

If they are mistaken as to the identity of the plaintiff; if there be in truth two persons about the same age bearing a strong resemblance to the family of Miller [Müller] and having the same identical marks from their birth, and the plaintiff is not the real lost child who arrived here with hundreds of others in 1818, it is certainly one of the most extraordinary things in history. If she be not, then nobody has told who she is. After the most mature consideration of the case, we are of opinion the plaintiff is free, and it is our duty to declare her so.

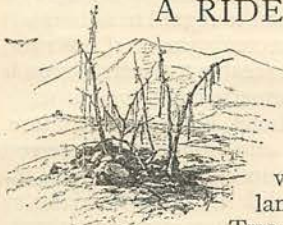
It is therefore ordered, adjudged, and decreed, that the judgment of the District Court be reversed; and ours is that the plaintiff be released from the bonds of slavery, that the defendants pay the costs of the appeal, and that the case be remanded for further proceedings as between the defendant and his warrantor.

So ends the record of the court. "The question of damage," says the *Law Reporter*, "is the

subject-matter of another suit now pending against Jno. F. Miller and Mrs. Canby." But I have it verbally from Salome's relatives that the claim was lightly and early dismissed. Salome being free, her sons were, by law, free also. But they came, and could come, only into a negro's freedom, went to Tennessee and Kentucky, were heard of once or twice as stable-boys to famous horses, and disappeared. A Mississippi River pilot, John Given by name, met Salome among her relatives, and courted and married her. As might readily be supposed, this alliance was only another misfortune to Salome, and the pair separated. Salome went to California. Her cousin, Henry Schuber, tells me he saw her in 1855 in Sacramento City, living at last a respected and comfortable life.

G. W. Cable.

A RIDE THROUGH THE TRANS-BAIKAL.



A BURIAT SHRINE.

ABOUT nine o'clock Tuesday evening we returned from the visit to the Buddhist lamasery described in THE CENTURY MAGAZINE for March, and at

eleven o'clock on the same night we ordered post horses at Selenginsk and set out for the Russo-Mongolian frontier town of Kiakhta (Kee-akh'-ta), distant about sixty miles. We ought to have arrived there early on the following morning; but in Siberia, and particularly in the Trans-Baikal (Trans-By-kal'), the traveler is always detained more or less by petty unforeseen accidents and misadventures. We were stopped at midnight about six versts from Selenginsk by an unbridged river. Communication between the two shores was supposed to be maintained by means of a "karbass," or rude ferryboat; but as this boat happened to be on the other side of the stream, it was of no use to us unless we could awaken the ferryman by calling to him. Singly and in chorus we shouted "Kar-ba-a-ss!" at short intervals for an hour, without getting any response except a faint mocking echo from the opposite cliffs. Cold, sleepy, and discouraged, we were about to give it up for the night and return to Selenginsk, when we saw the dark outlines of a low, raft-like boat moving slowly up-stream in the shadow of the cliffs on the other side. It was the long-looked-for karbass. In half an hour we were again under way on the southern side of the river, and at three o'clock in the morning we reached the poststation of Povorotnaya (Po-vo-rôte-na-

ya). Here, of course, there were no horses. The station house was already full of travelers asleep on the floor, and there was nothing for us to do except to lie down in an unoccupied corner near the oven, between two Chinese and a pile of medicinal deer-horns, and to get through the remainder of the night as best we could.

All day Wednesday we rode southward through a rather dreary and desolate region of sandy pine barrens or wide stretches of short dead grass, broken here and there by low hills covered with birches, larches, and evergreens. Now and then we met a train of small one-horse wagons loaded with tea that had come overland across Mongolia from Peking, or two or three mounted Buriats (Boor-yáts) in dishpan-shaped hats and long brown kaftans (kaf-táns), upon the breasts of which had been sewn zigzags of red cloth that suggested a rude Mongolian imitation of the Puritan "scarlet letter." As a rule, however, the road seemed to be little traveled and scantily settled, and in a ride of nearly fifty miles we saw nothing of interest except here and there on the summits of hills small sacred piles of stones which Mr. Frost called "Buriat shrines." All over Siberia it is the custom of the natives when they cross the top of a high hill or mountain to make a propitiatory offering to the spirits of storm and tempest. In the extreme north-eastern part of Siberia these offerings consist generally of tobacco, and are thrown out on the ground in front of some prominent and noticeable rock; but in the Trans-Baikal the Buriats and Mongols are accustomed to pile a heap of stones beside the

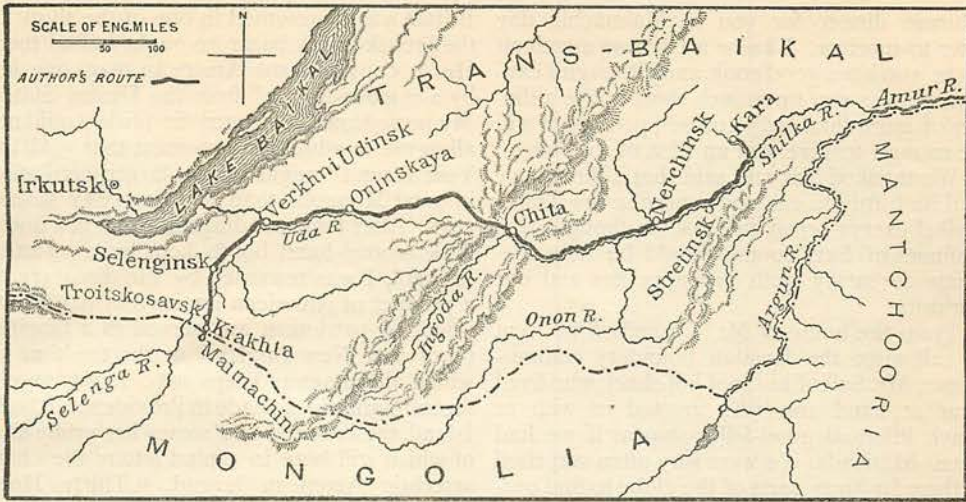
road, erect thereon half a dozen rods or poles, and suspend from the latter small pieces of their clothing. Every pious traveler who passes a shrine of this sort on the summit of a mountain is expected to alight from his vehicle or dismount from his horse, tear off a little piece of his kaftan or his shirt, hang it up on one of these poles, and say a prayer. As a result of this ceremonial, every shrine presents to the traveler a sort of tailor's collection of scraps and remnants of cloth of every conceivable kind, quality, and color, fluttering to the wind from slender poles that look like hastily improvised fishing-rods. Theoretically this custom would seem to be not wholly without its advantages. If a native was familiar with the clothing of his friends he could always tell by a simple inspection of one of these shrines who had lately passed that way, and, if necessary, he could trace any particular person from hilltop to hilltop by the strips of his shirt or the frayed edges of his trousers left hanging on the stone-ballasted fishing-rods as an offering to the mighty gods of the Siberian tempests. In practice, however, this might not be feasible unless one could remember all the old clothes of the person whom one wished to trace and all the ancestral rags and tatters of that person's family. From a careful examination that we made of a number of shrines we became convinced that every pious Buriat keeps a religious ragbag, which he carries with him when he travels and to which he has recourse whenever it becomes necessary to decorate the sacred fishing-poles of the storm-gods. I am sure that such miserable, decayed scraps and tatters of raiment as we saw fluttering in the wind over the shrines between Selen-ginsk and Kiakhta never could have been cut or torn from any garments that were actually in wear.

The weather all day Wednesday was raw and cold, with occasional squalls of rain or snow. We could get little to eat at the post stations, and long before it grew dark we were faint, hungry, and chilled to the bone. Nothing could have been more pleasant under such circumstances than to see at last the cheerful glow of the fire-lighted windows in the little log houses of Troitskosavsk (Troy-its-ko-sávsk), two miles and a half north of the Mongolian frontier.

The three towns of Troitskosavsk, Kiakhta, and Maimachin (My-match'-in) are so situated as to form one almost continuous settlement extending across the Russo-Mongolian frontier about a hundred miles south and east of Lake Baikal. Troitskosavsk and Kiakhta are on the northern side of the boundary line, while Maimachin is on the southern or Mongolian side and is separated from Kiakhta by a hundred

and fifty or two hundred yards of unoccupied neutral ground. Of the three towns Troitskosavsk is the largest, and from an administrative point of view the most important; but Kiakhta is nearest to the border and is best known by name to the world.

Acting upon the advice of a merchant's clerk whose acquaintance we had made on the Lake Baikal steamer, we drove through Troitskosavsk to Kiakhta and sought shelter in a house called "Sokoloff's" (Só-ko-loff's), which the merchant's clerk had given us to understand was a good and comfortable hotel. When after much search we finally found it, we were surprised to discover that there was not a sign of a hotel about it. The house stood in the middle of a large, wall-inclosed yard, its windows were dark, and although the hour was not a very late one the court-yard gate was shut and closely barred. After shouting, knocking, and kicking at the gate for five or ten minutes we succeeded in arousing a sharp-tongued maid-servant, who seemed disposed at first to regard us as burglars or brigands. Upon becoming assured, however, that we were only peaceable travelers in search of lodgings, she informed us with some asperity that this was not a hotel, but a private house. Mr. Sokoloff, she said, sometimes received travelers who came to him with letters of introduction; but he did not open his doors to people whom nobody knew anything about, and the best thing we could do, in her opinion, was to go back to Troitskosavsk. As we had no letters of introduction, and as the young woman refused to open the gate or hold any further parley with us, there was obviously nothing for us to do but to recognize the soundness of her judgment and take her advice. We therefore climbed into our telega, drove back to Troitskosavsk, and finally succeeded in finding there a Polish exile named Klembotiski (Klem-bót-skee), who kept a bakery and who had a few rooms that he was willing to rent, even to travelers who were not provided with letters of introduction. As it was after ten o'clock, and as we despaired of finding a better place, we ordered our baggage taken to one of Mr. Klembotiski's rooms. It did not prove to be a very cheerful apartment. The floor was made of rough-hewn planks, the walls were of squared logs chinked with hemp-fibers, there was no furniture except a pine table, three stained pine chairs, and a narrow wooden couch or bedstead, and all guests were expected to furnish their own bedding. After a meager supper of tea and rolls we lay down on the hard plank floor and tried to get to sleep, but were forced, as usual, to devote a large part of the night to researches and investigations in a narrowly restricted and uninteresting department of entomology. Thursday forenoon



we hired a peculiar Russian variety of Irish jaunting-car, known in Siberia as a "dolgushka" (dol-goosh-ka), and set out for Kiakhta, where we intended to call upon a wealthy Russian tea merchant named Lushnikoff (Loosh-neekoff), who had been recommended to us by friends in Irkutsk.

Troitskosavsk, Kiakhta, and Maimachin are situated in a shallow and rather desolate valley, beside a small stream that falls into the Selenga (Sel-en-ga') River. The nearly parallel and generally bare ridges that form this valley limit the vision in every direction except to the southward, where, over the housetops and gray wooden walls of Maimachin, one may catch a glimpse of blue, hazy mountains far away in Mongolia. Kiakhta, which stands on the border line between Mongolia and Siberia, does not appear at first sight to be anything more than a large, prosperous village. It contains a greater number of comfortable-looking two-story log dwelling-houses than are to be found in most East Siberian villages, and it has one or two noticeable churches of the Russo-Greek type with white walls and belfries surmounted by colored or gilded domes; but one would never suppose it to be the most important commercial point in Eastern Siberia. Through Kiakhta, nevertheless, pass into or out of Mongolia every year Russian and Chinese products to the value of from twenty to thirty million rubles (\$10,000,000 to \$15,000,000). Nearly all of the famous "overland" tea consumed in Russia is brought across Mongolia in caravans from northern China, enters the Empire through Kiakhta, and after being carefully repacked and sewn up in raw hides is transported across Siberia a distance of nearly four thousand miles to St. Petersburg, Moscow, or the great annual fair of Nizhni Novgorod (Neezh'-nee N6v-go-rod). Through

Kiakhta are also imported into Russia silks, crapes, and other distinctively Chinese products, together with great quantities of compressed, or "brick," tea for the poorer classes of the Russian people and for the Kirghis (Keér-gees), Buriats, and other native tribes. The chief exports to the Chinese Empire are Russian manufactures, medicinal deer-horns, ginseng, furs, and precious metals in the shape of Russian, English, and American coins. Even the silver dollars of the United States find their way into the Flowery Kingdom through Siberia. Among the Russian merchants living in Kiakhta are men of great wealth, some of whom derive from their commercial transactions in general, and from the tea trade in particular, incomes varying from \$75,000 to \$150,000 per annum.

We found Mr. Lushnikoff living in a comfortably furnished two-story house near the center of the town, and upon introducing ourselves as American travelers were received with the sincere and cordial hospitality that seems to be characteristic of Russians everywhere, from Behring Strait to the Baltic Sea. In the course of lunch, which was served soon after our arrival, we discussed the "sights" of Kiakhta and Maimachin, and were informed by Mr. Lushnikoff that in his opinion there was very little in either town worthy of a foreign traveler's attention. Maimachin might perhaps interest us if we had never seen a Chinese or Mongolian city, but Kiakhta did not differ essentially from other Siberian settlements of its class.

After a moment's pause he asked suddenly, as if struck by a new thought, "Have you ever eaten a Chinese dinner?"

"Never," I replied.

"Well," he said, "then there is one new experience that I can give you. I'll get up a

Chinese dinner for you in Maimachin day after to-morrow. I know a Chinese merchant there who has a good cook, and although I cannot promise you upon such short notice a dinner of more than forty courses, perhaps it will be enough to give you an idea of the thing."

We thanked him and said that although we had had little to eat since entering the Trans-Baikal except bread and tea, we thought that a dinner of forty courses would be fully adequate to satisfy both our appetites and our curiosity.

From the house of Mr. Lushnikoff we went to call upon the Russian boundary commissioner, Mr. Sulkofski (Sool-k6f-skee), who lived near at hand and who greeted us with as much informal good-fellowship as if we had been old friends. We were very often surprised in these far-away parts of the globe to find ourselves linked by so many persons and associations to the civilized world and to our homes. In the house of Mr. Lushnikoff, for example, we had the wholly unexpected pleasure of talking in English with Mrs. Hamilton, a cultivated Scotch lady, who had come to Kiakhtha across China and Mongolia and had been for several years a member of Mr. Lushnikoff's family. In the person of the Russian boundary commissioner we were almost as much surprised to find a gentleman who had met many officers of the *Jeannette* arctic exploring expedition—including Messrs. Melville and Danenhower; who had seen the relief steamer *Rodgers* in her winter quarters near Behring Strait; and who was acquainted with Captain Berry of that vessel and with the "Herald" correspondent, Mr. Gilder.

After another lunch and a pleasant chat of an hour or more with Mr. Sulkofski, Frost and I returned to Troitskosavsk and spent the remainder of the afternoon in exploring the bazar, or town market, and the queer Chinese and Mongolian shops shown in the illustration on page 78. In one of these shops we were astonished to find an old second-hand copy of Dickens's "All the Year Round." How it came there I could hardly imagine, but it seemed to me that if the periodical literature of Great

Britain was represented in one of the shops of the Troitskosavsk bazar we ought to find there also a copy of some American magazine left by a "globe-trotter" from the United States. My professional and patriotic pride would not allow me to admit for a moment that "All the Year Round" might have a larger circulation in outer Mongolia than *THE CENTURY MAGAZINE*. After long and diligent search in a queer dark second-hand booth kept by a swarthy Mongol, I was rewarded by the discovery of a product of American genius that partly satisfied my patriotism and served as a tangible proof that New England marks the time to which all humanity keeps step. It was an old second-hand clock, made in Providence, Rhode Island, the battered and somewhat grimy face of which still bore in capital letters the characteristic American legend, "Thirty Hour Joker." Mongolia might know nothing of American literature or of American magazines, but it had made the acquaintance of the American clock; and although this particular piece of mechanism had lost its hands, its "Thirty Hour Joker" was a sufficiently pointed allusion to the national characteristic to satisfy the most ardent patriotism. An American joker does not need hands to point out the merits of his jokes, and this mutilated New England clock, with its empty key-hole eyes and its battered but still humorous visage, seemed to leer at me out of the darkness of that queer old second-hand shop as if to say, "You may come to Siberia, you may explore Mongolia, but you can't get away from the American joker." I was a little disappointed not to find in this bazar some representative masterpiece of American literature, but I was more than satisfied a short time afterward when I discovered in a still wilder and more remote part of the Trans-Baikal a copy of Mark Twain's "Life on the Mississippi" and a Russian translation of Bret Harte's "Luck of Roaring Camp."

On Friday, October 2, Mr. Frost and I again visited Kiakhtha and went with the boundary commissioner, Mr. Sulkofski, to call upon the Chinese governor of Maimachin. The Mongolian town of Maimachin is separated from Kiakhtha by a hundred and fifty or two hundred yards of neutral ground, through the middle of which is supposed to run the boundary line between the two great empires. Maimachin is further separated from Kiakhtha by a high plank wall and by screens, or pagoda shaped buildings, that mask the entrances to the streets so that the outside barbarian cannot look into the place without actually entering it, and cannot see anything beyond its



wooden walls after he has entered it. It would be hard to imagine a more sudden and startling change than that brought about by a walk of two hundred yards from Kiakhta to Maimachin. One moment you are in a Russian provincial village with its characteristic shops, log houses, golden-domed churches, droshkies (drósh-kees), soldiers, and familiar peasant faces; the next moment you pass behind the high screen that conceals the entrance to the Mongolian town and find yourself apparently in the middle of the Chinese Empire. You can hardly believe that you have not been suddenly transported on the magical carpet of the "Arabian Nights" over a distance of a thousand miles. The town in which you find yourself is no more like the town that you have just left than a Zuni pueblo is like a village in New England, and for all that appears to the contrary you might suppose yourself to be separated from the Russian Empire by the width of a whole continent. The narrow, unpaved streets are shut in by gray, one-story houses, whose windowless walls are made of clay mixed with chopped straw, and whose roofs, ornamented with elaborate carving, show a tendency to turn up at the corners; clumsy two-wheel ox-carts, loaded with boxes of tea and guided by swarthy Mongol drivers, have taken the place of the Russian horses and telegas; Chinese traders in skull-caps, loose flapping gowns, and white-soled shoes appear at the doors of the court-yards instead of the Russian merchants in top-boots, loose waistcoats, and shirts worn outside their trousers whom you have long been accustomed to see; and wild-looking sunburned horsemen in deep orange gowns and dishpan-shaped hats ride in now and then from some remote encampment in the great desert of Gobi, followed, perhaps, by a poor Mongol from the immediate neighborhood, mounted upon a slow-pacing ox. Wherever you go, and in whatever direction you look, China has taken the place of Russia, and the scenes that confront you are full of strange, unfamiliar details.

We drove with a Russo-Chinese interpreter to the residence of the "surguche" (soor-goo-chay'), or Chinese governor,—which was distinguished from all other houses by having two high poles tipped with gilded balls erected in front of it,—and after being introduced to his Excellency by Mr. Sulkoſki were invited to partake of tea, sweetmeats, and "maigalo" (mý-ga-lo), or Chinese rice-brandy. We exchanged with the governor a number of ceremonious and not at all exciting inquiries and replies relative to his and our health, affairs, and general well-being, drank three or four saki-cups of maigalo, nibbled at some candied fruits, and then, as the hour for his devotions had arrived, went with him by invitation to the temple and

saw him say his prayers before a large wooden idol to an accompaniment made by the slow tolling of a big, deep-toned bell. The object of the bell-ringing seemed to be to notify the whole population of the town that his Excellency the governor was communing with his Joss. When we returned to his house Mr. Frost drew a portrait of him as with an amusing air of conscious majesty he sat upon a tiger skin in his chair of state, and then, as we had no excuse for lingering longer, we took our leave, each of us receiving a neatly tied package in which were the nuts, sweetmeats, and candied fruits that had been set before us but had not been eaten.

We wasted the rest of the afternoon in trying to get photographs of some of the strange types and groups that were to be seen in the Maimachin streets. Again and again we were surrounded by forty or fifty Mongols, Buriats, and nondescript natives from the great southern steppes, and again and again we set up the camera and trained it upon a part of the picturesque throng. Every time Mr. Frost covered his head with the black cloth and took off the brass cap that concealed the instrument's Cyclopean eye, the apprehensive Celestials vanished with as much celerity as if the artist were manipulating a Gatling gun. We could clear a whole street from one end to the other by merely setting up the camera on its tripod and getting out the black cloth, and I seriously thought of advising the Chinese governor to send to America for a photographic outfit to be used in quelling riots. He could disperse a mob with it more quickly and certainly than with a battery of mountain howitzers. If I remember rightly, Mr. Frost did not succeed in getting pictures of any animated objects that day except a few Mongol ox-teams and two or three blind or crippled beggars who could not move rapidly enough to make their escape. At a later hour that same afternoon, in the bazar of Troitskosavsk, he came near being mobbed while trying to make a pencil drawing of a fierce-looking Mongol trader, and was obliged to come home with his sketch unfinished. We both regretted, as we had regretted many times before, that we had neglected to provide ourselves with a small detective camera. It might have been used safely and successfully in many places where the larger instrument excited fear or suspicion.

Our Chinese dinner in Maimachin Saturday afternoon was a novel and interesting experience. It was given in the counting-house of a wealthy Chinese merchant, and the guests present and participating comprised six or eight ladies and gentlemen of Mr. Lushnikoff's acquaintance, as well as Mr. Frost and me. The table was covered with a white cloth, and

was furnished with plates, cups and saucers, knives and forks, etc., in the European fashion. Ivory chopsticks were provided for those who desired them, but they were used by the Russian and American guests only in a tentative and experimental way. When we had all taken seats at the table a glass flagon containing a peculiar kind of dark-colored Chinese vinegar was passed round, and every guest poured about half a gill of it into a small saucer beside his plate.

"What is the vinegar for?" I asked Mr. Lushnikoff.

"To dip your food in," he replied. "The Chinese in Maimachin eat almost everything with vinegar. It is n't bad."

As I had not the faintest idea what was coming in the shape of food, I reserved my judgment as to the expediency of using vinegar and maintained an attitude of expectancy. In a few moments the first course was brought in. I will not undertake to say positively what it was, but I find it described in my note-book as "a prickly sea-weed or sea plant of some kind, resembling stiff moss." It had presumably been boiled or cooked in some way, but I cannot venture to affirm anything whatever with regard to it except that it was cold and had a most disagreeable appearance. Each of the Russian guests took a small quantity of it, sopped a morsel in the dark-colored vinegar, and ate it, if not with relish, at least with heroic confidence and composure. There was nothing for Mr. Frost and me to do but to follow the example. The next nine courses, taking them in order, I find described in my note-book as follows:

1. Shreds of cold meat embedded in small diamond-shaped molds of amber-colored jelly.
2. Black mushrooms of a species to me unknown.
3. Salad of onions and finely shredded herbs.
4. Lichens from birch trees.
5. Thin slices of pale, unwholesome-looking sausage, component materials unknown.
6. Small diamonds, circles, and squares of boiled egg, dyed in some way so as to resemble scraps of morocco leather.
7. The tails of crawfish fried brown.
8. Long-fronded sea-weed of a peculiar grass-green color.
9. Curly fibers of some marine plant that looked like shredded cabbage.

I do not pretend to say that these brief entries in my note-book describe with scientific accuracy the articles of food to which they relate. I did not know, and could not find out, what many of the courses were, and all I could do was to note down the impression that they made upon me and call them by the names of the things that they seemed most to

resemble. All of these preparations, without exception, were served cold and were eaten with vinegar. Over a brazier of coals on a broad divan near the table stood a shallow pan of hot water, in which were half immersed three or four silver pots or pitchers containing the colorless rice-brandy known as maigalo. After every course of the dinner a servant went round the table with one of these pitchers and filled with the hot liquor a small porcelain cup like a Japanese saki-cup that had been placed beside every guest's plate.

I had heard a short time before this an anecdote of an ignorant East Siberian peasant, who in making an excavation for some purpose found what he supposed to be the almost perfectly preserved remains of a mammoth. With the hope of obtaining a reward he determined to report this extraordinary find to the *ispravnik*, and in order to make his story more impressive he tasted some of the flesh of the extinct beast so that he could say to the police officer that the animal was in such a state of preservation as to be actually eatable. An investigation was ordered, a scientist from the Irkutsk geographical society was sent to the spot, and the remains of the mammoth were found to be a large deposit of the peculiar Siberian mineral known as "*gorni kozha*" (*gór-nee kó-zhaa*), or "mineral leather." The irritated *ispravnik*, who felt that he had been made to appear like an ignorant fool in the eyes of the Irkutsk scientists, sent for the peasant and said to him angrily, "You stupid block-head! Did n't you tell me that you had actually eaten some of this stuff? It is n't a mammoth at all; it's a mineral—a thing that they take out of mines."

"I did eat it, Barin" (*Báh-rin*, meaning "Master"), maintained the peasant stoutly; "but," he added, with a sheepish self-excusatory air, "what can't you eat with butter?"

As the servants in Maimachin brought round and handed to us successively black mushrooms, crawfish tails, tree-lichens, and sea-weed I thought of the peasant's mammoth and said to myself, "What can't one eat with vinegar and Chinese brandy?"

After the last of the cold victuals had been served and disposed of the dishes were cleared away, the saucers were replenished with vinegar, and the hot courses came on as follows:

1. Meat dumplings, consisting of finely minced veal inclosed in a covering of dough and boiled.

Mr. Frost, by some occult process of divination, discovered, or thought he discovered, that the essential component of these dumplings was young dog, and he firmly refused to have anything whatever to do with them even in combination with vinegar. I reproached him

for this timidity, and assured him that such unfounded prejudices were unworthy the character of a man who professed to be a traveler and an investigator, and a man, moreover, who had already spent three years in the Russian Empire. Had I known, however, what was yet to come, I think I should have held my peace.

2. Finely minced meat pressed into small balls and fried.

3. Small meat pies, or *pâtés*.

4. Boiled fowl, served in a thick whitish gravy with large snails.

At this course I felt compelled to draw the line. The snails had turned black in the process of cooking and resembled nothing so much as large boiled tomato-vine worms; and although I drank two cupfuls of hot rice-brandy with the hope of stimulating my resolution up to the point of tasting them, my imagination took the bit between its teeth and ran away with my reason.

5. Fat of some kind in soft, whitish, translucent lumps.

6. Roast sucking pig, served whole.

This was perhaps the most satisfactory course of the whole dinner, and as I ate it I thought of Charles Lamb's well-known essay describing the manner in which the Chinese discovered the great art of roasting young pig, and decided that I too would burn down a house if necessary in order to obtain it.

7. Small pieces of mutton spitted on long, slender iron needles and roasted over a hot fire.

8. Chicken in long, thin, shredded fibers, served with the broth.

9. Boiled rice.

10. Peculiar, hard, woody mushrooms, or lichens, boiled and served with brown gravy.

11. Thin, translucent, and very slippery macaroni, cooked in a Chinese samovar.

12. Cocks' heads with sections of the necks; and finally,

13 to 19. Different kinds of soup served simultaneously.

The soups virtually brought the dinner to an end. The table was again cleared, the vinegar-saucers and saki-cups were removed, and the servants brought in successively nuts and sweetmeats of various sorts, delicious "flower tea," and French champagne.

The dinner occupied about three hours, and within that time every guest partook of thirty or forty courses, consumed from one to three saucerfuls of Chinese vinegar, drank from fifteen to twenty-five saki-cupfuls of hot rice-brandy flavored with rose, and washed down the last mouthfuls of Chinese confectionery with bumpers of champagne to the health of our host.

That we were able to get to our droshkies without assistance, and did not all die of acute indigestion before the next morning, must be

regarded as a piece of good luck so extraordinary as to be almost miraculous. My curiosity with regard to a Chinese dinner was completely satisfied. If the Chinese dine in this way every day I wonder that the race has not long since become extinct. One such dinner, eaten late in the fall, would enable a man, I should think, if he survived it, to go into a cave like a bear and hibernate until the next spring.

I little thought when I drove away from the Chinese merchant's counting-house in Maimachin late that afternoon that I had enjoyed the last recreation I should know for months to come, and that I was looking at the old Mongolian town for the last time. Early Sunday morning I was taken sick with a violent chill, followed by high fever, severe headache, pain in the back, cough, languor, and great prostration. It was the beginning of a serious illness, which lasted nearly two weeks and from which I did not fully recover for three months. With that sickness began the really hard and trying part of my Siberian experience. Up to that time I had had at least strength to bear the inevitable hardships of life and travel in such a country; but after that time I was sustained chiefly by will power, quinine, and excitement. It is unnecessary to describe the miseries of sickness in such a place as that wretched room adjoining Klembotski's bakery in the frontier town of Troitskosavsk. There are no entries in my note-book to cover that unhappy period of my Siberian life; but in a letter that I managed to write home from there I find my circumstances briefly described in the words, "It is one thing to be sick at home in a good bed, in clean linen and with somebody to take care of you; but it is quite another thing to lie down sick like a dog on a hard plank floor, with all your clothes on, and in the paroxysms of fever be tormented to the verge of frenzy by bedbugs." I had no bedding except my sheepskin overcoat and a dirty blanket, and although I tried the hard bedstead, the floor, and the table by turns, I could not anywhere escape the fleas and the bedbugs. I tried at first to treat my illness myself with a small case of medicines that I had brought with me; but learning that there was a Russian physician in the town, I finally sent for him. He began giving me ten-grain doses of quinine, which ultimately broke the fever, and at the end of twelve days, although still very weak, I was able to be up and to walk about.

I fully realized for the first time while lying sick in Klembotski's bakery what a political exile must suffer when taken sick in a roadside étape. In addition, however, to all that I had to endure the exile must live upon coarse food, breathe air that is more or less foul or infected,

and perhaps lie in leg-fetters upon a hard plank sleeping-bench. Mr. Charushin (Char-oo-shin), a political convict whose acquaintance I made in Nerchinsk (Nér-chinsk), was not released from his leg-fetters even when prostrated by typhus fever.

On the 15th of October Mr. Frost and I left Troitskosavsk for Selenginsk. I felt very weak and dizzy that morning and feared that I was about to have a relapse; but I thought that even a jolting telega in the open air could hardly be a worse place in which to be sick than the vermin-infested room that I had so long occupied, and I determined that if I had strength enough to walk out to a vehicle I would make a start. We rode about sixty miles that day, spent the night in the post station of Povorotnaya (Po-vo-róte-na-ya), and reached Selenginsk early the next forenoon. In this wretched little Buriat village there were three interesting political exiles whom I desired to see, and we stopped there for one day for the purpose of making their acquaintance. Their names were Constantine Shamarin (Shah-máh-rin), a young student from Ekaterineburg; Mr. Kardashoff (Kar-da-shóff), a Georgian from the Caucasus; and Madame Breshkofskaya (Bresh-kóffska-ya), a highly educated young married lady from the city of Kiev (approximately Keév). Mr. Kardashoff and Madame Breshkofskaya had both served out penal terms at the mines of Kara (Kah-ráh), and I thought that I could perhaps obtain from them some useful information with regard to the best way of getting to those mines, and the character of the officials with whom I should there have to deal.

Mr. Shamarin, upon whom I called first, was a pleasant-faced young fellow twenty-four or twenty-five years of age, of middle height and quiet, gentlemanly bearing, with honest, trustworthy, friendly eyes that inspired confidence as soon as one looked at him. His history seemed to me to furnish a very instructive illustration of the complete disregard of personal rights that characterizes the Russian Government in its dealings with citizens who happen to be suspected, with or without reason, of political untrustworthiness. While still a university student he was arrested upon a political charge, and after being held for three years in

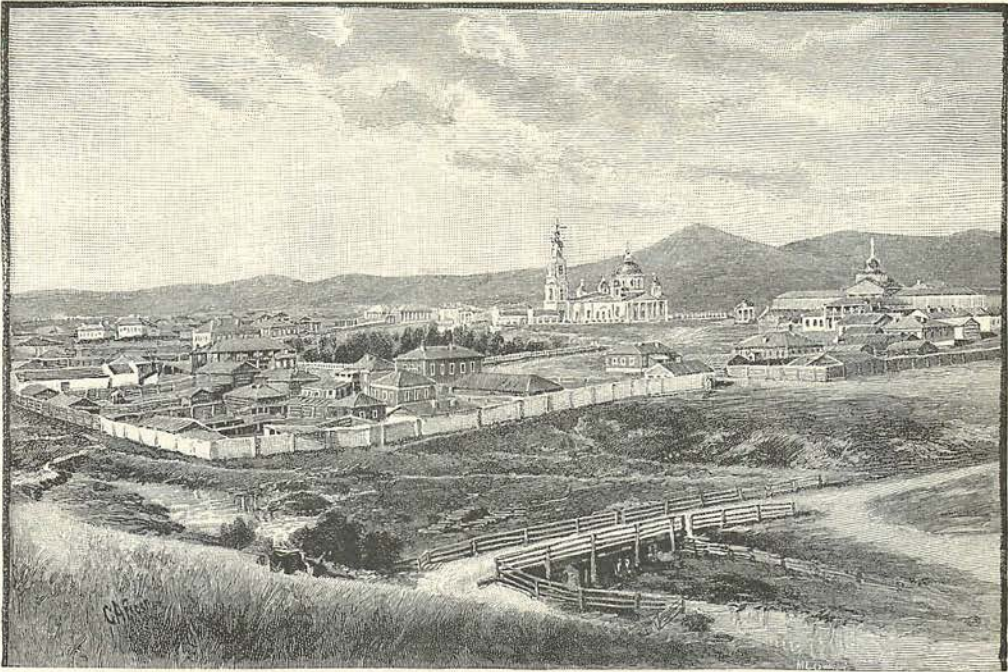


one of the bomb-proof casemates of the Trubetskoi (Troo-bet-skóy) bastion in the fortress of Petropavlovsk (Pet-ro-páv-lovsk) was finally tried by a court. The evidence against him was so insignificant that the court contented itself with sentencing him to two months' imprisonment.

Holding a man in solitary confinement for three years in a bomb-proof casemate before trial, and then sentencing him to so trivial a punishment as two months' imprisonment, is in itself a remarkable proceeding, but I will let that pass without comment. Mr. Shamarin certainly had the right, at the expiration of the two months, to be set at liberty, inasmuch as he had borne the penalty inflicted upon him by virtue of a judicial sentence pronounced after due investigation and trial.



The Government, however, instead of liberating him, banished him by administrative process to a village called Barguzin (Bar-goo-zín), in the territory of the Trans-Baikal, more than four thousand miles east of St. Petersburg. In the summer of 1881 he, with three other politicals, including Madame Breshkofskaya, made an unsuccessful attempt to escape across the Trans-Baikal to the Pacific Ocean with the hope of there getting on board an American vessel. For this he was sent to a native ooloot in the sub-arctic province of Yakutsk (Yah-koótsk), where he was seen by some or all of the members of the American expedition sent to the relief of the survivors of the arctic exploring steamer *Jeannette*. In 1882 or 1883 he was transferred to Selenginsk, and in the autumn of 1884 his term of exile expired, leaving him in an East Siberian village three thousand miles from his home without any means of getting back. The Government does not return to their homes the political exiles whom it has sent to Siberia unless such exiles are willing to travel by étape with a returning criminal party. Owing to the fact that parties going towards Russia do not make as close connections with the armed convoys at the étapes as do parties coming away from Russia, their progress is very slow. Colonel Zagarin, the Inspector of Exile Transportation for Eastern Siberia, told me that returning parties are about three hundred days in making the thousand-mile stretch between Irkutsk (Eer-koótsk) and Tomsk. Very few political exiles are willing to live a year in fever-infested and vermin-infested étapes even for the sake of getting back to European Russia; and unless they can earn money enough to defray the expenses of such a journey, or have relatives who are able to send them the necessary money, they remain in Siberia. I helped one such political to get home by buying, for a hundred rubles, a collection of Siberian flowers that he had made, and I should have been glad to help Mr. Shamarin; but he had been at work for more than a year upon an index to the public documents in the archives of the old town of Selenginsk, extend-



A GENERAL VIEW OF KIAKHTA, SHOWING THE "NEUTRAL GROUND."

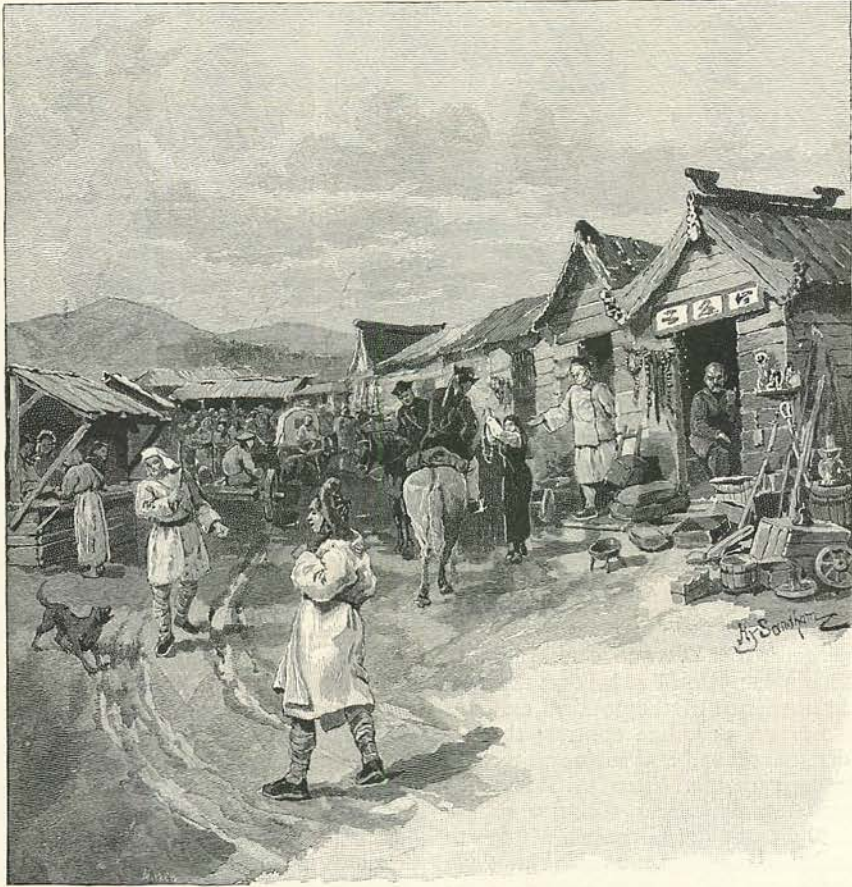
ing over a period of a hundred and thirty years, and he hoped that the governor would pay him enough for this labor to enable him to return to European Russia at his own expense. The correspondence of the political exiles in Selenginsk is under police control; that is, all their letters are read and subjected to censorship by the *ispravnik*. When Mr. Shamarin's term of exile expired he was, of course, *de jure* and *de facto* a free man. He sent a petition to the governor of the province asking that the restrictions upon his correspondence be removed. The governor referred the matter to the *ispravnik* and the *ispravnik* declined to remove them. Therefore, for more than a year after Mr. Shamarin's term of banishment had expired, and after he had legally re-acquired all the rights of a free citizen, he could receive and send letters only after they had been read and approved by the police. How exasperating this cool, cynical, almost contemptuous disregard of personal rights must be to a high-spirited man the reader can perhaps imagine if he will suppose the case to be his own.

While Mr. Shamarin and I were talking, Madame Breshkofskaya came into the room and I was introduced to her. She was a lady perhaps thirty-five years of age, with a strong, intelligent, but not handsome face, a frank, unreserved manner, and sympathies that seemed to be warm, impulsive, and generous. Her face bore traces of much suffering, and her thick, dark wavy hair, which had been cut

short in prison at the mines, was streaked here and there with gray; but neither hardship, nor exile, nor penal servitude had been able to break her brave, finely tempered spirit, or to shake her convictions of honor and duty. She was, as I soon discovered, a woman of much cultivation, having been educated first in the women's schools of her own country, and then at Zurich in Switzerland. She spoke French, German, and English, was a fine musician, and impressed me as being in every way an attractive and interesting woman. She had twice been sent to the mines of Kara,—the second time for an attempt to escape from forced colonization in the Trans-Baikal village of Barguzin,—and after serving out her second penal term had again been sent as a forced colonist to this wretched, God-forsaken Buriat settlement of Selenginsk, where she was under the direct supervision and control of the interesting chief of police who on the occasion of our first visit had accompanied us to the Buddhist lamasery of Goose Lake. There was not another educated woman, so far as I know, within a hundred miles in any direction; she received from the Government an allowance of a dollar and a quarter a week for her support; her correspondence was under police control; she was separated for life from her family and friends; and she had, it seemed to me, absolutely nothing to look forward to except a few years, more or less, of hardship and privation, and at last burial in a lonely graveyard beside the Selenga

River, where no sympathetic eye might ever rest upon the unpainted wooden cross that would briefly chronicle her life and death. The unshaken courage with which this unfortunate

that we were having a hard life, but such examples of suffering nobly borne for the sake of a principle and for an oppressed people would have put a soul under the ribs of death.



BAZAR AND CHINESE SHOPS IN TROITSKOSAVSK.

woman contemplated her dreary future, and the faith that she manifested in the ultimate triumph of liberty in her native country, were as touching as they were heroic. Almost the last words that she said to me were: "Mr. Kennan, we may die in exile, and our children may die in exile, and our children's children may die in exile, but something will come of it at last." I have never seen nor heard of Madame Breshkofskaya since that day. She has passed as completely out of my life as if she had died when I bade her good-bye; but I cannot recall her last words to me without feeling conscious that all my standards of courage, of fortitude, and of heroic self-sacrifice have been raised for all time, and raised by the hand of a woman. Interviews with such political exiles — and I met many in the Trans-Baikal — were to me a more bracing tonic than medicine. I might be sick and weak, I might feel

We left Selenginsk at four o'clock on the afternoon of Friday, October 16, and after a ride of a hundred and eight miles, which we made in less than twenty-four hours, reached the district town of Verkhni Udinsk (Vérkh-nee Oó-dinsk). The weather, particularly at night, was cold and raw, and the jolting of the springless post vehicles was rather trying to one who had not yet rallied from the weakness and prostration of fever; but the fresh open air was full of invigoration, and I felt no worse, at least, than at the time of our departure from Troitskosavsk, although we had made in two days and nights a distance of a hundred and seventy miles. There were two prisons in Verkhni Udinsk that I desired to in-





A STREET IN MAIMACHIN.

spect; and as early as possible Sunday morning I called upon the *ispravnik*, introduced myself as an American traveler, exhibited my open letters, and succeeded in making an engagement with that official to meet him at the old prison about noon.

The *ostrog* of Verkhni Udinsk, which serves at the same time as a local prison, a forwarding prison, and a place of temporary detention for persons awaiting trial, is an old weather-beaten, decaying log-building situated on the high right bank of the Selenga River, about a mile below the town. It does not differ essentially from a log *étape* of the old Siberian type except in being a little higher from foundation to roof, and in having a sort of gallery in every *kamera*, or cell, so arranged as to serve the purpose of a second story. This gallery, which was reached by a steep flight of steps, seemed to me to have been put in as an afterthought in order to increase the amount of floor space available for nares, or sleeping-platforms. The prison had evidently been put in as good order

as possible for our inspection: half the prisoners were out in the court-yard, the doors and windows of nearly all the *kameras* had been thrown open to admit the fresh air, and the floors of the corridors and cells did not seem to me to be disgracefully dirty. The prison was originally built to accommodate 170 prisoners. At the time of our visit it contained 250, and the *ispravnik* admitted, in reply to my questions, that in the late fall and winter it frequently held 700. The prisoners were then compelled to lie huddled together on the floors, under the low sleeping-platforms, in the corridors, and even out in the court-yard. What the condition of things would be when 700 poor wretches were locked up for the night in an air space intended for 170, and in winter, when the windows could not be opened without freezing to death all who were forced to lie near them, I could partly imagine. The prison at such times must be a perfect hell of misery.

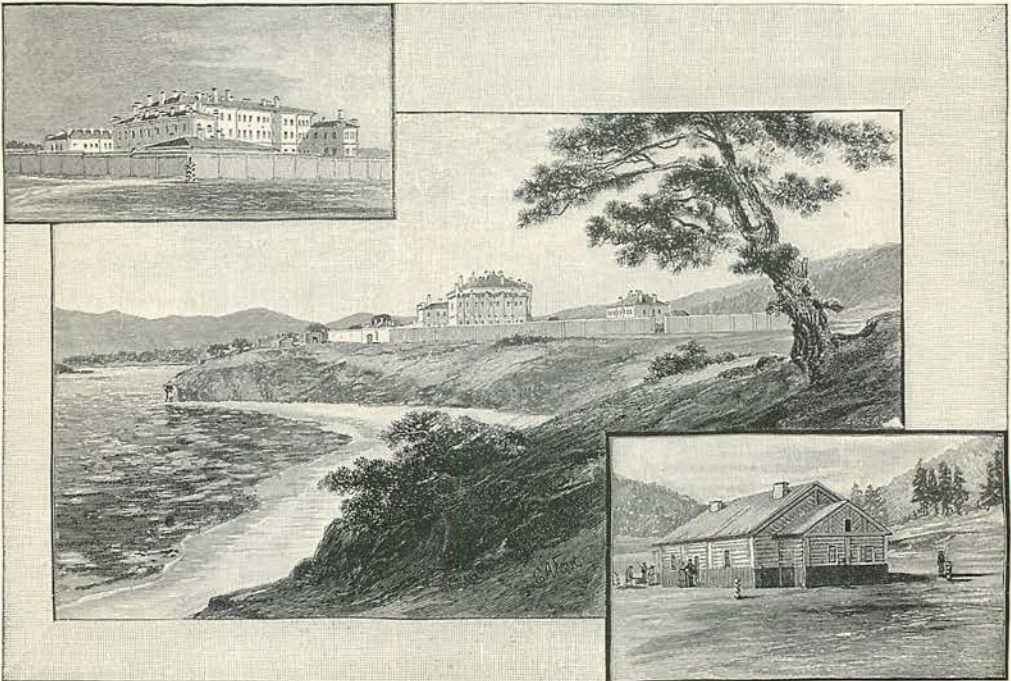
Mr. M. I. Orfanoff (*Or-fán-off*), a well-known Russian officer who inspected this

ostrog at intervals for a number of years previous to our visit, has described it as follows in a book published at Moscow under all the limitations of the censorship:

The first ostrog in the Trans-Baikal is that of Verkhni Udinsk. It stands on the outskirts of the town, on the steep, high bank of the Selenga River. Over the edge of this bank, distant only five or six fathoms from the ostrog, are thrown all the prison filth and refuse, so that the first thing that you no-

He was simply astounded. "How can people sleep," he exclaimed, "on this wet, foul floor and under such insupportable conditions?" He shouted indignantly at the warden and the other prison authorities, but he could change nothing.

It has been argued by some of my critics that I exaggerate the bad condition of Siberian prisons and étapes; but I think I have said nothing worse than the words that I have above quoted from a book written by an officer in



1, 2. THE NEW PRISON IN VERKHNI UDINSK. 3. TYPE OF NEW TRANS-BAIKAL ÉTAPES.

tice as you approach it at any time except in winter is an intolerable stench. The prison itself is an extremely old two-story log-building intended to accommodate 140 prisoners.¹ During my stay in Siberia I had occasion to visit it frequently. I never saw it when it held less than 500, and at times there were packed into it more than 800.² I remember very well a visit that I once made to it with the governor of the Trans-Baikal. He arrived in winter and went to the prison early in the morning, so that the outer door of the corridor was opened [for the first time that day] in his presence. The stench that met him was so great that, in spite of his desire to conceal from the prisoners his recognition of the fact that their accommodations were worse than those provided for dogs, he could not at once enter the building. He ordered the opposite door to be thrown open, and did not himself enter until a strong wind had been blowing for some time through the prison. The first thing that he saw in one corner of the corridor was an overflowing "parasha,"³ and through the ceiling was dripping filth from a similar parasha in the story above. In that corner of the corridor he found six men lying on the floor asleep.

the service of the Russian Government and published at Moscow in 1883 under all the limitations and restrictions of the censorship.⁴

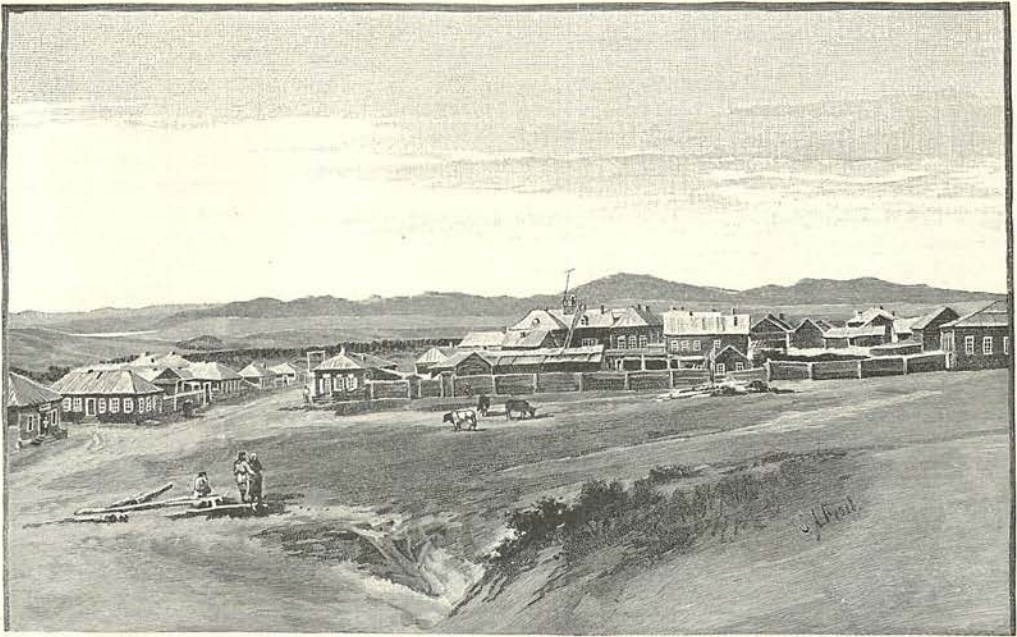
Through this prison of Verkhni Udinsk pass every year educated and refined men and women sent to the Trans-Baikal for political offenses, and through it Madame Breshkofskaya passed four times on her way to and from the mines of Kara. I am glad, however, to be able to say that the old ostrog at Verkhni Udinsk will soon become, if it has not already become, a thing of the past. A large new forwarding prison had just been finished at the time of our arrival, and it was to be opened, the ispravnik said, as soon as the necessary ar-

¹ The ispravnik told me 170. The lesser number is probably nearer the truth.

² The italics are Mr. Orfanoff's own.

³ This is the name given by Russian prisoners to the excrement tub.

⁴ "Afar" (V'Dalee), by M. I. Orfanoff, pp. 220-222. Moscow: Kushnereff & Co., 1883.



A PART OF CHITA FROM THE "HOTEL PETERBURG."

rangements could be made for the larger guard that it would require.

As soon as we had finished our inspection of the old ostrog, we went with the ispravnik to see the new prison that was intended to take its place. It was a large four-story structure of brick, stuccoed and painted white, with two spacious wings, a large court-yard, and a separate building for the accommodation of political prisoners and the prison guard. The kameras were all large, well lighted, and well ventilated, and every one of them above the basement story had an extensive outlook over the surrounding country through at least three large windows. The corridors were twelve or fifteen feet wide; the stairways were of stone with iron balustrades; the solitary-confinement cells were as spacious as an ordinary American hall-bedroom; the arrangements for heating, ventilation, and cleanliness seemed to me to be as nearly perfect as they could be made; and as

a whole the prison impressed me as being the very best I had seen in Russia, and one of the best I had ever seen in any country. Its cost was about 200,000 rubles (\$100,000), and it was intended to accommodate 440 prisoners. I expressed my satisfaction to the ispravnik, and said that I had not seen so good a prison in the Empire.



"Yes," he replied; "if they do not overcrowd it, it will be very comfortable. But if we have to shut up 700 prisoners in the old prison we shall probably be expected to put 3000 into this one, and then the state of things will be almost as bad as ever." Whether the ispravnik's fears have been justified by events, I do not know; but the fact remains that the new prison at Verkhni Udinsk is far and away the best building of its kind that we saw in the Empire except at St. Petersburg, and we were more than gratified to see at last some tangible evidence that the Russian Government does not regard the sufferings of its exiled criminals with absolute indifference.

We left Verkhni Udinsk on Monday, October 19, for a ride of about three hundred miles to the town of Chita, which is the capital of the Trans-Baikal. The weather was more wintry than any that we had yet experienced; but no snow had fallen, the sky was generally clear, and we did not suffer much from cold except at night. At first the road ran up the shallow, barren, uninteresting valley of the Uda (O6-da) River, between nearly parallel ranges of low mountains, and presented, so far as we could see, little that was interesting. The leaves had all fallen from the trees; the flowers, with the exception of here and there a frost-bitten dandelion, had entirely disappeared; and winter was evidently close at hand. We traveled night and day without rest, stopping only now and then to visit a Buddhist lamasery by the roadside or to inspect an étape. The Government

has recently expended three or four hundred thousand rubles (\$150,000 to \$200,000) in the erection of a line of new étapes through the Trans-Baikal. These buildings, the general appearance of which is shown in one of the three combined illustrations on page 80, are rather small and are not well spoken of by the officers of the exile administration; but they seemed to us to be a great improvement upon the étapes between Tomsk and Irkutsk.

On Thursday, October 22, about fifty miles



from Chita we crossed a high, mountainous ridge near the post station of Domnokluchefskaya (Dom-no-kloo-chéf-ska-ya) and rode down its eastern slope to one of the tributaries of the great river Amur (Am-moór). We had crossed the watershed that divides the river systems of the Arctic Ocean from the river systems of the Pacific, and from that time America began to seem nearer to us across the Pacific than across Siberia. American goods of all kinds, brought from California, suddenly made their appearance in the village shops; and as I saw the American tin-ware, lanterns, and "Yankee notions," and read the English labels on the cans of preserved peaches and tomatoes, it seemed to me as if in the immediate future we ought from some high hill to catch sight of San Francisco and the Golden Gate. A few kerosene lamps and a shelf full of canned fruits and vegetables brought us in imagination five thousand miles nearer home.

About noon we arrived cold, tired, and hungry at the Trans-Baikal town of Chita



THE HOUSES OF THE DECEMBRIST EXILES IN CHITA.

(Cheé-tah), and took up our quarters in a hotel kept by a Polish exile and known as the "Hotel Peterburg." Chita, which is the capital of the Trans-Baikal and the residence of the governor, is a large, straggling, provincial town of about four thousand inhabitants, and, as will be seen from the illustration on page 81, does not differ essentially from other Siberian towns of its class. It has a public library, a large building used occasionally as a theater, and fairly good schools; politically and socially

it is perhaps the most important place in the territory of which it is the capital. Its chief interest for us, however, lay in the fact that it is a famous town in the history of the exile system. To Chita were banished, between 1825 and 1828, most of the gallant young noblemen who vainly endeavored to overthrow the Russian autocracy and to establish a constitutional form of

government at the accession to the throne of the Emperor Nicholas in December, 1825. Two of the log houses in which these so-called Decembrist exiles lived are still standing, and one of them is now occupied as a carpenter's shop, and is a general rendezvous by later politicals who followed the example set by the Decembrists and met the same fate.

The colony of exiles in Chita at the time of our visit comprised some of the most interesting men and women whom we met in the Trans-Baikal. We brought letters of introduction to them from many of their comrades in other parts of Siberia, were received by them with warm-hearted hospitality and perfect trust,



A MEETING OF POLITICAL EXILES IN CHITA.

and spent with them many long winter evenings in the upper room of the old Decembrist house, talking of the Russian revolutionary movement, of the fortress of Petropavlovsk, of the Kharkoff Central Prison, and of the mines of Kara. Such meetings as that pictured above were of almost daily or nightly occurrence, and are among the pleasantest recollections of our East Siberian life. I shall not undertake, at the end of an article, to make the reader acquainted with these political exiles, but shall reserve an account of their lives and characters for a future paper, descriptive of our second visit to Chita, on our way back from the mines, when we spent in the upper room of the little carpenter-shop the greater part of every night for two weeks.

Owing to the absence of the governor of the province, we could not obtain in Chita permission to visit and inspect the Kara prisons and mines; but the governor's chief of staff, upon whom I called, did not seem to have any objection to our going there and making the attempt. He said he would telegraph the commanding officer about us, and gave me one of his visiting-cards as a substitute for a letter of introduction. It did not seem to me likely that a simple visiting-card, without even so much as a penciled line, would unlock the doors of the dread Kara prisons; but it was all that we could get, and on the 24th of October we set out for our remaining ride of three hundred miles to the mines.

George Kennan.