

THE RUSSIAN'S HOME LIFE

Nine Tenths of the Population Live in Villages.

HOUSEKEEPING IS SIMPLE

Russian Peasant at Home Not Much Given to Appearance.—Still Wears Red Flannel Shirt Outside of Trousers.—Believes in Thorough Cleanliness for Sunday.

Probably nine out of ten persons who have traveled in Russia, if asked to describe the Russian home would speak first of the log-house of the Russian village. Nine-tenths of Russia's population live in villages. The log house is the most truly representative habitation in Russia.

Sunk a few feet below the level of the ground, it faces the village street. Even in the newly settled agricultural communities in Siberia—now a land of promise to the Russians—the isolated farmhouse, a mile, perhaps, from neighbors, is unknown. The farmers' houses are all in a village facing a single village street. The houses are rough and unpainted. Even the prosperous farmer does not abandon his log house. His door and window frames may be painted in white, or green, if he is well-to-do, but that is the only outward display he makes. The logs that compose the house are always peeled, and generally hewn; and the chimneys are filled in winter with plaster or moss. The street in front is unpaved, and often in spring very muddy. Behind the house is a garden, where flowers and vegetables are raised in the hot Russian summer, which is very much like the summer in New England.

The Russian housewife is generally fond of flowers, and fills the windows of her dwelling with them. As the Russian house is always kept warm, the plants afford in winter a fresh and delightful contrast to the white cold of the snow-covered country and the log village street.

The poorer Russian log house has but one room, as a rule, which contains a bed, a bench running half way round the room, cupboard and shelves, and by far the most important article of furniture, a great brick stove, surmounted by a capacious oven.

The stove and oven are there no matter how meager the other furnishings. In the long winter the Russian keeps his house very warm, and all the year round he uses the oven once a week for taking a bath.

The Russian bath is familiar in principle to all the world. Steam is its base. The Russian at home gets up a good fire in his stove on Saturday, and gets into the oven for his weekly steaming. The heat would suffocate any other man, but he finds it very comforting. When dripping and as red as a lobster, he gets out and rubs down with snow, or if he is robust rolls in a snowbank. This process purifies him for Sunday, as he believes he should be very clean when he goes to church. Even the most graceless citizens among the Russians are good churchmen. They attend to their religious duties in a way that sets an example for some of their critics. Many of their everyday customs have a religious significance. The wearing of a beard is in strict accordance with the teachings of the church.

The Russian peasant at home is not much given to studying appearances. He still wears his red flannel shirt outside his trousers. There is a proverb in Russia that the man who tucks in his shirt ceases to be honest. Be that as it may, the shirt outside the trousers is not always a talisman against sins of both omission and commission, notably those of Ananias.

The peasant costume is simple. The trousers, often of cotton, are tucked into high boots. The kaftan, or overcoat, is of brown cloth, home made. In winter a sheepskin jacket is worn under it.

The wife of a peasant wears print gowns, and so does his little girls, the latter in summer being innocent of other garment. The chubby and rosy-cheeked, flaxen-haired children play around the farm in red tunics, ever with a pious medal of St. Vladimir or St. Paul around their necks.

Housekeeping among the peasants is simple, though the women are hard workers, often helping in the fields in addition to doing their housework.

The most important, domestic article in a Russian house is the samovar—literally "self-boiler"—in which the family tea is made. All Russians are great tea drinkers, and all tea is made in samovars. The samovar is a big brass vessel with a tube down the center, in which live coals are placed to heat water for making the tea.

Russian cookery is wholesome, and in the main palatable. Beef, pork, fowl and fish are staples, as with us. Bread is made from rye, and is dark brown, being known as "black" bread. Soup is much eaten. The most distinctly national soup, which is eaten by all classes, especially by the peasants, is called "shchec." It is made from beef, cabbage, parsley and carrots, and seasoned with salt and pepper. Poor people make it without the beef. Another popular soup is "borsch." This is made after the following recipe: "Boil separately a piece of beef and some greens, either spinach, sorrel or the leaves of beet-root. Rub the greens through a sieve, and put them into the beef broth, which must also have been previously passed through the sieve. Add pepper and salt. Boil and let simmer. Then boil some eggs hard, cut them into pieces, and put them into the borsch."

NEW BULLETPROOF CLOTH.

Wonderful Things Related of an Italian Invention.

The world is at present intensely interested in a new Italian bullet-proof cloth, and since the Italian government is negotiating for its use it is of importance that we see just what the results are, although it is necessary to state that the invention remains a secret, and this notwithstanding attempts to discover its details. Thus we shall have to deal with a general description and with the results of experiments.

The armor is a sort of felt, the stuff being capable of adaptation to any form whatever; for example, a breast plate with a collar or a sort of coat which completely envelops the wearer and absolutely guarantees him from gunshot wounds. The thickness of the protector varies from one-sixteenth to seven-sixteenths of an inch, according to the arm the effects of which it is designed to destroy. Against the armor of seven-sixteenths of an inch the regular ordnance revolver with steel covered ball is powerless, and also the gun of the 1891 model charged with smokeless powder. In the numerous experiments which have been made—in firing at a distance of several yards—the ball, whether it be of lead or steel, when it strikes the protector is arrested and deformed, in some cases rebounding and in other being almost reduced to a pulp. Thus there is not only an arrest of the ball but deformation as well, and in this deformation the force of the ball is converted. While there should be a high degree of temperature at the point touched by the ball, it seems that the ball alone feels the effects, for the protector does not seem to be burnt in the slightest.

These results are not limited to ballistic effects, for in the recent experiment it was sought to pierce the armor with a dagger driven with all possible force. The point of the arm, however, could not penetrate the felt and was bent into a shapeless mass.

It is natural to suppose that the force of the ball would be communicated to the armor and that this would be driven violently backward, resulting in a disagreeable shock and one which at times would be dangerous to the wearer. To demonstrate the incorrectness of this view Signor Benedetti attached his protector to a horse and fired upon the animal only six feet away with an ordnance revolver, the ball falling at the feet of the horse, while he, freed from his halter, walked away as if nothing had happened. It is to be noted that with the same revolver a piece of steel had been previously pierced. The same experiment was made with a chicken covered with a breast piece of the felt, the cock, after being rid of his new shell, quietly pursuing the even tenor of his way.—Philadelphia Record.

Table Manners in Siberia.

A traveler in Siberia has the following to say in regard to table manners which he met with: "In eating you must reach for what is passed during this first stage of a meal. You would never suggest to your neighbor on the right to pass you the cheese, but you would rise in your place and, with a firm grasp on your knife, reach over his plate and impale the tempting morsel. If this is not possible you leave your place and go around the table and secure your loot. My Russian naturalist, Alek, was a fair sample of an educated Russian and he turned to me and said: 'I see you eat with a fork.' 'Yes,' said I, 'and I see that you do not.' 'No, I had a sister who studied at an English convent in Japan for a year or so. When she came back she ate with a fork, and we soon learned her out of it.' The end of the Russian knife is broader than the portion next to the handle and it is used both as a knife and as a spoon. They complain that the American knives do not hold enough." After this it is not surprising that "the Russians were highly amused" at the author's "use of the toothbrush, which they consider a peculiarly feminine utensil."

Simple Life of the Pope.

One morning early a friend of mine, a Venetian nobleman, called on him. Mgr. Sarto had said mass and settled down to work. His sisters had gone out to mass or for the household marketing, which they were doing at the Rialto on Aug. 4, 1903, the day of wonders in their simple life.

"Has the count taken coffee?" asked the bishop.

"Well, to tell the truth, no, because the business was urgent, and I have come straight from the railway station," the guest replied.

No excuse availed, and Mgr. Sarto rose and went into the kitchen. So the bishop of dual Mantua and his guest might have been seen there talking and laughing, while monsignor coaxed the charcoal with a black kitchen fan, the coffee fizled in a tin pot on the range and the count got out cups and saucers in order to save his distinguished host what menial service he could. Then they had coffee together at the kitchen table.—Century.

Size of Manchuria.

Manchuria corresponds in latitude to Manitoba, North Dakota, Minnesota and Nebraska. Its area of 362,310 square miles is only 10,000 square miles less than the combined area of these great grain states. It is two and a half times greater than California, and is as big as Texas, Alabama and Louisiana combined. In the northern part of the province are thousands of square miles untouched. Manchuria has a possible wheat area as great as that of the United States.

BUCKETFUL OF DIAMONDS

Supposed to Have Been Hidden by a Kafir Chieftan.

SEEN BY CECIL RHODES.

Many Attempts Made to Recover Them, but Indunas Who Buried Them Cannot Be Made to Tell. Diamonds Filled a Bucket. Were of Finest Color.

A bucketful of diamonds worth \$20,000,000, and hidden by old Chief Magato, who long years ago ruled the Kafir tribes of Rhodesia, has put all of South Africa in a turmoil of feverish excitement. In every part of Cape Colony and the Transvaal, in Cape Town and Kimberley, Pretoria, Mafeking, Johannesburg, Swartzman's kop, Ladysmith and Pochefstroom venturesome men are making up expeditions to search Rhodesia and the mysterious wilderness lying far north of the Limpopo river to the Zambezi for these diamonds. Newspapers in South Africa are full of the excitement. Nothing else is talked of in that end of the world but Chief Magato and his bucketful of diamonds.

Chief Magato is not a myth. Neither is the bucketful of diamonds. Cecil Rhodes saw the big bucket filled to the brim with diamonds of the finest color and perfect luster. With Cecil Rhodes at the time were Sir John Willoughby, Justice Lange and D. C. de Waal. But with all his craftiness, Cecil Rhodes was unable to make a bargain with the old chief, who was willing to give away his kingdom, larger than the state of Texas, but who clung tenaciously to his bucketful of diamonds.

The story of the now famous meeting between Cecil Rhodes and old Chief Magato, of Rhodesia, dates back to 1890, when Rhodes, accompanied by Sir John Willoughby, Justice Lange and D. C. de Waal, M. L. A., came to the Transvaal from the newly-acquired territory now called Rhodesia. Magato long was the terror of the venturesome Boer pioneers. To set foot in his realm was to court death. Across Rhodesia his fearless black warriors, a living hedge with brilliant spears, barred the way to the Zambezi river. But if Magato was fearless, so was Cecil Rhodes. The empire builder who had not feared to go alone to the heart of Lobengula's country and make a treaty with that black scourge of the dark continent, did not hesitate to pay a visit to Magato.

During the conversation, Magato, who knew all the great men of South Africa by reputation, and who was dazzled by the fame of the great white chief from Kimberley, became confidential, and as the story has it, asked Mr Rhodes if he had ever seen a bucketful of diamonds.

Magato thereupon spoke to an Induna, and within a few minutes two natives arrived on the scene carrying a bucket filled to the brim with precious stones of the finest color.

It is stated that after an intimation from Mr. Rhodes as to the diamonds having been stolen, and the response of the chief that would require more than the Transvaal police to recover them, Mr. Rhodes again carefully regarded the diamonds and estimated their value at from \$15,000,000 to \$20,000,000.

The story was noised abroad and several private syndicates were afterwards formed to try and obtain the diamonds or a portion of them. From Magato, but notwithstanding a large outlay of money, none of these syndicates could get Magato to sell the stones, if he had them, which he invariably denied, or find out what had become of them.

As a matter of fact, the narrative itself began to be regarded as a myth, but it was resuscitated when, just before Magato's death, a large and valuable diamond was sold by the chief himself to a local trader. Renewed efforts were then made to get hold of the diamonds, but Magato himself denied having them or ever having had any. There are traders in the Spelonken who have stated more than once that though they never saw these diamonds themselves, they had often been told about them by Magato's Indunas.

So far the theory has merely demonstrated the possession of the diamonds. As to the date of their being hidden, of how they were hidden, and possibly where—here is the connection with the hidden treasure which has started the various expeditions on their earnest search.

Just before his death Magato, who hated his nephew, Mpefu, the heir to the chieftainship, and who hoped to see one of his Indunas installed instead, determined, at any rate, not to leave him any riches. So when he felt that his death was near he sent for four of his Indunas, and addressing them solemnly on their duty and loyalty to himself, requested them to divide the diamonds into parcels and take them far away and bury them in some wilderness. This they promised to do, and the diamonds having been distributed among them, two Indunas set out for the Matabeleland and the other two trekked toward the Selati, in the direction in which the remains of the murdered man, Van Niekerk, were subsequently found.

The facts leaked out in one way or another after Magato's death, and there must be many of Magato's people, as well as a few persons who know these details—perhaps even there are some traders in Zoutpansberg to-day who may remember two of Magato's Indunas going on a special mission toward the location of Mafiji, the mysterious "she king," as the Kafirs termed her.

FLIPPING THE COIN.

Alton brought the automobile to a stop at the crest of a hill. Below was a vista of green fields and winding white roads. Beyond, the ragged line of hills stood out sharply against the sky.

"Isn't it splendid, Dan?" said Alicia, with appreciative enthusiasm. "I didn't really know there were such bits of landscape about here."

Alton settled back comfortably on the cushions. With studied deliberation he lighted a cigar and puffed away several moments before he turned to the girl.

"I thought I'd stop in the pleasantest spot I knew of," he explained. "We'll probably stay here for some time."

"Indeed?" she said.

"We shall stay here until you decide," he affirmed.

"Decide what?" she said.

"Decide to answer the question I asked you a short time since; the one, in fact, I have asked you repeatedly during the past year."

Alicia frowned.

"You develop determination rather suddenly," she observed.

"Exactly," he returned, stolidly.

"Well," she said, "you may as well go on. I'm not ready to answer you yet."

"Alicia," he said, gravely, "it's not fair to treat me in this way. You should give me an answer, one way or the other."

"And after this answer would be quite welcome after this patient wait of yours," she mocked.

"Did I say so?" he asked, quickly.

"It is evident I'm not worth waiting for," she said, looking pensively across the valley.

"You are worth waiting for forever," he declared, stoutly, "but it isn't fair to keep me in suspense like this. You know as well now as you ever will."

"There are pros and cons to be weighed thoroughly before I decide," she said. "A man always thinks a woman can decide offhand a matter of the gravest import."

Alton's eyes twinkled.

"Heaven forbid!" he muttered.

Alicia flashed him an angry glance.

"We may as well be going," she said with some constraint. "It's growing late."

"I haven't my answer yet," Alton reminded her.

"If you intend to wait for that, I'll walk home," she said.

Alton sat erect and knocked the ashes from his cigar. He drew a penny from his pocket and laid it on his knee with exaggerated care.

"I've a proposition to make," he said slowly. "It seems that you have no intention of definitely settling this matter. Therefore, suppose we let Fate decide it with the turn of this coin. If it comes heads, you'll marry me in June. If tails, I'll leave the field to other suitors. Is it agreed?"

The girl turned her eyes and gazed at him silently. There was unutterable scorn in that look.

"We'd better go back," she said lightly.

Alton turned the automobile and they sped homeward over the hard white roads. Alicia sat silently beside him. Her head was turned away, but he could see the angry color in her cheek.

"Instead of being crushed, as it was meant he should have been, he seemed vastly amused. For some time he made no attempt to resume conversation."

"Alicia," he said at length, "have I blundered again? Are you angry?"

"I didn't think you were capable of such a thing," she said wrathfully.

"You have said my answer meant everything in the world to you; but how much do you care if you are willing to leave it to the turn of a coin?"

"Everything," he said imperturbably.

"You can't, or you'd never have suggested such a hazard," she declared.

"I was desperate," he said with becoming meekness.

"Perhaps you'd best say nothing more about it," she said.

"And, with all this, I haven't my answer," he complained.

Alicia's face was calmly disdainful.

"Dan," she said, "it seems to me you might guess, after what has happened, what my answer will be. If you were willing to leave it all to chance—"

"Chance?" he cried.

"Certainly," she cried, "the chance of a coin's turn."

Alton threw back his head and laughed heartily. Alicia watched him in amazement. Then his face became grave.

"Pardon, Alicia," he apologized, "but those remarks about chance are amusing. Did you imagine for a minute that I would trust to the turn of an ordinary penny?"

He drew the penny again from his pocket and laid it in her hand.

"It wasn't coined at a mint," he explained. "Kindly examine it carefully and tell me what you find."

Alicia bent over the penny.

"Why it's—it's 'heads' on both sides, Dan," she said.

"That's the chance I took," he said. "Shall we leave it to the coin now?"

Alicia was looking across the fields.

"If—if you like, Dan," she said.

Silence may be golden, but a lot of talk savors of brass.

A horse usually acts up when you are trying to sell him.

A man who worries about the shortcomings of others needs watching.

A good many trains of thought are unable to get off the side-track.

CARING FOR PARROTS.

Expert Tells of Best Food and Conditions for the Bird.

Women who are fond of parrots for pets should bear in mind the fact that to keep them well, birds from tropical countries must be protected from drafts and sudden changes of temperature, and under no circumstances should they be left out over night, even in summer.

Miss Virginia Pope, who for twenty years has made a study of birds, their care and treatment, says that there is greater mortality among parrots for this reason than any other.

Women, who through carelessness or thoughtlessness, have left their pets hanging out in the dew over night, have found to their sorrow that if their birds were not dead by morning they were down with bronchial pneumonia, a disease that they are subject to.

There are certain do's and don'ts which Miss Pope suggests, which, if followed, will go a long way to keep a bird of this sort in good health and plumage.

Much care should be exercised in their feeding and a most important rule to follow is to give the bird plenty of water.

This is entirely contrary to the advice of many bird fanciers, but Miss Pope, by personal experience, has found that it is most necessary. There should be one cup for seed and another for water, the latter to be changed twice a day. Some persons there are who will say that the bird will die if given water, but Miss Pope says that they will die without it.

Crackers which have been dipped and moistened well in condensed milk should be given them every morning.

Condensed milk has been found to be better than sweet milk for the reason that it is less likely to turn sour, and to affect the digestive organs.

The milk should be thinned with hot water first, about one-half teaspoonful of water to one-half cup of milk. Toasted bread or swieback can be substituted for crackers if desired.

The seed cup should contain sunflower seed mixed with hemp, about one-fourth of the hemp to three-fourths of the sunflower.

Parrots will not take a bath. At least it is said that not one in a hundred will of its own accord.

This is a natural characteristic, as in their own warm countries the heavy dew at night serve the purpose. But as some sort of bath is necessary it is best to spray them twice a week with an atomizer.

A spray bath is not disagreeable to the bird, on the contrary, they appear very grateful and will spread their wings and show every evidence of enjoyment during the process.

The Curse of Flannels.

At the age of 6 I found myself—infelix!—removed to a town possessing a bleak climate and many woolen manufactures. It was the custom of the house mothers to buy flannel by the piece, direct from the factory, red flannel, hot, thick, felled like a Lapplander, and the invention of Lucifer Out of this flannel was cut a garment of continuous all-embracing garment, of neuter gender in which every child in that town might have been observed flaming Mephistophelianlike after the morning bath. A pattern was given to our mother. The hair shirt—I laugh when I read! By definition the hair shirt must have possessed geographical limits of attack, but my flannels left no pore unlicked, untortured; they heated the flesh until scarlet fever paled into a mere plesantry, and they soured the milk of amiability within me forever. The rotation of the autumn, when the happy fowls and foliage alike moulted, shed the superfluous, when bracing October set the body in a glow, I alone of living things must be one up in flannel!

And spring, that season of vernal bourgeoisie, was the time when I, too, like any other seedling, slipped free of all stuffy incassings, and could sprout and spring in air and sun, clad in blessed muslin. I shall never forget the corroding bitterness induced by flannels. At times they absolutely reduced me to fastidiums with my religion, so that filial piety, the ordaining of the seasons, and the very catechism itself, hung in the balance of the conflict. I believe I can hardly overestimate the spiritual detriment done me by my flannels.—Atlantic Monthly.

Newly Discovered Facts.

A good deal of secrecy has been observed as to just what of scientific value was learned by the recent voyage of the British ship Discovery into the antarctic regions. The geographical results of the exploration are well known but the scientific results will take a long time to work out. It is said, however, that a secret has been brought back which will shake the foundations of many a scientific belief. Certain fossils have been found which prove beyond doubt that once—no one yet can tell how long ago—mammals, and perhaps even men, lived on the land where now are utter desolation and life-destroying ice and snow. These treasures were packed into tin boxes and brought to London under special escort to the British museum, where they will await inquiry by specialists. In speaking of the matter Sir Clements Markham was most guarded. Still, he admitted that the fossils must in any case mean much. They may upset all the theories as to the polar system and the geographical origin and age of the world.

Eating Reptiles and Insects.

In Arizona Indian children may be seen catching ants and eating them and in Mexico the honey ant is eagerly sought after by the natives, who eat the well-rounded, currant-like abdomen. In South America the large lizard, the iguana, is a delicacy, not to speak of the larger snakes, which in taste are like chicken. The ordinary rattlesnake, it is said, is very good eating if one can overcome the inborn prejudice.

LAY OF THE PHARISEE.

Ignoble beasts, as asses, swine, and bears uncouth and vulgar dogs, Are some acquaintances of mine, And some are wretched demagogues, Frauds, bullies, braggarts, too, I know Their glaring faults I plainly see— And some of them are nowise slow To say what they consider me.

Poetroons and quacks and gluttons I Regret to say I daily meet, And those who steal and those who lie And those who lose no chance to cheat,

And bores and coxcombs—I condemn Their vicious ways in language free, I have my own strong views of them— They're their opinions, too, of me.

Fanatics, fakors, cads and fools, Rank upstarts, misers, bigots, sots, Corruptionists and venal tools And such as hatch infernal plots, Then idlers, slovens, sneaks and rakes And prigs—and many more there be.

To recognize them all it takes A flawless character like me.

Guilty But Hurt.


"I was governor of my state for two terms," said a well-known western politician, "and I made up my mind as soon as I was sworn in the first time to right any wrong I might find in the two state prisons. I had somehow got the idea that many innocent men were sent there."

"And did you find it so," was asked.

"I did. There were over a thousand convicts in all, and I investigated 350 cases before I stopped. According to his own story, every one was an innocent man and the victim of injustice. There was one exception. He had been sent to prison for stealing a cow, and he pled to me for a long time. At length, one day after I had gone over the case with him for the fifth time and showed him that he must be guilty, he said:

"It's no use to try to deceive you, governor. I'll admit that I did the stealing, but what hurts my feelings is the mistake they made. It wasn't a cow at all, but a blamed old jackass, and the jury convicted me because it was sworn to that he gave twelve quarts of milk a day."

WELL EQUIPPED.



Askem—"How do you manage to make your opera succeed with only eight in the chorus?"

Manager—"I've got twelve bill posters."

Montana Coroner's Verdict.

"Gentlemen," said the Montana coroner, "this is a case where the deceased lying before you was mistaken in his man. He sets out to look for Steve Brady and fill him with lead, but comes across Sam Andrews instead and stops to ask him what he'll take for the cause he is riding. Sam sets a price and they get into a row and Bill Harper is shot dead."

"There is no question in my mind that had Bill found Steve he would have plunked him and there is no question but he was found by Sam and got plunked himself, but out of respect for the statoots made and purvided it is my duty to inform you that a verdict of rush of blood to the head will be perfectly satisfactory to all interested parties."

Too Extravagant.

"It has come to my ears, gem'men of the Lime Kiln club, dat six different membes hev dum gone and rented locked boxes at de postoffice. I don't menshun any names, but I want it understood dat I frown upon any sich piece of extravagance."

"Last Sunday I saw sartin members of dis club ridin' out wid livery riggs! I don't call any names, but I know dat dose men don't aim ober \$3 a week at de best. Dar dey was, whoopin' around and puttin' on style when dey could no more afford it dan I kin afford to whitewash de capitol at Washington for de sum of 15 cents an' board myself."

Not a Good Officer.

The officer had rolled the hobo over in the street.

"You are a good officer," commended the roundsman.

"I don't think so," replied the officer, as he seated himself on the pressure hobo.

"Why not?"

"I am on the bum."

Back Numbers.

Elsie—What a ridiculous child he is. He said he was going to visit his great-grandpa.

Mamma—And is that ridiculous, dear?

Elsie—Of course. Great-grandpas are always dead.—Philadelphia Press.

"Do you see anything ridiculous in my wig?" said a judge to the well-known Irish barrister, John Curran.

"Nothing but the head," flew back the retort.

Rather Doubtful.

"If I could only win you," he said, "we would soon be one."

"And if we were both won," she queried, "which would be the winner?"