SOME WORDS.

BY SARAH DOUDNEY.

ONLY some words about the dear old times,
Spoken amid the glamour of the street,
But they were like the music of the chimes
Drifting across the meadows, faintly sweet.

Only some words from one who knew the past,
Whose eyes had seen the light of suns gone down—
Such simple words! and yet a spell was cast
Upon the tumult of the noisy town.

I saw once more the home among the hills,
The lights and shadows on the quiet way,
The budding boughs, the gold of daffodils,
The long, soft grasses waving all the day
The shades grew deeper, and, behold, I dreamed
A dream of summerods in gloom and glow,
Leaves changed and fell, and scarlet berries gleamed,
Dropping, like coral beads, on heaps of snow.

Only some words; but neither brush nor pen
Could paint such pictures for my weary eyes.
Beyond the crowd—beyond the strife of men—
I looked, and saw those lovely visions rise.

Such simple words! But words are mighty things;
They cast us down, or lift us up to rest;
They charm and strengthen, till our angel sings
The last of all the life-songs, and the best.

EASTER IN LITTLE RUSSIA.

BY ERICA GLENTON.

It was dark when we arrived at Stavnikova,
where horses met us, this time “four-in-hand,”
and to judge from the size of the coachman and footman, I secretly thought they were needed. Again we started through the mud and water, as the men with a droschki followed behind with the luggage. Presently we stopped.

“Doonark—Idio!” screamed the coachman.

“Why on earth can’t you look where you are going?”

As if anyone could see in this darkness,

“Then feel,” retorted our Jehu, “only be good enough to keep well behind.”

And keep behind he did, for he lost his way, tumbled himself and belongings into a ravine, and then hastily shouted for help. Again we stopped. The coachman’s fat companion, got down from the box and went to the help of the unfortunate droschki driver.

After waiting some twenty minutes our host said:

“Drive on, Ivan, we cannot wait here all night.”

After being several times threatened with a complete turn-out we reached our destination, to my great relief; for the roads in Russia are simply lanes through the fields, and after rain greatly resemble the bottom of a pond.

We were met with a very warm welcome.

“Drive on, Ivan, we cannot wait here all night.”

The gentlemen kissed each other as heartily as did the ladies. I stared in bewildered surprise, for although I had seen men at home pale with suppressed feeling, had seen them almost shake each other’s hands off, yet never had I seen two men kiss in this way. I followed them into the dining-room, where the steaming samovar awaited us—tea is deliciously made in Russia—feeling somewhat shy, but the delicate kindness and warmed heart swings soon put this feeling far away.

There are no people so simply frank, so generously hospitable as the Russians. They do not treat a gosperness as a machine, but as one of the family; English girls being specially liked.

The next day—Thursday—Madame said:

“We are going to church this evening, Miss Glenton. Would you like to come?”

“Oh, yes please.”

“But there are no seats as in an English church.”

“Anymount,” I replied, laughing, “but they do sleep in church sometimes.”

At 8.30 p.m. we entered the church, which was already crowded, and pushed our way to the altar steps. Beyond the steps, from wall to wall, were beautiful paintings of our Lord, the Virgin, and various saints. In the centre of this wall of pictures was a door, through which only a priest can pass. There were also two other doors through which a man may pass, but no woman, unless she has built the church. The centre door when opened revealed an inner altar and more paintings. Before each picture numberless candles were burning; also every worshipper held a lighted candle during the service. Our Saviour’s sufferings from the four Gospels.

“Why do you hold candles?” I asked.

“As an emblem of the light to which we are listening,” was the reply.

It was an impressive service although I did not understand a word, for it was read in the Slav language. The priest in his robes of black, silver and gold, the breathless attention of the mighty crowd, the wild plaintive singing, all served to deepen the impression. About the middle of the service someone brought me a chair, for although a Russian would consider it an insult to God if he sat in church, yet he will never force his views upon others. When the service was over, everyone tried to reach home with lighted candles, but the night being very windy, only Madame succeeded. With this candle she lit all the lamps hanging before the images in every room, and they remained burning until Sunday.

At midday on Good Friday we again went to church, taking our tea with us. An image of our Lord in His grave was placed under a canopy. A procession was formed, headed by the priest repeating prayers and swinging incense. This procession, formed by the entire congregation, walked round the outside of the church several times at a funeral.
At 11 P.M. the same evening we went to church, which was crowded to excess. The singing was very sweet and plaintive—even sad. The image of the Virgin and the Child, but at twelve o'clock the entire congregation formed a procession and walked slowly round the outside of the church, during which time the bells pealed out joyfully, the singers burst out into a grand chant—"Christ has risen," cannons were fired, while each person kissed his neighbour on the cheek, and shouted "Voskres"—"Christ has risen"—to which they replied: "Voskresno Voskres"—"Truly He has risen." During the chant we re-entered the church, and exchanged kisses.

The priest kissed every member of his flock three times, and I could not help thinking if I were the priest I should never want to kiss, or he kissed again, to the end of my natural life. One thing I noticed—he did not kiss one member of the family I was with.

When we came out of church I saw many peasants and others going to "Pascha" and meet spread out before them, waiting to receive the priest's blessing before eating. They had been fasting from midnight, meat, cheese, milk, and butter. Many Russians begin to eat directly they reach home; but we were too tired, so gladly went to bed.

When we came downstairs on Sunday morning I was amazed to see the men and maid kiss their masters and mistresses three times, as they offered the Easter salutation. Myself was saluted on the cheek three times by the man-cook; but it was given with such evident naiveté, that I took it as a matter of course, but the usual salutation—"Voskhod vostvoyote"—is changed for the Easter greeting. Everyone was in elegant costume—and good humour. Presents were exchanged, and every one was remembered by everyone. Also, every servant received a present. No meals were prepared this day; everyone took what he liked from the table, thus leaving the servants entirely free.

We took our case the whole day. In the afternoon it is the custom for the gentlemen to pay visits to their lady acquaintances, as of course every lady remains at home. From time to time the bells rang merry peals; all seemed so happily. The 'Svetlitsa' was now the subject of conversation, and the usual feast which is exchanged by many. A great deal of dancing, looking so picturesque in their native costume. This costume is quite different from the one worn in Great Russia. A chemise, richly embroidered in cross-stitch; a scarlet petticoat; a worked apron, edge of deep blue and red, worn under a belt made by many coloured ribbons, is the fashion worn in Little Russia. The hair is worn in a plait, and tied by a long ribbon.

On Monday we went out to a dinner-party. It was May 16th, and yet, but as it was, there were heaps of snow to be seen in the woods as we drove along. The house, which was only one storey, and built on the edge of a beautiful forest, then covered with lies of the valley, consisted of some twelve rooms. The great salle had twenty-four windows, with tall arches, laid in stone, and the whole was covered by a pattern. One end was furnished in crimson, the other in amber, while the great palms were placed about, adding greatly to its artistic appearance. The cabinet of Jean Michelповich—what an Englishman styles his "den"—was quite a curiosity. Upon the walls, tasteably covered with town coats of arms, hung all kinds of old armour, belonging to various nations "long ago." Cases of old coins and antique vases were all over the room.

The dinner was a sumptuous one and beauti-

fully served. Not one low dress was to be seen. All the ladies wore their hair swept up in high chignon, and the men dressed in the latest fashion. There was plenty of wine and and the table with the ladies. English

men might, with pride, take a leaf from this book. Then again the mother of the host sat at the head of the table, and all the other hostess facing her. It struck me as being such a gentle attention—indeed the whole behaviour of Russian children, of course there are exceptions; towards their parents is delicate and reverential.

To an English person their want of conventionality and manner of eating is a little trying. They make a noise while eating their soup, put their knives into their mouths, spit upon the floor, and a few other tribes. I saw one lady take a pin from her hair and use it as a toothpick, while another lady took her pickles from the jar as she wanted them instead of a spoonful on her plate.

I greatly enjoyed the drive home, for we were treated with a leisurely carriage at full gallop and was at home.

And now, Miss Glenten, good-night—I mean good-morning; for it is after two o'clock. Go to bed. We shall want your help in our many preparations for tomorrow—the greatest of all our church holidays. You look tired-out by our long drive.

I went to bed—but not to sleep. I lay thinking of what I had seen. I could not understand how church was attended by peasants, there were so few people of the higher class there; nor why the priests seemed of such low caste.

About 10.30 A.M. we descended to the dining-room for coffee and bread. The Russians are horrified at the English manner of eating meat at their first meal. A doctor once called me a cannibal for so doing.

"And now," said our host—Constantine Michailovich—"we will teach you to colour eggs.

"Why do you colour eggs?" I asked.

"There is a legend, which says that when Mary visited our Lord's empty grave, and when He met her in the garden, she carried a basket of flowers and an empty bowl. Of her His hands He changed them into red ones. That is why we colour eggs," said the man, and a pan containing some two hundred eggs, still in hot water, brought in. We placed them in wine-glasses, then painted them all colours. Some were boiled in coloured water—some painted with flowers, others were ornamented by gold and silver. While we were so occupied, there went on a great boiling and roasting in the vast, turn-of-the-road, fill the rooms in the house. In the evening, a great table was laid out from end to end of the dining-room. It was covered with a fine white cloth, and with beautiful flowerings. In the centre three high Easter-breads—Pascha—were placed. They were covered with sugar and flowers; while upon the centre one was a white rose, and upon one end, two fresh-roasted pigs, boiled hams, roasted lambs, ducks and hens, jellies, fruits, various kinds of cold meats and cold dishes. A famous Russian branchy named as 'Vodka.' When the coloured eggs were added the effect was exceedingly pretty. When finished, the priest came to bless the table and drank a cup of holy water upon it. Then came a distribution of eggs and bread amongst the people.