

Banner.

COMMENCEMENT. The Baking forth of this young sky, Wedg eyes!

SEPTEMBER 13, 1862. The silent stars more dark appear. To watch the blazing of their sphere.

Russia and the Russians.

The Christian World, for September has a very instructive article on the great Northern Power of Europe and Asia. It is from the pen of the editor, Rev. Dr. Baird, who travelled much in Russia, and whose statements may be regarded as reliable.

No country in Europe is so convulsed at this moment as Russia. That vast Empire, at least the European portion of it, is agitated in the most fearful manner. In the large cities, especially in St. Petersburg and Moscow, the two capitals of the country, besides occasional popular outbreaks, there have been many and destructive conflagrations, in which the poor as well as the rich have greatly suffered.

The present Emperor, Alexander II., now in his 45th year, is a most amiable and enlightened prince, and possesses more character than he has credit for, although he has not that iron will for which his father Nicholas was distinguished. Perhaps it is quite as well that he has not. His amiable disposition, united to extensive knowledge of the nature of civil government and the duties of the station to which the providence of God, acting in accordance with the laws of the Empire, and not his own ambition, or even choice, brought him, admirably fit him to govern in a wise and reasonable manner.

But the most gigantic undertaking of Alexander II. has been the liberation of the many millions of serfs of the Empire. Of the origin of this portion of the population of Russia it would be foreign to the nature of the present article to attempt to speak; it is a complicated and difficult subject to treat. Respecting their number in 1857, upon the question of their emancipation began to be discussed, as well as their present number, very different accounts are given by the various writers. The number of serfs, according to the second visit to Russia, made in 1840, by the Minister of the Interior, Count Slogodoff, and the Minister of the Public Domain, Count Tolstoy, was 23,000,000; those belonging to the members of the Imperial family, as *apanages*, were 1,000,000; and those who belonged to the nobles were 22,000,000; making a total of a little more than 24,000,000 souls.

and took some steps in that direction; but he was deterred from going further than recommending to the nobles to set their serfs free, selling them the lands, or a portion of them, which they cultivated, and requiring payment at fixed but reasonable intervals of time. And many complied with the Imperial recommendation. We know well a nobleman who liberated 7,000 serfs, selling them at a fair price as much land as they could cultivate. His revenue from them, whilst they were serfs, was about \$20,000.

After much deliberation in the Imperial Council, and consultation with Governors of Provinces and leading nobles, who were requested to act in committees in relation to the matter, the present Emperor entered in 1857, upon the great but hazardous measure of the liberation of the serfs of the nobles. Of course, it was from the nobles that the chief opposition was to be expected. Some favored the scheme, especially in those Western provinces, or "governments" as they are called, in which *serfage* still existed; but the great majority of the nobles bitterly opposed, as much as they dared.

At first, it was proposed to accomplish the measure in twelve years; but it was soon found necessary to reduce the term to six, the last year of which is now passing away. During the first four years, the condition of the serfs was not essentially changed. At the end of that period, they were declared free, but they must remain two years more where they were, and during that period come to an agreement with their former masters with regard to the houses and lands which they occupied. It was provided by law that the intervention of the Government should take place, where needed, in the second of those two years, or the sixth of the term, to reconcile the parties where an agreement had not been reached. It is just here that the greatest difficulty has occurred. Some of the nobles are averse to selling their lands to the serfs; in many cases the serfs refuse to give the price demanded; and in many cases also refuse to give anything at all, maintaining that the land is theirs by right of long occupancy and cultivation! In some cases the "communities" of the serfs—for the serfs have extensive communities, or organizations, that have large municipal powers, such as looking after the roads and bridges, caring for their own poor and sick people, and many other objects and have their serfing books and charitable institutions—have taken up the matter, and lay a claim to the land! The whole subject is complicated enough. The nobles have not the power to enforce their views and make the people work for them, and on their terms. When they attempt anything like this they are soon compelled to fly for safety to the great cities or the military posts; and the serfs in such cases to their old practice of burning the houses and other buildings of the proprietors.

Certainly Russia is passing through a fearful process. Great wisdom and prudence and patience on the part of the Emperor and his ministers are needed, and much time to bring the country through it. There are probably no two men in all the world whose position is more trying than that of Alexander II., Emperor of all the Russias, and Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States. Their positions are even very much alike; for although civil war has not actually commenced in Russia, no one can assure us that it may not on any day burst forth. In both cases slavery lies at the bottom of the trouble; in Russia that of 23,000,000 or 25,000,000, less or more, of white people; in the United States that of 4,000,000, or thereabouts, of black or colored people.

RUSSIA AS A FIELD FOR EVANGELISTIC LABORS. No country in Europe has greater claims on the friends of the Gospel than our Russia. Russia in Europe is larger than all the rest of Europe. But the Russian empire, comprising as it does so large a portion of Europe, the entire Northern end of Asia, and the North-western part of North America, is quite one-seventh part of the habitable globe, for it contains all of eight millions of square miles. In size it is about equal to the British empire. Russia in Europe has more than 62,000,000 inhabitants; while the entire empire has very nearly 100,000,000, or 79,000,000, as some of our newspapers have asserted.

The position and influence of Russia make it one of the most important countries for Christian effort. The Russians are Asiatic in their origin, manners, instincts. Their desire for conquest is very much in the direction of Asiatic countries, or Asiatic people; rather than the countries of Western Europe. And if the Russians possessed as much knowledge of the true Gospel as the English, they could and would be great agents for the salvation of the entire Asiatic continent.

But the greatest reason of all why we should desire the evangelization of Russia is to be found in its need of the Gospel. More than sixty millions of people in Russia are Christians in contradiction from the remaining millions of the population, which are Jewish, Mohammedan, Pagan. There are not more than 2,500,000 of Protestants in the entire Russian empire, while there are 7,500,000 of Roman Catholics, and quite 9,000,000 of followers of the Greek Church, including the various branches of *schismatics*, or people who have, for one cause or another, separated from that Church, but retain, in many cases, many of its ceremonies and worst errors.

The Protestant Churches of Russia are to be found mainly in Finland, the Baltic provinces, (Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland,) and in the dispersed German colonies in the Southern portions of Russia in Europe, and the Trans-Caucasian provinces in Asia. And while it is true that in Asia and England Protestantism is going forward among the Protestants of Russia, it is to be deplored that there is even yet comparatively but little spiritual life in their churches. Still, the religious condition of the members or followers of the Greek and Roman Catholic Churches is incomparably worse than that of the Protestants.

The Emperor Alexander I., nearly sixty years ago, by a ukase, ordained that the serfs in the Baltic Provinces should be set free in three periods of ten years each. The last of these decades ended in the earlier part of the reign of the late Emperor Nicholas. There are, therefore, no serfs in the Baltic Provinces; neither are there any in Finland, nor in the modern kingdom of Poland, the part of old Poland which Russia obtained at the Congress of Vienna, in 1815, with the 5,000,000 of inhabitants. Thus there have been no serfs on the Western side of Russia, comprising the countries just named, which are the most civilized portion of the Empire, for many years.

The Emperor Nicholas had a heart, at one period of his reign, to free the serfs

Arminian languages, especially in the first three or four of these. We have been gratified to learn that the Imperial government has directed that the Bible be translated into the modern Russ, the vernacular language of what may be called the great Russian or Slavonic race. It was high time. Only the New Testament, the Pentateuch, the book of Judges, and one or two other portions of the Old Testament were translated, and published by the Russian Bible Society just spoken of, and the translation of them is said by the Russians not to be good. What the translation now making under Imperial auspices will prove to be, we cannot predict. Our expectations are not high, for the Septuagint has as much influence in the Greek Church as the Latin Vulgate has in the Roman Catholic. The Gospels and Acts of the Apostles have been printed, and 200,000 copies have been circulated! Let us praise God for this. Even a poor translation of the Bible is better than none. While there is but little true apprehension of the glorious Gospel of our Lord in the Greek Church, we have no doubt that the Saviour has his "hidden ones" in the bosom of that communion, who will be made in that day when he makes up his jewels." Bishop Tchern, in his day, was a faithful preacher of the Gospel. He was the author of many books. Several of his writings are circulated as tracts. There are some true followers of Christ among the "Separatists," or schismatics in Russia) although the greater part of those people, amounting to several millions, seem to be ignorant of the pure Gospel as the Church from which they have seceded. The best of them, we apprehend, are the *Molokani*, in the Southern part of Russia in Europe. There certainly are many excellent people among this sect, which seems to have had its origin in reading the Scriptures; probably some of those copies, nearly half a million in number, which the Russian Bible Society had put into the hands of the people before his noble career was arrested in 1825 by the late Emperor.

Marriages. To marry one man while loving and loved by another, is about the most grievous fault that a woman can commit. It is an affront to delicacy, against kindness and truth. It involves a guilt and a shame when given to anything but reciprocal affection. It involves double treachery and cruelty; it involves wounding the spirit, wounding the heart, perhaps blighting and soiling the soul—of the one who is abandoned and betrayed. It involves the speedy disenfranchisement of the one who never consented to the change, or who was promised the substance, and who grasps only the phantom, soulless beauty, and the husk, the shell, the skeleton of a dead affection. It entails ceaseless dejection, at home and abroad, by day and night, and our down-sitting and our uprising; dejection in every relation—dejection in the tenderest and most endearing moments of our existence. It makes the whole of life a weary, dreary, ungrateful life. It is a right-minded woman could scarcely lay a deeper sin upon her soul, or one more certain to bring down a fearful expiation.

A Nice Girl. "There is nothing half so sweet in life, half so beautiful, or delightful, or so lovable as a nice girl. Not a pretty, or a dashing, or an elegant girl, but a nice girl. One of those lovely, lively, good tempered, good-hearted, sweet-faced, amiable, neat, natty, domestic creatures met within the sphere of a Christian's life. Her domestic hearth the influence of her goodness, like the essence of sweet flowers.

Sabbath Evening Hymn. Another day of heavenly rest, And angels' toil is ended, And to the chorus of the blessed The last hymn has ascended. Tranquil as an infant's sleep, Eye shadows out and meadow; Let thy peace, with calm as deep, The wearied spirit shadow.

For the Ladies. Sweet sixteen! Thy must have been that; perhaps more. They were rather elegant girls and had an air. If my readers do not know what I mean by that, let them go to Broadway and watch the first befouled young lady with a gold bracelet on her arm.

Future Wives and Mothers. Sweet sixteen! Thy must have been that; perhaps more. They were rather elegant girls and had an air. If my readers do not know what I mean by that, let them go to Broadway and watch the first befouled young lady with a gold bracelet on her arm.

A Mother's Influence. "My mother asked me never to use tobacco, and I have never touched it from that time to the present day," said the Hon. Thomas H. Benton. "She asked me not to game, and I never game; and what ever usefulness I may have attained in life, I owe to having yielded to her wishes. When seven years old, she asked me not to drink, and I made then a resolution of total abstinence, and I have formed an abstinence society at a time when I was the sole member of it; and that I have adhered to it, I owe to my mother."

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Religion at Home. Religion should begin in the family. The holiest sanctuary is home. The family altar is more venerated than that of the church. The education of the soul for eternity should begin and be carried on at the fireside.

Agricultural. The Art of Catching Horses. A correspondent of the Valley Farmer truly remarks that there are few things more aggravating than to be in a hurry to go to some place, and have great trouble to catch a horse. I have sometimes made the assertion that a horse which I raise never has to be caught, unless some one else spoils him. The way I manage is to keep them gentle from colts, handling them as often as convenient. When young horses are running to grass, give them salt occasionally, and let them fondle about you, making as little show as possible of trying to get hold of them. There is nothing surer to spoil a horse forever than running as if trying to hem him in, and yelling at him authoritatively, or scolding; he can see, just as well as you know, that he is out of your reach. To put on the cap shaft, whip him severely for causing trouble, and, my word for it, the next time you want to catch him he will not listen to the voice of your charming, charm you never so wisely." Horses learn a great deal by signs. In beginning to teach them to be caught, go toward them on the rear side, slowly and cautiously, making no demonstrations at all. If the animal begins to walk off, stop, or whistle, or otherwise manifest indifference, until he becomes quiet again, then approach as before. When you are so close as to be confident he will not escape you, speak kindly, and hold up one hand, ready to touch him on the withers, and thence pass it along the neck until you can get hold of his head, but do not seize him with a grab, as this tends to excite his fear afterward. In practicing this course, using the sign, namely, holding up the hand when you are a little farther away each time, a horse may be taught to stop and be caught, even when in considerable glee, (playing,) simply by holding up the hand and using some familiar phrase, such as *whoa, boy, &c.* By way of caution, however, watch his actions and intentions closely during his tutelage, and if at any time, for any cause you see that he is going to run, do not by any means say anything or hold up your hand, as the sign given and disobeyed a few times, will almost inevitably prevent your making anything out of it in future.

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