



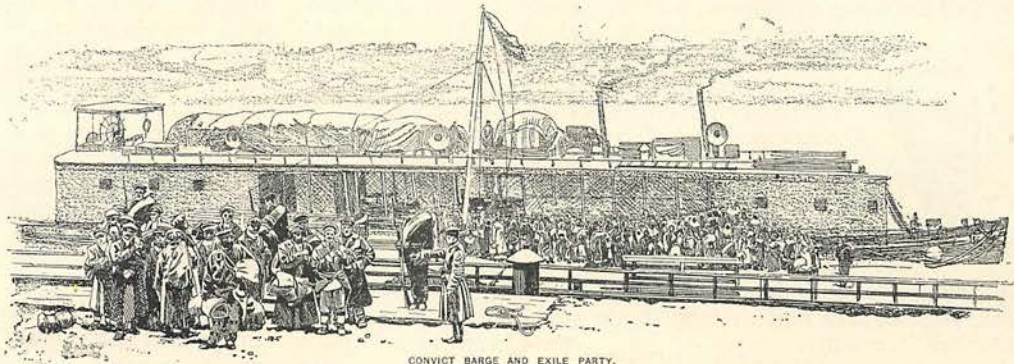
AN EXILE PARTY ON A MUDDY ROAD NEAR TIUMEN.

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CONVICT BARGE AND EXILE PARTY.

## PLAINS AND PRISONS OF WESTERN SIBERIA.

### SIBERIA'S ENORMOUS TERRITORY.



CONVICT TYPE.

IN crossing the boundary line between the provinces of Perm and Tobolsk we entered a part of the Russian empire whose magnitude and importance are almost everywhere underestimated. People generally seem to have the impression that Siberia is a sub-arctic colonial province about as large as Alaska; that it is everywhere cold, barren, and covered during the greater part of the year with snow; and that its sparse population is composed chiefly of exiles and half-wild aborigines, with a few soldiers and government officials here and there to guard and superintend the "ostrogs," the prisons, and the mines. Very few Americans, if I may judge from the questions asked me, fully grasp and appreciate the fact that Siberia is virtually a continent in itself, and presents continental diversities of climate, scenery, and vegetation. We are apt, unconsciously, to assume that because a country is generally mapped upon a small scale it must necessarily occupy only a small part of the surface of the globe; but the conclusion does

not follow from the premises. If a geographer were preparing a general atlas of the world, and in drawing Siberia should use the same scale which is used in Stieler's Hand Atlas for England, he would have to make the Siberian page of his book nearly twenty feet in width to accommodate his map. If he should use for Siberia the scale adopted for New Jersey by Colton in his Atlas of the United States, he would have to increase the width of his page to fifty-six feet. If he should delineate Siberia upon the scale of the British ordnance survey maps of England (the "six-inch maps"), he would be compelled to provide himself with a sheet of paper 2100 feet wide, and his atlas, if laid out open, would cover the whole lower part of New York City from the Battery to Wall street. These illustrations are sufficient to show that if Siberia were charted upon a scale corresponding with that employed in mapping other countries, its enormous geographical extent would be much more readily apprehended, and would appeal much more strongly to the imagination.

In its extreme dimensions Siberia extends from latitude 40.17 (the southern boundary of Semirechinsk) to latitude 77.46 (Cape Cheliuskin), and from longitude 60 east (the

Urals) to longitude 190 west (Behring Strait). It therefore has an extreme range of about 37 degrees, or 2500 miles, in latitude, and 130 degrees, or 5000 miles, in longitude. Even these bare statistics give one an impression of vast geographical extent; but their significance may be emphasized by means of a simple illustration. If it were possible to move entire countries from one part of the globe to another, you could take the whole United States of America, from Maine to California and from Lake Superior to the Gulf of Mexico, and set it down in the middle of Siberia without touching anywhere the boundaries of the latter territory. You could then take Alaska and all the states of Europe, with the single exception of Russia, and fit them into the remaining margin like the pieces of a dissected map; and after having thus accommodated all of the United States, including Alaska, and all of Europe, except Russia, you would still have more than 300,000 square miles of Siberian territory to spare — or, in other words, you would still leave unoccupied in Siberia an area half as large again as the empire of Germany.



## COMPARATIVE AREAS.

<i>Siberia.</i>	<i>Square Miles.</i>	<i>Europe.</i>	<i>Square Miles.</i>
Tobolsk .....	570,290	France .....	204,177
Tomsk .....	333,542	Germany .....	211,196
Steppe provinces .....	560,324	Great Britain .....	120,832
Yeniseisk .....	992,874	Greece .....	25,014
Irkutsk .....	309,191	Italy .....	110,620
Yakutsk .....	1,517,132	Montenegro .....	3,630
Trans-Baikal .....	240,781	Netherlands .....	12,648
Amur region .....	239,471	Portugal .....	32,528
Maritime prov. ....	730,024	Roumania .....	48,307
		Servia .....	18,750
Total .....	5,493,629	Spain .....	193,199
		Sweden .....	170,979
<i>Am. &amp; Europe.</i>	<i>Sq. Miles.</i>	Norway .....	123,205
U.S. and Alaska .....	3,501,404	Switzerland .....	15,892
Austria-Hungary .....	240,942	European Turkey .....	125,289
Belgium .....	11,373		
Denmark .....	14,124	Total .....	5,184,109
Siberian provinces .....	5,493,629		
The United States, Alaska, and Europe .....	5,184,109		
Difference in favor of Siberia .....	309,520		

The single province of Tobolsk, which in comparison with the other Siberian provinces ranks only fourth in point of size, exceeds in area all of our northern states from Maine to Iowa taken together. The province of Yeniseisk is larger than all of the United States east of the Mississippi River, and the province of Yakutsk is thirteen times as large as Great Britain, thirty-



four times as large as the State of Pennsylvania, and might be cut up into a hundred and eighty-eight such States as Massachusetts; and yet Yakutsk is only one of eleven Siberian provinces.



## VARIETIES OF CLIMATE.

It is hardly necessary to say that a country which has an area of five and a half million square miles, and which extends in latitude as far as from the southern extremity of Greenland to the island of Cuba, must present great diversities of climate, topography, and vegetation, and cannot be everywhere a barren arctic waste. A mere glance at a map is sufficient to show that a considerable part of western Siberia lies farther south than Nice, Venice, or Milan, and that the southern boundary of the Siberian province of Semirechinsk is nearer the equator than Naples.\* In a country which thus stretches from the latitude of Italy to the latitude of central Greenland one would naturally expect to find, and as a matter of fact one does find, many varieties of climate and scenery. In some parts of the province of Yakutsk



the mean temperature of the month of January is more than 50 degrees below zero, Fahr., while in the province of Semipalatinsk the mean temperature of the month of July is 72 degrees above; and such maximum temperatures as 95 and 100 degrees in the shade are comparatively common.

On the Taimyr peninsula, east of the Gulf of Ob, the permanently frozen ground thaws out in summer to a depth of only a few inches, and supports but a scanty vegetation of berry bushes and moss, while in the southern part of western Siberia water-melons and cantaloupes are a profitable crop, tobacco is grown upon thousands of plantations, and the peasants harvest annually more than 50,000,000 bushels of grain. The fact which I desire especially to impress upon the mind of the reader is that Siberia is not everywhere uniform and homogeneous. The northern part of the country differs from the southern part quite as much as the Hudson Bay territory differs from Kentucky; and it is as great a mistake to attribute the cold and barrenness of the

\* The provinces of Akmolinsk and Semirechinsk did not, however, belong originally to Siberia. They were annexed to it at the time of the organization of the "Governor-Generalship of the Steppes," in 1882.



WEAK, SICK, AND INFIRM EXILES IN TÉLEGAS.

Lena delta to the whole of Siberia as it would be to attribute the cold and barrenness of King William Land to the whole of North America.

Generally speaking, the winters in all parts of Siberia are severe; but as the annual range

\* In some places there is a difference of 115 or 120 degrees Fahr. between the average temperature of January and that of July.

of temperature from the one extreme to the other is very great,\* the summers are disproportionately hot. In the fertile and arable zone of southern Siberia, which is a belt of country four or five hundred miles wide, lying along the central Asiatic and Mongolian frontier, there are a dozen towns which have a higher mean temperature for the months of June, July, and August than the city of London. In



fact, the summer temperature of this whole belt of country, from the Urals to the Pacific, averages 6 degrees higher than the mean summer temperature of England. Irkutsk is 5 degrees warmer in summer than Dublin; Tobolsk is 4 degrees warmer than

London; Semipalatinsk exactly corresponds in temperature with Boston; and Vierni has as hot a summer as Chicago.

#### COMPARATIVE SUMMER TEMPERATURES.

<i>Siberia.</i>	<i>Fahr.</i>	<i>America and Europe.</i>	<i>Fahr.</i>
Vierni .....	70.7	Chicago, Ill. ....	71.3
Blagoveshchensk ..	68.6	Buffalo, N. Y. ....	69.0
Semipalatinsk .....	68.2	Milwaukee, Wis. ....	68.6
Khabarofka .....	67.3	Boston, Mass. ....	68.2
Vladivostock. ....	65.6	Portland, Me. ....	66.6
Akmolinsk .....	65.1	Moscow, European	
Omsk .....	65.1	Russia .....	65.0
Barnaul .....	63.7	St. Petersburg .....	61.0
Krasnoyarsk .....	63.0	London, England. ....	60.0
Tobolsk .....	62.4	Dublin, Ireland. ....	57.0
Tomsk .....	62.2		
Irkutsk .....	61.5		

Mean summer temperature of 12 Siberian cities and towns .....	65.3
Mean summer temperature in 9 American and European cities .....	65.2

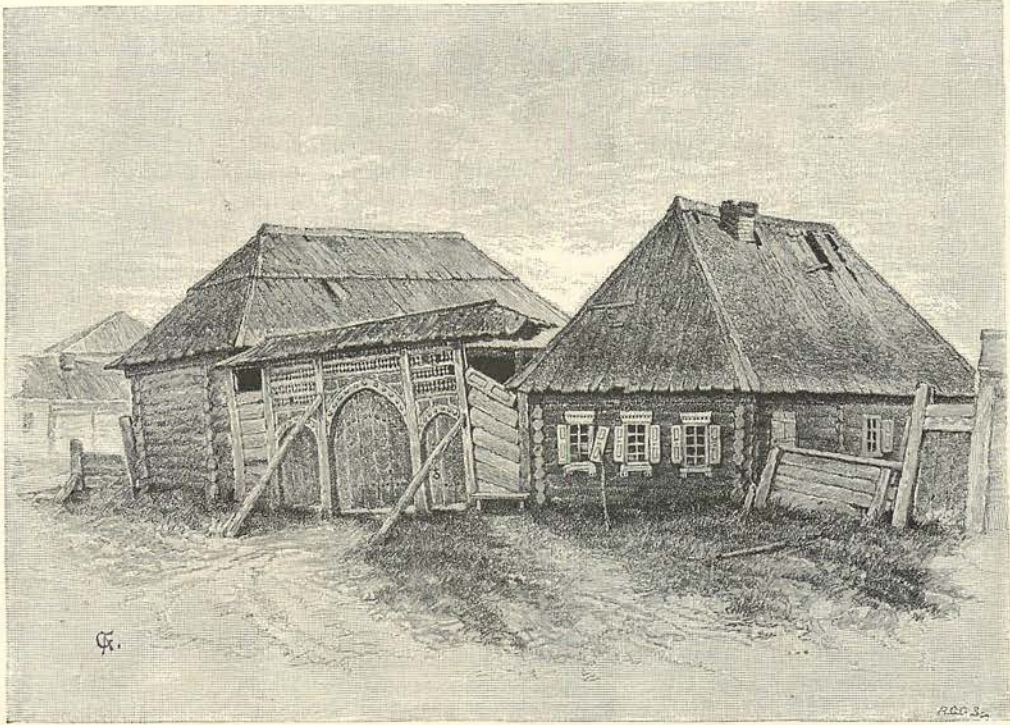
To the traveler who crosses the Urals for the first time in June nothing is more surprising than the fervent heat of Siberian sunshine and the extraordinary beauty and profusion of Siberian flowers. Although we had been partly prepared, by our voyage up the Kama, for the experience which awaited us on the other side of the mountains, we were fairly astonished upon the threshold of western Siberia by the scenery, the weather, and the flora. In the fertile, blossoming country presented to us as we rode swiftly eastward into the province of Tobolsk, there was absolutely nothing even remotely to suggest an arctic region. If we had been blindfolded and transported to it suddenly in the middle of a sunny afternoon, we could never have guessed to what part of the world we had been taken. The sky was as clear and blue and the air as soft as the sky and air of California; the trees were all in full leaf; birds were singing over the flowery meadows and in the clumps of birches by the roadside; there were a drowsy hum of bees and a faint fragrance of flowers and verdure in the air; and the sunshine was as warm and bright as that of a June afternoon in the most favored part of the temperate zone.

#### A FARMING REGION.

THE country through which we passed between the post stations of Cheremishkaya and Sugatskaya was a rich, open, farming region, resembling somewhat that part of western New York which lies between Rochester and Buffalo. There were no extensive forests, but the gently rolling plain was diversified here and there by small patches of woodland, or groves of birch and poplar, and was sometimes cultivated as far as the eye could reach. Extensive stretches of growing wheat and rye alternated with wide fields of black plowed land not yet sown, and occasionally we crossed great expanses of prairie, whose velvety green-sward was sprinkled with dandelions, buttercups, and primroses, and dotted in the distance with grazing cattle and sheep. Sometimes, for miles together, the road ran through unfenced but cultivated land where men and women in bright-colored dresses were plowing, harrowing, or weeding young grain; sometimes we plunged into a dense cool forest, from the depths of which we could hear the soft notes of shy cuckoos, and then we came out into a great sea of meadow blue with forget-me-nots, where field sparrows and warblers were filling all the air with joyous melody. Flowers met the eye everywhere in great variety and in almost incredible profusion. Never had we seen the earth so carpeted with them even in California. The roadside was bright with wild roses, violets, buttercups, primroses, marsh marigolds, yellow peas, iris, and Tartar honeysuckles; the woods were whitened here and there by soft clouds of wild-cherry blossoms, and the meadows were literally great floral seas of color. In some places the beautiful rose-like flowers of the golden trollius covered hundreds of acres with an almost unbroken sheet of vivid yellow; while a few miles farther on, the steppe to the very horizon was a blue ocean of forget-me-nots. I do not mean simply that the ground was sprinkled with them, nor merely that they grew in great abundance; I mean that the grass everywhere was completely hidden by them, so that the plain looked as if a sheet of blue gauze had been thrown over it, or as if it were a great expanse of tranquil water reflecting a pale blue sky. More than once these forget-me-not plains, when seen afar, resembled water so closely as to deceive us both.



Throughout the whole distance from Ekaterineburg to Tiumen, wherever the country was open, the road was bordered on each side by a double or triple row of magnificent silver-



A SIBERIAN PEASANT'S HOUSE, BARN, AND COURT-YARD GATE.

birches, seventy or eighty feet in height, set so closely together that their branches interlocked both along the road and over it, and completely shut out with an arched canopy of leaves the vertical rays of the sun. For miles at a time we rode between solid banks of flowers through this beautiful white and green arcade, whose columns were the snowy stems of birches, and whose roof was a mass of delicate tracery and drooping foliage. The road resembled an avenue through an extensive and well-kept park, rather than a great Siberian thoroughfare, and I could not help feeling as if I might look up at any moment and see an English castle or a splendid country villa. According to tradition these birches were planted by order of the Empress Catherine II., and the part of the great Siberian road which they shade is known as "Catherine's Alley." Whether the object of the great Tsaritsa was to render less toilsome and oppressive the summer march of the exiles, or whether she hoped by this means to encourage emigration to the country in which she took so deep an interest, I do not know; but the long lines of beautiful birches have for more than a century kept her memory green, and her name has doubtless been blessed by thousands of hot and tired wayfarers whom her trees have protected from the fierce Siberian sunshine.

Almost the first peculiarity of a west Siberian landscape which strikes a traveler from America is the complete absence of fences and farm-houses. The cultivated land of the peasants is regularly laid out into fields, but the fields are not inclosed, and one may ride for two or three hours at a time through a fertile and highly cultivated region without seeing a single fence, farm-house, or detached building. The absence of fences is due to the Siberian practice of inclosing the cattle in the common pasture which surrounds the village, instead of fencing the fields which lie outside. The absence of farm-houses is to be explained by the fact that the Siberian peasant does not own the land which he cultivates, and therefore has no inducement to build upon it. With a very few exceptions, all of the land in Siberia belongs to the Crown. The village communes enjoy the usufruct of it, but they have no legal title, and cannot dispose of it nor reduce any part of it to individual ownership. All that they have power to do is to divide it up among their members by periodical allotments, and to give to each head of a family a sort of tenancy at will. Every time there is a new allotment, the several tracts of arable land held under the Crown by the commune may change tenants; so that if an individual should build a house or a barn upon the tract of which he was the temporary occupant, he

might, and probably would be forced, sooner or later, to abandon it. The result of this system of land tenure and this organization of society is to segregate the whole population in villages, and to leave all of the intervening land unsettled. In the United States such a farming region as that between the Urals and Tiumen would be dotted with houses, granaries, and barns; and it seemed very strange to ride, as we rode, for more than eighty miles, through a country which was everywhere more or less cultivated, without seeing a single building of any kind outside of the villages.

Another peculiarity of western Siberia which strongly impresses an American is the shabbiness and cheerlessness of most of its settlements.



THE "REAL SCHULE."

In a country so fertile, highly cultivated, and apparently prosperous as this, one naturally expects to see in the villages some signs of enterprise, comfort, and taste; but one is almost everywhere disappointed. A west Siberian village consists of two rows of unpainted one-story log-houses with A-shaped or pyramidal roofs, standing directly on the street, without front yards or front doors. Between every two houses there is an inclosed side yard around which stand sheds, granaries, and barns; and from this side yard or court there is an entrance to the house. The court-yard gate is sometimes ornamented with carved or incised wood-work, as shown in the illustration on the preceding page; the window shutters of the houses are almost always elaborately painted, and the projecting edges of the gable roofs are masked with long strips of carved or decorated board; but with these exceptions the dwellings of the peasants are simple log structures of the plainest type, and a large proportion of them are old, weather-beaten, and in bad repair. The wide street has no sidewalks; it is sometimes a sea of liquid mud from the walls of the houses on one side to the walls of the houses on the other; there is not a tree, nor a bush, nor a square yard of grass in the settlement. Bristly, slab-sided, razor-backed pigs lie here and there in the mud, or wander up and

down the street in search of food, and the whole village makes upon an American an impression of shiftlessness, poverty, and squalor. This impression, I am glad to say, is in most cases deceptive. There is in all of these villages more or less individual comfort and prosperity; but the Siberian peasant does not seem to take any pride in the external appearance of his premises, and pays little attention to beautifying them or keeping them in order. The condition of the whole village, moreover, indicates a lack of public spirit and enterprise on the part of its inhabitants. As long as an evil or a nuisance is endurable there seems to be no disposition to abate it, and the result is the general neglect of all public improvements. Much of this seeming indifference is doubtless attributable to the paralyzing influence of a paternal and all-regulating government. One can hardly expect the villagers to take the initiative, or to manifest public spirit and enterprise, when nothing whatever can be done without permission from the official representatives of the Crown, and when the very first effort to promote the general well-being is likely to be thwarted by some bureaucratic "regulation," or the caprice of some local police officer. All that the peasants can do is to obey orders, await the pleasure of the higher authorities, and thank God that things are no worse.

Almost the only indication of taste which one sees in a west Siberian settlement, and the only evidence of a love of the beautiful for its own sake, is furnished by the plants and flowers in the windows of the houses. Although there may not be a tree nor a blade of grass in the whole village, the windows of nine houses out of ten will be filled with splendid blossoming fuchsias, oleanders, cactuses, geraniums, tea roses, and variegated cinnamon pinks. One rarely finds, even in a florist's greenhouse, more beautiful flowers than may be seen in the windows of many a poor Siberian peasant's dwelling. Owing to some peculiarity in the composition of the glass, these windows are almost always vividly iridescent, some of them rivaling in color the Cesnola glass from Cyprus. The contrast between the black, weather-beaten logs of the houses and the brilliant squares of iridescence which they inclose — between the sea of liquid mud in the verdureless streets and the splendid clusters of conservatory flowers in the windows — is sometimes very striking.

#### FLOWERS AND MOSQUITOES.

AS WE approached Tiumen we left behind us the open plains, and the beautiful farming country which had so much surprised and delighted us, and entered a low, swampy, and almost impenetrable forest, abounding in flow-

ers, but swarming with mosquitoes. The road, which before had been comparatively smooth and dry, became a quagmire of black, tenacious mud, in which the wheels of our heavy tarantas sank to the hubs, and through which our progress was so slow that we were four hours in traversing a single stretch of about eighteen miles. Attempts had apparently been made here and there to improve this part of the route, by laying down in the soft marshy soil a corduroy of logs; but the logs had sunk unequally under the pounding wheels of ten thousand loaded freight wagons, leaving enormous transverse ruts and hollows filled with mud, so that the only result of the "improvement" was to render the road more nearly impassable than before, and to add unendurable jolting to our other discomforts. At last, weary of lurches, jolts, and concussions, we alighted, and tried walking by the roadside; but the sunshine was so intensely hot, and the mosquitoes so fierce and bloodthirsty, that in twenty minutes we were glad to climb back into the tarantas with our hands full of flowers, and our faces scarlet from heat and mosquito bites. Upon comparing our impressions we found that we were unanimously of opinion that if we had been the original discoverers of this country, we should have named it either Florida or Culexia, since flowers and mosquitoes are its distinctive characteristics and its most abundant products.

At the gate-keeper's lodge of one of the last villages that we passed before reaching Tiumen, we were greeted with the ringing of a large hand-bell. The sound was strangely suggestive of an auction, but as we stopped in front of the village gate, the bell-ringer, a bare-headed man in a long black gown, with a mass of flaxen hair hanging over his shoulders and a "savings bank" box suspended from his neck, approached the tarantas and called our attention to a large brownish picture in a tarnished gilt frame resting on a sort of improvised easel by the road-side. It was evidently an ikon or portrait of some holy saint from a Russian church; but what was the object of setting it up there, and what relation it bore to us, we could not imagine. Finally the bell-ringer, bowing, crossing himself, and invoking blessings on our heads, implored us, "Khrista radi" ["For Christ's sake"], to contribute to the support of the holy saint's church, which, it appeared, was situated somewhere in the vicinity. This combination of an auctioneer's bell, a saint's image, a toll-gate, and a church beggar greatly amused Mr. Frost, who inquired whether the holy saint owned the road and collected toll. The gate-keeper explained that the saint had

nothing to do with the road, but the church was poor, and the "noble gentlemen" who passed that way were accustomed to contribute to its support; and (removing his hat) "most of the noble gentlemen remembered also the poor gate-keeper." Of course the two noble gentlemen, with mosquito-bitten faces, rumpled hair, soiled shirt-collars and mud-bespattered clothing, sitting with noble dignity on a luxurious steamer trunk in a miry tarantas, could not resist such an appeal as this to their noble sympathies. We gave the gate-keeper a few copper coins with directions to put half of them into the savings bank of the black-robed deacon, and having thus contributed to the support of two great Russian institutions, the church and the grog-shop, we rode on.

Late in the afternoon of Thursday, June 18, we came out of the forest into an extensive marshy plain, tinted a peculiar greenish-yellow by swamp grass and buttercups, and our driver, pointing ahead with his whip, said, "There is Tiumen." All that we could see of the distant city was a long line of pyramidal board roofs on the horizon, broken here and there by the white stuccoed walls of a Government building, or the green-domed belfries and towers of a Russo-Greek church. As we approached it we passed in succession a square marble column marking the spot where the citizens of Tiumen bade good-bye to the Grand Duke Vladimir in 1868; a squad of soldiers engaged in target practice, stepping forward and firing volleys by ranks to the accompaniment of a flourish of bugles; a series of long, low sheds surrounded by white, tilted emigrant wagons; and finally, in the suburbs, the famous exile forwarding prison.

There were two or three hotels in the town, but upon the recommendation of our driver we went to the "Rooms for Arrivers," or furnished apartments of one Kovalski, who occupied a two-story brick house near the bank of the river in the eastern part of the city. About 6 o'clock in the evening we finally alighted from our muddy tarantas in Kovalski's court-yard, having made a journey of 204 miles in two days with eleven changes of horses, and having spent more than forty hours without sleep, sitting in a cramped and uncomfortable position on Mr. Frost's trunk. My neck and spine were so stiff and lame from incessant jolting that I could not have made a bow to the Tsar of all the Russias, and I was so tired that I could hardly climb the stairs leading to the second story of Kovalski's house. As soon as possible after dinner we went to bed, and for twelve hours slept the sleep of exhaustion.



## TIUMEN.

TIUMEN, where we virtually began our Siberian journey, as well as our investigation of the exile system, is a town of 19,000 inhabitants, situated 1700 miles east of St. Petersburg, on the right bank of the river Tura, just above the junction of the latter with the Tobol. The city and the surrounding country have much more commercial importance than is generally supposed. Siberian cold and Siberian desolation have been so much talked and written about, and have been brought so forcibly to the attention of the world by the terrible experience of De Long and the survivors of the *Jeannette*, that nine readers out of ten, in forming a conception of the country, give undue prominence to its arctic side and its winter aspect. When, in conversation since my return, I have happened to refer to Siberian tobacco, Siberian orchids, or Siberian camels, my remarks have even been received with smiles of incredulity. I do not know any better way to overthrow the erroneous popular conception of Siberia than to assail it with facts and statistics, even at the risk of being wearisome. I will therefore say briefly, that the province of Tobolsk, which is the part of Siberia with which a traveler from Europe first becomes acquainted, extends from the coast of the Arctic Ocean to the sun-scorched steppes of Semipalatinsk and Akmolinsk, and from the mountains of the Ural to the boundary line of Yeniseisk and Tomsk. It has an area of 590,000 square miles and includes 27,000,000 acres of arable land. It contains 8 towns of from 3000 to 20,000 inhabitants, and its total population exceeds 1,200,000. In the last year for which I was able to get statistics the province produced 30,044,880 bushels of grain and 3,778,230 bushels of potatoes, and contained 2,647,000 head of live stock. It sends annually to European Russia enormous quantities of raw products, such as hides, tallow, bristles, furs, bird skins, flax, and hemp; it forwards more than 2,000,000 pounds of butter to Constantinople by way of Rostoff, on the Don; and there is held within its limits, at Irbit, a commercial fair whose transactions amount annually to 35,000,000 rubles (\$17,500,000). The manufacturing industries of the province, although still in their infancy, furnish employment to 6252 persons and put annually upon the market goods to the value of 8,517,000 rubles. Besides the workmen employed in the regular manufacturing establishments, the urban population includes 27,000 mechanics and skilled laborers. Cottage industries are carried on extensively throughout the province, and produce annually, among other things, 50,000 rugs

and carpets; 1,500,000 fathoms of fish netting; 2,140,000 yards of linen cloth; 50,000 barrels; 70,000 telegas and sleighs; leather manufactures to the value of 2,500,000 rubles; and quantities of dressed furs, stockings, mittens, belts, scarfs, laces, and ornamented towels and sheets. The quantity of fish caught annually along the Ob and its tributaries is estimated at 8000 tons, and salt to the amount of 3000 tons is used in curing it. Tiumen, which is the most important town in the province, stands on a navigable branch of the vast Ob river system, through which it has steam communication with the greater part of western Siberia, from Semipalatinsk and Tomsk to the shores of the Arctic Ocean. Fifty-eight steamers ply on the Ob and its tributaries, most of them between Tomsk and Tiumen, and through the latter city is transported annually merchandise to the value of thirty or forty million rubles. Sixteen million rubles' worth of Siberian products are brought every year to the Nizhni Novgorod fair, and in exchange for this mass of raw material European Russia sends annually to Siberia nearly 300,000 tons of manufactured goods.

It cannot, I think, be contended that a country which furnishes such statistics as these is an arctic desert or an uninhabited waste.

On the next day after our arrival in Tiumen the weather furnished us with convincing evidence of the fact that the Siberian summer climate, although sometimes as mild and delightful as that of California, is fickle and untrustworthy. During the night the wind changed suddenly to the north-east, and a furious storm of cold, driving rain swept down across the tundras from the coast of the Arctic Ocean, turning the unpaved and unsewered streets of the city to lakes of liquid mud, and making it practically impossible to go out of doors. We succeeded, with the aid of a droshky, in getting to the post-office and back, and devoted the remainder of the day to reading and to writing letters. On Saturday, during lulls in the storm, we walked and rode about the city, but saw little to reward us for our trouble. The muddy, unpaved streets did not differ much in appearance from the streets of the villages through which we had passed, except that some of them had plank sidewalks, and the unpainted log-houses with high, steep, pyramidal roofs were larger and more pretentious. There was the same absence of trees, shrubbery, front yards and front doors which we had noticed in all of the Siberian villages; and but for the white-walled and green-domed churches, which gave it a certain air of picturesque-ness, the town would have been commonplace and uninteresting.

The only letter of introduction we had to deliver in Tiumen was from a Russian gentleman in St. Petersburg to Mr. Slovtsof, Director of the "Realnoi Uchilishche," an institution which is known in Germany as a "real schule." Saturday afternoon, the storm having broken, we presented this letter and were received by Mr. Slovtsof with great cordiality. The educational institution over which he presides is a scientific and technical school similar in plan to the Institute of Technology in Boston. It occupies the largest and finest edifice in the city—a substantial two-story structure of white stuccoed brick, nearly twice as large as the Executive Mansion in Washington. This building was erected and equipped at a cost of \$85,000 by one of Tiumen's wealthy and public-spirited merchants, and was then presented to the city as a gift. One would hardly expect to find such a school in European Russia, to say nothing of Siberia, and indeed one might look far without finding such a school even in the United States. It has a mechanical department, with a steam-engine, lathes, and tools of all kinds; a department of physics, with fine apparatus, including even the Bell, Edison, and Dolbear telephones and the phonograph; a chemical laboratory, with a more complete equipment than I have ever seen, except in the Boston Institute of Technology; a department of art and mechanical drawing; a good library, and an excellent museum—the latter containing, among other things, 900 species of wild flowers collected in the vicinity of the city. It is, in short, a school which would be in the highest degree creditable to any city of similar size in the United States.

From Mr. Slovtsof we obtained the address of Mr. Jacob R. Wardropper, a Scotch gentleman who had for twenty years or more been engaged in business in Siberia; and feeling sure that Mr. Wardropper would be glad to see any one from the western world, we ventured to call upon him without the formality of an introduction. We were received by the whole family with the most warm-hearted hospitality, and their house was made almost a home to us during the remainder of our stay in the city.

The chief interest which Tiumen had for us lay in the fact that it contains the most important exile forwarding prison in Siberia, and the "Prikaz o Slynikh," or Bureau of Exile Administration. Through this prison pass, on their way southward or eastward, all criminals condemned to banishment or penal servitude, and in this administrative bureau are kept all the records and statistics of the exile system. After our arrest in Perm for merely looking at the outside of a prison, we felt some doubt as to the result of an application for leave to

inspect the forwarding prison of Tiumen; but Mr. Wardropper thought we would have no trouble in gaining admittance, and on the following day (Sunday) he went with us to call upon Mr. Krassin, the *ispravnik*, or chief police officer of the district. I presented to the latter my open letters from the Russian Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and was at once received with a cordiality which was as pleasant as it was unexpected. Mr. Krassin invited us to lunch, said that he had already been informed by private and official letters from St. Petersburg of our projected journey through Siberia, and that he would gladly be of service to us in any way possible. He granted without hesitation my request to be allowed to visit the forwarding prison, and promised to go thither with us on the following day. We would find the prison, he said, greatly overcrowded and in bad sanitary condition; but, such as it was, we should see it.

#### THE FORWARDING PRISON.

MR. KRASSIN was unfortunately taken sick Monday, but, mindful of his promise, he sent us on Tuesday a note of introduction to the warden which he said would admit us to the prison; and about 10 o'clock Wednesday morning, accompanied by Mr. Wardropper, and Mr. Ignatof, a former member of the prison committee, we presented ourselves at the gate. The Tiumen forwarding prison is a rectangular three-story brick building, 75 feet in length by 40 or 50 in width, covered with white stucco and roofed with painted tin. It is situated in a large yard formed by a whitewashed brick wall 12 or 15 feet in height, at each corner of which stands a black and white zigzag-barred sentry-box, and along each face of which paces a sentry carrying a loaded Berdan rifle with fixed bayonet. Against this wall, on the right-hand side of the gate, is a small building used as a prison office, and in front of it stands a post surmounted by a small A-shaped roof under which hangs a bell. A dozen or more girls and old women were sitting on the ground in front of the prison with baskets full of black rye bread, cold meat, boiled eggs, milk, and fish pies for sale to the imprisoned exiles. The Tiumen prison was originally built to hold 500 prisoners, but was subsequently enlarged by means of detached barracks so that it could accommodate 800. On the day of our visit, as we were informed by a small blackboard hanging beside the office door, it contained 1741. As we approached the entrance we were stopped by an armed sentry, who, upon being informed that we desired

admittance, shouted through a square port-hole in the heavy gate, "Star-she-e-e!" (the usual call for the officer of the day). A corporal or sergeant, with a saber at his side and a Colt's revolver in a holster on his hip, answered the summons, carried our note to the warden, and in a moment we were admitted to the prison yard. Fifty or sixty exiles and convicts were walking aimlessly back and forth in front of the main prison building, or sitting idly in groups here and there on the ground. They were all dressed from head to foot in a costume of gray, consisting of a visorless Scotch cap, a shirt and trousers of coarse homespun linen, and a long gray overcoat with one or two diamond-shaped patches of black or yellow cloth sewn upon the back between the shoulders. Nearly all of them wore leg-fetters, and the air was filled with a peculiar clinking of chains which suggested the continuous jingling of innumerable bunches of keys.

The first "kamera" or cell that we entered was situated in a one-story log barrack standing against the wall on the left of the gate, and built evidently to receive the overflow from the crowded main building. The room was about 35 feet in length by 25 in width and 12 feet high; its walls of hewn logs were covered with dirty whitewash; its rough plank floor was black with dried mud and hard-trodden filth; and it was lighted by three grated windows looking out into the prison yard. Down the center of the room, and occupying about half its width, ran the sleeping-bench—a wooden platform 12 feet wide and 30 feet long, supported, at a height of 2 feet from the floor, by stout posts. Each longitudinal half of this low platform sloped a little, roof-wise, from the center, so that when the prisoners slept upon it in two closely packed transverse rows, their heads in the middle were a few inches higher than their feet at the edges. These sleeping-platforms are known as "nares," and a Siberian prison cell contains no other furniture except a large wooden tub for excrement. The prisoners have neither pillows, blankets, nor bedclothing, and must lie on these hard plank nares with no covering but their overcoats. As we entered the cell, the convicts, with a sudden jingling of chains, sprang to their feet, removed their caps, and stood silently in a dense throng around the nares. "Zdrastvuitui rebiata!" ["How do you do, boys!"] said the warden. "Zdravie zhelaiem vasha vvisoki blagarodie" ["We wish you health, your high nobility"], shouted a hundred voices in a hoarse chorus. "The prison," said the warden, "is terribly overcrowded. This cell, for example, is only 35 feet long by 25 wide, and has air space for 35,

or at most 40 men. How many men slept here last night?" he inquired, turning to the prisoners.

"A hundred and sixty, your high nobility," shouted half a dozen hoarse voices.

"You see how it is," said the warden, again addressing me. "This cell contains more than four times the number of prisoners that it was intended to hold, and the same condition of things exists throughout the prison." I looked around the cell. There was practically no ventilation whatever, and the air was so poisoned and foul that I could hardly force myself to breathe it. We visited successively in the yard six *kameras* or cells essentially like the first, and found in every one of them three or four times the number of prisoners for which it was intended, and five or six times the number for which it had adequate air space. In most of the cells there was not room enough on the sleeping-platforms for all of the convicts, and scores of men slept every night on the foul, muddy floors, under the nares, and in the gangways between them and the walls. Three or four pale, dejected, and apparently sick prisoners crawled out from under the sleeping-platform in one of the cells as we entered.

From the log barracks in the prison yard we went into the main building, which contained the kitchen, the prison workshops, and the hospital, as well as a large number of *kameras*, and which was in much worse sanitary condition than the barracks. It was, in fact, a building through which Mr. Ignatof—a former member of the prison committee—declined to accompany us. On each side of the dark, damp, and dirty corridors were heavy wooden doors, opening into cells which varied in size from 8 feet by 10 to 10 by 15, and contained from half a dozen to thirty prisoners. They were furnished with nares, like those in the cells that we had already inspected; their windows were small and heavily grated, and no provision whatever had been made for ventilation. In one of these cells were eight or ten "dvoryane," or "nobles," who seemed to be educated men, and in whose presence the warden removed his hat. Whether any of them were "politicals" or not I do not know; but in this part of the prison the politicals were usually confined. The air in the corridors and cells, particularly in the second story, was indescribably and unimaginably foul. Every cubic foot of it had apparently been respired over and over again until it did not contain an atom of oxygen; it was laden with fever germs from the unventilated hospital wards, fetid odors from diseased human lungs and unclean human bodies, and the stench arising from unemptied excrement



THE TIUMEN FORWARDING PRISON.

buckets at the ends of the corridors. I breathed as little as I possibly could, but every respiration seemed to pollute me to the very soul, and I became faint from nausea and lack of oxygen. It was like trying to breathe in an underground hospital-drain. The "smatritel," or warden, noticing perhaps that my face had grown suddenly pale, offered me his cigarette case, and said: "You are not accustomed to prison air. Light a cigarette: it will afford some relief, and we will get some wine or "vodki" presently in the dispensary." I acted upon this suggestion and we continued our investigations. The prison workshops, to which we were next taken, consisted of two small cells in the second story, neither of them more than eight feet square, and neither of them designed for the use to which it had been put. In one, three or four convicts were engaged in cobbling shoes, and in the other an attempt was being made to do a small amount of carpenter's work. The workmen, however, had neither proper tools nor suitable appliances, and it seemed preposterous to call the small cells which they occupied "workshops."

\* According to the report of the Inspector of Exile Transportation for 1884, the cost to the Government for the food furnished each prisoner in the Tiumen forwarding prison is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cents a day (7 kopeks). Pris-

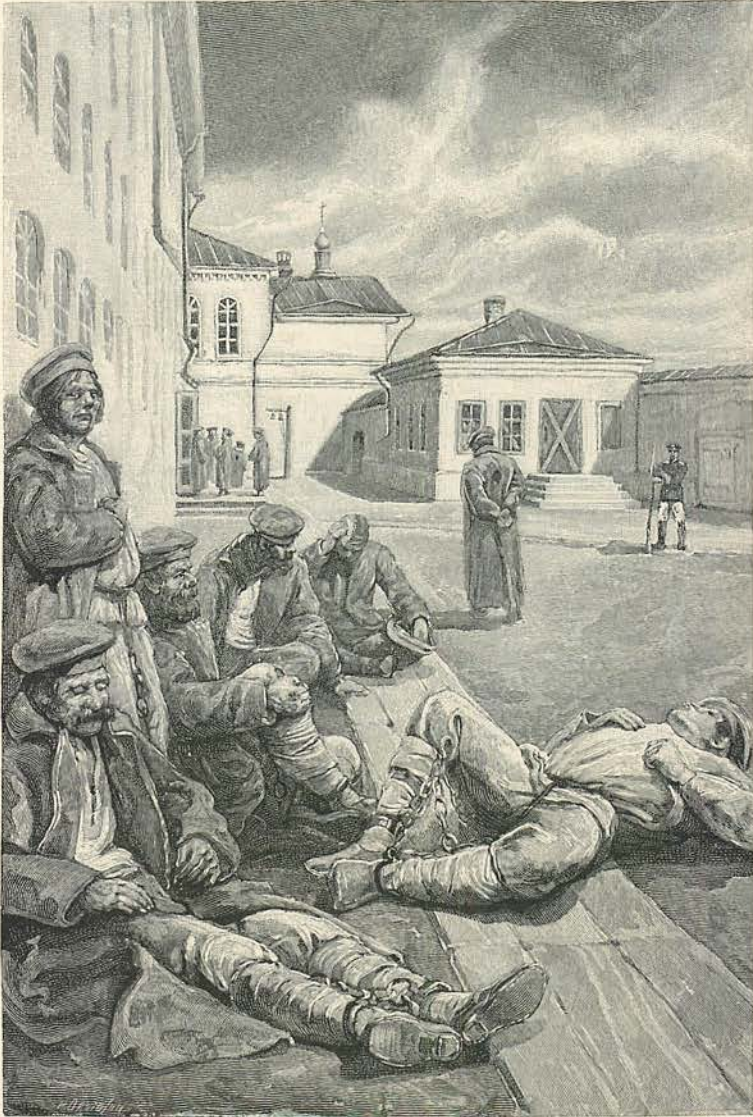
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We then went to the prison kitchen, a dark, dirty room in the basement of the main building, where three or four half-naked men were baking black rye-bread in loaves about as large as milk-pans, and boiling soup in huge iron kettles on a sort of brick range. I tasted some of the soup in a greasy wooden bowl which a convict hastily cleaned for me with a wad of dirty flax, and found it nutritious and good. The bread was rather sour and heavy, but not worse than that prepared and eaten by Russian peasants generally. The daily ration of the prisoners consisted of two and a half pounds of this black bread, about six ounces of boiled meat, and two or three ounces of coarsely ground barley or oats, with a bowl of "kvas" morning and evening for drink.\*

#### THE HOSPITAL WARDS.

AFTER we had examined the workshops, the kitchen, and most of the kameras in the first and second stories, the smatritel turned to me and said, "Do you wish to go through the hospital wards?" "Certainly," I replied; "we wish to see everything that there is to be seen

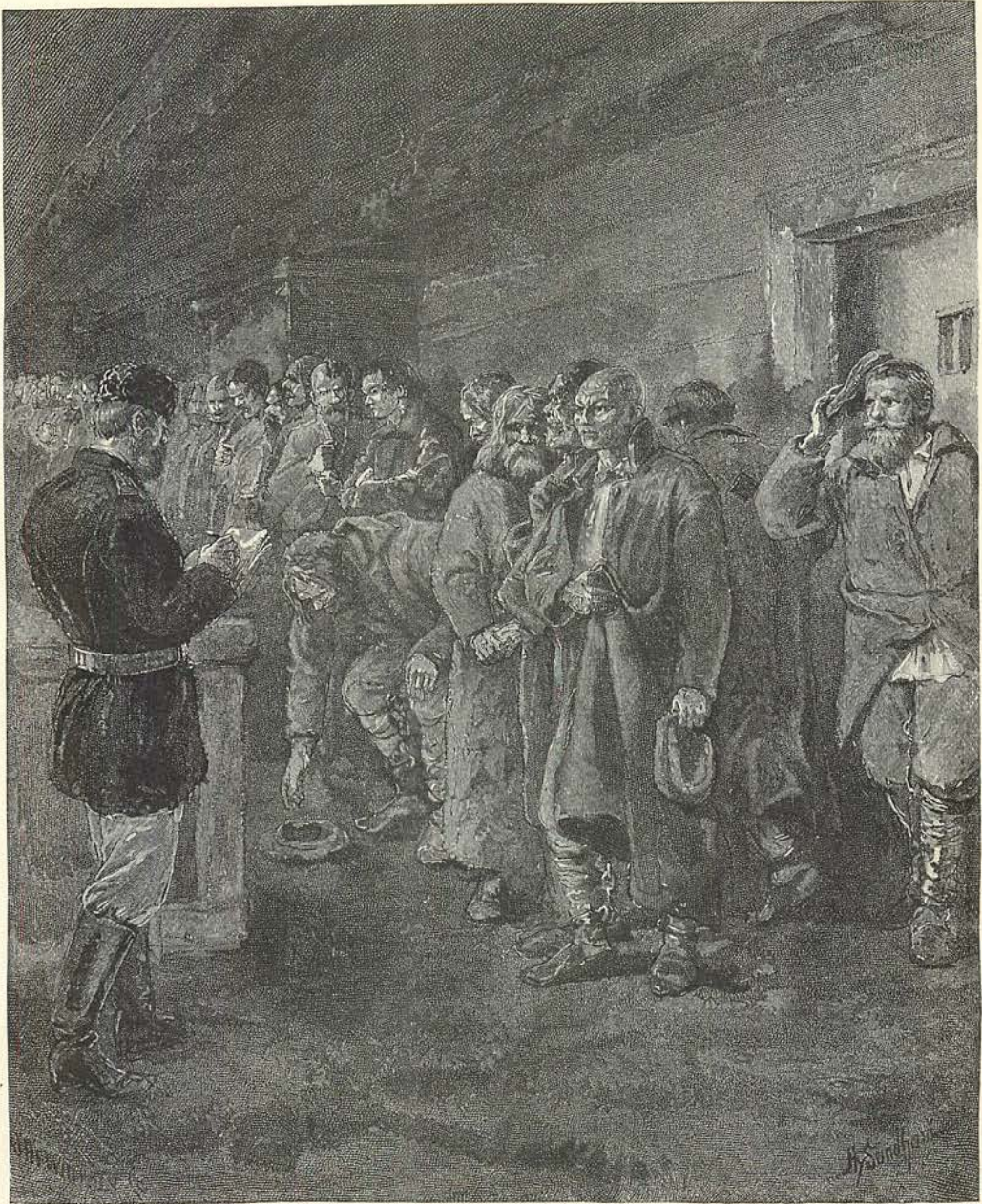
oners belonging to the privileged classes (including politicals) receive food which costs the Government 5 cents a day per man. Of course the quality of a daily ration which costs only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cents cannot be very high.



THE COURT-YARD OF THE PRISON. (FROM A SKETCH MADE BY AN EXILE.)

in the prison." The warden shrugged his shoulders, as if he could not understand a curiosity which was strong enough to take travelers into a Siberian prison hospital; but, without making any remarks, he led the way up another flight of stone steps to the third story, which was given up entirely to the sick. The hospital wards, which numbered five or six, were larger and lighter than any of the cells that we had previously examined in the main building, but they were wholly unventilated, no disinfectants apparently were used in them, and the air was polluted to the last possible degree. It did not seem to me that a well man could live there a week without

becoming infected with disease, and that a sick man should ever recover in that awful atmosphere was inconceivable. In each ward were twelve or fifteen small iron bedsteads, set with their heads to the walls round three sides of the room, and separated one from another by about five feet of space. Each bedstead was furnished with a thin mattress consisting of a coarse gray bed-tick filled with straw, a single pillow, and either a gray blanket or a ragged quilt. Mr. Frost thought that some of the beds were supplied with coarse gray linen sheets and pillow-cases, but I did not notice anything of the kind. Over the head of each bedstead was a small blackboard,



MAKING UP A PARTY IN THE TIUMEN PRISON.

bearing in Russian and Latin characters the name of the prisoner's disease and the date of his admission to the hospital. The most common disorders seemed to be scurvy, typhus fever, typhoid fever, acute bronchitis, rheumatism, and syphilis. Prisoners suffering from malignant typhus fever were isolated in a single ward; but with this exception no attempt apparently had been made to group the patients in classes according to the nature of

their diseases. Women were separated from the men, and that was all. Never before in my life had I seen faces so white, haggard, and ghastly as those that lay on the gray pillows in these hospital cells. The patients, both men and women, seemed to be not only desperately sick, but hopeless and heart-broken. I could not wonder at it. As I breathed that heavy, stifling atmosphere, poisoned with the breaths of syphilitic and fever-stricken patients,



COURT-YARD OF THE WOMEN'S PRISON, TIUMEN.

loaded and saturated with the odor of excrement, disease germs, exhalations from unclean human bodies, and foulness inconceivable, it seemed to me that over the hospital doors should be written, "All hope abandon ye who enter here."\*

After we had gone through the women's

\* The cost of the maintenance of each patient in the hospital of the Tiumen forwarding prison in 1884, including food, medicines, etc., was 27 cents a day. The dead were buried at an expense of \$1.57 each. [Report of Inspector of Exile Transportation for 1884.]

lying-in ward and the ward occupied by patients suffering from malignant typhus fever, I told the smatritel that I had seen enough; all I wanted was to get out of doors where I could once more breathe. He conducted us to the dispensary on the ground floor, offered us alcoholic stimulants, and suggested that we allow ourselves to be sprayed with carbolic acid and water. We probably had not been in the prison long enough, he said, to take any infection; but we were unaccustomed to prison air, the hospital was in bad condition,

we had visited the malignant typhus fever ward, and he thought that the measure which he suggested was nothing more than a proper precaution. We of course assented, and were copiously sprayed from head to foot with dilute carbolic acid, which, after the foulness of the prison atmosphere, seemed to us almost as refreshing as spirits of cologne.

At last, having finished our inspection of the main building, we came out into the prison-yard, where I drew a long, deep breath of pure air, with the delicious sense of relief that a half-drowned man must feel when he comes to the surface of the water.

"How many prisoners," I asked the warden, "usually die in that hospital in the course of the year?"

"About 300," he replied. "We have an epidemic of typhus almost every fall. What else could you expect when buildings that are barely adequate for the accommodation of 800 persons are made to hold 1800? A prison so overcrowded cannot be kept clean, and as for the air in the cells, you know now what it is like. In the fall it is sometimes much worse. During the summer the windows can be left open, and some ventilation can be secured in that way; but when the weather becomes cold and stormy the windows must be closed, and then there is no ventilation at all. We suffer from it as well as the prisoners. My assistant has only recently recovered from an attack of typhus fever which kept him in bed for six weeks, and he caught the disease in the prison. The local authorities here have again and again urged the Government to make adequate provision for the large number of exiles crowded into this prison during the season of navigation, but thus far nothing has been done beyond the building of two log barracks."\*

The warden spoke naturally and frankly, as if the facts which he gave me were known to everybody in Tiumen, and as if there was no use in trying to conceal them even from a foreign traveler when the latter had been through the prison and the prison hospital.

#### THE WOMEN'S PRISON.

FROM the main prison building we went to the women's prison, which was situated on the other side of the road in a court-yard formed by a high stockade of closely set and sharpened logs. It did not differ much in external appearance from the men's barracks inside the prison-wall, which we had already ex-

amined. The kameras varied in size from 10 feet by 12 to 30 feet by 45, and contained from three to forty women each. They were all clean and well lighted, the floors and sleeping-platforms had been scrubbed to a snowy whiteness, strips of coarse carpet had been laid down here and there in the gangways between the nares, and one cell even had potted plants in the window. The women, like the men, were obliged to sleep in rows on the hard platforms without pillows or blankets, but their cells were not so overcrowded as were those of the men, and the air in them was infinitely purer. Most of the women seemed to belong to the peasant class; many of them were accompanied by children, and I saw very few hard or vicious faces.

From the women's prison we went to the prison for exiled families, another stockaded log barrack about 75 feet in length which had no cell partitions and which contained nearly 300 men, women, and children. Here again the sleeping-platforms were overcrowded; the air was heavy and foul; dozens of children were crying from hunger or wretchedness; and the men and women looked tired, sleepless, and dejected. None of the women in this barrack were criminals. All were voluntarily going into banishment with their criminal husbands, and most of them were destined for points in western Siberia.

ABOUT 1 o'clock in the afternoon, after having made as thorough an examination as possible of all the prison buildings, Mr. Frost, Mr. Wardropper, and I went with Mr. Ignatof to lunch. Knowing that our host was the contractor for the transportation of exiles eastward by barge, and that he had been a prominent member of the Tiumen prison committee, I asked him if the Central Government in St. Petersburg was aware of the condition of the Tiumen forwarding prison, and of the sickness and misery in which it resulted. He replied in the affirmative. The local authorities, the prison committee, and the Inspector of Exile Transportation for western Siberia had reported upon the condition of the Tiumen prison, he said, every year; but the case of that prison was by no means an exceptional one. New prisons were needed all over European Russia, as well as Siberia, and the Government did not yet feel able financially to make sweeping prison reforms, nor to spend perhaps ten million rubles in the erection of new prison buildings. The condition of the Tiumen prison was, he admitted, extremely bad, and he himself had resigned his place as a member of the prison committee because the Government would not authorize the erection of a new building for use as a hospital. The prison

\* During the season of navigation in 1884 the Tiumen forwarding prison was overcrowded 133 days out of 151. [Report of the Inspector of Exile Transportation for 1884.]





EXILES GOING ON BOARD THE BARGE.

committee had strongly recommended it, and when the Government disapproved the recommendation, he resigned.

Subsequent conversation with other citizens of Tiumen and with officers of the Exile Administration more than confirmed all that had been told me by Mr. Ignatof and the warden. The report of the Medical Department of the Ministry of the Interior, extracts from which were furnished me, showed that the sick rate of the Tiumen forwarding prison for 1884 was

28.4 per cent.; or, in other words, nearly one third of the whole prison population received hospital treatment. When one considers that from 17,000 to 19,000 exiles pass every year through the Tiumen forwarding prison, and that thousands of sick are treated at the dispensary and in their cells, and are not included therefore in the hospital records, one can partly realize the human suffering and misery of which that prison is the scene.

In order fully to understand the scope of

the Siberian exile system and the important place occupied in that system by the Tiumen forwarding prison, the reader must bear in mind that there are in Russia no penitentiaries. If the penalty affixed by the Russian penal code to a crime is not greater than imprisonment for four years, the criminal serves out his sentence in one of the prisons of European Russia, simply because it would be unprofitable to send him to Siberia for so short a time. If, however, a prisoner's crime calls for a more severe punishment than four years of confinement — to Siberia he goes.

Between the years 1823 and 1887, inclusive, there were sent to Siberia 772,979 exiles, as follows:

From 1823 to 1832..	98,725	<i>Bröt forward</i>	593,914
From 1833 to 1842..	86,550	In 1878 .. . . .	17,790
From 1843 to 1852..	69,764	In 1879 .. . . .	18,255
From 1853 to 1862..	101,238	In 1880 .. . . .	17,660
From 1863 to 1872..	146,380	In 1881 .. . . .	17,183
From 1873 to 1877..	91,257	In 1882 .. . . .	16,945
		In 1883 .. . . .	19,314
		In 1884 .. . . .	17,824
		In 1885 .. . . .	18,843
		In 1886 .. . . .	17,477
		In 1887 .. . . .	17,774
Total .. . . . .	593,914		
Total* .. . . . .			772,979

Exiles to Siberia may be grouped according to the nature of their sentences into three great classes, namely:

- I. Katorzhniki, or hard-labor convicts.
- II. Poselentse, or penal colonists.
- III. Sylni, or persons simply banished.

To these must be added a fourth class, composed of women and children, who go to Siberia voluntarily with their exiled husbands or parents. Criminals belonging to the first two classes are deprived of all civil rights and must remain in Siberia for life. Offenders of the third class retain some of their civil rights and may return to European Russia at the expiration of their terms of banishment. Convicts and penal colonists go to their places of destination in five-pound leg-fetters and with half-shaven heads, while simple exiles wear no fetters and are not personally disfigured. Exiles of the third class comprise

a. Vagrants (persons without passports who refuse to disclose their identity).

b. Persons banished by sentence of a court.

c. Persons banished by the village communes to which they belong.

d. Persons banished by order of the Minister of the Interior.

The relative proportions of these several classes for 1885, the year that I spent in Siberia, may be shown in tabular form as follows:

<i>Penal Class.</i>	<i>Men.</i>	<i>Women.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
I. Hard-labor convicts [Katorzhniki], punished by sentence of a court .. . . .	1,440	111	1,551
II. Penal colonists [Poselentse], punished by sentence of a court .. . . .	2,526	133	2,659
<i>a.</i> Vagrants .. . . .	1,646	73	1,719
<i>b.</i> Exiled by judicial sentence .. . . .	172	10	182
III. Exiles <i>c.</i> Exiled by village communes .. . . .	3,535	216	3,751
<i>d.</i> Exiled by executive order .. . . .	300	68	368
IV. Voluntaries [Dobrovolni] accompanying relatives .. . . .	2,068	3,468	5,536
Totals .. . . . .	11,687	4,079	15,766

An analysis of this classified statement reveals some curious and suggestive facts. It shows in the first place that the largest single class of exiles (5536 out of 15,766) is composed of women and children who go to Siberia voluntarily with their husbands and fathers.† It shows in the second place that out of the 10,230 persons sent to Siberia as criminals only 4392, or less than a half, have had a trial by a court, while 5838 are exiled by "administration process" — that is, by a mere order from the Ministry of the Interior.‡ Finally, it shows that more than one-third of the involuntary exiles (3751 out of 10,230) were sent to Siberia by the village communes, and not by the Government.

Every "mir," or village commune, in Russia has the right to banish any of its members who, through bad conduct or general worth-

‡ The proportion of the judicially sentenced to the administratively banished varies little from year to year. In the ten-year period from 1867 to 1876, inclusive, there were sent to Siberia 151,585 exiles: 48.80 per cent. went under sentences of courts, and 51.20 per cent. were banished by administrative process. In the seven-year period from 1880 to 1886, inclusive, there passed through the Tiumen forwarding prison 120,065 exiles, of whom 64,513, or 53.7 per cent., had been tried and condemned by courts, and 55,552, or 46.3 per cent., had been banished by orders from the Ministry of the Interior. A prison reform commission appointed by Alexander II. in the latter part of the last decade reported that on an average 45.6 per cent. of all the exiles sent to Siberia went under sentences of courts, and 54.4 per cent. were banished by administrative process.

\* The statistics of exile in this article are all from official sources, as are also the facts, unless otherwise stated.

† The records of the Bureau of Exile Administration for the four years ending with the year of my visit to Siberia showed that the numbers and percentages of women and children who voluntarily accompanied their husbands and fathers to Siberia were as follows:

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Whole number of exiles.</i>	<i>Women and children.</i>	<i>Percentage.</i>
1882 .. . . .	16,945	5,276	31
1883 .. . . .	19,314	6,311	33
1884 .. . . .	17,824	6,067	34
1885 .. . . .	18,843	5,536	28
Totals .. . . .	72,926	23,190	31



TIUMEN LABORERS WAITING FOR WORK ON "THE HILL OF LAZINESS."

lessness, have rendered themselves obnoxious to their fellow-citizens and burdensome to society. It has also the right to refuse to receive any of its members who, after serving out terms of imprisonment for crime, return to the "mir" and ask to be re-admitted. Released prisoners whom the mir will not thus re-admit are exiled to Siberia by administrative process.

The political exiles who are sent to Siberia do not constitute a separate penal class or grade, but are distributed among all of the classes above mentioned. Their number is much smaller than it is generally supposed to be, and does not, I think, average more than about 150 a year. One hundred and forty passed through the Tiumen forwarding prison in 1884 and sixty in 1885 up to the time of my visit. Owing, however, to the fact that until recently they have not been classed as "politicals" in the prison records and in official reports, it is difficult to ascertain exactly what proportion they make of the whole number of

exiles. I believe, however, that one per cent. is a fair estimate.\* Up to the time of my visit to the Tiumen prison I had not seen a political; and acting upon the advice of friends in St. Petersburg, I was very careful and guarded in making inquiries about them.

#### AN EXILE MARCHING PARTY.

ON the morning after our first visit to the Tiumen forwarding prison we had an opportunity of seeing the departure of a marching exile party. We went to the prison merely for the purpose of getting a sketch or a photograph of it, but happened to be just in time to see a party of 360 men, women, and children set out on foot for Yalutorfsk. Our attention was attracted first by a great crowd of people standing in the street outside the prison wall. As we drew nearer, the crowd resolved itself into a hundred or more women and children in bright-colored calico gowns, with kerchiefs over their heads, and about 250 men dressed in the gray exile costume, all standing close together in a dense throng, surrounded by a cordon of soldiers. In the street near them were fifteen or twenty one-horse telegas, or small four-wheeled wagons, some piled high with the gray bags in which exiles carry their spare clothing and personal property, and

\* According to the report of the Tiumen Bureau of Exile Transportation for 1887, there were sent to Siberia in that year 165 political exiles, as follows:

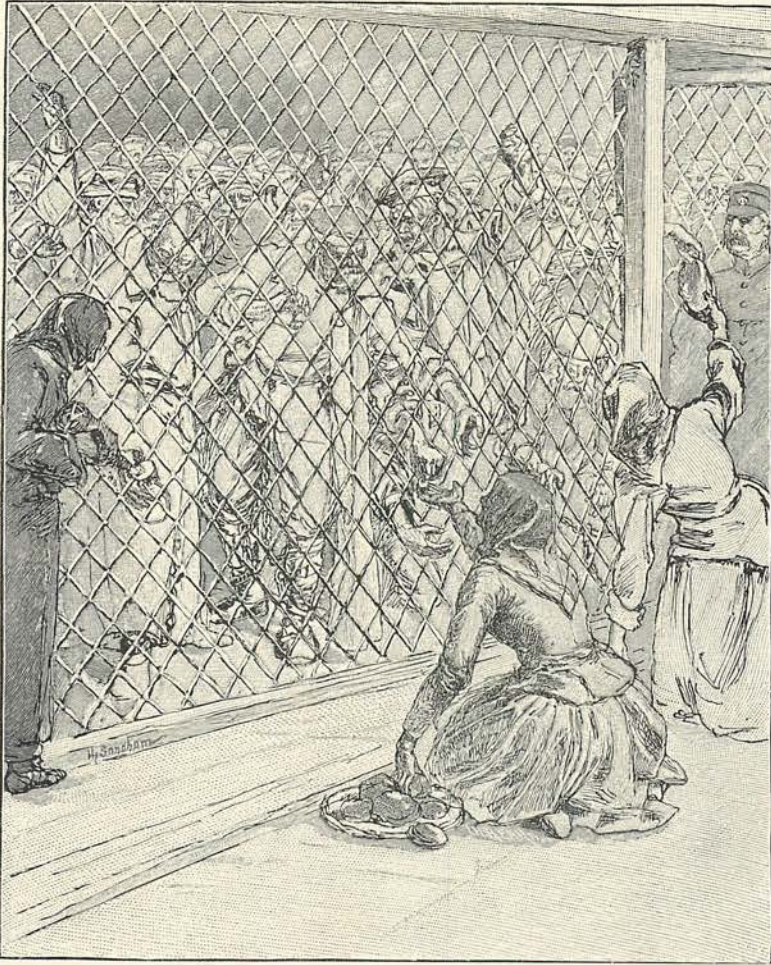
<i>Belonging to the noble class.</i>		<i>Other non-privileged classes.</i>	
Men.....	50	Men.....	70
Women.....	17	Women.....	18
Children.....	4	Children.....	6
Total.....	71	Total.....	94

some filled with men, women, and children, who, by reason of age, weakness, or infirmity, could not walk. It seemed surprising to me that anybody should be able to walk after a week's confinement in that prison. The air was filled with a continuous hum of voices as the exiles talked eagerly with one another, and occasionally we

"What's the matter with her ankle?" inquired the officer impatiently, looking down at the child's thin bare feet and legs.

"I don't know; she says it hurts her," replied the mother. "Please let her ride, for God's sake!"

"She can't ride, I tell you — there's no



MEN'S CAGE, CONVICT BARGE — EXILES BUYING FOOD.

could hear the wail of a sick child from one of the telegas, or a faint jingle of chains as some of the men, tired of standing, changed their positions or threw themselves on the ground. The officer in charge of the party, a heavily built man with yellowish side-whiskers, light-blue eyes, and a hard, unsympathetic face, stood near the telegas, surrounded by women and children, begging him to let them ride.

"Please put my little girl in a wagon," said one pale-faced woman, as I approached the group. "She is n't ten years old and she has a lame ankle; she can never walk thirty versts."

room," said the officer, still more impatiently. "I don't believe there's anything the matter with her ankle, and anybody can see that she's more than twelve years old. *Stoopaitye!*" ["Move on!"] he said sternly to the child; "you can pick flowers better if you walk."

The mother and the child shrank away without a word, and the officer, to escape further importunities, shouted the order to "Form ranks!" The hum of conversation suddenly ceased; there was a jingling of chains as the prisoners who had been lying on the ground sprang to their feet; the soldiers of the guard shouldered

their rifles; the exiles crossed themselves devoutly, bowing in the direction of the prison chapel; and at the word "March!" the whole column was instantly in motion. Three or four Cossacks, in dark-green uniforms and with rifles over their shoulders, took the lead; a dense but disorderly throng of men and women followed, marching between thin, broken lines of soldiers; next came the telegas with

## THE CONVICT BARGE.

HAVING witnessed the departure of one of the marching parties, we went down Saturday afternoon to the steamer-landing to see the embarkment of seven hundred exiles for Tomsk. The convict barge, which we were permitted to inspect, did not differ much in general appearance from an ordinary ocean



INSIDE THE WOMEN'S CAGE, CONVICT BARGE.

the old, the sick, and the small children; then a rear-guard of half a dozen Cossacks; and finally four or five wagons piled high with gray bags. Although the road was soft and muddy, in five minutes the party was out of sight. The last sounds I heard were the jingling of chains and the shouts of the Cossacks to the children to keep within the lines. These exiles were nearly all penal colonists and persons banished by Russian communes, and were destined for towns and villages in the southern part of the province of Tobolsk.

steamer, except that it drew less water and had no rigging. The black iron hull was about 220 feet in length by 30 in width, pierced by a horizontal line of small rectangular port-holes which opened into the sleeping-cabins on the lower deck. The upper deck supported two large yellow deck-houses about seventy-five feet apart, one of which contained three or four hospital wards and a dispensary, and the other, quarters for the officers of the convoy and a few cells for exiles belonging to the noble or privileged class. The space between

the deck-houses was roofed over and inclosed on each side by a coarse net-work of heavy iron wire, so as to make a cage 30 feet wide and 75 feet long, where the prisoners could walk and breathe the fresh air. This cage, which is known to the common criminal exiles as the "chicken-coop," was divided by a net-work partition into two compartments of unequal size, the smaller of which was intended for the women and children, and the larger for the men. Companion-ladders led down into the sleeping-cabins, of which there were three or four, varying in length from 30 to 60 feet, with a uniform width of 30 feet and a height of about 7. One of these cabins was occupied by the women and children, and the others were given up to the men. Through the center of each cabin ran longitudinally two tiers of double sleeping-platforms, precisely like those in the Tiumen prison kameras, upon which the exiles lay athwart-ship in four closely packed rows, with their heads together over the line of the keel. Along each side of the barge ran two more tiers of nares, upon which the prisoners lay lengthwise head to feet, in rows four or five deep. A reference to the plan and section of the barge will, I think, render this description of the interior of the sleeping-cabins fairly intelligible. The vessel had been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after its return from a previous trip to Tomsk, and the air in the cabins was pure and sweet.

The barge lay at a floating landing-stage of the type with which we had become familiar on the rivers Volga and Kama, and access to it was gained by means of a zigzag wooden bridge sloping down to it from the high bank of the river. When we reached the landing, a dense throng of exiles, about one-third of whom were women, were standing on the bank waiting to embark. They were surrounded by a cordon of soldiers, as usual, and non-commissioned officers were stationed at intervals of 20 or 30 feet on the bridge leading down to the landing-stage. I persuaded Colonel Vinokurof, Inspector of Exile Transportation for western Siberia, to delay the embarkment a little, in order that we might take photographs of the exiles and the barge. As soon as this had been accomplished the order was given to "Let them go on board," and the prisoners, shouldering their gray bags, walked one by one down the sloping bridge to the landing-stage. More than three-fourths of the men were in leg-fetters, and for an hour there was a continuous clanking of chains as the prisoners passed me on their way to the barge. The exiles, although uniformly clad in gray, presented, from an ethnological point of view, an extraordinary diversity of types, having evidently been collected from all parts of the



A CONVICT BARGE.

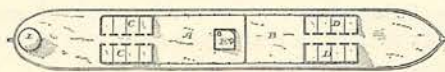


FIG. 1. PLAN OF CAGE-DECK.

A, Men's cage; B, Women's cage; C, Hospital cells and dispensary; D, Officers' quarters and cells for privileged class; E, Cook's galley.



FIG. 2. PLAN OF LOWER-DECK.

F, Cabin for hard-labor convicts (men); G, Cabin for exiles and penal colonists (men); H, Women's cabin; a, b, Nares, or sleeping-platforms.



FIG. 3. TRANSVERSE SECTION OF BARGE.

D, D, Deck-houses; G, Sleeping-cabin; a, b, Cross-section of sleeping-platforms.

vast empire. There were fierce, wild-looking mountaineers from Daghestan and Circassia, condemned to penal servitude for murders of blood-revenge; there were Tartars from the lower Volga, who had been sunburned until they were almost as black as negroes; Turks from the Crimea, whose scarlet convicts contrasted strangely with their gray convict overcoats; crafty looking Jews from Podolia, going into exile for smuggling; and finally, common peasants in great numbers from all parts of European Russia. The faces of the prisoners generally were not as hard, vicious, and depraved as the faces of criminals in America. Many of them were pleasant and good-humored, some were fairly intelligent, and even the worst seemed to me stupid and brutish rather than savage or malignant. At last all were on board; the sliding doors of the network cages were closed and secured with heavy padlocks, and a regular Russian bazar opened on the landing-stage. Male and female peddlers to the number of forty or fifty were allowed to come down to the side of the barge to sell provisions to the prisoners, most of whom seemed to be in possession of money. In one place might be seen a half-grown girl passing hard-boiled eggs one by one through the interstices of the net-work; in another, a gray-haired old woman was pouring milk through a tin tube into a tea-pot held by a convict on the inside of the cage; and all along the barge men were buying or bargaining for loaves of black rye-bread, salted cucumbers, pretzels, and fish turn-overs. The peddlers seemed to have perfect trust in the convicts, and often passed in food to them before they had received pay for it. The soldiers of the guard,

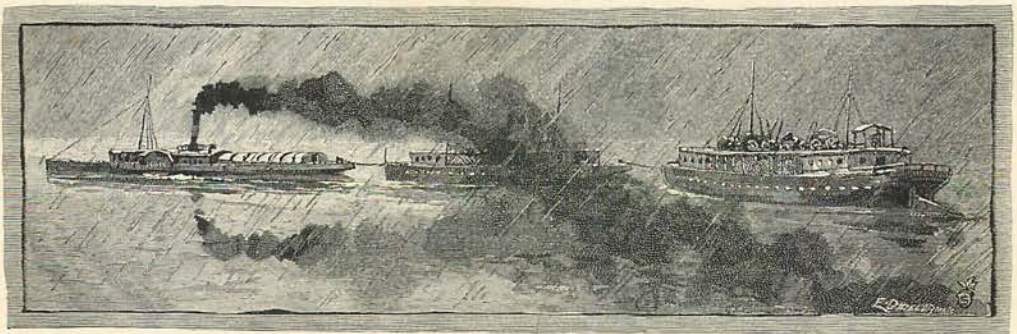
who were good-looking, fresh-faced young fellows, facilitated the buying and selling as far as possible by handing in the provisions and handing out the money, or by opening the sliding doors for the admission of such bulky articles as loaves of bread, which could not be passed through the net-work.

While we stood looking at this scene of busy traffic, a long-haired Russian priest in a black gown and a broad-brimmed felt hat crossed the landing-stage and entered one of the deck-houses, followed by an acolyte bearing his robes and a prayer-book. In a few moments, having donned his ecclesiastical vestments, he entered the women's cage, with a smoking censer in one hand and an open book in the other, and began a "moleben," or service of prayer. The women all joined devoutly in the supplications, bowing, crossing themselves, kneeling, and even pressing their foreheads to the deck. The priest hurried through the service, however, in a perfunctory manner, swung the censer back and forth a few times so as to fill the compartment with fragrant smoke, and then went into the men's cage. There much less interest seemed to be taken in the services. The convicts and soldiers removed their caps, but only a few joined in the prayer, and buying and selling went on without interruption all along the side of the barge. The deep-voiced chanting of the priest mingling with the high-pitched rattle of chains, the chaffering of peddlers, and the shouting of orders to soldiers on the roof of the cage produced a most strange and incongruous effect. Finally, the service ended, the priest took off his vest-

ments, wished the commanding officer of the convoy a pleasant voyage, and returned to the city, while Mr. Frost and I walked back and forth on the landing-stage studying the faces of the prisoners. With few exceptions the latter seemed cheerful and happy, and in all parts of the cage we could hear laughter, joking, and animated conversation. Mr. Frost finally began making sketches in his note-book of some of the more striking of the convict types on the other side of the net-work. This soon attracted the attention of the prisoners, and amidst great laughter and merriment they began dragging forward and arranging, in what they regarded as artistic poses, the convicts whom they thought most worthy of an artist's pencil. Having selected a subject, they would place him in all sorts of studiously careless and negligent attitudes, comb and arrange the long hair on the unshaven side of his head, try the effect of a red fez or an embroidered Tartar cap, and then shout suggestions and directions to the artist. This arranging of figures and groups for Mr. Frost to draw seemed to afford them great amusement, and was accompanied with as much joking and laughter as if they were school-boys off for a picnic, instead of criminals bound for the mines.

At last, just after sunset, a steamer made fast to the barge, the order was given to cast off the lines, the exiles all crowded against the net-work to take a parting look at Tiumen, and the great black and yellow floating prison moved slowly out into the stream and began its long voyage to Tomsk.

*George Kennan.*



#### INFINITE DEPTHS.

THE little pool, in street or field apart,  
Glasses the heavens and the rushing storm;  
And into the silent depths of every heart  
The Eternal throws its awful shadow-form.

*Charles Edwin Markham.*