RUSSIAN CONSPIRATORS IN SIBERIA.

A PERSONAL NARRATIVE.

BY BARON R——

A RUSSIAN DEKABRIST.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY EVELYN ST. JOHN MILDMAY.

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PREFACE.

THE subject of this book will be new to many of its readers; the rising of the soldiers at St. Petersburg in 1825 is but little known or remembered, and there are few people who are aware of more than the fact that those who took part in the insurrection which broke out in the December of that year are called Dekabrists * in Russia, and that they made a vain attempt to take advantage of the succession of Nicholas to the throne to effect great political changes.

When these notes were first made, the author had no idea of their going beyond his own immediate circle —his children, his nearest relatives, and the companions with whom he had spent the most memorable years of his life, the years of his imprisonment and residence in Siberia and Caucasia. Meanwhile times and circumstances have so entirely changed that there is reason to think that this account might be interesting to the public; most of those who were our judges are

* The month of December is called in Russian "Dekaber," hence the name *Dekabrist*, "December man."

dead, and of the 121 comrades who were condemned on account of the conspiracy of 1825 only fourteen are still alive, and but three of those took any part in the events of that fatal December day; so there is no reason why these notes should not now be published.

These events now have nothing but an historical interest, and the recalling of them cannot be looked upon as revolutionary, or in any way dangerous to the State, either by the Government or the public. The only result will be to make the real facts known, and to give those who take an interest in the fate of the Dekabrists some account of their characters and way of life.

There is certainly no lack of writings upon the subject; many of my comrades have published fragments in Russian upon that period.* Baron Korff has put out an official statement, Kowalewski has written a work discussing the part taken by Count Bludow in the Inquiry Commission, and finally, T. H. Schnitzler has given detailed, and for the most part trustworthy, accounts of what took place; to say nothing of other writers, as Ancelot, Lesure, Dupré de St. Maure and Custine.

I feel that many of my companions, had they wished to do so, would have been much better qualified than I am to describe our experiences. A complete relation of

* E. Obolensky: *Notice of K. Rylejew;* likewise *Bestuchew.* J. Puschtschin: *The Lyceum and A. Puschkin.* J. J. Kuschkin: *The Trial before the Inquiry Commission.* N. Murawjew: *The Proceedings of the Inquiry Commission.* Lunin: *The Secret Society.* Bassargin: *Die Schule der Kolonnen.* N. Turgenjew: *La Russie et les Russes.*

all those events has hitherto been wanting—nothing, in fact, was known of our fate in Siberia; besides which, the books above named were entirely restricted to the Russian public. It is very unlikely that those who are yet alive will trouble themselves to give any account of their lives; it has therefore fallen to me, one of the few survivors, to spend part of my remaining days on earth in giving a plain but truthful narration of what I have gone through myself, as well as what I have seen and heard.

I have confined myself almost exclusively to my own experiences, and only added here and there what I have heard from authentic sources and from reliable authority. That I have been faithful to the truth, and have avoided all party feeling, will be acknowledged not only by those who know the events here alluded to, but also by my readers, who, I trust, will see that I feel neither bitterness nor anger in thinking over the trials I have suffered, but that I have only lasting gratitude for all the unfailing kindness which has been shown to me and my comrades in grievous times. I know well enough that men's characters and actions are very much determined by the spirit of the times, and the circumstances surrounding them, which may make us feel hardly towards those who have been harsh towards us.

Yes, I would entreat my readers—and especially those among them whose hearts burn with indignation and grief as they read my narrative—always to bear in

mind the circumstances under which we were condemned and punished: they will then see there was reason enough for our having been treated thus. The same explanation also holds good for those who see names dear to them taking part in deeds which would certainly not be done now.

I need say no more of these recollections of my own and my dear companions' lives and sufferings. After many false and unjust judgments of us Dekabrists, and also of our opponents, have been sent forth to the world, the truth and nothing but the truth must be told. Even in our own days, when the great reforms which have taken place in Russia bear witness to the need which existed for them, so curious an episode from the history of the past, brought out in all its details, cannot fail to be interesting,—in narrating which it is hoped that the author will be exonerated from all wish to do more than give a true and faithful account of the trials and struggles endured by himself and his friends.

RUSSIAN CONSPIRATORS IN SIBERIA:

BEING

MEMOIRS OF A DEKABRIST.

CHAPTER I.

THE REVOLT OF THE 14TH DECEMBER, 1825.

EARLY on the morning of the 27th November I entered the drawing-room of my dwelling, in which I had heard a noise. A joiner, who was employed at the Court, and to whom I had given the parquet to keep in order, was at work there. He asked me, with a mysterious look, "Have you heard of the great misfortune? The Emperor has just died at Taganrog." All those to whom I spoke of it that day, assured me of the truth of the fact. The sensation it created everywhere, I cannot attempt to describe. Our regiment assembled towards evening in the street opposite to our hospital. The colonel of the regiment, General C. J. Bistram, informed me, with a trembling voice, of the death of

the Emperor Alexander, and congratulated us upon the new Emperor Constantine's accession, waved his hat, and cried "hurrah." Tears were running down his cheeks, as well as those of many of the soldiers, especially those who had fought under Alexander in the Franco-German campaign, and whom he had always called his dear comrades. At his command the cheer resounded through the regiment; and we then returned to our barracks quietly but sadly. All the remaining regiments of Guards took the oath with the same feeling; grief overpowered every other sentiment. If the will of Alexander had been communicated to them in an official manner, the officers and privates would have taken the oath to the Grand Duke Nicholas quietly and willingly.

The fatal news had arrived at the Winter Palace at the moment that they were singing a Te Deum for the restoration of Alexander's health. The Grand Duke Nicholas made up his mind at once to take the oath of allegiance to the Grand Duke Constantine, who was residing at Warsaw, and himself received the oath for his elder brother from the inner guards of the palace. Count Miloradowitch and Prince A. N. Galitzin, who knew the tenor of Alexander's will, exerted themselves in vain to prevent his so doing, but Nicholas would not hear of any objection, and only replied shortly, "Whoever refuses to follow me and to swear allegiance to my elder brother, is mine and his country's enemy." The oath was taken throughout the kingdom without the

slightest opposition; it was, nevertheless, everywhere known that Constantine had abdicated, and that a will of Alexander's was in existence transferring the government to Nicholas. The knowledge of this fact lay like a heavy weight on the mind of the nation. False reports, conjectures, and expectations were daily arising, producing great fear and excitement throughout society. The members of the Senate knew that, since the year 1823, a will of Alexander's lay among their archives with this inscription in his own hand, "To be preserved till I demand it, but, in case of my death, to be opened before anything else is done." Of this will copies were kept for security in the archives of the Senate, the Synod, and the Cathedral of Uspenski in Moscow. It will be asked to whom the blame of this mischievous measure is to be attributed: Alexander, who had omitted to recognize Constantine's resignation of the throne; the Senate, who had not acted up to their duty; or the Grand Duke Nicholas? Knowing, as Nicholas had all along, of the existence of the secret societies, and the names of many of their members, he may have wished to avoid in this way any occasion of disturbance or discontent.

From a private point of view the members of the Senate might perhaps be justified in their motives, but certainly not in a political, for their duty was to act according to Alexander's will, and to lay aside any personal feeling.

Had Alexander's will been opened on the 27th

November, it is my firm belief that all, without hesitation, would have sworn allegiance to the Grand Duke Nicholas; at all events, the rising would not have had the excuse of the second oath of allegiance—that oath which annulled the one of sixteen days before, and at the same time showed that the will of Alexander had not been respected, as it should have been according to the existing law.

The interregnum lasted from the 27th November to the 14th December. Subsequently this period of time was obliterated by a manifesto ordering the day of the Emperor Nicholas's accession to be kept on the 19th November, the day of Alexander's death.

The Grand Duke Constantine, to whom the whole kingdom swore allegiance, remained quietly at Warsaw, firm in his determination to resign; he received no congratulation, he opened no ministerial packets if the imperial title was added to the superscription of his name. The Grand Duke Michael had been sent to meet the new Emperor; he waited at the Livonian town of Neumal, for his arrival, or for reliable intelligence as to his abdication. In the meantime, everything at St. Petersburg was paralyzed by this painful state of expectation and uncertainty. No music was heard on parade, the women of the higher and middle classes wore mourning, requiems were sung in all the churches; no one could escape the universal depression.

I have already said that the Emperor Nicholas had

knowledge of the existence of the secret societies,* of their object and members, and that they were known also to persons of his immediate surrounding. It will at once be asked what measures were taken by him to anticipate the impending revolt? None whatever; everything was left to chance! In society, among the officers, all kinds of reports were circulated, which often contradicted each other; they grumbled about Alexander's will, they discussed the right of Constantine to resign, and the magnanimity of Nicholas, who, for fear of infringing the claims of his brother, was unwilling to take advantage of the decided right to the throne conferred upon him by Alexander's will. Nicholas, according to his own showing, believed that he possessed neither the love of his people nor of his troops.

On the 6th December I visited the inner guard in the Winter Palace. As usual on *fête* days, long rows of members of the household and officers stood in the saloons to salute the Imperial family on their way to church. No conversation was heard; isolated groups drew together and whispered anxiously.

On the evening of the 10th December I received a note from a comrade, Captain N. P. Repin, begging me to come to him at once. It was late; I found him alone, walking up and down with his watch in his hand. In few words he imparted to me that the long-foreseen rising was at hand; a fitting opportunity was come for

* *See* Appendix. Sketch of the Secret Societies.

action, in order to avoid the risk of internal discord or a civil war. Speeches and argument would now be of little avail; material force was needed,—a few battalions and cannon they *must* have. He wished for my co-operation in raising our first battalion: this, as I only commanded one section,* I roundly refused; the readiness of the subalterns to join might be depended upon, not so the captains of companies. An attempt was still possible, which was all the more likely to be successful, as it was asserted that Colonel A. F. Moller with his battalion would assist. The same evening I repaired with Repin to Conrad Rylejew's; he lived in the American Company's house, near the Blue Bridge. We found him alone, reading: he had wrapped a large handkerchief round him on account of a sore throat. In his look and countenance could be read his enthusiasm for the great cause; his speech was clear and convincing; he pointed out that the new oath to Nicholas now impending would cause great confusion among the soldiers, which, with little trouble, could be advantageously used to further their plan of a change of system. Soon after, Bestuchew and Tchepin Rostowsky entered. After a conference upon various propositions we separated, to have another consultation at the first opportunity.

On the 11th December, I found, to my great

* *Translator's note.*—*Zŭg*, section—The *zŭg* varies in different countries: perhaps *subdivision* would express it better, though *section* is the literal translation of the word.

annoyance, sixteen young officers of my regiment at Repin's, discussing the events of the day—they were partly initiated into the secret of the undertaking. I succeeded in calling our host into a side-room, where I represented to him how ill-advised was this hasty initiation of novices. He replied that in the moment of action they would be able to rely upon every one of those present.

Youth allows itself to be so easily carried away. It acknowledges no hindrance, no impossibility; the greater the difficulty and danger the greater the thirst for action. Among all those present, not one was a member of a secret society, save the host and me, and yet they all lent a willing hand to the projected enterprise.

On the 12th December I assisted at a conference at Prince E. P. Obolensky's, at which the chiefs of the conspiracy residing at St. Petersburg took part; they deliberated upon the means at hand and the impending crisis. The chief command of the armed force was entrusted to Prince Trubetzkoy, in the event of an experienced leader not arriving from Moscow in time. It was decided to assemble the revolting troops on the Senate Square, to collect as many men as possible there, and, under pretext of defending Constantine's rights, to refuse the oath of obedience and allegiance to the Emperor Nicholas; and, finally, if victory remained on our side, to declare the throne vacant, and appoint a

Provisional Government consisting of five members, to which should belong, among others, N. S. Mordwinow and Speransky.* This government, aided by the Diet and Senate, was to be at the head of affairs till men selected from the whole kingdom should have laid the foundation for a new Constitution. It was not yet known for certain from how many battalions or companies, or from which regiments, we could obtain support. In the meantime, the tumult which the new oath of allegiance would excite among the privates must, at all risks, be turned to account. The Winter Palace, the chief seats of Government, the Banks, and Post-Office were to be occupied by a sufficient body of troops to prevent disorder or individual action. In case the number of troops was too small, and the enterprise should be a failure, a retreat to the military colony of Novgorod, in which they would have a reserve, was intended. These measures were not found strict or decided enough. To all objections and suggestions the same reply was made: "You cannot have a trial of such an enterprise, as if it was a parade!" All those who took part in this meeting were fully prepared to act. When I heard them confidently reckoning upon some of the battalions of my

* The Privy Councillor Speransky had been one of the most influential advisers of Alexander the First in his early years; shortly before the outbreak of the French Revolution he had been overthrown by an intrigue, and banished from the palace. He passed for a Liberal. Completely reinstated under the Emperor Nicholas, Speransky played a conspicuous part, as author of the great Russian code of laws.

regiment, whose disposition I knew too well for me to place any dependence on them, I held it to be my duty to represent to them the difficulty—nay, impossibility—of attempting an insurrection thus unprepared. "There may be little prospect of success, it is true; but a step must be taken—a beginning must be made; strike at once, and the first blow will bear fruit," was the answer. The words, "A beginning must be made," still ring in my ear. The speaker was the enthusiastic Conrad Rylejew, one of the leaders of the conspiracy.

On the 13th December some officers of my regiment came to see me. To their question how they should conduct themselves if they had to take the guard anywhere on the day of the outbreak, I replied, shortly and concisely, that, for the public safety, they must stoutly defend their posts. However firm might be my resolve to adhere to my friends, I thought it unadvisable to entangle others in my uncertain fortunes. On the evening of the same day I received intelligence that the following day was appointed for taking the oath. In the night a messenger from the regiment brought the order that the officers in a body were to present themselves at the residence of the Colonel of the regiment at seven o'clock in the morning.

With the dawn, all the officers of the regiment assembled at the Colonel's house, who welcomed them with the announcement of a new Emperor; he there-

upon read aloud Alexander's will, Constantine's resignation of the throne, and the new manifesto of Nicholas. In the presence of all the officers I stepped forward and said to the General: "If all the papers read by your Excellency are authentic, which I have no right to doubt, how is it to be explained that we did not take the oath of allegiance to the Emperor Nicholas on the 27th November?"

The General replied with visible embarrassment, "You are making a needless difficulty; this has been duly considered by older and more experienced men than you. Gentlemen, return to your battalions and administer the oath." Our second battalion under Colonel Moller had the guard in the Winter Palace, and the posts of the first quarter of the town. The first battalion took the oath at the barracks, with the exception of my section of sharpshooters, who had the day before taken the sentry duty at the Galley Port, and were not yet off guard. From the barracks I repaired to the Winter Palace for the parade, which took place without any ceremony. Everything was as yet quiet, no disturbance was to be observed. On returning to my house, I found a note from Rylejew, according to which they were expecting me in the quarters of the Moscow Regiment. It was then between ten and eleven. As I approached the Isaac Bridge in my sledge, I saw a dense mass of people at the other end of it, and on the Place a division of the Moscow Regiment drawn up

in square. I pushed through the crowd on foot, went straight to the square, which was standing on the further side of the Monument of Peter the First, and was greeted with loud cheers. In the square stood Prince Tchepin Rostowsky, leaning on his sabre, tired and exhausted with the conflict in the barracks, where he had, after encountering the greatest difficulty, refused the oath, wounded the Brigadier commanding the regiment and battalion severely, and finally brought off his company with the colours; Michael Bestuchew's company, and a handful or two of men from the remaining companies, followed him. The two captains stood next each other waiting for assistance. J. J. Puschtschin stood dauntless and immovable in the square; he had left the army two years before, and though he was in civilian's dress, the soldiers willingly obeyed his commands. In answer to my question, "Where I could find the Dictator Trubetzkoy?" he replied, "He has vanished; if you are able, bring us more men; if not, there are victims enough already without you."

I hastily returned to the barracks of my regiment (the Finland guard of Chasseurs), where there only remained the first battalion, and my section of sharpshooters, who had been in the meantime released from guard. I went through all four companies, ordered the men to dress at once, to screw in their flints, take cartridges with them, and start at once in rank and file, with the understanding that we must hasten to help our

comrades. In half-an-hour the battalion was ready; only a few officers, however, fell in. No one knew by whose orders the soldiers were turned out. Adjutants on horseback galloped about incessantly: one of them was sent to our Brigadier with the order to lead our battalion on to the Isaac Place. We marched in columns of companies. At the Naval Cadet College we found the Adjutant-General, Count Komorowsky, who had been sent to meet us on horseback. On the middle of the Isaac Bridge we were halted, and ordered to load sharp: almost all the soldiers crossed themselves. Confident of the spirit of my soldiers, my first effort was to cut my way with them through the Regiment of Carbineers before us, and through a company of the Preobrashenski * Regiment, which had possession of the end of the bridge by the Senate Place. As I had now convinced myself that the revolt had no leader, and was totally without unity, and as I was determined not to sacrifice my soldiers needlessly (while it was of course out of the question that I should join the ranks of the opposition), at the moment that Count Komorowsky and the Brigadier gave the order to march forward, I decided to halt my men where they were. By this, I meant not only to prevent my men being turned against my friends, but at the same time to take from the regiments in pursuit the possibility of their passing the bridge now occupied by my section, and

* *Translator's note.*—Preobrashenski (Transfiguration).

acting against the insurgents. The result was quite successful. My soldiers unanimously cried "Halt," so that the Carbineer Regiment before us could not form. Captain A. S. Wjatkin, only by dint of personal exertion and unsparing use of his fists, succeeded in leading his section further. Twice the Brigadier returned to make my section move forward, but his persuasions and threats were alike in vain. The Commandant of Battalions had disappeared, and I commanded the position on the bridge. Three whole companies who stood behind my section were at once brought to a standstill; the soldiers of these companies not only did not obey their captains, but openly expressed their opinion that the officer at the head knew what he was about.

The clock struck two. The police drove the populace from the Place; the people crowded on to the rails of the bridge near Wassily Ostrow;* many of the passers-by begged me to hold out for an hour and all would go well. Owing to the backward movement of the crowd the captain of our third company, D. N. Beljewjew, succeeded in retreating with his company, and crossing the Neva from the Academy to the English Quay, and then effecting a junction with the first section of our battalion in front of the bridge. For this he was rewarded with the Wladimir Cross. The remaining

* Wassily Ostrow is a large island in the Neva, lying opposite the Isaac Place, connected with the "Grosse Seite" of the residence by several bridges.

columns stayed behind my section until the last moment. This painful state of uncertainty lasted over two hours. Every moment I expected that my friends would cut their way through to the bridge, so that I might come to their aid with my 800 soldiers, who were ready to follow me anywhere.

In the meantime 1,000 men of the revolted Moscow Regiment had formed square in the Senate Place. The company of M. A. Bestuchew stood opposite the Admiralty Boulevard, and under his command formed three sides of the square; while the fourth, standing opposite the Isaac Church, remained under the command of the weary and worn-out Prince Tchepin Rostowsky. This circumstance enabled M. A. Bestuchew to save, from the fire of his men, two troops of Cavalry of the Guard, who had advanced from the square and placed themselves at short range from it. The front of the square opposite the Senate House prepared to give a salvo, but was withheld by M. Bestuchew, who placed himself in face of the line, and gave the word, "Reverse arms." A few bullets whistled past his ears, and a few men of the cavalry fell from their horses. The horsemen then turned without bringing their attack to a conclusion. A good hour later the whole battalion of the Marines hastened through the Galley Street * to the help of the revolted Moscow Regiment.

* The Galley Street debouches on to the Isaac Place, through a large gateway, which divides the Senate House in two parts. The

When this battalion was assembled in the courtyard of the barrack to take the oath, and a few officers who opposed it were arrested by their Brigadier-General Schipow, M. A. Bestuchew I. appeared at the entrance exactly at the moment that the few shots fired in the attack of the cavalry were heard, and cried, "Boys, we are attacked; follow me." They all streamed after him to the Isaac Bridge. In his haste he had neglected to take some cannon from the Arsenal, expecting to be reinforced by the Artillery of the Guards, who were to bring their guns with them. On arriving at the Place the battalion at once formed a column of attack, and placed itself near the square of the Moscow Regiment close to the column, which was turned towards the Isaac Church.

A little later further help arrived: three companies of the Grenadiers of the Guards, who were led out of their barracks by Lieutenant A. M. Sutthof, the adjutant of the battalion N. A. Panow, and Sub-Lieutenant Koschewinkow, on to the Isaac Place, and joined the insurgent regiments.

These troops advanced at the charge over the ice of the Neva, and then entered the inner court of the Winter Palace, where they hoped to find allies; they found instead Colonel Gerun, who had placed his battalion of

battalion of Marines of the Guard consequently came, without hindrance, from the side opposite the Winter Palace, to the rescue of the rebels, as the troops which the Emperor had assembled about him were stationed in a body before the Winter Palace and the buildings of the General Staff.

Sappers of the Guards in position; he made vain attempts to bring the Grenadiers to their obedience to the new Emperor. They, perceiving their mistake, cried out, "This is not our party," and at once turning about, hastened up to the "Staats Platz," in order to support their brother insurgents. On the way by the Admiralty Boulevard they met the Emperor, who asked them, "Where are you bound? Are you on my side? Then turn to the right; if not, turn to the left." A voice answered, "To the left," and they all hastened on to the Isaac Place without keeping to their rank and file. Here the Grenadiers were placed inside the hollow square of the Moscow Regiment, so as to enable them to be formed into companies, under cover of the square. This arrangement was hardly completed when the final catastrophe took place.

There were already above 2,000 men in the ranks of the insurgents. With so large a force, and surrounded as they were by thousands of the populace ready to co-operate, it would have been easy to bring the rebellion to a more favourable issue, had there been one efficient leader, especially as the opposite party were wavering, and certain regiments assembled round the Emperor seemed inclined to join the rebels. But able generalship was not to be found among the insurgents: the soldiers were kept for hours standing motionless, with nothing but their uniforms on, in ten degrees of frost (Reaumur), and a sharp east wind blowing. The chosen

Dictator, Prince Trubetzkoy, was nowhere to be seen; his appointed assistants were not at the posts assigned them, although present on the Place. They offered the command to Colonel Bulatow, who, however, refused. They then offered it to Bestuchew I., who declined, as he was only a navy captain and did not understand infantry service. At last they forced the chief command upon Prince E. P. Obolensky, who was certainly no tactician, but was well known and beloved by the soldiers. Complete anarchy reigned; no dictator being at the head, every one shouted orders which no one obeyed, and the confusion was complete. Being still in expectation of the support which did not arrive, they were obliged to defend themselves only, without daring to make an attack, which, at so early a stage, might have had the most important results. They obstinately refused to surrender, and proudly rejected the proffered mercy. Gradually the troops of the opposite party assembled; the Cavalry of the Guards was first on the Place. The battalions of the Ismailow and Jäger Regiments came along the Wosnessienskie Street to the Blue Bridge, the Semenow Regiment along the Erbsenstrasse.

On the Admiralty Boulevard stood the square of the Preobrashenski Regiment. The Emperor was there prominent on horseback, with a numerous suite. The Cesarewitch, a boy of seven years old, with his tutor, was in the middle of the square. In front of the

square were placed cannon of Colonel Nesterowski's Brigade, covered by a section of the "Chevalier Garde," under the command of Lieutenant J. A. Annenkow. Behind the Imperial square stood a battalion of the Paulow Guard; the Sappers were, as before mentioned, ranged in the court of the Winter Palace. The loyalty of these troops was not to be relied on. At the critical moment they wavered. When the 2nd battalion of Jäger Guards received the order to advance over the Blue Bridge, and had put itself in motion, Jakubowitch gave the word of command, "Left about face," and the whole battalion turned about, although the commander of the battalion was well known to be thoroughly loyal and trustworthy. On account of this, Colonel Busse was not appointed Flügel Adjutant* to the Emperor, a distinction which was given to all the officers commanding battalions of the Guards, which had held out for the Emperor on that day, with the exception, of course, of Talubjew, who commanded my battalion, and who was compromised by the behaviour of my section. The Ismailow Regiment was also at this time wavering in its allegiance, but, on the other hand, the Cavalry of the Guard, led by A. J. Orlow, charged the square of the Moscow Regiment five times, and was five times repulsed with bayonet and shot.

* *Translator's note.—Flügel adjutant*— The aides-de-camp of his Majesty, when generals, are called general adjutants, when of inferior rank, flügel adjutants. We have no corresponding rank in England.

When the troops thus arrayed had encompassed the insurgents on all sides with close columns, the crowd of people on the Place round them began to diminish. The police became bolder in dispersing the people, who at first had filled all the three sides of the square—the Isaac Place, the Place of the Senate, the Palace and the Admiralty. On the two last-named places the Emperor himself rode up and down continually at a quick trot; now sharply ordering, then good-humouredly begging the people to disperse, and no longer hinder the movement of the troops. In the meantime, various higher officers were using every endeavour to win over the irresolute troops to the Imperial cause. The Emperor himself was averse to any bloodshed, and ardently wished to see the insurgents brought back to obedience before it came to the worst. General Bistram prevented the companies of the Moscow Regiment which had remained in barracks from uniting with their insurrectionary comrades; he even succeeded in persuading them to take the sentry duties that evening. The General (J. O. Suchasonet) rode into the midst of the square and entreated the soldiers to disperse before the cannon were discharged. They replied, "He might run away himself, and fire at them if he liked."

The Grand Duke Michael Paulowitch, who had only a few hours before returned from Neumal (where, as before mentioned, he had been awaiting the Grand Duke Constantine, while the latter was quietly tarrying

in Warsaw), galloped up to the square of the insurgents and tried to induce the soldiers to submit. He was in danger of becoming a sacrifice to his bravery, for W. R. Kuchelbecker, fearing that the Grand Duke might succeed in persuading the men, fired his pistol at him, which fortunately missed fire. Count M. A. Miloradowitch, the best-beloved leader of the soldiers, also endeavoured to induce the insurgents to follow him from the Isaac Place: Prince E. P. Obolensky seized the bridle of the Count's horse to lead him out of the square, and stuck a bayonet from one of the soldier's muskets into the horse's quarters, hoping thus to save the rider. But unfortunately at the same moment, three bullets fired by Kachowsky and two other soldiers, hit the brave Miloradowitch, who had fought with renown in numerous battles without ever being wounded, so that he fell from his horse a dying man. The Commandant of the Grenadier Guard Regiment, Colonel Stürler, was also struck down by a bullet of Kachowsky's as he was endeavouring to recall to their obedience the Grenadier Company which had mutinied. At last the Metropolitan Seraphim appeared in full vestments, accompanied by the Metropolitan of Kiew, Eugenius, and several priests. Uplifting the consecrated cross, he prayed the soldiers for the love of Christ to return to their barracks: promised in the Emperor's name, as the Grand Duke and Count Miloradowitch had done before, an unconditional pardon to all the conspirators, the authors of the rising alone

excepted. The prayers of the Metropolitan were of no avail, they only replied: "Return home, father, pray for us there, pray for all. Here you are out of place."

A December day in the far north does not last long; towards three o'clock it began to get dark; without doubt the people who had been dispersed by force would, with the twilight, rejoin the insurgents, but no time was given them. It is supposed to have been Count Toll who, as the darkness was gathering, approached the Emperor and said to him, "Sir, give orders that this Place should be swept by cannon, or resign the throne!" The first cannon-shot loaded with blank cartridge thundered out; the second and third cannon sent ball, which hit the wall of the Senate House, or flew over the Neva in the direction of the Academy of Arts. The shots were answered by the insurgents with ringing hurrahs! The guns were then loaded with grapeshot, Colonel Nesterowsky pointed them directly into the square, the gunner crossed himself, then the Emperor gave the word of command, and Captain M. Bakunin took the slow-match out of the soldier's hand. A moment later, and grapeshot fell like hail in the densely-crowded square; the insurgents fled through the Galley Street and over the Neva to the Academy; the guns were at once dragged to the Galley Street and the bank of the Neva, from whence they fired canister, which trebled the number of slain, mowing down guilty and innocent, soldiers and mere casual spectators.

Three sides of the square of the Moscow Regiment under M. Bestuchew III. threw themselves on to the banks of the Neva, pursued by the flying shot. Bestuchew wished to collect the fugitive soldiers on the Neva, but from the Isaac Bridge cannon-balls came thundering on to them, smashing the ice on the river and preparing a watery grave for numbers of the soldiers. But for this, Bestuchew would have been able to take possession of the St. Peter and St. Paul fortress. The Marines of the Guard, the Grenadiers of the Body Guard, and a portion of the Moscow Regiment made for the Galley Street, where they were followed by cannon, which shot down many soldiers in the defile.

It is a marvellous fact that not one of my companions in misfortune, the compromised officers, was killed or wounded, though many of them had their cloaks and furs riddled with bullets; in the Battalion of the Marines of the Guard whole rows of soldiers fell, but the officers were unhurt. They all took to flight in the two before-mentioned directions, one alone remained on the Place, and went up to General Martynow, begging him to deliver up his sword to the Grand Duke Michael; it was M. K. Kuchelbecker, Lieutenant of the Marines of the Guards. At the same instant Colonel Sass, of the squadron of Pioneer Guards, sprang upon him with drawn sabre. General Martynow held the colonel back, saying, "Brave friend! you see he has already given me up his sword." When the Place was clear, the

Regiment of Cavalry of the Guards proceeded over the Isaac Bridge to Wassily Ostrow. I conducted my section to the riding-school of the first Cadet Corps.

The commanding officer of my regiment had meanwhile arrived, and ordered me to place my section in the inner court of the residence of the Governor of the Cadet Corps, opposite the great "Perspective." The chaplain of the regiment also had orders to be there, I know not why. I was ordered to withdraw from the section. I saw my soldiers forming a circle, and the priest begin to address them. I thereupon broke through the ring, and publicly declared that my soldiers were in no way to blame for anything, that they were only doing their duty in obeying their superior officer. I then withdrew while they took the desired oath of allegiance to Nicholas. The stars were shining bright in the heavens, bivouac-fires were burning in all the squares, patrols on horse and foot roamed through the streets. I was commanded to occupy with my section the Andrejew Market and the shops there. We immediately sent into the barracks to fetch cloaks, as we had been in light uniform since ten o'clock that day. The next morning I saw my wife for one second only, it was . . . . to bid her adieu for a long time. By Imperial order I was arrested on the morning of the 15th.

As I review the events of this memorable day, I am yet of opinion that with very little trouble the revolt

might have been successful. More than two thousand soldiers, and a still larger number of people, were prepared to obey the call of a leader. The leader was nominated, but it was an unfortunate choice. I have lived with Prince Trubetzkoy for six years, and many of my comrades have known him much longer; we are all agreed that he was an able and energetic man, upon whom one could depend in an emergency. Why he was not at his post at the time appointed no one has ever found out; I believe that he himself does not know—he had lost his head. This one unforeseen circumstance decided the matter. Prince Obolensky, who was chosen in Trubetzkoy's stead, felt himself to be unfit for the position. While they were treating with him and trying to overcome his scruples, the most valuable time was wasted, and all unity of action lost. The officers and soldiers who were flocking to the standard of the insurgents knew not to whom to turn, or under whose command to place themselves; the troops on the square stood there passive and inert, and yet they were the same men who had so bravely resisted five attacks of the Cavalry of the Guard, and had refused to return to the metropolis, in spite of prayers, threats, or promises of pardon.

As though bound by a spell, the soldiers, who had shown themselves before so zealous, now stood inactive, when with comparatively little trouble they could have taken the cannon which were now being used against

them. The guns were guarded by a section of the "Chevalier Garde," which was under Lieutenant J. A. Annenkow, a member of the Secret Society, and yet no one thought of taking advantage of this favourable circumstance. Numerous members of the societies and many of the conspirators also served in the Ismailow Regiment, which could easily have turned the scale of fortune. The captain, Bogdanowitch, shot himself in the night after the 14th of December, crushed by the reproach of having failed to act with his political friends. The Imperial regiments opposed to us were not all to be relied on—for instance, when a battalion of Chasseurs of the Guard were to march against the Moscow Regiment, A. J. Jakubowitch gave the order "left about face," and this command had such an effect that only two regiments could be induced to wheel. It was the same with other regiments. It is also quite incomprehensible that the rebels did not drive the police away, and thus induce the people, already armed with axes and hatchets, to join their cause. In conclusion, I also observed that on this day the guard at the Winter Palace was taken by the second battalion of the Finland Regiment, under the command of Colonel A. F. Moller, for many years a member of the secret society.

Another instance of want of determination at the critical moment was that of Colonel Bulatow, who stood with two loaded pistols on the Admiralty Boulevard at

twenty paces from the Emperor, firmly resolved to take the monarch's life, but an invisible hand restrained him. He was distinguished for courage and resolution. It is well known that during the great campaign of 1812, he, with his company, had repeatedly taken batteries, and, under a hailstorm of bullets, was always the foremost. When the Emperor, at a personal examination, expressed his surprise at seeing him among the number of the rebels, Bulatow replied ingenuously that he, for his part, was astonished to see the Emperor there before him. "How is that?" asked the Emperor. "Yesterday I stood for two hours at twenty paces from your Majesty, with two loaded pistols, firmly resolved to take your life; but each time I laid my hand on the pistol my heart failed me." The Emperor was pleased with the frank confession, and gave orders that the colonel should not be confined in the casemates of the fortress, where the rest of us were placed, but should be placed in the residence of the Commandant of the fort. A few weeks later Bulatow killed himself by starvation; he must have endured the most fearful agony in refusing food, for his finger-nails were completely bitten off from hunger. Such a man might have been expected to carry out his resolution.

The 14th December, 1825, decided the fate of the conspirators of the South, for, on this day, Colonel Paul Pestel, President of the Directory of Tultshin, the soul of the whole conspiracy, was arrested. Having

been denounced by Captain Maiborada, Pestel was ordered to the head-quarters of the staff of the Second Army, nominally to give information about certain affairs relating to the service.

He set out, although not without a foreboding of threatened danger; at the toll-gate of Tultshin he was arrested by gendarmes and led away to prison. Two weeks later, on the 29th December, 1825, the brothers Sergius and Matthias Murawjew Apostol were also taken prisoners, but were set at liberty the following night by the junior officers of the Tchernigow Regiment, most of whom belonged to the Society of United Slaves. Sergius Murawjew Apostol, at the head of a few companies which had placed themselves under his command, made an attempt to cut his way through, and to reach the nearest place where his confederates were collected; a detachment with a few cannon under General Geisnow overpowered Murawjew's men; after a desperate resistance, Sergius was wounded, and both brothers were taken prisoners, together with all their comrades, excepting the youngest brother Hypolite, who had fallen in the fight, and the captain of the company, Cusmin, who had shot himself.

CHAPTER II.

THE COURT OF INQUIRY AND EXAMINATION.

On the morning of the 15th December, as before mentioned, I was arrested. The Regimental Adjutant was sent for me; after a short farewell to my wife (I had only been married eight months) I went with him to the Colonel of the regiment, when I found all the officers of the regiment assembled. The General asked, "Which of you gentlemen would like to accompany Baron R., who is arrested, to the Commandant?" No one offered. The General thereupon turned to the orderly officer, Captain D. A. Talubjew, and told him to accompany me in the carriage to the Commandant's residence. In the office-room of the Commandant my sword was taken from me, and I was conducted to the Main Guard in the Winter Palace, where a battalion of our regiment was on duty. I begged Colonel Moller's permission to write a few lines to my wife; the Colonel seemed embarrassed, and said it was impossible; but had any verbal message to send he would commu-

nicate it to her, which he accordingly did. I was taken to the room of the officer on duty. In a corner, which was divided from the rest of the room by a long table, lay an arrested officer of the General's staff, K. B. Tschewkin, asleep; he was awakened and led away, and his place assigned to me. The guard was relieved: the Commandant Baschuzky entered and made inquiries about the prisoners.

I was then conducted into the ante-room of the guard-room behind a partition with glass doors, where I remained, and from whence I could see the soldiers of the Preobrashenski Regiment crowding round Bestuchew, who had given himself up of his own accord. He was gaily dressed, as if for a ball, and when his escort was about to start, he himself gave the word "Forward," and marched in time with his men. After half an hour they brought up J. J. Puschtschin. As he stood surrounded by some dozen soldiers, a young officer stepped forward to disarm the prisoners: it was S. P. Galáchan, adjutant in the regiment of Grenadier Guards. Thus passed the hours till eleven o'clock in the evening. An escort of ten soldiers now entered, but with no more prisoners. The field officer of the day, Colonel Mikulin, then came up to search me and Captain Repin, who had shortly before been brought in, in order to see if we had any concealed weapons, and then signified to us that he had orders to take us to the Emperor. We were escorted by soldiers. In ascending the flight

of stairs, I felt some one pulling at the skirts or hind pocket of my uniform: it was Colonel Mikulin, who had extracted a letter from it. When we had arrived in the Emperor's anteroom, through which Flügel Adjutants and General Adjutants were incessantly passing and repassing, the Colonel asked me from whom was the letter he had found upon me. I desired to see it, and replied it was from my wife. After the cannonade of yesterday was over I had begged Repin to set my wife's mind at ease; two hours later I sent a soldier to her, who brought me back a note with the words, "Sois tranquille, mon ami, Dieu me soutient, ménage toi." Mikulin replied that it was impossible, or else that my wife did not understand French; it was evident that it could not be written by a lady to a man, but must be from a man to a lady. "How can any one writing in the masculine spell 'tranquille' with two *l*'s and an *e*?" persisted the Colonel, without in the least seeing that to me, who was about to be brought before the Emperor for examination, it must be intolerable to be troubled about grammatical minutiæ. To my delight, the Adjutant of the Emperor, P. A. Browsky, came up and put an end to the disagreeable strife about words, remarking to the learned Colonel, "Cessez donc, mon cher, vous dîtes des bêtises." Prince J. V. Wassiltschikow came out of the Emperor's room in tears; A. J. Neithardt, chief of the staff, followed him—the tears in his eyes also; they both returned my salute courteously. A

Flügel Adjutant then appeared with the intelligence that the Emperor could not receive any more, and had given orders that I should be taken by a detachment of Feldjägers * to the guard-house of the Chevalier Garde Regiment, and my comrade, Repin, to the guard-house of the Preobrashenski Regiment.

The next eight days I spent in the guard-house without being ordered up for examination. My wife's uncle lived in the neighbourhood: he sent me a bed and a screen, so as to make my condition more endurable. On the third day of my detention J. A. Annenkow went on guard, the same who on the 14th had covered the guns that were used against the insurgents, and later was condemned to forced labour for life as a member of the secret society. Most of the members of these societies had served in the Chevalier Garde, the regiment attached to the household of the Imperial family.

In the afternoon of the 21st of December a Feldjäger * at last came to fetch me for examination. The officer on duty accompanied me to my sledge and wished me a speedy liberation.

On my arrival at the Winter Palace I was again taken behind the partition with glass doors, which had before been my resting-place, there to wait till my turn came for examination. At ten o'clock in the evening an escort

* *Translator's Note.*—Feldjägers are employed, in times of war or peace, as couriers: the corps consists of four officers and seventy-seven men. They are selected from the young men who are studying to be, or are already foresters.

of ten soldiers conducted me into the inner apartments of the palace. After half an hour I was taken before the general adjutant of the day—W. V. Lewaschow. He sat at a writing-table, and began to examine me by putting previously-prepared questions to me, writing down all my answers. Just as my examination began, a side-door of the room opened, and the Emperor entered. I went a few steps forward to salute him; he said, with a loud voice, "Halt!" came up to me, laid his hand on my epaulet, and repeated the words, "Stand back; back, back," following me till I had reached my former stand-point, in the full glare of the candles burning on the table. He then looked me searchingly in the face for a minute, expressed his satisfaction with my former services, and said that he had repeatedly observed me. He added that heavy charges were laid against me, and that he expected me to make a full confession, and ended by promising to do all that was possible to save me. He then withdrew. The examination was resumed as soon as the Emperor had left the room. I found myself in a most painful position. There was no ground or possibility for me to deny the facts on my own account, neither could I tell the whole truth, lest I should implicate any of those who had taken part in, or originated the rebellion. After half an hour the Emperor again entered, took the paper with the recorded answers out of General Lewaschow's hand, and read it. In my deposition no names were given. He looked at

me kindly and encouraged me to be candid. The Emperor wore, as he had previously done when Grand Duke, an old uniform of the Ismailow Regiment with epaulets. His pallor and his bloodshot eyes showed clearly that he worked much; he would hear, read, and investigate everything for himself. When he returned to his cabinet, he once more opened the door, and the last words I heard him say were, "I would willingly save you,"—"Dich rette ich gern." After Lewaschow had ended his report, he handed me the paper to read through, so that I could attest the truth of my evidence with my signature. I begged him to spare me such a signature, and gave him to understand that I could not disclose the whole truth. Nothing remained for me but to sign the report: but the Emperor was informed of my first hesitation, and must have looked upon it as contempt of his gracious promise. The sentence passed upon me was not only not mitigated—as will be shown in the sequel—but made still more severe. All those who were involved in the conspiracy, or were accused of taking any part in it, had to undergo these "first examinations" in the palace. The Emperor saw and spoke to each of them.

The General Adjutants Lewaschow, Benkendorff, and Toll* successively wrote down the depositions; Lewaschow, the most in detail: he frequently employed

* Later chief of the Political Police, and as such one of the Emperor Nicholas's most influential advisers.

a very peculiar method of conducting the examination. For example, he said to Bestuchew Rjumin, who did not reply immediately to all his questions, "Vous savez l'Empereur n'a qu'à dire un mot, et vous avez vécu." To the colonel, M. F. Mitkow, he said, "Mais il y a des moyens pour vous faire avouer," so that the latter was obliged to remind him that we lived in the 19th century, and that torture had been abolished by a law of the Emperor Alexander. It was impossible that in these examinations in the Emperor's cabinet all the details of the conspiracy could be entered into; they were intended only to afford the opportunity to the Emperor of seeing and speaking to each of the conspirators alone, and learning the names of the yet unknown participators. As soon as any such names were mentioned, feldjäger, gendarmes, and officers of all arms were despatched to arrest the accused. The examination of M. A. Bestuchew was one of the most remarkable. On the night of the 14th December he had tried to save himself by flight, and taking the road to Sweden, he reached the lighthouse of Tolbuchin, where the sailors of the watch knew him as a colleague of General Spassowjew, surveyor of all the lighthouses. His wish was to rest there some hours, but he was unluckily recognized and pointed out as a fugitive by the wife of a sailor, was seized, and the next day brought to the Winter Palace. Exhausted by hunger, fatigue, and cold, he turned to the Grand Duke Michael with the request that he would

give him some nourishment or he would hardly be capable of going through the examination. The supper of the Flügel Adjutant on duty that day was served in the same room; the Grand Duke told Bestuchew to sit down to table, and conversed with him during the meal. When Bestuchew was led away, the Grand Duke said to his Adjutant Bibikow, "Thank God that I was not acquainted with this man the day before yesterday; I really believe he would have drawn me into it." The Emperor received Bestuchew kindly, and said to him, "You know I can pardon you; and if I could be sure of finding you a faithful servant in future, I should be quite ready to do so." Bestuchew answered, "Your Majesty, that is just the misfortune—that you can do everything; that you are over the law. All that we wished to effect is, that the fate of your subjects in future should be entirely dependent on the law, and not on your caprice." Many of the accused expressed themselves in the same spirit when brought before the Emperor.

When my first examination was over, I was led back again to the ante-room of the guard-room of the palace, behind the well-known partition. I received light through the glass doors, warmth through the open top of the partition. Of course neither light nor heat was great. This place where I was kept would have been bearable at the most for a few hours. Every moment I expected to be taken to another guard-room or into the fortress, and therefore submitted with patience to my fate. I

slept the night through on a chair, leaning my arm on a table.

From early morning on the following day fresh prisoners were brought in and out, military and civil, known and unknown. If too many arrived at once, some were placed for a few hours behind the partition with me, but a sentry was then added, to watch that we did not speak to one another. Colonel Poliwanow and Count Bulgary thus passed a few hours. Colonel P. O. Grabbe spent a whole night with me: the complete peace of mind which his countenance bespoke particularly impressed him on my memory. Christmas came: the same narrow dark corner of the ante-room was still my abode. I was left to sit there in the same uncomfortable uniform coat and high tight jack-boots which belonged to the dress; fortunately I had taken my cloak with me, which kept out a little cold. All the passers-by stared through the glass door: I therefore turned my chair so as to sit with my back to them. Every day, when the guard was relieved, I was visited by the colonel and captain. On the fifth day, when the turn of the Garde Jäger regiment, with its Colonel V. J. Busse, my former comrade, came, I begged him to send a soldier to my house, to bring me a great-coat, short boots, and linen; after several hours these things were delivered to me: my wife had also sent a morocco-leather pillow. We were thus indebted to chance alone for whatever comforts fell to our lot, having nothing but what was in our

possession at the preliminary examinations. In December daylight soon comes to an end; no candle was given me, but it mattered little, as I had no book; a little light from the ante-room made its way through the glass door, and a feeble glimmer fell on the wall behind me. The voices of the speakers in the guard-room were distinctly audible.

In this situation day after day passed, and each seemed endless. In the afternoon of the third Christmas holiday the Grand Duke Michael came in to me suddenly, stood in the doorway, and asked, "What? Is he still here?" I made up my mind not to complain of either cold or hunger, although my daily food was restricted to a plate of soup and a little bit of white bread.. This was caused by my exceptional situation: while most of those under suspicion were brought to the Winter Palace as soon as they arrived at St. Petersburg, and waited here for the examination for a few hours only, or at the most a day, this same corner of the guard-room of the palace was assigned to me as a temporary residence, which, however, lasted fourteen days. For those indeed who were only to remain for a few hours in the palace, the plate of soup from the court kitchen was enough; but I, and those who, like me, were detained for many days, and were yet allowed no other food, were barely kept from starvation. One of my companions, M. N. Nasimow, was bold enough to tell the Emperor during the exami-

nation, that in his palace he was allowed to starve. "That does not matter," replied Nicholas: "all are treated in the same way here—it is only for a short time." The most trying part for me was that I could not sleep: the chair, the only furniture in the room save the table, was so uncomfortable, the floor so fearfully cold, spite of the warm cloak. I had no choice but to spend fourteen nights sitting on the chair. It often happened that the soldiers on guard took pity on my hunger, woke me at night, and secretly gave me some of their bread. To listen to the conversation of these people, who always treated me with the greatest respect and civility, was my only diversion. These conversations were often curious enough: "It's a pity, brother, about those poor young people, they will now be shut up in the fortress," said one. "We are no better off," replied the other; "our barracks are worse than the fortress, and when we leave them it is only to be tormented with guards and drill. These dear young fellows will at all events be left in peace in their dungeons."

I remained in my miserable corner till the 3rd of January, 1826; on the afternoon of that day the Grand Duke Michael arrived: he again entered the guard-room, and again expressed his astonishment at finding me still in confinement. By his order I was taken into another room, where a bed and some clean were given me; two soldiers with drawn swords

were posted before my door. I fully enjoyed the pleasure of once more stretching my limbs on a bed. I remained for two days in this room, which was shared for some hours by another compromised man, Colonel Rajewsky. As the sentries prevented any talking, we conversed by singing in French: each one hummed to himself, as if he was paying no attention to the other. On the afternoon of the 5th of January, I was at last taken by a Feldjäger to the fortress. I went with a beating heart through the door of St. Peter and St. Paul fortress; the carillon of the fortress clock saluted me —a piece of artistic mechanism, which slowly and tediously rang out the tune "God save the King." In the Commandant's house I found three officers of the Ismailow Regiment, who had been arrested—Andrejew, Müller, Malintin—who like me were going to receive sentence of imprisonment. After half-an-hour the Commandant, Lukin, came, opened the packet which the Feldjäger had handed him, and then informed me that by high decree we were to be placed in the casemates. In the same room with us stood a man in civilian's dress, wearing the Order of St. Anne in diamonds round his neck. The Commandant turned to him, and exclaimed in a sad and irritated voice, "What, are you also mixed up in this affair, and leagued with these gentlemen?" "No, your Excellency; I find myself here under court-martial for peculation of timber in ships' materials." "Oh, I am

relieved, that is all, dear nephew," said the Commandant, and cordially pressed the hand of the more fortunate man. The Town-major, Lieut.-Col. O. M. Poduschkin, led us one by one to the casemates: he asked me if I had a pocket-handkerchief with me, as according to rule he must blindfold me. This was at once done, and seizing me by the arm, he conducted me down the stairs, and there placed me in a sledge. After a short trajet we arrived at our destination. The Town-major helped me out of the sledge, saying, "Here is the threshold, and after that six steps;" he then called out, "Artilleryman, open No. 18." Keys jingled, locks rattled, we entered, the doors slammed behind us. The Town-major then took the bandage from my eyes, and wished me a speedy deliverance. I begged him to order me something to eat; I had not tasted food the whole day, and for an entire fortnight I had been starved in the palace. He made some difficulty, as the dinner-hour was already passed, gave as an excuse the bad arrangements of the fortress kitchen, but finally promised to send me some dinner, though I had asked only for a bit of bread.

My cell was almost pitch-dark; the window was closed with a thick iron grating, through which I could only see a narrow strip of horizon and a part of the glacis. Against the further wall of the three-cornered cell stood a bed with a blue-grey coverlet; against the other, a table and bench. My triangle was six feet in

the hypothenuse. In the door was a little window with a linen curtain outside, which the sentries could raise at any moment to watch the prisoners. A little while after I had entered this cage and sat down, I heard the sentry's footsteps approaching; the keys and locks rattled again; the prison warder entered and brought me a lamp (a wick burning in an ordinary glass filled with oil and water), a basin of soup, and a good large bit of bread. I asked a question of the man, but received no answer. I then, with the greatest haste, devoured the potato soup, flavoured with bay-leaves, and two pounds of bread. The warder looked at me with amazement; I explained to him why I was so hungry; he went out of the room like a dumb man, taking the emptied basin, and closed the door.

The fortress clock struck eight consecutive hours; then I heard again the "God save the King." Though I was conscious of the sounds, yet they did not rouse me from sleep. I should certainly have slept on for twenty-four hours, if the gaoler with his keys had not awoke me. This terrific clatter was no sooner over than the Platz Adjutant Nicolajew entered: a tall man in a black coat following him, and the artilleryman acting as prison warder. I sat down on my bed, expecting that another prisoner was coming in with them. The Adjutant inquired how I found myself; the man in the black coat, who proved to be the doctor, asked me how my health was? To both I replied, "Thank God, I have rested

comfortably." "Excuse our having disturbed you, but we must do our duty." And, silently as they had entered, the three men disappeared; and I immediately went to sleep again. When I woke it was midday, but the room was still dark, for the window was cut in a deep embrasure, and did not admit the full light. I never saw either sun or moon, and scarcely a solitary star passed the narrow window-pane. Towards evening a lamp was brought in. I had nothing to read, for in the first months of our imprisonment no one brought us any books. Alone, confined in a narrow room, there was no exercise for the body, no distraction for the mind; thought alone was free. The future lay before me, uncertain and sad; the present offered nothing; the past alone remained to me.

On the 8th January the Town-major came in at nine in the evening to take me before the commission of inquiry, which met daily in the Commandant's house. He bound my eyes this time so completely that my whole face was covered. On the steps of the Commandant's house I could hear speaking: through the handkerchief I could see the shining lamps of the carriage: the ante-room appeared to be filled with servants. In the next room the Town-major made me sit down, and told me to await his return. I at once raised the bandage, and saw great folding doors in front of me, a large screen at the other end, behind which were two lights, but no one in the whole room. I know

not whence the thought came to me that the door would open suddenly, and I should be shot. This idea was probably caused by the Town-major's mysterious manner and the bandaging of my eyes. I sat thus for an hour. The Town-major at last reappeared and conducted me with eyes still blindfolded through the next room, which seemed full of light. I heard a quantity of pens scratching without being able to distinguish the writers. In the next room I heard more pens scratching, but no word spoken. Having at last reached the third room, the Town-major said to me, *sotto voce*, "Stay here." For half a minute there was no sound or movement; then the words, "Take off the handkerchief," were heard. It was the voice of the Grand Duke Michael! I saw before me a long table; at the upper end of it sat the president of the commission, the War-Minister Tatischtschew; on his right the Grand Duke. Then came the renowned J. J. Dibitsch, S. U. Kutusow, and the Adjutant-General Count Benkendorff. To the left sat Prince A. R. Galitzin (the only civilian), General Tchernitschew,* U. B. Lewaschow, and the Colonel W. Adlerberg,† who had undertaken the office of a secretary. They were all, in some respects, distinguished men, but none of them could lay claim to the qualifications necessary for an experienced, competent, and impartial judge. The examinations before this com-

* He was later made Minister and Prince.

† Now Count and Minister of the Household.

mission of inquiry differed in no way from those which the Adjutant-General had held in the Emperor's private room. Was this commission of inquiry intended to be a court-martial? Then the whole affair might have been decided in twenty-four hours, without the aid of any one learned in law. The articles of war would at once have condemned all the accused to death! and this kind of court, in which officers only gave sentence and the plaintiffs acted as judges, was the ordinary method in Russia when an important case was to be decided!

The first question was addressed to me by the Grand Duke Michael: "How could you, as commander of a whole squad of riflemen, keep back three entire companies who stood partly in front of your section?"

"When the battalion marched out of barracks, it was arranged in columns of companies, so that my section found itself before the three companies of Jägers."

"Pardon me, I did not know that circumstance," said the Grand Duke in a friendly voice. Dibitsch thereupon asked why I had kept my soldiers in the middle of the long Isaac Bridge. I answered that after I had personally ascertained that there was neither leader, unity, nor order in the arrangements on the Senate Place, it had appeared to me to be right to keep quiet and take no step whatever. "I understand," replied Dibitsch, being a tactician, "you had it in view to form a definite reserve." He then asked further,

"Since when have you belonged to the secret society, and by whom were you received?"

"I have never been a member of any secret society."

"Perhaps you mean us to infer that you consider that being a member necessitates peculiar usages and ceremonies, signs and conditions, as in the brotherhood of the Freemasons; but it is enough to know what are the objects of the society, to make you at once a member of it."

"I have already had the honour to tell your Excellency that I have never been received into a secret society, and that I can appeal to all those who were really members, without shunning the examination before witnesses, or fear of being confronted with them."

I was here interrupted by S. A. Kutusow: "Yet you knew Rylejew?"

"I know him, for we were brought up together in the first Cadet Corps."

"Did you not know Obolensky, too?"

"I know him very well; I served with him: he was the oldest adjutant of the infantry corps of Guards. How could I help knowing him?"

"What further proof do we want?" remarked Kutusow, in his senseless way.

I was silent, although it would have been easy for me to retort, that as he knew Prince Obolensky, he must himself have been a member of the society.

The president, Tatischtschew, then informed me that, on the morrow, I should receive written questions from the commission, and should have to answer each question in writing according to the heads. Before the end of the inquiry, Colonel Adlerberg said to me, "You are accused of having wished to cut down the second sharpshooter of the right flank, because he tried to persuade some of his comrades to follow the section of Carbineers?"

"My soldiers, M. le Colonel, did not speak as they stood in rank and file: one of them, I don't know if he was the second or third from the flank, wished to move forward: I held my sword before him, and threatened any one who attempted to move without my orders." Colonel Adlerberg's remark at once showed me that they had been informed of the most trifling circumstances connected with me. The Brigadier and one other man who had reason to fear my depositions had given them this information.

With that the first examination closed; the president rang the bell, the Town-major bound my eyes and led me away. My face was covered with a handkerchief, so that the secretary and clerk should not recognize the prisoner. After a few minutes I found myself again in No. 13. Three days later, a sealed packet from the commission was handed to me. The questions were almost the same as those which had been laid before me at the sitting, but new accusations were included, to-

gether with mention of new persons and fresh information. The Town-major in handing me the packet said, "Don't hurry, but consider everything." At the first moment I rejoiced in the possession of some sheets of paper, pens and ink; but when I hastily glanced at the points in question and saw whose were the names, my heart sank within me. Was it possible that all these men were in prison and to be brought before the court! The commission was already apprised of the assembly which had taken place at Repin's, as well as of the conferences at Rylejew's and Obolensky's. The answers to all the questions which concerned me personally were easy enough, as my actions of the 14th December had all been done in the light of day. But how was I to deal with the depositions referring to what had been arranged at our meetings. I was so far fortunate, that not one of the persons named by me was arrested, not one of my soldiers punished. My answers caused me subsequently to be brought face to face with one of my comrades, to which I shall refer in the fitting place. After I had finished writing my answers, I enclosed a request to the commission, praying that I might be allowed to write to my wife. This petition was granted the following day. I then wrote her a long letter, and in a few days received the answer. After this I received permission to write once a month; my second letter was returned to me, with the remark that it was too long, and that I must in future write only a few lines.

The answers from my wife must also be very shortly expressed; but even these were a great satisfaction and real comfort to me. I had also asked for permission to receive books from home; this was not granted, but the Major himself brought me the Psalms of David.

The commission of inquiry held daily sittings: the Grand Duke was seldom present. Tschernitschew appeared to be the chief person there: the law officers of the commission often sat up writing till late into the night. All the special denunciations were collected by D. N. Bludow* in one document; he excluded all that was important and favourable for the accused, but inserted denunciations and private conversations, as every unprejudiced reader of the printed report can see for himself. The founders of the secret society and the leaders of the conspiracy were frequently called before the commission. Pestel was forced to appear very often, and was so tormented with the questions, that he repeatedly lost patience, especially as he was ill at the time. He reproached the commission with their incapacity, demanded a sheet of paper, and himself wrote down some interrogatories for the committee: "There, gentlemen, that is the way in which you should conduct affairs: you will receive answers according to these questions, upon the matters in hand." When the evidence was contradictory, the accused were brought

* He died a few years ago, Count and President of the Reichsrath and Ministerial Committees.

face to face, and the individual depositions registered, sometimes considerably perverted. Some of the questions I still remember as being specially extraordinary. Tschernitschew, who was particularly zealous in the affair, for instance, asked my friend, M. A. Nasimow, what he would have attempted to do had he been present in St. Petersburg on the 14th December? (He was at the time on leave at Moscow.) This question was so manifestly unfair, that Benkendorff sprang from his chair and seized Tschernitschew by the arm, exclaiming, "Ecoutez, vous n'avez pas le droit d'adresser une pareille question: c'est une affaire de conscience." The president of the commission, Tatischtschew, very seldom took part in the inquiry: he only once made the following remark to the accused: "You have read nothing but Tracy, and Benjamin Constant, and Bentham: look what it has brought you to. I have read nothing but the Holy Scriptures all through my life, and you see what I have gained;" with that he pointed to the two rows of stars which glittered on his breast.

CHAPTER III.

THE SENTENCE AND ITS EXECUTION.

THE Platz Adjutant daily inspected my prison, but he was not conversational, and I was therefore left to my own resources. I walked backwards and forwards and moved about as much as I could in my narrow room, in order to preserve my health. Sleep shortened the weary hours by half. The food was wholesome, simple, and sufficient, not scanty, as in the palace. Often, especially in the evenings, I felt constrained to sing; singing strengthened my chest, and made amends for the want of conversation, and singing gave expression to my feelings. I sang prose and poetry of my own, arranged melodies, and remembered many old songs. I was once, late in the evening, singing the universal Russian song, "In the lowly vale stood the shady oak." At the second verse I heard another voice accompanying me behind the partition of planks; I recognized the voice of my warder. "A good sign," thought I; "if he sings with me, he will also speak with me." I repeated the

song once more from beginning to end; he knew the words better than I. When he brought me my food, I thanked him for the accompaniment of the song, and he at last made up his mind to speak: "God be thanked that you are not wearying, that you keep up a cheerful heart." From that hour he began to be more communicative, and answered my questions readily. "Tell me, Sokolow"—so the artilleryman was called—"what shall I do to procure myself some books? I hear my neighbour over the way, in No. 16, turning over leaves the whole night through."

"God preserve you from such books! the dear lad there reads and writes so much, he has already written fetters on to his hands."

"What does that mean?

"Yes, they have already fastened an iron chain of fifteen pounds on to both hands." It was a young man of twenty-one years, Bestuchew Rjumin, who was deeply implicated in the undertakings of the Polish as well as of the Russian conspirators: they wished to force him in this way to a full confession. He expressed himself better in French than in Russian; but as he had to write down his confession in Russian, they had given him dictionaries, and that was the reason of the hasty and continual turning over of leaves in the great folios.

Some days later I heard the clinking of chains opposite me in No. 15. "Have they put in a new

prisoner?" I asked Sokolow. "No, he has been in here many weeks, but since yesterday only they have put him in fetters." This aggravated punishment was imposed on N. S. Bobrischtschew Puschkin, officer of the General's staff, from whom the court of inquiry wished to find where the Constitutions written by Pestel were concealed. They were put in a small chest and buried in the earth, the spot known only to Puschkin and Saikin. This latter was sent all about the place with a Feldjäger, and after long search and raking about under the snow, the little box was found and immediately delivered into the Emperor's hands. "Are there many of the prisoners in chains?" I inquired further. "Yes, of my thirty numbers, ten are loaded with them;" and there was the same proportion in chains among the number in the remaining casemates and curtains of the fort. A youth, midshipman in the navy of the Guards, Diwow, who was called by the warders "the little child," was also in chains. His spirit was excited, his imagination was inflamed; he imparted wonderful things, which only existed in his fancy, to the commission of inquiry. These were made subjects of inquisition, and afterwards played a prominent part in the report of Count Bludow. For this evidence Diwow was freed from forced labour, after the verdict was given, and sent to fortress work at Bobrowsk. Some of my companions allowed themselves to be persuaded that an open confession alone could save them, and

that their escape depended upon their giving up the names of those who had received them into the secret society. Owing to that many were induced to make special denunciations. Thus Colonel Fahlenberg declared that Prince Bariatinsky had initiated him into the conspiracy: Bariatinsky denied the facts, and the judges were driven to confront them. The depositions contradicted each other. Bariatinsky made yet a last attempt to save his comrades, saying to General Tschernitschew: "You see, General, yourself, how strange Monsieur my comrade is; should I be likely to confide a secret to such a man?" In spite of this excessive candour, Fahlenberg was condemned to forced labour. Among the number of my fellow-prisoners, there were many who wore chains on their hands and feet, and were condemned to sit in the dark without lamps, while others had their food curtailed.

On the 6th of March the Platz Adjutant did not come as usual: Sokolow put on a mysterious air; he was in a new dress. The warder, Schibajew, invalid of the Jäger regiment of Body Guards, who daily brought me my food, had also appeared shaved and in a new cloak. "What feast is it to-day?" I asked. "It is no feast." "Why are you then in new clothes?" "It is the day of the Emperor Alexander's funeral." Everything was quiet and monotonous as usual around; the thick fortress walls, with their earth and grass works, allowed no sound to penetrate; the carillon only reached me at

times through the window and the embrasures. Suddenly a cannon thundered out, a second, and then the report of guns innumerable; that was the conclusion of the funeral ceremony.

As every hole and corner of the fortress was filled with prisoners, they could but rarely get admittance to the bath-room on account of their number. My turn came for the first time in the middle of April. The snow had disappeared, and the weather was beautiful; I was led down by a guide, but my eyes were no longer bandaged. When I stepped over the threshold of the outer door from the dark corridor, the sun's rays so blinded me that I stood still and involuntarily covered my eyes with my hand. I gradually withdrew my hand and went on: the ground appeared to rock under my feet, the fresh air took away my breath. Along the whole inner wall of the Kronwerk curtain, though passing by a long row of windows, I could see none of my comrades, for the window-panes were smeared over with chalk. When I turned to the right along the other curtain, in which is the entrance of the fortress, I saw a window over the gate and recognized M. F. Orlow, who sat there writing. Not far from the gateway stood a subaltern officer's guard; I was delighted to recognize my own soldiers: they hastened at once on to the platform and replied as loudly and joyfully to my salute as they used to do formerly. The bath-room was spacious; and the bath refreshed and invigorated me. On my return, I

observed my servant Michael standing near the guard, who tried to attract my attention by singular movements and pantomime. "Is Anna Wassiliewna (my wife) well?" I asked.

"She was here just now in the church, and is at this moment coming down the path." I redoubled my steps, and saw her walking slowly, about 200 paces from me; I longed to hasten to her, but remembered she was near her confinement and might take fright; I also feared what my escort would say. I could but wave her a salute with my hand and walk on. Returned to my prison, I found it darker than ever, and could make out neither chair nor table, and but dimly see the white border of the grey coverlet.

The Emperor in Passion Week permitted the prisoners to have books of spiritual counsel, pipes and tobacco. This was a real luxury after so long a privation. For the last four years I had given up smoking; I now returned to it with all the greater zest, hoping that the smell would overpower the bad, damp, and unwholesome air around me. My wife had sent me *The Hours of Devotion*, by Zschokke, and also three volumes upon the wars of 1812, 1813, and 1814, but these were kept back by the censorship of the commission of inquiry. Owing to the acquaintance of my wife's uncle with the Commandant Sukin, I enjoyed the additional luxury of some snuff and a dozen pocket-handkerchiefs. I once asked the Platz Adjutant, Nicolajew, if my comrades also

received tobacco, books, or linen from their relations. He replied, "Only those who have relations or acquaintance in St. Petersburg," and added that yesterday he had brought a bundle of linen and English blankets to Colonel M. J. Mitkow; but when Mitkow learned that all the prisoners had not these advantages, he tied up the bundle again, and declared that he also could dispense with these things. After long suffering he died in banishment at Krasnojarsk, in the year 1850.

By order of the Emperor we were inspected every six weeks by his Adjutant-Generals Sasonow, Strekalow, and Martynow. The latter was my inspector, and recommended me to the Commandant, who accompanied him, reminding him of the fact that the Emperor had, on former occasions, noticed me.

On the 20th May, the Platz Adjutant Nicolajew woke me early in the morning. I heard his voice in the corridor saying a barber must be sent for at once. "Am I to be taken before the commission again?" "No; a great joy awaits you in the Commandant's house—your wife has received permission to come and see you." In a moment I was dressed; I would not wait for the barber, and we hastened out; the burning rays of the sun blinded my eyes, a mild balmy air refreshed me; at the prison door I was greeted by my servant Michael; in the front court my carriage was standing, and as the coachman Wassili recognized me, he advanced with the black horses and drove round in a

circle to show me their good condition. In the Commandant's house I once more held my wife in my arms; she was in mourning, for my mother had died during my imprisonment. To see her face, to hear her voice, to listen to her words once again filled my heart with joy and comfort, but as the fortress commandant, General Adjutant Sukin, was present during all our interview, we could not converse at ease and could but touch on family affairs, ; owing to the kindness of the General Adjutant V. V. Lewaschow, my wife had received permission for this meeting. The time of her confinement was approaching, and she wished that we should once more receive each other's blessing. I sought to cheer her in every way as to my future fate; the hour soon passed away, and the Commandant dared not prolong it; we separated, commending ourselves to the Almighty Father; with a heart full of thankfulness to God I returned to my No. 13. This meeting had comforted me, and I could now hope that my wife would be able to bear our separation and her coming time of trouble with fortitude, and the thought of my brave Anna, whose firm bearing had filled me with new strength, consoled me waking or dreaming.

Three days after I received a letter from her, assuring me how much encouragement our meeting had given her. I had communicated to her, in the presence of the Commandant, the last words the Emperor had said to me, and had tried to comfort her in every way; but when

alone I kept the idea that I might be executed continually before me.

On the 17th of May there was an unusual stir in the corridor of the prison: warders and prisoners were incessantly going backwards and forwards, talking loudly; many of the latter in passing my number called out "Bon jour, 13." "Portez-vous bien, 13." In the afternoon the warder, Sokolow, told me that a portion of the prisoners had been taken before the commission, where they signed papers and then returned to their casemates. "What do you think?" I asked; "will their being called in there do the prisoners good or harm?" "God knows," was the answer. "It seems to me those who are left here in peace will be best off." I went to sleep at last, still in restless expectation, till the rattle of locks and bolts suddenly woke me up, and the Platz Adjutant took me before the commission. The walk to the Commandant's house showed me how beautiful the spring was already: the air was impregnated with the smell of elder-flowers, the birds fluttered and sang in the Commandant's garden, in which they were involuntarily congregated, for they had nothing but bare walls on three sides.

I was led through the clerks' room, not to the former sitting-room of the commission, but to another on the right, where Benkendorff and the Senator Baranow sat at a writing-table. The answers that I had written to the interrogatories of the commission were handed to

me, and I was asked "whether the signature was my own?" "whether I had answered under pressure?" "if I had anything to add?" I answered in the affirmative to the two first, in the negative to the last question. I was then made to sign the papers. I read in Benkendorff's countenance that it would go badly with me. The Senator Baranow was not a member of the commission of inquiry, but as a member of the highest criminal court appointed for our judgment, he must convince himself that the signatures were genuine. That completed my case, the verdict was already settled. Pestel, Rylejew, Murawjew Apostol, Soll, Juschnewsky, Bestuchew, and some others had made use of this last question, whether they had anything more to say, openly to proclaim their sentiments and to expose the abuses and injustices of the reigning system in all their deformity.

The majority of the accused had, on the contrary, at this opportunity retracted or altered their former depositions, not from fear or remorse, but because the privacy of the examination rendered it superfluous to make confessions which would only aggravate their punishment and might also implicate their comrades.

On my way back to the casemates I drank in the May air with avidity. I picked some blades of grass as I passed the garden hedge. I then accelerated my steps, so as not to let my heart get too tender; feeling hearts will readily believe that I kissed and caressed the grasses; when they were withered I examined each blade and

compared the variety of their beauty. They were the only things, links with the world of nature, which had gladdened my eyes for months.

From the 17th May the voices and movement in the corridor became quieter and more rare. The monotonous stillness was only broken by the daily visits of the Town-major, the fortress adjutant, and the warder, or an occasional lament, declamation, or song, from some prison cell. One of my companions in misfortune, M. A. von Wisin, could not endure the confinement; his spirit was strong, his courage unbroken, but his nerves were in a state of such fearful excitement, that it was found necessary at last to order that his cell should be left unlocked, and a watch was placed with him.

Sixteen of my comrades were imprisoned in a different part of the fortress, in the Alexejew Ravelin, under the charge of a civilian specially appointed. Before the windows was a high wall; the inner triangle of the Ravelin was enclosed by three walls, which had only a door and no window; here, in a narrow space, grew a few trees, and here solitary prisoners were occasionally brought for a quarter of an hour to inhale the fresh air. On the leaf of one of the maple-trees here, Rylejew wrote his well-known farewell verses.

From the beginning of June I lived in constant anxiety about my wife, for the time of her confinement drew near. I sang my songs more rarely; Sokolow and

Schibajew, my warders, often asked me if I was ill. My rest was continually broken by dreams; I saw my wife suffering and calling to me for help; in a word, my faith and firm confidence wavered. In the fortress, as in the outer world, the good news lagged, while the bad came on wings.. On the 19th June my eldest son was born. I only learnt it on the 22nd: two lines from my wife's hand satisfied me as to her well-being. I rejoiced for her that she was no more alone; I blessed my son in my thoughts, and asked in my prayers that the Everlasting Father would replace the earthly father to him. I had then no hope of ever seeing my son; I expected my speedy doom.

On the morning of the 12th July, I observed some carpenters at work with large beams on the Kronwerk ramparts opposite my window, without in the least understanding what it was they were about. I often returned to the window, and once I saw two general adjutants moving about the place. In the afternoon, the Platz Adjutant took me before the court of inquiry; I went most unwillingly, anticipating some fresh examination. The reader can imagine my surprise when I found the room filled with my comrades, and with what joy I embraced them. I was told that we were assembled there to receive our sentence. I looked in vain for some of my comrades, who were either not among the accused, or were in a higher category and had already received sentence. The condemned were

assembled in the two rooms adjoining the session-room, arranged in categories or divisions, so that when the first category entered the session-room, the second category took their place, and so on. After hearing their sentence they were led back through a door at the opposite side of the room into the prison, not to their former quarters, but in a different arrangement, according to the order and number of the condemned in each division. There were about twelve categories in all, and I was told off to the fifth; we had a few moments to speak to each other: the guard then came up to our division, which consisted of five men; sentries were standing at each door. We entered, and placed ourselves in a line facing the members of the upper criminal tribunal, who were seated at a long table by the wall. Directly opposite us sat the Metropolitan with some bishops; to the right generals, to the left senators, all in full uniform, decorated with ribbons and orders. I observed among the generals the brave Bistram, my venerated chief, who, with difficulty, restrained his tears. Some minutes previous he had been obliged to see sentence passed on his much-loved adjutant, E. P. Obolensky. Some of the judges looked sympathizing, others stern; many of the senators showed an unseemly and impertinent curiosity, using not only eyeglasses but opera-glasses to look at us. In the midst stood the chief secretary of the Senate, Shurawlew, and read the sentences in a loud clear voice. The verdict had con-

demned us (the fifth category) on the 10th July to ten years' forced labour, and after that to perpetual banishment in Siberia. This sentence had been modified by the Emperor on the 11th July, for my comrades Repin and Kuchelbecker, who were to have only eight years, while Bodisko, on account of his youth, had the forced labour changed for work at the fortifications; Glebow and I expected that we should be mentioned among those whose fate was softened, but Shurawlew remained silent, and the Commandant made a sign to take us back to the casemates. Of the 121 condemned there were only three, namely Bestuchew, Glebow, and myself, whose sentence was not mitigated; the reason of my being excluded, I can only imagine, was owing to a momentary irritability on the part of the Emperor, who may have considered that my conduct showed ingratitude after the kindness he had shown and the goodwill he had expressed to me.

The whole ceremony of the publication of the sentence to the accused lasted five hours, and took place in the most profound stillness. M. S. Lunin, a condemned of the third category, alone was heard to say in a loud voice, when the sentence had been read to him and a special stress was laid by the secretary on the words *perpetual banishment*, "Perpetual, indeed! and I am already fifty years old!" He died at Nertschinsk in the year 1847; he consequently endured this *perpetual banishment* for twenty years. N. S. Bobrischt-

schew Puschkin, on receiving his sentence, merely crossed himself.

The impression this scene left on our minds was that we were neither in a court of justice nor before judges. The chief criminal tribunal was appointed and confirmed on the 1st June: it consisted of members of the Reichsrath, the Senate, and the Synod (the high dignitaries of the church), and fifteen specially appointed generals. The court held its sittings in the Senate House, and indeed under the presidency of the deaf Prince Lopuschin; the Prince Labanow Rostowsky acted as general procurator; the above-mentioned Shurawlew as secretary. The court, consisting of eighty members, chose out of this body a committee, whose duty it was to divide the criminals into categories, and so to determine the degree of culpability of each of the accused. In this committee sat Count P. A. Tolstoy, Prince Wassiltschikew,* Speransky,† Count Stroganow, Kamorowsky, Kuschnikow, Engel, Count Kuttassiow, and the most active of all our judges, D. D. Baranow, the same who had previously, together with Count Benkendorff, witnessed the authenticity of our signatures and written answers.

On our way from the Commandant's house to our casemates, I saw a crowd of generals, adjutants, regi-

* Later President of the Reichsrath.

† The renowned Russian, and author of the collection of laws (Swod Sakonow).

mental adjutants and footmen, who crowded round to look at us: it was but natural that we five should congratulate ourselves upon our meeting again after so long an imprisonment, and converse gaily and cheerfully as we went; yet this circumstance was reported outside the fortress (and certainly not to our advantage), as showing "proud contempt" of our destined punishment.

I was not taken back to my cell, No. 13, but to the casemates of the Laboratory Bulwark instead, where a little room with a tolerably large window, whose lower panes were whitened with chalk, was assigned to me. On the walls I read the names of the prisoners who had been shut up here; of these only one, Count S. Gr. Tschernitschew, was among the condemned. I had not inhabited such a light room for months. I could not sleep, and walked up and down the whole night in my little room, which measured only nine paces in length. After a few hours the sun disappeared from the horizon, leaving us the clear twilight of a northern July night. The Platz Adjutant had told me, before his departure, that he would fetch me away early in the morning for the execution of my sentence. I waited, expecting an immediate departure for a Siberian fortress.

Thus dawned the 13th July. Before sunrise I was taken to the Fortress Place, where was standing a large square of detachments of the Paulow Regiment of Body Guards, as well as the Garrison Artillery. From there I was taken to the square, where stood already some of

my companions in misfortune; the remainder were brought in by degrees. I was rejoiced at seeing my old acquaintances again. We all embraced, and every one sought his dearest friends. I looked in vain for Rylejew, till I was told that he was one of the five condemned to an ignominious death. We all confided the sentences we had received to one another, many with bitterness and anger, others with restrained indignation. Prince S. G. Wolkonsky went about, talking cheerfully; Batenkow had a bit of stick in his mouth, and gnawed it in his anger; Jakubowitch walked up and down lost in thought; Prince Obolensky had thriven in the fortress, his cheeks were glowing; J. J. Puschtschin was cheerful, according to his nature, and even made the circle round him laugh. I saw no one in despair; even the sufferings which were mirrored on the faces of the sick, remained voiceless. Outside the square the General Adjutants, Benkendorff and Lewaschow, and a few other officers, walked restlessly up and down. Colonel P. V. Abramow, one of the condemned, called one officer on guard loudly by his name—the latter, however, did not look round: Benkendorff asked Abramow what he wanted. "I wish to give up my new epaulettes to my brother, who will soon be colonel," was the quiet, dry answer. Benkendorff courteously assented, and ordered the captain to take the epaulettes into his charge. In this square I waited for half an hour, till we were parted into four divisions and surrounded by

soldiers. In the first division were the condemned officers of the 1st division of Guards and the General's staff; in the second, the officers of the 2nd division of Guards, the Sappers and Pioneers; in the third, the officers of the army; in the fourth, the civilians. The condemned who belonged to the Marine were sent to Cronstadt for the execution of their sentence. In this order, and separated by rows of soldiers, we were led through the fortress gate on to the glacis of the Kronwerk curtain. With their backs turned towards the "Petersburg Seite," * stood interminably long rows of troops, from every regiment of the corps of Guards, with loaded cannon. A gallows was now visible on the Kronwerk rampart; I recognized the carpenters' work which I had seen from my casemate without then understanding its purpose. Our two divisions were arranged at equal distance from the two others. Near each division a funeral pile was burning, an executioner standing by. The General Adjutant Tschernitschew was on horseback: on this morning he was not rouged; his face was pale, and he did not let his horse curvet.

A General was with each division; our former Brigadier, G. A. Golowin, was attached to ours. We were each called out singly, according to the order of the categories. One by one we had to fall on our

* The side of the town lying eastward from the fortress, on the left bank of the Neva, is called Petersburg Seite (Petersburgskaja Storoná).

knees, whilst the executioner broke our swords over our heads, tore off the uniforms, and threw the broken sword and the clothes into the burning funeral pile. I hastily stripped off my uniform when I knelt down, before the executioner could touch me, the General meanwhile calling out to him, "Tear it off," but it was already done. The swords were filed beforehand, so that the executioner could break them without any great exertion of strength. The only accident that occurred was that poor Jakubowitch, owing to the carelessness of the executioner, was struck on the temples, where he had formerly been wounded by the bullet of a Circassian. The last in our division was M. J. Puschtschin, captain of the Mounted Pioneer Guards; he was condemned to serve as a common soldier, retaining his prerogative of nobility. In strict justice, his sword should not have been broken over his head; he mentioned this to the General, who, however, ordered the sword to be broken.

This ceremony lasted over an hour; then they made us put on striped dressing-gowns, such as are worn in the hospitals, and took us back to the fortress in the order in which we had come. On the fortress glacis there had been no one to look at us, but at the gate a crowd pressed round. The multitude is usually curious; this time they had not been present at the interesting spectacle, either because it was too early, or that they had been prevented by the police. When we

were taken back, the gallows on the Kronwerk rampart was awaiting its victims, but no one was to be seen near it; we turned our eyes towards it, and prayed that God would grant an easy death to our companions.

I was then taken to the Kronwerk curtain cell, No. 14, the one in which Conrad F. Rylejew had passed his last night on earth. I entered it, feeling as if in a sanctuary, fell on my knees and prayed for him, for his wife and daughter,—it was here he had written his last letter to them. In the tin mug of the prison was still the remains of his last draught. I put it to my lips, to give my soul fresh courage. Repin was next me, but double partition walls divided our little four-cornered cell. M. A. Nasimow was placed in my former number, 13; from thence he could see the fearful execution on the Kronwerk rampart: the cold corpses remained there till late in the evening, after the bright immortal souls of those he had loved so well had for ever fled.

The witnesses of the last moments of Paul Pestel, Conrad Rylejew, Sergius Murajew Apostol, Michael Bestuchew Rjumin, and Michael Kachowsky, were—the priest of the Kazan Church, P. N. Myslowsky, the Platz Adjutant Nicolajew, the artilleryman Sokolow, the warder Trosimow, in the fortress; and on the place of execution, besides these, were the Town-major A. A. Boldynew; the Staff Captain of the General of the Guards staff, W. D. Wolchowsky; and some of the

fortress artillerymen. The condemned spent the last night in the Kronwerk curtain. Pestel to the last showed extraordinary strength of mind; no feature of his iron face betrayed the slightest emotion. The others also underwent their fate with manful resolution.

I am not writing the biography of my comrades and companions in misfortune; I will, therefore, only touch upon the last hours of their lives and the remarkable points of their character. Paul Pestel, formerly officer of the Chevalier Garde, and adjutant of Count Wittgenstein, then Colonel of the Wjatka Infantry Regiment, was, as before mentioned, one of the leaders of the conspiracy, and had been compiler of a Constitution which was to have been established after the overthrow of the existing system. On the 14th December he was not in St. Petersburg, but was at the head of the rebels in the South. According to the unanimous verdict of all who knew him, he was a man of great mind, iron character, and firm determination. He declined to be accompanied by the Lutheran pastor, Reinbott, to the scaffold.

Conrad Rylejew played the chief part among the St. Petersburg conspirators. His was a noble, enthusiastic, poet nature. After leaving the 1st Cadet Corps, he entered the Horse Artillery, and then became secretary of the American Company. In his leisure hours he devoted himself to getting redress for the complaints of the poor and oppressed, who, during the

last years of his life, incessantly crowded his anteroom.

I have already said that of his own free will he offered himself as a victim to the rising of the 14th December. He foresaw the probability of failure, but wished to call out an open opposition—a public demand by the people of their rights; being persuaded that by his own exertions he would be able to call out followers as soon as "a beginning was made." He was the soul of this unfortunate enterprise, and as far as it was possible, took the whole responsibility of it on himself. He entreated the Emperor and the commissioners not to spare him, but to deal leniently with his less guilty comrades. The published report of the inquiry commission makes special mention of this circumstance. I don't know where Count Bludow, the editor of this report, heard that Rylejew himself did not appear on the Senate Place. I saw him there myself. He certainly could not be there the whole time, for, as he was at the head of the movement, he had to drive round to the barracks and to all the different posts, and to look up his adherents, who had not yet appeared at the place of reunion. He could not undertake the command, as he had only been a short time in the army, and had now left it. He therefore placed himself in the ranks.

The last night in the casemates he received permission to write to his wife. He now and then interrupted his writing, prayed, and then continued to give her his

last directions. He tried to console her, and counselled her as to the bringing up of their only daughter. By sunrise the Town-major entered and told him that in half an hour he must get up. Two warders with chains followed. Rylejew seated himself to finish his letter, and begged them to put the fetters on his feet meantime. Sokolow, the warder, was astounded at the composure and peace of mind of the man so soon to die. After ending his letter, Rylejew ate a little bit of bread, drank some draughts of water, gave his blessing to the prison warder, crossed himself, and then calmly said, "I am ready."

Sergius Murawjew Apostol was placed in No. 12 of the casemates on the eve of his execution. The priest Myslowsky was so struck with his nobleness of mind and pure, firm faith, long before this fatal hour had dawned, that he exclaimed, "When I enter the casemate of Sergius Ivanowitch, a reverential feeling comes over me, as if I was entering the Holy of Holies before Divine service." From his earliest youth his one idea had been the good of his fatherland. For that one object he had worked, having studied diligently at the Ecole Polytechnique at Paris. His whole energies were directed to preparing a better future for Russia. The end he had in view was so far off that he lost patience meanwhile. In this spirit he expressed his sentiments in the following verses written on the wall of the Kiew cloister:—

Toujours rêveur et solitaire
Je passerai sur cette terre
Sans que personne m'ait connu ;
Ce n'est qu'au bout de ma carrière
Que par un grand trait de lumière
L'on verra ce qu'on a perdu.

I have already mentioned the rising of the Tchernigow Regiment, in which he commanded a battalion as chief lieutenant; even to the last moment of his life he thought of others and not of himself. Opposite him in No. 16 was his young friend, Michael Bestuchew Rjumin: he devoted himself to the work of consoling and encouraging him. The artilleryman Sokolow, and the warders Schibajew and Trosimow, did not prevent the condemned conversing aloud. They respected the last moments of those appointed to death. I have always lamented that these three simple-minded good men were unable to repeat the last conversation of the two friends—they only reported that they had talked of the immortality of the soul.

Bestuchew Rjumin was only twenty-two years old: he had served first as a noble youth in the Sémenow Regiment of Guards; but when this was abolished, he entered the Poltawa Regiment, where he became an officer. On account of his readiness and knowledge of languages he was entrusted with commissions to many Poles at Kiev, Podolia, Wolhynia, and Warsaw, which he executed disguised and under a false name. He was so young that it was hard for him to part with the life

upon which he had just entered; like a bird in a cage he flung himself from side to side and tried to free himself in every way when the fetters were put on him. Before his departure from the casemates he took from his bosom the picture of the Crucified (which every Russian carries) and gave it to his prison warder Trosimow for a remembrance. I have seen this picture and wished to buy it, but the old soldier would not part with it—he was in hopes of being able, after his discharge, to give it to Bestuchew's sister.

Michael Kachowsky was in another division of the Kronwerk curtain not under the charge of my warder Sokolow; I therefore, to my great regret, have been unable to get any information as to the last hours of his life. He had served in the Guards, and left them. When we were taken back to the glacis of the fortress the five condemned were conducted to the chapel in chains and shrouds, and there had to listen to their own funeral mass. The procession then went from the church to the Kronwerk bulwark; on their way Murawjew Apostol tried to comfort his friend Bestuchew Rjumin; he then turned to the priest Myslowsky and expressed his sorrow that he should be obliged to accompany the condemned, led as thieves should be, to the place of execution. The priest replied with the words of the Redeemer on the Cross to the thief who was crucified with him. As they approached the gallows the five embraced each other; they were then placed in a row

on the bench, but when the noose was fastened the bench was accidentally thrown down, and Pestel and Kachowsky only remained hanging, while Rylejew, Murawjew Apostol, and Bestuchew Rjumin fell upon the bench and were hurt. Murawjew remarked with a sigh, "They don't even understand doing this with us." This bitter exclamation was called forth by the violent pain of his wounds of the 3rd January, which had not yet healed. During the time that the fallen bench was being raised, and the line and noose newly adjusted, a few moments of inexpressible agony were passed. The three condemned, to whom, after such an accident, their lives would have been given under other circumstances, employed their time in praying for a blessing on their fatherland and a happier future for their brethren. The corpses were left hanging for the whole day as a further degradation. In the night they were taken down, wrapped in Bast mats, brought in a boat to the shore of the Chuntujew Island, and there buried in the earth. According to some the bodies were put into a ditch in the fortress with quicklime. Thus ended the execution of the 13th July, 1826.

Before I conclude the relation of this sad period of my life, it is necessary that I should add a few remarks upon the circumstances which accompanied our condemnation. I must, therefore, first of all, place before my readers two lists: one, of those who were brought before the commission on account of the events of the 14th

December; the other, of the punishments inflicted upon the individuals implicated. As these names will be always recurring in the course of my narrative, it is advisable to give this short statement of all those who were either compromised or condemned, to make the story complete :—

LIST *of those* MEMBERS *of the* SECRET SOCIETIES, *who, by order of the* EMPEROR, *were brought before the Supreme Criminal Court on June* 1, 1826.

UNION OF THE NORTH.

1. Prince Sergius Trubetzkoy, Colonel of the Preobrashensky Regiment of Body Guards, Orderly Staff Officer of the 4th Infantry Corps.

2. Conrad Rylejew, retired Sub-Lieutenant of the Horse Artillery Guards, Secretary of the Russo-American Merchants' Company.

3. Prince Eugene Obolensky, Lieutenant of the Finland Body Guard Regiment, the Senior Adjutant of the Commander of the Corps of Guards.

4. Nikita M. Murawjew I., Captain of the General Staff of Guards.

5. Michael Kachowsky, retired Lieutenant of Guards.

6. Prince Dmitry Tchepin Rostowsky, Staff Captain of the Moscow Regiment of Body Guards.

7. Alexander Bestuchew II., Staff Officer of the Regiment of Dragoon Guards, Adjutant of the Duke of Würtemberg.

8. Michael Bestuchew III., Staff Captain of the Moscow Regiment of Body Guards.

9. Anton Arbusow, Lieutenant of the Marines of the Guard.

10. Nicholai Bestuchew II., Captain in the Navy, Vice-Director of Lighthouses.

11. Nicholai Panow, Lieutenant of the Regiment of Grenadier Body Guards.

12. Alexander Sutthoff, Lieutenant of the Regiment of Grenadier Body Guards.

13. William Kuchelbecker I., College Assessor.

14. Iwan Puschtschin I., College Assessor.

15. Prince Alexander Odojewsky, Cornet of the Horse Guards.

16. Alexander Jakubowitch, Captain of the Nishegostod Dragoon Regiment.

17. Nicholai Zebrikow, Lieutenant of the Finland Regiment of Body Guards.

18. Nicholai Repin, Staff Captain of the Finland Regiment of Body Guards.

19. Alexander Murawjew, Col. of the General Guards' Staff.

20. Iwan Jakuschkin, retired Captain of the Semenow Regiment of Guards.

21. Michael von Wisin, General.

22. Prince Theodor Schakowsky, retired Major.

23. Michael Lunin, Colonel of the Grodno Hussar Regiment.

24. Peter Muchanow, Staff Captain of the Ismailow Regiment of Body Guards.

25. Michael Mitkow, Colonel in the Finland Regiment of Guards.

26. Dmitry Zawalischin, Lieutenant of the Navy.

27. Gawrila Batenkow, head of Civil Engineers.

28. Baron Wladimir Steinheil, retired Colonel.

29. Constantin Torson, Captain-Lieutenant, senior Adjutant of the chief of the Staff of the Fleet.

30. Prince Valerian Galitzin, Gentleman of the Bedchamber.

31. Alexander Belajew I., Midshipman of the Marines of the Guard.

32. Peter Belajew II., Midshipman of the Marines of the Guard.

33. Diwow, Midshipman of the Marines of the Guard.

34. Peter Bestuchew IV., Midshipman of the 27th Flotten Equipage.

35. Peter Swistunow, Cornet of the Chevalier Garde.

36. Iwan Annenkow, Lieutenant of the Chevalier Garde.

37. Sergius Kriwzow, Sub-Lieutenant of the Mounted Artillery of the Guards.

38. Alexander M. Murawjew II., Cornet of the Chevalier Garde.

39. Michael Naryschkin, Colonel of the Tarutino Infantry Regiment.

40. Alexander von der Bruggen, Colonel of the Ismailow Regiment of Guards.

41. Michael Puschtschin II., Captain of the Squadron of the Pioneers of the Guard.

42. Bodisko I., Lieutenant of the Marines of the Guard.

43. Michael Kuchelbecker II., Lieut. of the Marines of the Guard.

44. Mussin-Puschkin, Lieutenant of the Marines of the Guard.

45. Anklow, Lieutenant of the Marines of the Guard.

46. Wischnewsky, Lieutenant of the Marines of the Guard.

47. Bodisko II., Midshipman of the Marines of the Guard.

48. Gorsky, Councillor of State.

49. Count Peter Konownitzin, Sub-Lieutenant of the General Staff of Guards.

50. Orchitzky, retired Staff Captain.

51. Koschewnikow, Sub-Lieutenant of the Ismailow Regiment of Guards.

52. Fock, Sub-Lieutenant of the Ismailow Regiment of Guards.

53. Lappa, Sub-Lieutenant of the Ismailow Regiment of Guards.

54. Michael Nasimow, Staff-Captain of the Squadron of Pioneer Guards.

55. Baron Andreas Rosen, Lieut. of the Finland Regiment of Guards.

56. Michael Glebow, College Secretary.

57. Andrejew II., Sub-Lieutenant of the Ismailow Regiment of Guards.

58. Wladimir Tolstoy, Ensign of the Moscow Infantry Regiment.

59. Count Zacharias Tschernitschew, Captain of the Chevalier Garde.

60. Tschichow, Lieutenant of the 2nd Flotten Equipage.

61. Nicholai Turgenjew, Confidential Secretary in the Imperial Council.

Union of the South.

1. Paul Pestel, Colonel and Commander of the Wjatka Regiment of Infantry.

2. Sergius Marawjew Apostol, Colonel of the Tschernigow Regiment of Infantry.

3. Michael Bestuchew Rjumin, Sub-Lieutenant of the Poltawa Regiment of Infantry.

4. Matwei Murawjew Apostol, retired Colonel.

5. Alexey Juschnewsky, General Intendant of the 2nd Army.

6. Prince Sergius Wolkonsky, General.

7. Wassily Dawidow, Colonel of Hussars.

8. Prince Alexander Bariatinsky, Captain of the Hussar Guards, Adjutant of Count Wittgenstein.

9. Alexander Podgio, retired Colonel.

10. Artamon Murawjew, Colonel and Commander of the Achtyr Hussar Regiment.

11. Ivan Powalo Schweikowsky, Colonel and Commander of the Alexopol Infantry Regiment.

12. Theodor Wodkowsky, Ensign of the Jäger Cavalry regiment at Neshin.

13. Baron Tiefenhausen, Colonel Commander of the Poltawa Infantry Regiment.

14. Wranitzky, Colonel on the General's Staff.

15. Nicholai Krjukow II., Lieutenant of the General's Staff.

16. Peter Fahlenberg, Colonel on the General's Staff, Senior Adjutant on the Staff of the 2nd Army.

17. Nicholai Lohrer, Major of the Wjatka Regiment.

18. Semen Krassnokutsky, Chief Procureur.

19. Wladimir Licharew, Sub-Lieutenant on the General's Staff.

20. Ferdinand Wolff, Staff Surgeon at the head-quarters of the 2nd Army.

21. Alexander Krjukow I., Lieutenant of the Chevalier Garde, Adjutant to Count Wittgenstein.

22. Joseph Podgio I., Captain of the Staff of Guards.

23. Paul Abramow, Colonel Com-

mander of the Rajan Infantry Regiment.

24. Wassily Norow, Lieutenant-Colonel.

25. Andrey Jentalzow, Colonel Commander of the 27th Horse Artillery.

26. Wassily Iwaschew, Captain of the Chevalier Garde, Adjutant of Count Wittgenstein.

27. Nicholai Basargin, Lieutenant of the Jäger Regiment of Guards, Adjutant of General Kisselew, Chief of the Staff on the 2nd Army.

28. Alexander Kornilowitch, Captain of the General Guards' Staff.

29. Nicholai Bobrischtschew Puschkin, Lieutenant on the General's Staff.

30. Paul Bobrischtschew Puschkin II., Lieutenant of the General Staff.

31. Zaikin, Sub-Lieutenant of the General Guards' Staff.

32. Iwan Awramow, Lieutenant of the General Staff.

33. Nicholai Zagoutzky, Lieutenant of the General Staff.

34. Poliwanow, retired Colonel.

35. Baron Alexey Tscherkassow, Lieutenant on the General Staff.

36. F. Voigt, Captain of the Asow Regiment.

37. Count Nicholai Bulgary, Lieutenant of the Empress's Regiment of Cuirassiers.

United Sclavonians.

1. Peter Borissow II., Sub-Lieutenant of the 8th Brigade of Artillery.

2. Andrew Borissow II., retired Sub-Lieutenant of Artillery.

3. Joan Spiridow, Major of the Pensa regiment of Infantry.

4. Iwan Gorbatschewsky, Sub-Lieutenant of the 8th Brigade of Artillery.

5. Wladimir Betschanow, Ensign of the 8th Brigade of Artillery.

6. Alexander Pestow, Sub-Lieutenant of the 9th Brigade of Artillery.

7. Jacob Andrejewitch, Sub-Lieutenant of the 9th Brigade of Artillery.

8. Julian Liublinsky, Noble, landholder in Wolhynia.

9. Alexis Tjutschew, Captain of the Pensa Regiment.

10. Peter Gromnitsky, Lieutenant of the Pensa Regiment.

11. Iwan Kirejew, Ensign of the 8th Brigade of Artillery.

12. Iwan Fuhrmann, Captain of the Tchernigow Regiment.

13. Wediniapin I., Sub-Lieutenant of the 9th Artillery Brigade.

14. Wediniapin II., Ensign of the 9th Artillery Brigade.

15. Iwan Schimkow, Ensign of the Saratow Regiment.

16. Paul Mosgau, Sub-Lieutenant of the Pensa Regiment.

17. Ilja Swarrow, Commissariat Officer.
18. Alexander Frolow, Lieutenant of the Pensa Regiment.
19. Mosgalewsky, Sub-Lieutenant of the Saratow Regiment.
20. Nicholai Lisowsky, Lieutenant of the Pensa Regiment.
21. Paul Wigodowsky, Clerk of the "Chancellerie."
22. Berstel, Colonel Commander of the 2nd Battalion of the 9th Artillery Brigade.
23. Schachirew, Lieut. of the Tchernigow Regiment.

There were thus brought up before the Criminal Court :—

From the Union of the North	61
From the Union of the South	37
From the United Sclavonians	23
Total	121

The names of some of my comrades are not given here, for I was not personally acquainted with them, and have not been able to obtain correct information about them. I lived for six years at Tschita and Petrowski with eighty-five of them; I met twenty of them in my settlement and in the Caucasus; there are but sixteen of the number whom I have never seen again.

STATEMENT *of the* CRIMINAL CATEGORIES, *and the Decisions given by the highest Court of Justice, upon the condemned State Criminals* (July 10, 1826).

Sentence : To be quartered.

Names of the Condemned.	Sentence Commuted by Supreme Decree of July 11.
1. Paul Pestel. 2. Sub-Lieutenant Rylejew. 3. Col. Sergius Murawjew Apostol. 4. Sub-Lieut. Bestuchew Rjumin. 5. Lieutenant Kachowsky.	To be hung.

FIRST CATEGORY.—Sentence: The whole Category of these Criminals to be beheaded.

Names of the Condemned.	Sentence as commuted by Supreme Decree of July 11.
1. Colonel Prince Trubetzkoy. 2. Lieut. Prince Obolensky. 3. Colonel Mathias Murawjew Apostol. 4. Sub.-Lieut. Borissow II. 5. Sub.-Lieut. Borissow I. 6. Sub.-Lieut. Gorbatchewsky. 7. Major Spiridow. 8. Captain Prince Bariatinsky. 9. College Assessor Kuchelbecker I. 10. Captain Jakubowitch. 11. Lieut.-Col. Podgio II. 12. Colonel Artamon Murawjew. 13. Ensign Wodkowsky. 14. Ensign Betschanow. 15. Colonel Dawidow. 16. Juschnewsky (4th Class). 17. Staff Captain Alex. Bestuchew II. 18. Sub.-Lieut. Andrejewitch. 19. Capt. Nikita Murawjew I. 20. College Assessor Puschtschin. 21. General Prince Wolkonsky. 22. Captain Jakuschkin. 23. Sub.-Lieut. Pestow. 24. Lieutenant Arbusow. 25. Lieutenant Zawalischin. 26. Col. Powalo Schweikowsky. 27. Lieutenant Panow. 28. Lieutenant Sutthoff. 29. Staff Captain Tchepin Rostowsky. 30. Midshipman Diwow. 31. Councillor N. Turgenjew.	To have life given to them, with banishment and perpetual forced labour. Those mentioned below to have 20 years' forced labour, instead of forced labour for life: Mathias Murawjew Apostol. Kuchelbecker I. Alexander Bestuchew II. Nikita Murawjew I. Prince Wolkonsky. Jakuschkin. These commutations were the result of various circumstances, viz. the intercession of the Grand Duke Michael, full confession, or in consideration of repentance.

SECOND CATEGORY.—Sentence: To lay their heads on the scaffold, and to be condemned to civil death, and lifelong forced labour.

Names of the Condemned.	Sentence as commuted by Supreme Decree of July 11.
1. Captain Tjutschew. 2. Lieutenant Gromnitzky. 3. Ensign Kirejew. 4. Lieutenant Krjukow II. 5. Colonel Lunin. 6. Cornet Swistunow. 7. Lieutenant Krjukow I. 8. Colonel Mitkow. 9. Lieutenant Basargin. 10. Lieutenant Annenkow. 11. Staff-Surgeon Wolff. 12. Captain Iwaschew. 13. Sub-Lieut. Frolow. 14. Colonel Norow. 15. Captain-Lieut. Torson. 16. Capt.-Lieut. N. Bestuchew I. 17. Staff Capt. M. Bestuchew II.	To be condemned to 20 years' forced labour, with the exception of Colonel Norow, who was condemned to 15 years. The sentence of perpetual forced labour was not commuted for N. and M. Bestuchew.

THIRD CATEGORY.—Sentence: Forced labour for life.

1. Colonel Baron Steinheil. 2. Colonel Batenkow.	Forced labour for 20 years.

FOURTH CATEGORY.—Sentence: Forced labour for 15 years, and then to settle in Siberia.

1. Staff Captain Muchanow. 2. General von Wisin. 3. Staff Captain Podgio I. 4. Colonel Fahlenberg. 5. Swarrow (10th Classe). 6. Sub.-Lieut. Mosgau. 7. Staff-Captain Kornilowitch. 8. Major Lohrer. 9. Colonel Abramow.	Twelve years' forced labour, and then settlement in Siberia.

Names of the Condemned.	Sentence as commuted by Supreme Decree of July 11.
10. Lieut. Bobrischtschew Puschkin II.	Twelve years' forced labour, and then settlement in Siberia.
11. Ensign Schimkow.	
12. Count Alex. Murawjew II.	
13. Midshipman Belajew I.	
14. Midshipman Belajew II.	
15. Colonel Naryschkin.	
16. Cornet Prince Odojewsky.	

FIFTH CATEGORY.—Sentence: Forced labour for ten years, and after that settlement in Siberia.

1. Staff Captain Repin.	Repin and Kuchelbecker to eight years' forced labour. Bodisko, on account of his youth, to labour at the forts. The sentences of Glebow and Baron Rosen were not commuted.
2. College Secretary Glebow.	
3. Lieutenant Baron Rosen.	
4. Lieutenant Kuchelbecker II.	
5. Midshipman Bodisko.	

SIXTH CATEGORY.—Sentence: Forced labour for six years, after that settlement in Siberia.

1. Colonel Alexander Murawjew.	Murawjew to be banished, without loss of rank or nobility. Liublinsky to five years' forced labour, and then settlement.
2. Liublinsky, Landed Proprietor.	

SEVENTH CATEGORY.—Sentence: Forced labour for five years, and then settlement in Siberia.

1. Sub-Lieutenant Licharew.	Two years' forced labour, and after that, settlement. Berstel and Count Bulgary to two years' work at the forts.
2. Colonel Jentalzow.	
3. Lieutenant Lisowsky.	
4. Colonel von Tiefenhausen.	
5. Sub-Lieutenant Kriwzow.	
6. Ensign Tolstoy.	
7. Captain Count Tschernitschew.	
8. Lieutenant Awramow.	
9. Lieutenant Zagoutzky.	

Names of the Condemned.	Sentence as commuted by Supreme Decree of July 11.
10. Colonel Poliwanow. 11. Lieutenant Baron Tscherkassow 12. Lieutenant Count Bulgary. 13. Chancellor Wigadowsky. 14. Colonel Berstel. 15. Colonel von der Bruggen.	Two years' forced labour, and after that, settlement. Berstel and Count Bulgary to two years' work at the forts.

EIGHTH CATEGORY.—Sentence: To be settled in Siberia, with loss of rank and nobility.

1. Sub-Lieutenant Andrejew II. 2. Sub-Lieutenant Wediniapin I. 3. Councillor Krassnokutsky. 4. Lieutenant Tschichow. 5. Gentleman of the Bedchamber, Prince Galitzin. 6. Staff-Captain Nasimow. 7. Lieutenant Bobrischtschew Puschkin. 8. Sub-Lieutenant Zaikin. 9. Captain Fuhrmann. 10. Major Prince Schakowsky. 11. Captain Voigt. 12. Sub-Lieutenant Mosgalewsky. 13. Lieutenant Schachirew. 14. Colonel Wranitzky. 15. Lieutenant Bodisko I.	No change of sentence. Bodisko I. to be degraded to the rank of common sailor.

NINTH CATEGORY.—Sentence: To be sent to Siberia, with loss of rank and nobility.

1. Sub-Lieutenant Count Konownitzin. 2. Staff-Captain Orchitzky. 3. Sub-Lieutenant Koschewnikow.	To be sent to the distant garrisons as soldiers.

TENTH CATEGORY.—Sentence: With loss of rank and nobility, to be degraded to a common soldier, but with prospect of advancement.

Name of the Condemned.	Sentence as commuted by Supreme Decree of July 11.
1. Captain Puschtschin II.	To be sent as a soldier to the Caucasian army.

ELEVENTH CATEGORY.—Sentence: To be degraded to common soldiers, with loss of rank and prospects of advancement.

1. Midshipman Bestuchew IV. 2. Ensign Wediniapin. 3. Lieutenant Wischnewsky. 4. Lieutenant Mussin-Puschkin. 5. Lieutenant Anklow. 6. Ensign Fock. 7. Lieutenant Zebrikow. 8. Sub-Lieutenant Lappa.	To be sent to distant garrisons. Zebrikow, who had gone over to the rebels, in the sight of his whole regiment, received an increase of punishment: he lost his rank of noble, and was degraded, without prospect of advancement.

Every reader must be struck by the inconsistent and arbitrary manner in which the divisions into categories were made. There was a difference between the sentences originally passed in the first and second categories, but when they came to be carried into effect there was virtually none. In the original sentence some of the accused were said to have recanted, yet they were punished equally with those who adhered to their former opinions. Many of the accused were condemned for their intention of attempting the Emperor's life, though mention is actually made in the sentences of their having given up the intention. The accusation against Michael Nasimow was, that he had taken part in the rising, merely because he had received a comrade

into the secret society. Some were condemned for "bold" ways of speaking in their private conversations. The pardons were granted in the same arbitrary manner: they seemed in many cases to be the result of pure accident, and no motive whatever could be assigned for them. For instance, how unaccountable was the judgment passed upon Lieut. Zebrikow, whose name was notwithstanding paraded among the pardoned. I must mention in conclusion that when the foreign ambassadors came to Moscow for the coronation of the Emperor Nicholas, the representatives of England and France (the Duke of Wellington and Marshal Mortier) interceded, according to their special instructions, for the mitigation of the sentences. Karamsin also remarked to the Emperor that the individuals should hardly be condemned for crimes which ought rather to be called mistakes arising from the opinions of the age. The Emperor is reported to have replied to the Duke of Wellington, "I shall astonish Europe by my clemency.

CHAPTER IV.

THE JOURNEY TO SIBERIA.

THE verdict was no sooner given than the deportation of the condemned to Siberia began. I don't know for what reason those who were condemned to forced labour were, contrary to the usual custom, put in irons for the journey. Such aggravated punishment was in general reserved for those individuals who, either through fresh offences or attempts to escape, had incurred a heavier penalty. As those who were condemned for this rising were always guarded by a gendarme, and were transported with post-horses to Siberia in gangs of four, accompanied by a Feldjäger and a guard of gendarmes, escape was totally out of the question. It was an exceptional measure when we travelled post, the reasons for which were much questioned. Some thought it might be to spare us the long march; others, that it was to secure us from the rage of the people. Many were of opinion that it was to prevent the chance of our spreading revolutionary ideas, and that, therefore, the

quickest means of transport was chosen. Eight persons of the above-mentioned eleven criminal categories were despatched at once to the quicksilver mines of Nertschinsk: Prince G. P. Trubetzkoy, Prince E. P. Obolensky, Prince S. G. Wolkonsky, B. L. Dawidow, A. Z. Murawjew, A. J. Jakubowitch, and the two brothers J. A. and P. J. Borissow; they worked for long years under ground in the mines, like the other forced labourers.

The whole category of those condemned to banishment in Siberia followed these eight, who were the most deeply implicated.

The men were despatched by fours. Theirs was an especially hard fate, as they were settled each one by himself in the northernmost region of Siberia, between Obdorsk and Kolymsk, in a country where the earth will not even bring forth grain. Here they remained above a year, and were then moved southward between Beresow and Yakoutsk. They were at first quite alone, not a friendly voice, not a ray of sun to cheer and warm them; as might have been expected, such a life drove some of them mad, while others gave themselves up to despair, which soon put an end to their miserable existence. Prince Schachowsky and N. S. Bobrischtschew Puschkin were among the former, while Fuhrmann and Schachirew fell victims to the latter within two years. M. A. Nasimow lived a year in Nishni Kolymsk, where he was brought a part of the way on a pack-horse and

part on a little sledge drawn by dogs. His night quarters on this journey must often have been in the open air, snow all around and thirty degrees (Reaumur) of cold. Nishni Kolymsk is the place at which, in the reign of the Empress Elizabeth Petrowna, the former Minister (Count Golowkin) lived an exile. A local report relates that the sick and aged man was forced to go to church on feast days, that he might hear, after the end of the liturgy, the priest pronounce the anathema over him. The next category of conspirators despatched included those who were degraded to the rank of common soldiers, and as such must pass their whole lives in Siberia: these were disposed of in various little fortresses and castles in Siberia, and subsequently were transported to the mountains of the Caucasus. In August the expediting of the State criminals ceased for a few months, for it was not considered advisable to unite all those condemned to forced labour in Nertschinsk or in any other mine, for a rising was feared in the larger mines; this precaution was not superfluous, as the occurrences since then at Nertschinsk have shown.

In August, 1826, shortly before the coronation of the Emperor Nicholas, the commandant of the Sewersky Regiment of Jäger Cavalry, Colonel Leparsky, was named commandant of the Nertschinsk Mine. He was ordered to find out some place on the other side of Lake Baikal which would be suitable for the erection

of a temporary prison, to be used until another place should be determined on for the building of a strong prison or house of correction. Leparsky set out at once, and chose the Siberian fortress Tschita, between Nishni Udinsk and Nertschinsk, situated about 400 wersts * distant from the latter town. In expectation of his report and decision, the departure of the fifth (my) category was delayed.

In order to relieve the over full fortress of St. Petersburg, some of the condemned, after many months, were removed to Schlüsselburg, others to the prisons of Finland and the Island of Aland; the others remained in the casemates, where the supervision was relaxed after the verdict. The alleviations in which we were to share consisted in our being taken one by one, in order, into a vestibule, where doors and windows were opened, and we could inhale the fresh air daily for about twenty minutes. Besides this, we were taken every ten or fourteen days into the fortress, to walk on the ramparts. These measures were of pressing necessity: the pale yellow faces of most of the prisoners testified to the poisonous effect of the impure and damp air of the prison. I suffered from scurvy; my gums were swollen and quite white. A third very important alleviation consisted in the permission to receive books. I read all Walter Scott's novels with the greatest delight; the hours passed so quickly that often I did not hear the

* Werst is about five furlongs.

sound of the fortress clock. Through Sokolow I shared my books with a fellow-prisoner. I sometimes devoured four volumes in a day; and spent those hours, not in the fortress, but in Kenilworth Castle, in the cloister, in a Scotch inn, in the palaces of Louis XI., Edward, and Elizabeth. When evening came, I rejoiced in the thought of the next morning when I should begin a new book. I could only manage light reading; grave and learned books would have been out of the question, with the expectation of a speedy departure for Siberia continually before me. I should have liked some books upon Siberia, but at that time few had been written about that country. With the exception of the travels of Pallas, Martynow, Martus, and some persons who had accompanied a mission through Kiatchta to China, no written information was to be had. Most of these accounts were, as we afterwards found out, incomplete and full of faults. Those of my fellow-prisoners who had no relations in St. Petersburg, received books from the fortress library, *Cook's Voyages*, the *History* of Abbé Laporte, and old Russian newspapers. A comrade once sent me a newspaper of 1776, which contained an article on North America, in which "the shameful rebel, General Washington," was continually spoken of.

A week after the sentence had been given, a relation and brother officer received permission to see me and take leave. Our meeting took place in the Commandant's residence, and in the presence of the Platz Adju-

tant. On the 25th July, my wife obtained leave to let me see her new-born son at the Commandant's house; although in tears, she was composed and firm. My son, six weeks old, lay on the Commandant's sofa; his blue eyes and the smiles round his mouth seemed to bring us messages of comfort. My wife inquired about the time and place of our reunion. I entreated her not to follow me at once to Siberia, but to wait till our boy could run alone, and I could give her some information about my new place of residence. She gave me, with her blessing, the picture of the Blessed Virgin. I observed something adhering to the reverse side; it was a thousand roubles in bank-notes. I sent back the money, for it was unnecessary. I asked to have instead a large cloak of grey cloth, lined with wax-cloth. This article of dress was of the greatest use to me afterwards in the rain and cold I had to endure. I also begged my wife to visit the widow and daughter of Rylejew, and not to forget them in their great sorrow.

The hour fixed for our interview was soon at an end. We parted in the firm hope of reunion; it mattered little when and where, so that we met at last.

I then returned with hasty steps to my casemate; the verdure, the flowers, passed unheeded before me. The air was thick with the smoke of the burning woods over a large extent of country. The sun shone out like a fiery disk. The departure of my comrades destined for settlement and military service in Siberia continued

in the meanwhile incessantly. Every third day four men and no more were despatched, so as not by their numbers to delay the course of the post. We were permitted, when September came, to see our relations for one hour in the week, till our departure. My wife visited me every Wednesday, my brothers also sometimes came, one of them from Esthonia. My youngest brother, a cadet in the first Cadet Corps, also came; he wept bitterly, and deeply regretted among other things that by my condemnation I had lost the privilege of ever earning the cross of St. George. He further told me that the cadets were proud of finding many names of former pupils of the institute among those condemned, and pitied me that I had not shared the same honourable fate as Rylejew.

I passed in this manner seven months, in daily expectation of my departure to Siberia. A whole year of imprisonment in the casemates was already gone by, and I must still wait! In the winter, the vacant cells in the prison were filled with Poles who had known of the secret society in Russia; these Poles knew so well how to conduct their affairs and to conceal the holding of the Polish revolutionary meetings, that only a few, Count Moschinsky, Kryschanowsky, and Janusch Kewitsch, were banished to Siberia. Opposite my cell a Colonel Worzel had taken the place of Bobrischtschew Puschkin I. He was not yet acquainted with the fate of the remainder of those condemned, as he had

spent many months in another fortress; he inquired of me about his neighbours incarcerated opposite, and his old acquaintances, his questions being disguised by singing in French: he named Pestel, S. Murawjew, and Wolkonsky. I replied to him by singing, "*Pendu, pendu,* exilé à Nertschinsk." After the beginning of the new year, 1827, the departures recommenced. My valise was already prepared. My brother-in-law had come to St. Petersburg and had brought reindeer skins, out of which my wife had made me an overcoat; the hair was turned outside, the coat was wadded inside with silk. This dress was light, warm, and comfortable. As I had another fur besides, I could defy the cold on the journey. The 3rd of February, my wife's *fête* day, was the day of our last meeting in the fortress and our parting. I was to start on the morrow. I knew it beforehand, for on that day M. M. Naryschkin, Lohrer, and the two brothers Belajew were despatched, and after these it must come to my turn. I prepared my wife for it, repeating my wish that she would not follow me till my son could walk and had cut his teeth; we did not then know that the wives of the condemned were not allowed to take their children with them. I was not without grounds of consolation. I represented to my wife how necessary it was for my health that I should breathe fresh air again; that the one hour of our meeting in the week would not be a pleasure to her if continued, for she must observe how rapidly my imprison-

ment was undermining my health. Since the beginning of winter our walks had entirely ceased; the miserable lamp scarcely allowed us light enough to read from one minute to another; the air in the prison, bad enough before, was rendered even more intolerable by the carelessness of the warders, who now and then let an old glove or greasy rag burn in the iron stove. I felt my strength day by day decreasing. I said as much as I could to my wife in the presence of the Platz Adjutant; for the second time I declined to take money secretly with me; we were each of us permitted to take ninety-five rouble bank assignats with us, which, however, had to be given over to the charge of our guard. Then came the moment for our long, sad farewell; my wife gave me a little wooden cross from Jerusalem, which had reposed on her breast and that of my baby-boy. I could not see him to bid him good-by, as he was ill; the Platz Adjutant, Nicolajew, would have prolonged our interview, but this would not have lightened our final separation.

On the 5th February, the Platz Adjutant stayed sitting on my bed longer than usual, and told me that he would fetch me away that night for my journey (the departure of the prisoners takes place in winter about midnight). I had time to prepare—that is, I commended myself and all dear to me to the all-loving Almighty Father. The clock struck eleven; the tune of "God save the King" again sounded in my ears. I

was glad to have heard it for the last time. Sokolow then hastily unbolted the door. I was able to embrace him before the Platz Adjutant entered and took me to the Commandant. Five sledges were waiting at the steps of the Commandant's house. N. P. Repin, M. N. Glebow, and M. K. Kuchelbecker followed me to the Commandant's. We embraced each other. I had served in the army with the former; with the latter I had only made acquaintance on the day of execution. We each had our own warm clothing. In the same room stood the Town-major, two Platz Adjutants, a Feldjäger, and the well-known doctor in the frock-coat, leaning against the stove. On the chimney-piece I caught sight of some medicine-glasses. Nicolajew told me that the doctor had to attend at each start in order to render assistance in case of fainting or illness. As far as we were concerned, he was a mere spectator. Our short conversation was interrupted by the entrance of the Commandant Sukin. An artilleryman followed, holding up the ends of his cloak mysteriously gathered in his hands. The Commandant explained to us that, according to supreme command, he had to despatch us to Siberia, and, he was grieved to say, in chains. At these last words the artilleryman let fall the ends of his cloak, and the chains destined for us rattled on the floor. The Commandant then withdrew, and the rings were clasped round our ankles, fastened with a lock, and the keys given to the Feldjäger who was to accompany us.

After this we went out; it was not easy to descend with the chains on. I held firmly by the rail, but one of my comrades stumbled and nearly fell. The Town-major then brought in some red cords which had served to tie up quills: one end of the cord was attached to a ring which united the bars and links of the iron chains; the other was fastened to the girdle, in order to enable us to move quickly and take steps of half an ell in length. There were gendarmes waiting at the steps to place us each on a sledge; and thus began our journey of 6,600 wersts (4,125 English miles). The moon and glittering stars lighted us on our way: we passed over the Neva at a slow trot. My eyes were fixed on Wassily Ostrow; I knew my wife was now praying for me. "Il n'y a rien de plus beau dans le monde que le ciel étoilé, et le sentiment de devoir dans le cœur de l'homme," she had once said to my father. We reached the opposite bank of the Neva near the Marble Palace, turned into the Liteinaya, down the officers' street by the Newsky Perspective Avenue, then past the Alexander Newsky Convent to the Schlüsselburg Gate. But few houses were lighted up; the streets were deserted; we could only hear the occasional call of the street watch as they walked to and fro, halberd in hand, or met now and then a guest returning late from some convivial entertainment; it was just then the "Butter week." *

* As is well known, the carnival week is called in Russian, "Butter week" (Maszliniza).

We halted at the bar — the Feldjäger entered the guardroom: the postilions meantime loosed the tongues of the post-bells, the sentry raised the bar, and the spirited horses dashed on. The cold, without a breath of wind, refreshed us; the postilions drove very fast, continually calling out to the horses, "Carnival! hi! hi!" The first station was reached in an hour. It took but a few moments for other sledges to be put to, for the days appointed for the departure were known beforehand at all the post-stations. After a few minutes we were in another sledge; good-natured postilions wrapped our feet carefully in dry hay to protect them from frost-bite, and we were off again on our ceaseless course. At the two first stations some of us found friends and relations who were waiting to bid the exiles once more farewell. The priest Myslowsky had, with his usual kindness, taken pains to find out the day of our departure. We then hastened on. I observed, with increasing anxiety, that we were approaching the fortress of Schlüsselburg. I dreaded lest we also should be shut up within its walls, knowing that some of our comrades had been imprisoned there for a long time after the execution of the sentence, and to be left confined in a fortress appeared to me more terrible than any other fate.

We came to the cross-roads, where one turns left to the fortress and the other right to the village, beyond which is the station. My heart beat faster and faster,

till our sledges turned down the road to the village and all danger of the fortress was passed. The horses were quickly changed; as we galloped on we could barely distinguish the walls of the fortress, where Russian soldiers had once given a famous proof of their bravery. Peter wishing to snatch away the Schlüsselburg from the Swedes, had caused the fortress to be stormed, but during the storming it was found that the scaling-ladders were too short, and seeing the impossibility of success, he ordered the assault to be discontinued.

"Tell the Emperor," replied Prince Galitzin, the leader, when he received the command, "that I now do not belong to him, but to God alone: forward, my children." Galitzin mounted on to the shoulders of one of his men who stood on the highest step of the ladder, and in this way was the first to spring upon the rampart; the others followed him, and the fortress was taken.

During the Carnival we travelled through the towns of Tichwin, Ustinqua, and Molaga. Wherever we dined and supped we found Shrove Tuesday pancakes and sturgeon soup all ready. After a journey of many days we arrived at night at Rybinsk, where, for the first time since we started, we were to rest for some hours. There were only two rooms at the station; in the first there was nothing but tables and chairs; the second, with sofas and beds, was already occupied by travellers. Overcome by exhaustion, we had lain down on the floor,

when a man in an admiral's uniform, decorated with the St. George's cross, entered, followed by two sleepy youths, each carrying a pillow and a bundle. We apologized for disturbing the gentlemen in their repose by the clanking of our fetters. "I beg you, gentlemen," said the admiral politely, "to change rooms with me; my room is warmer: you will rest better there than here. Your way is long, mine is only to St. Petersburg." Our unknown friend was travelling to the capital, to take his son to the Cadet Corps; here he gave him a good lesson of courtesy. After a short rest we went on again. On Sunday morning we at last reached Jaroslaw. While the table was being laid at the hotel on the market-place, where we changed horses, I heard a cautious knock at the door of the room, and a soft voice asked, "Is J. D. Jakuschkin here? where is he? when does he come?" It was the wife of the condemned Jakuschkin, accompanied by her mother, N. N. Schermetjew.* These questions I could not answer. I only knew that Jakuschkin had long before been removed from the fortress at St. Petersburg to another in Finland. These two ladies, brought up in the greatest comfort and luxury, had lived for months in this miserable inn, awaiting Jakuschkin's arrival, and he was not sent to Siberia till the following summer.

While we were eating, the people assembled on the

* The Counts Schermetjew belong to the richest and noblest families in Russia.

Place outside; in a quarter of an hour the whole Place was packed so close with human beings that if an apple had been thrown down from above it could not have fallen on the snow without hitting a head or shoulder. Our sledges stood ready in the inner court; the gates were shut; on the outside were two gendarmes with drawn swords. In the passage, Madame de Jakuschkin and her mother wished us a prosperous journey. When we descended the steps the Feldjäger ordered that his sledge should drive on, and that the gendarmes should follow; instantly we took our places: the guard had hardly opened the doors when, swift as an arrow, we shot across the Place—the dense crowd of people standing on each side. I had barely time to put my hand up to salute, when every hat flew off, and we were respectfully greeted on all sides, not a trace of "the people's rage" to be seen. In a few moments we had passed the Volga, and now travelled along the left bank.

We sped on incessantly like Feldjäger, day and night: sleeping in the sledge was almost impossible; passing the night encumbered with fetters and clothes was not comfortable either: we could only snatch a few moments' sleep while the horses were being put to; the rapidity of this journey became hourly more and more unbearable. Kostrowa, Makajew, Kotoluitsch, Walga, Glasow, Perin, Kungur, Katherinburg and Tjumen passed like apparitions before our eyes. We spent the night at Glasow, and here for the first time our fetters were removed

for a moment, while we changed our linen. When we had reached this distance from the capital of European Russia, we began to learn the peculiar practices of the Feldjäger who accompanied us, and how admirably he understood how to fill his purse. From Tichwin he allowed four sledges only to be harnessed; he invited me to sit in his sledge with him, placed my gendarmes in the sledges following, and thus the posting-money for the three horses which should have drawn the fifth sledge, for full three thousand wersts, went into his pocket. This one might not have objected to, for no one suffered by it, neither postmaster, postilion, or post-horses, for three horses could easily draw one prisoner and two gendarmes; neither was the Crown defrauded, as a fixed sum was paid for which the Feldjäger had to convey us to a given place. But he was not content with this profit; as soon as the horses were put to, he asked the postmaster in a loud voice, "How much have I to pay you for posting-money?" If he demanded only the half of the lawful amount, he quietly ordered that the Feldjäger's sledge should follow the gendarmes, who should go first with the prisoners. We then went at a full trot; he slept, or pretended to sleep, quietly by my side, and so we drove on merrily. But it was quite another affair when the postmaster demanded the full sum due to him; then the voice of the Feldjäger thundered forth, "My team of three goes first; gendarmes! take care not to lag behind." Then

began a wild race with the intention of ruining the unfortunate horses. The Feldjäger was always striking the postilion with his sword, while he shouted, "Forward, forward! you ought to drive nothing but corpses at this place—certainly not Feldjäger!" and by his threats and oaths he urged the postilion on to such a mad speed that I was obliged to cover my mouth and nose with the sleeve of my fur-coat—the rapid passing through the bitter cold air completely took away my breath. By tricks like these the dishonest, covetous man brought things to such a pass that on our way to Tobolsk only, seven horses fell dead to the ground. He hoped in this way to force the postmaster to a partial abatement of the posting-money. I remonstrated and scolded in vain. I could often scarcely contain myself when I saw the postilion thus losing his best and most spirited horses, and sobbing as he had to cut the traces. I asked the Feldjäger to give him a bond at the next station, by which the proprietor might receive twenty silver roubles indemnification (though the horse was well worth forty roubles). "Oh, nonsense," cried the Feldjäger; "how can you intercede for a cheat and *vaurien*, who has purposely put in a sick horse? it is an old trick of these canaille," and so he put an end to the matter. However, when we reached the stations kept by Tartars, and which became more numerous the other side of Tjumen, the power of the Feldjäger was at an end; they demanded the sum of

money in full, and drove so quickly that he could say nothing to the drivers. When he approached a station the drivers lifted us out of the sledge at once, so as not to keep the horses standing, and then led them round and round for an hour to get cool. With mischievous joy and smiles we looked at the Feldjäger; the postilions were active, and up to the business, their horses swift and light as the wind.

We arrived at the house of the police-master at Tobolsk on the morning of the 22nd February. A police officer came out and requested us not to descend from the sledge, but to drive to the police-house. This courteous reception surprised us; it was a striking contrast to the usual billet. We had a room in the police lockup assigned to us. Meanwhile our post-sledge was waiting; our valises had not been taken out. We had travelled so quick that we had overtaken our comrades, who had started from St. Petersburg two days earlier. We were detained at the police-station till they were sent off, and were then conducted to the residence of the police-master, Alexejew, where we rested for two days in his guest-room, and were unusually well treated, by command of the civil governor, Bantysch Kamcasky. At breakfast we had served for us alone twelve different kinds of fish, in which the rivers of Siberia abound. We greatly needed this repose, and enjoyed it to the full. On the morning of the third day we were obliged to continue our journey. An assessor of the Kurgan

district court of justice, Z. M. Gerassimow, accompanied us in the place of the Feldjäger, and our posters were changed for farm-horses. Before our departure from Tobolsk we were taken to the civil governor, who received us politely, and kindly inquired how our health had borne the imprisonment in the fortress and the long journey. He then bowed his adieus, saying to our attendants, "These are your prisoners; but you will not forget that you have to do with gentlemen" (literally, well-born people).

We were now travelling along the great high-road which traverses Siberia diagonally. Everything was arranged with a view to the transport of criminals; every posting place was at the same time a military station. The district south of this great road is the most thickly peopled in the whole country, though the population is so small that the towns are from 100 to 400 wersts distant from each other. At Tara we could not avail ourselves of the hospitality of the police-master, Stepanow, a Caucasian warrior of Jermolow's time, as we did not spend a night in that town. Some of our comrades, whom we afterwards met, could not sufficiently praise the generosity of this man, who was even found fault with on account of his humanity. He vindicated himself by saying he had only followed the precepts of Christian love. The farm-horses were always changed in the court of the public court-house, where we sometimes found the authorities at their work, and could not

but admire the straightforward and rapid manner in which the business of the commune was despatched, and the healthy tone of the Russian peasants' mind. We passed our nights in the clean cottages of these peasants, who received us cordially, and declined all payment. Of Siberia and its inhabitants I shall be able to say more on the occasion of my return journey, as I then travelled in the summer; and this hasty winter trajet gave me no opportunity of making myself acquainted with either people or country. I will, therefore, merely give one instance of the charitable disposition of the Siberians. On certain days, and at fixed spots on our way, we saw a crowd of peasants standing by the roadside under the open heavens. It was the custom for the villagers living near the great road to assemble and await the passing of the "unfortunates" (so they called those exiled and banished to Siberia), in order to sell them food, warm stockings, &c.; to the poorer among us they were always given. This took place twice a week, when the prisoners were going from one military station to another, and the villagers took it in regular rotation. I was told that this Christian custom had existed from very old times. They received us kindly everywhere, from Tobolsk to Tschita; warm wraps were fastened over our open sledges, our feet carefully packed round with hay, and blessings were showered on our heads.

Our way led through the towns of Tara, Kanisk,

Kolhyvaw, Tomsk, Atchinsk, Krasnojarsk, Kansk, Nishni Udinsk, Irkutsk, nine towns in a stretch of 3,000 wersts (about 1,875 English miles). From Krasnojarsk we were put upon wheels, and drove on thus for several stations. The undulating hills of yellowish red chalk had thrown off the snow, and the road was already beginning to be dusty. The chief street of Krasnojarsk consisted of well-built stone houses, many of them two stories in height; we stopped at the police-office in the market-place, where several of the inhabitants disputed the honour of lodging us. At last an old man begged the police-master to let him take us into his house: he was a merchant named Stargow. He gave us his best room, lodged us luxuriously, and, according to Russian custom, had a refreshing bath prepared for us. When we entered his house he presented us his sons and daughters-in-law, and we had some agreeable conversation about the country before us, to us as yet unknown. I congratulated myself on my good fortune in being quartered here, particularly as I was in hopes of now getting to the bottom of a mystery which had long tormented us; all my questions were, however, in vain. Stargow merely said he knew nothing about it. The case was this, that the whole way from Tjumen the postilions and peasants had everywhere asked us if we had seen Afanaffy Petrowitch. They then said that Alexejew, the police-master from Tobolsk, and Stargow, the merchant of Krasnojarsk, had accompanied this

man with great deference to St. Petersburg, that he had remained one day in Tobolsk, and had recognized the Governor-General Kopzewitch standing at an open door and called out, "Now, Kopzewitch, favourite of Gatschina, do you recognize me?" The unknown was very old but still vigorous, and was remarkable by his very handsome dress. The most contradictory rumours regarding him were current among the people. Some maintained that he was a Boyar sent from the Emperor Paul, others imagined him to be an own brother of that Emperor. My host apparently was in the secret, but he was resolutely silent. When on my return journey I came to his place of residence I found he was no longer alive: his children only knew that he and Colonel Alexejew had accompanied this mysterious person to St. Petersburg.

On the 22nd March we at length reached Irkutsk; of course during these last 3,000 wersts we had travelled at only half the speed of our first 3,000, between St. Petersburg and Tobolsk; not one horse had been killed by this journey, and we had also stopped for the night, from one to five times a week. We had to spend our one day of rest at Irkutsk, in a common prison. Here we parted from our second guard and received a fresh one, in the person of a Cossack sub-officer. At the second post-station beyond Irkutsk we came to the Lake Baikal, here called the Holy Sea, over which we drove: the horses went sixty wersts without stopping;

the drivers had taken some boards in their sledges, to make bridges if needful over the fissures in the ice, but the horses jumped these cracks, which were often many ells wide, with such dexterity that the long sledges barely touched the water. The Siberian horses are extraordinarily strong and hardy, though small and ill-shaped; they can go eighty wersts at a stretch without any exertion. On the other side of Lake Baikal was the monastery of Podolsky; the beautiful environs of this—which later I learnt to know well—now lay under a thick covering of snow, whose uniformity was only broken here and there by villages, mountains, and trees. As we approached Tschita, we saw for the first time the yourts (felt tents of the nomad Burjäts). At Klutschway, the next station before Tschita, our sledges were changed for stage-coaches, for here the snow does not lie the whole year round. This place stands very high, and in consequence rejoices in a clear, unclouded sky; if snow occasionally falls, the wind carries it down at once into the valleys. In a certain sense it may be said that Tschita is too cold for snow: the thermometer stands at forty degrees of frost (Reaumur), so that quicksilver freezes, and a spirit thermometer only is of use.

Before we reached our place of destination we encountered an adventure. On the 29th March, Glebow and I drove in a stage-coach for the last stage of our journey to Tschita: the driver was a heathen Burjät, who had tied the harness together very carelessly with string.

After we had travelled ten wersts, we found ourselves on the top of a mountain overlooking the little village to which we were going; we drove slowly and carefully down the heights, when suddenly the rope of the harness broke, and at the same time the wooden pin which fastened the front wheels to the carriage snapped. In an instant we were upset: Glebow was thrown over the off horse on to the road, while the driver sprang off on one side, and I was left with my right foot caught in the ropes of the side horse, and had to cling with both hands to the mane of the middle horse. The animals went on at full speed for about two wersts, taking the fore-axletree of the broken carriage with them. Encumbered with very heavy chains, I contrived with the greatest difficulty to hold firm between them till Repin and Kuchelbecker, who had reached the foot of the mountain before us, saw my perilous situation, stopped the horses and extricated me. My chains prevented my being able to help myself in any way. Miraculously I was unhurt, my clothes were not even torn. The carriage was mended, and at last, at the end of an hour, we reached the object of our journey, the prison of Tschita, a wooden hut surrounded by a hedge. We hoped to find there some of our comrades who had previously been sent from St. Petersburg, but these were located in another temporary prison, in which there was no room for us, as it could hold but twenty-four men. We were received by the captain of a line regiment, a Platz

Adjutant, a clerk, and some sentries; the captain asked if we had money or treasures about us, as this was strictly forbidden. I took from my neck the silken cord on which was a portrait of my wife, a locket with my parents' hair, and a little packet of earth from my native land. When I handed these things to the captain, he observed a gold ring on my finger, and cried in a stentorian voice, "What have you on your finger?" "My wedding-ring." "Off with it." I replied civilly that I had been allowed to have it in the Winter Palace and in the fortress, and that the wearing of such things was not forbidden. "Off with it instantly, I tell you," he cried, still more roughly. I calmly answered, "Take the ring and the finger with it;" folded my arms, and quietly leaned against the stove. The adjutant gave the captain no time to say a word, but whispered something in his ear, then gathered up our treasures and withdrew. Meantime, the clerk examined all our portmanteaus and books, and made a note of everything. The adjutant returned in half-an-hour, telling me that the captain returned me my wife's picture, and permitted me to wear the wedding-ring: the other keepsakes should be carefully kept at the "Chancellerie." Thus ended our reception. From that time, during the whole of my residence at Tschita, and afterwards in the prison of Petrowski, the captain, Stepanow, conducted himself most courteously.

The next day we were visited by our Commandant,

S. R. Leparsky, an ancient cavalry officer, who for very many years had commanded the Sewen mounted Jägers, of which the Emperor Nicholas was colonel before he came to the throne. Whenever any officers were obliged to exchange into other regiments in consequence of any unpleasantness in their own, these so-called unruly spirits were always transferred to that of Leparsky; he knew how to deal with them all, without ever making an enemy. Although all his life had been passed in garrisons of remote towns, it was easy to see that he had had a good education in his youth. He had been a pupil in the Jesuit school at Polozk, could speak Latin, and express himself fluently also in French and German; he was in addition to this a man of noble character and a thorough gentleman. The old man inquired with much feeling how we had borne the long journey, and if we did not need the visits of a doctor: he added that he would willingly do all he could to ameliorate our fate. I therefore begged for permission to write to my wife; he was obliged to refuse me this request, as writing was expressly and most strictly forbidden.

The next lot of our comrades arrived two days after us: B. N. Licharew, von Tiefenhausen, S. T. Kriwzow, and Tolstoy; and two days after them, Liublinsky, Wigadowsky, Lisowsky, and N. A. Zagoutzky: these were followed by von der Bruggen, A. B. Jentalzow, A. J. Tscherkassow, and J. A. Abramow II. We were closely packed, but sociable; our heavy chains did not

permit us to move much, but we got used to them, and learnt to tie them up with straps, or fasten them to our girdles or cravats. Between our hut and the high paling there was a space of two fathoms in width; we moved about this spot often through the day. In April the weather grew a little warmer, and at the end of May the earth began to thaw, and we could then begin our work. One morning we were taken into an open place, where we met our comrades from the other prison. Our meeting was a very joyful one, and was repeated twice a day, from eight to twelve in the morning, and from two to five in the afternoon. Our regular employment now began. A quantity of spades, mattocks, shovels, carts, and wheelbarrows had been collected; our first task was to dig the foundations for our new prison, and the ditch round it. This work reminded us of the fortress of Zwing Uri, which the Swiss were once obliged to build for themselves, and the sad labour which we had to carry on was called henceforward Zwing Uri. Every day, except Sundays and holy-days, the non-commissioned officer on guard entered early in the morning with the call of "Gentlemen, to work." In general we set out with songs on our lips, and energy in our hearts; no constraint was used towards us. For this we had to thank our Commandant, who had indeed received orders to employ us *unsparingly* for work, but in answer to his representations obtained permission to exercise his judgment as to the fitting measure.

CHAPTER V.

PRISON LIFE AT TSCHITA.

TOWARDS the end of May a tinge of green began to show on the mountains and fields round Tschita. This little village lies on the great road between Lake Baikal and Nertschinsk, on a height surrounded on two sides by high mountains. The little river Tschita, near the village, falls into the navigable river Ingoda, and forms a delightful valley. To the north lies Lake Onon, on whose shores Tschingis Khan held his court of justice (he used to drown the criminals in the seething waters) on his march to Russia. The descendants of his Mongols, the Burjäts, still wander, with their felt tents, through this country, which abounds in meadows and lakes; they are now here, now there, always on horseback, often armed with matchlocks, but in general only with bows and arrows, in order to reserve their powder, with the use of which they are quite familiar, for special need. A portion of this tribe have given up their migratory habits, and have settled down; they

practise agriculture, and their fields and meadows are as well irrigated as those of the Milanese. The high situation of Tschita considerably increases the cold in winter, but it is healthy, with a fresh, bracing climate. The sky is almost always clear, excepting in August, when the thunder is incessant for days together, and then follows a shower, beginning with enormously large single drops, which in a few hours floods the whole road, for the water falls rapidly down the slope, digging deep trenches as it runs. The great electricity of the air is remarkable; the slightest movement of cloth or wool produces sparks or crackling. The climate is healthy, the rapidity of the vegetation most extraordinary, for both corn and vegetables ripen within the five weeks in which the frosts cease, *i.e.* from the middle of June to the end of July. Many species of vegetables were then quite unknown in the country; one of my comrades first introduced the growing of cucumbers in the open air, and melons in hot-beds.

The vale of Tschita is renowned for its flora, for which reason this country is called the "Garden of Siberia." I have never seen finer specimens of certain species of lily, iris, and other bulbs, than are to be met with here. The number of inhabitants of the village in which we lived had reached 300. Like all miners, they are poor. They lived in little houses, on which a miserable church looked down, supporting themselves by agriculture and fishing, which in the

Ingoda and Onon Lake is very remunerative. The land belonged to the Crown, by whom it was assigned to the peasants; they were, therefore, much employed in burning charcoal, which had to be shipped by water to the mines of Nertschinsk. Till our arrival there was but one civil authority in the place, viz. the mining superintendent, Smollaninow, who for the first four months of our residence boarded us on our own account; the Crown gave us bread, and, besides that, paid daily two copper kopeks (about a halfpenny) for each man. In the three years and six months which we passed in Tschita, the place took quite a new aspect, as much from the many new buildings as from the new guests, in whose suite there were military authorities and guards. On our arrival, Tschita consisted of twenty-six cabins, and but three real houses, occupied by the commandant, the mining superintendent, and the town-major.

At first only thirty of us State criminals lived in Tschita. Eight of our comrades were despatched to forced labour in the mines of Nertschinsk immediately after the execution of the sentence; the remainder were left in the fortress of Schlüsselburg and the Island of Aland. All these condemned joined us in August, 1827, when the building of the larger prison was complete, and we could all be housed there. Till our reunion we lived (those who had first arrived at Tschita) in two fortified cottages, and only met at our work, when we dug the foundations of the new prison and the

deep ditches for the fence around it. We were ordered to fill a large hollow close to the road with earth and sand. This hollow, down which rushed the foaming mountain torrents, threatened to destroy the road. The water in a few days washed away the work of a whole summer, so that in the following year we were forced to erect a dam of logs, to obtain a bottom for our dike of earth and sand. This hollow we called the Devil's Ditch.

Life passed in cheerless monotony. At first we had very few books, writing was strictly forbidden, and neither paper nor ink to be procured. When we were all united, we formed among ourselves a company of singers, which shortened many a sad hour. Chess was the sole amusement of the time between work and sleep. Playing-cards we might have obtained through the warders; but we had passed our word to each other not to allow card-playing, in order to prevent any cause of unpleasantness or dissension.

Our rooms were so small that we could not keep them as clean as we wished. We had beds of boards, which were covered with felt rugs or furs; under the beds were our portmanteaus and boots. In the night, when doors and windows were closed, the air was intolerably oppressive, as the doors were shut at sunset. They were always opened early in the morning; and I never missed the sunrise, but used to go out immediately to get a little fresh air. The others bore the

close atmosphere better than I did, as they all smoked, which habit I had given up.

There was one person living at Tschita before my arrival, who excited my sincere compassion and most heartfelt sympathy, Alexandrine Murawjew, born Countess Tschernitschew; her husband, Nikita Michaelowitch Murawjew, had already arrived at Tschita in February. She had entrusted their two daughters and only son to the care of the grandmother, Catherine Feodorowna Murawjew, and hastened to her husband's place of destination, in order to share his banishment and trials. But how terrible was her disappointment when the Commandant informed her that his instructions did not permit him to allow her to join her husband, and that she might only see him twice a week for an hour, in the presence of the orderly officer, as had been the custom in the St. Peter and St. Paul Fortress.

I saw this remarkable woman for the first time near her dwelling, which was opposite her husband's prison, as we were being taken to our work one day. In order to have an opportunity of seeing him, though only at a distance, she made a point of opening and closing her window-shutters herself, morning and evening. Besides her husband, there were among the condemned her brother-in-law, Alexander Murawjew, and her own brother, Count Zacharias Tschernitschew, sole heir of a great "majorat;" this property the War Minister

(A. J. Tschernitschew) tried to appropriate two years later. In spite of his great influence he was turned out of the Privy Council, after N. S. Mordwinow had proved that the claimant was no relation whatever of the family of the man condemned, and had no right to the property. The large estate and family name afterwards passed to a certain Kruglikow, who had married the eldest sister of the head of the family. Alexandrine Murawjew was then but twenty-four years old, pretty, distinguished-looking, full of genius and life. In order not to distress her husband she was cheerful, even gay in his presence, but the moment she was alone the tender mother's heart was torn by longings for her absent children. She felt that no one could replace their mother, although their excellent grandmother watched over them as the apple of her eye. After the first year of separation her only son died, and the daughters lost their health, perhaps in consequence of over-anxious care and indulgence. At first I thought that this strange separation of man and wife was only temporary, and probably the result of some misunderstanding. Even though living with his wife, Murawjew might have remained a prisoner, might have worn his chain, and have joined as well in our daily public work; but, unhappily, this strict rule was maintained for three years, until we were removed to the great State prison, which had been built in another spot during our residence at Tschita.

Two months after our arrival at Tschita we were

joined by Elizabeth Naryschkin * (born Countess Konownitzin), in company with another lady, Alexandrine Jentalzow. These had to submit to the same rule: they might only speak to their husbands twice a week at a fixed hour. My heart bled when I saw how sadly they looked at us when we were taken past them in chains, and they could scarce get a look from their husbands whom they had followed to the world's end; and I confess I thanked God daily that my wife had acceded to my request to remain with our boy till I asked her to come.

Fortunately for Madame Naryschkin she had left no children in her home, her only daughter had died some time ago at Moscow. Though the position of the married people was sad and painful enough, yet we were greatly the gainers by the arrival of these ladies. We were not allowed to write to our relations; some of us were completely forgotten or abandoned by our relatives; and perhaps the majority would have shared the same fate, had not these noble women followed us, and maintained a correspondence with our families, and kept our memory alive in the civilized world by their letters. They were like guardian angels to us; their purses were open for all the needy; for the sick they built a special hospital. Alexandrine Murawjew wrote to her grandmother for a first-rate chemist's store and

* The Naryschkins, like the Tschernitschews, belong to the highest Russian nobility. Peter the Great's first wife was a Naryschkin.

all kinds of surgical instruments from Moscow. One of my comrades, formerly staff-surgeon in the Second Army, Ferdinand Wolff, lived in this hospital, and acted as doctor, doing his best to restore the sufferers to health and strength. Our benefactresses could not even receive our thanks. We could very rarely see them through the chinks of our prison walls, and then only at a distance; our best chance was when they were rambling over the neighbouring hills on foot or on horseback.

Alexandrine Jentalzow was childless, and had lost her parents in early youth, so that she had no ties to interfere with her wish of sharing her husband's fate. She stayed with us but a few months; for her husband, formerly commander of a battery of artillery, was only condemned to one year's forced labour, and soon left Tschita. The prison life was less unendurable to them than their change of residence, for Berezov was assigned to them as their place of settlement. Three years later they were sent further south to Jalutorowsk, where the husband died in 1847; his widow applied in vain (till the year 1856) for leave to return to her home, but was left to sorrow alone by the grave of her husband.

In autumn, 1827, the great prison destined for us, and whose foundations we had ourselves dug, was ready to receive us. Prince Trubetzkoy, and the other State criminals who had been sent direct to the quicksilver

mines, were united to us in September, and a little later the remainder of our comrades who had been confined in the fortresses of Schlüsselburg and Finland.

The culprits from Nertschinsk were accompanied by two ladies, who watched over us as our protecting angels in every way. Princess Catherine Trubetzkoy, born Countess Laval, had followed her husband immediately upon his departure to Siberia, accompanied by one of her father's secretaries. In Krasnojarsk the travelling-carriage of the Princess broke down, and her companion fell sick. She would not stop for this, but put herself in a miserable vehicle without springs, and in this way reached Irkutsk after a long toilsome journey. Trubetzkoy had already been despatched to Nertschinsk, which is 700 wersts (437 English miles) from Irkutsk; the Princess applied to the civil governor there, B. J. Zeidler, for a guide for the further journey. Here began a series of heavy trials for the noble and courageous woman. The Government chief had received orders to use every means of opposing the determination of the wives of the State criminals who wished to follow their husbands. The governor Zeidler first of all represented to the Princess the difficulties of existing in a place which contained 5,000 grave criminals, with whom she would have to live in a common barrack, without her own servants or any comforts whatever. This did not in the least scare the Princess; she declared herself

ready to bear any privation, if she could only be with her husband. Next day the governor announced to her that he had orders to require a written declaration from her that she would renounce all her rights of nobility, and resign her claim to all property, moveable and immoveable, which she already possessed, or which might come to her by inheritance. Catherine Trubetzkoy signed this declaration without the slightest hesitation, hoping that it would clear the way to her rejoining her husband. But the catalogue of her trials was not yet complete. For days and days the governor refused her admittance on the plea of illness. The Princess waited patiently, and at last Zeidler was obliged to receive her. After he had in vain entreated her to give up her enterprise, he declared that the only way to join her husband would be to follow the weekly despatch of forced labourers, who went, bound with cords, from one military station to another. The Princess agreed submissively to this also. The governor could now no longer restrain his emotion; he burst into tears, and exclaimed, "You shall *drive* to your husband." About the same time our Commandant, Leparsky, came to Irkutsk; he was much struck with the conduct of the Princess, and doubtless did his best to prevent any further difficulties being thrown in her way. A woman with less strength of mind would have shrunk back—would have made conditions; have delayed the affair by correspondence with the chief authorities at St. Peters-

burg, and would thus have deterred the other women from undertaking the long and toilsome journey. Without undervaluing or detracting from the merits and energy of the other ladies, I must say that the Princess Trubetzkoy was the first who not only smoothed the long and unknown road to reunion with her husband, but at the same time succeeded in overcoming the opposition of the Government.

Princess Marie Wolkonsky, born Rajewsky, arrived at Tschita a few weeks after the Princess Trubetzkoy. Her father, the renowned hero of 1812, had strenuously opposed his daughter's departure; he knew that her marriage with Prince Sergius Wolkonsky, who was old enough to be her father, and was already a general in the great campaign of 1812, had been in obedience to his will, and not from inclination; her only child, yet an infant, also had a strong claim on her. She decided upon undertaking whichever duty demanded most sacrifice and self-denial. She told her old invalid father, to whom she was passionately attached, that she was going to see her husband for a short time only, left her son with his grandmother, the oldest lady-in-waiting of the Imperial court, and set forth on her journey to Siberia. At Irkutsk, she expected to meet with the same hindrances which detained the Princess Trubetzkoy. Marie Wolkonsky also bound herself in writing to the resignation of her rights of station and property. The same declaration was demanded of all

those who wished to follow their husbands to Siberia, from my wife also, who was among those who voluntarily shared their husbands' exile, and in the year 1830 came to join me. The two above-named princesses were the first to follow their husbands, their condition was therefore the worst. At first the Siberian authorities had no positive instructions, and they shunned any inquiries at St. Petersburg. A correspondence at a distance of 7,000 wersts could not be otherwise than slow; the relatives whom the two ladies had left in St. Petersburg and Moscow did not clearly know to whom to turn for the transmission of money, whether to the orderly-general Potapow, or to Count Benkendorff. The ladies at first suffered literally from the want of necessaries; for some months they were obliged to endure hunger and cold; their food would have been unfit for the poorest day-labourer, and they had to wash their own linen: what trials for those who had from their childhood lived in the greatest luxury! But they had worse sufferings than these to bear, with the thought of their husbands working under ground in the mines, in the charge of rough mining officials. When we were all united at Tschita, these ladies were better off. The sending of money and letters was now arranged through the civil governor, Zeidler, and our disinterested Commandant, Leparsky: the sums were not limited: they were not indeed transmitted directly to the proprietors, but were given out according to their needs and wishes, through

the medium of the Commandant's office. The post-day, which came round only once a week, was an important epoch in our monotonous life. Latterly we were permitted to order Russian and foreign papers.

In September, 1827, we were, as before mentioned, taken to the newly-built prison. The Commandant separated us into five divisions. In one room were the eight last comers from Nertschinsk; the remaining four divisions were arranged, not according to the order of the categories of punishment, but according to the Commandant's discretion. One of these rooms we always called Moscow, because most of its inhabitants came from Moscow; another was called Novgorod, because there was much political talk there, as was formerly the case in the popular assembly of that renowned republic; the division in which I found myself, with my seventeen comrades, was called Pleskow, the sister of Novgorod.

Instead of our beds of boards, we had beds made at our own expense, not so much with the view of sleeping better, as of keeping the rooms cleaner; the floor under our new beds could be swept, which was impossible with the former ones. We had our table in common, laid it ourselves: each one in turn had to be Orderly. According to the Russian prison arrangements, we were allowed to choose one senior, from among ourselves, who made known our wishes to the Orderly Adjutant or the Commandant. This senior expended

our money for us and bought stores, but did not keep one kopek in his own hands—his bills of exchange were issued from the Commandant's office. Our kitchen and store-room stood at fifty yards' distance from the prison; the senior had permission to go there as often as he liked in the course of the day, under escort; he was always elected for three months. The first senior was the former Colonel Ivan Semenowitch Powalo Schweikowsky, who held this post twice in succession. Our food was wholesome and simple. I often wondered at the frugal meals of those of my companions in misfortune, who had been used to the best French cookery all their lives, and champagne every day; now they contented themselves with cabbage-soup and porridge, and drank quass, or water. We had many gourmets among us; they all maintained they had never really suffered from hunger, but said they had been fully satisfied.

I have already mentioned that about half my comrades were not well off, and that many were quite neglected by their relations, while some were very rich. Nikita and Alexander Murawjew alone received 60,000 roubles yearly! Each time when the senior was chosen, at the expiration of three months, a paper was sent round, upon which each wrote down his contribution in proportion to the common expenses; the sum collected was spent by the senior in procuring tea, sugar, and food, besides household necessaries. Clothes and linen we had to get for ourselves. The rich bought the neces-

sary articles and divided them with their poorer brethren; everything was shared in a truly brotherly way, money as well as suffering. In order not to spend the money lavishly, our dress was cut out and made by some of our comrades. The best tailors were Paul Puschkin, Prince Eugene Obolensky, Paul Mosgau, and Anton Arbusow. The best caps and shoes were made by Nicholas and Michael Bestuchew and Peter Fahlenberg; by their work they saved a sum of money with which we were able to support other unfortunate exiles. When the priest Myslowsky (the same who had accompanied the five leaders of the conspiracy to the gallows) learnt the details of our way of life through Alexander Kornilowitch, he told it all to my wife, adding the observation that at Tschita we led the life of the Apostles. Our work continued uninterruptedly as before; we had now become used to our chains. Between May and September we filled up the Devil's Ditch, improved the broad road, planted and watered the plants of the garden, which yielded us vegetables and potatoes. When, after Schweikowsky's return, I was chosen senior of the prison, I salted down, in brandy-casks, 60,000 cucumbers out of our garden. From September till May we were taken twice daily into a special building outside the prison court, where hand-mills were erected; we were each obliged to grind daily eighty pounds of rye. We found the work hard at first, till our hands and arms got used to it; the strongest

and healthiest among us helped the weaker ones to get through their share. Our work, which consisted in the turning of our millstones, was often accompanied by melodious songs: a musical comrade was made bandmaster; the church music of Bortniansky was particularly well given. We were only taken to the church once a year, at fast-time, in order to communicate; on the eves of great festivals the priest came into our prison to hold Divine Service. I shall never forget how impressively and solemnly this Service was celebrated on Easter-eve of the year 1828, when, before the tattoo, at about nine o'clock, there resounded from all sides the cry, "Christ is risen," and the chains of the prisoners clanked as they threw themselves into each other's arms in brotherly love. In thought we embraced at the same time our distant relatives and friends, who we knew were united to us in prayer.

Our leisure hours, after the first wearisome years were past, were filled up with pleasant and instructive lectures; besides French, Russian, English, and German newspapers which we were allowed to procure, we had at our disposal the excellent library, which Nikita Murawjew, Wolkonsky, and Trubetzkoy had sent for. The newspapers were divided among sundry readers, to whom all the others had to apply for the most important news. Many of our comrades having received a scientific education, it was resolved that they should enliven our long winter evenings by giving us lectures. Nikita

Murawjew, who was the possessor of beautiful military maps and plans, expounded to us strategy and tactics; Ferdinand Wolff gave lectures upon chemistry and anatomy; Puschkin II. explained the higher branches of mathematics; Alexander Kornilowitch and Peter Muchanow read Russian history; Prince Alexander Odojewsky, Russian literature. I must add, gratefully, that he had for many years the kindness to teach me, the born Esthonian, Russian, which I hardly knew. At nine o'clock in the evening our doors were shut and every light must be extinguished. As we could not go to sleep so early, we in general conversed for some time or listened to the stories told by M. Kuchelbecker, who had made a voyage round the world. A. Kornilowitch also sometimes related to us episodes from the history of his fatherland, with which he had occupied himself much when editor of the paper, *The Old Times of Russia*. For many years he and the Professor Kunitzin had had free access to the State archives, and had studied the times of the Empresses Elizabeth and Anna particularly. After half a year we lost this accomplished comrade. A Feldjäger, who brought S. Wodkowsky from Schlüsselburg, took Kornilowitch back with him. We afterwards learnt that he had been imprisoned again in the St. Peter and St. Paul Fortress, where he had been questioned about the Polish secret societies; in 1834 he was sent to the Caucasus as a soldier, and two years later died of a malignant fever.

These long years of intimate intercourse with such highly-educated people had a great effect upon those among us who had previously had neither the time nor means of improving their minds. Some began to learn foreign languages. Zawalischin I. was the greatest proficient in these; he not only learnt Greek and Latin, but eight modern languages as well. He found an instructor of each of these languages among the number of his comrades. The grammatical exercises often led to many comical scenes. When any one attempted the English pronunciation the laughter was universal; and M. Lunin, who was a proficient in that language, called out entreatingly, "Read and write English as much as you like, gentlemen, only pray don't try and speak it."

Our five rooms were very narrow, for beds stood on the four sides. Some among us wished to play the violin or the flute, but they were too conscientious to torment their other comrades. I afterwards selected that most ungrateful instrument, the czakan (flageolet), and devoted half an hour daily to it. A year later we were allowed to build a little house of three separate rooms in our prison-court; in one stood carpenters' benches and turning-lathes, and a press for bookbinding. The best productions in this room were from the hands of the two Bestuchew brothers, Puschkin, Frolow, and Borissow I. In the rooms were a *royal* and a pianoforte; at fixed times each came in, in turn, to practise the flute, czakan, violin and guitar. A. P. Juschnewsky

played very well on the "royal," and with Wodkowsky, a first-rate violinist, Krjukow II. and Swistunow, who played the violoncello, made a good quartette. On the 30th August, 1828, when we celebrated sixteen birthdays, our orchestra played in the prison for the first time.

Our comrades of the seventh category left us a year after our arrival in Tschita, as their term of forced labour was at an end, and they must then leave for "settlement in Siberia." We rejoiced at the thought of their leaving us, as they would henceforth enjoy more liberty, while they grieved over the thought of leaving us still in prison and in chains. Time showed that we were even better off than they were. The society of the noble and good brightens prison life as much as the company of the bad and worthless darkens a life of liberty. Those who left us had at first much to suffer, as they were settled in remote northern spots, and apart from each other. It was not till two years later that they were removed to a country further south, where they were allowed to live two or three together.

In the early days of August, 1828, a Feldjäger arrived at Tschita. He neither brought nor took away any one with him; we could not in any way account for his sudden appearance, for no change took place in our treatment. At the end of September, however, the Commandant appeared one day in the prison in full

uniform, his ribbon over his shoulder; he gathered us in a circle round him, and then informed us that the Emperor had been graciously pleased to be moved, in consideration of our good conduct, to have our chains taken off. We had worn them all through our journey, and for six months afterwards. We heard some time after that the Emperor had, on the 8th July (the day of the festival of the Kazan Church at St. Petersburg), on coming out of church, ordered a Feldjäger to be sent off to Tschita with orders that the chains should be taken off those State criminals who had, by their good conduct, merited such a favour. The Commandant had received this order at the beginning of August, but had decided to say nothing about it until he had received an answer to the question whether the grace accorded was to be extended to the State criminals of all the categories. He would have liked to free us all from our chains, but was obliged to restrain himself, fearing that this might draw upon him the suspicion of the higher powers, and cause them to remove him and put a harsher man in his place. Leparsky was anxious on our account to keep his post, and reported that we all deserved this indulgence. His request in our favour was agreed to, and he himself had the pleasure of making it known to us. A non-commissioned officer opened the locks of our fetters, and for the last time they clanked as they fell to the ground. At the moment I almost regretted them; they had so often accompanied

my songs as I beat time with my feet. The first night after they were taken off I felt as if the chains still encumbered my ankles. I had become used to their being in one particular position. One of my comrades—I don't remember which—bethought him of procuring a pair of our fetters, and having them made into little mementoes for us. I have still a ring and a cross which Jakubowitch made out of this iron. If I am too prosy and sentimental about my chains, I fear I must always be the same: I have learnt by experience that even suffering has its pleasant side.

About this time I was chosen for senior, in order to relieve J. P. Schweikowsky. I had, at times, occasion to transact business with Colonel Leparsky in connection with the affairs of my companions in misfortune; he always received me with marked courtesy. He often said, "What will be written about me everywhere in Europe? People will call me a hard-hearted jailer, executioner and oppressor, while the truth is, in reality, gentlemen, that I only retain my present post in order to protect you from the persecutions and injustice of unscrupulous officials. Of what use are my ribbons and stars, which I can here show to no one? May I soon be removed from this place, but only in company with you!"

In the course of the year 1828, three more ladies joined us at Tschita. Natalie von Wisin, born Ophytin, had been unable to follow her husband at once on account of her two infant sons. In her early years she

was remarkable for her beauty and her religious temperament; before her marriage she was desirous of withdrawing from the world and shutting herself up in a convent. Later, when sharing the banishment and sufferings of her husband, she showed the most complete submission to the will of God, but her nerves were so shaken, that her health was quite broken.

Alexandrine Dawidow, wife of Wassily Ljwowitch Dawidow, Colonel of Hussars, arrived at Tschita at the same time; she had a numerous family, and was obliged to leave them all with her relations before her departure. Unvarying sweetness, calm resignation and deep devotion, were the chief characteristics of this charming woman. Mademoiselle Pauline, the bride of P. A. Annenkow, also came to Tschita that year; the betrothal had taken place secretly, but the Emperor, openly and in a very marked manner, gave her his permission to go and join her bridegroom. She had addressed herself to him on the occasion of some grand manœuvres; it was at a happy moment, and the Emperor received her with the greatest sympathy, and gave her money for the journey, while every possible hindrance was thrown in the way of the other married ladies. There were now at Tschita the Princesses Trubetzkoy and Marie Wolkonsky, Alexandrine Murawjew, Elizabeth Naryschkin, Alexandrine Jentalzow, Natalie von Wisin, Alexandrine Dawidow, and Pauline Annenkow,—eight ladies in all. They conducted the whole correspondence with

the relations of all the State criminals; they formed the link between the living and the politically dead. Their own life was one of most complete self-denial; as I have said before, they could only see their husbands for an hour twice a week, in the presence of a sentry and an orderly officer. This state of things lasted nearly four years, until our removal to a new prison near the Petrowski ironworks.

We were at first eighty-two in number at Tschita, and all men. After the despatch of the State criminals of the sixth and seventh categories, who were sent away to settlement after completing their penal work, and the departure of Tolstoy (to the Caucasus) and Kornilowitch (to the fortress of St. Petersburg), there remained seventy men and seven women at Tschita; Madame von Jentalzow had followed her husband to his place of settlement in the year of her arrival.

Every prisoner is, of course, incessantly occupied with thoughts of release; such an idea naturally was often in our minds, while outside the prison walls it appeared that others were similarly employed. In the mines of Nertschinsk, where formerly eight of my comrades worked together, there still remained some of the officers of the mutinous Tschernigow Regiment, who were not condemned at the same time as we were, but had been sentenced by a special court-martial. Among them were the Baron Solowjew, Bystritzky, Massalewsky, and a certain Suchanow. The latter, who shortly before his

condemnation had been transferred to a hussar regiment, planned to stir up the thousands of forced labourers in the mines there, to assist in setting us at Tschita free, and then hoped to arrange with us how the move should be followed up. The majority of those in the mines had assented, and it was decided to disarm the watch in the night, and to set out the following morning, but on the previous evening the conspiracy was disclosed by a traitor; Suchanow and the other leaders were thrown into prison in chains. The affair was immediately notified at St. Petersburg, and Suchanow, together with ten of the chief conspirators, condemned to death. The night before the execution of the sentence, Suchanow hung himself to the stove in the prison; the remainder were shot. Solowjew, Bystritzky, and Massalewsky were removed to our prison at Tschita to prevent similar attempts. At Tschita we were guarded by a company of infantry and fifty Siberian Cossacks. Many among us were busily engaged with thoughts of liberty and preparations for flight, but others saw the impossibility of success and declined attempting it. As far as the guard was concerned, we could have easily mastered them; the soldiers were devoted to us, and would willingly have been induced to lay down their arms; we might have escaped from the prison and made our way through the gates in safety, but what would then happen?

We might fly southward to China, and reach the frontier thus, but the Chinese would, without doubt, have

given us up. Besides this, when once at the frontier, fifty Cossacks would be sufficient to harass us by day and night, and prevent our resting for a moment, and in this way would have worn us out. Another road led to the south-east, where, on the banks of the Amoor, we might have a vessel built in one of the creeks in the river, and sail down to the open sea, and then make our way across to America. But how should we reach the shores of the Amoor? The nomad Burjäts would not have helped us, and even when at the river we were still a long way from the ocean, and our pursuers might easily destroy our vessel. A third road lay to the west, to the frontiers of European Russia, but that was a distance of 4,000 wersts: there would be innumerable difficulties to overcome in a journey of that length. A fourth road led over the Tundri, plains and morasses overgrown with moss. The easier way would be for each individual to attempt his escape alone. We knew that some deported Circassians had reached their native mountains in safety, crossing the sea of Aral and the Caspian Sea. But the escape of some would cause the others to be most severely treated, and no one wished to be responsible for this, either to their comrades or their wives. The case was different for those who went as settlers only and lived apart; but even here the escape of one would have the most terrible consequences for the remainder. There was, therefore, nothing left but to yield submissively to the law of necessity.

CHAPTER VI.

OUR DEPARTURE TO SETTLE IN PETROWSKI.

We passed three years and seven months at Tschita. The prison life there was originally meant to last but a short time; the prison, however, near the town of Werchne Udinsk, and close to the Petrowski iron-works, which was our ultimate destination, was first planned in the year of our arrival at Tschita, and the foundations then laid by an engineer officer and some assistants specially appointed. This new and spacious building was completed in the summer of 1830, and our Commandant received orders to take us there at once. Our preparations were quickly made; the port-manteaus were packed; our vegetables and everything belonging to the gardens, including our wooden tools, were given to the inhabitants of the place. We had to march in two divisions all along the road. The lodgings for travellers were of the poorest; in some places, indeed, there were none whatever. The first division marched under the charge of the Town-major, Lieut.-Col.

Leparsky, a nephew of our Commandant; the old colonel himself was at the head of the second. Each division was guarded by a sufficient escort of soldiers and Cossacks. Carriages were hired for the transport of our goods, but those only of our comrades were permitted to go in them who were either in weak health or suffering from bad wounds. Among the latter were von Wisin, Prince Trubetzkoy, Schweikowsky, Lunin, Prince Wolkonsky, Jakubowitch, Mitkow, Dawidow, and Abramow. Each division elected a head. N. N. Sutthoff held this office in the first, while I was chosen for the second division. We were obliged (always under escort) to start one day in advance with our kitchens and provisions, in order to prepare the dinner and supper. After every two days' march we had one of rest. Our journey was fully 700 wersts long, and lasted forty-eight days. The ladies accompanied us for some days; then, being unable to find quarters, they drove on without stopping to Werchne Udinsk, from which point we came again upon large villages where we could find lodging.

The first division started on the 4th August; the second followed the day after. The inhabitants of Tschita went a part of the way with us, and left us with unfeigned regret. Our residence there had procured them many advantages. We had expended large sums of money, and had built larger and better dwellings, while the new houses of the Commandant and Mesdames

Trubetzkoy, Wolkonsky, and Annenkow, were a real embellishment to their town. The ladies of Murawjew, Naryschkin, and Dawidow lived in hired houses, which they had built expressly for themselves. The post-road led to the town of Werchne Udinsk; the stations consisted only of a few huts and a post-house. Along the whole length of it, which is occupied by Burjäts, there does not exist a single village. We had to spend our nights and days of rest in the "yourts" of the Burjäts —cone-shaped felt tents, capable of holding four men. These tents, when spread out in a line, had the appearance of a little military camp, especially when surrounded with sentry-posts and pickets. Our cooking was done in the open; in rainy weather we made a temporary roof of sticks and brambles to shelter the kettle. The autumn air, which, though warm enough by day, in the night went down to eight degrees of cold, together with our journey through a mountainous country, refreshed and invigorated us all. For some days our road led over hill and dale; mountains rose on all sides of us, and as we journeyed on we caught occasional glimpses of distant valleys on our right or left. *Taburren*, little white and grey horses, were pasturing on either side; their herdsmen, armed with matchlock and bow, were mounted, and had with them two-wheel carts with their felt tents, in which reposed their wives and daughters.

These nomad Burjäts subsist on the product of

the chase, on fish, and even on carrion. These descendants of the Mongols have as few wants as their forefathers of the time of Tschingis Khan, who would undertake to march his innumerable armies prodigious distances without any stores of provision. Our Burjät drivers and escort took neither bread nor other victual with them. Twice a day they left the camp in parties, and spent half an hour in the forest satisfying their hunger with bilberries. By degrees they got used to us: some of them spoke Russian, and served as interpreters (whom they called Tolmetschen) to the others. A group of them regularly assembled round the table, at which Trubetzkoy and Wodkowsky played chess; these spectators gave us to understand, by exclamation and signs of approbation, that they were well acquainted with the game. One of them was invited to play; he did so, and gained the victory over our best player. He also told us that the game had long been known to the Burjäts, and had come to them from China.

The curiosity of these nomads was greatly excited by my comrade, M. S. Lunin. His wounds had gained him permission to be driven in a carriage, which he had covered with oil-cloth; he slept in it at night, and lived in it by day. For many days, the moment that we stopped for our night's lodging or our day's rest, his carriage was surrounded by a crowd of Burjäts, who waited impatiently till the prisoner should show himself; but the curtains of oil-cloth remained steadily

closed, the mysterious individual whom they looked upon as the chief criminal still remaining invisible. At last it occurred to him to come out and inquire what they wanted. The Tolmetscher explained, in the name of the spectators, that they wished to see him, and learn for what particular reason he had been sent to Siberia. "Do you know your Taischa?" (Taischa means the highest rank, the title of the chief of the Burjäts.) "Yes, we know him." "But do you know the Taischa who is over your Taischa, who can put him in a carriage, and take him away to destruction (Ugei)?" "Yes, we have heard of him." "Well, I wished to put an end to his power, and therefore I am banished." "Ho, ho, ho!" echoed the wondering troop, and, with deep reverences, the curious crowd drew back from the carriage and its mysterious occupant. A small number of this nomad race have turned to Christianity, live in houses, and practise agriculture; the remainder are idolaters, and are led by their priests, the Schamans, who purposely keep up their superstitions, occasionally reduce themselves to a state of complete unconsciousness by their extravagant bodily exercises, and in that condition give utterance to prophecies and curses. The uncleanliness of the Burjäts reaches the highest possible degree —they have no linen, wear furs next their bare bodies, boots of chamois-skin, and both in winter and summer little fur caps; their heads are shaved, all except one tuft, which crowns the top. Little eyes, low and flat

foreheads, square faces, with broad prominent cheek-bones, and pale yellow complexions, are the distinguishing marks of their race. Among themselves they are called Mendu; the greeting which they daily exchanged with us sounded like "Amur Mendu."

On our way to the town of Werchne Udinsk we passed our nights in felt tents, which were well made, and let no wind through; on cold evenings a fire was lighted in the middle of the tent; in the centre of the roof being an opening with flaps, from which the smoke escaped. The families of the Burjäts sit round the fire on felt rugs, naked children tumbling about amongst their elders, who spend their time in tearing and cutting skins of animals with their teeth, shaping their arrows, casting bullets, or milling felt. The chief luxury of every class, and principal support of those who can afford it, is a particular kind of tea, a mixture of decayed and spoilt tea-leaves, which is pressed into cakes, with cherry-tree gum or some other sticky substance, that look like smooth bricks, of one to two feet in length, seven inches wide, and three inches thick: from this resemblance the tea is called in Siberia "brick tea." The Burjäts broke off little bits from these lumps with their hatchets, ground or pounded them in mortars, boiled the tea-powder in a kettle, added some flour, milk, or butter and fat, and drank this brew with much relish from wooden lacquered bowls, rather deeper and larger than our saucers. These people have a passion

for tobacco, and smoke it in little copper pipes. When they light them, they inhale all the smoke. The pipes are small, and the tobacco very dear; it is now, however, largely cultivated in the southern regions of Siberia. In all probability these nomads will in time follow the example of their settled brethren, who are for the most part living in great prosperity.

Two weeks before our departure from Tschita I had received a letter from my wife, written from a station on the further side of Lake Baikal (where she had been detained for three weeks by a terrible flood). Our child was now four years old; my wife had long been turning in her mind to whom she could entrust his education. Her health had meanwhile suffered perceptibly from the separations and heavy sorrows she had endured, especially since she had received a positive refusal to her request to bring her boy to Siberia with her. The General-Adjutant Dibitsch had allowed the wife of J. D. Jakuschkin to take her sons with her; she had not followed her husband at first on account of these boys. When my wife went with the same petition to the Adjutant-General Benkendorff, he informed her that it was impossible to obtain such a permission; and on her mentioning Dibitsch's promise, Benkendorff replied, "C'est impossible! c'est une étourderie de la part du Général. Et encore je dois vous prévenir, Madame, si vous voulez partir sans votre fils, il n'y aura jamais de retour pour vous, jamais." He then added, "Si vous

avez besoin de quelque autre chose, j'intercéderai auprès de sa Majesté." My wife's only reply was, "Je vais prier de ne pas revenir, et je n'ai rien à demander quand on me refuse mon fils." Benkendorff was moved to tears, and begged that she would communicate once more with him before her departure, so that he could send her the papers requisite. The threat of Benkendorff, "Il n'y aura pas de retour pour vous," was no empty one, it was a rule of the Government. Two of my comrades, Juschnewsky and Jentalzow, died in the year 1846, when in exile in Siberia; their childless widows petitioned for leave to return to their homes, but received a refusal.* My wife was overwhelmed when she returned to her house, and took her son in her arms; the whole affair had such an effect on her health that from this time her hearing was impaired by a constant singing in the ears, which lasted a long while, and always recurred with any excitement. During the time of our separation she lived a very retired life, devoted herself entirely to her boy, and latterly went to visit her estates in the Ukraine. Her health was terribly broken; loving relatives sympathized deeply in her troubles, but did not know how to help her. When her youngest sister promised to take charge of the child, my wife was immensely relieved, knowing he would be well cared for. Her preparations for the journey were very short; she informed Benkendorff of the time

* These remarks were made in the year 1853.

of her departure, and received an answer by return of post, as well as four packets, addressed respectively to the Governors of Tobolsk, Jeniseisk, Irkutsk, and to our Commandant Leparsky.

Our boy accompanied his mother as far as Moscow. She there received many visits from the relations of my companions in misfortune. Countess Wera Tschernitschew, sister of our Alexandrine Murawjew, and now Countess Pahlen, with tearful entreaties begged my wife to take her under the disguise of a maid-servant, so that she might go to the aid of her sister in Siberia. I dare not attempt to describe the last days which my wife spent with her son.

On the 17th June, 1830, she left Moscow, with a man-servant and a maid, and travelled as fast as the post; till she reached Tobolsk, she only stopped one night to rest. On presenting Benkendorff's letter to the Governor-General, J. A. Welgaminow, he offered her a guide as far as Irkutsk, a postilion named Sedow. She arrived at Irkutsk the 31st July, and was detained there a few days; although they did not throw as many obstacles in her way as they had done to Princess Trubetzkoy, yet they insisted upon a written renunciation of her rights of nobility. In order to cross Lake Baikal, my wife's travelling-carriage was, on the 4th August, placed in a large fishing-boat; after a stormy voyage, which compelled them to run into a harbour of refuge, the travellers arrived at the station of Stepnaija: and

here they were obliged to remain, for the swelling of the rivers Selenga and Uda had flooded the whole country around. For ten days she was compelled to live in a barn, in a miserable village, till the waters subsided; she was then obliged to leave her carriage behind, and go some wersts by boat, and only reached the next station after great trouble and danger. The servant remained with the carriage, while she with her maid got into a post-carriage and went on. Although I had received my wife's letter from Stepnaija before I left Tschita, I yet could not fix any day in my mind for her arrival; judging by the distance only, she might arrive at any moment. The wife of my companion Juschnewsky had left Moscow a fortnight before, and had been delayed neither by the Lake of Baikal nor by floods. She was not, however, destined to share her husband's imprisonment and banishment for any length of time—he was released from his troubles by a sudden death when he was standing before the coffin of our comrade Wodkowsky in the church of the village where he was then settled. On the 27th August we spent our day of rest at Ononskybor, a little village where we were lodged in felt tents. After dinner we lay down to sleep, but I could not close my eyes; the tents were ranged along the post-road, which crossed over the brook and then disappeared in the wood; I heard, in the distance, the bells of post-horses, then the sound of carriage-wheels; I looked through a slit in the tent, and catching sight

of a green veil, I threw on my coat and ran out to meet the carriage. Nicholai Bestuchew hastened after me, but did not get up to me; the sentries before the tents threw themselves in front of me to stop me, but it was in vain—I managed to slip through. The carriage stopped a few steps from the sentries: a moment later and my wife was clasped in my arms.

The sentries stood motionless; for the first few moments I was lost in the feeling of intense joy, but then came the thought, where could I take my wife? after her long and fatiguing journey she could hardly move. Happily for us the Platz Adjutant, Rosenburg, just then came up, and informed me that he had received orders from the Commandant to lodge us both in a cottage, under the charge of a guard. She had only a maid and a portmanteau with her. Rapid questions and answers about my boy, my relatives at home, our past and future life, engrossed our first hours of meeting. I was obliged to go out to arrange the supper as usual, and persuaded my wife meantime to visit Madame Naryschkin. When I approached the tents my comrades came out in a body to meet me and wish me joy: they embraced me, and many eyes were filled with tears. They insisted upon my not going to my work in the kitchen; in fact they had already done it for me. I had intended that my wife should share our ordinary fare, but Jakubowitch had already prepared some excellent soup as a welcome for her. The next day I, my

comrades, and my kettles proceeded on our march; my wife was in a postchaise: I walked by the side of her carriage the whole day conversing with her. I would not get in, as I had resolved to go on foot the whole way from Tschita to Petrowski. At first she could scarcely walk one werst, but after a week's time, when we were near the banks of the Selenga, she walked from six to ten wersts with me. The weather was lovely, and the sun was so bright from ten till two o'clock, that she found her summer dress quite warm enough. One night which we spent in a felt tent reading letters from our boy and other relations, was a great pleasure to her: she enjoyed so much seeing the starry heavens through the smoke-opening over her head.

After some days we reached the banks of the Selenga, the grandest and most beautiful part of Siberia. Picture to yourself a broad river, whose right bank was formed of high rocks, of various-coloured strata, red, yellow, grey, and black granite, mixed with spar, slate, sand, lime, gravel, and chalk; this bank was sixty feet in height! In clear weather the perpendicular wall of rock shone with a thousand lovely colours. The country around is broken by hills, which are crowned with great blocks of stone resembling castles and fortresses; these are probably the results of some earthquake; the appearance of the shores of Lake Baikal confirm this opinion. This lake, which is called in Siberia the Holy Sea, is of unfathomable depth. Pallas, the renowned traveller of

the time of Catherine II., describes this country in detail, and reckons it as one of the most beautiful countries he ever saw. I don't know, however, if Pallas was ever in the Caucasus or in Grusia. Nature on the Selenga is very lovely, but it wants life; the population is very small in comparison to the extent of country; this want of life is more felt by the passing traveller than is generally imagined.

Near the town of Werchne Udinsk, we turned off the great road to the left; after three days' march we arrived at a large village, Tarbagatay: its houses and inhabitants gave it the look of one of the villages of Great Russia. Here they live, on a tract of fifty wersts in length, the so-called Semeiskje, a people whose forefathers had been sent to Siberia from Dorogobusch and Gornel, chiefly on account of Sectarianism, both under the government of the Empress Anna in 1733, and under that of Catherine II. in the year 1767. They had been permitted to sell their goods and property, and to settle in Siberia with their wives and families. Thence they received the name of *Semeiskje*, that is, people who have emigrated with their families. When these exiles crossed Lake Baikal and arrived in Werchne Udinsk, they received orders from the local authorities to establish themselves in desert places, at a distance from any other settlements. The government commissary took them to an ancient forest, beside the little river Tarbagatay, and permitted them to select

what place of residence they liked there: they were exempted from payment of the Crown taxes. How great was the surprise of these officials when, on returning after the lapse of a year, they found a fine well-built village, kitchen-gardens, and fields, in a place which twelve months before had been covered by a dense forest. This marvellous change was the result of the people's diligence, combined with the ready money which they had brought with them, after selling all their property at home. As soon as their arrival was known, skilled workmen flocked to them from the mines around, and the work went on merrily. After Werchne Udinsk we passed our nights and days of rest in these large villages, instead of in the felt tents of the Burjäts. In Tarbagatay we had time to inspect everything in detail. My wife and I were quartered in the house of a peasant; the houses contained several rooms, and a covered staircase: they had large windows and roofs of boards: on one side of the entrance there was a large room for the workmen, and a huge Russian baking-oven; on the other side, from two to five rooms, with Dutch ovens: here the floor was covered with carpets made on purpose, the tables and chairs were polished, and even mirrors, bought in Isbit at the yearly fair, adorned the walls. Our hostess regaled us most hospitably with ham, sturgeon, and various kinds of cakes. In the court we saw carriages bound with iron, good harness, strong, well-fed horses, and healthy, well-built men:

the *tout-ensemble* gave the impression of great prosperity. It was Sunday: every one went to the house of prayer, the men in long coats of blue cloth, with magnificent sable caps—the women in short silk cloaks, called *soul-warmers;* their head-gear was made of silk stuff, woven with gold and silver. Everything betokened wealth, diligence, and order. Only one thing struck the observer as wanting: the church being "orthodox," the inhabitants had only a house of prayer, and no priest. Like all the "orthodox," they use no tobacco, no tea, no wine, no medicine, nor inoculation, as they consider all these things sinful. I have, however, never seen a person marked with the small-pox among them. They are a God-fearing people, read the holy Scriptures diligently, and observe the rules of their sect with the greatest strictness.

Many of these people are capitalists: some possess capital to the amount of 100,000 roubles, carry on a great trade in corn, and have many dealings with the Chinese, to whom they sell wheat and sheepskins advantageously. "Why are your neighbours so poor?" I asked of my host. "How should they not be poor?" was his reply. "Before the cock crows we are out in the fields and ploughing in the cold morning air, while the native peasant is hardly up and beginning to boil his brick tea; the sun is high in the heavens before he goes out to his field. We have done our first work, and are taking our rest, while the Siberian and his draught

cattle are labouring through the heat of the day: neither he nor his horses have strength enough to plough the land thoroughly. In addition to that, the earlier settlers are devoted to brandy-drinking; they waste every kopek in this way, and can amass no capital." Bestuchew asked one of these farmers why they did not import machines, which would lighten and hasten their farm-work, at all events in threshing and cleaning the seed. The farmer replied, "Our corn is chiefly dried; we often keep it for five years, when prices are low and seasons fruitful. A broad shovel is all we want for winnowing. How much can a machine winnow in a day?" "More than sixty 'loof.'" "My shovel and hand will do as much as that," replied the farmer, extending his sinewy hand with a wrist more than four inches wide. The whole existence of these people testified to their prosperity and content. They have a communal Constitution, which makes them tolerably independent, pay their taxes punctually, and transact their business with officers of the Crown, who understand and treat them with justice.

The following day we spent in another village of the same colony, and found the same active life there—in the village Dessiätinkowo, where we passed our next rest day. Our host was a robust old man of 110 years, who was one of the first of those transported in the reign of Anna (1733). He was then thirteen years old, and remembered clearly all the circumstances of the

long journey and the first settlement. The old man lived in the house of his youngest and fourth son, who was himself seventy years of age. Although the father did not any longer work, he still kept to his old habit of carrying a hatchet in his belt: and it was he who early every morning roused his children and grandchildren to work. He took me to see his other three sons. He had built a separate house for each of them, with a court, barn, and water-mill attached to each. "Why hast thou built so many water-mills, grandfather?" I asked the old man. "Just look and see what fields we have got," he replied, pointing to the mountains all around, where every available corner was cultivated.

The soil grows excellent wheat, which can be exported with great advantage. The riches and prosperity of these peasants made me feel as if I was looking at Russians at work in America, rather than in Siberia. Here they are quite as well off as in America; they have a large and very fruitful territory, an industrious population, and govern themselves.

In this village we found my wife, who had been detained on account of the flood. There still remained four days' march to our new prison. I persuaded her to drive on and procure a lodging for herself and the servants, and also to buy some provisions. I resigned my post in the commissariat as soon as we reached this, our last night's quarters. Here we received letters,

together with the important news of the July revolution in France. It seemed to us a good omen on the eve of our arrival at our new place of residence, and all the more welcome as the last newspaper but one had informed us of the senseless "ordonnance" of Charles X. In general, every traveller looks forward with pleasure to the end of his journey; it was far otherwise to us, who had only the prospect of a new prison before us. For the last few wersts the road wound through a forest, which became less dense as we approached Petrowski, and finally led through brushwood and morass, till we suddenly came in sight of high mountains to the north and east. In a deep valley might be seen a large village, a church, a factory with many chimneys, a river, and, behind it, the red roof of the prison. As we drew nearer we could see an enormous building with a number of brick chimneys, and stone foundations reaching high up into the wall. It was windowless, save one small projecting part, in which were the entrance, main-guard, and guard-room. When we had passed through the gate, we saw windows in the inner walls, stairs, and an enclosure made of upright pointed logs, dividing the whole inner space into eight separate courts; each court had its own door, and each division contained five or six men. The stairs led to a lighted corridor of four ells in width, from which doors opened into the single cells. Each cell was seven paces long and six wide. These were almost pitch dark; their

only light being what came from the corridor through a grated window made over each cell door. It was so dark that even on a clear day it was quite impossible to read or make out the figures or hands of a watch. By day we were allowed to open the doors, and in the warm weather to work in the corridors; but then, how short a time does the Siberian sunshine last! Even in September we had to take our choice of burning candles or sitting in the dark. There were in all sixty cells; in some of them two prisoners were lodged.

Our first impression was very painful, all the more that it was unexpected. How could we imagine that after we had spent nearly four years in the small, but endurable prison of Tschita, we should without any reason be punished by removal to a far worse abode, and even be deprived of daylight? It grieved me terribly to think of my comrades, who must spend twelve years in this prison. Two divisions of the building were given up to the married couples—the first and the twelfth.

The women did not for a moment hesitate to share the prison of their husbands, which they had not been allowed to do in Tschita, owing to the smallness of the building and the prisoners living in common. Here each one had his own special cell.

Trubetzkoy's wife, Naryschkin's, von Wisin's, and mine lived in our division. Sergius Trubetzkoy used to say, "Why should we need windows, when we have four suns within our dwelling?" Alexandrine Muraw-

jew and Catherine Trubetzkoy could only spend their days in the prison, as children were not allowed in the building. The doors were locked every evening after the tattoo, and it might have been very dangerous for babies, whose sudden ailments often require immediate help, to be thus shut off from any assistance, especially as no fire was allowed at night. The mothers therefore spent the nights in their own houses with their children, and their days in the prison with their husbands. We all tried to ornament our cells to the best of our powers. A common kitchen was established in the centre of the prison. Each of the divisions could be completely shut off as soon as the gates were locked. A space as large as that occupied by the whole prison was enclosed by a high paling of boards, so that the prison walls and this enclosed space formed a right-angled, equal-sided square. According to the original plan, the prison was to have extended over the whole square; but as some of the prisoners had already been transported from Tschita to their ultimate place of settlement, and the remaining categories were to follow in time, the half of the space only was built over, and the remainder was used as a playground and promenade. In the winter we made montagnes russes there and a slide for skating. Each cell opened into a corridor or common passage; but in order to have a little quiet, and to lessen the noise, the Commandant ordered that the doors between the divisions should be entirely closed. When we complained of the

darkness of our cells to the Commandant Leparsky, and expressed our astonishment that he should have suffered the building to be made on such an inconvenient plan, as if on purpose to injure our eyesight, he declared with a shrug of the shoulders that the design for the building had been arranged by the Emperor himself, and therefore it was useless to think of remonstrance.

CHAPTER VII.

IN THE PRISON OF PETROWSKI.

We did not discover, till a few weeks after our arrival, how much the altered life in the prison of Petrowski was telling upon us. As soon as winter set in, it became impossible to stay for any time in the long corridor into which our cells opened, on account of the cold. We were forced to retreat into these, and burn candles the whole day. My eyes soon became so weak that I was obliged to use spectacles. In the meantime our ladies, especially Madame von Murawjew, the Princesses Trubetzkoy and Wolkonsky, as well as Madame Naryschkin, had written faithful accounts of our gloomy dwelling to their relations in St. Petersburg. The Commandant, on his side, had represented to the authorities that the darkness of the cells would very likely seriously affect those who were weak in health, or inclined to melancholy. At length, in the following spring, Leparsky informed us that the Emperor, at the intercession of Count Benkendorff, had given orders for a

window to be pierced in the outer wall of each cell. His orders were executed in May.

Our work went on in common, as in Tschita: in summer we were occupied with the making of a road and labouring in the kitchen-garden; in the winter we worked handmills. We each employed our leisure hours according to our taste, and fortunately had no lack of books. Prince Odojewsky visited me twice a week, and corrected my writings and translations. An old sailor, C. P. Torson, spent every Wednesday with me relating his voyages round the world, his past deeds, and future projects. Other comrades came to see us and our neighbours in the evening, and our corridor was generally very lively until the tattoo.

My wife and I lived rather apart from the others, having our regular occupations; every hour of the day had its appointed employment, excepting those in which we had to walk up and down the court for exercise. Every day at ten o'clock in the morning my wife went to her hired quarters to attend to her little housekeeping; at midday the food was all taken by the cook to the guard-room, from whence the sentry brought our meals into the corridor. My wife still loves to recall our life in prison, during which we spent more time together than falls to the lot of most married people in the course of twenty years.

In July, 1831, two of our comrades, N. P. Repin and Michael Kuchelbecker, left us; they were in the same

category as I, but their term of forced labour was shortened, while my sentence remained unaltered. We learnt in the spring that Repin, together with Andrejew (who had been removed previously), had been sent to Werchne Udinsk, about 200 wersts from Irkutsk. The friends met at Repin's first place of abode: he had hired a lodging in the house of a merchant's wife, a sort of antechamber separating his room from that of his hostess. Their meeting was a great mutual joy, and their conversation lasted till long after midnight. Suddenly the maid detected a smell of smoke, woke her mistress, and they both examined the kitchen and stove, but found nothing to account for the smoke, which grew more and more dense in the antechamber. They knocked at Repin's door, but received no answer; at the windows—all was still. When the door was at last broken open, the flames rushed out upon those who entered, and the bodies of the two exiles were found so burnt as to be scarcely recognizable. The remains of the companions in misfortune were interred in one coffin in the churchyard of the place. The civil governor at once repaired to the spot, but his inquiry was without result; the probability is, that the two men had talked long together, had not extinguished the light, or else had set fire to the bed-clothes with their pipes, and must have been suffocated by the smoke.

Some months after I had heard of this accident, I received a letter from Repin: in order to reach Petrowski

it had been obliged to go to St. Petersburg and through the third division of the Imperial office, thus making a circuit of more than 12,000 wersts on its way. The feelings with which I received the letter of my unfortunate companion and former fellow-soldier can be imagined; he had left the prison full of joy and hope at the change in his life, and in this letter gave me an account of his new home and all he was doing.

We had passed a year in the new prison when I was obliged to part from my wife, as the time of her confinement drew near. She hired a house in which the Princess Trubetzkoy had lived till her own was finished. All our ladies had their own houses, and they all, except the wives of Juschnewsky and von Wisin, had children. A week before her confinement I was permitted to leave the prison and remain with my wife; a sentry was placed before our dwelling, who, however, only accompanied me when I had to go to work or to the mill. On the 5th September, 1831, my second son Conrad was born; I embraced him with deep love and thankfulness, but when afterwards three sons and a daughter were born to me, the thought of their future almost weighed me to the earth; at such moments, when my courage failed, it was difficult to rejoice over even the most promising children. After the birth of my second son, I resolved to use every endeavour to qualify myself to educate them, so as to give those who not only had no property, but had also lost their rights of citizenship,

some chance of making their own way in the world. As soon as my wife was able to leave her bed, I was obliged to leave her alone and return to my prison, from whence I might visit her twice a week for a few hours at a time. This separation was of course very painful, but we consoled ourselves with the thought that it would not be of long duration, as the time for my being moved away to settlement would be in the following July. We shared our means of subsistence at Petrowski, and though we gained in quiet and space by having our cells to ourselves, yet the ideal charm which had brightened our life at Tschita was wanting here; increasing years and decreasing health had perhaps something to do with it; also the fact that, as we lived apart, we were not so dependent on each other, and could choose our intimate associates. Of course the presence of so many ladies among us involved a certain amount of constraint.

F. B. Wolff and Artamon Murawjew were the most active of us all. Wolff was a doctor, and highly considered; Murawjew had trained himself to be a practical surgeon. A soldier of the guard accompanied them every time they left the fortress to attend the sick of the place. Our aged Commandant, the officers and workmen of the building, all looked to Wolff in case of illness; besides which, many sick people from the neighbourhood came to ask his advice. He looked after his large apothecary's shop with the help of A. Ph. Frolow, and was soon known in all the country round as a wonder-

working doctor. Artamon Murawjew let blood, drew teeth, and bound up wounds. When commander of the Achtyr Hussars, he little thought that the office of an army-surgeon would one day fall to his share; but during a journey abroad he had fortunately attended lectures on surgery for his own pleasure. After he was settled in Irkutsk he still continued this pursuit, which had become almost a necessity to him, until he died in the year 1847. During the whole six years of my residence in Tschita and Petrowski not one single death occurred among my comrades: a remarkable circumstance, when it is remembered that on an average, out of seventy-five men, two die in a year. We were eighty-two in number, and not all young; some had reached the age of sixty years. Most of us had been bred up in princely luxury, and all were used to certain comforts, from which they were suddenly brought to bear most unusual privations. The monotonous life, and simple moderate food, without doubt suited us all.

Petrowski is one of the iron-foundries belonging to the Crown, where iron vessels are cast, iron hoops and wire forged and drawn. In the works there was also a saw-mill, which for years had been out of gear, the machinery having been injured past repair, as it was believed. The Director of the works had learnt from the Platz Adjutant, that some among us were acquainted with mechanics, and begged the Commandant to allow "these gentlemen" to inspect the machinery,

and give an opinion as to the possibility of its being repaired. N. Bestuchew and Torson betook themselves to the place, and, to the astonishment of the officials, masters and workmen, the machinery and saw-mill were in a few hours set going. N. Bestuchew had in his mind a design for a new chronometer of cheaper construction. This idea he carried into execution twenty years after, when he was settled at Selenginsk. His new clock was set up in a hall in the winter, where, in spite of the cold of twenty-five degrees (Reaumur), it continued to go perfectly. When we had the sorrow of losing our much-loved and honoured Alexandrine Murawjew by an early death, Bestuchew, with his own hands, prepared a wooden coffin with all the fittings and ornaments, and also cast one of lead, in which the wooden shell was placed. He was also an artist. He painted all our portraits, and made some very pretty sketches of Tschita and Petrowski. Torson occupied himself in constructing models of threshing, reaping and sowing machines. N. A. Zagoutsky contrived to make a very good wooden clock, his only tool being a common dinner-knife.

In our joiners' room we prepared all the tables, chairs, arm-chairs, benches and cupboards required. The best joiners were N. Bestuchew, Frolow, P. S. Puschkin and A. T. Borissow. Repin and Andrejewitch spent a good deal of time in painting; the latter devoted himself to painting a large altar-piece in

oils for the church at Tschita. Music had also its disciples: F. F. Wodkowsky and N. A. Krjukow played the violin; P. N. Swistunow the violoncello; A. P. Juschnewsky the piano; M. M. Naryschkin, Lunin, and J. F. Schimkow the guitar; Count Igelstrom the flute. Prince Odojewsky and B. P. Iwaschew were devoted to poetry. Puschkin wrote clever fables, and rendered the Psalms into metre. Iwaschew composed an epic poem, called "Stenka Rasin." * The reading and newspaper room was besieged at all free hours. On Sundays we assembled to read the holy Scriptures and some edifying books; except once a year for Communion, we were never taken to Church. We kept to the resolution we had made at Tschita not to play cards; we allowed ourselves, however, paper and ink, in spite of the stringent prohibition against it.

M. S. Lunin lived in a most peculiar way. He lived in No. 1, a totally dark cell, in which no window could be pierced, because a guard-room had been built outside. He took no part at our common table, kept his fasts after the custom of the Roman Church, which he had joined some years before, after he had been at Warsaw a pupil and disciple of the well-known *Meister*. One-third of his cell was shut off by a curtain, behind which, elevated on some steps, was a large Crucifix blessed by the Pope, which his sister had sent him from Rome. All through the day loud Latin prayers

* A well-known Russian rebel and robber.

were heard in his cell: he was, however, no ascetic in his ways; and when he came among us was always agreeable and witty. Whenever we visited him in his cell we found him always ready to converse in a secular, and often in a jocular strain. He was very much provoked with Victor Hugo's book, *Notre Dame de Paris*, which penetrated even into our wilds, and was read with avidity: he had the patience to burn the whole work in a candle.

He always painted our future (that is, the time of our settlement) in the most gloomy colours, declaring that only three courses would be open to us—marriage, a monastery, or drink. He himself came to a sad end. He lived, as a colonist, quite secluded: surrounded his hut with a high fence, kept the doors fastened at all times, and had with him only one servant, a Burjāt. Probably these eccentricities aroused suspicion: for he was suddenly arrested, his papers being seized and sent to St. Petersburg. In consequence of what was found in them he was despatched to Nertschinsk, where he lived under strict supervision, and died in the year 1847, at the age of seventy. In his youth Lunin had served in the regiment of Chevaliers de la Garde. When his father, who was very rich, would no longer give him sufficient means to live in the capital, he left, went to Paris, and subsequently to London, where he supported himself by giving French lessons. After his father's death he returned to his country and resumed

military life; he afterwards served in the Grodno Regiment of Hussar Guards at Warsaw, and was so much beloved by the Grand Duke Constantine there, that when in December, 1825, the latter received orders to arrest Lunin, he sent to him at once to warn him and give him the opportunity of escape. Lunin, however, preferred sharing the fate of his comrades.

A. P. Juschnewsky was a man especially worthy of note: he had formerly been General Intendant of the Second Army. He was a stoic in the strictest sense of the word, and was closely allied with Pestel, who never concealed a thought from him, and consulted him about his every action. Juschnewsky was married; his wife followed him after a short time; they lived in Petrowski in very poor circumstances; his property still remained in the possession of the sequestrators—even his brother (the rightful heir) was not allowed to enjoy it until the revision of the papers in the office of the Intendant of the Second Army was completed. This inquiry lasted long, and caused great annoyance to Juschnewsky, for, being a prisoner, he was deprived of all means of freeing himself from certain accusations which were made against him. The old man's delight can be imagined when, after the lapse of eight years, he received the verdict of the commission of inquiry, in which it was expressly stated that the former Intendant General of the Second Army had not only caused no injury to the Government, but had, on the contrary, been the means of benefiting

it largely by his wise and timely measures. The large sums of money which passed through his hands, and the intricate affairs he had to manage, would have made it easy for Juschnewsky's enemies to bring an accusation of treason against the exile without any real grounds, and they might thus have ruined him; indeed, it was a great surprise to us, who knew all the circumstances, that this did not occur. He died in the vicinity of Irkutsk, where he was settled, in the year 1839, as he was praying by the coffin of a deceased comrade. I must mention, in conclusion, that seven of my comrades were betrothed, whose brides did not follow them; and that eight of our married men, whose wives stayed behind, had to bear in addition the terrible grief of hearing that they had married others. The impression which this intelligence made was deepened by the sight of those ladies who had followed their husbands through misery and exile, and who were not only models of conjugal devotion, but the greatest blessings to their husbands and all of us as well.

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM PETROWSKI TO KURGAN.

THE time for me to leave Petrowski and to begin life as a settler was drawing near: the term of my forced labour, and, at the same time, of my life in prison, came to an end on the 11th July, 1832. I knew that my wife's relations had petitioned the Government to settle us at Kurgan, and that this request had been acceded to. As my wife expected her confinement at the end of August, I persuaded her to start for Irkutsk on the 3rd July, and there to procure the despatch of the requisite official papers, so that immediately on my arrival we might continue our journey. On the 2nd July I brought my little Conrad into the prison in order to take leave; the child was dressed in a bright blue cloak which the Prince Obolensky had made for him with great skill; he was not in the least shy, though my comrades surrounded him and caressed him with deep feeling. My wife took a touching farewell of our faithful companions; the ladies feared for her health in her

situation, which might make the fatigues of the journey very dangerous to her. Alexandrine Murawjew sent her a folding travelling chair, and offered her a thousand little comforts, and tried to persuade her to take a cow with her for the passage over Lake Baikal, so that the child might have fresh milk at all hours. Torson prepared the hammock of sail-cloth, and N. Bestuchew arranged the screws and buckles with which to secure the little bed to the roof of the calèche, in which my wife was to make the passage. She started on her journey on the 3rd July, and reached the shores of Lake Baikal without hindrance; there she hired a fishing-boat with sails; the calèche was rolled into it, and thus they put out to sea under the care of the fisherman and some travelling companions. In the middle of the lake a storm arose, which lasted some days, during which the vessel rocked incessantly though anchored. The child fell ill; the store of milk which they had taken turned sour; he would not drink boiled milk: at first he was content with rice-water, but at last he took hardly any nourishment, and seemed as if he must die. On the fifth day the storm abated, the wind was favourable, and in a few hours the sailors were able to land. To this day my wife recalls with delight the moment when they again touched the land, and her sick boy could get fresh milk after his five days' suffering and hunger. She reached Irkutsk on the 12th July, and expected me to follow the next day; but I did not arrive

till a fortnight after. My delay arose from two causes. The Governor-General Lawinsky was inspecting his district at that time, and had forgotten to inform the Commandant at the right moment of my place of destination. Leparsky did not receive the letter until the 20th, and despatched me on the same day; but I had waited nine days beyond my time in prison. Soon after my departure my comrades who remained had their term of imprisonment and forced labour shortened, on the occasion of the birth of the Grand Duke Michael Nikolajewitch. The second cause of my arrival being postponed was a storm on Lake Baikal. On the 20th July, 1832, I bade adieu to my comrades and my prison. I felt nothing but joy and satisfaction in leaving the latter, but the parting with my companions was sad and sorrowful; sufferings and recollections in common had drawn us far closer to each other than any ties of relationship could have done. It was no less painful to me to part from those ladies who, by their self-denial and friendliness, had done all that was possible to alleviate the sorrows of our lot, while they really suffered more than we. I *hoped* to see them again, but when and where? None could give an answer. At the gates of the prison stood two post-carriages; a non-commissioned officer and a private were to accompany me. Colonel Leparsky sent for me to the guard-room, where he took leave of me and courteously regretted that he had not sooner made my acquaintance. I

entreated him to continue to soften the hard fate of my companions in misfortune, as he had hitherto done. As I descended the steps of the guard-room I saw my comrades again crowding round the gate to bid me farewell.

I travelled with M. N. Glebow to Werchne Udinsk, where we parted, as he was to be settled in the village of Kabansk in the vicinity of that town; he died there twenty years later, in 1852. I drove as fast as possible without halting a moment; the charming banks of the Selenga passed unheeded before my eyes, their beauty illumined now by the brilliant light of day, now by the pale moonlight; but my thoughts were far away with my wife and child, in Irkutsk, or in the prison so lately vacated, and I scarcely saw what was passing before me. Instead of going to the Possolsky Monastery, where the ships generally lie in harbour, by the advice of my companion I drove along the shores of the Selenga to the little river haven Tschertowkino, whence the large fishing-boats go to Irkutsk when they go down the river to Lake Baikal. I had hardly reached the village when I saw at the distance of a werst a boat which had just put off; there was no other vessel in the harbour; there was, therefore, but one course open to me—to drive along the shore until I came up with the boat. As we were flying through the village I heard a voice screaming after me; it was repeated several times. I looked round and saw a man running after my car-

riage, beckoning with his hand; at last he fell down exhausted by his chase. I turned about, raised him up, and recognized Wiskenow, my guard and escort at Tschita and Petrowski, who had been rewarded with the order of St. George. He had received his discharge some months before, and now begged most earnestly that I would take him with me. "I don't myself know where I am being taken to, neither have I room for thee, dear friend," was my reply. "As soon as I am settled I will gladly have you with me; at Irkutsk you can learn my place of destination." With that we parted.

We drove on and on along the shore, hastening over field and meadow to catch the boat. In half an hour we reached the next stage, where the sailing vessels called. I shouted with all my strength to the helmsman, "Halt, take me up." "Will you give me twenty-five roubles?" "Willingly." "Give me thirty roubles?" "All right." "Thirty-five roubles?" "Done." "Forty roubles, then?" "Anything for a boat at once."

Two fishermen jumped into a little boat and put off to shore. I and my companions entered. I had with me only a portmanteau, a basket with some bread, and a bottle of wine, which the Princess Trubetzkoy had given me for the journey. I had had no time to provide myself with any other provisions; the wind was favourable, and we hoped to get across Lake Baikal in five hours.

The boat was tugged down the river by three men with a rope, who dragged it slowly along. The skipper had but six men to work his vessel. A tarantass (or native carriage) stood in the middle of the boat; in it sat a grey-haired man wrapped in a military cloak. Our little boat glided swiftly down the clear waters of the Selenga. We soon reached the vessel and jumped in. After I had saluted my unknown travelling companion, I begged the sub-officer to pay the skipper the promised money for the passage at once, and I entreated him to use every means in his power to hasten the passage, and promised a good present for his men if we got across soon. However, these boatmen, who spent all their lives on the water, were more sluggish and difficult to move than amphibious animals; they seemed not to know the meaning of the word haste. It was three in the afternoon, and we were still about sixteen wersts from the mouth of the river, when they began to fasten the rope to a tree, in order to sit down and get some food and rest on board their vessel. "We have time enough," they said; "the wind is favourable; we shall be the other side to-morrow early, if we only get safely down the Selenga; the many turns and openings, where it pours itself into Lake Baikal, make sandbanks and shoals at its mouth, and render the navigation difficult." The boat remained on the bank; I persuaded my companions to jump out and drag the rope until the fishermen had rested and eaten. The indefatigable soldiers

followed me at once, and we tugged the boat forward a bit; but in jumping out I had sprained my foot, and every step became more and more painful to put it to the ground. I hardly felt it, however, as I thought with anxiety of my wife and child awaiting me. Our separation had already lasted fourteen days longer than we had intended. We stopped in the evening, the steersman assuring us it was dangerous to steer in the dark through the many shoals between us and the lake; when the sun rose, we should be out of the river in an hour, and could then hoist the sail. To me the evening appeared quite light enough; the moon was in her first quarter and shone brightly; but I, with my disabled foot, and two of my soldiers quite exhausted, could do nothing. Knowing nought of the art of sailing, or of the stream and its windings, I was forced to wait till they chose to go on. I wrapped myself in my cloak, listening to my travelling companion in the tarantass, as he asked questions about me, and so fell asleep at length.

When I woke next morning I saw that the banks of the river were far distant. We were now on the lake, the sails hoisted, but the wind was rapidly falling; at last the sails flapped idly, the gaff creaked on the mast, swayed slowly from side to side, and finally remained immoveable; and there we lay about twenty wersts from the mouth of the Selenga. My impatience and anxiety may be imagined; the fishermen lay down

to sleep, saying, "If we don't arrive to-day we shall to-morrow." I had time enough to study Lake Baikal. Its shores are sometimes steep and high, sometimes undulating, with here and there bare rugged rocks of granite and flint alternating with greensward and little woods. There are traces of volcanic action on all sides, and it may be assumed that in former times the Selenga, Lake Baikal, and the Angora were all one river. In some places the lake is fathomless. Where the river Angora runs out of Lake Baikal, two granite blocks stand up in the midst and serve as sluices; near these masses of stone the marks of volcanic agency are plainly visible.

The pain in my foot was becoming unbearable, though I bathed it with water continually, and I had to ask the skipper to demand his payment from my companions. They had provision for seven days; indeed, they never start for a voyage on Lake Baikal without a store of that kind, the weather on the lake is so uncertain.

We lay thus for two days, motionless, in the midst of the lake. On the third a storm arose; the vessel, though secured by an anchor, rocked like a cradle moved by an impatient hand. The wind was still contrary, and my situation became hourly more unbearable: we were tossed on the waves day and night, while the reflexion of the sun's rays on the water and the high wind caused such inflammation in my eyes that I could scarce read a few lines at a time from Goethe's "Genius," which

happened to be in my pocket. To add to it all, I was sea-sick, and lay most of the day on deck, and the night in my little cabin, into which I could only just crawl. The greater my impatience became, the more insurmountable seemed the hindrances. After a two days' storm, a contrary wind blew incessantly for two days. We had already lain at anchor for seven days, and our provisions were running short. One day more, and we must have turned back to Tschertowkino, and waste time anew at the mouth of the Selenga. On the eighth day the fragments and crumbs of bread were collected; the fishermen had still a little brandy, though their bread was almost out. They calmly assured us that sometimes they spent a fortnight on the lake waiting for a favourable wind. I sopped some bits of bread and remains of oatmeal in the Tokay wine which the Princess Trubetzkoy had given me, and this peculiar mixture was my food for one whole day. I had wished to keep the wine (from the cellar of the celebrated gastronomer Count Laval) for my wife in case of illness, but now it must be sacrificed. On the ninth day it was decided to sail back again at noon. Just then the pennon of the vessel began to move. The fishermen called out, "We shall have either a calm or a favourable wind. . . . Raise up the mast, spread the sail, the wind is all right!" The boat actually moved; and in a few hours we reached the other shore, not far from a post-station. Here I learnt that my wife had, like me, been detained on the lake

some time. I drove to Irkutsk with the speed of the wind, and arrived about midnight. An officer of police accompanied me to her dwelling. The maid opened the door softly. I saw the light of a night-lamp, and heard my wife's voice as she rocked her sleeping child. The joy of meeting was indescribable, and we promised each other never to part in future. In her countenance I read the illness of my son. He was dangerously ill; would take no nourishment; and his countenance was more pallid than ever. His mother lifted him out of bed and brought him to me. He looked at me with a long fixed stare, then raised his hands quickly, and smiled; from that instant I had hopes of his recovery. As the autumn was drawing near we could not think of postponing our journey; we must set out at once, regardless of the child's illness. I drove to the Governor J. B. Zeidler, who gave me my pass and a Cossack sub-officer as escort. In the afternoon of the 4th August we were on the clear waters of the Angora. It was a pleasant evening: the sun broke through the clouds, illumining with its rays this, the second chief town of Siberia, and the large buildings and gardens, which were reflected in the Angora and Irkuta. Every step brought us nearer to our new home. The road over which I had passed in winter six years before appeared to me entirely changed.

As the child's health continued to improve, we took fresh courage, and continued our journey to Kurgan

almost joyfully, in spite of the new sort of imprisonment to which we were hastening. We drove very quickly, hurrying in order to arrive early at Kurgan. It was no less than 4,200 wersts (2,620 English miles) from Petrowski to our new place of destination. The unforeseen delay in my departure from the prison and the hindrances on Lake Baikal had robbed us of three weeks of the best time of year. It was already the beginning of August, and the night frosts had set in. This delivered us from the little flies which so torment both man and beast during the short Siberian summer, that it is often quite impossible for them to work in the daytime, and even the common labourers have to cover their faces with a veil of linen.

I have already described the extraordinary speed of the Siberian horses. We drove on day and night without stopping. In the evening I got on to the box by the driver, and tried to induce him to drive slower and more carefully, by promising him a good drink-money if he would do so; but promises and threats were alike in vain, the horses were not to be checked. When they were being put to at the stations, a crowd of men always stood round the unmanageable animals, holding them firmly by the halter. As soon as the travellers were seated, the driver called out, "Let go!" the men then flung themselves to the right and left to get out of the way, and the carriage shot past them, without any exaggeration, like a cannon-ball. All the efforts of the driver are fruitless;

the more he holds the horses back, the quicker they go; the utmost he can do is to keep them in the right direction. After the first four wersts, where the road in general is fenced on each side for the herds of the villages and stations, the horses begin to get quieter, and that particular danger is over, for the animals, at all events, keep to the road. When they went at full speed down hill, or through a river, one could neither see nor hear.

Wherever the climate allows of it, agriculture and the breeding of cattle are carried on with very great success. The traffic is carried on by means of the great high-road from Tjumen and Nertschinsk, being the channel by which the products of these enormous and rich plains will be made available by future generations. Even in the reign of Catherine II. Siberia was called the golden territory, on account of the abundance of precious metals, but though the mountains and river-beds of Siberia do in fact contain rich gold-fields, yet the chief wealth of the land is in the fruitfulness of the soil. Many places in the governments of Tomsk, Jeniseisk, and Irkutsk, have most abundant harvest crops; the land needs as little dressing as the plains of the Ukraine, and the enormous rivers greatly facilitate the relations of trade. The time for uniting the canals in Siberia has not yet arrived, but there is already communication by water connecting Okhotsk with the Oural, interrupted only in three places and at very short intervals.

Even the enormous stretch of country from Okhotsk to St. Petersburg, extending over 10,000 wersts, has a natural water communication, which is broken only at the following points: 1, at Katshuga on the Lena, from whence the goods can be conveyed by land carriage to Lake Baikal; 2, at the church village Muchowskoje—but there it is only ninety wersts from Jenisee to Katt, a tributary of the Ob; 3, from Tjumen to Perm on the Kama.

The river Jenisei divides Siberia in two parts, East and West Siberia. The first is mountainous, cut up by torrents; all the rivers are bright and clear. West Siberia has more plains, and the rivers are muddy; but the soil in both divisions of the country is equally fruitful, excepting of course the northern icy regions.

The farm produce of East Siberia is disposed of in the mining towns, and also in China; while that of West Siberia is consumed at home, except the large quantities of tallow, butter, skins and soap, which are bought by great merchant houses in Russia. The fairs, which take place three times a year, are visited by countless agents of traders from European Russia.

There are three-and-a-half million of inhabitants in Siberia, without reckoning the inconsiderable number of Ostiaks, Samoieds, Tungusians, Jakuts, and Burjäts. The population is chiefly made up of exiles and numberless fugitives, who have settled there in order to escape conscription, or the oppressions of despotic masters and

officials. From this mixture of various races there has, in course of time, grown up a new and distinct Siberian population. The Government takes great pains in the settlement of the exiles, and expends large sums in establishing new colonies; but the incapacity and dishonesty of the officials has caused many of the villages to be abandoned by the tormented and ill-used inhabitants. The names of the few upright officials, and the way in which they conducted business, are still held in blessed remembrance, a sure sign that there were not too many of them.

For example, in the time of Catherine II. and the Emperor Paul, a certain Ivan Ivanowitch, whose name I heard often enough during my residence, was commissary in the country of Witein, in the district of Jakutsk. The memory of this much-honoured man has made so deep an impression, that the people, even after the lapse of thirty or forty years, love to recall all his peculiarities; for instance, that he wore high jack-boots day and night and slept in his clothes, &c. His memory is blessed by all; he caused roads and bridges to be made, and maintained the greatest order in the villages of his district; traces of his administration are still to be seen in this, the third generation. The inhabitants still give an account of the unexpected visits he used to pay to the villages, when he would enter the houses and ask for beer and bread. If the bread was badly baked, the hostess was flogged; if the drink was too sour or

too warm in summer, bodily punishment was in each case inflicted on the culprits, and the whole family thanked him cordially, and the grandchildren in the next generation blessed him.

The rapacity of the officials (of whom there were, fortunately, only nine to every 40,000 inhabitants) was the principal subject of the conversation which we heard in the towns (which were at regular distances of 500 wersts) and the villages (from thirty to forty wersts apart). There was no possibility of a closer study of the country or the people, owing to the rapidity of the journey. The weather was favourable; the road, under the Tomsk government in particular, extraordinarily good. The station-masters and householders in the towns where we alighted, or stayed to spend a night, showed us great attention and hospitality, and so we went on our way swiftly and merrily. At the end of August we reached the frontiers of the Tobolsk government. On the road, people inquired of us whether the newly-appointed Governor of Tobolsk, A. M. Murawjew, would soon arrive from Irkutsk? Murawjew, as a discharged colonel of the General Staff, had been condemned in 1826, by the chief criminal court, to forced labour, on account of his participation in the conspiracy. The Emperor had mitigated his punishment to exile in Siberia, without the loss of rank or nobility. Murawjew had at first been sent to Irkutsk, where his faithful wife, born Princess Schakowsky, his children and his sister-

in-law, the Princess Barbara, were to be with him. But before the end of this journey, which was accomplished through difficulties and privations of all kinds, Murawjew and his wife received intelligence that by the efforts of kind friends they had been transferred to Werchne Udinsk, on the other side of Lake Baikal; they therefore had to retrace their steps. After a year, Murawjew was appointed inspector of police at Irkutsk; a few years later, President of the government; and, finally, Governor of Tobolsk. In all these offices he did much good service, and left behind him an honoured memory.

On the other side of the town of Tara, a sudden but not unexpected event interrupted our journey: when we arrived in the village of Firstowo my wife felt the hour of her delivery approaching. She went to bed, and I sent for some female assistance. An hour afterwards my son Wassily was happily born. The landlady of the house into which we had been obliged to go, nursed my wife, and I took charge of the elder children. On the seventh day after his birth, I had the child baptized by the village priest, and on the ninth we continued our journey. Conrad lay in the hammock fastened to the carriage, Wassily on the breast of his mother. After a two days' journey we arrived at Tobolsk.

Here we soon found a comfortable dwelling. I visited the inspector of police, Alexejew, who had received me very kindly when on my way to Tschita six years

before. I was delighted to find here V. N. Licharew, with whom I had passed a year at Tschita; he had afterwards lived at Kondinsk, and since then had been moved to Kurgan. I also met Count Moschinsky, a Polish exile of 1827, and some of his countrymen, exiled on account of the rising of 1830; among them was Prince Sangushko, who had been a private in a battalion of the Siberian line; and Krzyzanowsky, a distinguished soldier, who had served with much credit in Napoleon's army in Spain under General Chlopicki, and whom I have mentioned in connection with the Polish secret society. I spent several pleasant days in the company of these men, after which we continued our journey.

On the other side of Tobolsk we turned off the great road towards the south, and spent some days in the large town called Jalutorowsk. I visited two of my comrades here, with whom I had lived at Tschita, A. B. Jentalzow, and Baron Tiefenhausen. The former was living in the town with his wife, and complained much of illness and the inactive life he led; Tiefenhausen, who in the year 1815 was already commanding a regiment in Count Woronzow's corps in the Army of Occupation in France, had busied himself in building a large house, which he meant to let. It was hardly finished when, through the spite of a workman, it was burnt to the ground. The energetic old man rebuilt it again twice, but a second and third time it fell a sacri-

fice to the flames. From the *débris* remaining he contrived to build himself a little cottage, worked diligently in his garden, and cultivated many fruits and vegetables which had never before ripened in this climate. At length, on the intercession of Suworow, the noble Governor-General of Livonia, Esthonia, and Courland, he was, in the year 1853, set free. He went to Narwa, where he met his wife, daughter, and two sons after twenty-eight years' separation.

I could not reach Kurgan in one day's journey from Jalutorowsk: I therefore slept at the next station before my new place of destination, Belofersk, a large church village. The postmaster informed me soon after my arrival that the Judge of the General Court of Justice wished to speak to me. It was Iwan Gerassimow, who had accompanied us from Tobolsk to Irkutsk six years before, by order of the authorities. I was overjoyed at seeing him again, and inquired how he was getting on. "I am titular councillor, and have a house of my own." These words were spoken with such self-satisfaction, that I could only wish the old man might soon become college assessor.

Before reaching the last station we had to drive some wersts through deep sands, through a wood, and then over a wide plain, which was bordered with villages on each side of the road; at last the church tower of Kurgan was visible. The town lies on the left bank of the river, and has three long streets, with five others

crossing it diagonally; these are lined on each side with wooden buildings. Kotzebue makes special mention of the one stone house in the place—the court of justice—in his book, *The most Remarkable Year of my Life*. When I had reached the end of our long journey, the thought that here I must end my days as an exile, and my wife and children must spend their whole lives, made my heart sink within me.

CHAPTER IX.

THE YEARS OF OUR SETTLEMENT IN KURGAN.

On the 19th September, 1832, we arrived at Kurgan. I presented myself to the inspector of police, Lieut.-Col. F. J. Burjenkewitch, and then took up my residence in the house of my comrade, M. A. Nasimow, where I met an old acquaintance, J. F. Voigt. On the same day they found me a residence. In a few hours I settled myself and family. Arranging or furnishing the rooms was not to be thought of until the next fair; neither useful furniture nor household utensils were to be found in Kurgan itself. We had, therefore, to borrow all that was wanted for immediate use from our obliging landlord. Our new place of residence presented no remarkable feature; the town takes its name from an old castle which stands on a high hill (*Kurgan* in Russian), about five wersts distant, on which there stood, 140 years ago, a watch-tower, surrounded by a deep ditch as a protection against the Kirghis. Kurgan contained 2,000 inhabitants, and had one church. I

was shown the house in which Kotzebue had lived as an exile during the reign of the Emperor Paul, and I met many persons who still remembered him, and were mentioned in his well-known works. Some individuals had even heard of this book, and one merchant, K——, was very much displeased with it, because his father was accused by the writer of always smelling of onions. I found that the best society in Kurgan, until my arrival, kept entirely to their former habits and way of life. The merchants are not rich—they trade chiefly with foreign money, and as commissioners of wealthy houses. Some of them had built tanyards, soap and tallow boiling-houses, on the other side of the Tobol. Artisans of all sorts were to be found among the townspeople and the peasantry. The school of the district had fifty scholars, and excellent teachers, whose proficiency was testified by the progress of the scholars at the public examinations. The priest Suawensky was also an estimable and very pleasing man.

As long as we were living in prison and as forced labourers, the sums of money which our relations sent to us were not limited in amount; but in our settlement a bachelor was only allowed 300 silver roubles a year, and a married man not more than 600 silver roubles. This sum was quite sufficient here, as living was very cheap. A pood of rye-meal cost seven kopeks; * wheat-meal fourteen kopeks; meat one-half to one kopek a

* Three kopeks are about equivalent to a penny.

pound; a cart-load of hay, thirty kopeks; and a tschetwert of oats sixty kopeks. The peasants from the neighbourhood brought their produce into the town on Sundays, and latterly on Saturdays also. I went into all the neighbouring villages, and found industrious agricultural labourers in all of them. Owing to the low prices they are unable to amass any capital, but have quite sufficient to live comfortably. In remote corners of the large villages I noticed some strange little huts forming a sort of street; these were the homes of the newly arrived settlers who had brought no money with them, and had to live on their hopes of making some—exiles from Great, Little, and White Russia, Tatars, Gipsies, and Jews, all mixed up together.

The monotonous life of Kurgan was broken by three fairs in the year, which took place on the 18th March, the 27th October, and 20th December. Merchants from Irbit, Tobolsk, Schadrinsk, and Tjumen, and even from Kazan, frequented these fairs. From early morning till late evening everything was in a stir, almost every customer was at the same time a merchant, and during the continued holiday, which is the result of the fair, the streets, so deserted in general, were filled with a gay bustle which often lasted till late into the night. Tea-machines were set up in the streets, round which numerous consumers congregated; while close to them other groups gathered round some itinerant musician, who

played songs and dances on the accordion. Many carried about their own handiwork for sale—boots, gloves, wooden vessels, woven baskets, &c. One prominent figure was the seller of chamois and reindeer leather breeches, of which he carried many pairs upon his shoulders; in order to attract purchasers, he put on each time a pair of these garments before the assembled public. Riders and horses were swarming meantime on the banks of the Tobol, where Russians, Kirghis, and Gipsies were bargaining over the little high-mettled Siberian horses. The answer to an inquiry as to the price of a horse was always, "Oh, it will be two or three sacks." There is so little gold and silver coin in Siberia, that all the circulation is either paper or copper coins; these latter are counted out ready in bags amounting to twenty-five roubles, and the honesty of the people is so great, that the contents of these bags can always be relied on. After sunset the booths are closed, and the peasants retire into the neighbouring villages for the night, returning into the town at sunrise; some of them prefer passing the night under the open heaven, lying round a watchfire.

In every Siberian district town there are always thirteen officials, consisting of the inspector of police, the sheriff (isprawnick) with three assessors, the judge with three assessors, the district procurator-fiscal, the postmaster, the tax-collector, and the doctor. These form the aristocracy, but are often divided by family quarrels or

business matters; the isolation, however, from any other society, the great distance between the towns, and the necessity of intercourse, force them to a speedy reconciliation, which generally takes place on feast-days. Every one celebrates his own name-day, and those of every member of his family. Two days before, the host sends out his invitations: "M. N. greets you, and begs you will come to breakfast, dinner, and tea, with your wife, on such a day." These sociable reunions are heavy to a degree which can hardly be conceived, and which can be compared to nothing that one has ever before seen. In the morning the guests assemble to breakfast; at two o'clock they return to a well-served dinner; after dinner they drive home to have a sleep, and in the evening meet again at eight for tea, dancing, and supper, and finally break up at two in the morning. During the dance, lemonade and dried and preserved fruits are handed round. The ladies are very well dressed, and have most beautiful jewellery; the Oural mountains being so near, it is easy to get precious stones: they dance well and with great zest, their music being in general a violoncello, two violins, and a clarionet or flute. The men who do not dance, play whist or boston with inexhaustible patience. The hospitality of the Russians was extended to us political criminals in the kindest way. My comrades and I were invited by all the officials to their festivities, although I had restricted myself to a visit at the house of the inspector of police. My

wife never left home, as she was constantly occupied with the children, but in spite of that they never, to the last day of our residence at Kurgan, gave up inviting us on every festive occasion. Besides their name-days, the officials of Kurgan kept annually a common festival on the last Sunday of the Carnival week. On this occasion an enormous sledge appeared made of six ordinary peasants' sledges; at the four corners supports were placed, made fast at the top with laths laid crosswise; in the middle of the cross was a horizontal wheel, on which a grimacing harlequin played antics and made faces, while a flag floated over the whole. The officials and musicians sat on benches upon the platform: six horses drew this equipage, with an outrider preceding them. They drove in procession through the streets, from one acquaintance to another; at every door the hostess received them with pancakes and wine, in every house they embraced and kissed each other, while, as a preparation for the great fast, they reciprocally asked pardon for any injuries. Innumerable sledges, with one, two, or three horses, followed this giant sledge, with the accompaniment of songs and ringing of bells, till the evening was far advanced. The Siberians have the most intense delight in sledge-driving: races are going on incessantly on the Tobol the whole winter through. At the consecration of the river in spring and on Twelfth-day, there is a large gathering of horsemen; in the spring they swim the horses in, the consecrated

water, while in January they only drink and besprinkle themselves with it; and then begin the races. The belief in the blessing of the water is so strong, that frequently, when it was concluded, numbers of men would undress and dip several times in the hole which was hewn out of the ice, and this in 25 degrees of frost! while at the spring blessing, three weeks after Easter, when it was still bitterly cold, the bath extended to every one. These excellent Siberian horses never, as a rule, go into a stable, but stand out summer and winter under a wooden roof.

On the 4th December we left our hired lodgings and moved into our own house, which I had bought for 800 roubles of the district judge, who had been promoted to a higher office at Tobolsk. Our neighbours sent bread and salt to the house, together with their good wishes. It was warm and roomy, had a garden of two acres, containing an acacia avenue and many shady birches. Here we lived peacefully and happily; to make our happiness complete we needed only the presence of our eldest boy, who, in obedience to the law, had remained under his aunt's care in Europe. Our society, which had been hitherto limited to our companions in misfortune, M. A. Nasimow and J. F. Voigt, was now extended in an unexpected and very pleasant way.

In the spring of 1832 the forced labour of our comrades, left behind at Petrowski, was shortened in honour of the birth of the Grand Duke Michael Nikolajewitch.

The fourth category of criminals, who were to have remained in prison two years longer, came over therefore to our settlement at once. Lohrer and Naryschkin were sent to Kurgan, and arrived in March, 1833; they materially improved our society. Every Monday I spent some delightful hours with Naryschkin, and his lovely and graceful wife, who had been brought up in affluence, and suffered much from her exile and the poor way of living to which she had to submit.

Our most important day in the week was Thursday—post-day. On Friday we despatched our letters; they went through the hands of our inspector of police to the office of the Civil Governor of West Siberia, thence to the third division of the Emperor's chancellerie, where, after inspection, they were sent to their addresses. On Friday we regularly communicated to each other the news from the civilized world; though we had not so many foreign papers and periodicals as at Tschita, yet we still had those of most importance. As we had no regular employment (service with any private person or in any factory being prohibited) we had much spare time, which we each tried to turn to account as best we could. There are few doctors in Siberia (in fact, only one to every district of 40,000 people, dispersed over 500 wersts of country); we, therefore, set to work to become our own doctors and sick nurses, and to improve ourselves by reading medical books.

Our comrade, B. N. Licharew, who had remained

for some months in Tobolsk, joined us afterwards at Kurgan. Shortly after his arrival he received the painful news that his beautiful wife, whom he was daily expecting, had availed herself of the right given by the law, and had married another husband at Odessa. His whole life was embittered; he was continually seeking distraction, and could find none. Six years after the bullet of a Circassian in the Caucasus ended his misery. In order to be able to teach my children, I occupied myself in improving my mind; I translated into Russian the *Hours of Devotion*, the *History of the Germans*, and the *History of the Italian Republics*, by Sismondi, &c. &c.

Besides the conspirators of December there lived in Kurgan some Polish exiles, who had taken part in the rising of 1830—Waszinsky, Rajewsky, and Prince Woronetzky. Two years later Kletschkowsky came with his wife; also Sawizky and Tschenimsky, the latter merely for having harboured an emissary for one hour. Woronetzky was an old man of eighty years, whose face was covered with sabre-cuts; but so extraordinary hale and hearty that his scarred cheeks had a youthful rosy colour, and his daily supper consisted of ten hard-boiled eggs. I frequently heard Polish airs whistled and sung in the streets; in particular the national song, "Poland is not yet lost." On the 3rd May every year the Poles all assembled to celebrate Kosciusko's memory. At the same time there appeared also numbers of soldiers and peasants who had been

sent here for taking part in the revolt of the military colonies of Staraja-Russia. Soldiers and peasants had not been able to stand the dreadful situation in which they were placed by the unfortunate system of military colonies of Araktschejew. They rose like one man, and then, as slaves always do, turned against their superiors, whom they stabbed and impaled. To this day the relation of the suffering and after-excesses of these military colonists makes me shudder.

Our comrade, A. F. von Bruggen, was settled in the town of Pelym, rather to the north of us, but still in the same government. He had lived a year with us at Tschita, from whence he was transferred to the settlement. We had not met for six years, when, to the joy of all, he was sent to Kurgan. Bruggen had served in the Ismailow Guards, and had then left. In 1825 he wanted to travel abroad, and was already provided with a passport, when he was detained for the whole winter by the illness of his wife; during that time he was arrested and condemned. He had not taken part in that conspiracy itself, but, like a large portion of my fellow-sufferers, had been punished for "his way of thinking" and his "expressions." His wife could not follow him on account of the tender age of her children. I have preserved some very interesting letters of his, written from Pelym; in one of them he describes the life which the well-known Münnich had led during the twenty-one years he spent in that town (during the

whole reign of Elizabeth). He had received the details of the life of this celebrated general and statesman from the children of eye-witnesses,—even at this day they are not without interest. Münnich lived in the very house which he had had made, on a plan of his own, for his enemy Biron, when he overthrew the latter, and sent him into exile. Biron was afterwards sent to Jaroslaw, and Münnich came in his place. After the dethronement of the Regent Anna, whose honours and favours were declared forfeited, he was sent as an exile to Pelym, where he was never allowed to leave the house, and might only take exercise by walking on the roof. He occupied himself in drawing plans of battles and sketches of fortresses, and also in completing a pamphlet upon the reorganization of the management of Siberia (which was afterwards submitted to the Empress), and in reading the newspapers; in the evening he played boston with the officer on guard or with his *valet-de-chambre*. He never missed the moment when the cattle returned from the meadows. He then went up on to the roof, and gazed with delight at the herds returning to the town, listening to the sound of the large and small bells round their throats. When he was recalled, at the beginning of Peter III.'s reign, and restored to all his former honours, he ordered the postilion not to begin his homeward journey till he had driven three times round the town, which he had lived in twenty years and yet had never seen. His strength

of body was as extraordinary as his strength of mind. After his return from Siberia he lived for four years, partly in St. Petersburg and partly on his property in Courland.

Towards the end of the year 1834 some informer made an accusation against the Poles, who were said to have devised a new conspiracy in Siberia, under the guidance of Pulawsky. In consequence, a General from the suite of the Emperor of Russia, Puschkin, fortunately an upright and honourable man, was sent to Siberia to inquire into the matter. Some of my comrades were also accused, but the whole affair was explained, and all were set free. Count Moschinsky suffered the most from the results of this unjust accusation. The Emperor had already agreed to pardon him, to restore to him his property and title of Count, when this accusation was suddenly made against him: he was thrown into prison for two years, and was banished for a still longer time. This catastrophe was the ruin of his earthly happiness, as in that time his wife married an officer of Hussars. The General Mussin-Puschkin, who had received orders to make every inquiry as to the conduct of the State criminals of 1825, as well as to receive their complaints and requests, made his way to Kurgan. He invited us to come to his quarters, where he executed his commission of inquiring into our grievances and demands, with visible emotion. I handed him a written request to be allowed to buy a bit of land,

and occupy myself with agriculture. After some months we each received permission to have fifteen acres of arable land in the vicinity of the town. A Government surveyor then came to Kurgan and arranged the division. My field abutted upon Nasimow's bit of land, as well as Lohrer's and Voigt's. Naryschkin's and Licharew's plots were further from the town, and contained both pasture and meadow-land, which was very fortunate, as Naryschkin had ordered some handsome horses and some valuable brood-mares from Moscow, as the foundation of a stud. My comrades left me the bits of ground which touched my own to do as I liked with. I began my work on the land in the spring of 1835; sixty acres gave me a large field for activity. On the town side my plot was bounded by the shore of the little Boschinakow Lake. I manured the sandy and unfruitful shores of the lake with ashes, which were to be procured gratis in any quantity from a large soap-boiling-house hard by, and in two years the land was fruitful. The remaining bits of land had been profitable from the first,—the soil, like that of the Ukraine, was a strong mould; over the greater part of the Kurgan district there was not a stone to be found, which, of course, was very favourable to agriculture. Such a soil, which is like that of South Russia, will not bear dressing. For agricultural implements I employed the two-horse Siberian plough, similar to the Belgian, which is well adapted to the soil. After I had

introduced the use of extirpators, rollers, and iron harrows, I turned my three-field husbandry into a four-field alternate husbandry. Some of my experiments answered well. The Himalayan barley and potatoes were the only crops that would not thrive. I also began a little stud. With the help of one labourer, and in summer two, the work could be easily got through. The harvest and threshing was done either by extra hired labourers, or else by an "invitation to a feast." The population being so thin, it was difficult to get any work done for money; the only chance was to offer a feast in addition to their wages, to suit the tastes of the pleasure-loving Siberians. The required number of men, women, and maidens soon assembled, bringing each their holiday clothes and implements as well. From early morning till late evening they worked diligently; while my wife in the meantime was having pies baked, and cabbage-soup and porridge made, and prepared the table in the middle of the court. Work stopped at seven in the evening, and the people assembled to the sound of a fiddle and two flutes, in order to wash and dress; they then saluted the lady of the house, sat down to table, and ate with an appetite insured by fourteen hours' work. After the meal was over, dancing began, which lasted almost without interruption till sunrise. It was quite incomprehensible to me where they could find strength for it, for even while the musicians were resting there was no cessation.

The men and women then took it in turn to sing; beer and brandy were handed about freely; the girls refreshed themselves with gingerbread and nuts.

The price of corn was too low to think of any great return from agriculture, but cattle-breeding, which is inseparable from farming, was tolerably profitable. I cultivated pease on a large scale, as they are much in requisition during the fast, and pea-straw is also very good fodder for horses and cattle. My herds increased rapidly, and with them my income, while my interest in farming had been in addition the means of restoring me to health. We had sent back to their homes the man-servant and maid, who had followed my wife, as soon as we reached Kurgan. We did not wish to keep them away from their native land, and could then see no limits to our own exile. We hired servants, who served us faithfully and diligently, though, of course, they were criminals sent from Europe. My coachman, a very worthy man, was branded. The wages were not high: a man-servant received one and one-and-a-half silver roubles, a maid-servant eighty silver kopeks a month; these small sums were quite sufficient for them to dress well.

I was working one day in the garden, the children were helping me to water the flowers, when the coachman came to me in haste with the intelligence that a General was waiting at my house for me. It was Lieutenant-General Petersen, chief of the 23rd Infantry

Division of the Oursk Military District. He was inspecting the troops dispersed among the district towns, and came to Kurgan in the course of his rounds. He had known my father personally, and wished to see me. The General was about to resign, feeling himself quite incapable of restraining the injustice of the sub-officials, and he could no longer take any pleasure in his work. He enjoyed the full confidence of the higher authorities; had received a present of 7,000 silver roubles from the Emperor on starting for Siberia, but in spite of all these marks of favour he was too conscientious to retain office. In the course of only one year, ten thousand papers had been sent to him, among which were many complaints and pleas filling hundreds of sheets; while he had not at the time one single official under him whom he could depend upon as incorruptible. Countless means were tried to bribe him, and when their direct attempts were fruitless the petitioners resorted to cunning. On the day of a public audience, when the General had adjusted the requests and complaints brought before him, the servant announced that there was in the ante-room a sealed box, sewn up in wax cloth, and addressed to the General. There was found in it a dressing-gown of gold brocade, and furs worth many thousand roubles. Orderly, sentries, every one was asked who had brought the box. No one could give any information. Inquiries were instituted by the police, but in vain, and finally the things were sold for

the benefit of the poor. When the people were convinced that it was useless to try and bribe the General, they turned to his wife. Once when she was driving through the town in her sledge, she observed a woman standing at a corner with costly furs of sable and black fox for sale, which she offered to her; the woman contrived to bring them to the General's house and then disappear. These were also publicly sold for the benefit of the poor.

I pass over further details of our quiet circumscribed life. The increase of my family, by the birth of a daughter and a fourth son, gave us very little spare time; the education and care of the children devolved entirely upon us. The only interruptions in our monotonous lives were the yearly visits of the Governor-General, the chief of the district gendarmes, or of one of the provincial Lutheran preachers. According to their instructions the former were obliged to inquire if we had any injustice to complain of; but, fortunately, we had no reason to trouble them, as we, with the other State criminals living in the place, were on the best terms with the local officers, who always treated us with great humanity.

I must add that we also had now and then the pleasure of receiving guests from the outer world. Once we had the widow of the late chief of the district, Lieutenant-General de St. Laurent; another time the astronomer Feodorow, who was engaged in a topo-

graphical survey: his visit gave me especial pleasure, as he had studied many years in Dorpat, spoke German very well, and knew the locality of my distant Baltic home.

This happy, monotonous life, hitherto free from any care, except anxiety for my children's future, was now broken by an accident which befell me at this time. On the 22nd December, 1836, my wife's birthday, it was so bitterly cold, that I had been obliged to go alone to church; after I had prayed and distributed some alms among the poor, I bought some dozens of little wax-tapers to decorate the Christmas-tree which was to be lighted at our house on Christmas-day itself, the fast among the Russians lasting until the morning of the 25th December.

On the way home I slipped upon the planks laid down in the court, which were covered with ice; I fell and could not rise from pain. The window of my wife's bedroom was so placed that I feared she would see my accident and be alarmed: I therefore collected all my strength to try to get up. But I had hardly put my right foot to the ground, when the leg gave way, as it had no hold in the hip, and I fell a second time and lost my senses. The servants carried me in, and laid me on the sofa; when I came to myself I could not move the right leg; the pain was so violent that I screamed aloud at every movement while my clothes were being taken off. The district doctor was sent for, but he was absent on duty:

when he came at last, he said he was no surgeon and could not say what the injury was. The hip was much swollen and inflamed: first they put on a quantity of leeches, and then warm poultices of herbs and linseed, but all in vain—the pain would not give me a moment's rest. The anxiety of my poor wife and children may be conceived: my comrades kindly took it in turn to watch by my bedside, and gave us every help in their power. They bled me on Christmas-day for the first time; and then, in order that I might be strengthened by a little sleep, they gave me opium: this, however, brought on a sort of stupor, from which I was not aroused till my strength had considerably decreased. Friendly neighbours came to and fro, advising, suggesting, offering all sorts of herb decoctions; some asserted that the bone of the leg was broken, others that the bone was drying up already. No one had the slightest knowledge of either anatomy or surgery.

I lay in bed till April; my whole nervous system was shattered: I could just contrive, by holding up the injured limb in my hands, to lift both feet out of bed; but when I tried to stand on the sound foot, supported by a servant on each side, the other leg seemed to hang as if by a thread, and was quite helpless in the socket. By degrees I managed to get about on two crutches, but the leg was drawn up and did not reach the ground by four inches. Air and movement were, however, necessary; every day I went out in a droschky with boards

laid across, and hopped about in the court on crutches; which, however, caused me much pain in the shoulders, from the position I had to be in constantly; the sedentary life which I had to lead was also, I felt, injurious to me in many ways.

My bodily sufferings increased daily, and I was terribly depressed also with the thought of my poor children who might soon be fatherless—what would become of them? they were by law banished to Siberia, and all their rights were forfeited: their future therefore seemed hopeless. Just at this time, however, early in the year 1837, came the news that the Grand Duke Alexander Nikolajewitch (now Emperor) was going to make a journey to Siberia, and would, in the course of it, come to Kurgan. Early in April horses were brought into the town, and that everything might be in readiness, they were carefully trained by jockeys not to be alarmed at the torches and lanterns which were to be carried by the escort as they galloped alongside of the carriages, in the event of the Cesarewitch arriving at night. These preparations caused great delight to all the spectators, excepting the mothers of the jockeys and torch-bearers, who ran every risk of being thrown from their unmanageable horses and breaking their necks. For weeks these arrangements formed the chief topic of conversation at Kurgan. The question was mooted among my comrades, "Should we take this opportunity of asking for leave to return home?" But what hope

could the future hold out to men who were condemned to civil death? What comfort could it be to our relations, when they saw us pining away without place, without civil rights, without occupation, always under the surveillance of the police? Besides, we were obliged to own to ourselves, that even if some of us were freed from exile by the intercession of the heir to the throne, it would be but a small portion of our comrades who would enjoy the privilege, and the rest would be dispersed over Siberia and would be in far worse case. When the news came that the Cesarewitch was already at Tobolsk, that he would but just touch the western frontier of Siberia, would then pass Jalutorowsk and Kurgan on his way to Orenburg, and would arrive in our town on the 6th June, my anxiety was almost unbearable. For myself I had nothing to ask, but I had to take thought for my faithful wife and children; my increasing illness made me think I should not long be able to protect and advise them. Under these circumstances it was not difficult for me to decide what to do. Three days before the arrival of the Cesarewitch, I went to my comrades and told them my resolution of asking an audience of him, in order to entrust to him the future care of my family when I should be no more. Had I neglected such an opportunity of asking for protection for my little ones, I should never have forgiven myself.

In the afternoon of the 5th June, the people, in

festive attire, poured out to meet the heir to the throne, who was expected to arrive that night. A crowd of peasants from the surrounding villages helped to swell the numbers, and lined both sides of the road along which he was to pass for some distance. The sun went down, but the summer nights in the north are never dark; in spite of that, however, a cunning speculator, a little chandler, who had a quantity of candles in store, persuaded the people that the Cesarewitch must be met with lighted candles if he should arrive by night. His obedient hearers sat patiently therefore by the roadside with burning candles in their hands; and at last, about midnight, when they were all burnt out, a Feldjäger came galloping up, followed shortly after by our noble guest and his suite. The Cesarewitch took up his abode at the house of the district judge: the travellers betook themselves to rest immediately after their arrival, while the people posted themselves in the street in front of their future ruler's dwelling, ready for his awakening, and for the chance of getting a sight of him.

About four in the morning I drove to the house where the Cesarewitch was lodging, made the droschky stop in the midst of the dense crowd, and hopped on my crutches up to the door. The inspector of police came up from a little distance to meet me, and begged me not to put him to the pain of refusing me admittance, as the Adjutant of the Governor-General had given strict orders that none of the State criminals were

to be admitted. I replied that I hardly thought such an order could be authentic, for if such a measure had been considered positively necessary, the authorities would have had information of it before now, and we should have either been locked up or forbidden to leave our houses on this day. I was, however, obliged to yield to the good inspector's anxious request, and sought the dwelling of the staff-officer of the gendarmes who accompanied the Cesarewitch; he was a Lieut.-Col. Hoffman; I met him in the street, and entreated him to obtain for me the opportunity of an audience. This request he was obliged to refuse, but he expressed himself ready to deliver a petition, if I had drawn one up. When he heard that I had not got any ready, he begged me to wait a moment, and he would inquire if there was any possibility of my request being granted. While I was awaiting Colonel Hoffman's return, a stately man, wrapped in a military cloak, came straight up to me and said, "You must be Baron R——! My friend Krutow made me solemnly promise, if I came to Kurgan, to see you and do what I could to aid you; I beg you will come in and see me." The speaker was J. B. Jenochin, the body-physician of the Cesarewitch. In a few minutes two skilful army surgeons had undressed me and laid me on the divan; when Jenochin had examined my injured leg, he at once pronounced that it was "a partial dislocation of the limb forwards," which was the cause of such pain. The ignorance of

the Kurgan district doctor had let a hurt, in itself at first unimportant, grow into a real evil, of which the cure must necessarily be very tedious. As it was six months since I had received the injury, I could not expect an instantaneous cure. While I was dressing, Hoffman entered and took me to the Cesarewitch's dwelling, where I was received by the General-Adjutant Kawelin. When I had imparted my wish to him, he told me it was quite impossible to accede to it, his instructions expressly forbade anything of the kind; but that I might give my petition to him (Kawelin), and he would deliver it to his Imperial Highness. When I replied that I had not drawn up any petition, the General said, "What, then, is your request?" "For myself, I desire nothing, for in my helpless and sick condition no favours can do me good, and I would only pray the Cesarewitch that in case of my death my wife and children should be cared for." General Kawelin advised me to prepare a petition at once, and to give it him half-an-hour before mass, as the journey would be continued immediately the service was over. In the hall he gave orders to the priest who was present to begin mass at six o'clock, and to finish it quickly, in order that the august traveller might reach Slatoust the same night; it was 200 wersts (125 English miles) off. On the steps, I met the Flügel Adjutant, S. A. Jurgewitch, who begged me to give Frau von Naryschkin some messages from her brothers, Counts Gregory and

Alexis Konownitzin. As I was leaving I caught sight of the Cesarewitch standing at the window; the expression of his face seemed to say he would be my protector.

A carriage was standing before our door; to my inquiries who had come to see me, the coachman replied, "A General." All dignitaries, whether professors, doctors, or judges, are called Generals by the Russians. To my inexpressible delight I found the noble and immortal Wassily Andrejewitch Shukowsky, the well-known poet, and tutor of the Cesarewitch. He cheered up my wife, played with and caressed the children, who, hardly roused from sleep, only replied to his kindness with frightened tears. When I told him of my ineffectual attempts to speak to the heir to the throne, and said that General Kawelin had advised me to prepare a petition, he said, "You have no time now, we are just starting; be at rest though, I will represent everything to his Imperial Highness. For thirteen years I have been with him daily, and have long been convinced that his heart is in the right place, and where he can do a good deed, he does it *de bon cœur*." I could not enjoy the conversation of the charming poet for long; he was surprised that we in Siberia should already have read his newest work, "Undine;" he mentioned the poems of our own Odojewsky in terms of high praise, and much regretted that he had not been able to speak to my comrade Jackuschkin at Jalutorowsk.

We also exchanged a few words about the future heir to the Russian throne: all that Shukowsky told me of the disposition of the Grand Duke seemed to offer a pledge for the future welfare of Russia. The Cesarewitch was much struck with the aspect of the tract of land through which he had passed; instead of ruinous huts, universal poverty and misery, he found everywhere pretty villages, and settled prosperity and content. He himself said he had been as well received in Tjumen and Tobolsk, by this population of exiles, as he could have been in Rybinsk and Jaroslaw.

While Shukowsky was still with me, the bells began to ring; the Cesarewitch had given orders to the staff-officer of gendarmes that "these gentlemen" (under this name he meant us State criminals) "should come to church; I can only see them there." The instructions sent from St. Petersburg had not provided for such a case. The inspector of police at once sent messengers to our house to give notice that we were to assemble at the church directly. The Cesarewitch with his whole suite stood before the high altar; to the right by the side wall stood my comrades; to the left Madame Naryschkin; the officials and some of the people remained in the background near the side altar; the greater part of the population meantime crowded round the equipages outside the church. During the service the eyes of the Cesarewitch often turned to my unfortunate companions, and tears were glistening in

them. I could not reach the church in time; and as I was leaving the house with my children, a hurrah, which rent the air, announced the departure of the Grand Duke, the only guest whose appearance in this place of exile could excite either hope or joy. The people exulted in having seen their future sovereign, while a few trembling old women crossed themselves, saying aloud, "God be thanked that we are still alive."

When Colonel Nasimow, who accompanied him, asked permission to visit one of my comrades, the Grand Duke replied, "I rejoice that you should have the opportunity of visiting a relation in adversity." On his return journey the Cesarewitch visited Saratow. General Arnoldi then presented to him the artillery officers who were there; when my youngest brother's name was called, the Grand Duke asked him if he had a brother in Siberia? on his replying that he had an own brother there, the Cesarewitch in the presence of all the bystanders said, "I am happy to tell you that I have seen him, and although he is still on crutches, his health may be quite restored, and I have already asked the Emperor to mitigate his fate."

The day of the departure of the Cesarewitch from Kurgan, the 6th June, was Whitsunday, and the Church festival of our town as well. The people celebrated this high day in the woods, about four wersts from the town, near the great hill from whence it derives its name. Here, in a little copse on the banks of the Tobol, the

happy folk wandered about drinking tea, beer, and brandy, cracking nuts, singing and dancing to the sound of an accordion. Towards evening I drove out with my children; townspeople and countrypeople pressed round me with questions, showing kindly sympathy. "Have you seen the Cesarewitch? What did he say? Has he promised you liberty? God grant you freedom and consolation." On the 8th August, we learnt that the Grand Duke, on reaching the Slatou factory, which was his next night's lodging, had despatched a courier to the Emperor, asking for our liberty and permission to return to our homes. The Emperor Nicholas, on receipt of the letter, replied that for "these gentlemen" the way to Russia could only be through the Caucasus, and then gave orders that we should be enrolled as common soldiers in the Caucasian corps.

We received this intelligence through our Governor-General, and at the same time through the captain of the Finland Regiment of Guards, Count Gregoire Konownitzin, who had come to Kurgan, having obtained permission to accompany his sister, Madame Naryschkin, on her journey to her mother. From this act of liberation, which included all the political criminals living at Kurgan, A. F. von der Bruggen was alone excluded, and for no apparent reason: for, as before mentioned, he had never belonged to the conspirators. Nearly a year after our departure he was made Chancellor of the Kurgan district court, and ten years after

was promoted to a first-class rank. As the Imperial order had to be carried out at once, my companions in a few days started on their journey through Tobolsk, Kazan, and Roston to their respective destinations. The Governor-General, D. J. Gortschakow, gave me permission, on account of my illness and my family, to go straight through by Orenburg and Saratow, and allowed me a few days to make my preparations. On the 6th December we set out for Europe in the same carriage which had brought my wife from Moscow; our thoughts gratefully reverted to the jolly German who had built such a solid carriage, and whose words had come true when he assured my wife that she would be able to come back to Moscow in it. In leaving this land of exile, I could not but think of the comrades I left behind; my blessing rested on them and on this country, which must, in time, cease to be looked upon merely as an object of terror and home of sorrow, for it gives every promise of future prosperity; and the foresight of my fellow-sufferers and the homeless Poles will, in all probability, have been the means of laying the foundation of a happier future for Siberia. There are three strong pledges for the well-being of this country in time to come. There are no privileged classes, very few officials, and the people are capable of governing themselves.

CHAPTER X.

FROM SIBERIA TO GRUSIA.*

On leaving Kurgan an escort, in the person of the police inspector Timotei Timaschew, was attached to my party: he was a retired lieutenant who had risen from the ranks; he had fought at Austerlitz, had been made prisoner in Friedland and carried off to France, from whence he went as a volunteer to Spain, besieged Saragossa with the French, and defended himself bravely with his bayonet against Palafox's sword. In these wanderings he had completely lost his memory, and his recollection now only extended to where the most sparkling beer, the strongest brandy, the best ham, and the sweetest grapes were to be obtained. A wag, like every old Russian soldier, he chattered and argued on every possible occasion. If my little daughter of a few

Translator's note.—Grusia is the Russian name for the province south of the Caucasus, inhabited by the Imeritians, Mingrelians, &c., of which Tiflis is the principal town, and which is in general called Georgia.

months old began to cry, and he heard it from the coach-box, he would beg permission to soothe the little one with a Spanish ditty; and then, instead of a Bolero, he would howl a Tyrolean song. He held special instructions from the Governor-General Prince Gortschakow permitting me, in case of illness, to stop on the road. I found it impossible to be comfortable in the calèche with my crutches, and preferred sitting on a great leather cushion in an open low tarantass. Our journey was carried on at the usual speed with post-horses; it was out of the question to hope for good lodgings for the night, as the travellers came up so quickly in succession. My wife had indeed a heavy charge, as she had to take care of me, the three boys as well, and in addition to nurse the baby. The autumn was so far advanced that the weather was in general very bad; my wife fell ill: the servants, who had never travelled before, were quite helpless; in short, the journey was wearisome and fatiguing to the highest degree.

Not far from Tschiliabrinsk we passed the boundary line of Siberia in order to arrive in Europe in the government of Orenburg. The first impression was anything but favourable; the continuous rain had prevented the reapers gathering in the corn, and in almost every field the rye lay rotting on the ground, poisoning the air with the smell. We had already driven many stages down the Oural mountains without seeing a

streak of light on the horizon, far less the ridge of a hill; we went on at a trot till at last we reached Slatoust, well known for its manufacture of arms, and now we were at the foot of the mountain. Here we stayed with the tired horses till fresh ones were brought to us from the station-house: these took us slowly down-hill through a long well-built village and stopped at a comfortable inn. The town stands on the rising ground, and is only occupied by manufacturers and workmen; the echo of the iron hammers is heard incessantly day and night. Though rich in metals, the chain of the Ourals is not interesting in any way; the mountains are neither imposing in size nor remarkable for their vegetation. The country people along the main road differ but little from the Siberians, and are chiefly settled criminals; their villages looked poorer and more shabby than those we had left behind. In the government of Orenburg we saw, for the first time for many years, large estates; these are not to be found anywhere throughout Siberia. The government town of Ufa is well built and with regularity, and is beautifully situated at the confluence of two streams. After passing two towns of this province (Bugulmá and Bugarusslan) we entered the Simbirsk government, to which the rich territory of the Volga belongs. This river, which supplies the greatest part of Russia with its provisions, has long borne the name among the people of "the nursing mother of Russia." The town of Samara, where we next touched,

afforded a striking contrast to anything in Asiatic Russia; innumerable masts were to be seen: the shores of the river were covered with large and small craft; like most of the towns on the Volga, Samara carries on an extensive trade in corn. We crossed the Volga on a warm bright night; the heavy rains had caused the stream to overflow its banks; its windings are numerous, which adds greatly to the beauty of the river. The population on the banks are industrious and well-to-do, the soil is very fertile, and every town and church village has its little port; in consequence the whole country has a very lively and busy appearance at the time of navigation.

We touched at the towns of Sysran, Ecwalynsk, Wolsk, and Saratow on the Volga. There are in the neighbourhood of Wolsk—and, indeed, through the whole government of Saratow—considerable numbers of sectarians of all kinds (besides the German colonists); they have a very indistinct idea of the differences between their creed and that of the Greek Orthodox Church, although on principle they keep themselves quite apart from the adherents of the latter.

A great pleasure awaited me at Saratow. After a twelve years' separation I again saw my youngest brother. I heard in the inn that he was quartered with his regiment of artillery in the village, and that he was lately married. I sent at once to let him know that a relation from Revel had arrived, and wished to see him. In half-an-hour I was in the arms of a man in whom I

should hardly have recognized the brother I had left a boy in the Cadet School. Our meeting could be but a hurried one; the advanced season made me hasten on as fast as I could. I was, however, detained a whole day in Saratow by my escort the police officer, who had celebrated our family meeting by such a carouse and dinner in my new sister-in-law's house that he was taken ill, and we could not continue our journey till the third day.

The direct road from Saratow to Caucasia lies through Zaryzin and Kannjschin to Astrakhan. We wanted to go through Charkow, to see my wife's brother; but it was a great détour, and in order to make my escort agree to it, I persuaded him to go by Woronesch to see the relics and grave of the newest of all Russian saints, St. Mitrophan. The old man, a staunch Orthodox Christian, was well pleased with the proposal and readily gave in; my brother accompanied us on horseback for some wersts.

After leaving the Saratow government we passed through the towns of Balaschow and Nowochopersk to Woronesch. Two of the principal streets of this town are built of stone, a very rare exception in this stoneless land. The inn on the market-place offered us every possible comfort; the whole town gave the impression of increasing prosperity. The inhabitants told me that Woronesch was greatly enlarged and improved within the last few years, and especially since the relics of

St. Mitrophan had attracted so many pilgrims to his shrine. The next day, according to my promise, we went to hear mass at the coffin of the new saint. The church dedicated to him is adorned with a richly gilt altar, blue and white marble columns, gilt cornice and capitals; on the right, close to a window, stands the coffin, draped with a crimson velvet covering, trimmed with gold fringe and tassels. On the wall at the foot hangs a large picture of the Virgin, adorned with precious stones and pearls. After mass was concluded, a priest-monk came with a key, raised up the velvet covering, and opened to our view a golden coffin, in which we saw the "uncorrupted" body of the saint, surrounded on all sides by miraculous caps, gloves, jackets, little bottles, &c. The pilgrims approached and received each one some of these little trifles in return for a freewill offering of money. My escort, Timaschew, had a whole bag of these wonder-working articles. The priests naturally made a very good thing of it, as the gifts of money were freely poured in.

We continued our journey the next day; the horses we found at all the stations of the government of Woronesch were excellent. The coachman drove steadily and quickly, trotting at the rate of seventeen wersts an hour, and I observed to him that his horses were worthy of drawing the Emperor's carriage. "Yes, indeed, and they will have that honour," replied the coachman; "we expect him from Tiflis every day, and

the horses have been standing idle for a week already, so we were obliged to give them exercise to-day." This alarmed me not a little; my journey to Woronesch being contrary to the escort's instructions. "Now, Timaschew," I asked him, "if we meet the Emperor, and he inquires why we went by Woronesch, what shall you answer?" "I shall say we wished to pray at the grave of the holy Mitrophan; no one could object to that." After passing the next station we met the Grande Duchesse Helene Paulowna returning from the grand review. Sixteen horses were steaming in front of her enormous carriage, which was sticking in the mud up to the axles. At sunset we reached Charkow; there now remained but 130 wersts to Kamenka, the estate of my brother-in-law. We had intended to travel the whole night through, but the postmaster stopped us, refusing to give my wife any horses because her passport was not made out for this route. When he saw, however, that I quietly made up my mind to stay till he thought better of it, he ordered them to put to. He was the only postmaster who knew anything of the geography of Russia, and observed to me that the direct way from Siberia to the Caucasus did not lie through Woronesch and Charkow.

The visit to my brother-in-law could be but a flying one; a few days later we reached the banks of the Don, but we lost no time there, for the temporary bridges which had been put up for the Emperor were still standing,

as he had passed through the day before on his way from Tiflis. We spent our first night in the land of the Don Kossacks, at the priest's house, in a little village; hardly four-and-twenty hours before the Emperor and Count Orlow had slept in the same house. The priest could not rejoice enough over the delights of this august visit; he described to us how he regaled the noble guest with tea, and only lamented that his conversation had been so short owing to the violent toothache from which the Emperor was suffering.

The communication between Katerinograd, where we stopped some days, and Wladikaukas, distant 105 wersts, was very imperfect. The post, the travellers, as also the provision and army-munition transports, were only despatched twice a week, and then always with an armed escort, on account of the military road being unsafe: these rare opportunities of safe travelling were always called "occasions." Our journey began in the following manner:—Early in the morning a train of provision waggons, drawn by oxen, was dragged through the town and halted on a plain; this was followed by our equipages, the carriage of an apothecary, a postilion with letter-bags, a loaded cannon with a burning match, a detachment of infantry, ten Cossacks galloping up last of all and dividing on each side of the transport. The infantry sent on a vanguard, and a rear-guard followed; the trumpeters gave the signal for departure, and step by step the long

train of carriages and men moved on. After half an hour the mist which had previously hidden the landscape, began to disperse, and the wonderful view of the Caucasian mountains burst upon our eyes. From the Caspian to the Black Sea, mountains were piled up against the horizon like masses of white cloud, and, illumined by the sun, they glistened like polished crystal, the snowy mountain tops alternating with silvery glaciers, and their colour changing to brilliant purple and gold; the whole wall of mountain was only broken by the giant peaks of the Elbrus and the Kasbek. It was a sight whose grandeur is beyond description. In clear weather the mountains can be seen from Georgjewsk, not far from Stawropol. The extent of view was of course doubly surprising to us who had seen nothing during our stay at Katerinograd, owing to the dense fogs that had prevailed.

Our unwieldy procession moved on, more like a warriors' host than a caravan of travellers, over the plain called the Kabarda, which consists of meadows alternating with arable land; it is exposed to the depredations and rapacity of the daring horsemen who emerge from the clefts in the neighbouring mountains in search of booty and the chance of robbing travellers. We advanced so slowly that I could keep up with the train for some wersts on my crutches, and could hear the soldiers' conversation. At every post which marked the wersts there was a warning of what we might expect: here

the Circassians had fallen upon the post; here they had plundered a traveller; there wounded an officer or killed a soldier, in every case stealing the horses. I was told that our draught oxen went twice a week from one fort to the other, protected by the battalion of the line, which here forms the guard in the forts, at the expense of the Crown. Half-way to the station we made a halt. Towards five in the evening we approached the fortress of Prischibrinsk, in which we were to sleep. The name fortress was, by the way, only a euphemism as regards the fort which we saw. An earth and grass wall with four bastions, which enclosed a barrack, some huts, and a pot-house—that is what was called a *fortress* on this military road. At the entrance and exit there were palisades, and on the walls some guns, and vigilant sentries, who depend more on their own bayonets than on the wall or cannon. The garrison consisted of one or two companies of soldiers, a few officers, and a doctor. Twice a week they had to lodge travellers here for the night, and then escort them to the next fortified post.

We continued our journey the next day in the same order, along the road across the immense plain, where the vegetation is luxuriant and rich; in the afternoon we reached our night quarters at Fort Uruch. The third day we arrived at Ordon, a fortress which was considerably larger than the two others. We then went on through Dradas to Wladi Kawkas. About ten werstâ

from this town we left the escort and waggons behind and went on at a trot. To the left of the road we saw the dwellings of the so-called "peaceful Circassians," which means those who have become Russian subjects. I ordered the driver to stop, and went into one of these roadside houses where a Circassian farmer was living; his clothes, his boots, his walk, his gait, were all essentially Circassian; but his house and surroundings and all his furniture were an exact imitation, though a poor one, of a Russian farm. The distrust of the Russians for these new subjects of the Emperor was then so great, that my companion warned me against entering the house; and I was obliged to quiet him by saying that I relied upon the bravery of the hero of Saragossa. An hour later we arrived at the house of Colonel Schiokow, the commandant at Wladi Kawkas, to whom my brother-in-law had given me a letter of recommendation. On the 6th November we left Wladi Kawkas, and journeyed on along the left bank of the broad and peaceful stream of the Terek, penetrating further into the country. The road wound up and down hill the whole way, and as we neared the mountains in the evening a singular spectacle was presented to our eyes: fires without number blazed up on all sides, now slowly now quickly, as the wind caught the flames driving them down the mountain; the peasants had set fire to their fields and pastures to cleanse and improve them for the next spring. On the right was this sea of fire, on the left the foaming Terek

growing more rapid every moment; we did not reach Laus till late at night.

In order to get to the high mountains we were obliged to follow the course of the Terek. Along the left bank of the river an excellent road takes the traveller between rocks of giddy height into the interior of the country. Beneath us foamed the wild mountain torrent, while above us the rocks appeared to be so close together that only a streak of sky was to be seen in the defile of Dargell where we now found ourselves. Here and there the road was blocked by fallen rocks or stopped by the sudden turns of the river. At all these places were bridges, which took the traveller over to the left bank, from which he was brought back to the right. Each one of these bridges, backwards and forwards, was guarded by a picket of soldiers; the distance from the large towns is so great that each sentry-post has its own hospital and barracks.

After the long sojourn in Siberia the charm of being thus transported into beautiful mountain scenery of a thoroughly southern type was indescribable. In spite of the burning sun the air we breathed in the defile was cool, aromatic, and invigorating; the cleft made by the river through the mountains is no narrow that the sun can rarely send its rays through.

It was quite late in the evening when we arrived at the little place called Kasbek. On the following day we penetrated further into the mountains, this time downhill,

but always following the windings of the Terek. After passing the station of Kobi, the road became narrower and more dangerous. As an avalanche at any moment might block the whole, they were laying down a new road, which was not to follow the river. By order of the then Commandant of the Caucasian army, Baron R——, who was a distant relation of mine, we were escorted from the station of Kobi by an officer and some thirty-six men; the way so dangerous that their help was very necessary. We arrived at half-past twelve midday at Kobi; I showed my watch to the officer who received me here, and was to escort us on; he was of opinion that by continuing our journey at once, we might arrive before dark at the next station, where my wife and children would find better quarters and better food than in the wretched mud hovels at Kobi. We set off at once; the officer, a worthy old staff-captain, who had already struck up a friendship with the children, quietly rode close by the precipice alongside of our carriage, without even seeming to observe that at every moment the stones were rolled down the frightful abyss by his horse's feet—the soldiers following at the double. The road was so dangerous that all along the chasm there was a low wall of stones built up, to prevent the carriages rolling over; on this wall the captain rode. After we had proceeded slowly for some hours, darkness came on, and at the same time a snowstorm began. I looked at my watch; to my surprise the hands still marked half-

past twelve; the sudden stopping of the watch had misled us at Kobi, and now we saw the danger of having to pass the most perilous part of the road in pitch darkness.

The obscurity was profound as we descended the steep declivity of the mountain to Guttagora. The pass was so dangerous here that the soldiers not only put on a drag, but also fastened chains and cords to the axles of the hind wheels. The road went as straight as a plumb-line down to the valley, having on one side a huge wall of rock, on the other a frightful abyss. The narrow track had become so slippery from the heavy storms of rain, that at any moment the carriage might begin to slide down. The darkness and snowstorm became more and more dense, till at last the road was hardly visible to the soldiers, who were holding back the carriage, and in some places actually supporting it. With bated breath I walked close by the side of the carriage in which were my wife and children, who could hardly keep themselves from being jerked out. At last we reached the bottom, but the little station-house there was not capable of taking us all in. Our captain told off twelve soldiers, under whose escort we were to continue our journey in spite of the darkness. The way continued downhill, and the road we now had to follow was no less steep than the descent of Guttagora. Just as we reached a particularly dangerous spot, the strong chain with which the soldiers had fastened the hind

wheels of the carriage, snapped, and it was only with the greatest exertion that they could manage to fasten it together with ropes. One more anxious half-hour, and we had safely reached the valley of Kaischauer, where the head official received us, but would hardly believe us when we told him we had made our way over the pass (which is at all times renowned for its perils), with our heavy carriage and in the night.

When we woke next morning, a beautiful landscape lay before us illumined by the rays of the clear autumn sun; although it was now November, the trees, bushes, and grassy lands through which the Argwa, on whose banks we now were, meandered, were clothed in brilliant, luxuriant green; the fine well-grown trees with vines clinging round them, made a strong impression on me. There are two stations between this place and Tiflis. Our impatience now knew no bounds; for we had heard that our boy, whom I had left as a baby twelve years ago, was awaiting us in the house of our relative, General Wolkowsky. We arrived late at night; I thought it more prudent to go to an hotel kept by an Italian who had long been established at Tiflis, instead of going to my relation's house, as I had heard at Tschita that General Rajewsky had been punished with several days' arrest in the main-guard because he had invited to dinner one of my companions in misfortune, Count Zacharias Tschernitschew, formerly a cadet, who had been reduced to the rank of a common soldier; I was

anxious not to get my relation (who, as chief of the staff, had to be particularly careful) into any difficulty of that kind.

No need to describe the delight of the meeting with my fine handsome boy and seeing my wife's loving relations again. The next morning I crept through the streets of Tiflis on one crutch, to present myself, according to order, to the commander of my corps, Baron R. My brother-in-law had already informed me that I was told off to the Mingrelian Jäger Regiment, but was to remain at Tiflis for the present on account of my bad health. The Commandant received me with much cordiality, but recommended me to join the head-quarters of my regiment as soon as possible, adding that possibly he might not remain much longer in his present situation.

Most of my readers know what a thoroughly Oriental town Tiflis is; until thirty years ago, the Asiatic element predominated to a great extent. Almost all the houses are built with flat roofs. There are more Armenians and Grusians than Russians to be seen in the streets, and camels are as frequently met as horses and asses, as is the case everywhere in the East; the women are very rarely visible, and then always covered with thick veils. The bazaar and the renowned baths of Tiflis were on a completely Asiatic plan, and were served entirely by Orientals. After four days' residence in the chief town of Grusia, we continued our journey

to Biely Klutsch, where were the head-quarters of the Mingrelian Jägers: we took our eldest boy with us, after a sorrowful parting from his adopted parents; we wished him to feel at home with us and to get used to the altered circumstances in which he would have to live.

The rain, which fell incessantly during the four days we spent at Tiflis, had rendered the Circassian roads (at all times bad enough) nearly impassable; our progress was very tedious; riding, the usual mode of travelling in Grusia, was of course impossible for us, and there was no help for it but to drag our heavy carriage through endless mud. On the second day, after the horses had only gone half-a-mile from the station where we hired them, they were so knocked up that it was useless to think of going on, and we had to make up our minds to camp out for nearly twenty-four hours under the open sky. We did not reach Biely Klutsch till the evening of the third day, when we had to hire a lodging at once, so badly furnished, however—like most of the houses in the place—that we could only make it look habitable by laying down some carpets.

The Mingrelian Jäger Regiment, to which I was now attached as an invalid, consisted of six battalions, of which there were always two by turns in Biely Klutsch, while the others were sent out on expeditions against the hostile mountaineers. This regiment, which was always in the presence of the enemy, was, strange to say,

almost entirely made up of men whose political opinions were thought doubtful, and who had been sent here on that account. There were numbers of Polish youths among the soldiers who had taken part in the rising of 1831, and after its suppression, had been placed in the Caucasian corps as a punishment. I met among the officers an old fellow-soldier, Captain Dobrinsky; on suspicion of belonging to the secret society, he had been dismissed from the Guards and transported to this romantic desert, though still retaining his rank. He seemed in other respects quite happy; he had married a Grusian, and enjoyed his life here free from cares.

Here, in southern Biely Klutsch, I found the state of things much the same as in northern Tschita: there was as much Polish as Russian to be heard in the streets, and Polish national airs often re-echoed till late in the night under the windows of our quiet house. Our life here passed as quietly as at Tschita; my whole time was taken up in teaching my children, and I was obliged to work hard in order to be able to instruct them properly. The duties of housekeeping and the care of the little children kept my wife busily employed. There were more exciting events going on in the neighbourhood, though not in our immediate vicinity. We heard from Tiflis that the visit which the Emperor Nicholas had paid to the capital of the Caucasus, had given occasion to a series of radical changes in the upper government. Soon after our arrival at Biely

Klutsch, the commander of the Caucasian corps (as he had prophesied at the time of my visit) was removed from his place, and made a member of the Senate: a promotion which was something very like a degradation. Our brother-in-law, the chief of the staff, also lost his appointment, and was made chief of the brigade.

These changes were arranged with a view of making a deep impression. On the day after our arrival at Tiflis, the Emperor had held a parade of the Erivan Cavalry Regiment, had then suddenly called the Flügel Adjutant, Prince Dadian (a son-in-law of Baron R.) to the front, had stripped off his gold epaulettes, and ordered his arrest. On his way to Tiflis, the Emperor had been informed that the Prince had made use of the soldiers in his regiment for his own purposes, and had hired them out on his own account for work which was in no way connected with the service. The punishment in this case followed the accusation summarily, and indeed before any formal inquiry had been made. Another Flügel Adjutant, who was also in command of a regiment, Count Oppermann, who was accused of having hired out his soldiers as drivers, was received by the Emperor before the assembled crowd with these words, "I had hitherto thought that it would have seemed more honourable to you to wear the golden monogram with my initials on your epaulettes, than to play the market-driver in Tiflis." These occurrences naturally made the commandant of the corps, who was

a thoroughly honourable and upright man, feel his position to be an uncomfortable one, and that he could not any longer retain his office. In order to give his subordinates an example of ready and unconditional obedience, Baron R. had humbly kissed the hand which had so shamefully degraded his son-in-law.

Although the Emperor had received no further complaints during his residence at Tiflis, he loudly expressed his dissatisfaction with the system of government. A new order of things, similar to that existing throughout the rest of the kingdom, should henceforth reign in Caucasia; complete centralization, and dependence of the local heads on the Government authorities, was to be established at once.

Caucasia was divided into a number of governments, which were to be administered by numerous civil officers appointed by the Ministry of the Interior. At the head of it was the newly-elected Governor, Privy Councillor, and Senator, Baron Paul Hahn, a clever Courlander, who had formerly been Governor of Livonia and Courland, and who, in spite of his own and his officials ignorance of the state of Caucasia, had brought with him a carefully elaborated project for the reorganization of this country.

It was very interesting to me to hear the opinions of the officers of our garrison as to the former government, and also the offence with which Prince Dadian was charged. They were almost all of one mind, that, under

the peculiar circumstances, the employment of men by their officers for other than purely military service was not only pardonable, but in a certain sense justifiable. The number of Russians at that time in Caucasia who were not soldiers was so infinitesimal, that in fact outside the towns they could scarcely be said to exist at all. The children of the soil looked upon any work, which they were not obliged to do for their own wants, as a disgrace, and gave themselves up to idleness the moment they had procured the necessaries of life, which were in general very easy to obtain, and from this idleness it was almost impossible to rouse them. For the officers in the interior there was no chance of procuring the common necessaries of civilization (such as are in general made by smiths, shoemakers, tailors, &c.) except by employing soldiers to make them. The laziness and incapacity of the peasants reaches such a pitch that there are none to be found for ordinary work, even with very high wages in prospect. For instance, when once you are off the great post roads, it is impossible to find any one capable of driving. The Grusians make their journeys almost always on horseback, and have all their baggage transported by oxen, which is probably the reason that even among those who are able and willing to work there is such difficulty in finding any one able to drive. What, then, can officers do under such circumstances, especially those who are married and well off? If they do not wish to give up all the comforts of

civilized life, and live as roughly and primitively as the Grusians themselves, they must have recourse to soldiers. Those who are best off get all their furniture and such things from Tiflis, but for repairs, &c. the soldiers are indispensable. Although the officers in general are just enough to compensate their men in some measure for these extra services, it is not to be denied that abuses and instances of oppression are of very frequent occurrence, and in remote garrisons there is much opportunity for injustice and rapacity. If once the men are employed for extra work, it is hardly possible to draw the line between what is allowed or not allowed. As all service is paid at an exorbitant rate, there is also the temptation for poorer officers to hire out their men for high wages.

The Emperor's anger at the unjustifiable conduct of his officers is quite comprehensible and reasonable, but I do not know if he was made acquainted with the existing state of things, which might have somewhat mitigated his wrath, and no one could ever tell me. In all probability he was not, for his constant companion, Count, afterwards Prince, Orlow, was also for the first time in the Caucusus, and was as ignorant as his master of the circumstances of the case. It is but fair to add that the Emperor had met with an accident soon after he had left Tiflis, which probably tended to increase his unfavourable impression of Caucasia. The horses ran away, the coachman being new and inex-

perienced, and the Imperial carriage was upset in a most dangerous place, close to the edge of a precipice: a monument was put up to mark the spot where the Emperor so nearly lost his life. This accident so disgusted him with driving, that he made the rest of the journey on a Cossack horse, and only re-entered the carriage on the other side of the Caucasian frontier.

In January of the year 1838 my circumstances most unexpectedly changed for the better. One dreary afternoon we heard the bells of post-horses stopping at the door; an officer despatched by my brother-in-law descended from the carriage, and handed us a written order from the War Minister, which directed the colonel of our regiment to send me to Pjätigorsk.

In spite of the winter being a severe one, we started in February for Tiflis, on our way to our new abode. We remained some weeks in my brother-in-law Wolkowsky's house; I owed this favour to the noble Schukowsky and his visit to Kurgan. During this visit I had the good fortune to obtain possession of a weapon which is of great and universal interest as a unique historical curiosity. In the cleft of the mountains a Circassian had found a sword bearing the name and arms of Leopold, Archduke of Austria, the same who, in company with Richard Cœur de Lion, had besieged St. Jean d'Acre, and was subsequently that hero's deadly enemy. A soldier of the Mingrelian Jägers had taken this in battle from the man who had originally

found it, and had learnt its history from him. The place where it was found, the workmanship, and the marks alluded to, preclude all doubt as to the authenticity of the weapon. How it ever got to Grusia from Palestine is a complete mystery. Before I left Tiflis I heard of the heroic death of my Siberian comrade, Alexander Bestuchew, who, under the name of Machinsky, is well known as one of the most talented writers of his time. He had also been sent as a private to the Caucasus, but had the opportunity of soon rising to be an officer. In the year 1837 he fell in an outpost skirmish.

Pjätigorsk is the most invigorating and best known of the Caucasian mineral waters. Lying on the left bank of the river Podkumsk, the baths collect together every year a number of officers, officials, and soldiers of Caucasia, who come here to seek the cure of their wounds or the restoration of their health broken down by overwork. At a short distance from the town innumerable sulphur springs of various temperatures (21—37 degrees Reaumur) issue from a mountain. This spring is so full of sulphur that the air is strongly impregnated with the smell, and almost every metal which people carry about them is tarnished; the silver epaulettes and ornaments of the officers who come here annually, turn after a short time quite yellow, and almost all the money the same. Pjätigorsk not only has the advantage of being itself a peculiarly strengthen-

ing bath, but has also in its vicinity a number of excellent springs, containing other minerals in solution. The regular course is for the bathers who arrive in April to leave Pjätigorsk at the end of June, and then go to the iron springs of Shelesnodowsk close by, or the chalybeate springs of Kislowodsk, or the alkali and soda springs of Sentuki. In this way it is quite possible in *one* summer to go through a whole course of several different baths, and thus complete the cure with no fatigues of travel and very little expense. The life which one leads at these Asiatic baths, especially at the romantic heights of Pjätigorsk, is very peculiar. The bathing society is made up of European and Asiatic Caucasian elements; and from the officers of the Caucasian Corps having Circassian features, the Asiatic type appears to strangers to predominate. In the broad lime avenues, which form the chief promenade of the bathers, conversation is heard in every sort of tongue, French, Russian, Polish, Circassian, and occasionally German; here a couple of ladies in the newest Parisian fashions are walking up and down, while a few paces from them a richly-decorated Oriental servant is exercising his master's horse. The band of the regiment makes the public acquainted with the newest dance music and opera airs of Western Europe, and once a week gathers the more healthy and robust portion of the community together at a fashionable ball in the great salon of the Kurhaus. The beauties of the

mountain scenery around offer the pedestrian charming walks; one of the most frequented leads to the neighbouring Scotch colony, where the bathing guests meet another new and foreign element.

After trying a much-recommended spring, and finding that it did not suit me, I had the good fortune to meet with a German, Doctor Roscher, born in Stuttgardt, and who had studied at Dorpat; he received me most kindly, and did himself great credit by his treatment of me, and my subsequent restoration to health.

I met here many officers whose names are well known in the history of the Circassian war, and also many of my old comrades from the St. Peter and St. Paul Fortress and the Siberian prison—Naryschkin, Prince Obolensky, and Nasimow, were all here as common soldiers; Prince Valerian Galitzin, Kriwzow, and Zebrikow had already worked up to be officers, and were able to take part in all the pleasures of society. We were obliged to keep aloof, being still in the ranks: I found great difficulty in uncovering my head to salute the officers I met, for my hands were occupied with the crutches on which I was still obliged to drag myself along.

Of all the military guests there General Sass and Wellgaminow excited the greatest interest. Sass was then at the zenith of his reputation, and was the universal subject of conversation, both from his characteristic and witty remarks, and the eccentric but thoroughly suc-

cessful way in which he managed the Circassians. Soldiers such as he are rarely to be seen in our times. The excitement of war and the perils of hazardous expeditions against the mountaineers had become a necessity to him, and in every long interval of peace, he fell a victim to depression and illness. The Circassians were more kept in awe by this most original Courlander than by any other general before or since.

He was as renowned for his cunning and diplomacy as for his bravery, and adapted himself with peculiar tact to the nature and tastes of the Circassian mountaineers. One day in particular he received a Circassian deputation in bed, surrounded by physic-bottles, pretending to be an invalid, and the following night he had stormed and taken fortified villages and castles hitherto considered impregnable. Another time, when it was important to him to entice the enemy out of a strongly fortified position, Sass had given himself out as dead, and had a coffin with his name on it buried. His fearlessness and courage made him as popular with the enemy as with his people, who followed him in implicit obedience. Two incidents had contributed to make the name of Sass known in the more distant Circassian villages: the sudden death of a small chief with whom Sass had had dealings, gave rise to the belief among the mountaineers that he had been treacherously poisoned by the general. In order to contradict the report and to give the people confidence, Sass repaired at once to

the village of the dead chief, without any military escort and accompanied only by an interpreter; from that hour his name was held in reverence by the Circassians. Another time, in the midst of a desperate fight, he had not only given life and liberty to a brave Circassian who wanted to rescue his brother's corpse, but had also bestowed a sum of money on him. This brave man, who was always cheerful and amiable, and in spite of his many wounds, was able to go about like other people, never appeared in the promenades of Pjätigorsk without being the object of universal attention from both men and women.

I was very much interested in the above-mentioned Scotch colony in the vicinity of Pjätigorsk. Many of the missionaries supported by English mission societies lived among them, and were respected by all for the cheerfulness and self-denial with which they went about their difficult work among the wild sons of the Caucasian mountains. Pastor Lange, a member of the Basle Missionary Society, was a great favourite of mine; he distinguished himself much by the successful way in which he combated the excessive brandy-drinking which was the chief vice in the Scotch colony, and which was much encouraged by the fact of the colonists having a privilege of distillery. This excellent man lived in penury, which should almost be called want: in spite of the high prices in Caucasia, he only received 250 roubles altogether for his stipend. Another very interesting

person was the missionary Zaremba, a Polish count who had studied at Dorpat, and had subsequently given up both property and position in order to devote himself entirely to missionary work; he was then on the point of giving up Grusia and going to Constantinople, by order of the society, there to wait their further commands. The grave faces of these worthy men, who seemed dead to the pleasures of the world and the attractions of ambition, were remarkable enough when seen in the midst of the gay and varied society which assembled at Pjätigorsk to recruit its forces before the battle with the coming winter.

After the course at the sulphur baths was concluded, I went for a short time to Kislowodsk; when the season there came to an end, and the neighbourhood was completely abandoned by the gay world which had enlivened it for the last few months, I returned to Pjätigorsk, to spend a solitary winter in the bosom of my family, occupied chiefly with the education of my eldest boy. My social intercourse was restricted entirely to the company of my excellent doctor, Dr. Roscher, and the commandant of the place, Simborowsky. I was struck by the urgency with which the latter was continually advising me to beg for my discharge from military service. There was no chance of my ever being really active as a soldier; the condition of my injured limb, it is true, improved slowly, but the hardships of my Siberian sojourn, the long painful illness, and latterly, the very

weakening Caucasian baths, had so ruined my nervous system, that nothing but pressing necessity gave me energy to carry on my boy's education, any exertion, whether of body or mind, was so painful to me.

I could not make out the reason of my good friend Simborowsky's urgency, and the granting of my request appeared to me highly improbable. I made up my mind, however, to follow his advice, and to present a petition for my discharge. I asked the Imperial Adjutant-General Benkendorff for his aid in this matter; his generous help to my wife in her difficulties, and his noble, chivalrous spirit, induced me to apply to him. Benkendorff laid my request before the Emperor, and after the noble General Grabbe had entreated him to look favourably on my children, I received my release from service on the 10th January, 1839. Permission was also given me to live henceforth in my own home, under the surveillance of the police, but as a *private person.*

The circumstance which I will now relate was doubtless the cause of General Simborowsky's advice to me to leave the service as soon as possible. When Baron R. left, General E. A. Golowin was appointed in his place as Commandant of the Caucasian corps,—he had been our brigadier when I was in the Guards, and, as I have before mentioned, he was in command at the execution of the 13th July, 1826. (See Chapter III. The Sentence and its Execution.) This Golowin had

been staying at Pjätigorsk during the last summer season, when a great ball was given in his honour. At this ball he had inquired of Simborowsky the names of many of the officers present, and had learnt from him that some of them had taken part in the rising of 1825, had been condemned to forced labour, and had subsequently been sent to the Caucasus, where they had risen to be officers again. "Are any of these gentlemen here?" asked Golowin. Simborowsky named Naryschkin, Prince Odojewsky, and me, adding that my long illness and numerous family made me an object of special pity. "What Baron R. is he?" asked Golowin; and then added, "Probably it is the same who served in the Finland Jäger Guards, and who by rights ought to have been hanged." I did not hear of this conversation till after my discharge from military service. How right was my good friend Simborowsky when he pressed me to make my request to the Emperor! To serve under such a chief would indeed have been a misfortune to me.*

The feelings with which I received the rescript which gave me back my long-wished-for liberty, and also the power of returning to the civilized world,

* *Author's note.*—If we mistake not, this General Golowin is the same who, subsequently, when Governor-General of Livonia, Esthonia, and Courland, gained the unenviable reputation of having been the chief promoter of the Greek Orthodox Propaganda among the Lutheran Etten and Letten. He was, however, an intimate friend of the Prussian General von Gerlach, well known for his piety.

after fourteen years' imprisonment and exile, can be imagined! My chief happiness was the thought that there was now an end to my wife's privations, and that I should see my children restored to civilized society. But how often does it happen in life that the times of purest joy are associated with the deepest sorrows! Such was my case. I had intended to leave Caucasia in May, as the road was not really practicable earlier in the year. Before this month, to which I had been looking forward with so much impatience, commenced, my eldest child had gone through a severe illness, and my little daughter lay in her grave. Here ends the history of my life, as far as it is connected with the conspiracy of 1825 and the events which resulted from it. After a long residence in South Russia, I was now, at last, to return to my home in Esthonia.

APPENDIX.

SKETCH OF THE SECRET SOCIETIES OF RUSSIA, 1815—1825.

Even as early as the reign of Alexander I. secret political societies existed in Russia, though they were in general concealed under the veil of religious ends. The gigantic and crushing power of the State left no scope for individual energy. Men of intellect, therefore, who were unsuited for office, were condemned to complete inactivity; to them the Freemasons' lodges offered an object of interest possessing a peculiar charm from the outward ceremonies attached to their admission into them. Among the most influential Freemasons in Russia were numbered, first, Count Z. G. Tschernitschew, J. W. Lopuchin, Nowikow, Radischtschew, Gamaley—all persons distinguished by birth and prominent social position.

When the admission of able and active men into the secrets of Freemasonry showed that it had ceased to be looked upon merely as a pastime and formality, and its influence began to extend over a wider area, then the suspicion of the Government, already alarmed by the French revolution, began to be

excited. In the last years of Catherine's reign, the Freemasons and Martinists were already beginning to be looked upon with distrust as Jacobins and revolutionaries; suppressions and examinations were proposed, in which Nowikow suffered more than any of the other members.*

The Emperor Paul, who in everything acted in opposition to his mother's wishes, favoured and supported the Freemasons. Alexander I. followed in his steps, until the great alteration which took place at the time of the Congress at Aix. In the year 1822, on the 13th April, he published a ukase, directed to W. P. Kotschubey, the Minister of the Interior, in which it was ordered that all the Freemasons' lodges should be closed, and that written bonds should be required of all the civil and military that they would never enter a Freemasons' lodge or secret society.

But even before this, other societies had sprung up near the lodges, possessing far too much vitality to let themselves be extinguished without a word of remonstrance, or to vanish at a simple hint of the Emperor. In the year 1815, "the Literary Society of Arsamas" was founded by the future Minister Bludow, Daschkow, and the poet Schukowsky. This union took its name from a phrase of Bludow, "The vision of Arsamas." The journey of the artist Stupin to the town of Arsamas had been the origin of the phrase. Stupin had a plan of improving the clumsy style of painting which had been followed for ages at Arsamas, by the help of an academy and a union—thence came the designation of

* Compare *The Moscow Martinists and Nowikow.* By M. N. Longinow. *The Russian Freemasons' Lodges in the Eighteenth Century.* By A. Pypin.

"Arsamas Academy, Arsamas Society."* This union ceased in 1818, but was imitated by the founders of the society called "The Promoters of Enlightenment and Beneficence."

The excited temper of the times, the great effect which a long residence abroad, and in France especially, had had on many of the officials and Russian officers, had created a strong wish for opportunities of interchange of ideas, and, in consequence, clubs sprung up on all sides, and the example of the above-mentioned societies was speedily followed. They were, in fact, the expression of a deeply-felt want. Certain of the officers of the regiments of Guards formed little literary societies among themselves, small coteries which assembled for lectures and evening entertainments. From conversation upon literature, poetry, and novels, they involuntarily and imperceptibly glided into talking of Jacobins and Girondists, Carbonari and Tugendbundgenossen.† The younger officers were specially interested in these things, and tried every possible means to obtain the *entrée* into these literary circles. The political followed the footsteps of the literary societies. In the year 1816, the Colonel of the Staff of the Guards, Col. A. N. Murawjew, Captain N. M. Murawjew, and the Colonel Prince S. P. Troubetzkoy formed the first political society. The brothers Matthias and Sergius Murawjew Apostol and Jakuschkin, captain of the Semenoff regiment of Guards, took a prominent part in its arrangements. In the year 1817, Col. Paul Pestel allied himself to them for the foundation of

* See *Count Bludow and his Times.* By Kowalenski. 1866. p. 108.

† *Translator's note.*—I have thought it better to retain this name in the original; it *represents* an alliance of students, though that is not the literal rendering of the word.

the first secret society, which took the name of "Union of Public Weal," or "The Worthy Sons of Fatherland." The statutes were arranged by Pestel, who divided the members into three classes, "brothers, men, and boyars." The "men" had the right of receiving new brethren. The founders of the society called themselves "boyars:" from amongst these were chosen the leaders and secretary. Prince Schakowsky, F. Glinka, Nowikow, Lunin, and others joined the above-named founders. Certain formalities and oaths were required on entering the society.

Unions of this kind might almost be said to be in the atmosphere. Almost at the same instant, another secret combination was mentioned. M. Orlow, Count Maranow, and Nicolay Turgenjew wanted to form a separate society, "The Russian Knights," but, after some conferences on the subject, they were induced to join the "Union of Public Weal." Michael Nicolaiwitch Murawjew, Burtzow, P. Kokoschkin, and von Wisin joined after the statutes had been revised by Alexander Murawjew, Trubetzkoy, and Kokoschkin, and the paragraphs relating to the taking of oaths, unconditional obedience, coercion, and poison and dagger, had been struck out. The name of "Union of Public Weal" was changed for "Union for National Prosperity," and the members were then divided into four classes. The first class was bound secretly to watch over all benevolent institutions; the second class had the charge of providing suitable religious instruction for the rising generation, and of working upon their minds by example as well as by discourses and exercises; the third was to watch the administration of justice; the fourth was to devote itself to political economy,

and in particular to find openings for increasing the national wealth, to improve the industry of the people, and the public credit, to agitate against monopolies, &c.

The founders and early members of the society formed the central confederation; from these was selected the central council, consisting of a chairman and five assessors. The leader or president had the title of Head of the League. The members of the central confederation, together with the members of the central council, formed the central directory. The central council had the executive, the central directory the legislative power and the administration of justice in the confederation. All the most important arrangements remained in the hands of the originators of the society. The directories were increased by the accession of new members, and every directory had its leader. Ordinary matters were decided by the voice of the majority. Every member had the right of leaving, but was bound to keep the secret. No formalities were observed at the reception of new members; they merely signed agreements, which were afterwards burnt without their knowledge.

The first part of the statutes of the "Union of National Prosperity" was called, from the colour of the cover, "The Green Book;" the second part, compiled by Prince Trubetzkoy, was rejected by the central confederation and burnt in 1822, together with other papers of Colonel Alex. Murawjew. There were two directories in Moscow, under the presidency of Alex. Murawjew and the Prince Schakowsky.

There were likewise two directories under the leadership of Semenow, a lieutenant of the Chasseurs of the Guard, and Colonel Burtzow. There were, besides, in St. Petersburg

two societies independent of these directories, one conducted by Obolensky, Tolstoy, and Tokarew, the other by Semenow. Of the other directories, that which was established in the South Russian town of Tultshin deserves special mention, for Pestel belonged to it. In the assemblies of the members of the "Union of Public Weal," constitutional forms of government and monarchical institutions were alone treated of. The first proposal for the founding of a republic was made by Nowikow, when putting forward his project of a constitution. Pestel, at a meeting of the central directory, declared that, of all the existing forms of government, he gave the preference to a republic. The members then present have since for the most part affirmed that the debates led to nothing, and that no conclusion was arrived at. In the discussions which followed, on the contrary, the introduction of the republican form of government was agreed to. The report of the inquiry commission appointed after the events of the 14th Dec., says that the idea of the murder of the Emperor sprung up at this meeting, and gives this as a reason for the accusation and condemnation of the members of the society by the Supreme Criminal Court in 1826. It should be stated here that this accusation was totally groundless.

The number of new members of this society continued to increase. Some of the original founders, however, began to doubt of the practicability of the projects for which they had associated themselves, and many on that account broke off their connection with the secret society. Among these was one of the first founders, Colonel Alex. Murawjew. As at the same time other differences of opinion arose, Pestel proposed to select a number of plenipotentiaries from the union, and

put into their hands the management of its future plans. The central directory agreed to this proposition. Nicolay Turgenjew and Theodor Glinka, from St. Petersburg, Colonels Burtzow and Romanew, from Tultshin (South Russia), were ordered to the assembly of deputies summoned at Moscow. The brothers Michael and Ivan von Wisin, M. Orlow, P. Grabbe, Jakuschkin, M. M. Murawjew, and Ochotniskow, also appeared at the conclave. N. Turgenjew presided. The differences of opinion which had been feared came out so strongly at this meeting that Orlow, Grabbe, Prince Dolgoroucky, and some others announced, in writing, their secession from the union. The majority of the remaining members perceived the impossibility of continuing the sittings of the assembly without awakening the suspicions of the police (the above-named ukase had in the meantime appeared). Nicolay Turgenjew, therefore, at the end of February, 1821, declared, in the name of the plenipotentiaries, that the "Union of National Prosperity" had ceased to exist. Burtzow and Romanew carried this news to the directory of Tultshin. Pestel and Juschnewsky immediately declared they would not acknowledge the dissolution of the union, but would rather, by hints of dangers and difficulties, drive the faint-hearted to withdraw, and then proceed boldly with the courageous ones. Juschnewsky made a speech in the assembly of that directory, with the object of getting rid of the timid. This had a most unexpected effect. Not only did no one leave the union, but the zeal of the members increased from that moment. The statutes previously compiled by Pestel, with their stringent and mysterious regulations, now came into force—the members separated themselves into "brothers, men, and boyars." The conclave chose Pestel and

Juschnewsky for leader and president, and subsequently Nikita Murawjew, who had not been present at the meeting of plenipotentiaries at Moscow.

Meantime, in St. Petersburg, the secret society had almost gone to pieces; but at the end of the year 1822, when the corps of Guards returned from Lithuania, it began to revive again, and from that time it took the name of "Alliance of the North." It was divided in two parts — the leaders and those who were merely their followers or imitators— upper and lower circle. The upper circle consisted of the original founders, and selected the members of the directory: these alone knew the measures to be adopted for the attainment of their object, and the time which had been fixed for its execution. Nikita Murawjew became the head of this revived secret society. At the end of the year 1823, the Princes Trubetzkoy and Obolensky were united with him. When Trubetzkoy was placed on the staff of the first army at Kiew, Conrad Rylejew took his place.

The directory of Tultschin had developed into "The Secret Society of the South," which was conspicuous for its great activity and decision: the influence of Juschnewsky and the powerful Pestel was plainly seen in its working. Murawjew Apostol was afterwards added as a third director. The central directory of Tultschin consisted of two committees—that of Kumenka, under the presidency of Colonel Dawidoff and General Prince Wolkonsky, while that of Wassilkowa was under Sergius Murawjew Apostol and Bestuchew Rjumin. In the year 1822, the heads of the committee met at Kiew. At this meeting, several most important resolutions were proposed from the code arranged by Pestel (*Ruskaja Prawda*, so the

code of Jaroslaw the Great was called in history). Opinions were divided with regard to the murder of the Emperor. As an intermediate stage between the monarchical and the republican constitution, a provisional government was proposed. The first beginning was to be a rising in the autumn of 1823, during the great review in the camp at Bobrinsk, when they reckoned upon the co-operation of the Colonels Powalo Schweikowsky and Norow. When this review was postponed, the proposed rising had also to be deferred. In April, 1824, it was decided that the insurrection should begin during the imperial review at Bielaja Zerkow, from whence they would march to Kiew and Moscow; from Moscow, Sergius Murawjew Apostol was to advance to St. Petersburg. But neither did this review take place, and the project came to nothing.

There was a great desire in St. Petersburg and Moscow to free the Unions from the overwhelming influence of Pestel, and the violent measures of the Union of the South. Nothing short of a dissolution could produce this, and it seemed far from likely at present, for the chief leader in St. Petersburg, Nikita Murawjew, had proposed a constitution on the model of the United States, but with monarchical forms, and had formed a propaganda for the dissemination of his views. In the same year, 1824, Pestel came to St. Petersburg. At the meetings, in which Trubetzkoy, Obolensky, Rylejew, and N. Murawjew Apostol took part, Pestel bitterly complained of the inactivity of the Union of the North, the want of unity, the diversities in the statutes, &c., and put forward a proposition to amalgamate the two unions of North and South, to choose a leader and presidents in common, and to decide the affairs of the league

by the voice of the majority. The motion was agreed to, though certain differences of opinion between Pestel and Nikita Murawjew still remained.

By the activity of the directory of the Union of the South, two new secret societies were discovered in 1825. They had grown up, under the names of "United Sclavonians" and "Polish Patriotic Society of Warsaw," without any one being aware of their existence. In that year, the third infantry corps was encamped at Lestchin, in the Government of Wolhynia. The officers of the different branches of the service often met together, and here Bestuchew Rjumin received intelligence of a secret society, which had been founded by two artillery officers, the brothers Borissow. This society then numbered thirty-six members: its object was to unite the Sclavonian family in one federal republic.

On the octagon seal of the league were engraved the names of the eight races of Sclavonian stock—Russians, Servian-Croats, Bulgarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Lushitshauen, and Slovens and Poles.

It was left to Sergius Murawjew Apostol and Bestuchew Rjumin to unite this society to the Union of the South by means of the committee of Wassilkowa. For conducting this arrangement with the Wassilkowa committee, two mediators were chosen from the Sclaves, Lieut. Gorbatchewsky for the section of the artillery, and Major Spiridow for the section of the infantry. Bestuchew Rjumin confided to the Sclaves Pestel's project of a constitution, and they took the solemn oath of secrecy.

The report of the Imperial Inquiry Commission, as might be expected, represents the allied Sclaves as horrible, blood-

thirsty cannibals of the most atrocious kind. We know, from the accounts of one of the most revolutionary members, Gorbatschewsky, how much of this is to be believed, and their exclamation of horror, "That is contrary to God and all religion," when the proposal of forcibly removing the Emperor was laid before them, showed how unfounded was the accusation. After the attempted revolt of the 14th of December, 1825, twenty-three of the thirty-six members of the "League of United Sclavonians" were condemned by the chief criminal court of justice, besides those who were sentenced by court-martial in Moscow, Baron Solowjew, Masgalewsky, Bystritzky, Schulminow, and Tscheprilla (Kusmin shot himself). Probably, the false reports of their ferocity and bloodthirsty dispositions were the cause of the special severity with which the United Sclaves were treated. There was time and also opportunity enough for the Government to have ascertained the truth, if they had so wished. I have only to add that, in the last assembly, when the United Sclavonians took counsel with the Union of the South, it was decided to carry out the attempted rising in August, 1826. To this Baron Tiefenhausen replied that they ought certainly not to make such an attempt for the next ten years, and that it was folly to think of it so soon.*

There were, besides these Russian unions, a very large number of Polish revolutionary societies. A union of malcontents was formed in the year 1820, under the presidency of Professor Lelewel, whose primary object had been a scientific

* Compare *The Report of the Inquiry Commission:* St. Petersburg, 1826. Printed at the Military Printing Press of the Staff of his Imperial Majesty.

one. Later on, the student, Thomas Zan, had inaugurated a new society, called the "Philarete," or "Friends of Virtue." The renowned Adam Mickewitch was numbered among its members. The curator of public instruction of the Wilna district ordered an inquiry in 1823. Zan took the whole blame of the matter on himself, and was deported to Siberia. In 1821, General Uninsky established in Posen the society of "Scythe-bearers or Reapers" (fig. death), which spread rapidly. The Freemasons met secretly in Warsaw, to take counsel upon the condition of their country, and to found a "Patriotic Union." One of the chief leaders was Major Valerian Lukacuisky, a man of singular decision of character, who took part in all the campaigns of the Polish legion of 1806 to 1814. The arrest and punishment of the first founders of this society, which took place a little later, did not lead to its abolition, but only served to increase the caution of the members, who dispersed themselves in various places to carry on the work separately, and resolved only to hold their meetings in future during the time of the yearly markets at Balta, Berditschew, and Kief. Lukacujsky, who, meantime, had been arrested at Warsaw, and tortured, persisted so stoutly in his denials, that all those of the accused who still remained were set at liberty from want of evidence against them. The members of the Patriotic Society now began to re-assemble. A small circle of secret leaders had remained unknown and unnoticed. They were Colonel Sewerin, Krzyzanowsky, Prince Arton Jablonowsky, the treasurer, Grzymala, and the secretary, Plichta, and the well-known and highly-esteemed old Count Stanislas Soltik. In the year 1824, a certain Grodetzky, at Kiew, received a commission from the "Patriotic Union" to

find out if there were any Russian secret societies with which they could communicate. He returned from Tultshin without accomplishing his object.

At the same time, Sergius Murawjew Apostol and Bestuchew Rjumin, on the Russian side, had been looking out for Polish secret societies, and had, by the help of Count Alex. Chodkjewitch, made an alliance with Krzyzanowsky, which had led to negotiations between the Warsaw society and the committee of Wassilkowa. At the first meeting with the representatives of that committee, Krzyzanowsky announced that he had no authority to make final arrangements, and was only charged to prepare the way for an understanding between the two societies. This first conference lasted a long time, on account of the many different inquiries which were necessary on both sides, but the result was nil, as the Pole had no authority to conclude arrangements. What Bestuchew Rjumin asserted to the inquiry commission was untrue; a real "convention with Krzyzanowsky" was not then concluded, for the latter had no authority, neither did he make any promises. Nothing was decided, save that further negotiations should be conducted on the Russian side by Sergius Murawjew Apostol, and on the Polish side by Grodetzky and Czarkowsky. The answer from Warsaw which Krzyzanowsky had promised was long in coming. At length, Grodetzky was introduced to Pestel by Prince Wolkonsky, and in the year 1825 Pestel had an interview with Prince Jablonowsky, who was furnished with instructions from the Patriotic Union, but Krzyzanowsky, who was then residing at Kiew, on account of his father's death, tried to avoid any meeting with the Russians. The conferences between Pestel and Jablonowsky took place in the

presence of Prince Wolkonsky. Pestel explained in detail the object of his union, and said that he considered it indispensable to know the position and intentions of Poland with regard to his enterprise, for at such a moment no middle course could be allowed—the Poles must declare themselves either for or against the Russian revolution. "We can easily obtain our freedom without your assistance, but if you neglect the opportunity now offered you of coming forward, you will lose every hope of being reinstated as a nation. Before we proceed, we must first know what form of government you purpose introducing when your country has gained its independence." Prince Jablonowsky answered frankly that the chief object of the Patriotic Society was to obtain the independence of Poland, together with the restoration of the frontiers as they existed before the second partition. Before any further discussion, he desired to know if the Russian secret society would agree to this just and moderate request.

Pestel replied, that this point presented no difficulty, and that, in case a doubt should arise upon the question whether the Lithuanian provinces should belong to Russia or Poland, it should be left to the people concerned to decide. Prince Jablonowsky further declared that the Polish Society had hitherto come to no conclusion as regarded the form of government, but that his own verdict would be in favour of a monarchical constitution. Pestel was of a different mind. In an eloquent and spirited speech, he dilated on the advantages of the republican constitution, of which he considered the United States of America a model.

As Jablonowsky wished to reserve the decision upon the future constitution of Poland to his countrymen exclusively,

and evaded every idea of mixing with the Russian conspirators, Pestel let the subject of the constitution pass, while he proceeded to another question. "What do the Poles propose to do about the Grand Duke, who is residing in Warsaw, when once the revolution has begun in Russia?" Prince Jablonowsky evaded this question, remarking that the Patriotic Society would not take part in coercive measures of any kind. Krzyzanowsky had already declared to the committee of Wassilkowa, "that no Pole had ever raised his hand against the life of his prince." Prince Jablonowsky would only promise "that no protestations on the part of the Grand Duke should hinder the revolution in Warsaw." Pestel was not satisfied with this, and declared he had been deceived in his expectations. The negotiations agreed only on one point, that relating to the revolutionary propaganda which was to be made in the Lithuanian corps. On the two sides respectively, Colonel Powalo Schweikowsky and Count P. Moschinsky were named inspectors, in order that there might be no Pole in the secret unions of the Russians, and likewise no Russian in that of the Poles.

Prince Jablonowsky at length obtained that a member of the Russian society should be sent to Warsaw, with instructions to hasten the pending negotiations. Pestel promised to authorize Colonel Lunin. The whole transaction closed with a resolution to meet again in the year 1826, during the annual fair at Kiew.*

* *Author's note.—Journal of St. Petersburg.* No. 287–312. In the year 1827, from the report of the Warsaw Commission of the 3rd January, 1827, compiled by the long since deceased Baron Mohrnheim, who, before delivering his report, had taken counsel with D. N. Bludow.

At the time of the accession of Alexander I., eight years only had elapsed since the third partition of Poland. Alexander had never approved of this partition. At the Congress of Vienna he had insisted on the foundation of a new kingdom of Poland—he wished to restore to the Poles their country. As the liberator of Europe he desired also to be the liberator of Poland; he flattered himself he should be able to give a great constitutional king to Warsaw. It is known that this proposal was strongly resisted by the other great powers. Lord Castlereagh, for instance, warned the Emperor, writing to him, "One single step from absolute power to constitutional liberty can change the whole course of affairs in Europe. Your project may very likely produce political troubles in your own country." The Emperor replied that it was necessary to put an end to the efforts of Poland; that the longer she continued in a state of oppression, the more likely she would be to resist all friendly influence; and that the peace of Russia and the whole of the North would be disturbed by her. Alexander gave the Poles a constitution, and all seemed to go smoothly at first. Within ten years the whole Polish national debt was paid. Commerce and industry made a decided advance, the organization of the Polish army became a model. But immediately after the Congress at Aix, a retrograde movement set in. The Emperor became suspicious of the opposition of the Polish deputies in the Diet, Russian jealousy of the preference accorded to the Poles became more evident, the Constitution was repeatedly violated, the Viceroy and Nowosilzow began to act tyrannically, and the old hatred of the Polish people against their Russian oppressors at once broke out.

Affairs were in this state when the negotiations between

the Polish and Russian revolutionary societies began. Nothing will ever make the Pole a Russian, or the Russian a Pole—they are unlike in faith, historical traditions, and speech. Pestel and his associates were aware of this, and never dreamed of trying to leap the ethnographical barrier between the nations.

From this impossibility of amalgamation, owing to the difference of civilization in the higher, the difference of religion in the lower classes of the two peoples, it was manifest that in a confederation lay the only chance of safety, the only hope of a final settlement. Poland must be restored as a separate state, but divided from Lithuania and the Ukraine, and all those states, as also Finland and the Baltic Provinces, should be united in a confederation. The constitution of this confederation is contained in Pestel's Russian Codex (Prawda), and is worked out on the plan of the North American Republic. The Central Government granted to each of the separate states the right of self-government, whilst the Central Government itself was charged with all the military and foreign affairs, naturalization, commerce, navy, militia, posts, internal communication, &c. To the Central Government also was reserved the right of controlling these separate states, and depriving them temporarily of their power of self-government. They hoped to establish a state of things such as existed in Switzerland and North America, and were highly lauded by all European Liberals.

To make the whole complete, two little societies must be mentioned, which sprung up about this time, and showed how much such unions were in the atmosphere. In the year 1820, the secret society of the Templars was founded by Majewsky, a captain of hussars. The chief home of this society was in

the province of Wolhynia. Majewsky called himself Grand Master of the order. His associates also adopted high-sounding titles. Kanovitzky called himself Vice-regent; Lagowsky, Orator; Bulawsky, Field-marshal; Jagorsky, Lord Chief Justice; Kaspinsky, Chief Secretary, &c. But, with all these grand titles, this society was of no real importance, possessed no means whatever, and had hardly any positive or definite object in view. When Majewsky, in the year 1825, heard of the establishment of secret unions in Russia, and their negotiations with the Patriotic Society of Warsaw, he was in great fear lest he should be quite set aside. He therefore decided on joining the Patriotic Union of the Poles, which, after great difficulty, he succeeded in doing. This Majewsky had served the Prince of Orange in the Russian regiment of hussars.*

There was yet one more society, "The Order of Regeneration." D. J. Zawalischin, lieutenant of the Russian fleet, had, during his many voyages round the world, paid long visits to England and America, and had there seen and admired those institutions of "civil liberty" which now formed the universal ideal. Singularly religious-minded from his earliest youth, and very well read in the Scriptures, he had united religious and political objects, and had founded an "Order of Regeneration," to extend the kingdom of truth. Returning to St. Petersburg, in the year 1828, he communicated the statutes of this order to Rylejew and Arbusow, and others of the members of the Union of the North—he even presented them to the Emperor for confirmation. The Emperor lauded his zeal for the public good, but would, of course, have nothing

* *Author's note.*—See the judgment of the Warsaw inquiry commission of January 3, 1827.

to do with Zawalischin's project. Hurt by this reception, the latter joined the above-mentioned Union of the North. All that is reported, both of him and his undertaking, by the inquiry commission, is quite incorrect.

There now only remains to say a few words as to the cause of the unusual political activity shown by the Russian army of that time in originating and encouraging these societies—activity of which there was not a trace to be found a few years before. It must also be remarked that the liberal reforms which were started in the reign of Alexander I., for the advancement and development of the educated classes, were the more effective from the stern manner in which everything of the kind had been repressed under Paul, and in the latter part of Catherine II.'s reign. The notable occurrences of 1812 had also brought out a strong feeling of the power of the people, and a patriotic enthusiasm of which no one had previously had a conception. Then followed the eventful years of the Franco-German war.

The Russian and Prussian troops of occupation had remained some time in France after the second taking of Paris. While the Prussian corps was penetrated by a deep-rooted hatred of the French, with at the same time a strong aversion towards the French revolutionary ideas, and only eagerly desired to return to their houses and old Prussian ways, the year of their residence on French soil had a totally different effect on the Russians. To the young Russian nobility, especially the regiment of Guards, the Franco-German campaign was identical with their entrance into a world of civilization, which was hitherto unknown to almost all their number. Beneath a milder sky, in the midst of new surroundings, which

bore the stamp of a higher civilization, under the influence of softer manners and more humane views of life, many of the Russian officers acquired new ideas for the government of their own country. To the young men who had spent the greater part of their lives in the monotony of distant Russian country towns, or in the bacchanalian uproar of the feasts of St. Petersburg, a new and beautiful world was opened on the sunny banks of the Loire and Garonne, to whose charms they yielded themselves with delight. The idleness of garrison duty, the great distance which separated the detachments of troops quartered in remote places, permitted a freedom of action of which they had hardly dreamt before. These young strangers watched the political party strife which then filled all parts of France with deep interest and attention.

The most zealous and active spirits of the Russian Guards imbibed with enthusiasm the idea of citizenship, liberty, and constitutional rights, and threw themselves with energy into the life of the people, for whose conquest they had come from the far east. The thought arose, in more than one breast, whether it would not be possible to make their distant home partaker of the same advantages, and with the warm, unreasoning zeal of youth they ignored the deep gulf which existed between the Russian and French ideas of civilization. When the term of their residence in France was past, the flower of the corps of officers returned to their homes bent on importing France into Russia. Their first step was to form Freemasons' lodges in the majority of the best regiments, of a purely political colouring; when these were dissolved or prohibited, their members joined the secret societies and pursued the same object of creating a constitutional form of government.

Knowing that the Emperor Alexander himself agreed with their ideas, they imagined that in preparing a reorganization of Russian affairs they would be able to obtain his co-operation. But Alexander, frightened by the liberal movement in Germany, now took a different line, and the young military nobles found themselves in direct opposition to the reigning government. Various measures of repression were tried but without result, and even some of the soldiers were infected by the French poison, and desired treatment such as they had seen and had been used to in France. The "Enragés" among the conspirators became still more estranged from the Emperor, and now turned their minds entirely to their republican ideal. Even before Alexander died *Levées de Boucliers* were at work in St. Petersburg and South Russia; his death brought the undertaking to a crisis before it was ripe. They were of opinion that the confusion resulting from Constantine's renunciation should be turned to account, and the sedition broke out before it was sufficiently organized to promise a safe conclusion; had Nicholas' firm hand at once seized the reins of government it would have been impossible to effect anything against the dynasty, backed as it was by devoted masses.

The revolt of 1825 broke out in two places simultaneously and failed in both. The movers in it had a political impossibility in view, and had only themselves to thank if they proved the victims of their own imprudence. But it is not to be denied that it was the flower of the Guard, and especially the young intellects, which had attempted this master-stroke of 1825. With youthful enthusiasm they clung to a number of highly-gifted but impractical leaders; many officers held it to be a point of honour to share danger and want with the men

whom they knew to be noble and devoted champions of modern ideas. The proud consciousness of working with the best of their time was more powerful than the fear of death or exile; they had for the first time come in contact with the ideal, and could not withstand the charm of an enterprise which appeared to secure for every one who took a part in it, a place among the best and noblest of his fellows.

Thus it is seen that the conspirators and rebels of 1825 were young enthusiasts, who must be judged after another than a strictly political standard. The hard fate they had to endure has atoned for their crime, and it is now possible for those who read their history to take a kindly and pitiful interest in the first attempt to draw Russia into the path of West European liberalism.

THE END.

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