

## AT THE COURT OF THE CZAR.

### MINISTER DALLAS IN ST. PETERSBURG.—I.

#### A DRAMATIC VISIT FROM THE EMPEROR.

*Saturday, 29th July, 1837.*—The *Independence*<sup>1</sup> made Dager Point on the evening of Thursday, the 27th instant, and with a brisk breeze on the quarter turned into the Gulf of Finland at about eight o'clock; continuing our course almost before the wind we reached the last light, the Tolbukin Light, at about ten o'clock last night, and the pilot deemed it most prudent to lay to until dawn at two o'clock this morning, when we made sail again and anchored in the harbor of Cronstadt at about five o'clock. While coming up the gulf on this side of Hogland, we passed a Russian squadron principally composed of three-deckers and line-of-battle ships, one dozen in number, with the admiral of which our commodore exchanged a salute of seventeen guns. We saluted after anchoring, with twenty-one guns.

The day has been rendered memorable by a dramatic visit from the Emperor Nicholas, accompanied by the chief officers now here, among them Count Nesselrode, Prince Mensikoff, and the governor of Cronstadt. The Emperor is fond of these abrupt and covered visitations, and plays the game with dexterity and ease. Our vice-consul at Cronstadt, Leonartzen, happened to be accompanying the commodore in his gig, on a visit to the governor of Cronstadt, at about eleven o'clock, when the barge belonging to the imperial steamboat passed them, and he immediately recognized the Czar acting as its coxswain,

and distinguishable from the officers who surrounded him by a close white cloth cap. The gig was immediately turned back in the just belief that the Emperor would come on board the *Independence*. He first, however, stopped at the Danish frigate lying near us, and remained undetected for half an hour. He then came to us, still acting as a mere aide or subordinate to Prince Mensikoff, and coming last up our gangway. As he obviously desired to pass without recognition, his retinue paid no attention to him, and it was a matter of obvious courtesy to forbear breaking in upon his fancied incog. He separated himself from the rest, peered actively throughout the ship, spoke inquiringly to a number of the seamen, and accidentally coming across my infant daughter, took her in his arms, expressed great delight at her beauty, and repeatedly kissed her.

His fine figure and penetrating eye had been remarked, however, by almost every one, and no one was deceived as to his reality. When going he touched his cap to Prince Mensikoff, inquired whether he was ready to leave, and being answered affirmatively, ran up the gangway, descended and again took the helm, while the ceremony of departure was going through by the others. Our commodore now broke through the disguise and saluted him with forty-one guns, which induced him at once to resume the Emperor, to hoist signals to the Russian frigate ordering a return of the salute, to run up at the mast-head of his steamboat the American ensign, and finally to display his

<sup>1</sup> The *Independence* line-of-battle ship, 74 guns, was built at Boston in 1814-15. In 1872 she was in use at

the Mare Island navy-yard, California, as a receiving ship.—EDITOR.

imperial standard. This last act was instantly followed by tremendous salutes from all the numerous men-of-war in the harbor, and from the various forts of Cronstadt. The effect was fine beyond description, and our ship seemed to be, for a time, the center round which was acting one of the most beautiful and exciting scenes imaginable. During this remarkable visit I became personally known to Count Nesselrode.<sup>1</sup>

#### A COURT PRESENTATION.

*Monday, 31st July, 1837.*—The governor of Cronstadt having placed his steamer at my disposal for the purpose, I this morning sent all my baggage on board of her, and embarked with my family, accompanied by a number of the officers of the *Independence*, for St. Petersburg.

*Saturday, 5th August, 1837.*—I entered upon the possession of a house I have rented from Count Bobrinski, at the sum of 9000 rubles or \$1800 per annum; it is fully furnished, and promises to be alike neat, gentlemanly, clean, and comfortable. The operation of moving in has been laborious and fatiguing; but I am overjoyed at again finding myself under a roof of my own, with all my children around me, and, as it were, once more at home.

*Sunday, 6th August, 1837.*—Mrs. Dallas, my two daughters, and I, in one carriage, and Mr. Chew, my secretary of legation, in another, with an extra carriage for baggage, left St. Petersburg to-day at about ten o'clock, and reached Peterhof Palace by twelve. We were shown into a suite of apartments and had served up a comfortable *déjeuner à la fourchette*. After putting on our court costume, we were informed that imperial carriages would conduct us to the palace for presentation at about half-past three o'clock. Accordingly they came. I now rode with Mrs. Dallas in one carriage, and left my daughter to be escorted in the other by Mr. Chew. We were ushered into a splendid antechamber, upstairs, the walls of which were wainscoted with beautiful paint-

ings—at least four hundred different heads, all of great delicacy and nearly the same size. The master of ceremonies led the ladies into a corner of the apartment overlooking the grand waterworks, and I entered into easy conversation with Baron Nicolai. We were almost the first present. The room, however, rapidly filled with glittering officers, military and civil, and with ladies whose glowing, soft, and fair complexions it was impossible not to admire.

After some time passed in listless expectation and chat, I was conducted into a distant chamber and presented to Nicholas I. I had hardly entered the door before he came rapidly towards me, his hands both extended, and with an air of great frankness and ease shook me by the hands with the utmost apparent cordiality. His first words were: "Mr. Dallas, you are welcome to Russia; I have to thank you for the very handsome and hospitable manner in which my disguised visit to your ship was received. I have never seen a nobler vessel. I found you knew me, after I had gone—but did any one recognize me while on board? You were here twenty-four years ago, but you could hardly know me, changed as I am since then. I took your ship on the moment of her arrival, in her ordinary sea-trim; I did not want to see her dressed up. She is an admirable ship. I am going to send some of my naval officers to the United States to learn naval architecture and science, and I must request you to let them have such letters as will facilitate their progress. Can you persuade Commodore Nicholson to delay his departure until after Friday next, when the eighty-gun ship at the admiralty is to be launched? I should be much pleased to have him present and to hear his remarks."

To all and each of these inquiries I of course made replies. He asked me also what the disturbances in Canada were tending to, and observed that when a government became oppressive and forgot the tender care to which a colony was entitled, she justified resistance

<sup>1</sup> George Mifflin Dallas, the author of this journal (selections from which will be printed in two parts), was born in the city of Philadelphia on the 10th day of July, 1792. The family originated in the Highlands of Scotland. His father, Alexander James Dallas, was born in the island of Jamaica. On the 17th of June, 1783, he arrived with his bride in Philadelphia. He chose the profession of the law, and his rise was rapid. In 1801 he was appointed District Attorney of the United States by President Jefferson. In October, 1814, he accepted the Treasury portfolio in the Cabinet of President Madison. George Mifflin Dallas was the third child and second son. He was graduated from Princeton College in 1810, at the age of eighteen; he took the first honors of his class and delivered the valedictory oration, in which he gave promise of that graceful delivery and command of language for which he early became famous. He at once entered his father's office as a student at law, and in April, 1813, was admitted to

the bar. In politics it was the school of Jefferson and Madison and their followers to whose doctrines the elder and the younger Dallas adhered, and in whose political party the Republican, later called Democratic, George M. Dallas was for many years a widely recognized leader. When in 1813 President Madison appointed Albert Gallatin a special commissioner to proceed to St. Petersburg and with Mr. Adams, then Minister of the United States to Russia, to negotiate a peace with Great Britain under the auspices of the Russian Emperor, Mr. Gallatin tendered the post of private secretary to Mr. Dallas. On his arrival at St. Petersburg Mr. Gallatin found that England had declined the proffered mediation of Russia, whereupon Mr. Dallas was sent, alone, to England with despatches to the Russian ambassador in London, to ascertain, if possible, the views of the English Government. This movement resulted in the appointment of the commission to Ghent which after prolonged negotiations

and separation. I told him that I put little faith in the alleged spirit of independence in Canada; that dissatisfaction had long prevailed there, but the people were not, I believed, energetic or united enough for a decisive course of action. He then spoke about Russia, and I said that I had been much struck with the great improvements made during his reign in the department of his marine, especially at Cronstadt, and in the magnificent structures of St. Petersburg. "Why," said he, "I am perfectly satisfied with this people, and will do all I can for them."

At the close of the conversation he again shook me by the hand, and I bowed and left him. I had, during a pause, put my letter of credence in his possession, which he laid upon a table without opening; and in reply to my assurance that the United States were disposed to strengthen and confirm the harmonious relations subsisting between the two governments, he said that he felt delight at the conviction of that truth, and would not be behind my Government in manifestations of cordial friendship. I was immediately afterward conducted to the Empress, who remarked, among other things, that our Government was in practice of changing its representatives here very frequently, and she wanted to know whether the same course was pursued as to other countries and whether it arose from any settled principle of policy. I told her, that it was indiscriminately done—was partly ascribable to the changes to which all popular governments were more or less subject, and in many cases was imputable to accidental causes. "Well," said she, "I hope you will prove an exception to this practice, that you will be happy in Russia and remain long."

We had been formally invited to dine with the Imperial family as soon as we reached the palace; and as soon as the form of being presented had closed, and the Emperor, Empress, the Grand Duchess of Würtemberg, and the grand duchesses, daughters of the Emperor,

ended in the treaty of December 14, 1814, which closed the war. During his residence of more than a year in Europe Mr. Dallas visited France, Holland, and the Netherlands, as well as Russia and England, and met many of the distinguished men of the day. In London he called upon his cousin, Lord Byron, and an amusing anecdote is told of his republican independence in declining to recognize the privilege of the peerage and make a second call upon his distinguished relative until his first visit had been returned. Lord Byron is said to have been much amused when the state of affairs was reported to him, and to have exclaimed, "I like the young man's independence; I will call on him to-morrow." In his twenty-fourth year, on the 23d of May, 1816, Mr. Dallas married Sophia Chew Nicklin, daughter of Philip Nicklin, Esq., and granddaughter of Chief Justice Benjamin Chew. In 1828 he was elected mayor of the city of Philadelphia, but resigned in the year following on receiving from

had mingled in the crowd of the anteroom for about fifteen minutes, the doors of the banqueting-room were thrown open, a numerous band of music struck up, and the company proceeded with apparently very little formality to dinner.

One of the masters of ceremonies led me forward and placed me at table immediately in front of the Empress, while Mrs. Dallas and my daughters were placed next to the imperial family, alongside of the younger grand duchess. I was repeatedly addressed, on various topics, by the Empress, who spoke distinct if not handsome English. Among her other remarks was her desire to know whether our novelist, Cooper, had lately written another book, for he was her great favorite—especially in such works as the "Pioneer," "The Spy," and the "Last of the Mohicans"; she had, however, not read all, nor in my opinion his best productions; and I recommended the "Red Rover" and the "Water-Witch." She had not heard before of his last work on England, and seemed surprised that he should write about a country where he had been so little.

I had cause to be officially and personally highly gratified, and hastened to return to St. Petersburg. We galloped home by nine o'clock, driven by a coachman who was very drunk, but of whose condition we were not aware till safely housed.

I left in the hands of one of the officers in waiting the sum of two hundred rubles, the customary present on similar occasions, to be equally distributed among all who had participated in services to us.

*Sunday, 13th August, 1837.*—The frigate *Independence* sailed from Cronstadt about noon to-day.

#### GLIMPSES OF ST. PETERSBURG.

*Sunday, 20th August, 1837.*—Attended divine worship in the chapel of the British Factory on the English quay. The two front pews have been civilly devoted to myself and family. The

President Jackson the appointment of United States District Attorney, the same post to which his father had been appointed by Mr. Jefferson. In 1831 he was elected to fill a vacancy in the Senate of the United States; entering for the first time a legislative body.

Upon the accession of Mr. Van Buren to the Presidency in 1837, the mission to Russia was accepted by Mr. Dallas, who at his own request was recalled in October, 1839. In 1844 he was chosen Vice-President of the United States, James K. Polk and George M. Dallas receiving 170 out of 275 electoral votes.

In 1856, on Mr. Buchanan's signifying his desire to be recalled, Mr. Dallas was nominated by the Senate on January 31 and confirmed February 4 as Minister to England. He returned to the United States in 1861, arriving at Philadelphia on June 1. He died suddenly, as his father had done, on the morning of Saturday, the 31st of December, 1864.

clergyman, whose sermon was certainly good, is named Law, and is of the stock of Lord Ellenborough, and of Thomas Law, of Washington.

*Saturday, 26th August, 1837.*—The Spanish consul here, Don Raymonde de Chacon, paid me a visit, to inquire about his brother in Philadelphia. In the course of conversation he told me there was very little official business for him to attend to here; that although Spanish produce to the amount of fifty millions was annually brought into Russia from the West Indies or the Peninsula, sugar, coffee, wines, etc., it came in British or American vessels. During all last year but three Spanish vessels came to Russia, to the port of Riga.

*Friday, 8th September, 1837.*—Mr. Rodofinikine called this morning. Among other matters he referred to the wretched condition of the Russian peasantry, and said that they were in the habit of burying their money, whether silver or gold, and of pretending to be utterly destitute; that four or five hundred rubles was a very large sum for them to own—and that until a recent ukase of the present Emperor they were not competent to hold any portion of the soil, but that now there were a million of them who owned small tracts of land which they farmed. He expressed an opinion that too much labor was already bestowed upon agriculture, and that more was produced than could be consumed, and no markets were to be found for the surplus. Great quantities of sheep were raised in the southern provinces; and Count Nesselrode had in the neighborhood of Wosnesensk a flock of about seventeen thousand merinos.

*Sunday, 10th September, 1837.*—The imports of tobacco into St. Petersburg have been the subject of my study to-day. I am satisfied that we supply Russia with this weed to an extent of nearly half a million of dollars annually, and that the trade has increased, is still increasing, and might, by modification of the Russian tariff, be very largely increased.

The present Emperor proposes to emancipate the serfs on the imperial domain, and to confide their government to Kitisoff. The example will ultimately work its way; but its progress must necessarily be very slow, as it will be resisted by the great nobles.

*Tuesday, 14th November, 1837.*—The French ambassador, Baronte, paid us a long visit. He is obviously preparing for a permanent departure. His conversation, always intellectual, was peculiarly agreeable this morning. In speaking of the comparative characteristics of this country and England, France, and America, he was particularly emphatic in pronouncing society in Russia to be listless, somber, and indifferent or unexcitable. In Paris people had no time to note the weather or for

sickness; here time hung heavily upon the health and spirits of all but the natives, and they were heavier than time itself.

#### SOCIAL EXPERIENCES.

*Thursday, 23d November, 1837.*—We go to-night to our first Russian entertainment since the dinner at Peterhof: the soirée of Count and Countess Levachoff. We are invited to come at ten o'clock, and I presume we will reach there by eleven.

*Friday, 24th November, 1837.*—We remained at Count Levachoff's till between three and four this morning. He is an aide-de-camp of the Emperor, a cavalry general, a nobleman of great wealth, and his personal manners recommend him strongly, at least to a stranger like myself. His palace (for it cannot be otherwise called) is exceedingly splendid, and enjoys the reputation of being one of the most beautiful in this city of palaces. The countess has the look and deportment of an accomplished and unaffected American lady, and often reminded me of Mrs. Robert Morris, subsequently Mrs. Bloodgood. Both of them speak the English language fluently. I counted eleven rooms, of various sizes and furniture, open for the entertainment, all brilliant with light, paintings, and decoration. The two largest rooms were appropriated to dancing and card-playing. The order of arrivals and departures at the front door was protected by hussars in couples; and a shoal of most gorgeously liveried servants superintended every detail in-doors. The count, in full military costume, met us at the drawing-room door, took Mrs. Dallas from my arm, and led her to the countess and then to a seat. I was cordially saluted by several whom I had visited but not seen, and among them by my old acquaintance, Politica, who is remarkably unchanged in appearance. Many of the diplomatic corps were there.

*Sunday, 3d December, 1837.*—My presentation to the Grand Duchess Helen, wife of the Grand Duke Michel, took place at the palace at two o'clock. On entering the door, I was saluted by a company of dismounted dragoons, and ushered upstairs through rows of attendants into a magnificent hall of reception, supported in its vaulted and richly painted ceiling by noble columns of white mock marble. Here I remained in conversation with two officers of the household, and admiring the walls and other ornaments of the apartments. I was particularly struck with the glowing and immense paintings executed on the milk-white glossy walls and with the uncommonly beautiful mosaic floor. After waiting there about twenty minutes, I was marshaled through a suite of rooms until I reached one of special elegance,

in which the Grand Duchess advanced to meet me with much animation and grace. We stood in conversation for fifteen or twenty minutes. Her dress was in nothing striking, except a single enormous pearl of great purity which hung directly in the center of her forehead below the parting of her hair. We spoke about my family; about her travels during the summer; about the rapid improvements making in Russia under the auspices of the present Emperor; about the annexation of Texas to our Union, and about the possibility of Canada following in the same course. In all, she manifested much intelligence and vivacity.

*Monday, 4th December, 1837.*—My set of silversalts and cruets were purchased this morning for one thousand and thirty rubles [about \$200], and I think I thus adequately furnished my dining-table, having already procured English glass, French porcelain, Russian lights, and English cutlery. My aim has been to unite elegance and taste with as much simplicity as the subject-matter would admit. As to vying even remotely with the gorgeous extravagance exhibited by the principal members of the circle in which as a national representative I necessarily must move in this capital, the attempt would be equally out of character, in bad taste, and utterly futile.

I went accompanied by my daughter to a soirée at the Countess Laval's. It is one of the handsomest and most richly furnished houses in St. Petersburg. Nothing more strongly shows the magic of wealth. The count is said to have come here originally as a French hair-dresser; and certainly looks the origin at this moment admirably; he is short, mean, and insignificant in appearance. The countess is the impersonation of an indented toadstool, fat, coarse, short, and ugly. They are, however, both very kind persons and seem deservedly favorites. He is one of the four *maîtres de la cour*. His establishment presents many points worthy of admiration. It is on the largest scale of private dwellings in a city where all such dwellings are palaces: its various apartments are adorned with the utmost profusion and with great judgment; its largest saloon, an oblong square of about thirty-five by twenty-five feet, with vaulted ceiling, and walls covered with deep-crimson satin drapery, are hung with choice paintings of the best Italian and French masters. Adjoining this is an apartment of about the same dimensions, whose floor is ancient mosaic from the island of Capri, and whose sides are crowded with specimens of antique sculpture, vases, and curiosities. I noticed especially here a most exquisite antique gorgon's head, another of Augustus Cæsar, and several that I could not identify. The money expended in this single room must have been incalculable.

Beyond this, and after passing a narrow passage, I reached a most beautiful boudoir, modeled with the most elaborate exactness in all its colors, shape, size, and arrangements, after an excavated chamber of Pompeii. This seemed the pet piece of the count and countess, both of whom were eloquent in pointing out its peculiar beauties. There was one display at this entertainment which I had not seen at others, except at the two public balls of the Mineral Springs and l'Assemblée de la Noblesse. In the first of the range of saloons as you entered, one side of the room was occupied by an immense table covered with all sorts of delicacies, ices, jellies, fruit, cakes, sugar plums of all colors and fantasies, coffee, chocolate, wines, *liqueurs*, etc., which was the fountain whence the attendants afterward distributed on waiters to the company, or to which the gentlemen resorted whenever inclined for refreshment. Cards, particularly if not exclusively whist, were playing in four or five saloons; and Countess Laval with entire composure executed a most skillful game of chess with Countess Litta, in the very midst of her guests in the most thronged saloon. The party was what is here called a *rout*—without dancing; beginning at eleven o'clock, and closing in less than two hours; and it was composed chiefly of married ladies from thirty to seventy years of age. I should not suppose there were four girls, as we would call them, present. The dresses were exceedingly handsome, but some of the matrons shocked my American notions not a little by a most profuse display of the bust. Conversation does not seem to be as much a pursuit as it should be; generally speaking, gentlemen arranged themselves in a dark mass on one side of the saloon, respectfully and vacantly gazing at the ladies who were closely packed on divans, ottomans, or sofas on the other side or in the center. The diplomatic body are an exception to this remark, and seemed disposed to make themselves agreeable to their fair associates.

#### A DIPLOMATIC DINNER.

*Monday, 18th December, 1837.*—This being St. Nicholas day and therefore the name-day of the Emperor, it is the subject of universal celebration. Count Nesselrode has a multitudinous dinner at the "Hôtel du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères," to which I am obliged to go, *selon les usages* in grand uniform; and in the evening, as I was formally apprised by the secretary of the Court, Mr. Maikailoff, some days ago, the ball of the nobility will be attended by the Grand Duchess Helen, and all are expected to dress their loftiest. The city generally also undergoes

illumination at night and the Neva consecration.

*Tuesday, 19th December, 1837.*—At Count Nesselrode's dinner yesterday, all the diplomatic corps attended except Luchenfeldt, of Bavaria. On such occasions established etiquette requires that ambassadors and ministers should take their seats at table according to the precedence arising from the dates of their respective arrivals at this court, ambassadors of course as higher in grade being before ministers. I took my place next to Mr. Milbanke below, and as I presumed above Count Schimmelpenninck. In the course of the evening, after we had risen from the table, the Dutchman informed me that he disputed the right of Mr. Milbanke to the precedence he assumed; that he had spoken to Count Nesselrode upon the subject, and to Mr. Brunoff, and that both these gentlemen were inclined to agree with him in the views he expressed, and promised to communicate to him their formal decision on the point. The result would, of course, affect me by advancing me one step in the line should the conclusion be against the British representative. The grounds of his proceeding are simply these: Lord Durham was ambassador, and on quitting Russia he left Milbanke *chargé d'affaires*, an appointment since confirmed by the British Government. As *chargé* left by an ambassador, Milbanke ranks as a minister plenipotentiary and took that rank before either Count Schimmelpenninck or I reached here; but he is not an envoy extraordinary, and that is our most important and distinctive grade, and the count considers it essentially higher than the mere minister plenipotentiary, and therefore entitling us to precedence. It would seem also that Milbanke is even minister plenipotentiary more by a sort of diplomatic brevet than by actual commission in the line; and his personal deportment appears to have kindled a disposition to pull him a little back from the forward position he too boldly takes.

#### THE EMPEROR'S SLEIGH-RIDE AND HIS EARLY HOURS.

*Tuesday, 26th December, 1837.*—I dined to-day with Prince Butera, the Neapolitan minister. He married a Russian widow of immense wealth, owning productive gold mines in Siberia. His residence on the English quay is one of the most splendid establishments I have visited. There were present the Austrian and French ambassadors, the Prussian, English, and Dutch ministers, Count Woronzoff, Count Matuzewitch, the French secretary of legation, the Marquis de Villafranca, and a French attaché. The table was brilliant, and the din-

ner exquisite, especially the dish of Neapolitan macaroni, and the glass of imperial Tokay. During the repast much conversation of a lively character took place respecting Madame Taglioni, whose dancing last evening enchanted the Emperor and Empress. On this topic the Austrian was poetically eloquent, and described the feet of the actress as actually speaking. He insisted also that her extraordinary length of arms greatly contributed to her grace and activity, being admirable substitutes for the balance-pole employed by tight-rope dancers. The Marquis de Villafranca and I, after being introduced, had a long and interesting confab. He is not an unapt looking representative of the Spanish pretender, Don Carlos. Of about forty years of age, short figure, round limbs, jet-black hair and eyes, bushy mustache and swarthy complexion, he looks the young but grave grandee.

I crossed and recrossed the Neva upon the ice to-day, and was amused by seeing the preparations making by a body of men for an extensive skating plain. Trees were planted in the ice on the line of demarcation; some benches were already stationed; the snow was shoveled and wheeled off, and, through a hole cut, water was procured and thrown in buckets over the appointed space, thus securing a smooth and clean surface. On returning home, while walking carelessly with Philip along the English quay, a single-horsed, small sledge approached at a rapid pace, with apparently one of the numberless military officers in it whom we see in all directions, enveloped in a light-blue cloth cloak and with cocked hat and feather, and speeding exactly in the same unattended and simple manner. I did not notice, much less recognize, the person in the sledge until after he had made the usual gesture with his hand (putting it to the side of his hat by his forehead and there retaining it) and had nodded repeatedly at me, with smiles, as if endeavoring to make me know him. I had just time to whip my hat off, and turned towards him most respectfully; it was the Emperor of all the Russias! He flew rapidly by, and I observed that all who were in his track seemed aware almost by instinct of his approach, and doffed their hats and caps instantly. Here was the monarch of myriads—the despotic arbiter of life and death, and liberty, and law—actually and visibly enjoying a sleigh-ride in a style as entirely unassuming and fearless and natural as would be chosen by any one of his subjects or slaves. The constitutional king, Louis Philippe, could not venture on this without the music of whistling bullets being awakened; and even a king or queen of England would run some risk of violence or rudeness. Yet such is the everyday practice

of Nicholas the First. He is probably bold in the consciousness that he strives to do his duty, or the excessive degradation of his slaves presents the least hazard of a generous aspiration and struggle for liberty.<sup>1</sup>

*Wednesday, 27th December, 1837.*—Dr. Leffevre's second lecture on chemistry was delivered this evening and I accompanied three of my children to it. At its close we went to Mr. Law's, the English clergyman, nephew of Lord Ellenborough and our Thomas Law, and remained till midnight. My daughters danced to the music of the piano, while I took my seat at a card-table and won from his reverence at whist ten rubles. How strangely different are the religious prejudices of different countries! Mr. Law dresses in black, and in that alone, when out of the pulpit, differs from any of the crowd of gentlemen who may meet in the ball-room, the theater, or at the green baize.

*Friday, 29th December, 1837.*—We were gratified last night by finding the Emperor among the guests at Count Woronzoff's. He had told the count, when at Moscow, that he would attend his parties, provided that they began at nine o'clock; the count feared that was an impossibility; his Majesty went, however, at the hour he had indicated, and was alone until nearly eleven. Fashion is more potent than autocracy. When I entered the room where he was, I perceived him to be in conversation with Count Schimmelpenninck, and forbore to advance; he caught my eye, left the count, and coming towards me, we shook hands, when he observed that he had met me ten days ago, that I obviously did not recognize him, but that he never saw any person for five minutes whom he afterward forgot.

The Winter Palace is just reported in flames!

#### BURNING OF THE WINTER PALACE.

*Saturday, 30th December, 1837.*—The great Winter Palace is now a quadrangular stack of blackened and gloomy walls; still, however, at twelve o'clock to-night blazing in every direction with almost unabated fury. As to a spectacle, it is more grand and imposing than any exhibition I ever beheld. The Emperor has ordered all dangerous efforts to arrest or ex-

tinguish the flames to be abandoned, and the noble pile with its gorgeous and rich contents is left, surrounded by an army in full costume, to consume itself away. The whole scene is the celebration of the obsequies of some mighty monarch. As yet, the origin of this calamity is merely matter of conjecture and rumor; but one story has an air of verisimilitude and is generally credited. Some persons are said to have been engaged in the apothecary's apartment in making chemical experiments, and having accidentally ignited a quantity of fluid, the blaze extended itself and gradually became irrepressible and inextinguishable. The Emperor was, at the time, in the theater witnessing the graces of Taglioni, and hurrying home he arrived at the palace at the moment when the fire burst forth from several points. This immense conflagration has in no manner disturbed the general tranquillity of the city. No bells have rung, no outcry has been made, no noisy engines have rattled along the streets, and no crowds have been collected. The process of supervising has been allotted to the military and police; the operation has been conducted with the silence, system, and despatch by which those two departments are characterized.

I did not retire to bed this morning until some of the household servants were bustling about, preparing for the day. Circumstances over which we sat brooding had excited vague alarm in all the family. In despotic governments fears of conspiracy and change are always more or less afloat. The agents of the police keep these fears alive as necessary to their own importance. Some of the French newspapers had contained a statement that a plot against the Emperor was being actively followed up. He went to Tsarskoe-Selo for some days, on his return hither, instead of taking up his quarters at once, as he was wont to do, at the Winter Palace. Then he moved about without attendance or parade, as witness the manner in which he appeared at Count Woronzoff's soirée. And we recollected, furthermore, many harsh things said of his extreme and passionate violence in the reviews at Wosnesensk, and especially towards a general officer of noble rank whose badges of honor he rudely tore from his breast with his own hand

<sup>1</sup> Nicholas I. was born in 1796. His eldest brother, Alexander I., noted for his part in the Napoleonic wars, arranged that his brother Constantine should forego his right to the succession; so with the consent of the latter Nicholas ascended the throne on the death of Alexander in 1825. Nicholas, who was a man of great activity, intelligence, and of fine presence, had shown a taste for military affairs, and from the suppression of the revolt that followed upon his accession pursued a policy of repression. In 1817 he had married the daughter of Frederick William III. of Prussia, sister of the late Emperor William. In concert with

England and France he helped to secure the independence of Greece. His war with Turkey in 1828-29 resulted favorably to Russia. The Polish insurrection which began in 1830 was ruthlessly stamped out; and in 1849 Nicholas helped Austria to subdue revolted Hungary. His demands upon Turkey led to the Crimean war, in which England and France overmatched him, and before the end of which he died, on March 2, 1855. His successor, Alexander II., made peace in the following year. It is said that the emancipation of the serfs by the latter accorded with a recommendation left by his father Nicholas I.—EDITOR.

in the presence of the troops. All these ideas, when aggravated by the light of the burning palace, would probably have given way to farther reflection, had not, as if to invigorate and confirm them, a notice been sent me from the imperial guard that two other large fires had broken out in distant quarters of the city; that a doubt existed whether they were not the explosion of some general plan, and that I was desired to be vigilant in care of my own household. I was on the point of revisiting the palace a second time, when I met the soldier at the door who gave this notice to my servant verbally. We were now countenanced in some degree in indulging our imaginations, and we very soon worked our way into the midst of a revolution and the conflagration of the city. I sent for the Secretary of Legation to take charge of the archives of the mission, stationed my servants at the points most suited for effective look-outs, and tranquillized the family as well as I could. The extraordinary silence that prevailed was, however, the great restorer of intellectual composure; and I got all to bed by two o'clock, except Mr. Chew and myself, who remained up and on the *qui vive*.

*Monday, 1st January, 1838.*—The incidents of the conflagration are rapidly developing and engage at present every attention. The number of lives lost is differently stated; some carry it up to more than two hundred, others to eighty, and a general in actual service on the fatal night explicitly assured me that but one man had been killed. A body of grenadiers are represented to have perished by the sinking of the floor at the moment they were endeavoring to remove and save the throne; and the Emperor is said not to have abandoned the hope of extinguishing the flames until he saw the staff of the standard which surmounted the palace blazing, when he lost color for a moment and exclaimed that it appeared to be the will of God and he would no longer hazard the lives of his officers and subjects in the attempt. He disappeared for a short time from among his attendants, who were alarmed at his absence. He had gone into his private cabinet to collect and secure his private papers, with a large bundle of which in his hands he again came out.

There were nearly four thousand permanent occupants of this immense palace, many of whom were entirely dependent upon this sanctuary for their means of livelihood. Numbers of young ladies attached to the court as maids of honor, or in other capacities, have been suddenly deprived of all their jewels and little property and made destitute. Several of them, in their extreme terror, fled from the scene and were not found again for forty-eight hours,

having taken refuge among their friends. Much of the most valuable furniture has been rescued; the Hermitage remains untouched; the interesting collection of portraits which covered the walls of the historical Hall of the Generals was saved by a regiment of soldiers who devoted themselves to that particular object. The crown jewels were early sent away; the Empress, after her return from the theater, went in person and preserved her own jewelry. The splendid malachite vase, esteemed one of the most precious articles, resisted by its weight and fastenings the exertions of sixty men and was lost. No attempt was made to sever the gorgeous jasper columns which adorned the saloons of the Empress from the walls, and they were reduced to powder. The estimated loss is fifty millions of rubles, or ten millions of dollars. Orders have already issued for the rebuilding, and the Emperor has said that he will reoccupy the palace next September—utterly and absolutely impossible!

I am informed this evening that a new ministerial department is about to be created, with General Kisileiff at its head. It is exclusively designed for the government of the private domain and properties of the crown, which have latterly been injuriously neglected; a matter of no inconsiderable importance, when it is recollected that the Emperor actually owns about eighteen millions of peasants, or one-third of the population of Russia. This enormous acquisition has been caused by the loans he made after the French war to the nobles, which being unpaid were followed by seizures, etc.

#### THE RUSSIAN NEW YEAR'S.

*Saturday, 13th January, 1838.*—This is the New Year's day of Russia, and an active interchange of personal civilities takes place. Cards are sent to all one's acquaintances.

The court convened at the Palace of the Hermitage, at twelve o'clock, to celebrate agreeably to my note and invitation the anniversary of the birth of Her Highness Helen. The ceremonial is one deemed peculiarly high and important, and the occasion rallies all the court, all the civil functionaries, and all the military officers, together with all the maids of honor, to the presence of the sovereigns. I made it a point to reach the palace door punctually at the hour designated, accompanied by the Secretary of the Legation. It was instantly obvious that the vast basement accommodations of the Winter Palace were no longer to be had. The door, though not obstructed, was flanked by throngs of liveried servants, whose masters had passed in, and the stairway was equally crowded. On my name being announced, an attendant, dressed fancifully as a



Highlander, presented himself as our guide, opened the mass of human beings in our way, and marshaled us through two lines of richly appareled gentlemen and officers along an extensive corridor hung with the finest paintings, until we reached the saloon appropriated for the meeting of the foreign ministers. On entering I found the corps diplomatique assembled with the exceptions of Prince Butera and Count Schimmelpenninck, who, however, soon appeared. We were all in full costume, and Counts Nesselrode and Woronzoff were with us. A folding-door at the extremity of the room opposite to where we had come in being suddenly thrown wide, we were gratified by beholding an immense array of ladies of honor, dressed in the rich and gorgeous national costume which had been prescribed by the present Empress. The apartment in which they stood was large and beautiful, and they moved about with ease and thus exhibited their fine figures and finer ornaments to entire advantage. The trains were mostly of crimson, purple, or light-blue velvet embroidered in gold or silver, and dragging about two yards upon the floor. The head-dress was a variation of the ordinary Russian nurse's cap, a peculiarity in attire which was very becoming. It was composed of every kind of material and of all varieties of color; diamonds, pearls, emeralds, topaz, etc., etc.; jewelry of all descriptions seemed to have been showered upon each of the ladies. We arranged ourselves in a sort of semicircle, with the Austrian ambassador at the head, and according to the rank of seniority; our secretaries stood behind us respectively; and soon the approach of the Emperor and Empress from the interior of the palace and through the splendid saloon before us was felt. The gentlemen of the bedchamber, with coats covered with gold embroidery, white buckskin trousers, shoes and buckles, and chapeaux and gloves, first moved by us in a throng of about two hundred, going out at the opposite door and halting at the entrance. Then came the high officers of ceremony, Litta, Laval, Narischkin, etc., with their appropriate attire and insignia, who ranged themselves on our left by the side of Nesselrode and Woronzoff; these were immediately followed by the Grand Duchess Helen, wife of the Grand Duke Michel, the Grand Duchesses Marie and Olga and their two younger nieces, daughters of the Grand Duke Michel, who in a line fronting us stationed themselves on our right, the Grand Duchess Helen being within easy speaking distance of Count Ficquelmont: following these imperial ladies were the Grand Duke Michel and the Grand Duke Heir, who as they entered turned a little to the left, and left the way clear for the Emperor and Empress. As their

majesties entered we all bowed first to the lady and then to the monarch, and the former advanced to the Austrian, offered her hand for the usual kiss, and conversed for a few moments. She was victoriously equipped; her train of sky-blue velvet, embroidered with silver flowers to the depth of two feet, was protected and occasionally adjusted by two pages who followed her in the garb of young lieutenants: her cap, in shape and meaning like that worn by the maids of honor, was decorated by rows of enormous pearls and diamonds and appeared to be of cherry-colored satin; her gown was of pink satin richly embroidered in gold, and her necklace, bracelets, rings, etc., were brilliant in proportion. As soon as she left the ambassador, the Emperor advanced to him, shook hands cordially, and talked with animation. His dress was that of a general, unincumbered by glitter, his coat green, his epaulets gold, his pantaloons white buckskin, fitting tight to the skin, and his boots long hussars, eclipsing Day and Martin by their polish. On these occasions, the sovereigns passed slowly down the line of diplomats, addressing each as they liked in succession. When my turn came, I kissed the hand of the Empress, and expressed my gratification at perceiving that her summer travels had improved her health. She said they had on the whole, but just now she felt exceedingly unwell, that she had not recovered from the shock of the conflagration and was utterly unfit to go through the labors of the day; that according to established rule she would be obliged to receive and shake hands with about four thousand persons, and being then scarcely able to stand from faintness how was she to get along? I told her she really looked very differently from what she felt, and expressed my sincere regret; but that perhaps the delight her presence would inspire might react upon herself and give her strength and spirit for the scene. The Emperor shook me by the hand, and at once asked me why I had not been at Count Woronzoff's party on Thursday; that he had seen Mrs. Dallas and my daughters there, but looked in vain for me. I told him that I had gone, unfortunately for me, too late; that I had been occupied (as in truth I had been, in preparing for all the emergencies that might arise in my interview with Count Nesselrode) until past eleven o'clock, but that had I been aware that I should have met his Majesty, no engagement should have detained me. He said, with a smile, "The plain truth is, you are more fashionable than I am!" The Empress spoke to me in English, the Emperor in French. After completing the semicircle, and being then by the door, they both turned round, gave a salutation to the corps generally, and left the room,

their attendants all following; and then came, in one splendid and prolonged sweep, with a magnificence of rustle and smile altogether overwhelming, the whole cavalcade of maids of honor, giving to us a rare and surpassing review. When the door closed we were at liberty to depart, and I hastened to my carriage, eager to reach home and to divest myself of my stiff uniform.

*Monday, 15th January, 1838.*—Countess Laval's first ball was to-night, and we repaired to it. Her magnificent dwelling expanded still farther than I ever noticed it before. A new series of splendid rooms was opened in addition to those heretofore described, and ended in a vast dancing saloon, with superbly arched ceiling, lighted by two immense bronze chandeliers and side candelabras, wax candles in all. No supper—but a large apartment with two tables kept loaded all the evening with refreshments. Card-tables innumerable and all occupied.

#### CONSECRATION OF THE NEVA.

*Thursday, 18th January, 1838.*—*La fête des Rois*, and the consecration of the Neva under a pavilion opposite the Hermitage and through a hole cut in the ice, performed by the Emperor. We started to witness the proceedings at half-past eleven, in a crowded carriage, and drove at once upon the frozen river, and within two hundred yards of the pavilion. It was thronged with priests in their sumptuous garments and with military officers who brought their respective banners to be dipped in the holy flood. All present stood uncovered, while mass was being performed. The vast multitude collected for the occasion could not be less than forty thousand in number; and those gathered immediately round the scene of consecration and in a compact mass upon the ice I presumed to be about twenty thousand.

*Friday, 19th January, 1838.*—At noon went to the Emperor's private palace of Annitchkoff, high up the Neffsky prospect, and was in due form presented to his Imperial Highness, Monseigneur the Grand Duke Czarovitz Heir, with whose fine form, soft countenance, and unafected good manners I was highly prepossessed. His destiny is a striking one, but I should much question his possessing the bold and resolute qualities of the will, as well as the active intellectual ones, without which he must be a sad and uncertain successor to his father.

#### RUSSIAN TOBOGGANING.

APPRISED by De Sersay that our diplomatic set of ice-hills at the country residence of Count Laval were ready, I drove Phil and my daughters forthwith to visit them. We were all de-

lighted with the amusement. Two parallel and nearly adjoining straight platforms of beautifully clear and smooth ice, formed of distinct but inseparably united blocks of uniform width and depth, run in opposite directions for perhaps two or three squares, and rise gradually at their opposite extremes fifty or sixty feet high into the upper chambers of two fanciful pavilions: the line separating the plains is a mound of soft and clean snow of sufficient elevation to prevent its being easily surmounted in the progress of the sport, and the outer boundaries are similarly composed. Very small and exquisitely neat and showy sledges are employed, with runners generally of polished steel, and with light and narrow cushions of differently colored velvet, or worked worsted, or red morocco; each accommodates two persons, and a lady may seat herself in front of a gentleman with her feet a little lifted and pointed the course she is going: the start from the pavilion is precipitous, and of course requires no external impetus: the velocity is extreme during the greater part of the transit; the course is governed by the gentleman, whose hands are covered with thick stuffed gloves or gauntlets, and who, leaning a little back, by the slightest touch upon the ice guides the vehicle with the nicety and precision which characterize the effect of a rudder upon a skiff: the sledge is arrested gently or abruptly according to the skill of its manager, at the end of the plain and at the foot of the other pavilion, into which the parties mount by a stairway with their feathery apparatus, and taking a fresh start in the reverse direction shoot back to the foot of the pavilion whence they first issued. The going and return may occupy two or three minutes, and seemed to be accompanied with great exhilaration and delight to the voyagers. The cold was severe, and we had somewhat too much wind, but my children, who immediately and fearlessly engaged in the excitement, were much pleased. There is no real danger, though awkwardness and failure in the descent may cause vexation, as they give rise to loud mirth in the spectators.

#### THE EMPEROR'S ENGLISH.

*Tuesday, 23d January, 1838.*—At half-past seven I repaired to Count Nesselrode's with Mrs. Dallas and Julia. It was a grand and select ball to the imperial family, and the early hour of meeting was designated to suit the health and medical advisers of the Empress. The Emperor, among other ways of indicating his disposition, raised his voice several keys louder than usual, and said to me: "You are the first gentleman that has ever induced me thus publicly to speak English; I hope you will

now undertake to teach me, by frequent conversations, how to speak it well." "With all my heart," was my reply, "though you really speak it so distinctly and correctly already, that I have little or nothing to teach: I will, however, undertake anything in order to be frequently honored by your attention." Shortly after this remarkable interview, the Grand Duke crossed one of the longest rooms, came directly up to me, and shook hands. He said he had met me the day before yesterday while he was in a sledge and I on the English quay, and that I had not recognized him. "How is it possible for me, an utter stranger, to know you when, without a single attendant, you drive along like any private person, muffled up completely in your cloak and covering your face from the cold? As soon as you lifted your hand and thus in some degree uncovered your face, I hope your Highness perceived that I knew you instantly."

"No doubt, no doubt; the truth is, I prefer moving about without escort. I think we are the only reigning family in Europe who attempt it. It is impossible for me, as a military man, to leave off my uniform and to divest myself of these tell-tale ornaments [epaulets and orders], but I should like to avoid the notoriety consequent upon them."

Our supper at half-past eleven was as rich, *recherché*, and gorgeous as possible. Prince Narischkin told me that he had himself purchased at Paris the golden and malachite ornaments of the table, and had given 95,000 rubles for them. He subsequently sold them to the Emperor, who gave them for the use of his vice-chancellor.

*Wednesday, 31st January, 1838.*—We went to the ball of the Princess Bellozelskoy at half-past seven. The imperial family were all there. The exterior of the house in the first story was illuminated by innumerable lamps. Four hundred and fifty guests were accommodated at the supper table. The magnificence of the whole scene is indescribable. The stone staircase, branching off at the first landing, and leading to the second story, was, in its vastness, ornaments, and style, worthy of the splendor to which it introduced one. After the company had collected in what seemed to be an endless suite of drawing-rooms, another suite embracing an immense picture-gallery was thrown open for dancing, and finally, beyond this, another and still more noble series were displayed for supper. The picture-gallery contained many very fine originals—especially of the schools of Correggio and Annibal Caracci—and one, Judith with the head of Holofernes by Andrea del Sarto, particularly struck me. Numbers of the subjects were too indelicate and ought to have been removed on this occasion. Suffering as I did during the whole

evening with a pain and fever in my head, I felt no disposition to partake in the gaiety around me, and less to converse: my chief occupation was, therefore, in examining the paintings and statuary. In the apartment appropriated to engravings, of which the collection in portraits is extensive and remarkable, I was surprised agreeably by seeing one of Trumbull's, of the Battle of Bunker Hill. While musing silently and in a retired niche, I was agreeably surprised by the Emperor's coming to me, shaking hands, and then leaning against the wall as if disposed to a little chit-chat. I asked him, in allusion to what took place between us at Count Nesselrode's, whether he was ready to take his first lesson in English? He said he hoped to benefit by frequent conversations with me, and repeated emphatically the assurance that I was the only gentleman by whom he had ever been induced to speak the language publicly. I expressed myself highly flattered. He then asked me what I thought of the state of things in Canada, and intimated that he had heard of my doubting whether the insurgents had among them a single man competent to lead them. The Emperor said that it was neither his temper nor his policy to rejoice in the misfortunes of other countries even though they might be supposed beneficial in their tendencies to the interests of Russia; but, added he, almost in the very words repeating the sentiment he uttered when I presented my letter of credence at Peterhof, if the mother country will act oppressively and unjustly towards her colonies, they are right to resist. I told him I thought it would be on the whole the better policy for England to consent to the separation and independence of Canada.

"But where then is she to get her timber?"

"From the Baltic," I replied.

"Yes," he said, "she might; but perhaps not of such good quality nor as cheap."

This drew my mind to his fleet off Cronstadt, and I hazarded the remark that I should like to see those fine-looking ships of his out in the Atlantic.

"Why," he replied, "I will probably send some of them there; but really I am charged in all directions with such ambitious projects and such mischievous designs, that I am averse to do anything that in the slightest degree might countenance these imputations."

"Send a small squadron to visit us," said I, "in the United States. I assure you we shall give them a most cordial welcome."

"I should like to do so," he answered, "and think I will send one or two; but my men, who make such good soldiers, make poor sailors."

"Give them, or some of them," I observed,

“the opportunity of good long voyages and of a bold sea, and they will rapidly improve.”

The Emperor then invited me to accompany him, as soon as the opening of navigation in the spring would permit it, on a visit to his Baltic fleet; an invitation which I of course accepted. I forgot to record that when he adverted to the accusations commonly made against him, I interrupted him, as apologizing for them in some degree, with the remark, “But, then, you are so powerful that you naturally inspire jealousy.”

“Yes,” he said, “we are powerful only, however, for defense, not for attack,” and he seemed anxious that he should express this last idea distinctly, for he quit English, for an instant, to give it in French.

I became this evening personally acquainted with Count Cherchineff, the minister of the department of war. He is said to be distinguished by great ability and energy. His figure is tall and stout and well proportioned; his head and face rather small; his hair, eyes, and mustache peculiarly black; and his complexion somewhat pallid. His department exacts infinite labor. I told him that we had repeatedly interchanged visits and cards without meeting, and that I had ascribed it to his incessant engagements. He said I was right—that such an empire as this, with such a military system, required inconceivable exertion, especially with an emperor who entered into all the details of business. “For instance,” said he, “here I am at midnight, but I must be up at five in the morning, and must meet the Emperor at nine. I have been eleven years in my present post, and can’t tell how I live through it all.” I should presume him to be about fifty.

#### GAMBLING IN RUSSIAN SOCIETY.

*Wednesday, 7th February, 1838.*—I played chess with Count Litta, the crack performer of the highest circles here, and beat him. This at once establishes my reputation; it does more, it affords me a resource at these soirées much better than the one of gambling at whist to which I am so generally persuaded, and to which the lack of something to kill time with strongly tempts me. The extent to which gambling is carried with this sober game of whist is surprising. One gentleman of the diplomatic corps told me that he frequently played for twenty thousand rubles a game, and that last year he lost about eighty-five thousand rubles. Écarté, too, is constant, and I have noticed many thousands changing owners at this sport in the course of fifteen minutes. At large entertainments twenty or thirty card tables may be readily counted—all actively going. I

have, however, noticed but one disagreeable scene of conflict, and that ended tranquilly and liberally.

*Friday, 16th February, 1838.*—The splendid ball and supper of Count Woronzoff, at which he entertained the imperial family, opened this evening at half-past seven o’clock.

I very soon heard, in the course of the evening, the intelligence which has reached here through the Berlin “Gazette,” in relation to the attack made by Sir F. Head upon the Canadian insurgents on Navy Island in the Niagara River; his having routed them; and his having pursued an American steamboat, which was said to be engaged in their service, killed her crew within our jurisdiction, set her on fire, and allowed her to drift over the Falls. The incident is a stirring one, and is regarded here as involving an outrage upon the sovereignty of the United States, which cannot be overlooked. There is obviously a general dislike of English policy and pretension; and everything is eagerly caught at to fan a quarrel with her.

#### THE EMPEROR’S PERUKE.

*Wednesday, 21st February, 1838.*—In the evening we repaired to the ball of Madame Boutourlin at about nine. The Emperor and the two Grand Dukes, *Héritier* and Michel, came in the course of the night; the first danced a quadrille with our hostess. After shaking hands I expressed myself pleased to see that he still danced: he said he was too old, but that an old sentiment of attachment to the lady had got the better of him. “Certainly not too old,” said I, “because you are several years younger than myself and have not got one of the gray hairs by which I am surmounted.” “Yes,” he replied, “my hairs are gray, the few I have, and this (pulling the curls on top) is a peruke.”

On conversing to-day in terms of admiration of some of the things I had seen at the Imperial Library, Count Lerchenfeldt informed me that many, if not the most, of them had been obtained from the libraries of Polish nobles whose estates had been confiscated. I had noticed a Polish name in many of the volumes.

*Monday, 19th March, 1838.*—Mrs. Dallas and I at half-past four repaired to Prince Yonsonpoff’s to dinner. The establishment is on the grandest and costliest scale. The endless range of lofty saloons, the countless paintings upon the walls, the masterly and exquisite statuary, and the numberless servants gorgeously dressed out in green and silver, with pages having caps and flowing feathers, altogether overwhelmed our faculties of admiration. It redeemed its reputation of being the largest

private residence in St. Petersburg, and far surpassed in splendor anything I have yet seen. I should suppose there could not have been less than a thousand paintings of the various masters, and some of them of immense size. For two alone, the present Emperor offered two hundred and fifty thousand rubles, but the sale was declined. That, however, which riveted my gaze was the noble piece of sculpture of Canova, "Cupid embracing Psyche"; it was placed in the center of a circular apartment whose roof was a dome, and whose walls were tapestried in glowing scarlet; the effect upon the white marble was beautiful. Our dinner was all that boundless wealth could

make it. The guests were fifty in number, Counts Orloff and Woronzoff, Prince Mensikoff, Princess Belozelskoy, Countess Laval, Sherbatoff, Blondoff, ministers of Prussia and Sweden, etc., etc. The dining-hall of spacious dimensions was on one side decorated with family pictures, and on the other with the family plate tastily arranged in two glass-covered cases, which filled the whole space, and which being divided into shelves enabled one to see every curiously worked piece distinctly, and to take the whole magnificent service in at one *coup d'ail*. The fashion of collecting family plate and of thus displaying it has recently been borrowed from England.

(To be concluded in the next number.)

George Miffin Dallas.



## A HEADY MAID.

DO men wive hypocrites from very choice  
 Or very blindness? He who would a mate  
 To cling about his flattered neck, and voice  
 In purring tones her sweet obedient fate,  
 — Though all the while she work her will withal, —  
 Can none of me, who hate such warm deceit.  
 I 'll say plain yea and nay; if th' occasion call,  
 A round, firm nay, with tone in no wise sweet,  
 But savored rather bitter, if there fell  
 Necessity. . . . My grandame says, should he  
 Speak out his yea as round and firm as well,  
 What would the outcome be? 'T would plainly be  
 — Poor dame! she 's worn with marriage many a day —  
 That I should hate him till his yea grew nay.

### A HEADY MAID IN LOVE.

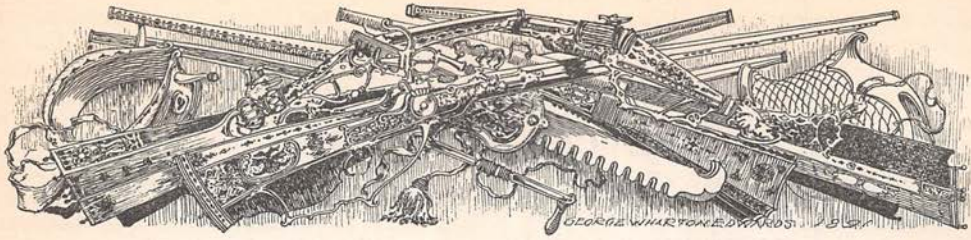
DID I say hypocrites? I meant it not.  
 How were a maid a hypocrite who 's led  
 By love to use mild patience in the stead  
 Of disputatious word and anger hot?  
 Besides, it were not womanly; 't would mar  
 The grace of dignity, a woman's crown.  
 'T were but a child who needs must scream and frown  
 For what he cannot grasp. . . . Sweet grandame, far  
 Behind lies all that thoughtless time of mine,  
 And everything is altered, I of all  
 Most changed. The earth hath taught an alien lore  
 That grants the sun and moon a bright strange shine;  
 And something lost is held in gain's sweet thrall —  
 Though one I know, myself I know no more.

Louise Morgan Sill.



ENGRAVED BY G. KRUELL, FROM AN OLD RUSSIAN LITHOGRAPH.

EMPEROR NICHOLAS I.



## AT THE COURT OF THE CZAR.

### MINISTER DALLAS IN ST. PETERSBURG.—II.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE EASTER FESTIVAL.

*Friday, 20th April, 1838.*—A stranger, who has not witnessed, can scarcely imagine the ardor with which the lower class of this city give themselves during the present week, immediately following the long *carême*, to the most childish sports. They are encouraged, too, by all sorts of military and police arrangements. During the last three days of the week, and particularly in the afternoon, immense crowds collect at the common rendezvous in the square fronting the Admiralty, where have been erected temporary playhouses, circus, juggler's booths, menageries, whirligigs of all kinds, flying horses, swings, &c., &c. During this afternoon, I should suppose there assembled no fewer than fifty or sixty thousand people, and the whole machinery of amusement was in full exercise. The throng of carriages, whose circuits are carefully directed and supervised by mounted dragoons and whose multitudes and equipments are equally countless and showy, all in regular and unceasing motion, give to the *coup d'œil* the effect of a most magnificent panorama. The pervading silence forms, however, a forcible and eloquent contrast to the noise and bustle which would accompany such a scene in the United States. Scarcely anything is heard but the sound of the driving carriages, the bands of music within the theaters, or an occasional wild and monotonous song from the women who are swinging with great velocity. Real and loud hilarity is not discernible; nor, indeed, is it possible to find in any of this dense mass the slightest disposition to quarrel or to controversy; the great occupation of those who meet seeming to be, notwithstanding beards, moustaches, whiskers and dirt, to exchange kisses on each side of the mouth.

*Sunday, 22d April, 1838.*—The exhibition

<sup>1</sup> This paper concludes the extracts from the late Vice-President Dallas's journal. For the first instalment see THE CENTURY for May.—EDITOR.

before the Admiralty has been eminently showy and amusing to-day, the last of the carnival. I went with Philip on foot, while the ladies crowded the carriage. The multitude exceeded any assemblage I ever before saw; men, women, and children, all dressed with cleanliness and finery, and carriages without number, most of which were splendid equipages with four horses and gaudy liveries. Without the slightest tincture of exaggeration, I should say that there were collected not less than two hundred thousand human beings. The usual perfect order prevailed. The carriages, which moved in several regular lines in front of the space appropriated to diversions, were divided into as many concentric circles, and proceeded in a walk; had they formed in one straight line they must have extended seven or eight miles. At about half-past five, while I stood on the terrace of the Admiralty admiring the spectacle, I noticed the composed and slow progress of a high military officer on horseback, in what might be termed the center aisle between the rows of carriages; he was distinguished by a broad blue ribbon, and was soon joined by another whom I recognized as the Prince of Oldenburg. There was obviously now some ceremony preparing, and I waited for it. In a short time the Emperor, in a brilliant uniform of scarlet and white, mounted on a fine bay charger, appeared at one extremity of the aisle, accompanied by the Grand Duke Michael in a hussar uniform and the Czarovitz in scarlet and white, with a throng of about a hundred aides-de-camp in the same glowing dress; the cavalcade passed up to the right extremity at which the Emperor formed it in a line. The Empress then, with her daughters, in an open barouche drawn by six grays, with three postillions clothed like jockeys in white satin jackets with light-blue satin sleeves and white breeches, and with silk cap and tassel, drove into the aisle and passed in front of His Majesty by whom she was formally saluted; several carriages followed her with her maids of honor

and a crowd of officers attended. The glistening of the uniforms, the nodding of plumes, the richness of the equipages, the caracoling of the beautiful horses, and all combined with the immensity of the crowd and the universal devotion to amusement and hilarity, produced an effect altogether beyond description. The imperial cortege rode up and down in the manner I have described, several times.

#### THE EMPEROR'S DRAUGHT FROM THE NEVA.

I MET the Emperor this morning on the English quay. He was alone, stopped, shook me cordially by the hand, and after a little chat, informed me that he had received news from Lake Lagoda which rendered it probable that the ice in the Neva would break away in the course of two or three days.

*Thursday, 26th April, 1838.*—Bets on the departure of the ice in the Neva are numerous and heavy. The Emperor himself gambles on this event. It has been expected to move for several days, but remains firm, and one unacquainted as I am with the effects and operation by which it is secretly governed would deem it stationary for ten days or two weeks more under almost any condition of atmosphere.

*Saturday, 28th April, 1838.*—The ice in the Neva gave way and started on its downward course at about ten o'clock to-day. At about five in the afternoon the usual ceremony was performed by the Emperor drinking a tumbler of the water, filling the tumbler with pieces of gold for the benefit of the officer who handed it, and ordering him to cross the river in his barge. The barge proceeds, cannons are fired when it is half-way and again when over, and thence forward the people are at liberty to use their wherries. The intercourse to-day between the city and the islands was suspended for about eight hours; between 6 and 7 P. M., but few cakes of ice were perceptible. The bridge of boats was swung on one side at about noon and will probably not be restored before to-morrow morning.

*Thursday, 4th December, 1838.*—Mr. Soltikof while spending this evening with us narrated several anecdotes with great spirit, which it may be worth while to preserve. He is a man about sixty-five years of age, of immense wealth and of great talent as he said. He was formerly high in Imperial favor, but owing to some personal indiscretion in his manners at Court he was obliged to retire at least from intimacy. It is a fact remarkably illustrative of the little attention which the United States receives from European savants that Mr. Soltikof, although unquestionably eminent for ability and erudition, and though he has a copy of the Declaration of Independence with au-

tograph signatures hanging up in his library, did not know that General Washington had ever been President, but thought that he had retired wholly from public affairs, from the peace of '83 to the period of his death! He would hardly believe me when I assured him that he had been our chief magistrate for eight years under the existing Constitution. Mr. Soltikof says that the inundation of the Neva, in 1824, was very sudden and inconceivably disastrous in its effects; he occupied the house in which he now lives in the Small Moscow, and was sitting at his office table sealing some letters and packages; he had felt an unusual coldness in his feet: he rang the bell for his servant, and ordered him to take some letters to the post-office, and to his utter amazement he received for answer that it was impossible as the waters were six feet high in the streets, and still rushing upwards. He had scarcely been told this before the floor on which he stood burst and opened and the waters rose in his apartment up to his own middle; this swell lasted for about six hours. The Emperor Alexander was born in 1777, a year memorable by a similar inundation; and when that of 1824 occurred he said it announced his approaching end, and became an altered man. Soltikoff describes the change as striking and distressing; the calamity seemed to be forever present in all its horror to his mind, and to weigh him down; one melancholy incident he particularly dwelt upon, that of an old woman whom he saw while he was wandering about to relieve the sufferers, and who was eagerly searching for the corpse of a young and only grandson. The Emperor offered her ten thousand rubles which she declined receiving, saying she wanted nothing but the body and continued to weep and search, when suddenly she espied the object of her pursuit covered with dirt and rubbish, and rushed to it frantic with delight, and embracing and clinging to it in prolonged delirium.

#### SOLTIKOF'S RECOLLECTIONS OF 1814.

WHEN in the campaign of 1814 the allies entered Paris, the Emperor Alexander separated himself from his staff and, in the confidence of good intentions towards the French people, confidently rode alone and in advance. He was stopped by a knot of *poissarides*, one of whom advanced and presented him a handsome bouquet of flowers, saying that he was the only one of the monarchs whom they loved.

During his stay at Paris, Alexander was in the habit of almost daily visiting the Empress Josephine at Malmaison, and, indeed, it was owing to his energetic friendship at the Congress of Vienna that Eugène Beauharnais,



Duke of Leuchtenberg, was allowed to retain Bavaria. On one occasion driving out to see the ex-Empress in his carriage with four horses abreast, and galloping as usual, he met a French officer in a rich curricule and pair; the Frenchman would not yield the road, but cried out, "Give way, give way!" and the consequence was that when the two equipages encountered the curricule was overturned and broken to pieces; its horses knocked down and much wounded, and their owner thrown out, rendered perfectly furious with rage; the Emperor alighted immediately, begged the officer's pardon, hoped he was not hurt and ascribed the disaster to the carelessness of his coachman. "No!" was the reply. "You are doubtless one of those who have conquered our capital and you think to ride rough-shod over us, but I will not submit to such indignities and wrongs. I demand the satisfaction due to an insulted man; there is my address, and I expect to see you by eleven o'clock to-morrow morning." "Agreed," said his Majesty, "you shall be satisfied." Early the next day the Emperor sent General Kissilieff to the Frenchman with a splendid curricule and two of his finest horses, requesting him to accept them in lieu of the injured ones; at first the Frenchman haughtily declined, saying that he waited the personal presence of General Kissilieff's friend and associate, and would receive nothing but the satisfaction of an apology or a duel: he was thunderstruck, says Mr. Soltikoff, and overwhelmed when Kissilieff replied: "That is impossible, my friend is His Majesty the Emperor of Russia."

*Thursday, 6th December, 1838.*—I do not recollect to have seen the following anecdote, which is given me as illustrative of the political finesse of the Empress Catharine II., but which is probably an invention. Charles J. Fox had for some time been very hostile to Russia and its sovereign, in the House of Commons; the Empress gave a large entertainment at the Hermitage, to which she invited several distinguished Englishmen who happened to be here at the time. In one of the rooms there was a plaster cast of Fox, which was surrounded by busts of Cicero, Demosthenes, etc., and in this apartment and near the busts the Empress had engaged herself at whist; in the course of the evening her English guests sauntered into her neighborhood, and seeing the cast expressed aloud to each other their surprise; the Empress paused, listened for a moment, and then said to them: "What! gentlemen, are you surprised to see that bust in the midst of the greatest orators? Do you think me incapable of doing justice to an enemy? I can give Mr. Fox the rank to which his wonderful ability entitles him even while I suffer

under its exertions." These words were carefully reported to Fox, who soon afterwards became the parliamentary friend and eulogist of Catharine; the plaster cast soon gave way to one of marble and another of bronze.

THE HEIR'S OATH OF ALLEGIANCE AND A ROYAL BETROTHAL.

*Thursday, 13th December, 1838.*—At half-past ten went to a ball at Count Levaschoff's, it was exceedingly brilliant. Prince Hohenlohe apprised me that the diplomatic body would be invited to attend the ceremony of affiancing the Grand Duchess Marie and the Duke of Leuchtenberg on Sunday next, with their respective ladies. This necessarily involves a special and unexpected expenditure of at least two hundred and fifty dollars, which I can no more avoid than I could avoid returning the Emperor's salute as I pass him in the street, and yet I am expected to meet all such charges out of my salary!

*Friday, December 18, 1838.*—In the course of the evening Mr. Kaiserveldt made himself very entertaining by a number of anecdotes of his own personal experience. His description of the scene which took place at the Imperial chapel when the young Grand Duke became of age, and took the oath of allegiance, gave a delightful impression of the domestic feelings of the autocrat and his family. He says that the church was thronged with the high prelates of the church and dignitaries of State; a small table was placed in the center on which were placed the Bible, some religious emblems and the written draft of the oath to be taken; after some prefatory ceremonies the Emperor led his son to the desk and bade him read attentively and aloud the oath before he signed it. The young man began audibly and distinctly; but when he came to that part which imported that he vowed obedience and love to the Emperor, his father, his voice faltered, choked and finally ceased; he seemed to be overpowered by his feelings and wept profusely; the Emperor who stood close by remained motionless and gave no symptom of agitation except two heavy tears which rolled down his cheeks; a second time did the son endeavor to proceed, but again failed under the tenderest emotions about his father; the Czar allowed some minutes to elapse that he might master himself, and then with all the apparent unmoved dignity of the monarch pointed again to the scroll. As soon as he had completed the oath, the Grand Duke threw himself into his father's arms, where he sobbed aloud for an instant, when recollecting his mother to be at the side of the church he rushed toward her and was received with an affecting and prolonged em-

brace. The Emperor unable further to control himself went to them while thus clinging to each other, and encircling them both with his arms gave way to a paroxysm of emotion. In this scene, says Mr. Kaiserveldt, there was no acting; it was a sudden and obviously wholly unexpected overflow of parental love, it drew tears from all who beheld it.

*Sunday, 16th December, 1838.*—At eleven o'clock this morning I went accompanied by Mrs. Dallas and Mr. Chew, all *en grande tenue*, to the Imperial palace of the Hermitage. The accumulation of equipages on the river front probably induced our being invited to alight and enter at the door in the Milione, as we were driving on; the British ambassador and ambassador had just preceded us. We passed through several rooms until we came to the one temporarily converted into a chapel, and crossing that we were ushered through two lines of brilliantly equipped officers, along the Vatican gallery or corridor, and into the apartment appropriated to the reception of the diplomatic corps. We were early, none of our colleagues, but Clanricarde and his suite being there, and the customary guard of grenadiers not stationed until ten or fifteen minutes afterwards. Lady Clanricarde was handsomely and tastefully dressed in a silk of deep blue, fronted with a costly show of point lace, and having an expansive train bordered with the same and richly worked with Roman pearls; her head glistened with a coronet of diamonds whose luster however seemed to fade when contrasted with those of the Russian court. Our associates soon arrived. The ambassador of France wore a gorgeous but obviously old dress, white with a profusion of gold tinsel and a train of crimson velvet embroidered in gold. Countess Schimmelpennink was overwhelmed with finery of all sorts and of all colors; silver and gold tinsel, jewels of every description, a train fringed with silver, an upper gown of gauze fretted with golden stars, and a half-turban. Contrasted with these, the white satin gown with light pink satin train flounced with tulle and a headdress of a few flowers (the costume of Mrs. Dallas), unadorned by a single jewel of any sort, struck me as exceedingly modest, peculiarly suited to an American lady and withal really much the prettiest. The English and Austrian ambassadors wore their military uniforms of scarlet and white, only differing in the collocation of the colors, the first having scarlet coat and white trousers, the latter having white coat and scarlet trousers. Baron Barante was in civil dress richly covered with embroidery, Baron Blome, the Dane, resembled the Englishman, except that he glittered with some crosses and ribbons. Count Rossi, the Sardinian (whose wife is not yet out

of her room), wore a remarkably becoming dress of green and gold, turned up with white. Count D'Appony, the Austrian attache exhibited his fanciful and favorite costume of the Hungarian nobleman and ranger. The ceremonies began by the ambassadors and ministers (without their ladies or secretaries) being conducted in due order of rank to the large and lofty square apartment arranged into a chapel, and stationed along one side of it, with their chief, Count Ficquelmont nearest the door at which it was known the Imperial family would enter. A screen of the necessary size, with the external panels beautifully painted with saints and scriptural subjects, its parts movable on hinges and having two doors in front was fixed on the eastern side of the room and formed the retiring and preparing recess of the priests. Between its two doors was the altar, and on both sides of this screen, within a small, low railing, were the Court choir. Directly in the center, and at a short distance from the screen was a platform about ten feet square raised, say a foot or more, from the floor, and covered with crimson velvet bordered with gold lace. A small table was on this platform and the rest of the apartment was divested of furniture in order to make room; the large glass chandelier in the middle was illuminated, and when we entered, there were assembled only a few of the highest civil and military officers. About thirty of the clergy officiated, three of whom were of the highest rank, and one of these the very old gray-haired and enfeebled Metropolitan: three others were of a secondary rank, the bonnets or miters of these six were worn during most of the ceremony, and were ornamented with miniatures, pearls and other jewels in great abundance. The robes of all who officiated were of a material which resembles rich, thick, cut velvet of a glowing crimson color—with golden crosses worked in it in every direction, and with broad stripes of gold embroidery sunk as it were in the velvet. The manner in which these robes are adjusted is rather clumsy; they seem to be thrown over the shoulders, as one would throw a sheet or tablecloth, when intending that it should conceal the whole figure, without regard to grace or fitness. We had not been long in this apartment when we heard the customary suppressed "hush" which on such occasions preceded the Imperial family, and we of course fell into our line. The *fourriers*, *chambellans*, etc., etc., in double file and in their richest liveries, passed in at the northern door and went out at the southern one; the Grand Master of Ceremonies, and the Grand Marshal of the Court, with two or three other high dignitaries, bearing large golden square staves, surmounted with crowns in brilliants or gold

work, quitting the lengthened procession and stationing themselves at the extremity of the diplomatic line and in front of the velvet platform. Then entered the Emperor, Empress, their second son Constantine, their two other sons, the Grand Duke Michael and his Grand Duchess Helen, the Grand Duchesses Marie, Olga and Alexandra, and the betrothed (or "promis") the Duke of Leuchtenberg. At the threshold the Imperial party were met by the whole of the clergy, the Metropolitan at their head, bearing a sumptuous silver cross, with a golden full length image of the crucified Saviour upon it, and another carrying the chalice of holy water, drops of which were scattered by a sort of short bouquet of green leaves. Each of the Imperial family kissed the cross, held up for that purpose by the Metropolitan and his hand also; and each, bowing forward as if to approach the chalice of holy water received a few drops from the bouquet on the palm of the hand, which they carried to their lips. They then crossed the room and ranged themselves immediately opposite to us, the Emperor leaning his back against the edge of the open door, through which could be seen an endless vista of magnificently dressed ladies unable to get accommodations in the chapel. Directly behind the Imperial family, I was unexpectedly pleased to find that the ladies of the foreign ministers followed. My friend Count Schimmelpennink had not noticed this, and when the throng of maids of honor had passed and had (as many as could) arranged themselves throughout the room, he abruptly turned to me and said, "I believe I will go home!" "What for, Count?" "This neglect of our ladies is not to be borne; you perceive that they have been left with the secretaries and attaches in that remote antechamber." Had such been the fact and had I, as probably I should, encouraged the Count by the slightest assenting movement, we must have had an agreeable little flare-up. As it was, I relieved my colleague by pointing out to him his own wife, safely ensconced by my own, close to the Imperial family. The betrothment began by His Majesty's conducting his daughter Marie and the Duke to the platform, the latter being placed on the right of the former, and the Emperor returning to his former position. A lighted wax taper was then placed by two of the priests in the hands of each of the affianced. Religious exercises followed in the Greek form, of which I could understand nothing. Two priests brought, on large golden plates, the wedding rings, and deposited them on the small table; that of the Grand Duchess, which I could distinctly scan, was a very large diamond of extreme brilliancy. The Metropolitan with some ceremony placed

each ring on the finger of its owner; and after other recitations the Empress went forward, took the ring off the hand of Marie and placed it on that of the Duke, and the ring off the hand of the Duke and placed it on that of Marie; at this instant, as if the artillery had actually witnessed the movement, a roar of guns issued from the fortress on the opposite side of the Neva, exceeding in number one hundred. The venerable Metropolitan administered to each of the parties the promise or engagement, reading it from one of their sacred volumes; and they in turn manifested their assent by kissing the golden cross he held up. They then descended from the platform; the Grand Duchess threw herself into her father's arms, and remained some seconds, clinging to him under the influence of strong emotions; they were embraced by all the Imperial circle in succession, and here seemed to terminate the special act of affiancing. The priests however proceeded with their performances, during a short part of which it was very inconveniently necessary for all who were present to kneel. The hymn for the safety of the Emperor, in which the choir joined with great effect, was delightfully executed. When the whole closed the Imperial family passed out at the door through which they entered, bowing to us as they passed, and were followed by the almost endless train of maids of honor, chamberlains, etc. The ladies of the foreign ministers went in the current and in the order they came; while the ministers themselves were detained in the chapel for some time, preparatory to their being led in the direction opposite to that taken by the court, the whole way round through the interminable saloons of the palace until they came to a large and richly ornamented one overlooking the river, where they again marshaled themselves in line awaiting the coming of the affianced couple, to whom they in due solemnity tendered their felicitations. Here we had been joined by the secretaries and attaches; our ladies being left in the apartment in which they were originally placed to receive first the visit of the Duke and his future Duchess. This ceremony gave me the first opportunity I have had to form any sort of opinion of the young man so suddenly exalted by the Emperor by incorporation into his domestic circle and into the highest grade of his honors and services. His appearance is prepossessing, though certainly not handsome nor striking.

#### COURT GOSSIP.

*Tuesday, 15th January, 1839.*—The Marquis Clanricarde made himself uncommonly agreeable. He described Queen Victoria to me; she was a little lady, with fine large gray eyes that

turned up impressively and a peculiarity of bearing and manner which would make her remarked in any company; when she is gay her joyousness is that of an open-faced girl, but the instant she is serious she draws down the corners of her mouth, drops her eyes and looks intent; she sings well and reads admirably, filling the largest hall with a voice and enunciation as distinct as a bell without the least exertion.

*Monday, 27th February, 1839.*—Prince Hohenlohe told me the following anecdote. Some ten or twelve years ago, Jerome Bonaparte, now called Count de Montfort, at a soirée of his own, played cards with great vehemence; he lost all the money he had about him, then pledged his rings, and finally laid his watch upon the table. It was a small gold one, the back of which opened by a spring. A lady overlooking the game admired the watch and took it up to examine; on her attempting to open the back, Jerome immediately clasped it, and said: "That must not be done." His wife, who stood by, insisted upon knowing what was in it—grew angry, reproached him with having some keepsake of a favorite there, and finally bursting into tears quit the room. Jerome then opened the watch, showed to all present that it contained a beautiful miniature of his first wife (Betsey Patterson) with the remark: "You see, I hope, that I could not with propriety let her look at it!" The Prince says that it was notorious that he remained deeply attached to his first wife long after their separation.

#### THALBERG.

*Wednesday, 6th March, 1839.*—Sigismund Thalberg gave his first concert in St. Petersburg this evening at the *Assemblée de la Noblesse*. I had obtained four tickets out of the nine hundred sold, which were at fifteen rubles or three dollars per ticket. We went half an hour earlier than the appointed time, in order to get convenient seats, but we found the saloon already crowded. Many had gone as early as five in the afternoon, to wait patiently till eight. Everybody of ton and distinction was there, and the Imperial box was graced by the three Grand Duchesses, Helen, Marie, and Olga, attended by Baroness Fredericks and Kitty Tschitcherine.

A great poet, a great orator, a great painter, and a great musician (composer as well as performer) are scarcely to be separated on the scale of intellectual power and interest. Thalberg is the first musical genius I have ever seen. I had anticipated much but he more than satisfied me. He executed on the piano three of his own pieces, and made the instrument speak in tones I never imagined it capable of. The vast and discerning audience testified in tumults of applause to his triumph. He seems

a young man of twenty-five, of rather slender figure, florid complexion, light chestnut hair, and a distinct Grecian profile. His personal deportment was modest, deferential but perfectly self-composed and calm. Dressed in full black, with white cravat and maintaining a mild but imperturbable serenity, he took his seat at the piano, with the preoccupied air of a young clergyman full of his most interesting sermon. His first touch carried conviction of his excellence. It involved a delicacy, a certainty, an entirety which made the note fall in its utmost perfection upon the ear. As he proceeded, this exquisite distinctness accompanied him through all the mazes of his elaborated composition. The instrument seemed like a wonderful combination of the richest, clearest and sweetest human voices.

In coming away, the sudden rush through the ante-chambers was rather alarming. We got, however, in the advanced group with Count Nesselrode (whose little rake-hat made him look as if he had already been squeezed to death, and who kept screaming for his weeping and terrified daughter Marie) Princess Soltikoff, Countess Kreptovitch, etc., etc., and were able to reach our carriage with no mishap, except the loss of a breastpin.

*Tuesday, 12th March, 1839.*—At half-past ten we went to Princess Hohenlohe's, and remained till half-past two. I played chess with the representative of Don Carlos, the Duke of Medina Sidonia and Marquis of Villafranca, giving him a castle and a knight, and then beating him. The company was numerous and gay. Thalberg made his appearance as a guest, and seemed very much courted by some of the younger married ladies. He declines playing at such parties, unless engaged for the purpose and then his fixed price is 1000 rubles or two hundred dollars for the evening, during which he executes two or three pieces. Hohenlohe is not up to such extravagance; but the pianist finds himself in pretty constant demand. What orator, statesman, lawyer, poet, or even novelist has ever been paid at this rate?

*Thursday, 14th March, 1839.*—At half-past four went with Mrs. Dallas to the splendid dinner of Prince Youssoukoff. There were about fifty guests. The extent of this palace and the magnificence of its furniture and arrangements struck us as forcibly as ever. The Prince has his band of music (the only private one of which I am aware) and it played at a short distance from the company, changing its position when the dinner was announced, during the whole of the entertainment. He has also a theater attached to the establishment, and his household servants number five hundred.

I sat at table between Prince Mensikoff and Madame Paliansky, both of whom were agree-

able: the Minister of the Marine very shy about the actual condition and number of the Russian navy, and the lady amazed to hear of a country in which husbands were faithful to their wives; she thought she would send her daughters to marry in America.

#### TRIALS OF THE PERSIAN AMBASSADOR.

*Friday, 23d March, 1839.*—The Princess Shakoffsky, who spent the *avant soiree* with us, gave an animated account of the recent Persian ambassador at this court. He was a young man, scarcely one and twenty. He dressed in the rich and magnificent costume of his own country, with a number of what we would call "morning gowns" which he would often remove, one by one, as he felt himself, while visiting, getting too warm. He could not bear to see ladies and gentlemen dancing together, considering it offensive to modesty, and at balls kept his eyes studiously upon the floor; and yet he esteemed all women as mere objects of sale, and on one occasion, at the theater, struck by the extraordinary beauty of the Countess Zavadowski hesitated round to inquire at what price she could be purchased. He was passionately devoted to chess, and obliged the young men of his suite to play with him, and always to be beaten, morning, noon, and night. Once at a large party, Princess Shakoffsky challenged him to a game; he seemed to think it impossible for a lady to have any skill. She asked him whether she was bound not to win finally: he replied that he would not play unless she promised to exert herself to conquer; and they began. In a short time she checked his king and queen, and took the latter; he became excessively agitated and summoned to his assistance his four secretaries, who became themselves apparently much disquieted. The company clustered round the board, and took sides, and the Princess received so much and such various advice as to each move, that she ceased to think for herself and lost the game. Early next morning she was waited upon by the four secretaries, who believed she had purposely lost the game, and who came to thank her, as had she won it, they would probably have undergone imprisonment for a month! He was in the practice of walking about with his eyes shut or bandaged, saying that he wanted to accustom himself to live and move without seeing, as he presumed he should one day be deprived of his vision. Since his return to Persia, for some real or supposed offense, he has had his eyes torn out.

#### SONTAG SINGS FOR CHARITY.

*Tuesday, 26th March, 1839.*—At seven Mrs. Dallas, my daughters and I repaired to the

grand concert given by the Society of Patriotic Ladies for the benefit of their schools. On reaching the magnificent hall, the Salle de la Noblesse, we found it crammed with about fifteen hundred visitors, but seats had been set apart for the diplomatic corps, which we managed to attain by passing across the elevated platform appropriated to the music to the opposite side of the room very nearly *en face* of the Imperial box. Nothing could exceed the splendor of the scene. All that is noble and fashionable and elegant and tasty were assembled, the military and ladies richly dressed. The whole of the Imperial family (except the Grand Duchess Helen, who is unwell) were present. The Empress, Marie, and Olga, clothed in white, their foreheads glittering with diamonds, with the two boy grand dukes, Baroness Fredericks and Prince Volkonski were stationed, like the gorgeous figures of a superb tableau, on the crimson velvet-lined and curtained recess, or rather small room just in front of us; while the Emperor and Grand Duke Michael found their way at an open door close by, and stood tranquilly in the crowd. Here were certainly at a *coup d'œil* to be seen the elite of St. Petersburg if not of all Russia. All the dames and demoiselles d'honneur and ladies of distinction occupied the first ten or twelve benches nearest the music; all the general officers with their dazzling epaulettes and swords were clustered about, standing; all the Imperial Council and the Senate and the *État-Major* were collected. Nobody seemed to be absent whose presence could add to the brilliant *tout ensemble*.

This concert which takes place annually is one of the contributions of the nobility to charitable purposes; its performances are executed by the most distinguished ladies and the instruments are managed chiefly by amateur gentlemen. At the head, however, of the songstresses was the magnet of the evening, the celebrated and incomparable Sontag, now Countess Rossi. She had been persuaded to run the risk of reviving past recollections, to forget that she had stepped from the boards of the opera into the rank of a minister and the arms of a count, and to lead the flower of Russian noblesse and fashion on this benevolent occasion. What a splendid triumph did a single gift of nature seem to obtain! Her voice overwhelmed competition, and by its wonderful volume and sweetness produced a sort of enchantment which made you for a while insensible to anything else. The Czar, his court and his army, all seem to lose their prestige and their power, while that magical voice domineered the ear. She sang twice—first the finale of Donizetti's opera, "Anne Bolena," and was in this accompanied by Madame Bastinieff and Madame Krudener and three gentlemen, second Bellini's

"Norma." The effect of the last song was beyond description, and the applause was vehement and protracted. It recalled Malibran to my mind, and yet seemed superior by the addition to her voice of that of her father, Garcia. Nothing could be richer, nothing could be clearer, nothing could be vaster, nothing could be softer, nothing could be deeper, nothing could be more delicate, and nothing could be more decided. I might go on multiplying epithets, without describing a bit more distinctly. On the whole I think it was the best singing I ever heard, and as good as can be. The manner of the Countess was perhaps a little constrained in the effort to avoid relapsing into the cantatrice, and on two occasions instead of confining her curtsy to the Empress, she for an instant bent to the applauding audience. I doubt much whether this taste of the glory of past times was not more really delightful to her than any of the rank or other results of her marriage. She was sent for by the Empress at the close of her song—an act which is the common courtesy shown to professional songsters, and which has been constantly shown to Tagliani; I thought the discriminating delicacy of Her Majesty might have avoided on this occasion.

#### POSTAL SPIES.

*Thursday, 4th April, 1839.* . . . The discreditable practice of opening letters as they pass through the post-office, a practice said to be universal, and of which I have had convincing proofs, is attested by several anecdotes current here, of which I note the two following: Not long ago one of the foreign ministers complained in person to Count N. that he had received a bundle of dispatches through the post-office, rumbled, torn, and obviously having been opened. The Count coolly observed: "It must have been done very carelessly; I will give instructions against such negligence in future." On another occasion the Swedish minister, meeting the Director-General of the post-office, casually said to him that his subordinates ought to be more careful in their process of examining his letters. The director gravely protested that nothing of the sort was done: "Oh, I don't mind it," said the Baron, "but as in their hurry they sent me my dispatches from Stockholm with the seal of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Holland, I think they want lecturing." The director only replied with the exclamation: "Is it possible!"

#### THE NEW WINTER PALACE.

*Wednesday, 10th April, 1839.*—The reoccupation of the Winter Palace has been signal-

ized by splendid "gratifications" from the Emperor to those who have contributed to its reconstruction. General Klein-Mihel has received a loan of one million of rubles with which to purchase an estate, and the Order of St. Andrews, with a gold medal surrounded by brilliants. Count Cernicheff received as a gift three hundred thousand rubles and it is supposed will be sent ambassador to Vienna, a post for which Benkendorff and Klein-Mihel were his competitors. All the subordinate laborers on the palace have received a silver medal and now parade them on their breasts at the Cachelles. At this season of every year, it is customary to distribute more or less of these imperial favors.

The mortality among the workmen engaged in rebuilding the Winter Palace is represented to have been frightful. As the emperor has undertaken to re-enter during the feasts of Easter, immense heat was kept up in the interior to dry the walls, etc., and this produced all sorts of fatal disorders. Of course this effect of his will was not communicated to his majesty.

*Sunday, 14th April, 1839.*—The court circle, intended to have been held at the Winter Palace on Tuesday last, was deferred, owing to the fatigue and indisposition of the Empress, to this day, at noon. I reached the diplomatic reception room, without traversing much of the residue of this magnificent newly-finished structure. The basement affords accommodation for any crowd of servants, and the white marble stairway leading to the upper story, with its lofty, painted and gilded ceiling, and its ornamental statuary, is vast, striking, and beautiful. The apartment assigned to the foreign ministers was one in which a small and handsome throne occupied the center of a large recess, immediately in front of a painting of Peter the Great guided by Wisdom: its walls were of crimson velvet studded with gold double-headed eagles somewhat larger than a man's hand. From the vaulted ceiling hung the richest and tastiest chandelier of solid silver, chased and worked into oak wreaths encircling Russian eagles, the immense size of which surprised me. Against the walls a number of lustres of the same rich and solid material, each six or eight feet high, exquisitely elaborated were attached, and in two piers stood wide tables of pure silver. The mixture of gold and silver, though it seemed to increase the gorgeous display, detracted from the taste of the ensemble. The steps and floor of the platform on which the throne stood were carpeted with rich crimson velvet; the rest of the floor was figured and waxed wood.

*Monday, 15th April, 1839.*—I procured tickets for the admission of my family to explore

the Winter Palace, and we repaired thither at one o'clock. We entered by the great central door on the river side, and mounted the noble marble staircase, whose solid, carved and polished banisters of the same material particularly struck us. . . . In surveying the endless elaboration of work of all kinds, bestowed upon this building, one is utterly at a loss to comprehend how it could be executed by human means in the course of the brief interval between the conflagration and the present moment. An exclamation to this effect involuntarily escapes the lips as you enter each one of the more important chambers. . . . Nothing more exquisitely luxurious, costly and refined can be imagined than the private apartments of the Empress. They remind one of the descriptions in Lalla Rookh, of the Moorish Alhambra, of Sardanapalus, and of the Arabian Nights. . . . There was a striking and agreeable difference between these apartments and those of the Autocrat. In the latter nothing was feminine, everything elegant, commodious, nothing useless or trifling. He has no bed, he has no carpets, he has no toilet table, he has no knick-knackery. Such also were the rooms of the Grand Duke. The Grand Duchesses's, on the contrary, partook of the delicacy and luxury of the Empress's. . . . In the chambers of the younger children was a room provided with a small sentry-box, two small muskets, and the posts usual in front of guard-houses as props for arms; this is the military closet of the two Grand Dukes. In one of the rooms of the Empress I was pleased with the apparent lightness and finish of the sofas, chairs, and tables; they were of iron highly polished, and looked like the most fragile ebony.

#### PRINCELY STYLE.

*Wednesday, 17th April, 1839.* . . . At eight o'clock, expecting to meet all the Imperial family, we went to the ball of Prince Youssoupoff's. The Emperor and Grand Duke Michael attended, but the Empress excused herself by sending word that her physician advised her staying at home, and all the Grand Duchesses remained with her. The interest of the evening to me arose from the presence of Marshal Paskevitch, with whom I had several agreeable chats. He is a younger man than I had supposed, has a lively air, and is frank and agreeable in conversation. He told me he was fifty-five. His decorations, crosses and orders were extremely brilliant, glittering on his left breast and from around his neck like a huge mass of diamonds. The Czar, after his usual kind shake of the hand, said he had not been to a party for nine weeks; that he wanted to induce his wife whose health was bad to stay

at home by setting the example. Everybody agreed in considering the entertainment the most splendid which could be given by any person below royalty. Nothing could transcend the magic of the supper: its groves of orange trees towering eight or ten feet above the heads of the guests and laden with fruit and flowers; its gorgeous arbor prepared for the Empress, over which hung in clusters ripe, red, white, and purple, intermingled with leaves, grapes of the largest and most luscious appearance; its gorgeous and glittering table ornaments, its golden chandeliers; its dazzling company and still more dazzling liveried servants. When from these two rooms, the eye passed to the adjoining ones, to the antechambers, the refreshment saloon, the endless suite of halls and galleries devoted to paintings and sculpture, the card-rooms, and the expansive branching stone staircase flanked with marble statues and fragrant with exotics, it was difficult to suppose the whole the creation and property of a private subject. He is said however to enjoy an incalculable revenue. He is, however, sufficiently noted already in the diary. I could not help thinking that the Empress stayed away, not because of any real malady, for she walked on the English quay this morning, but in order to avoid witnessing or countenancing a fête that approached too near the Imperial style to be agreeable in a subject. The poor Princess, who had hoped to make it worthy of her mistress and her guest, looked the picture of despair when told that she could not come.

*Saturday, 20th April, 1839.*—The evening spent at the soirée dansante of Countess Schimmelpenninck. Among the gentlemen were Villafrauca and General Danieleffsky. I had with the latter a long and interesting conversation on the condition and history of Russia, and the characters of the Emperors Alexander and Nicholas. His mind is turned closely to these subjects; and he is now actually preparing for the press a work on the campaigns and policy of the late Autocrat. He accompanied Alexander as confidential secretary throughout all his great movements from the year 1804.

. . . Among other matters I remarked to Danieleffsky, that I felt surprised at their retaining, in a country like this, the law for the equal distribution of intestate estates, abolishing primogeniture; that their aristocracy must inevitably become poor and lose their consequence, and that we regarded such a law as the very cornerstone of our republicanism. He replied simply: "This is a despotism; our Senate now merely records after attesting the Imperial ukases. Peter the Great once made an ukase establishing *Les Majorats* or the right of primogeniture. The nobles soon felt their independence, and in less

than twelve years the Senate, while recognizing Peter's title to the throne, had advanced so far in their pretensions that they presented for his signature a written Constitution of Government! The law was certainly not the exclusive cause of this—great political results require a combination of causes—but it was the leading cause—and Peter abolished it without delay." Thus when the object is the same, the abatement or destruction of aristocracy, a republic and a despot must pursue the same course.

#### THE EMPEROR'S WHIMS.

*Thursday, 2d May, 1839.*—The Emperor met young Meyendorff with a companion near the boulevard the other day. He was on horseback, they walking on foot. Having been long absent from Russia, the young men did not know the person of the sovereign, and of course, omitted the customary bow. His Majesty immediately dismounted, went up to them, and reprimanded them sternly; they in vain pleaded their ignorance of his figure; he ordered them to proceed forthwith to the guard house, and upon their remaining stationary, not knowing where the guard house was, he called up a sentinel and directed him to accompany them to the prison. They were extremely alarmed, wept bitterly, and were immured for some hours in a wretched cell. At the expiration of that time, a guard announced to them that the Emperor had ordered them to be escorted to the Anischkoff palace; they went, expecting little short of Siberia or decapitation. When at the palace, they were stationed near a corner of one of the apartments, and then left to themselves. They were surprised to notice that several young ladies now and then, popped their heads in at the door, and looking at them for an instant, retreated laughing. At last the Emperor came in, and walking towards them said: "Young gentlemen, you have had lesson enough for the present; I am sure that you will know me hereafter, wherever you may see me; and now to remove the impressions of the day come and dine with my family and myself."

As an illustration of the extent to which the most important matters are subject here to Imperial whims, I give the following from young Count—. The Empress having written a letter to her father gave it to a servant to put into the hands of a courier then waiting to start; the servant, misunderstanding the order, deposited the letter in the post-office, and the mistake was not discovered until five or six hours had elapsed; in the meanwhile the regular mail for Prussia, and indeed all Western Europe was made up and dispatched. As soon as she was told what had been done, the Empress sent an express to command the whole mail, bag and

baggage, back to St. Petersburg: about fifteen hours were lost, everything was reopened, the Imperial missive recovered and placed in the courier's care, and then, but not till then, the mail allowed to resume its journey.

*Friday, 7th June, 1839.*—Rose this morning, after long and serious reflection, under the solemn conviction that it was my duty, at all hazards to take my family home this summer, and if my recall were not sent before I reached there, to abide the decision of the President whether I should return here myself or not. I accordingly inquired into the best modes of quitting, and found that my most convenient and economical course will be to proceed hence to Havre on board the steamer, the *Paris*, on the 24th of July next. I must set about preparing for this.

#### AN IMPERIAL DUCHESS'S TROUSSEAU.

*Tuesday, 9th July, 1839.*—Having received our "billets d'entree" we went this afternoon to see the trousseau of the Grand Duchess Marie. It is displayed in the Salle Blanche of the Winter palace. The throng of visitors was immense, producing a heat and a pressure nearly insupportable. Our party got broken into detachments, and we were obliged to move along with the dense tide without being able to see all that was exhibited, or to examine anything closely. The court dresses with their rich, embroidered trains were the most conspicuous objects, and were certainly very splendid. I counted in all one hundred and forty dresses most of them exceedingly elegant; and some of them morning wrappers trimmed with lace. The four sets of jewelry were in two large glass desks. The toilet-tables, and their ornaments, one of chased silver, and the other highly worked silver gilt were strikingly beautiful; the former purchased as a present for his sister from the Grand Duke Alexander on his recent visit in England. Nothing could surpass the collection of furs, the cashmere shawls, the countless bonnets, the laced and worked pocket-handkerchiefs; and all the etceteras of a fashionable toilette. The services of porcelain and of silver, and of silver gilt, each of great taste and execution, and apparently calculated for the largest scale of entertainment, formed to my eye, the richest part of the display. Glass in its most attractive shapes and in vast quantities loaded several tables. The tablecloth, napkins, doilies, etc., were endless. Even the culinary apparatus was admirable. Indeed it was impossible to imagine an article of use or ornament, with which a bride should be provided, that was not here in its utmost perfection and in exhaustless quantity. The whole was truly Imperial, and upon a moder-



ate estimate must have cost very little, if at all, short of a million of dollars.

#### VISIONS OF THE STEAM ENGINE.

*Friday, 12th July, 1839.*—In speaking upon the progress of human discovery and science, Count Michel Woronzoff, [the Governor of Odessa] remarked that the application of steam to propelling vessels through the water was, in fact, very far from being a modern idea; that he himself read a passage in an old Spanish author named Vilarete in which it was as clear as language could make it that an ingenious mechanic had undertaken the experiment before Charles V., and that though he failed its practicability was asserted by the historian, though he alleged that the machinery would be always liable to burst. So, also, he said that during the reign of Louis XIV. a Frenchman was visited at an insane hospital by a celebrated English nobleman who afterwards claimed the merit of discovering the steam engine; that the alleged madman was so-called and treated simply because he had over and over again pestered the chief of the Department of Marine with earnest entreaties for pecuniary assistance to enable him to show how vessels could be navigated by steam, and the count mentioned an authoress in whose works the whole of this last statement was made. The great merits, however, of Fulton were admitted as unquestionable.

#### AN IMPERIAL WEDDING.

*Sunday, 14th July, 1839.*—At twelve o'clock, accompanied by Mrs. Dallas, I went to the Winter Palace, agreeably to invitations, to witness the marriage of the Grand Duchess Marie and the Prince Maximilian of Leuchtenberg. The foreign ministers and ladies, after waiting with the general company for some time were escorted by Count Woronzoff to the chapel, and arranged on the two sides nearest the chancel, forming an alley for the imperial cortege. We noticed that two pairs of pigeons entered at the open windows, and alighted, after flying around the dome, over the altar; an incident that may have been accidental, but which many conceived to be the result of design. The Metropolitan and a concourse of twenty or thirty priests, robed in rich vestments of crimson thickly crossed with gold embroidery and with miters glittering with jewels and enamel pictures,—some bearing the sacred image, and others carrying wax lights, stationed themselves at the grand entrance to receive the Imperial party. Everybody wore their richest clothing, all the ladies having long trains, and all except the diplomatic ones having the Ka-

koshnick brilliantly studded with diamonds or otherwise ornamented. The bride wore a superb diadem of diamonds, and on the very top of her head, a crown of the same description. Her train was an immense one of crimson velvet, deeply bordered with ermine. Of the religious ceremonies I could understand nothing; they were exceedingly tedious. There was an interchange of rings between the bride and groom, effected through the agency of the Metropolitan; they sipped the consecrated wine from the same golden goblet, and during part of the proceeding, for about twenty minutes, while the Metropolitan was reading to them, golden crowns were held over the heads of the couple; over that of the Grand Duchess by her brother the hereditary Grand Duke Alexander, and over that of the Prince by Count Pahlen. At one time the couple were led, with their hands united, by the Metropolitan, three times round the altar. At the close of the ceremony, the groom led his bride to the Emperor by whom he was directed to embrace her, and then followed the family felicitations and kissing. The court choir performed the great *Te Deum* most effectively and the cannon of the fortress aided by peals from all the huge bells of the innumerable churches sent forth a deafening and yet exhilarating uproar. After kissing a number of the priests in succession, the Imperial circle left the Greek chapel, and went to where a temporary Roman Catholic chapel had been constructed in some interior apartment and the marriage ceremony was here performed again. We got home as expeditiously as we could at about four o'clock.

At eight o'clock we repaired to the *bal paré* at the palace. La Salle Blanche, an apartment of extraordinary magnificence; its one hundred and twelve Corinthian columns and the balustrades above them with its immense chandeliers having, since we were last in it been most richly gilt. Here also, all the ladies wore trains. No dancing was executed but the Polonaise; there were no refreshments; and the ceremony lasted only for about two hours; the fatigues of the day being too much for the strength of the Empress. Among the remarkable costumes seen on this occasion were those of the Sultan of Kirghis, with his retinue, come to make presents to the Emperor on the marriage of his daughter, and of a Queen of Georgia.

*Monday, 15th July, 1839.*—We were bound to be at the great theater *en gala* at eight o'clock. I was assigned by the Director a box in association with Count Rossi. The performance was a dull ballet only relieved by one capital scene representing a theater crowded with spectators before whom a danseuse was

making her *début*, while we were supposed to be behind the scenes. Nothing, however, could equal the brilliancy of the *coup d'œil* presented when the whole audience rose to greet the entrance of the Imperial family into their box. The Grand Duchess Marie, as the bride, came in first, and was saluted with vociferous acclamations; then her husband, then the Empress, and lastly the Emperor. By the by, I had noticed yesterday that during the wedding ceremonial there appeared to be an air of abstraction or preoccupation in His Majesty, and I found it to have been caused by the arrival of news of the death of the Sultan Mahmoud, who has by will directed his son, only eighteen years of age, to be under the guardianship of one of his sons-in-law until he attains twenty-five, and who directed the other son-in-law to be forthwith strangled. Nicholas seemed tonight to have, in a measure, recovered his spirits.

## LEAVE-TAKING.

*Tuesday, 23d July, 1839.*—Count Woronzoff apprized me that the Emperor was in his cabinet to grant me an audience of leave. I shall never cease to remember this conference with pride and delight; it convinced me I had not lived in Russia without doing public service and without achieving the reputation I desire. The Emperor was cordial, kind and full of feeling. He first addressed me, after we had shaken hands, upon my personal motives for returning to the United States “at the moment,” he said, “when we all have learnt to appreciate you and your family, and when my whole court, without exception, are cherishing the best dispositions for you.” I answered with the undisguised frankness due to such an inquiry from such a man; told him that my private affairs, the education of my children, and my limited resources compelled me to quit him, and that I felt deep regret at a necessity which I could not control. He again seized me by the hand, and assured me that he heard it with sincere pain and sorrow, and hoped that, if ever fortune should improve my ability, I might again visit Russia and desired me to be sure of a hearty welcome. I told him that I derived some consolation in the reflection that I left him *au comble du bonheur*; that I could distinctly perceive in the happy marriage of his daughter a source to him of unbounded and unalloyed gratification, and that all I had had the happiness to see and hear of the Prince of Leuchtenburg satisfied me that his confidence was well founded. He received this remark with apparent delight and grasped my hand anew, and said: “I believe him to be an admirable young man, worthy of everything I am doing for him, and that he will make my

child perfectly happy. You are right in thinking me, at this moment, as happy as a father can be.” I then indulged in the trite reflection that the period of attaining such contentment was the one at which philosophy told us we should, in this unstable world, be most prepared against change and adversity. This thought seemed congenial to his mind. His countenance varied its expression from joy to melancholy, and he replied, giving it at once a special direction: “Yes, the ill health of my wife gives me much anxiety; I cannot persuade her to omit anything she deems a duty, and to refrain from exposure or fatigue. She becomes daily more feeble, and now she insists upon going through the distractions of this fête, its intense and crowded heats and all its labors, as if her health were perfect.”

He then returned to our political relations; was happy to know that between him and the United States there could exist no sentiments but those of the most friendly character, and hoped that I went away under the same impression. I told him that my attention to the subject had produced a conviction that our highest interests as a nation were identified with those of Russia. “Not only are our interests alike,” said he, “but (with emphasis in his tone), our enemies are the same.” We recurred freely to the fact that the political institutions of the two countries were radically and essentially different; “but” he remarked, “they tend in each to the happiness and prosperity of their respective inhabitants; and I am engaged in introducing some liberal ameliorations, particularly in the department for the administration of justice, which I hope will be attended by most salutary effects.” I commented upon the necessity, however, of his having an eye to everything, and he said *that*, under the circumstances of Russia, was a vital duty.

I handed him my letter of recall which, he observed, he very reluctantly received, and he laid it on his desk without breaking the seal. We again shook hands, and I left him. Count Woronzoff met me, in great haste, saying that the Empress was waiting to receive me. Mrs. Dallas and my two daughters had just taken leave of her. There was obvious impatience all round to commence the ceremonies or gaieties peculiar to the evening, and I went through as rapidly as was consistent with respect.

I then put off my sword, and put on my Venetian or domino, and entered the *bal masqué*. A more absolute jam of human beings of all sorts, conditions, grades, forms, physiognomies, gaits, costumes and tongues cannot be conceived. The heat in the halls was intense. The polonaise immediately began, led off by the sovereigns, before whom as they advanced, turning in every zigzag direc-

tion, the compact mass gave way and opened an avenue for the brilliant train of courtiers, officers and fashionables, almost as if by magic. On one occasion as the glorious file came forward, I found myself screwed tight and motionless between two Kirghese Khans, some Chinese, and one or more Russian serfs, but falling back resolutely, I caught the eye of the Emperor, who saw my predicament and effort and exclaimed aloud in clear English; "I beg your pardon, sir!" to which I had no time for replying except by a bow of the head and a smile. Shortly afterwards, I perceived him approach Mrs. Dallas and with the polite inquiry "Oserais-je vous demander pour une polonoise," lead her repeatedly by the hand through the apartments. He congratulated her upon her intended visit to Paris, said it was a magnificent capital and that many years ago he had attended one of the most magnificent balls given there; and he repeated to her the regret he felt to part with us.

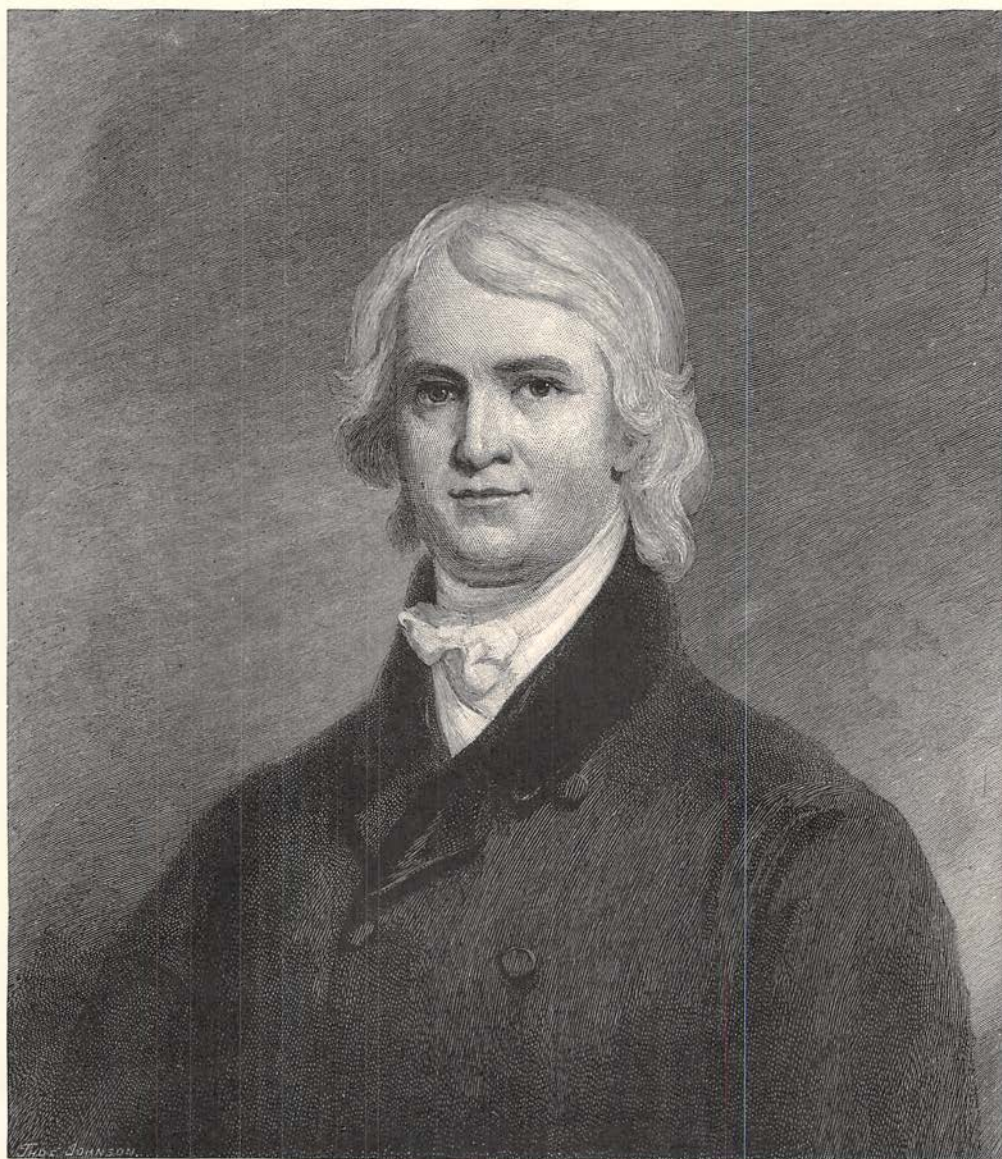
A splendid supper was served apart from the crowd, at about nine o'clock, and the chamberlains having arranged the parties which were to occupy the several *lignes* classified numerically, each carrying eight persons and the number being about thirty, destined for the principal persons of the court, we left the table and hurried, amid some confusion and mud and wet, to the equipages. Ours was number three, superintended by Count and Countess Borke: all being comfortably seated the Czar and Czarina in the van gave the order to proceed, and off we went for a drive of an hour through all the labyrinths of illumination and amid the finest display of water-works I ever beheld. The scene was as wonderful as any of the creations of Aladdin's wonderful lamp. There could not have been less than 500,000 lights, arranged in every possible form, creating a bright day, shining in reflection from the beautiful lakes, and glistening behind cascades, extending into dazzling alleys of a quarter of a mile in length, forming obelisks of vast heights, or spanning in arches the rivulets which intersected the walks. The great *jet d'eau*, the

Samson or Hercules, with countless others in all directions, sparkled and rumbled most musically, while a host of festive frolickers, estimated by Count Borke at 200,000, opened into avenues, as the cavalcade advanced, in front of the tents which were pitched for their enjoyment and accommodation within the open spaces of the gardens. Fine bands struck up at certain distances from each other; and in one of the widest and longest alleys of glowing fire, the court cortége, in order as it were to heighten their pleasure by seeing and saluting each other, turned round and round repeatedly. It is now to be described only to describe the delirious and extraordinary spectacle. To me and mine it was perfect enchantment, realizing and surpassing all we had read or anticipated.

We drove to our quarters about one in the morning, and bent upon achieving our regulated plan we hastily changed to our traveling dresses, packed up our finery, bade adieu to our friends, among whom we must ever affectionately remember the Barantes, the Hohenlohes, the Butaras, the Rossis, etc., etc., and pushed forward for St. Petersburg. Here, however, began a fresh and exhaustless source of surprise and amusement. The entire road from Peterhof to the capital was crowded with vehicles of every possible kind, from three and sometimes four lines and occasionally coming to a dead standstill. The troshky, the kibitka, the telega, the omnibus, the caleche, the carriage, the huge diligence, were all in succession before us, and apparently without end, crowded by men, women, and children, in all sorts of motley wear, and with all the ludicrous appearance which follows fatigue after frolic. We laughed especially and heartily at the infinite variety of dozing, nodding, and drunken drivers. As our chasseur was on the box, our coachman found his way with ease and safety. We got home at four o'clock, pretty considerably exhausted, but unwilling to retire or lie down until a finishing hand was put to packing trunks and boxes for the departure at noon.

George Miffin Dallas.





ENGRAVED BY T. JOHNSON.

AFTER THE PAINTING BY SULLY OWNED BY MISS DALLAS.

GEORGE MIFFLIN DALLAS.

(VICE-PRESIDENT UNDER JAMES K. POLK.)