

SIBERIA'S AWAKENING.

What Russia is Doing to Develop Her Vast Asiatic Possession.

CHARACTERISTIC SCENES IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

REMARKABLE as the statement may seem, ever since the day when the first section of the Siberian railway was opened, from Cheliabinsk to Kurgan, immigration has been flowing into the country in a constantly increasing stream. Now that the great rivers and steppes are crossed by through trains all the way from Moscow to Irkutsk, the movement is even more rapid, and already the vast areas of Siberia are less lone-

through Siberia is simple but adequate. Most of the peasants bring with them as much food as possible of the sort they relish, in order to avoid the necessity of buying on the way. Ponderous loaves of black bread, slabs of dried fish and a supply of tea are the chief essentials in this commissary department. Each family carries a teapot in addition to cups and simple dishes, and the individual traveler must do likewise if he wishes to be sure of comfort. As every one knows, tea is the staple article among the Russians and is consumed in

rates but little higher than those of the steamers and very much less than the regular third-class rates. For 1000 versts, for instance, the third-class fare is eight rubles and forty



MOSQUE OF THE TARTARS AT OMSK, SIBERIA.

kopecks, or approximately \$4.35, for 665 miles. The emigrant rate for the same distance is only three rubles, or about \$1.55. It goes without saying that the accommodations provided at this rate are not luxurious, but they are quite as good as could be expected for the price, far more comfortable than the former method of travel into Siberia by long and trying marches and probably in most instances relatively better than the homes the people have had.

The cars themselves in which the emigrants travel to the land of their hopes are the ordinary fourth-class cars of the sort one sees all over Russia, inscribed after the invariable fashion, "for eight horses or forty men." They are what we call box cars in the United States, painted the familiar red, with sliding doors opening in either side.

The most characteristic feature of Siberian farm life is that the farmers live not scattered all over the country, remote from neighbors, but in villages as near as possible to the land they are cultivating. Each village, then, is a cluster of houses, in which live not villagers in the usual sense, as townspeople in a small settlement, but the farmers of the region round about.

Life in these villages of Siberia is rude enough, with none of the qualities we consider necessary to comfort. The lands are fertile, yielding ample crops of grain even with the crude methods of cultivation in effect. The plowing is shallow because the plows are poor. There is little cultivation after planting. The grain is harvested with hand sickles and scythes. It is thrashed by horses in the open field, the grain trampled out of the straw by three or four Siberian ponies trotting around in a small circle. It is

PEARLS OF THOUGHT.

Nothing helps a man sometimes so much as a hindrance.

Habitual idleness in the rich is no more justifiable than habitual idleness in a tramp.

Every one is blind and knows nothing except how to depreciate the excellencies of others.

What we like determines what we are, and to teach taste is inevitably to form character.

How careful should the great be to regulate their conduct, when they see how ready the world is to follow their example.

Calamities that seem insupportable when looked at from a distance, lose half their power if met and resisted with fortitude.

The only leisure valuable to society is that which affords a man or woman opportunity to freely choose his or her line of usefulness.

Just because waiting is so hard, waiting is the one duty of the hour to be endured bravely and in hope, when there is nothing to do but to wait.

One of the surest evidences of friendship that an individual can display to another is telling him gently of a fault. If any other can excel it, it is listening to such a communication with gratitude and amending the error.

The law of Nature is that a certain quantity of work is necessary to produce a certain quantity of good of any kind whatever. If you want knowledge, you must toil for it; if food, you must toil for it; and if pleasure, you must toil for it.

All fine natures are generous. None are so poor that they have not something to give; if not money flowers; if not flowers kind words or crumbs to the birds, or at least generous thoughts, which may sometimes be the most difficult gift of all.

A FINE RISK.

A Practical Joke That Made the Insurance Agent Mad.

"I wish that people wouldn't try to be so funny with me!" snapped the life insurance agent. "Life is a serious business. That is why I spend so much of my time trying to impress upon people that some of my unexcelled life insurance is necessary for their happiness. Here I have lost a whole day and been put to considerable expense when I might have used both to better advantage, and all because people look upon me as a fit subject for their practical jokes.

"The other day I chanced to step into a hotel to see what was going on, and while there I struck up an acquaintance with a man who looked to be about 60 years of age. It wasn't long before I discovered that he carried no insurance, and as he looked like a splendid risk I lost no time in telling him all about the celebrated insurance that I handle. He looked a little bored before I was half through, but I didn't let that bother me, as I had him in a corner where he couldn't escape. Finally through an oversight on my part he managed to get in a word.

"See here," said he, "I have the heart disease and couldn't get my life insured if I wanted to. But I have a son who is as sound as a dollar. Why not talk to him?"

"Where is he?" said I.

"He is out at my house about 30 miles from here. It will be worth your time to see him."

"I'll see him at once, I answered.

"Well, I got the address and took the first train out there. I found the house all right and rang the bell. A woman answered and I asked if Mr. Blank's son was at home.

"He is," she answered, looking at me rather queerly.

"May I see him?" I asked.

"You may," she answered, and led the way inside. She disappeared for a moment and then reappeared upon the scene with a 6-months-old baby in her arms and I collapsed."

How Foreign Armies March to War.

In Russia the number of steps to the minute covered by soldiers on the march is from 112 to 116; in Germany it is 114, in Austria 115, in France and Italy 120, with the exception of the Chasseur-a-pied and the Bersaglieri, who make respectively 130 and 140 steps. The length of the step in Russia is 28 inches, in Germany 31 1-2 inches, and in France, Italy and Austria 29 1-2 inches, while the Italian Bersaglieri use a step of 34 inches. The Russian soldier, under these conditions, covers a distance of 261 feet to 270 feet per minute, the Austrian 282 feet, the French and Italian 294 feet, and the German 299 feet, the latter occupying the mean between the Russian and the special Italian corps, which has the most rapid march. The British army slow march consists of 75 30-inch paces to the minute, this measure being only used on parade, and for solemn occasions. The quick march, in which all evolutions are performed, increases to 110 paces, while the double rises to 150 paces in the minute.

A Plague of Cattlefish.

The Australian papers give accounts of an unprecedented plague of cattlefish that has been ravaging the fisheries and for a time entirely upsetting the fishing industry of North Australia. It is said that the creatures are swarming in such numbers that hundreds are brought up in a single haul of the nets. As the haul is drawn up they cling with their tentacles to the under side of the boat and have to be disengaged with axes, so that large quantities of tackle have been destroyed and many boats injured. They average from 15 pounds downwards in weight, and their appearance in such huge numbers has been as sudden as it has proved unpleasant.—Westminster Gazette.

some than they were a few years ago, writes Trumbull White, in the Chicago Record. The Russian peasant is displaying the same sort of restlessness that induced the settlement of our own Western States and Territories from the more thickly populated regions of the East. Indeed, the Russian peasant always has shown a willingness to support the "expansion" policy of his Government by moving on into the newly annexed lands and subduing them to his own civilization and manner of development, crude though that might be. It is time to dismiss the idea that the Russian peasant is altogether a clod. He has shared too well the labors of the Russian advance across Asia.



A SIBERIAN FARMER'S FAMILY AND HOME.

An observant English traveler writing recently of his journey in these lands has complimented the Siberian and the American in the same breath at the same time that he has phrased

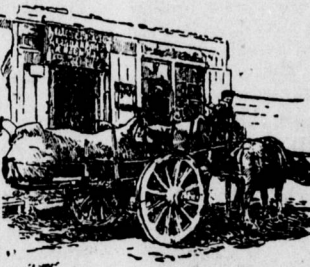
great quantities. The Government provides for the necessity in excellent fashion. At every station of the first class, which means about every seventy-five or eighty miles, there is erected at one end of the platform a little house of logs, which is arranged solely for the convenience of the people who want water. A big tank, holding two or three barrels of water, is arranged with a charcoal furnace to keep its contents at the boiling point. In another corner of the house is a tank of cold water. Each of these is fitted with several faucets so that the



HORSES TRAMPING OUT THE GRAIN ON A SIBERIAN FARM.

passengers may serve themselves rapidly when they come. Near this house is an open shed facing the track, which shelters a rough counter and some shelves. This is at the service of the peasant women of the village, who bring all sorts of eatables to this primitive buffet at train time.

When the train arrives there is a hasty exodus from the cars. One representative of each family or traveling



BULLOCK SKINS FILLED WITH WINE IN FRONT OF A SHOP.

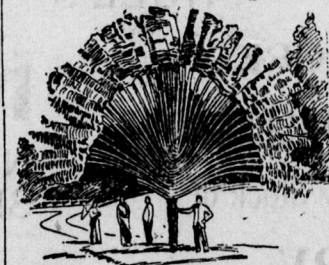
party hurries to the house where the hot water is waiting and draws from the tank into his teapot as much as he likes of the essential liquid. Others rush to the buffet shed, to find bread, fish, meat, cakes, hot soup, berries, kvass and kumys, all of which are sold at astonishing low prices. Then they return to the train to prepare

winnowed by hand and ground in windmills. With all the crudity of the processes, the yield of wheat, for instance, is from twenty to thirty fold, and as high as twenty-five and even thirty bushels to the acre.

Some of the landed proprietors have begun to introduce modern methods of viticulture, but the peasants are slow to adopt them. The grapes are robbed of their juices in the simplest of presses, and the wine is still carted and stored in bullock hides. A wine cellar is a strange sight, with its rows of distorted skins, bulging with the liquors.

The barbaric style of architecture such as the Tartars were fond of is frequently seen in the larger Siberian towns. Omsk has many mosques of this kind. One of the accompanying large pictures shows a business street in Omsk.

An Odd Tree From Madagascar.



From Vick's Magazine we get this picture of the travelers' tree, an odd-looking growth indigenous in Madagascar. Botanically it is known as the Ravenala Madagascarenis, but its popular name has been given it from the belief that water from rain and dew collects in its leaf stems in sufficient quantity to quench a traveler's thirst. The water does collect as stated, but as the plant grows beside water courses it can hardly be of special benefit to the traveler, who could slack his thirst much easier at the adjacent stream.

As the Sheriff Would Run It.

"Next week we will begin running this paper as Captain Kidd would have run it. Delinquent subscribers may expect a call from us with their accounts stuck in the muzzle of a six shooter. Otherwise this paper will be running as the Sheriff would run it."—Bowersville Clarion.

Drawbacks of Refinement.

Between dyspepsia and table manners, there is no fun in eating any more.—Detroit Journal.

PORTABLE SCHOOL HOUSE.

How the Educational Demands Are Met in St. Louis.

St. Louis is congratulating itself just now upon having successfully solved a difficult problem, and upon the carrying out of a unique and interesting idea. In fact, she has wrought out a new version of the old story of Mahomet and the mountain and a new application. Like the mountain, it has been found necessary that when scholars will not come to the school, the school must, of a necessity, go to the scholars. This, on the face of it, might seem a matter of extreme difficulty. As it is, however, the problem has been solved.

St. Louis has found much difficulty in providing room for all its school children. Rented rooms were experimented with in many parts of the city with more or less success, but the general result would hardly be called a satisfactory one. In districts where the population was scattered the plan seemed scarcely applicable. After much consideration and many experiments, it was suggested that a school-house or schoolhouses of such a nature that they could be readily moved from



PORTABLE SCHOOLHOUSE, ST. LOUIS, MO.

place to place, set up wherever required, and when no longer needed, taken down and removed to some other field of action, would fill the bill. Therefore, a consultation of local carpenters was called and a school building, such as desired, was the result.

These buildings have been constructed in such a manner that when no longer required at one site they can quickly be taken apart and, if need be, moved to another. They are twenty-four by thirty-six feet, inside measurement. The floors are constructed in eight sections, the sides in six sections, the ends in four sections and the roof in sixteen sections. Each section is strongly put together on frames, and these are bolted in such a manner as to make a perfectly tight and secure room. The joints between the sections are covered both inside and out by movable pieces, which are held in place by screws. The heating and ventilating are furnished by an indirect furnace with double casing. The fresh air is taken directly from the outside, and the supply cannot, in any manner, be cut off or reduced beyond a proper limit.

For Healthful Sleep.

Every one knows that it is bad to sleep on your back, but it is even worse if the bed is such that your stomach is as high as your head and your feet are lower than both, as must be the case on too heavily wadded mattresses. On the other hand, if the spring is too yielding you will find that the heavy parts of the body make you lie in a kind of hollow whether you sleep on your back or on your side. It is most healthful to have the feet so high as they are in this kind of bed, when you sleep on your

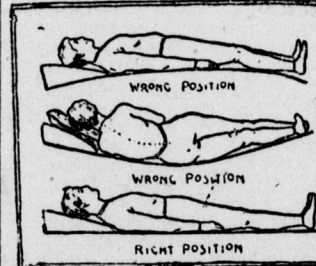


DIAGRAM SHOWING RIGHT AND WRONG POSITIONS.

back, and if you try to sleep on your side the spine is curved most uncomfortably and unhealthful.

What then is to be done about it? The spring of the bed must either be made in several pieces, or be made up of spiral springs, so that all parts are independent of one another, and the springs at the center are stronger than those at the head and foot, because they have more weight to support. In this way it becomes possible for the tired man or woman to obtain the greatest possible amount of benefit from the hours devoted to sleep. If they will use a moderately hard mattress, of cotton or hair, never of feathers, and not too high a pillow, seeing that when they are in bed the body is not all curled up in a knot by the poor springs and that the feet and back are in almost a straight line, the repose gained while lying either on the right or left side will prove refreshing and healthful.

Boy Non-Plused the Conjuror.

At a country fair a conjuror was performing the old trick of producing eggs from a hat, when he remarked to a little boy: "Your mother can't get eggs without hens, can she?" "Of course she can!" replied the lad. "Why, how is that?" asked the conjuror. "She keeps ducks," replied the boy, amid roars of laughter.—Tit-Bits.

Value of the Victoria Cross.

The Victoria Cross, the intrinsic value of which is one penny and one farthing, or two and a half cents, cannot be accepted as a pledge by a pawnbroker anywhere in Great Britain under penalty of a heavy fine. The cross is made from cannon captured from the enemy, and weighs just three and a half grains less than one ounce.

HINTS FOR HOUSEWIVES.

Cases for Shirts waists.

Beside all the many fashioned cases that are now used in traveling, for handkerchiefs, gloves, veils, shoes, sponges, brushes and nightdresses, respectively, cases are now made especially for shirts waists. They are usually made of some wash material of heavy texture, and fashioned much the same as the large nightgown case. The edges are bound with colored braid, and the initials of the owner embroidered on the flap with wash cotton.

Drinking Hot Water.

A prominent medical journal says that there are four classes of persons who should not drink hot water freely. They are: (1) People who have irritability of the heart. Hot water will cause palpitation of the heart in such cases. (2) Persons afflicted with sour stomach. (3) Persons with dilated stomachs. (4) Persons who have soreness of the stomach, or pain induced by light pressure. These rules are not for those who take hot water simply to relieve thirst better than cold water, and for that purpose is not to be condemned. But hot water is an excitant, and in cases in which irritation of the stomach exists should be avoided.

To Destroy the Red Ants.

The pestiferous little red ants will appear in the pantries and finally all over the house if steps are not taken to get rid of them. One way to get them out of the pantry is to sprinkle the shelves with oil of pennyroyal. Another way, which is about as effective and a bit more cleanly, is to saturate lumps of loaf sugar with spirits of turpentine and place them about the shelves and particularly at the place where the ants come in. If you wish to make sure that the ants will not get to the plate of cake or the pies that you are saving for more important visitors, surround the plates of cake or pie with little ridges of common salt. Ants will not cross such an obstruction. Red ants have a special distaste for sulphur, so fill little bags with it and scatter them about the cupboard and they will drive the ants away.

Soft Wood Floors.

It is not possible to finish a floor of soft pine or any similar wood successfully in the same way a hardwood floor is finished. Such a floor must first be well painted. Do not, however, paint such a floor with white lead. This paint is considered unwholesome to use on the floor, where there is constant wear and where minute particles of the paint may reach the atmosphere and be breathed into the lungs. White lead renders wood soft and does not wear well. Ochré is especially desirable. It is cheap and durable. Zinc paint is also used. A good, smooth soft wood floor may be stained a dark rich brown by the use of a pound of asphaltum mixed with half a pound of beeswax. If the paint is too light use more asphaltum. Apply this paint with a large floor brush or a sponge. When this is dry put on a thin coat of shellac, sandpaper the floor lightly and varnish it with a good varnish. An exchange gives the following floor varnish: Purchase two pounds of pure white borate of manganese which is finely powdered. Add it little by little to a sauceman containing ten pounds of linseed oil, which should be well stirred and raised to the temperature of 360 degrees Fahrenheit. Heat 100 pounds of linseed oil until ebullition takes place, then add the first liquid. Increase the heat until the mixture boils, and allow it to boil for 20 minutes. Strain the varnish through a thin cotton cloth, and it is ready to use. Apply two coats of this varnish, and if you wish a high polish add one of shellac.

Recipes.

Snowball Pudding—Beat the yolks of three eggs until light; then beat in gradually two cupfuls of sugar, add three tablespoonfuls of water, two tablespoonfuls of lemon juice, the grated rind of one lemon, one scant cupful of flour, one and one-half teaspoonfuls of baking powder and the beaten whites of the eggs. Pour into buttered cups and steam for half an hour.

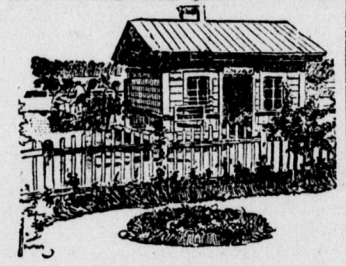
Scotch Wafers—Mix one-fourth cup of rolled oats, one-fourth cup of flour, one tablespoonful of sugar and one-fourth teaspoonful of salt. With the tips of the fingers work in two tablespoonfuls of butter, add hot water to form a stiff dough, toss on a floured board, knead slightly and roll into a thin sheet. Shape with a small cutter and bake on buttered sheets in a moderate oven.

St. Pancras Eggs—Separate the yolks from the whites of five eggs; keep each yolk separate; whip the whites to a stiff froth, adding a salt-spoonful of salt; butter five small cups, put the whites into them and carefully drop the yolk into the centre of each; dust with salt and pepper; place the cups in a shallow pan of hot water, put in the oven and cook five minutes, or till the whites are set. Serve in cups.

Batter Bread—Heaping cup corn-meal soaked over night in boiling water, just enough to thoroughly wet the meal. Next morning add one tablespoonful sugar, one-fourth teaspoonful salt, three eggs beaten lightly, one teaspoonful baking powder; add milk until the batter is a little thinner than for pound cake. Just before pouring into pan beat in quickly two tablespoonfuls melted butter. Bake in quick oven half an hour.

No Line on Them.

Hubband—What kind of people are our new neighbors?
Wife—I don't know. They hang their wash up in the attic.



HOUSE WHERE HOT WATER IS FURNISHED TRAVELERS ON SIBERIAN RAILWAY.

an important observation. "If we exclude the more recent peasant immigrants," he says, "the original Russian population of Siberia may be said to comprise the following three classes: The Cossacks, who first conquered the country; exiles, political and criminal; dissenters from the Greek church, who were either banished to Siberia or went there of their own accord. That is to say, the original Russian population of Siberia consists of men and women who were in some way intellectually or physically more active or more earnest than their fellow country men and women who remained in European Russia. The result is that to-day the average Siberian is a more vigorous and intelligent man than the average Russian. He picks up a thing more quickly; his life is richer, brighter."

The Siberian born citizens of the country do not fail to realize these differences. Already, I have learned that they want to be called Siberians rather than Russians, and to them the latter name seems no more correct than to call the descendants of English colonists in the United States



A BUSINESS STREET IN OMSK, SIBERIA, SHOWING THE TOWER OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.

Englishmen instead of Americans. Already evidences have appeared that "Siberia for the Siberians" is not an unknown sentiment. Provision for the sustenance of the immigrants on their railway journey

their meals and at their leisure eat and drink.

Emigrants from provinces not tributary to the Volga River are carried on special trains or in emigrant cars attached to the slower regular trains, at