

the bones of Luther there was to be consummated the adultery of the church with the spirit of the age, and rejected every natural explanation given to the Bible, saying that the literal word of God was alone worthy of faith. He considered every constitution as an insult to logic, and every intermediate power between the governor and the governed a disturbance of society, every popular republic as the most odious of institutions, and all popular deliberation and legislation the most arbitrary of tyrannies. The limit of human perfection was the Protestant religion and absolute monarchy. After this there is nothing extraordinary in our Catholic reaction and the return to the thirteenth century, in the apotheosis of the Pope, in the restoration of hell, in the brutal frankness in which the reaction among us invited the conscience to sleep in the ark where it had remained safe and immovable for the space of nineteen centuries. The religion of the Reformation, of the conscience, of liberty, of individual interpretation of the evangelical writings, had fallen into that abyss of slavery where the neo-Catholics had before tumbled. Hengstenberg supported the religious and political reaction with less enthusiasm, but with more knowledge and ability, than the impetuous Harms. The Bible is adored by him in the materialist sense of the ancient Jews, and with the savage intolerance of modern Catholic inquisitors. His vocation was journalism. Insulting, shameless, libelous, and brutal, he pursued all freethinkers into the retreats of private family life, dragged them forth to the pillory, relying upon the complicity of the political authorities, and there, holding them silent and defenseless, cursed, buffeted, and insulted them. If you imagine a Veuillot without his talent and his style, you will have a faithful image of this evangelical writer. He spat upon classic literature, full, as he said, of paganism; he confounded democracy with demagogy; he called modern France frivolous and trifling; he denied all authority to reason and all virtue to right; declared contemporary science more fatal than the cholera morbus; he called the theology of sentiment a rehabilitation of the flesh—and all under the banner of the strictest Lutheranism, and with the firmest intention to restore pure religion. And the religious reaction was not enough for him; he also sustained the political reaction in its most insensate form. The commandments committed an unpardonable neglect in ordering us to honor father and mother without adding equal respect to the king and the queen, because, in the opinion of this pious Christian, the king and the queen are our parents; they have given us their blood; they have nourished us at their breasts; they conduct us through life, and assure us eternal peace in death. He thought

it was insupportable tyranny to be obliged to pray for the Chambers, according to the precepts of the constitution and the orders of the king, and, above all, for the popular Chamber, born of free thought and political revolution, grudging their tributes to the monarchy and exciting passions among the people, full of reformers who are all crazy demagogues. The clergy ought only to pray for the Upper House, for the Lords, for those country gentlemen who preserve the sanctity of land, those feudal cavaliers who maintain the slavery of the soil, those romanticists who worship the Holy Alliance, those Lutherans who would set fire in all the universities to the images of the goddess Reason, and all those philosophers which are her false and corrupt priests. The separation of church and state is the worst of errors. The kings need the church as the heaven where the sceptre of their authority is shaped. The church needs the kings as the ministers who shall open for it with their staves and their sabres the road for the temporal dominion of the world. These insensates could give themselves up to these follies and deny the free conscience without understanding that they were denying God, could suppress free-will without seeing that they were suppressing man. Their rage, their madness, their denial of right, their struggles against progress, their barbarous conspiracy for oppression, showed with what reason, with what right and truth, the eighteenth century had uttered and sustained the saving principle of the absolute incompatibility between intolerant churches and modern liberties.

A GALA NIGHT IN RUSSIA.

By THOMAS W. KNOX.

IT was my fortune to be in St. Petersburg at the time of the marriage of the Grand Duke Vladimir, second son of the Emperor Alexander II., to the Grand Duchess Marie of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. The programme of a royal or imperial wedding is generally an extensive affair, and the higher the rank of the contracting parties the more imposing are the ceremonies. In the present instance the bridegroom went with an imperial train to the Russian frontier, and there met and welcomed the bride. He escorted her thence, not to St. Petersburg, but to Tsarskoe Selo, the palace which was the favorite resort of the Empress Catherine II., of illustrious and scandalous memory, and has ever since been maintained and occasionally inhabited by the imperial family. Here the fair Marie was welcomed by the emperor and empress, and several festivals were made in her honor. For nearly a fortnight she remained at Tsarskoe Selo, and in all this time was not permitted to see the great city, only a few miles distant, which was to be her future

home. Her entry was to be made a matter of ceremony: a day was appointed, and a programme arranged in which each person connected with the affair should know his or her exact and particular place. From a window overlooking the Nevski Prospect—the Broadway of St. Petersburg—I witnessed the grand procession which escorted the bride from the railway station to the Church of our Lady of Kazan, and thence to the Winter Palace, where on the following day the twain were doubly united, in accordance with the ceremonies of the Russian and Lutheran churches. After the wedding there were illuminations of the city and suburbs, and a gala spectacle at the opera-house; and thus ended the festivities connected with the marriage of the august pair.

On Thursday and Friday evenings of that memorable week the streets and houses of St. Petersburg had an extra dress of gas-light and candle-light, and the principal avenues were so crowded with the rejoicing populace that locomotion was a matter of great difficulty. I have been in a great many popular assemblies, and had my share of elbowing and foot-crushing, so that I consider myself somewhat an adept at the business. Consequently I entered without fear into the sea of humanity that covered the sidewalks of the Nevski, and surged and rippled at times half across the roadway. A few minutes were enough for me, and I was glad to get out. I never saw a denser crowd, and one that compressed itself so closely when there was no special object to be gained by compression. My sides were indented with all sorts of elbow-marks, and more than once my foot was made the *point d'appui* of some healthy but inconsiderate *moujik* who wished to secure greater elevation, and consequently a better view of what he could see perfectly well without the trouble of tiptoeing. With difficulty I emerged from the crowd into the roadway, and here a new trouble arose. Droskies innumerable were rattling up and down the Nevski, not at the dignified pace exacted by law in most of our great cities, but at the very best trotting speed of their horses. In St. Petersburg you can see fast driving in its perfection. There is no law regulating equine speed in urban districts, and if you want to show off your animal you are not restricted by the rules that obtain in Central Park. When the streets are clear, or filled only with the ordinary throngs, this is well enough; but when day has yielded to night, and an imperial wedding has brought thousands of people into the principal avenue, it would not be injudicious to tone down in some degree the vehicular locomotion. As I fought my way from the crowd to the roadway of the Nevski, I incurred the risk of being run over, and more than once the skirts of my

coat were brushed by the whizzing droskies. I edged along very much as one works his way between the surf and an overhanging cliff, and did not breathe easily till I obtained refuge in a sheltered portico. Even there breathing had its disadvantages, as I was in close proximity to an assortment of natives whose sheep-skin coats had been worn a decade or so, and were evidently unsaturated with Cologne-water. The newest of Russian leather is famous for its peculiar smell. What, then, may you not expect of leather garments that have seen summers and winters of service, and that, too, of the most continuous kind?

The street illuminations on both these evenings were disappointments compared with what may be seen in other great cities on occasions of importance. Here and there, but nearly always on public buildings, the initials of bridegroom and bride were wrought into a monogram of gas jets, and sometimes they were accompanied by the initials of the emperor and empress. Many shop-keepers and householders brought out the letter A in gas jets—a regulation thing that has doubtless done duty on every birthday and name-day of the emperor, and may continue to appear, let us hope, for many years to come. On the lamp-posts along the Nevski the lamps were removed by the simple process of unscrewing, and in their places were screwed stars and circles, and a variety of shapes that combined both the star and the circle. These were also regulation affairs, and gave the display a cut-and-dried appearance. In some of the windows there were rows of candles; but except in a few instances there were not enough of them in a window to do more than make the darkness visible. It was to be supposed that the Winter Palace and the semicircular row of buildings opposite would be brilliantly lighted; but to the surprise of most strangers there was no display there, and but for the candles in a few of the rooms the home of the emperor conveyed the impression that the whole family was out or had gone to bed.

We were a party of four, and on returning to the hotel we passed a unanimous vote that St. Petersburg did not know how to illuminate. It was announced that there would be an illumination on Saturday evening at The Islands, the popular resort of St. Petersburgians during the summer season, and rumor whispered that it would be a grand affair. We had been so disappointed with the urban display that we concluded the suburban one would be a positive bore, and determined not to go. But our kind friend, Consul-General Pomutz, had engaged a carriage for us, and at the appointed time it was at the hotel door, and as we were in for the hire of the vehicle, we thought we might as well take it out. The

latter part of August at St. Petersburg was like early November in New York, and we found that our heavy overcoats were none too thick for the night ride. We dashed over the Neva and along the winding road leading past the church where Peter the Great lies buried, and were soon among the trees that cover the islands, and make the groves which the natives love and frequent. The roads here are in excellent condition; they twist about in a very natural, cow-path way, and every few minutes you find yourself crossing a bridge spanning one of the numerous branches of the Neva. There are many cafés and restaurants on the islands, and there are also numerous cottages, which are the summer residences of well-to-do citizens, and remind you of Long Branch and Newport. In winter all this region is well-nigh deserted, but in summer it is a scene of gayety, especially on the bright nights of June and July. The gayety was at its culmination on the night of the great festivity.

We were more disappointed with the illumination at the islands than with that in the city, but the disappointment was an agreeable one. We expected a little, and we found a great deal. Beyond exception, it was the finest display that any of us ever saw or ever expect to see. Along the roads there were rows of lights, so that we had no need of moon or stars to show us the way, nor yet of the long twilight, which here continues all through the summer night. The opulent inhabitants had vied with one another to make their houses as bright as possible. Every window was half ablaze, and every house front and roof and chimney was outlined with lights. The trees were full of festoons of Chinese lanterns of all the colors known to the kaleidoscope, and on many of the limbs there were globes of glass—red, yellow, blue, and green—each with a light inside, and so suspended as to appear like a new kind of fruit, and in an abundance that suggested a bountiful season. At the very entrance of the islands we passed the country residence of Count Gromoff, one of the wealthy aristocrats of St. Petersburg, and found the whole establishment transformed into a palace of fairy-land. The garden was fairly sparkling with light; not a tree or bush had been neglected; and it seemed as if half the stars in the sky had fallen and found a lodgment there. In the centre of the scene were the burning monograms of the emperor and empress and of the newly wedded pair, and in front of them was a mass of tropical plants shading the marble busts of Alexander II. and his consort. Above and behind these there rose an imperial mantle surmounted with a crown, and forming an appropriate background to the luminous front. The palatial cottage was outlined with thousands of lights, and alto-

gether the Gromoff exhibition was far ahead of any spectacular display ever witnessed on the metropolitan or any other stage. The manager who could reproduce it might be certain of a long and profitable run, provided he could lead the discriminating public to appreciate its merits.

This was the beginning. I can hardly say that the display improved as we went on, but can conscientiously affirm that it maintained the promise to the end. There was such a throng of carriages that our pace was reduced to a walk before we reached the Gromoff cottage, and from there onward we were literally kept at a walk. The police required the line to be in constant motion; and if we sometimes halted a moment to look at some unusually fine display, a gruff and emphatic "*Poshol!*" from the lips of a policeman reminded our driver of his duty. Twice we turned into openings in the forest; but this was contrary to rule, and we were speedily hunted out and put into line again. Altogether we had two or three miles—possibly four or more—of driving among houses and trees decked with lights in a very exhaustion of human ingenuity. Now and then we skirted the water or caught glimpses of the arms of the Neva, and here again the decorators had been at work. Boats were numerous on the river, and each was brilliant. Boat-houses and bath-houses were scattered at frequent intervals along the banks, and each of these was bright with glow. Far away you could see the outline of each building, and could trace it as distinctly as though it were but a few yards before you. Beautiful effects were formed by the blending of different colors, and before we had half finished our circuit we admitted most emphatically that St. Petersburg does know how to illuminate.

To describe in detail would be to repeat to satiety. You can, if you choose, imagine two or three hundred lines (and make it a thousand while you are about it) filled with the nouns and adjectives that are most conspicuous in the two or three paragraphs that precede this. Then you can add a few thousand carriages to fill the roads, and a few tens of thousands (and don't be economical of them) of people on foot to line the roads and fill up any nooks and corners that need filling. Scatter some bands of music along the road (they needn't be very good ones), and in a good many places you must hang out the Russian and Mecklenburg flags. At open places in front of some of the cafés you may put groups of peasants rather picturesquely arranged, and, to add a little activity, you may have some of the groups dancing to Russian music. On the balconies of the houses you may put groups of well-dressed persons—the owners of the houses and their guests—and if you make some of the groups rather too dense for comfort, you won't be

out of the way. But don't make the blunder of a German party from our hotel. They mistook one of the well-filled houses for a restaurant, coolly entered the dining-room, and called for something to eat. The proprietor signed to his servant to supply them, and they did not learn their mistake until they called for their bill, and were told there was nothing to pay, as the house was private, and the master was happy to be of service to strangers.

You may throw over the whole scene a cloudless sky, lighted with a moon near the full, and studded with stars glittering with the brightness peculiar to these high latitudes. And no matter how late you remain on the ground you may touch the northern horizon with a mellow twilight that shows where the sun is creeping slowly along from where he set yesterday to where he will rise to-morrow. Had we been here two months earlier, we would have found the twilight strong enough to read by at midnight, and only a few short hours intervening between one day and the next. And if we stay until next December in St. Petersburg we shall find these short nights grown so long that we must light our candles at half past two in the afternoon, and shall need them in the morning until nearly ten o'clock. Summer and winter in the north present great contrasts.

About nine o'clock the police compel the carriages to crowd close to the sidewalk and leave the roadway free. Then shouts are heard in the distance, and run like a wave along the crowd—shouts that betoken the devotion of the people to the emperor and his family. Here they come, preceded by a brilliant array of Circassian guards and officers of the household cavalry. There are two open carriages, containing the imperial family and their guests, the father and mother of the bride; and then come several carriages of a pattern peculiarly Russian, though somewhat resembling an Irish jaunting-car. The occupants are seated back to back, with their feet about twelve inches from the ground, and the carriages can carry eight or ten persons with ease. These vehicles contain the members of the imperial court and the diplomatic corps, all in grand uniform, and the rear of the column is brought up by more mounted guards. The cortège moves rapidly—no policeman suggests that the emperor's carriage shall go at a walk, or move otherwise than as its occupant pleases—and is greeted and followed by the cheering of the multitude. At the end of one of the islands a tent had been erected for the imperial party, and here they sat while a pyrotechnic display was let off on the opposite shore. The show was said to be very fine: for my part, I only saw what rose above the trees, and that was not a great deal. I presume, and certainly hope,

that the imperial party saw more of the pyrotechnics than ours did. The police ruthlessly kept our carriage in the line at the road-side, and would not even let us fall in between the Circassian guards and the carriage where rode his imperial majesty. But then, you know, police are always unreasonable.

We drove back to the city over the road which the imperial cortège occupied a few minutes before us, and as the crowd was not quite through with its enthusiasm, we obtained a few cheers, which are hereby gratefully acknowledged. Thankful for past favors, we solicit a continuance of the same. Our dreams were disturbed by visions of illumination on land and water, and one of the party solemnly declared that he waked twice with the impression that his head was Mount Vesuvius in a state of perpetual eruption; and, moreover, he had taken no beverage stronger than tea for more than twenty-four hours!

Early on Sunday evening we put on our best clothes to attend the gala spectacle at the opera-house. It is no easy matter to obtain a ticket to this affair, which is a matter of invitation and very select, and had it not been for the kindness and exertion of our consul-general we should have been out in the cold. Our dress suits were hauled out of trunks and carefully brushed, and when our toilet was complete we were not unfit for presentation to the heiress of a millionaire. Two of our party had no crush hats—indispensable here to accompany a dress suit—and consequently had to borrow. The hats they secured were a trifle antiquated in pattern and a few sizes too small for the heads of the would-be wearers, but they were all right when closed and concealed under the arm. We started early and walked to the opera-house, riding being out of the question with hats like those. My two friends walked with the stateliness of a negro carrying a basket of eggs on her head, but in spite of all their care the hats had two or three unlucky falls. As we neared the opera-house we found crowds on the sidewalks looking at the gorgeous personages who were riding past. Officers in full uniform were most conspicuous and most numerous; persons in civilian dress were few and far between. It was half an hour too early for the imperial party, and I presume that by the time they came the crowd had increased to many thousands.

It was *infra dig.* to come on foot, at least I suppose so, as the first line of police, through which the officers passed without question, would not admit us until we displayed our tickets. We showed them again at the foot of the stairs leading to the third tier, and again to a richly dressed personage, who might have been a major-general, but was only a flunky. He showed us to our places,

and took our overcoats to hang in the hall. We retained our hats, and my friends were happy now, as their head-pieces, when shut up and out of sight, were just as good as mine. We were in a box in the third tier, and had partly taken the front seats, when a Russian party arrived to occupy the remainder. They appeared just a little chagrined, but we didn't, and in a few minutes were in a pleasant conversation with one of them, who wore the uniform of a general, and spoke French, as do most educated Russians, with ease and correctness. He pointed out several distinguished personages, and gave us a variety of information about the assemblage and the individuals composing it.

There were few people present when we arrived, but the house filled rapidly, and by eight o'clock, the time fixed for the spectacle, there was not a vacant place except in the imperial box, where a single servant was arranging the seats and burning a small brazier of incense, as if to fill the locality with sweet odors. The house was built a long time ago (in 1784), and is not equal to the Grand Theatre at Moscow, La Scala at Milan, San Carlo at Naples, or the Academy of Music in New York, so far as size and effect are concerned. Its interior has been changed several times, and I am told that the house will soon undergo a fresh restoration. There are five ranges, including the *bel étage* and the gallery, and it is said that the house can contain three thousand persons—a statement which I am inclined to doubt. The stage is large, and is said to be one of the best equipped in Europe. The government gives a large subvention for the support of opera, and the money which *prime donne* have taken from the capital would amount to an almost fabulous sum. Patti can command higher figures here than elsewhere, for the reason that the director of the opera can afford to pay her more. What matters a few thousand pounds when the government foots the bills? Not only does the government pay heavily for the support of the opera, but it maintains a school for the education of actresses and danseuses. The Foundling Hospital furnishes most of the latter, and as their education begins when they are five years old, continues till they are appointed to situations in the theatre at the age of sixteen, and further continues with six hours daily practice during all the time they hold the situations, it is no wonder that the dancing in the St. Petersburg ballets is the best in the world. The *corps de ballet* receives new recruits every year from the Foundling Hospital to fill the places of the many who retire after only short terms of service, some of them to marry and some to do otherwise.

There was a general buzz of conversation all over the house, the predominance of

voices being masculine, for the same reason that white sheep eat more hay than black ones—because there are more of them. The parquet is entirely filled with the sterner sex; almost all are officers of some kind or another—generals, colonels, chamberlains, or high dignitaries in the imperial service. All are in full uniform, and sport their decorations, which are so profuse in quantity and rich in quality as to make each row of seats resemble the show-case of a jewelry store. Some of the older officers have their breasts fairly covered, and it is fortunate that they do not live toward the age of Methuselah, or we might see the stars and crosses covering their backs and creeping down their legs. The "swabs," as irreverent sailors sometimes designate epaulets, are large and glittering, gold-lace abounds on all the uniforms, especially on those of the chamberlains, whose coats have a jack-daw sort of gaudiness, and the general effect is that of great richness. In the boxes nearly all the front seats are occupied by ladies in full evening dress; behind them are their cavaliers or others sitting or standing, some in uniform and the rest in full evening costume. I don't think a man would be admitted here in a black frock-coat, even though he had a dozen tickets; and if he did manage to enter he would soon be ashamed of himself.

The imperial box faces the stage; its floor is level with that of the first range of boxes, while its top pierces the second range. About twenty minutes past eight there is a commotion and buzz of whispers; all eyes are turned to the imperial box, and at the same time every body who has been sitting rises respectfully and faces the spot where the emperor is expected to appear. Preceded by General the Count Adlerberg, Minister of the Imperial Household, a man with a strong, well-knit frame, and a serious face adorned with heavy whisker and mustache, the emperor, in the uniform of a general of the Guards, comes to the front of the box, followed by Vladimir and his bride. A hearty and prolonged but at the same time decorous and well-ordered cheer greets the party, and simultaneously the orchestra strikes up the imperial hymn, whose stately measures resound through the building and fill every nook and corner. The party bows its acknowledgment of the reception, and is speedily seated; each person knows where to sit, and so there is no confusion. The emperor is in the centre; on his right is the young bride, looking rather flushed and not altogether at ease; and then comes Vladimir, looking just a shade uneasy than the lady he has sworn to protect. Next to him is the Czarevna—once the pretty Princess Dagmar—perfectly collected and evidently happy; and next to her the Czarevitz, who chats with his wife more than would be ex-

pected of a man so long married as he has been. A post intervenes between his position and mine, so that I get only an occasional glimpse of him; but I don't care so much to see him as to see his wife. Vladimir's bride is good-looking, solid, well-formed, with plump and finely rounded shoulders; a neck neither long nor short; regularly formed features, with the exception of the nose, which has a slight tendency to pugginess. With her evening toilet, a coronet of diamonds, and a string of diamonds around her neck in which each stone appears as large as a walnut, she is prettier than when I saw her two weeks before at the frontier, where she arrived in a plain traveling dress of brown holland. Say what you will, a princess appears more like a princess when dressed like one than when attired like an English governess or a New York shop-girl. As I saw Vladimir's bride at the frontier I don't think many men would propose to her, but as she looks to-night at the opera she would not want for offers. Many a man would be willing to encumber himself with the princess just for the sake of the diamonds on her neck and head. The loot of that young woman, who probably never earned a sixpence in her life, would set up a first-class hotel, including all the furniture and table-ware.

Vladimir's fat and rather meaningless face is between that of his wife and the Czarevna. The latter has no lack of diamonds, and evidently of the first water; but sparkle as bright as they may, they can not surpass the beauty of her keen, clear, and flashing eyes. Less inclined to stoutness than the bride, she does not display such a plumpness of shoulder, and her neck rises more swan-like, and gives fuller play to her finely formed head, with its curly hair and Grecian outline of face. No wonder the emperor likes her, and no wonder the Russians like her. I like her, and I am neither emperor nor any other Russian, and never exchanged a thousand words with her in my life. It is hinted that she has a temper of her own, and it is just possible that if I knew her better I shouldn't like her so well. Familiarity, etc.—you know the old adage.

The Czarevitz, in the few glimpses I have of him from behind the post, has rather a grim look, and does not appear over-amiable. He is growing a mustache and side whisker, and has not succeeded in hirsute culture so well as has the Grand Duke Alexis, but better than Vladimir, whose mustache was so slender that after much coaxing he cut it off a month or so ago, and will postpone a new one until he can do better. The Romanoffs are not a hairy-faced race; the present emperor has the best beard and mustache known in the family since the days of Pierre le Grand. As he

sits there under the eyes of the assembled three thousand he appears perfectly self-possessed, chats with the young bride on his right hand, and with her mother (or rather step-mother) on his left. He uses his opera-glass freely, now looking to one part of the house, and now to another, and occasionally he pauses to speak to the Grand Duke Constantine, who sits behind him. His eye is calm and clear, he holds his head erect, and while manifesting none of the stiffness, none of the awful dignity, pertaining to stage monarchs or justices of the peace in rural districts, he shows that he is every inch a king. And I shouldn't blame him if he should sometimes play big Indian or heavy swell. A man who is absolute ruler over seventy millions of people and one-eighth of the habitable globe has a right to put on airs.

The empress is not here to-night; her health is poor, and she appears rarely in public. At the emperor's left is the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg—a plump, well-built woman, only four years older than her step-daughter, who is not unlike her in appearance. There is a post between me and the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, so that I can not once see him; but it is of no consequence, as he doesn't belong to the imperial family, and is only here by invitation, like myself. Beyond him is the Grand Duke Michel, brother of the emperor, and governor of the Caucasus. Beside him is his wife—a rather sharp-featured woman in comparison with the bride, and paying little attention to her soldierly and sedate husband. The second line in the imperial box I can not see distinctly, and the only notable personages it contains are the Grand Duke Constantine, brother of the emperor and grand admiral of the Russian navy, and the Grand Duke Alexis, about whom so much is known in America that I need not describe him. He looks more like his uncle, by whose side he sits, than like the emperor, the resemblance being largely due, no doubt, to the similarity in cut and color of their beards. Constantine has the Romanoff features quite as marked as has the emperor, but his face lights up oftener, and he turns more frequently to speak to those near him. The emperor, as before stated, wears the uniform of a general of the Guards, the Czarevitz wears that of a general of cavalry, Constantine that of an admiral, Alexis that of a naval captain, Vladimir that of a colonel of infantry, and Michel that of a general of Cossacks. All are bright with decorations and gold-lace, and I do not think I ever saw a more gorgeous picture than was presented in that box after the party was seated. Remember the party—remember that the women were mostly pretty and the men handsome, that all were richly dressed, and had more diamonds and deco-

rations about them than any of us ever hope to have, and what more could you want for a tableau? There were more princes and grand dukes in the rear of the box, but I make no account of them, as I couldn't see them from where I stood.

As soon as the imperial party were seated every body else sat down: it would have been great rudeness for any body to sit while they were standing; and if the emperor had risen at any time during the performance, it would have been the etiquette for every other person in the house to follow his example. This is the case every where, no matter where the emperor may be, and the rule of etiquette includes all the members of the family. Royal and imperial personages are no doubt greatly bored by the constant ceremony going on around them, and most of them would be glad to escape at least a portion of it. The Empress Catherine succeeded in doing so to some extent when she built the Hermitage, or small palace which adjoins the *Palais d'Hiver*. She arranged a series of frequent reunions, and the rules governing them were conspicuously placed at the entrance of one of the principal halls, where they may still be seen. Here are some of these rules:

"1. Let each one who enters here remove his rank, his hat, and above all his sword.

"2. Leave at the door your dignity, your pride, and every sentiment that resembles them.

"4. Remain standing or sitting, or promenade, as you like, without regarding any one."

The fourth rule did away with the necessity for all to rise when any member of the imperial family passed through the hall, and was no doubt a great relief to all concerned. A gentleman who has lived in St. Petersburg for some time, and has the entrée of the court, tells me that one evening he happened in a little circle which contained the Grand Duchess Marie, sister of the emperor. Conversation went on quite rapidly, and the grand duchess was in the best of spirits. After a time she said, in the most friendly way

"I have a favor to ask of all of you. I want to join that party on the other side of the hall, and I don't want to make a commotion that will break up the conversation. If you rise when I do, they will, of course, see it. Now I want all of you to keep your seats, and I think I can get there without disturbing them."

Of course every body obeyed the injunction, and paid no apparent attention to her departure. She succeeded very fairly in her effort, as she managed to get quite in the midst of the party before she was discovered. She dropped into a seat with a merry laugh before more than half the number were able to assume an upright position.

Not many years ago an American minister when presented to the emperor coolly

sat down while his majesty remained standing, and furthermore placed an antiquated and by no means comely hat on the table between them. They carried on a brief conversation in this way. The emperor made no sign of affront at the time, but a remark which he subsequently dropped showed that he was not unobservant of such a gross infraction of etiquette.

All the gala spectacles at the opera-house have not been as pleasant as this one. The audience has been for many years in the habit of cheering when the imperial family enters, and the emperor is evidently satisfied that it should do so. Several years ago—I think it was on the occasion of the marriage of the Czarevitz, but am not certain—the master of ceremonies, who had charge of the opera-house, caused a printed notice to be placed in every seat in the building to the effect that it was not in accordance with strict etiquette to cheer, and therefore the practice should be discontinued. The audience would rise and bow when the imperial family entered, but would do no more. The emperor came with his party, and brought forward the bride to the front of the box. He expected a loud and hearty cheer, and stood fairly amazed at the apparent coldness of the assemblage. Every body was bowing decorously, but the silence was as complete as if the persons present had been summoned to a funeral. The emperor's annoyance was so great that he left at the end of the first act. The officious official lost his place, and nobody has since attempted to tell the audience what it shall or shall not do.

In a few minutes the curtain rises, and as we glance around the house we see that every body is on his good behavior. Two or three have leveled their glasses at the imperial box—evidently they are strangers and unaware of the custom, and before many minutes they have taken the hint and desisted. Every body sits erect, and the rows of seats look like those of a well-drilled school when heads are up for recitation purposes. You can hardly find a better-looking, better-dressed, and better-behaving audience, go where you will. One of my friends suggests that we can make a sensation by hanging our boots over the edge of the gallery, *à la Bowery*; I quite agree with him, and offer him a new hat to do it, but he declines. On the whole, I am glad that he did, as there would have been more attention paid to our box than would have been agreeable. What the result would have been I am unable to say, as nobody ever performed the boot trick in the St. Petersburg opera-house on a gala night.

The opera invariably selected for the gala night is *Djinn na Tsaria*, or, "A Life for the Czar." It is a work by Glinka, Russia's most celebrated composer, and is famous for

the beauty and sweetness of its melodies, which are all national. The plot of the opera runs upon the devotion of a peasant who saves the life of the Czar Michel by losing his own. The Czar is on his way to Moscow, and a detachment of Poles are attempting to intercept and kill him. They are on the right road, but a peasant who knows their object tells them they are going wrong, and offers to conduct them. They accept his offer, and he leads them to the middle of a forest, and finally announces that the Czar is safe and they are lost in the wood. In their fury they kill him; but of course he dies happy, and is speedily revived with brandy and soda in his dressing-room or at a neighboring restaurant.

Only the first act was given to-night. The scenery was well set and handled, and the movement of the piece was as easy as that of a comedy after it has had a steady run of a fortnight or more. The second act has more musical vigor than the first, and I regretted that it was not given; but, after all, it was not the music that we came for, and it really makes little difference what they give us. All the time from the rise to the fall of the curtain the audience sat almost without movement, and gazing at the stage as though at the theatre for the first time in their lives. There was not the faintest sound of applause, not a hand was clapped against another, not a stick or umbrella pounded the floor in delight, not a boot fell heavily on the planks, and not a voice indulged in a "Hi-hi." It was decorum theatriified.

As soon as the curtain fell every body rose and faced the imperial box; the party there rose and retired, and we were at liberty to stand at ease. The door of every box opened, and at each was a servant with a tray of ices, which were served to all who would accept them. It was hinted that we had better descend to the buffet on the first floor. We did so, and found what one of our party irreverently denominated a "free lunch." There were ices, cakes, fruit, and there were tea, coffee, Cognac, soda, Seltzer water, sherry, and Champagne for the lubrication of the solids. Scores of liveried servants were busy with glasses and plates and cups, and the place seemed to be doing a good business. There was an abundance of every thing, and I was told that there were tables in all the anterooms, so that every body could be properly refreshed. It was the emperor's treat, and I am bound to say that it was well managed. I wouldn't object to his standing treat every time I go to the opera. A part of the time the room was rather crowded, but every body was polite, and there was no inconvenience. The diplomatic corps were there in full force, as the buffet happened to be just off their row of boxes; and a fine appearance they present-

ed in their brilliant dress. Turkish, German, Persian, Austrian, Japanese, and I don't know what other nationalities were there, and all appeared on the best of terms. The land of the free and the home of the brave was represented by a *chargé d'affaires*, who looked very insignificant in his plain black suit without a single decoration of any sort. For all that his dress showed to the contrary, he might have been a waiter in a restaurant or an undertaker's lieutenant; and I don't wonder that some of our representatives abroad are out of humor with a costume that does not reveal their consequence. Our consul-general towered up finely in the uniform which four years of service and five bullet wounds give him a right to be proud of, and the simple neatness of his costume was strikingly apparent in comparison with the gaudy array of the Russian officers, who were thick as politicians at a caucus or Benedicks at a bachelors' club. The Turk was richly arrayed, and of course wore his fez, as did the Persian his tall shapka. The Japanese have a very neat dress, quite European in style, and the only fault one could find with it is its tendency to peacockiness.

We had half an hour for refreshment, and then a bell sounded the retreat. We returned to our places, so that all could be standing when the imperial party re-entered. They were seated exactly as at first, the audience again sat down, the music began, and the curtain rose. Our party was this time in the rear of the box, as the Russians had returned from the buffet before us, and concluded they had as good a right to front places as we had. "*Qui va à la chasse perd sa place,*" said the general, with a smile, soon after we entered. I returned his smile and said, "*Peut-être la chasse vaut mieux après on a gardé longtemps la place,*" to which he assented, and turned to look again at his sovereign.

The curtain rose upon a ballet, of which I could see very little, and that only by craning my head forward over those in front of me. The little that I saw was superb in every way: *mise en scène*, faces, forms, figures, dress, and dance, all were perfection. The ballet was short. As the curtain fell every body rose and faced the imperial box as before, its occupants bowed an adieu, the cheer that was given at their entrance was repeated, the orchestra played the imperial hymn once more, and when the last of the party had disappeared the audience was at liberty to disperse. We found our overcoats and our wonderful hats, and returned to the hotel on foot as stiffly as we had come. We were rather "set up" at having been the guests of the emperor, and discussed the propriety of exacting in future not less than two shillings (in coin) from every man that ventured to shake hands with us.