonsense.

" I see plainly that you fear to go to the Emperor, but, pray, is he then a wild beast that one dreads to approach? I cannot understand it, they see him four or five times a day, and yet they fear to approach him. Well, what is there to be done with such people?"

" I made an end of the conversation, there, look at Orloff's portrait! he is represented like a hero, and fears, however, to say a word!"

" Instead of looking at the portrait, I could not help looking at the Countess Orloff; her situation was not of the most agreeable. She sat smiling, and sometimes looked at me, as

if to say: 'age has its rights, the old one is angry!' but as she met my look, which did not agree with her, she feigned not to remark me. She did not enter into the conversation, and that was very wise. It would have been difficult to appease Madame Scherebzoff, whose cheeks were glowing, and who would have paid her dearly. The one thing was to wait patiently, until the storm had passed over one's head. She began again.

"Very likely that at Wologda, or wherever you have been, people think Count Orloff a man of high importance and great favour at Court. All that is absurd; probably his subordinates have spread that rumour. None of them have any influence, and they do not behave in a way so as to obtain it.

"You must pardon me for undertaking what I could not execute. Do you know what I advise you? instead of going to Nov-

gorod, go to Odessa; there you are farther from them all. Odessa is nearly a town of foreigners, and Woronzow, if he has not changed, oh ! he is a man of another régime."

Her confidence in Woronzow, who was at that time in St. Petersburgh, and came every day to see Madame Scherebzoff, was not quite justified; he consented to take me with him, if Benkendorf would consent to it.

With all that, some months passed, the winter passed, nobody reminded me of my departure, they forgot me, and I was no longer on the *qui vive*, especially after the following meeting.

The military governor of Wologda, Bolgowsky, was at that time at St. Petersburgh, he was an intimate acquaintance of my father, and loved me from my childhood. I went sometimes to see him. He had taken a part in the incomprehensible and never explained

affair of Speransky, in the year 1812. He was then colonel in the active army, when he was all at once arrested, led to St. Petersburgh, and exiled to Siberia. He had not yet arrived at the place of his destination, when Alexander forgave him, and gave him back his regiment. In spring I once came to him; in an arm-chair, his back turned to the door, sat a general, his face was not visible to me, I saw but one of his silver epalettes.

"Allow me to introduce you," said Bolgowsky, and I recognised—Dubelt.

"I had some time ago the pleasure of enjoying the attention of the general," I said, smiling.

"Do you soon leave for Novgorod?" he asked.

"That I ought to ask you."

"For heaven's sake I did not mean to remind you of it, I merely asked so. We gave

you into the hands of Count Strogonoff, and are not in a great hurry about it, as you see. And besides such valid reasons as the illness of Mrs. H."

At last, in the beginning of June, I got an ukase from the senate, confirming my nomination as councillor of the regency of Novgorod. Count Strogonoff thought that it was time to go, and I arrived about the 1st of July in the town of Novgorod, protected by God and St. Sophia, and I settled near the borders of Wolghaff, opposite to the hill from which the Voltarians of the 12th century precipitated into the river, the wonderful statue of Peroun.

CHAPTER VI.

Novgorod — The Regency — I am under My own Surveillance—The Secretaries and Paul I.—The Fatherly Government of the Land Proprietors—Count Araktjiyeff and the Military Colonies—The Cannibal Trial —My Leave.

BEFORE I left Petersburgh, Count Strogonoff told me that the military governor of Novgorod was at Petersburgh, and advised me to go and see him, as he had spoken to him about my nomination. I found him a plain and good-humoured general, with a soldier-like exterior, not too tall, and of a

middle age. We conversed half an hour, he accompanied me kindly to the door, and we parted.

Arrived at Novgorod, I went to him, and found an astonishing change of scene. At Petersburgh the governor was but a guest, here he was at home, he seemed even to have become taller. Without the least provocation from my side, he thought it necessary to say that he could not suffer the councillors to give their voice, or persist in their opinion by writing; that this hindered affairs, that one ought to converse about the differences of opinion, and if the one or the other would not give up his own, he would be obliged to quit the service.

I observed to him smilingly that it would be difficult to frighten me with leaving the service, as this was the only aim of my service; and I added, as long as bitter

necessity would force me to serve in Novgorod, I would probably have no opportunity to give my opinion."

This conversation was sufficient for both of us. On parting from him, I was decided not to become nearer acquainted with him, and, as much as I could see, the impression I had made upon him was nearly the same—that is, we detested each other as much as was possible in so short and new an acquaintance.

When I became accustomed to the affairs of the vice-royalty, I saw that my situation was not only very disagreeable, but very dangerous. Every councillor answered for his division, and had the responsibility of all the rest.

To read through all the papers of all the divisions would have been entirely impossible; one was obliged to subscribe upon trust; the

governor, in consequence of his opinion that a councillor never wanted to give advice, subscribed against all common sense, and against the laws, immediately after the councillor of the division to which the business referred. This was excellent for me; his signature seemed to me a certain guarantee that he would also take the responsibility upon himself, the more so, as he often spoke with emphasis about his own incontestible honesty and Robespierre-like incorruptibility.

As to the signatures of the new councillor, I little cared for them.

These people were petrified old scribblers, serving for about twenty years, until they advanced to the councillor's post; they lived solely upon the service, that is to say, upon prevarication in money affairs. They were scarcely to be blamed, for a councillor, if I am not mistaken, got 1—200 roubles (£50) a year;

which, for a man with a family, was impossible to live upon. When they understood that I neither intended to share in the common booty, nor to steal for myself, they began to look upon me as an uninvited guest, and a dangerous witness. And particularly when they saw that the friendship between the governor and myself was very moderate, they kept aloof from me; amongst themselves, they warned and preserved each other, but I had soon nothing more to do with them.

Besides, my honourable comrades in the service were not greatly afraid of money penalties or a deficiency, because they possessed nothing. They could venture, and the more so, the more important the business was. If the deficiency was five hundred roubles, five hundred thousand was all the same for them. In the case of a deficiency

one part of their salary was stopped for the amount of it, and that might last two or three hundred years, if the official lasted so long. Generally, either the official died, or the Emperor, and then the heir of the latter, for joy at this happy event, forgave the debts. Such manifestos appeared often also during the lifetime of the Emperor, on account of a birth in the family, of the majority of some one, and other opportunities. The officials counted upon these eventualities.

For me, it would have been quite different, in the case of a deficiency, they would have seized a part of the capital my father gave to me.

If I could have relied upon my *chefs de bureau*, things would have been easier for me; I did what I could, in order to oblige them; I was polite with them, helped them with money, and obtained, merely, that they did not obey me; they feared the other coun-

cillors, who treated them like boys, and began to arrive, when they came for business, already half intoxicated.

They were poor people, without any civilization, any hope in life, all the poetical essence of their being was limited to beer-shops and liquors. So, then, even in my own division, I had to be very prudent.

In the beginning, the governor gave me the fourth division. In it were wine tenures and money affairs. I asked him to change—he would not; said that I had not the right to change without the consent of the other councillor. I, in the presence of the governor, asked the councillor of the second division, he consented, and we changed.

The new division was less attractive; there were passports to be given, circulars to be mad, and affairs upon the misuse of the land proprietorial power, upon dissenters,

false coiners, and people living under the surveillance of the police.

It is not possible to imagine anything more absurd, more stupid, and I am almost certain that most of my readers will hardly believe me, although it is quite true, that I, in my quality as councillor of the regency, and chief of the second division, had to forward, every three months, a report to the master of the police, about myself, as about a man finding himself under the surveillance of the police.

The master of the police, through politeness, wrote nothing in the rubric for behaviour, and in the rubric for occupations, he wrote: "Occupied in the service of the State." This is a proof to what a Herculean degree of madness a government can arrive, which has two or three sorts of police, the one the enemy of the other, chancery for-

malities, instead of laws, and serjeant's notions instead of a governing reason.

These absurdities remind me of a thing that happened in Tobolsk, some years ago. A civil governor there had been in disunion with the vice-governor; the quarrel went on upon paper; the one wrote to the other, every order filled with poignancies and sarcastic words. The vice-governor was a heavy pedant, and formulist, made of a good-humoured seminarist; he composed his satirical answers himself, with great effort, and, one may imagine, that his whole life was concentrated in this quarrel.

It happened that the governor went, for some time, to Petersburgh. The vice-governor occupied, in the mean time, his post, and received, in his quality as governor, an impertinent letter respecting himself, which had been sent by him, the eve of the departure

of the governor. Without reflecting, the vice-governor ordered the secretary to answer it, signed the answer, and received it, as vice-governor; and so he continued to write offensive letters to himself, boasting of it, as a proof of high honesty.

Half a year, I bore the yoke of the service in the regency. It was heavy and tiresome. Every morning, at eleven o'clock, I put on the uniform, girded the civil sword, and betook myself to the Session. At twelve, the military governor came, without in the least noticing the Councillors; he went straight on to a corner, where he deposited his sword; then he looked out of the window, passed his fingers through his hair, went to his arm-chair, and then only bowed to the assembly.

Scarcely had an old corporal, with immense gray mustachios standing perpendicularly to his lips, solemnly opened the door—scarcely

had they heard the noise of the sword outside, when the councillors all stood up, and remained standing, in a bowed position, till the governor bowed.

One of the first actions of opposition, on my part, was, that I did not participate in this general rising, and this pious expectation, but bowed only when he bowed to us. Great quarrels, hot discussions, were not there. It rarely happened that a councillor asked the preliminary opinion of the governor; yet more rarely did the latter ask the opinion of the councillors. Every one had a heap of paper before him, on the table, and wrote down his name. It was a manufactory of signatures.

Bearing in mind a famous sentence of Talleyrand, I did not endeavour to distinguish myself by too much zeal, and occupied myself with affairs no more than was neces-

sary, so as not to attract any observation, or to help myself into some new misfortune. But in my division, there were two sorts of affairs, in which I thought I had no right to behave superficially. These were the affairs about the dissenters, and the misuse of the landed proprietor's power.

In Russia, the dissenters are not continually persecuted; but, all at once, a fancy comes on the Ministry of Home Affairs; and they make an invasion on some dissenting community, rob them, and all is quiet again. The dissenters generally have clever agents in Petersburgh, who give them hints from there, about an approaching danger; those at home immediately gather money, hide the books and images of saints, make the orthodox priest drunk, make the orthodox police commissaries drunk, and give a ransom. Then they are quiet again for ten years.

In the government of Novgorod, were a great many dissenters of those called Duchoborzi; that means, fighters of the Spirit. Their chief was an old Starost of one of the post communities * (I believe, in Saizowa), and enjoyed the highest consideration among them. When Paul I. was crowned at Moscow, he ordered the old man to come to him, most probably for the purpose of converting him. Like the quakers, the Duchoborzi do not take off their hats. The grey old man went, his head covered, to the crowned corporal.

Paul was not able to stand this. A mean susceptibility was particularly striking in Paul, and in all his sons, except Alexander. Having brute force in their hands, they have not even

* Between Petersburgh and Moscow were entire communities, who had the monopoly of furnishing the post-horses for the communication, and lived solely upon this.

the consciousness of power which the animal has, and which keeps back the large dog from attacking the little one.

"To whom comest thou in a hat?" cried Paul at him, loudly snorting, as was his wont, and with every sign of furious wrath. "Dost thou know me?"

"I know thee," the dissenter answered, quietly; "thou art Paul Petrowitch."

"Put him in chains—take him to the mines," cried the chivalrous Paul. The old man was seized; and the Emperor ordered them to fire the village at all corners, and send the inhabitants to the colonies in Siberia. At the next post station, a person in the suite of the Emperor threw himself at his feet, and confessed that he had dared to delay the execution of the supreme will, and to wait till a second order should be given. Paul, a little cooler now, understood that he would rather strangely

recommend himself to the people by burning villages, and sending people, without judgment, to the mines. He ordered the synod to examine the affair of the peasants, and to send the old one for the rest of his life to a monastery at Wladimir; he thought that the orthodox monks would be better able than the mines to torture him to death; but he forgot that our monks are not only orthodox; but that they are people who like money and brandy, and that the dissenters are people who do not drink brandy, and do not spare money.

The old man enjoyed the reputation of a saint. From all parts of Russia, the Duchoborzi arrived to pay him homage. They bought with gold the permission to see him. The old man sat in his cell, dressed in white, the walls and the ceiling of his cell being likewise covered with white linen by his friends. After his death, these latter asked permission

to bury his body near his own people; and they bore him in their arms in a solemn procession all the long way, from Wladimir to the government of Novgorod. None but the dissenters know where he is buried; they are convinced that, during his lifetime, he could work miracles, and that his body cannot moulder. All this I heard partly from the governor of Wladimir, partly from the postillion of Novgorod, and lastly, from the servant-brothers in the monastery where the old man had been.

Now this monastery no longer contains political prisoners, although it is a prison and filled with different priests, culpable clergymen, disobedient sons, of whom the relations complained.

The Archimandrite, a stout, tall man, with a fur bonnet on his head, showed us the interior of the monastery. When we entered

an under officer with his musket approached the Archimandrite, and reported to him:

"Your holiness, I have the honour to say that everything is in order in the prison. We have so many prisoners, so many sick, &c., &c."

For answer, the Archimandrite blessed him. What a chaos!

The affairs of the dissenters were of such a kind, that it was better not to touch them again. I read them through, and left them quiet. But the affairs concerning the misuse of the proprietors' power ought to be severely agitated. I did what I could to obtain some victories upon the muddy ground. I delivered a young girl from a hard persecution, and brought under guardianship a naval officer. These were the only merits of my time of service.

Amongst the undecided affairs of my

division was an entangled process which had lasted already through many years, about the cruelty and the many crimes committed upon his property, by a naval officer. The affair began with a complaint of his own mother, and then came complaints of the peasants. With his mother he reconciled himself, and concerning the peasants, he accused them of having intended to kill him. He could not prove it, however.

But by the testimony of the mother and the peasants, it was clear that this man committed all imaginable horrors.

For many years this affair slept the sleep of the just; informations and useless writings to and fro can always delay an affair, and then after a length of time, it is put into the archives as terminated. A representation ought to have been made to the senate to put the man under guardianship, but to

effect this, it was necessary to hear the opinion of the marshal of the nobility.

The marshals generally answer evasively, because they do not wish to lose a voice in the elections. It quite depended on my own will to leave the affair untouched, but it was necessary to give a *coup de grâce* to the nobility. The Marshal of Novgorod, a nobleman who had served in the militia, with the Wladimir medal of 1812, always talked in an elevated book style; in periods like Karamsin. He once, on showing a monument which the nobility of Novgorod had erected to themselves, in reward of their patriotism of 1812, spoke to me with the utmost emphasis about the difficult and sacred, but nevertheless very flattering obligations of a marshal of the nobility.

I made use of this to further my purpose. The marshal came to the regency for the

purpose of giving testimony about the madness of a sane priest. When the presidents of the different courts of justice had exhausted the whole provision of stupid questions, from which it could have been concluded that they had not preserved too much of their reason, and when the priest had been solemnly declared insane, I led the marshal aside, and told him the case of the naval officer. The marshal shrugged his shoulders, showed an appearance of anger and horror, and finished by talking of the officer as of an acknowledged good for nothing, who "cast a shadow over the noble society of Novgorod."

"Probably," I said, "you will answer in the same way by writing, if we ask you?"

The marshal who saw himself thus unexpectedly taken in a trap, promised to answer according to his conscience, adding, that

honour and honesty were the unfailing attributes of the Russian nobility.

Doubting a little the infallibility of these attributes, I hurried the affair as much as I could, and the marshal kept his word. The affair came before the senate, and I still recollect the sweet moment when I got in my division, an ukase from the senate naming a guardianship for the property of the naval officer, and placing him under the surveillance of the police. The officer thought the matter settled and quieted long since, and was thunderstruck when he came to Novgorod after the ukase. They told him how the case stood; the enraged officer intended to fall upon me from some ambuscade; he engaged some barkworkmen in order to prepare a trap for me, but unaccustomed to campaigns with land troops, he at last retired to some unknown provincial town.

Unfortunately the attributes of cruelty, corruption, and rage against the serfs and peasants, are more unfailing with our nobility than honesty and honour. Of course, there is a minority of civilised landed proprietors, who do not quarrel from early to late with their servants, who do not whip their peasants every day, but still also amongst them are some who are not too far from Soltikow and the American planters.

Entire martyrologies of the most frightful* crimes are buried in the ante-rooms, the maid servants' chambers, the villages and the chambers of torture of the police; recol-

* The Countess Soltikow, who, by the Empress Catherine II. was condemned to prison in chains for her whole life, and publicly exposed at Moseow, in punishment for her unheard of cruelty against her serfs. Some horrible specimens hereof have been cited by the Author, in a pamphlet about "Russian Serfdom," translated in the "Leader," 1853.

lections of them ferment in many hearts, ripening through many generations for a bloody hopeless revenge, which would have been *easy* to *prevent*, but which it will be *impossible* to suppress. Is it not sufficient to mention the names of Staraja Russa and the military colonies? Can it be possible that history bribed in advance by Araktjiyef,* should never lift the pall, under which government hides a series of crimes, which have been committed coldly and systematically for the introduction of the military colonies.

Everywhere, frightful things have been done; but here, the Germano-Tartar character of Petersburgh gives a particular tinge. Through many months, they continued beating with sticks, and whipping to death,

* Araktjiyef deposited in the Loan Office one hundred thousand roubles, as a prize for whoever would write the best history of Alexander I.

whilst the running at the gauntlet of the rebellious people, the floor in the courts of justice, and the chanceries, were never dry from blood; every crime that may be committed in this part of the world, on the side of the people against its executioners, is justified in advance!

The Mongolian side of the Moscow period which mutilated the Sclavonian character of the Russians, and the inhuman corporal system which mutilated the character of the Petersburgh period, were both incarnated in Count Araktjiyef.

He was, doubtless, one of the most horrible figures that appeared on the heights of Russian government, since Peter I. This, as Puschkin says of him, "lackey of a crowned soldier," was an ideal of a master corporal, as he developed himself in the creative imagination of the father of Frederic II.,

uniting an inhuman devotedness with mechanical punctuality—the punctuality of a chronometer; the absence of all feeling, with routine and activity; possessing just as much understanding as is necesssary for the execution of orders, and just as much ambition, envy, and bile, as are wanted, to prefer power to money. Such people are treasures to monarchs. Only the mean vindictiveness of the character of Nicholas can make it understood why he did not make use of a man like Araktjiyef, but contented himself with his fellows.

Paul discovered Araktjiyef by sympathy. Alexander, as long as he preserved some sense of shame, did not let him approach too much, but, carried off, by the family passion of playing at soldiers, and dressing the front, he confided to him his private military chancery.

We heard little about the victories of this

general of artillery. He occupied himself far more with civil affairs in the military department; his victories were counted upon the backs of the soldiers; his enemies encountered him already in chains; they were vanquished in advance. In the later period of Alexander's reign, Araktjiyef governed the whole Russian empire; he mingled in everything; had a right to do so, and blank signatures enough. Debilitated, and fallen into a deep melancholy, Alexander hesitated, for a while, between the Prince A. N. Galitzin and Araktjiyef, and, of course, soon decidedly inclined to the side of the latter.

During Alexander's journey to Taganrog, the serfs on the property of Araktjiyef assassinated his mistress. This murder gave him the opportunity of a trial, of which, until now, that is to say, seventeen years after

the event, the inhabitants, and even the officials of Moscow, speak with terror.

The mistress of Araktjiyeff (then a man of sixty years old) was a serf, who oppressed the other servants, beat them, and accused them, after which, the Count had them whipped.

When the measure of patience was exhausted, the cook murdered her. But the deed was so well done, that it was impossible to find out the guilty. But a victim was necessary for the vengeance of the tender old man. He forsook all the affairs of the empire, and went to the estate. In the midst of tortures, streaming blood, in the midst of groans and deadly screams. Araktjiyeff, his head surrounded with the bloody handkerchief taken from the dead body of his sweetheart, wrote a sentimental letter to Alexander; and Alexander answered him, "Come to repose thyself from thy misfor-

tune, on the heart of thy friend." It must be, that Baron Williet's statement is right, that, before his death, water had oozed into the brains of the Emperor Alexander!

But the guilty person was not discovered!

The Russians admirably understand the faculty of silence. Then Araktjiyeff, completely enraged, came to Novgorod, where they conducted lots of martyrs. Having become yellow and black with anger, with eyes half mad, still girt with the bloody handkerchief, Araktjiyeff began a new examination. And now, the affair took monstrous dimensions. About eighty persons were anew imprisoned. People in the town, who dared to say a word, who excited the least suspicion of having some distant acquaintance with one of Araktjiyeff's servants, who made any observation, were taken into custody.

Travellers who were seized and taken to prison, merchants, officials, had to wait weeks for a trial. The inhabitants hid themselves in the houses, they feared to appear in the streets; nobody dared to speak of this story. Kleinmichel, serving under Araktjiyef, took an active part in the trial.

The governor changed his house into a place of torture. From morning to evening people were tortured by the side of his cabinet. The Master of the Police of Staraja-Russa, a man accustomed to cruelties, was at last unable to go on, too lame to do anything more; and when he was ordered to examine a young woman who was in the second period of her pregnancy, whilst she was receiving strokes with the rod, he felt himself without the strength to do so.

He went to the governor, and said that it was not possible to strike this woman; that

it was even contrary to law. The governor sprang up from his seat, and, mad with fury, threatened the master of the police with his clenched fist. "I will order them to arrest you. I will place you before the court of justice, you traitor."

The master of the police was arrested, and asked for his dismissal. I regret sincerely, that I do not recollect his family name. He must be pardoned his former sins on account of this minute of heroism; for it was no trifle to show a humane feeling before these robbers.

The woman was tortured; she knew nothing of the affair, but she died. And the blessed Alexander also died. Without knowing how things would go on now, these malefactors made a last effort, and discovered the guilty man. He was, of course, condemned to the knout; but in the middle of this

triumph, an order came from Nicholas to place them all before the court of justice, and to stop the prosecution.

The governor was placed before the senate. Even there, he could not be absolved. But Nicholas, at his coronation, published an amnesty. The friends of Pestel and Muravieff could not profit by it ; but this miserable escaped. Two or three years later, the same man was again in the hands of the police for misuse of his power as landed proprietor. He was, indeed, worthy of being comprised in the amnesty of Nicholas !

At the beginning of the year 1842, I was so tired of being a Councillor of the Regency, that I could stand it no longer ; and I thought about a pretext to disengage myself. Before I could choose the means, an accident came to decide for me. On a frosty winter morning, I came to the Regency, and found

in the ante-room a peasant-woman of about thirty years of age. When she saw my uniform, she threw herself at my feet, and weeping bitterly, asked me to intercede for her.

Her master, a certain Mussin Pushkin, intended to send her and her husband to the colonies, her son, ten years old, should remain with the master; she implored me to have her child with her. When she was telling me the story, the governor entered; I showed him to her, and told him the matter.

The governor declared to her, that children of more than ten years may stay with the landed proprietor, if the latter desires it.

The mother, without the possibility of understanding this absurd law, continued her entreaties; he grew tired of it, she cried and embraced his knees, he disengaged himself coarsely, and said: "Thou art a fool! dost thou not understand Russian? I can do

nothing; what wilt thou of me?" then he went gravely to the corner, where he placed his sword.

I went also—it was sufficient for me—had not this poor woman taken me for one of those? It was time to finish with this bad joke.

"Are you not well?" the Councillor Lohlopin asked me, when I entered the Session. This man had been sent from Siberia to Novgorod for some little sins.

"I am ill," I said, bowing to the assembly, and leaving the room. The very same day, I wrote a letter to say that I was ill, and never again set my foot into the regency.

I asked for my dismissal. The Senate not only granted it, but also gave me the title of an aulic-counsellor, but Benkendorf wrote at the same time, that I was forbidden

to leave the town. N—, who returned at that time from his first journey to Moscow, endeavoured, in Petersburg, to obtain permission for me to go to Moscow. I hoped little from the results of this protection, and was cruelly tired of the little town with a great historical name.

N—, notwithstanding, succeeded. The first of July, 1842, the Empress, taking advantage of a family festival, requested the Emperor to grant us the permission to live at Moscow, considering the bad state of the health of my wife, and her wish to go there. The Emperor consented, and three days later, my wife received a letter from Count Benkendorf, in which he wrote, that, in consequence of the request of the Empress, the Emperor had allowed her husband to accompany her to Moscow. He closed the letter with the agreeable communication, that I would

continue there to be under the surveillance of the police.

I left Novgorod without the least regret, and hastened away. But I must say that my departure occasioned, perhaps, the only agreeable event of my whole sojourn in Novgorod.

I had no money for the journey. To wait for it from Moscow was too long for my impatience, and I gave the commission to my valet-de-chambre to procure me 1,000 roubles banco (£60). A few hours later, he returned with the hotel-keeper of the post-hotel, where I had lived a few days. Gebia, a stout man, with an expression of great kindness, gave me, bowing, a roll of bank-notes.

"How much per cent. will you require?" I asked.

"If you please," Gebia said, "I do no

business of the sort, I do not lend on interest. I heard from your valet-de-chambre that you want money, and as we are very much satisfied with you and have money, thank God! I have brought it."

I thanked him, and asked if he wanted a bill of exchange.

"That is quite superfluous," he said, "I believe more in your word than in a written paper."

"But I may die."

"Well," Gebia said, shaking with laughter, "losing the money will add nothing to the pain I shall feel at the tidings of your death."

I was moved, and instead of writing him the bill, I pressed his hand warmly.

Gebia, after the old Russian fashion, embracing and kissing me, said: "We observe everything and understand much. We know

that you have served against your will, and that you were not like the others, but that you always supported the cause of our poor brethren, "the black people." Now, you see, I am happy that chance has given me an opportunity of doing you a little more service."

When we left town, late in the evening, the postillion stopped his horses at the entrance of the hotel. Gebia stood there with a pie of the size of a wheel.

This pie was my medal of honour for the service.

CHAPTER VII.

Young Moscow again—The Sclavonians at Moscow, and P. Tchaadajeff—The West and the East of Europe.

BESIDE our circle at Moscow, was that of our adversaries, "our friends the enemies," as says Béranger, or better: "Our enemies, the friends," the Panslavists of Moscow.* We did not then appreciate what was true in their conceptions. This is quite natural

* I have spoken about their theories and their polemics with Belinsky, in my "Developpement des idées Revolutionaires en Russie." London, 1853. Second Edition.

in every polemic; the battle must be exclusive and unjust; the immediate consequence of concessions and mitigations is peace. Our dispute was necessary for their development, and for ours. I do not know how much they have profited since; as for me, I think that all cannot have been lost. And now, as I begin to talk about them, I tender them my hand with friendship, and I repeat the words of a lady, whom they know very well, and who, in transferring my compliments to one of them, added, jokingly,

"*Celui à qui on a fait tort, vous salue!*" (*Consuelo, G. Sand*).

Panslavism is not very ancient; its origin dates from about 1815. This was the classic time of all the different exhumations, restorations, and resurrections; it was a retrospective time, a time of ghosts and of Lazaruses, more or less decomposed.

At the same time as the "Teuschthum" in Germany, Panslavism appears, particularly among the Austrian Sclavonians. The governments favoured the development of that international hatred, the masses withdrew from each other, and formed exclusive groups; the frontiers became more and more infrangible; the ties, the sympathies, which united the nations, were broken; the revolutionary unity had become a dream. And, moreover, the nationalities which awoke, were weak; the activity of the nationalists, was a literary or an archæological one; governments had, therefore, only to congratulate themselves upon the voluntary retreat of the learned, and of the people, into that existence of catacombs and illusions.

For the Sclavonians, however, as for the Greeks, the return to the ideas of nationality was no longer entirely the same thing; and,

without considering the great faults committed in 1848 and 1849, by the Tchechs and Croates, the theoretical rehabilitation of the Sclavonian nationality had its thoroughly practical aspect.

Western Panslavism provokes and encourages the Sclavonian party in Russia. Besides that, the party has an historical basis, perfectly justifiable. Sclavonism exists, not as a theory, but as a popular feeling, as a reaction against that exclusively foreign influence, which dates from the time when Peter I. shaved the first beard in Russia.

The opposition against the civilizing terrorism of Petersburgh, always existed; killed and hanged on the walls of the Kremlin, in the form of those riotous soldiers, the Streletz; poisoned in the casemate of the fortress of St. Petersburgh, in the form of the Tsarevitsh Alexis; it again appears, as the party of

the Dolgorouky's, under Peter II; as hatred against the Germans, under Biron; as Pougatshef, under Catherine II; as Catherine II, herself, a great orthodox German, at the Holstein, and Prussian Court of Peter III.; as Elizabeth, who ascended the throne, supported by the Slavophiles of her time. The population expected that, at Elizabeth's coronation, all the German officials would be killed. All the dissenters, and all the sectarians, are Slavophiles of a certain kind. The whole clergy, white and black, is Slavophile of another kind. The soldiers, who asked the recal of Marshal Barclay de Tolly, because his family name was German, were the precursors of Chomiakeff and his friends.

The war of 1812 developed, most strongly, the feeling of nationality.

After all, the patriotism of 1812, had not the Slavophile character. We see that in

Karamsin and in Puschkin, and even in the Emperor Alexander himself. Practically it was nothing but the expression of that instinct, manifested by all young nations, when the foreigner attacks them, afterwards it was the pride of triumph, the consciousness of might. But as to the theory, it was weak; in order to love Russian history, it was transferred into European customs; in general it was a translation from the French of the Greco-Roman patriotism. They went not beyond the sentimental verse :—

"Pour un cœur bien né que la Patrie est chère."

It is true that the minister Schischkoff lived then for the restoration of the ancient style, but nobody listened to him. And as far as regards the national style, it was only the Count Rostopchin—the most *afrancesado* of men, who employed it in his

proclamation and appeals to the people. And, as the time of war went past, this patriotism cooled and degenerated at last, upon one side into the cynical, police-inspired flattery of the "Bee of the North," upon the other side into a sad and ignoble exaggeration, calling Schuia,* Manchester; Schebueff, Raphael of Urbino; and speaking of Petersburgh only as the "Palmyra of the North."

Under the Emperor Nicholas this patriotism lost its Greco-Roman character, and was transformed into police measures, into something vexatious and imposed, particularly at Petersburg. In that city, this exaggerated patriotism terminated—in perfect harmony with the cosmopolitan character of that city—in a national hymn, copied from Sebastian

* A little village, manufacturing town in the government of Wladimir.

Bach, and a tragedy, modelled after Schiller.

Before 1830 the national hymn was most naïvely sung to the air of "God save the Queen," and, moreover, it was not sung at all. All that sort of thing has been introduced by Nicholas. After the Polish campaign, an order was given to sing the new national hymn, composed by the gendarme, Colonel Lwoff, in all great concerts and great representations on the stage.

The Emperor Alexander was too well educated to please himself with such coarse and imposed compliments. He listened with disgust to the servile speeches of the academecians in Paris in 1814, and once, meeting Châteaubriand in the ante-room, he showed him the last number of the "Journal des Débats," saying: "I assure you that I never

saw such mean flatteries in any of the Russian journals."

But all changed with Nicholas.

Then some literateurs appeared, who surpassed even the expectations of the monarch, the journalists of 1814; and also some prefects in 1852. Boulgarine wrote in the "Bee of the North," that, among other advantages of the railroad between St. Petersburgh and Moscow, there was one of which he could not think without emotion, that the same person would henceforth be able to hear a *Te Deum* for the health of the Emperor in the morning at the cathedral of Kasan, and in the evening at the cathedral of the Ascension, in Moscow.

It would seem difficult to surpass this, but such is the richness of human nature, that a professor at Moscow, seeing the thousands of idlers who gathered to witness the

arrival of Nicholas at Moscow, wrote:—"I am certain one sign of the Emperor's hand would be sufficient to make all these thousands throw themselves with pleasure into the river." This seemed too much even for Count Strogonoff, and he effaced the passage. I know this anecdote from Count Strogonoff himself.

I was at the first representation of "Lepounoff," at Moscow. When Lepounoff lifts the sleeves of his shirt, and says something like: "I will wash myself to-day in the blood of the Poles," a half-suppressed groan was heard from the pit; even the gendarmes, the officers of the police, and *those others*, who, by a strange chance, always occupy the same places, the numbers of which are always effaced or illegible, dared not to applaud.

The tragedy fell sooner than the curtain.

At Moscow exclusive patriotism attained the same degree of absurdity, but it was an independant absurdity. An absurdity which had nothing in common with the police.

About fifteen years ago, a Panslavistic Croat came to Moscow. The Muscovites, in general, love foreigners; the Croat was, moreover, a foreigner and a countryman at the same time. Grand collections were made for the Dalmatians and the Baniaks; before his departure a grand dinner was given to him. At this dinner, a Slavophile professor, probably inflamed by the toasts for the different grand men of the Tzechs, the Roussniaks, the Slavaks, and the Montenegrins, improvised some verses, in which was the following little orthodox expression:—

"I will drink the blood of the Magyars and the Germans."

All those who had not lost their consciousness, showed a profound disgust at this savage phrase, and would not touch his glass. But fortunately, Androsoff, a well-known statist, a man of intellect and wit, saved the ferocious professor. He rose from his seat, took a knife, and said :

" Gentlemen, you must excuse me for some moments. I just recollect that my landlord, an old tuner of pianos, is paralyzed and a German. I go in haste to kill him. I shall be back in a moment."

A burst of laughter softened the indignation ; and the story was forgotten.

I have only mentioned this little incident to show once more, what a rapid and terrible abyss this exclusive nationalism is, how it comes near to national animosity. A patriotism consequent upon this must necessarily find in blood mounting to the knees.

It was during our exile, that the Slavophiles formed themselves into such a compact party, sanguinary *en herbe*. Among other things, polemics developed them. They closed their ranks before the gloomy letter of Tchaadajeff, the war against Belinsky, and the new flight which Panslavism took into Austria did the rest. In 1842, I found them in battle array, with their light cavalry commanded by Chomiakoff, and their very heavy infantry under Pagodie and Schewireff. They had their ultra-Jacobins of Slavism—men who would return to the twelfth century, to the period of Kiew, and thought the period of Moscow already a dangerous innovation. They had their Girondists, who moved moderately, and wished for nothing but for a period of civilization, like that of Peter I. They had a chair at the university of Moscow, a monthly review, which always appeared two

months too late, but did nevertheless appear. Besides the real centre of the army, there were volunteers, orthodox Hegelians, Byzantine theosophists, mystic poets, and masses of ladies. Our disputes completed and consolidated the antagonism of our opinions, and pushed them to the extreme, to an impossibility of agreeing together. The exaggerations, the developments *ad absurdum*, the ironic observations separated us more and more; whilst through the smoke of the incense in the churches, and through the chronological garbs, was to be distinguished an idea, young, mighty, and, what is yet more, *contemporaneous*.

But, before going farther, I have to say some words about the letter of Tchaadajeff.

This letter was, in itself, an historical event. It may seem doubtful what signification two or three sheets of paper appearing in a

monthly review can have, but such is the might of speech in a country that must be silent, and is not accustomed to the independent expression of its thoughts, that Tchaadajeff's letter occasioned a deep sensation throughout the whole of thinking Russia.

In the year 1836, I was sitting quietly at at my study-table in Wiatka, when the postman entered, and brought me the last number of the "Telescope." One must have been exiled and completely isolated, to understand what a new book is. I, consequently, seized the "Telescope" passionately, and cut open the sheets. "Philosophical letters addressed to a Lady," without the name of the author. In a note it was said, that these letters had been written in French by a Russian, and afterwards translated. All this produced rather a disagreeable effect, and

I began to read the other articles. At last the turn of the letters came also. Before the second or third page, I was startled with the lugubrious and serious tone in which they were written. Every word was a sigh, and spoke of long sufferings already cooled, but full of bitterness. Only men who have much thought a long while, who have much thought and much felt, can write in this way. It is by experience, and not by theory, that one comes to these conceptions. I continued to read. The letter grew ; it became an act of a gloomy, inexorable accusation against Russia—the protestation of an individual, who, for all that he had suffered, wanted for once to give vent to a part of the feelings accumulated in his heart.

I was forced to stop once or twice to rest, to give time for thoughts and senses to compose themselves, and after that, I read, and I read again. Such a letter, printed in

Russian, and by an unknown author? I was nearly afraid it would prove to be only an hallucination of my imagination; I hastened to read it again to Witberg, to another young man, and lastly, once more to myself.

It is more than probable, that in all the little and the great towns of Russia, in the capitals and in the mansion houses of private persons, nearly the same thing happened. Civilized Russia suffered full ten years without proferring one word, and suffered under a most prosaic, a most unproductive yoke, which gave nothing in exchange. Every one felt the weight, every one had a heavy heart, however silent all were.

At last a man came, who spoke it out in his way. He spoke of nothing but of sufferings, in his words was no light whatever; moreover, it is only upon pictures that one

represents the martyrs smiling to the angels, whilst their bodies are torn to pieces. This letter of Tchaadajeff's is an outcry of intolerable sufferings, it is a dreadful reproach on one part of Russia, especially on that one that was drawn forward by Peter the Great, in his reform; and this part had a right to it; for had either the author, or any body else, been spared by the other part, in the midst of whom they lived?

It was natural that such a voice must arouse a great opposition against itself, or it would have been entirely in the right, in saying, "that the past of Russia was void, the present insupportable; and, as to the future, that there was none; that Russia was but a hiatus in human intelligence, and a menacing example given to other nations, to what end isolation and obedience can lead."

This letter was an expiation, and an accusation. To know beforehand with what to reconcile, to rehabilitate oneself, is not the affair of repentance, is not the affair of protestation; or the avowal had been but a joke, and the expiation little sincere.

But this voice did not pass unnoticed. For a moment, all, even the somnolents, and the blockheads, were terrified, on hearing this voice of evil augury. Every one was amazed, the majority were scandalized, and some few persons applauded with a fanatic enthusiasm. The noise which was made in the saloons, provoked and excited the intervention of government. A Russian patriot, of German origin, Wiegel, pushed the affair forward.

The Révue was immediately suspended; the old rector of the university of Moscow, who was, at the same time, censor, was dismissed; the chief editor of the Révue was

exiled to Ucscicolsk; Nicholas declared Tchaadajeff to be afflicted with mental alienation, and made him sign a promise not to write anything more. Every Saturday, an officer of police, with a doctor of medicine, came to pay him a visit, and to make a report of the state of his health; that is to say, they delivered fifty-two false certificates, by the order of his Imperial Majesty.

This is as intelligent as it is moral. It was natural, also, that they themselves should be punished. Tchaadajeff received them with a profound contempt for the frolics of an autocracy, really afflicted with mental alienation. Neither the police-officer, nor the doctor, ever dared to pronounce a word concerning the real meaning of this visit.

Before my exile, I saw Tchaadajeff but once; it was on the day of N—'s arrest. I have mentioned, in another place, that, on

this day, there was a dinner at General Orloff's. All the company were already assembled, when a man entered, bowing with great coolness. His original, remarkable, and marked appearance, arrested, involuntarily, every look. Orloff took my hand, and introduced me to him—it was Tchaadajeff.

I recollect little of this first interview; I was absorbed, and he was, as usual, cold and reserved.

After dinner, Madame Rayeffsky, the mother of Orloff's wife, said to me, "Now, you are sad to-day—oh! young people, young people! how strange you are now!"

"And do you think," Tchaadajeff, who stood near us, by accident, said: "do you think that there are any young people now in Russia?"

That is all that I recollect of him. After my exile, we approached each other; and,

from that time to my departure, we were closely connected.

The sad and independent figure of Tchaadajeff detached itself, and stood out, like a melancholy reproach, from the heavy and faded back-ground of high life in Moscow. I liked to look at him in the midst of this factitious seignory, of these fickle senators, these blackguards with white hair, these venerable nullities.

However dense the crowd was, he was immediately distinguished; years had not pulled down his lofty stature; he was generally dressed with great care; his pale and delicate face was always immoveable. When he did not speak, he seemed to be of marble or of wax; his head was entirely bald; his eyes, of a dim blue, were sad, and, at the same time, expressed something kind; whilst his lips never smiled, but ironically. So,

this man stood upright, with folded arms, near some column, or some tree, of the "boulevard," the theatre, or the saloons; an incarnate veto, a living censure, he looked upon this whirlwind of men, that turned round him, void of thoughts and of sense, drawn on by some artificial object—and he was silent, became capricious, drew back from society, without ever being able to abandon it entirely; and grew singular; at last, he was wont to speak, concealing passion under a covering of ice in his speech, as in his placid features. After that, he was again silent; continued to be capricious, irritated, and malcontent; he hung again, like a dark cloud, over the society of Moscow, and did not abandon it, as before.

The old and young were uncomfortable with him; without any precise reason, one felt ashamed in the presence of this immov-

able figure, of this look that fixed you directly, one was afraid of his sad smile and his offensive condescension. Why then did they receive him, invite him, why did they go to see him? That is a question which is not devoid of interest.

Tchaadajeff was not rich, he had even a very small fortune; he had no high social position, no relations; he was a dismissed captain of hussars, and there was nothing but the iron cross of Kulm upon his breast. To be acquainted with him could but compromise anybody in the eyes of the supreme police. Whence then came his influence? Why every Monday did the "Burgraves" of the English club, and the patricians of the boulevard Twerskoi crowd his humble cabinet? why did not the fashionable young ladies fly from the cell of the monkish thinker? Why did generals, who understood nothing

civil, seem to feel obliged to appear at Tchaadajeff's, feigning a certain civilization, and boasting afterwards in repeating, certainly not without mistake, some chance caught words or observations? Why did I meet there the savage Count Tolstoi, "the American," and the adjutant of the Emperor, Schipoff, that minister of public instruction in Poland, who did everything to suppress instruction?

And it was not only that Tchaadajeff made no concessions, but he oppressed them, and rudely made them feel the difference between him and them. Certainly all these people went to him through vanity, and as such their visits were of little import, but what was grave therein was the involuntary avowal, that thought is an acknowledged power, which has its high place in the esteem of the world, notwithstanding an

imperial will. In so much as the authority of this madman, this captain of hussars, increased, the mad authority of Nicholas diminished.

Tchaadajeff, of course, had his faults, his originalities; he was irritable and spoiled. People reproached him with that. The society of Moscow is very intolerant and exclusive. Why then should not a man, of more than fifty years of age, who had lost nearly all his friends, nearly all his fortune, and had suffered a great deal of bitterness, whose life was exhaled in a forced idleness, have some peculiarities in his character, some whims, and a self love, which could not always hide itself?

Tchaadajeff had been adjutant to General Wasiltchikoff at the time of the rebellion of the regiment Semenofsky (1821 or '22). The Emperor was then at Verona or Aix-

la-Chapelle. The general sent his report by Tchaadajeff. The courier of the Austrian embassy arrived a little earlier than he, and Alexander learned the details from Metternich, who entangled him thus more and more with the reaction. Furious at the delay, the Emperor received the officer very badly, afterwards he repented of it, and offered him the title of colonel and aid-de-camp.

Tchaadajeff declined the honour, and asked only one favour—his dismissal. That caused much displeasure, but the resignation was granted.

He did not hurry himself to return, but being freed from his gilded uniform, gave himself up to serious studies. Alexander died. The insurrection of the 26th of December broke out; the absence of Tchaadajeff saved him from persecution. He returned at last in 1830.

In Germany, he was intimately connected with Schelling, and, I think that this acquaintance contributed greatly to drive him into a mystical philosophy, which grew up in him into a revolutionary catholicism, to which he remained faithful all his life long.

In his famous letter, he sets down half of the misfortunes of Russia to the account of the Greek Church, which had detached the Russian people from the universal Christian unity.

Although such an opinion may seem strange, one must, however, not forget that Catholicism has a great elasticity. Lacordaire preached Catholic Socialism in the Church of Notre Dame, remaining, notwithstanding, a Dominican friar, whilst Chevé preached a Socialistic Catholicism in the journal, "*La Voix du People*," being himself the friend of Proudhon. After all, the rationalistic and

rhetorical faith and science, the religion surrounded by Atheistic Institutions, the honest and moderate theology of the civilized "bourgeois" is nothing better than this Neo-Catholicism.

And lastly, when Ronge, and the adepts of Buchez are possible, after 1848, since Feuerbach and Proudhon, since Pio IX and Lamennais, when men like Mickewitch and Krasinsky continue to be Messianists, is it to be wondered at that Tchaadajeff brought such a doctrine from Europe at that time?

We have a little forgotten what Europe then was. It is sufficient to recollect the history of Volabelle, the Letters of Lady Morgan, or the Memoirs of Adriani, and, above all, the poems of Lord Byron, and of Leopardi, to become convinced that this was one of the dullest and the ignoblest epochs that have ever been.

Revolution avowed itself incompetent. On the one side was a cynical and coarse monarchism; on the other side an hypocritical and prudish one, covering itself with the leaves of charters, executions, there, depravity here, depression of strength and energy, everywhere.

Scarcely could be heard, at long intervals, some heroic songs of the Hellenes, or an energetic speech of Canning, or of Royer Collard.

A Catholic party then formed itself in the centre of Protestant Germany. The Schlegels' and Leo changed their religion; old Jahn doted upon a democratic and popular Catholicism. People fled from the present to the middle ages, read the lucubrations of Ekartshausen, occupied themselves with magnetism, with the miracles of the Prior of Hohenlohe. Victor Hugo, the enemy of Catholicism, helped this resurrection, as well as the Lamen-

nais of that time, thundering against the indifferentism of the century.

The *renaissance* of Catholicism could not help affecting a Russian with a great attractive force. Formally, this doctrine contained everything wanting in Russian life—in this life, abandoned to itself, without direction, and brutally oppressed by the temporal power. The severe organization, the proud independence of the Church of the West, its practical and imperative spirit, together with the *fata morgana* of those solutions, which are no solutions of a fantastic unity in its *urbs* and *orbs*, must necessarily captivate the ardent and unhappy spirit of one who had begun his serious development already in a riper age.

When Tchaadajeff returned, he found that, in Russia, everything in the society where he lived, was changed. I was very young, but I recollect very well how visibly society be-

came far more and more lax and servile since the reign of Nicholas. The aristocratic independence, the unruliness of the guards, all disappeared after 1826.

Other hopes were rising, a new generation was springing up, unconsciously to itself. These were some young people still in children's dresses, some pupils of the gymnasia of the universities, some literary novices who tried their pens and their forces; but all lived in a different circle from that of Tchaadajeff. His former friends were in Siberia, condemned to hard labour. In the beginning, he was quite alone in Moscow, then two, he and Puschkin, and, at last, three, he, Puschkin, and Orloff, who soon left him as alone as before. Puschkin was killed in 1837, Orloff died 1842.

Tchaadajeff often showed me, upon the tapestry of his cabinet, a little above the sofa,

two small spots. There it was that Puschkin and Orloff leaned their hands against the wall!

It is impossible to read, without a feeling of deep sadness, the two epistles of Puschkin to Tchaadajeff, separated from each other for about two years. Not only their whole existence in this interval, but the existence of a whole generation, bounding into life, full of joy and hope, was trampled under foot by brute force.

Puschkin, the young man, says to his friend:

"Brother, do not lose hope! A beautiful day is dawning. Russia will awake, and upon the ruins of despotism, our names will be written."

But the sun of this day did not rise. On the contrary, Nicholas rose to mount the throne; and Puschkin wrote to his friend, some years before his death: "Tchaadajeff! dost thou remember the past? Is it long

since, in my young fervour, I thought to write our names on other ruins? Now, in the heart, appeased by storms, there is nothing left but calm and idleness; and I write, with emotion and pity, our names upon *this* stone, sanctified by friendship."

Nothing was more opposed to the Slavophiles than Tchaadajeff's way of considering things, by which he avenged himself upon Russia, the self-conscious malediction with which he terminated his existence, and closed an entire epoch of Russian history.

"In Moscow," Tchaadajeff said, "they take every stranger to see the great cannon and the great bell, a cannon which it is not possible to fire off, and a bell which fell down before it produced a sound. Strange town! where the curiosities are distinguished by their absurdity. The bell, however, is yet the best of them. One can take it as a symbol of

this immense country, quite mute and without tongue—of this people, this race called Slaves (Slovene comes from Slovo, parole), if to express their astonishment at their having the gift of speech." His exaggerated despair, as well as the sanguine hopes of the Slavophiles, emanated from the same source; and that is the reason why they had mutual sympathies, notwithstanding their continual quarrels.

The first years after 1825 were terrible, not only on account of the persecutions, but also on account of the enormous vacuum that manifested itself everywhere. Society was down-fallen, trembling, and losing its head. Even the bravest began to see that the path upon which they had been marching, had become impossible; but they knew no other. A gray autumn sky, covered all of life like a pall; a deep discouragement weighed heavily upon the mind.

Tchaadajeff and the Sclaves both stopped before the mysterious sphinx of Russian life, a sphinx fast asleep, and covered with the gray soldier's cloak.

"Where are we going?" asked one and the other; "the present state of things is impossible; its roughness and its absurdity are insupportable. What will be the issue?"

"There is no issue for this country," answered the man of the Petersburgh period of the present civilization, who, perhaps, yet believed in the European future of Russia, but who now, sadly and inexorably, saw to what end all efforts led this land. "Civilization but gives means for oppression; the Church confounds itself more and more with the police; the people suffers everything, bears everything; government, from day to day, asks more and more."

The reform of Peter I. made us the most

unhappy creatures in the world—civilized slaves. What, then, do you ask? Do you think that this people has an organ of liberty?—but, can this state of things be changed? No! then, enough of sufferings—it is time to repose ourselves—to be supported by something, in this state of moral torture—and look! there is the Catholic Church, which calls us with a voice full of peace and consolation; with the same voice with which she, at all times, has called those who suffered.

So, in past centuries, men made themselves monks, when they thought their decease inevitable. They sought the repose of their souls in a factitious death.

This desperate solution is perfectly justified, from the point of view of Western civilization, such as it has formulized itself in the epochs of restorations, and from the

point of view of Petersburgian Russia. The Slavophiles succeeded, by resolving the question in another way.

There was, in the depth of their thoughts, an inward consciousness, an intuition, which made them feel a living mind in the people; but their instinct was more penetrating than their reasonings. They understood that the actual state of Russia, although a horrible one, was yet not a death-agony; and, whilst Tchaadajeff had glances of hope for individuals, and none for the people, they, on the contrary, rather despaired of individuals, and hoped a great deal from the people. "The issue is behind us," the slaves said; "the issue is in the return to those times preceding the Petersburgh epoch, in the return to the people."

Once for ever, we ought to know, that history never returns. Life is so rich in

material, that it never wants to go back to its old clothes. All restorations have never been anything but masquerades. We have seen two of them. Could the legitimists succeed in reawakening the monarchy of Louis XIV. from the tomb? Could the traditional republicans succeed in drawing back humanity to the 8th Thermidor? It is the truer for us, as we have nothing in our recollections to which we could go back. Political life in Russia, before Peter I., was absurd, poor, and savage; and, nevertheless, it is to this life that the Slavophiles would return. They did not confess it—but, how else explain all their archæological exhumations, their veneration for the customs of another time? Their endeavour to change the costume, was an endeavour to return to the ancient one, not to come nearer to the national dress of the people.

Through the whole of Russia, except the Slavophiles of Moscow, nobody wears the Norman cap. A— dressed in a way so very Muscovite, that the people in the streets of Moscow took him for a Persian.

The return towards the people has also been considered by them in a strange, superficial, and rude way. They have shared the error of many democrats, who are pleased to flatter the people rhetorically, and to find it quite perfect. They thought, that to partake of the prejudices of a nation, is to be in communication with it; that, to sacrifice one's own reason, instead of developing that of the people, is a great act of humility. Thence, comes their Greek, artificial, and sincerely hypocritical orthodoxy. Thence, come their practices of devotion, once more recalled to life—a practice sometimes deeply touching in the poor, with their ingenious

faith; but terribly offensive, when premeditated.

In short, the return to the people has been so little adroit, that it was not at all popular. The people understood them as little as it did us, and it liked neither one or the other.

Neither the Byzantine Church, nor the Kremlin at Moscow, will ever afford any help toward the future development of the Sclavonian world.

To return to the rural community, to the Artel (Association) of the workmen, to the assemblies of the whole people (Mir,) to the independent cossackry—that is a different thing. Return one may, not to immobilize them, not to crystallize them in the Asiatic way; but, on the contrary, to develope, to emancipate the basis of their institutions from everything that time has introduced of foreign alluvia, from all the excrescences and importa-

tions that have deformed and led them astray. All that is well, but one must not be mistaken; all that is beyond the faculty of the State.

To return to the Muscovite period would be of as little help, as to continue the period of Petersburgh. Less so, as the first was by no means better than the second. The grand bell, which convoked the people of Novgorod, was melted into cannon by Peter I; but it had been taken down and transported to Moscow by John IV. Serfdom has been notarial since Peter I; but was introduced by Godunoff. The code of Alexis speaks neither of juries, nor of ancient franchises; and, certainly, it is not in Petersburgh that the knout and the lash have been invented.

The great fault is, in our opinion, that the Sclavonians, moved by true sympathies, think, that there was a time, anterior to the present

epoch, when Russia had a development conformable to its substance. Russia never had such a development, and, what is more, never could have had. The things which begin now to be felt, to rise into notice among us, to stir thought which had existed in an embryonic state, without consciousness, on the fields of the peasants, and in their poor huts, as well as in the workshops, are just the very same things, which spring up and grow on other fields—on the historical fields which have been watered by the sweat, the tears, and the blood of twenty generations. These bases of the popular existence in Russia are not reminiscences, but living elements. They are in the present, and not in chronicles; but if they have been preserved, let us not forget that they have only escaped the destruction that menaced them by an historical development, which was extremely hard, and by

which the unity of the State was elaborated, and afterwards by the pressure of the State itself. They did not perish, but neither did they develop themselves. I even doubt, if they would have had sufficient inward forces to develop themselves, but for the epoch of Petersburgh, without the assimilation of the European civilization. The natural, immanent, physiological bases of the people's rights are not always sufficient to develop themselves. From immemorial times, a rural community has existed in India, very like to the Russian communities. The first has not gone far.

I am convinced that it is the only force of Western thought—in which its whole history is involved, the past of the active part of humanity—which has the male strength to fecundify the embryos, sleeping in the bosom of the patriarchalism of the Sclavonian world.

The Artel of the workmen, the community of the peasants, the division of salaries, and the division of the soil, the reunion of the peasants, and the reunion of the villages (vollost)—all those are foundation-stones for our social edifice for the future; but they are merely stones, and without the thoughts of the West, our Cathedral would have to stop at the foundation!

It is astonishing! but it is the fate of all which is *social*, that no single thing is self-sufficing, that all is drawn into the solidarity of peoples; whether isolating or concentrating, or withdrawing from each other, they remain in a rudimental life, which they do not understand themselves, or in an abstract thought which floats, like the soul of the christians over the dead body, waiting for its resurrection. The impressionable character of the Sclavonians, full of acceptivity,

their feminine character, as I have elsewhere said, their want of spontaneity, and great plastic and assimilative faculty, make them a people requiring the help of other peoples.

Left to themselves, they easily fall asleep "to the sound of their eternal songs," as remarks the chronicler of the Porphyrogeneta. Stimulated by others, they go to the last consequences and take passionate possession of ideas and facts. The Sclavonians have an extraordinary aptitude in identifying themselves with other peoples, while themselves resting. That unenfranchisable limit, beyond which the nations of Roman origin do not understand the Germanic nations, does not exist between these peoples and the Sclavonians. In the impressionable *omnivorous* nature of these latter, rests necessarily the desire for outward impulses, the passion to

devote themselves, and consequently an exterior stimulant was always necessary.

For her organization into a confederation of principalities, Russia needed the Normans.

For the unity of the state, the Mongols.

For becoming an immense empire, European influence.

But with all this acceptivity of the Sclavonians, have they not proved their complete inactivity for developing themselves into an European state? They constantly fall into unlimited despotism, or into a disorder without issue.

This incapacity, this want of assistance from their fellow men, is it not perhaps a virtue?

The whole of Europe has now arrived at the necessity of a despotism like that of St. Petersburgh, in order to save the existing organization of the *State*, from the swelling

tide of social ideas. Russia, drawn forward by the civilisation of Europe, has arrived to its last consequence. The absolute Cæsarean despotism is the last word of the present social organization, either Cæsarism or socialism. There is no third possibility now.

There was a time when the West, half enfranchised, looked haughtily and disdainfully down upon the Russian people, crushed and passive under the imperial knout. And the civilized part of Russia, humiliated and suffering, lifted its eyes with envy and admiration up to its elder, free, and happy brothers.

This time is no more! The equality of slavery puts us all on the same plane.

We assist at a spectacle, that has never been seen since the time of Constantine; Roman citizens living in the country, in order to seek shelter from the state, gave them-

selves to slavery. The only large country where, by accident, liberty and the Gothic regime have been preserved together, now tends to nothing but to despotism. And despotism is war; for which reason Louis Napoleon called it—peace.

The war between present Europe and present Russia is, in fact, as logical as was the despair of Tchaadajeff. How should it be otherwise than that these two great personalities of history, these two hoary combatants—representing the traditions of two principles: the principle of the State, and the principle of individual liberty—should take each other's hands, against this third person, who, mute, nameless, without flag, with chains upon his feet, rudely pushes open the door of history, and the door of Europe; who knows not how to conceal his hankering for Constantinople, and who presses his gauntleted hand

upon the breast of Germany, washing the other in the Pacific Ocean.

War is right, on the part of Europe, when the question is merely to maintain the equilibrium, the artificial repose, the armed "far niente," to hinder every movement, in order not to fall, and that all may not go together; then, everything that menaces the equilibrium, must be destroyed.

It is on this account that this war will, perhaps, last longer than ourselves. There may be an armistice, but there will be no peace, until an universal cataclysm comes, to mix the cards, and to begin a new game.

At the first dawn of day, the nations, standing in blood to the knees, will know each other better. The ferocious outcry of national exclusivism, of carnivorous patriotism, all that belongs not to the peoples, but to the empires.

Governments hate each other; the nations are only ignorant; and how should they not be led into error, by a religion entirely false, which is presented to them alongside the Gospel—the religion of carnage; of hatred of the races; of brutal force; of the apotheosis of colours; of that limited and inhuman virtue, which already the first Christians took for a vice, and to which the last cling so much, in order to betray the peoples—a patriotic egotism.

The Sclavonian world, little familiar with the aristocratic point of honour, much more peasant-like than chivalrous, will be the first to yield, and extend its hand to the elder peoples, like the Greek tyrant, who was so much moved by the two friends of Syracuse, that he stayed the arm of the executioner, and asked for the privilege of being admitted as the third in their union.

"So nehmet auch mich zum Genossen an,
Ich sey, gewährt mir die Bitte,
In eurem Bunde der Dritte."

This part of the third suits admirably the impressionable, acceptive, Sclavonian world, which sympathizes with its two elders, which loses itself in the plains, spread out without frontiers; this world of "laisser aller," less determined, less fixed, which is not parcelled out, either by mountains, or by unenfranchizable traditions. It is thus that I consider the future of the Sclavonian world. This is, however, a repetition of what I have said since 1848.

One word more before I close. Happen what will, though Russia be divided, or Europe fall back to a Byzantine childhood, one thing is done, and has no more to be extirpated. The young generation in Russia has understood that the western accidental idea of socialism

is the vague and confused ideal of the Russian people, is the realization and the logical development of its rudimentary institutions. Every one can conclude the probable consequences of this.

CHAPTER VIII.

Petersburgh again — A Commissioner of Police Officiating as *Valet de Chambre*—The Chief of the Police, Kakoschkin — Disorder in Order—Dubelt again—The Passport.

SOME months previous to my father's death, Count Orloff was nominated to Benkendorf's place. I then wrote to Madame Scherebzoff, if she could not procure me a passport for abroad, or a permission for me to come to Petersburgh, and try to get it. Madame Scherebzoff answered that the second would be easy; and a few days afterwards, I got from Orloff the Imperial permission to come to Petersburgh for some time, for the purpose of arranging my affairs.

My father's illness, his death, the real arrangement of affairs, and some months in the country, detained me until winter.

Towards the end of November, I set off for Petersburgh, after having presented a petition to the Governor-General to let me have a passport. I knew that he could not grant it, because I was still under the strict *surveillance* of the police. I only wished that he should send my request to Petersburgh.

The day of my departure, I sent in the morning to the police to take a card of permission for leaving Moscow; but instead of the card, a policeman came to say that there was a difficulty, and would come himself to see me. He came, indeed, and asked to speak to me confidentially, revealing to me, with a mysterious air, a novelty, that five years since, I had been forbidden to come to Petersburgh,

and that, without the Imperial permission, he could write me no card.

"That will be no difficulty," I said, smiling, and drew from my pocket the letter.

The Commissioner read it with astonishment, asked permission to show it to the chief of the police, and about two hours later he sent me the card and the letter.

Half of my conversation with the Commissioner had been carried on in French, spoken by him with great purity. How injurious it was for him, and for the Russian police in general to know French, he had learned by bitter experience.

Some years ago, a traveller, a French legitimist, Chevalier Pro, arrived at Moscow from the Caucasus. He had been in Persia, in Grusia, had seen a great deal, and now only committed the imprudence of criticising strongly the conduct of the war in the Cauca-

sus, and especially the administration. Being afraid that Pro would say the same things at Petersburgh, the Caucasian governor very prudently wrote to the minister of war that Pro was a very dangerous war-agent, sent by the French government. Pro lived quietly at Moscow, and was very well received by Prince D. W. Galitzin, when all at once the Prince got an order to send Pro, accompanied by a policeman, across the frontier.

To be guilty of absurd rudeness toward an acquaintance is always disagreeable, and therefore Galitzin lingered two days without a word. At last he invited Pro, and after the finest introduction, said to him that some denunciation, probably from the Caucasus, had irritated the monarch, and that he was ordered to leave Russia, but that somebody should accompany him to the frontier.

Pro, very angry, observed to the Prince, that as the government had the right to send him away, he was ready to go, but as to an accompaniment, he must decline it, as he did not belong to the class of criminals who ought to be accompanied.

The following day, when the chief of the police came to Pro, the latter received him with a pistol in his hand, briefly telling him that he would not tolerate, either in his room or in his carriage, a police official, without sending a bullet through his brains, if he should try to employ force.

Galitzin was a most noble-minded man, and therefore much embarrassed. He sent to Wayer, the French Consul, in order to consult him what to do. Wayer found an issue; he asked for an official of the police who could speak French perfectly well, and promised to introduce him to Pro as a

traveller, who requested a place in the carriage, paying half of the costs.

At the first word of Wayer's, Pro guessed the story: "I do not sell places in my carriage," he said to the consul.

"This man will be in despair."

"Well," Pro said, "I take him for nothing, but then he can afford me some little services. I hope he is not capricious? else I will put him out on the road."

"The most complaisant person in the world; you can entirely dispose of him. I thank you in his name."

And Wayer ran to Prince Galitzin to acquaint him with his triumph.

In the evening Pro and the *bonâ fide* started. Pro was silent the whole way, till they reached the first post station. There he went into the room, and lay down on the sofa.

"Hollo!" he cried to his companion, "come here, take off my boots."

"I beg your pardon; for whom do you take me?"

"I tell you take off my boots, or I will leave you on the road; I'll not keep you."

So the police officer really took off his boots.

"Now take and clean them."

"No; that surpasses all description."

"Well, stay here."

The officer cleaned the boots.

At the following station, the same went on with his clothes, and Pro tormented him to the frontier.

To grant some consolation to this martyr of police, they directed the attention of the Chief Magistrates towards him, and they made him, at last, Police Commissioner.

The third day after my arrival in Peters-

burgh, the porter came to ask me upon whose certificate I had arrived in Petersburg. The only certificate which I had was my dismissal, which had been sent with my petition to the Governor-General, when I made the request for a passport. I gave him my card, and he brought it back with the observation, that the billet was sufficient for leaving Moscow, but not for entering Petersburgh; together with that, a policeman came, with an invitation to the office of the Chief of the Police.

I went to the office of Kakoschkin (during the whole day illuminated by lamps.) In about an hour's time he arrived. Kakoschkin, better than any of the other creatures of his rank, represented a servant of the Tzar—a man without ideas, a man of all work, without conscience, without reflection. He served and took numerous perquisites, as naturally as a bird is wont to sing.

Perowsky told Nicholas how many bribes Kakoschkin took.

"Yes," Nicholas answered; "but I can sleep tranquilly, knowing that Kakoschkin is master of the police in Petersburgh."

I looked at him, whilst he was talking to somebody else. What a withered, worn out, old, and strengthless countenance; over which was curling a wig, that formed a terrible contrast with the furrowed lines and wrinkles of the face.

He conversed a little while in German with some German ladies, with such familiarity, as to show that they were old acquaintances, at which the ladies laughed and whispered. Then he approached me, and looking on the floor, said, with a rude voice:

"By an Imperial order, you are forbidden to come to Petersburgh!"

"Yes; but I have a dispensation."

"Where is it?"

"I have it with me."

"Show it? What! you twice make use of the same dispensation?"

"How that, twice?"

"I recollect that you came here before."

"I did not come."

"And what is your business here?"

"My business is with Count Orloff."

"How is that? You have been at the Count's!"

"No; but I was in the third division."

"Did you see Dubelt?"

"I saw him."

"And I, yesterday, saw Orloff. He says that he gave you no dispensation."

"It is in your hands."

"God knows when this has been written, and the time is past."

"It would, however, be strange, on my

part, to come without permission, and to begin here with a visit to General Dubelt."

"If you do not wish for something disagreeable, be so good as to go back, and not to stay longer than twenty-four hours."

"I did not intend to stay very long; but I must first wait for an answer from Count Orloff."

"I cannot allow this; and Count Orloff is much displeased that you came without permission."

"Will you allow me to have my paper. I will go immediately to see the Count."

"No; I must keep the paper."

"But this letter, written to me, with my name, is the only document I have."

"The letter remains with me, as a proof that you have been in Petersburgh. I advise you earnestly to leave, before it gets worse."

He nodded his head, and went out of the

room. With such people, would it be possible to talk reasonably?

The old General Toutchkof had a process with the attorney. The Starost (the eldest) of his village accepted orders of government, which he did not fulfil.

The tribunal decided to have the costs paid by the proprietor, who had given him a procuration; but the proprietor had never authorized him, and Toutchkoff said so. The affair was presented to the senate, and the latter decided: "General Toutchkoff has given a procuration to the Starost; consequently, he is responsible."

Toutchkoff answered, "Not having given any procuration, consequently—"

A year passed; all at once, the police notifies a warning to pay the sum; "for the general having given the procuration, consequently—"

And the General answers, "As I have never given a procuration, consequently—"

I do not know how the affair terminated, as I left Russia before the conclusion.

All this is no exception; it is entirely normal. Kakoschkin holds a paper, of which he does not even doubt the authenticity, on which are written the number and the date, easy to be established, wherein it is also written that I am allowed to come to Petersburgh, and, nevertheless, he says, "As you have arrived without permission, go back again;" and he puts the paper into his pocket.

Tchaadajeff was, indeed, right, in saying of all these gentlemen, "What *polissons* they are!"

I went into the third division, and told Dubelt what had happened. Dubelt burst out laughing; "How they entangle every affair! Kakoschkin has told the count that

you have arrived without permission; and the count has said that you are to be sent back. But, since I have explained the affair to him, you may stay as long as you like. I will immediately order them to write to the police. But, as for your affair, the count does not think it useful for you to ask for a passport. The Emperor has refused you twice; the last time at the intercession of Count Strogonoff; if he refuses you a third time, then, surely, during the Emperor's life, you will not go to the watering-place."

"But what shall I do?" I asked, with terror—for the idea of travelling and liberty had grown together in my mind.

"Go to Moscow," Dubelt said; "the count will write to the governor-general a private letter, saying, that you wish to go abroad, on account of the health of your wife; and asking him, as he, of course,

knows the best of you, if the surveillance of the police can be suspended. To such a question, it is impossible to answer, no. We propose, then, to the Emperor, to suspend the surveillance of the police over you; and then, you may ask your passport, as all other persons do, and go, with God's grace, to any watering-place you like."

This seemed to me extremely complicated, and even like a trap laid for me. They could not refuse me, because it would have drawn upon them the scorn of Madame Scherebzoff, whom I saw every day. Once, far from Petersburgh, I could return no more, and to correspond with these gentlemen is rather difficult. I communicated a part of my doubts to Dubelt, who began then to be irritated, which he showed by smiling still more, and still more twinkling his eyes.

"General," I said at last, "I do not know,

but it seems to me Strogonoff's proposition had not even been presented to the Emperor."

Dubelt rang the bell, and ordered them to bring in the record, and, whilst waiting for it, he said, apparently good humouredly, "The Count and myself recommend to you, in order that you may get a passport, the way which seems to us the most secure; if you have means more sure, employ them, you may be certain that we will not hinder you."

"The General is altogether right," said a voice from the grave. I turned round and saw, standing behind me, Sartinsky, still more bare-headed and old, who had received me five years before, in the same third division. "I advise you to conform to his opinion, if you wish to go away."

I thanked him.

"There is the record," Dubelt said, taking a great book from out the hands of the

official. (What would I not give to read it all through; in 1850, I saw likewise a record about myself in the cabinet of Carlier, at Paris; it would be interesting to compare them). Having turned over the leaves for a while, he presented it to me open, and pointed to a writing of Benkendorf to the Emperor, relating to a letter from Count Strogonoff, who asked permission for me to go, for six months, to a watering-place in Germany. On the border was written, in large letters, with a pencil: "Too soon, yet."

Those words were passed over with varnish, and at the bottom stood: "By the hand of his Imperial Majesty, too soon. Count A. Benkendorf."

"Do you now believe?" Dubelt asked.

"I believe," I answered; "and so fully do I credit your words, that I set off to-morrow for Moscow."

"Walk about here as much as you like, the police will no longer molest you, and, before you leave, come once more here; if you like, I will show you the letter to Scherbatoff. Farewell, and a pleasant journey, if I should not see you again."

"A pleasant journey," Sartinsky added.

We parted, as may be seen, in great friendship.

When I came home, I found an invitation to the Police Commissioner of the second part of the Admiralty.

He asked me when I thought of setting off.

"To-morrow morning."

"Good heaven! So it is true—indeed, I thought—the general said you were going to-day. Probably his excellency has accorded you the delay, but I want to be assured of it."

"You may—you may! By the bye, give me a certificate for leaving."

"I will write it for you in the office, and send it in about two hours. By what conveyance will you travel?"

"By the first one, if I find a place."

"Well, and in case you find no place, would you be so kind as to let us know it."

"With pleasure."

In the evening, the policeman came again. The Commissioner of Police ordered him to tell me that he could not deliver me a card of leave, and that I should come the following morning at eight o'clock to the Chief of the Police.

What devilish and tiresome proceedings!

I did not go at eight o'clock, but in the course of the morning, I went to the office. The Commissioner of the Police was there, and said to me:

"You cannot travel; there is an order from the third division."

"What has happened?"

"I do not know. The general ordered me not to give the card for leaving the town."

"Does the Secretary know it?"

"How should he not know it?" And he showed me a colonel in uniform, with a sword, sitting at a large table in the adjoining room. I asked him if he knew anything of the affair.

"Yes," he said, "an order came; there it is." He read it once more over, and gave it to me. Dubelt wrote that I had full right to come to Petersburgh, and that I might stay as long as I would.

"And that is the reason why you will not let me go? Excuse me, but I cannot help laughing. Yesterday, the chief of the Police sends me away from here against my will; to-day I am to stay here against my will; and all this for the mere reason that, in that paper,

it is said that I may stay as long as I would."

The affair was so clear that even the colonel-secretary could not help laughing.

"For what reason should I throw away the money for two places which I have taken in the diligence. Be so kind as to write my card."

"I cannot, but will ask the general."

Kakoschkin ordered them to write the card, and in passing by, on his way to the office, said reproachfully to me: "What does this mean? At one time you will stay, at another you will go."

I did not answer him.

When we drove in the evening through the toll-gate, and I once more beheld the unbounded distance, spreading out before me, I looked up to the sky and made an oath to myself never to return to this town

of absolutism, of sky-blue, green, and every other coloured police, of official disorder, of liveried impertinence, of gendarme's poetry, in which only Dubelt was civil, and this solitary civil man was the chief of the third division.

Tcherbatoff unwillingly answered Orloff's application. His secretary was not a colonel, but a pietist, detesting me on account of my articles, as an "Atheist and Hegelian." I drove to him to speak about the affair. The pious secretary, with an oily voice and christian unction, said that the governor-general knew nothing about me, that he did not doubt my highly moral qualities, but that he ought first to refer to the chief of the police. It was evident that he meant to delay the affair, moreover, the gentleman did not take bribes.

In the Russian service there are no more

terrible people than the disinterested ones, only the Germans are naïvely honest; in Russia, when a Russian does not take money, he takes other things, and is then indeed such a malefactor as is frightful to see.

Fortunately the chief of the police recommended me well.

About ten days later, returning home, I met at the door a gendarme. In Russia the appearance of a policeman is like a slate that falls from the roof upon one's head, and therefore I waited not without a particularly disagreeable feeling for what he would have to say to me; he gave me a parcel. Count Orloff announced to me that, according to the imperial permission, the police surveillance was suspended. So I got the right to have a passport for abroad

Well, let us be glad!—I go!
I hold my passport—
I go! what shall I find? I do not know,
My heart is full of faith, and yet the future veiled;
God knows what it will bring! It is with fear,
That I thus stand before the gates of Europe;
Vague dreams pass through my mind,
And I, I shake my head, sadly with apprehension.

HUMOR; *A Russian Poem.*

APPENDIX.

As a supplement to our, and Sekolowsky's story, I will add something about the trial which preceded ours; something about the story of poor Polejayeff. We will begin with the last. I have heard it more than once from the poet himself.

Polejayeff was already known for his excellent poems, while still a student at the University of Moscow. Amongst other things, he had written a humourous poem, "Sachka," a parody of Puschkin's "Oneguine." He had attacked in it, without restraint, in a humourous tone, and in pleasing verses, a great many things, and the Czar himself had not

been spared. This poem circulated in manuscript from hand to hand.

When Nicholas had sent to the gallows Pestel, Muravieff, and their friends,* he celebrated his coronation at Moscow in the autumn of 1826. Other monarchs avail themselves of such festivals, as opportunities for the distribution of pardons and amnesties; but Nicholas, after having celebrated his apotheosis, commenced immediately to overthrow the "enemies of the country," as Robespierre did, after his stupid *Fête de Dieu.*

The secret police handed over to him Polejayeff's poem. And lo! one night the rector of the University awakens Polejayeff; orders him to put on his uniform, and conducts him to the office of the University. There, a warden awaits him, and after having looked at him, to see if there was no button wanting on his

* The noble Russian revolutionists of the year 1826.

uniform, or no superfluous one, he invited Polejayeff, without further explanation, to enter a carriage with him, and drove him off. He took him to the Minister of Public Instruction. The Minister put Polejayeff again into a carriage, and took him straight to the Emperor.

Prince Lieven (at that time, Minister of Public Instruction) entered the inner apartment, and left Polejayeff in an ante-room, in which, although it was not yet six o'clock in the morning, several courtiers and high dignitaries were waiting. The courtiers imagined that the young man had distinguished himself by something, and immediately entered into conversation with him. A senator asked him, if he would be inclined to give lessons to his son.

Polejayeff was summoned to the cabinet. The Emperor was leaning against a writing-table, and talking with Lieven, while holding a manuscript in his hand. He turned on

the new comer a piercing and malevolent look.

"Didst thou write these verses?" he asked.

"Yes, your Majesty," answered Polejayeff.

"Then, Prince, I will show you a specimen of University education. I will show you what our young men are learning there."

"Read this manuscript aloud," he added, turning again to Polejayeff.

Palejayeff was overcome by such a violent emotion, that he was unable to read. Nicholas's look was fixed upon him immoveably. I know this look, and know nothing more terrible, more hopeless, than this neutral tinted, cold, leaden eye."

"I cannot read it," said Polejayeff.

"Read!" thundered the imperial sergeant.

This roar restored Polejayeff's strength; he opened the manuscript. "Never," he said afterwards, "have I seen my 'Sachka' copied so well, and on such beautiful paper."

At first he had some difficulty in reading; but then growing more and more enthusiastic, he read the poem aloud, and in a spirited tone, to the end. At the particularly cutting passages, the Emperor made a sign with his hand to the Prince. The minister covered his eyes, so much was he disgusted.

"What do you say to that," asked Nicholas, when the reading was concluded. "I will put an end to this moral ruin; these are the dregs, the residuum—I will root them out entirely. What is his conduct?"

The minister did not know anything about his conduct; but at this moment, very likely, something that was like a human feeling awoke in him, and he said:

"Without reproach, your Majesty."

"This testimony saves thee; but thou must be punished as an example to others. Wilt thou enter the military service?"

Polejayeff was silent. "I give thee the

means by military service, of exculpating thyself. Well, art thou willing ?"

" I must obey," answered Polejayeff.

The Emperor approached him, put his hand on his shoulder, and thus addressed him : " Thy fate depends on thyself; should I forget thee, thou canst write to me."

He then kissed him on his forehead.

Ten times, at least, Polejayeff has repeated to me the story of the kiss, because it appeared perfectly incredible to me. Polejayeff swore that it was true.

From the Emperor, Polejayeff, was conducted to Field-Marshal Diebitsh, who inhabited the imperial palace. Diebitsh was still asleep; they went to awaken him. He came out yawning, read the paper that had been presented to him, and asked the adjutant, " is this the man ?"

" It is your Excellency."

" Well, all right, enter the military service."

"I have been all my life in the military service. You see I have risen; perhaps you will, also, be one day Field-Marshal."

This absurd and out-of-place joke was the welcome which Diebitsh gave him. Polejayeff was taken off to the camp and made a soldier.

Three years passed away. Polejayeff remembered the words of the Emperor, and wrote him a letter. He got no answer. Some months later, he wrote a second letter. No answer. Convinced that his letters did not reach the address, he left the regiment, and escaped, in order himself to present a petition to the Emperor. But he acted imprudently. He visited his friends in Moscow, and was highly honoured and welcomed by them. That could not remain a secret. He was seized at Twer, and sent back to the regiment as a deserter, on foot, and in chains. The court-martial condemned him to run the gauntlet. The sentence was sent to the Emperor for confirmation.

Polejayeff was resolved to terminate his life before the punishment could take place. After having sought in vain in prison for some sharp weapon, he confided his intention to an old soldier who loved him. The old soldier understood him, and honoured his wish. As soon as the old man learned that the answer from the Emperor had arrived, he brought him a bayonet, and, presenting it to him, said through his tears, "I have sharpened it myself."

The Emperor did not confirm the sentence. Then Polejayeff wrote his beautiful poem, commencing—

"Disconsolate I succumbed,
My evil genius triumphed."

Polejayeff was sent to the Caucasus. Here, by way of distinction, he was advanced to the rank of a sergeant.

Years and years went on, his sad position, and the entire hopelessness of ever being libe-

rated from it broke his heart, he found it impossible to become a police-poet, and to sing the virtues of Nicholas, and still this would have been the only way of disengaging himself from the knapsack.

Stay! there was still another way, and he preferred it, to give himself to drunkenness in order to forget. There exists a terrible poem by him, addressed to—'To brandy.'

He asked to be removed from his regiment, to a regiment of carabiniers, stationed at Moscow. It was granted, and his fate became a great deal better by the change. But consumption was already at work on his chest.

At that time, in the year 1833, I made his acquaintance.

Nearly four years more he had to suffer, and then he died in a soldier's hospital.

When one of his friends came to ask for his body for interment, nobody knew what

had become of him. The corpses are a matter of trade in the military hospitals; they are sold to the University, to the faculty of medicine; they are used as skeletons, &c., &c. At last the dead body of poor Polejayeff was found in a cellar, thrown among other corpses; rats had already eaten one of the legs. After his death his poems were edited, and it was intended to put in his portrait, representing him wrapped in a soldier's cloak. But the censors thought this would be improper, and the poor martyr is represented with officer's epaulettes, as he had been advanced to the rank of an officer when lying on his death bed.

In the year 1827, the brothers Kritsky were arrested at the university. They have disappeared; nobody knows what they have done, nobody knows what has been done with them.

The last *fournée* (to speak in the style of the

year 1794), from the university of Moscow, and which preceded our affair, were sent to the regiments and the convict colonies in the year 1833. I knew amongst them Kostenezky, Kohlreif, Antonovitch; they were all pure and noble-minded youths. Before all Kohlreif is living in my memory. He was the son of a Lutheran clergyman at Moscow, a highly gifted musician, and an excellent companion. All the simplicity and naiveness of a German youth was preserved in him, disengaged by Russian society from the paltriness and absurdity of German fashions. Of delicate health, gentle and kind, he was ruined by the military service in seven years. Polejayeff was advanced to the rank of officer on account of consumption. Kohlreif was pardoned on account of consumption. He returned to Moscow to die in the arms of his father.

They were, like us, judged by a special commission. Government is so thoroughly

convinced of the incapacity of the ordinary courts of justice, that they, in every particular case name a particular commission, who judge according to unknown instructions, and dictate punishments not according to the code, but according to inspiration.

After that gigantic conspiracy, which included all that was beautiful, youthful, strong and distinguished by talent, courage and birth in Russia, all the later attempts at secret associations have been unsuccessful, as they were limited to smaller circles, and dissolved before they could make any demonstration. Internal intellectual activity absorbed the direct political one.

However, at the sight of all these persecutions and measures of government, at the sight of those thousands of Poles who wander to Siberia, at the sight of serfdom, and of the soldiers who are flogged to death—it cannot fail, that especially among the youthful

population, attempts are made to form new associations, new conspiracies. In consequence of this, new banishments to Siberia, the regiments, and to the Caucasus periodically occur.

And all that goes on in the same way, without ever stopping simultaneously, with an incessant and most zealous activity of the thinking mind, to solve the sphinx problem of Russian life.

I never knew Sunguroff. He was more severely punished than all the others.

After having terminated his studies at the University, he entered the public service, and married. He was a landed proprietor in the district of Moscow. They pretended that he was the principal criminal, and sentenced him to be sent to the convict colonies.

When he had arrived at the first resting-place, in the Woronzoff mountains, he asked permission of the officer, to go out of the

damp peasant's hut, that was filled with convicts, into the open air. The officer, a young man of twenty years, went himself with him, upon the high road. Sunguroff availed himself of a favourable moment, turned from the road, and fled.

Probably, he was well acquainted with the locality, and succeeded in escaping from the officer. But, the following day, the gendarmes came upon his track; he, seeing there was no hope of safety, cut his throat. The gendarmes brought him, senseless and bleeding to Moscow. The unhappy officer was degraded to a common soldier.

Sunguroff did not die; he was tried a second time, not as a political criminal, but as a colonist deserter. His head was half-shaved. This is an original measure, probably inherited from the Tatars, which is used to prevent desertion, and shows even more than any other bodily punishment, the extent to

which all human dignity is despised in the Russian government. To this exterior disgrace was added *one* stroke with the whip within the walls of the house of correction—a new abasement—a new baseness. After that, Sunguroff was sent to Siberia.

His name was once more mentioned to me, and then, never again.

At Wiatka I once met in the street a young physician who had been a university companion of mine. He was on a journey to some smelting-house. We got into chat about past times and acquaintances.

"Alas! do you know whom I have met on my way hither," said the doctor. "I sat one day in the distance of Nyjny Novgorod, at a post station, waiting for horses. The weather was horrible. An officer who conducted a party of prisoners, entered the room to warm himself. We began to talk with each other. When he heard that I was a

physician, he requested me to go with him, to examine one of the convicts, and to tell him if he were in fact very ill, or if he only feigned to be so. I went with him, of course, with the intention of affirming, at any rate, the assertion of the convict. In a small cottage I found about eighty men, laden with chains, shaved and not shaved, women and children. They all made way for the officer, and we saw a human form wrapped up in the uniform coat of an exile, lying on some straw in a corner of the dirty room.

"'That is the sick man,' said the officer.

"I had no need to lie. The unfortunate man had a very strong inflammatory fever. Haggard and exhausted by the prison and the journey, with a half-shaved head and a long beard, he was dreadful to look at. Unconscious, he kept turning his eyes round, and begging for something to drink.

"You feel very ill, do you not, brother?"

I asked the sick man, and whispered to the officer, "It is impossible for him to proceed."

The sick man fixed his eyes on me, and muttered:

"'Is it you?' He uttered my name. 'You don't recognize me,' he added, with a voice that pierced my very heart like a dagger.

"'Excuse me,' I said, taking the dry, burning hand, 'I cannot recollect.'

"'I am Sunguroff,' he replied.

"Poor Sunguroff!" repeated the doctor, shaking his head.

"Well," I asked, "did they leave him there?"

"No; but they laid him in a cart."

THE END.

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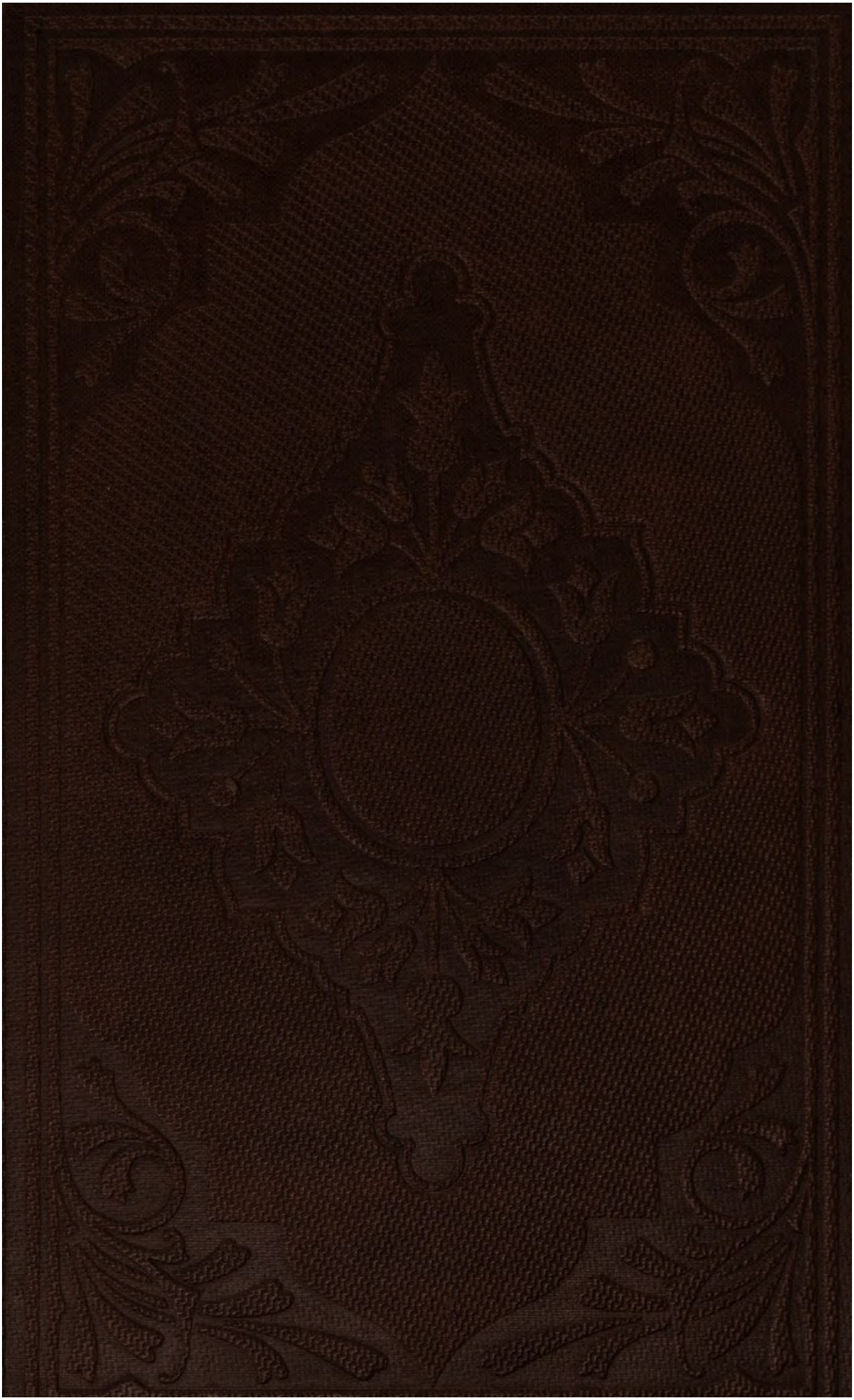
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