

# KNOUT AND NAME

About All That Now Remain of the Original Cossacks.

## CODE OF THE FIRST TRIBES.

One Class Lived in the Villages, the Other in a Sort of Monastery, and All Were Free Warriors, Self Appointed Guardians of the People.

Wherever Russia has a fight on hand she looks up promptly to do her bidding the Cossack. This right arm of the czar has not the best of reputations. Illustrated papers picture him a savage scarecrow mounted on a wiry looking animal, and his chief occupation is apparently the knitting and knouting of harmless people. Yet he comes of good stock.

Once upon a time there drifted into southwest Russia a tribe of runaways who called themselves "Kossaki," which is Tartar for free men, free warriors or guardians. Seemingly they lived up to the name. They protected from the Tartars the peoples in the countries which they originally had fled from and saved thousands of Russian women and children from slavery in Turkey. Growing in numbers and importance, these self appointed guardians became everywhere feared and respected. Their military services especially were in request. Any nation could command their help if its cause appealed to the Kossaki code of honor.

The tribe had gradually resolved itself into two classes—the village Kossaki, who lived in their own settlements all over southern Russia, and the inhabitants of the "Setch" beyond the rapids. The former had the advantage over the other country folk. As neighboring governments were too afraid to tax them. Between wars, to which the fall came from the Setch, the village Kossaki tilled the land. Or as altogether different character was the organization of the Setch, a community of about 12,000 men with permanent headquarters in a movable settlement (the exact location was changed eight times in two centuries; usually on an unapproachable island on the lower course of the Dnieper. The Turks once tried to rush the place, but got caught in the maze of islands like rats in a trap.

The Setch in one respect resembled a monastery. No woman was allowed inside it. A man might not even bring his mother or his sister. If he did he was hanged. Here, eager to lead the free and simple life among their equals, came all sorts and conditions of men. Indeed, owing to the law enjoining celibacy, the colony depended for its numbers on newcomers, although the village Kossaki contributed recruits. Any one could join, as rank and riches were despised, and all he had to do was to submit to laws as follows: Chastity, the orthodox creed, allegiance to Russia and the south Russian dialect. No reference or inconvenient questions of his past were asked of the intending Kossak. He simply went to the elected chief and, after a brief greeting, was shown to his place in one of the "kuren," or big huts. "Here is thy home, three paces long and two paces wide, and when thou shalt die we will make it smaller."

They had good times, though, in the Setch. There were no menavers, no organized trainings, no compulsory drill. Men lay or slept in the leveled spaces between huts, enjoying, gypsy fashion, the freedom of the open air. Drink was plentiful and also tobacco. Great songs were sung, and there was much playing of stringed instruments. Throughout the place a spirit of good comradeship prevailed. A popular pastime was dancing, no easy task in cumbersome high boots. Costumes were of a picturesque variety.

The Kossak wore a moustache and on the crown of his head a tawny wreath of hair, both being worn long to enable him to wind the three ends round his ears. Each man went armed to the teeth, and the majority carried "sagalkas" (whips which are still used).

In wartime things were different. To drink was a crime. Food, always plain, consisted of rations of uncooked horseflesh. Military organization was by election of leaders, one to every 100 men, with a colonel in command of a regiment. These officers had absolute power, but authority for only one campaign. Such war spells were of frequent occurrence, so much so that the fighting business led to the extinction of the tribe. Peter the Great laid waste the Setch. Mazepa made him self unpleasant. The Setch was again bombarded and ruined when its inhabitants became, some of them, plow men, while others were shipped to the orient. True, there was a brief reappearance of the Setch, but under different auspices and nothing like in old times. Finally the Kossaki lands were confiscated, and the tribe and its institutions gave place to serfdom and the creation of a new nobility. The Cossack of today inherits little of the old traditions but the name and the whip.—Harper's Weekly.

**This Life.**  
Life is made up not of great sacrifices or duties, but of little things, in which smiles and kindness and small obligations given habitually are what win the heart and secure comfort.—Sir H. Davy.

Nobody can help being born stupid, but anybody can help becoming stupider than he was born.—Lady Helen Forbes.

## BUILT UPON QUICKSAND.

It Makes a Firm Foundation For Many New York Sky-scrapers.

Quicksand, so the popular name of a lurking monster that swallows up the unwary, while often treacherous, has been safely built upon, and several of the second class skyscrapers in New York rest directly upon it. It is necessary at the outset to correct the popular idea about quicksand. The engineer's definition of quicksand is "any loose, friable material saturated with water." There are different kinds of quicksand; just as there are different kinds of wood, varying from nearly as treacherous as the popular idea of it to a material that may be safely built upon.

The ground in the lower end of Manhattan Island is a quicksand extending from the surface to a maximum depth of eighty feet below Broadway. It will bear three tons per square foot, and the foundations of many tall buildings rest upon it. Filled in ground is one of the poorest materials on which to build, as for years after it has been deposited it will continue to settle, and obviously any structure it carries must settle with it.

Ordinary ground will bear safely from two to four tons per square foot, dry clay from four to six tons per square foot, good gravel from six to ten tons and bedrock from 50 to 200 tons per square foot. Sand if confined will stand very large pressures, and similarly water, the most unobtainable of all, if it could be restrained, would be capable of resisting an enormous pressure. Certainly no force man has produced is sufficient to injure its structure.—Strand Magazine.

## THE TOP OF THE WORLD.

How an Explorer Would Know When He Was at the Pole.

The question arises in the mind of every one who is not an expert in using measuring instruments, "How do the explorers know when they are standing on the rotating part of the world?"

Perhaps there is a queer sensation when one is standing on the exact spot, but then no one has located either pole with such exactness. One can, however, discover one's whereabouts in this interesting point by several methods.

First one can measure the height of the sun above the horizon. When one is standing on the pole the sun circles round the observer during the whole twenty-four hours. It does not perceptibly rise or fall during the day. It just goes right round at a certain height, which varies according to the season.

You measure the sun's height above the horizon Dec. 14 at noon, at mid night and so forth. The angle you obtain is the angle which you should obtain for your supposed position. To make sure, you remain there two or three days so that errors of measurement can be corrected.

Also you can measure your shadow or the shadow of a pole during the whole twenty-four hours. If the length of this shadow varies by even an inch or so you are not at the pole. It must describe a perfect circle about the center.

The most exact measurements are obtained by theodolites. Sextants are not so accurate.—London Sphere.

## Named All Their Women Maria.

Socotra, an island in the Indian ocean, was for many centuries a place dreaded by the mariner. In the tenth century it was notorious as a pirate haunt, and one devout authority described its inhabitants as "Nestorian Christians and pirates." In addition to its native ruffians, it was also a regular station for the Indian corsairs who preyed on the trade with the far east. At an earlier date Socotra had been noted as the chief insensate producing land and as such was known to the ancient Egyptians. Among the curious customs of the Socotrans of the seventeenth century was that of naming all their women Maria.

**Johnson's Definitions.**  
Dr. Johnson perpetrated many jokes in his dictionary, but among his most famous blunders was his definition of "patern" as "the knee of a horse." Dr. Johnson defined oats as "a grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people." He defined "penitence" as "a slave of state, hired by a stipend to obey his master," which definition was made much by the doctor's enemies when he himself was awarded a pension.

## A Strong Hand.

"You was a big loser when de game broke up, wasn't you?"  
"Yes. Dat's why it broke up."  
"Was it a good hand dat won de last pot?"

"It shore was. When it landed it felt like it mus' o' weighed a ton."—Washington Star.

## Qualified.

"What! You marry my daughter," thundered old Roxley—"you, a mere clerk?"

"No, sir," replied young Hunter, "not a clerk, but a gentleman now. I resigned my job the moment your daughter accepted me."—Philadelphia Press.

## A Reminder.

Clerk—Mr. Sapielgh complains in his letter that he is not hearing anything further about his suit. Lawyer—Send him a bill.—Fleegende Blatter.

## It Depends.

"Don't you think there is something to be said for 'em?"  
"Not when the other fellow holds the coin."—Baltimore American.

## SPOILED A SPANISH PLOT.

Removal of Dutch Boys, Their Discovery of the Spanish Plot.

Of the many quiet and unassuming incidents, institutions and privileges prevailing in Holland none is more noteworthy than the certain privilege that has been enjoyed by the boys of Amsterdam for nearly 500 years.

At a fixed time each autumn these boys gather by the hundreds in the great square called the Dam, which is the center of the city. Each boy has a drum slung over his shoulder.

Facing this square is the Stock Exchange, and on the occasion of "quitting" just as soon as the day's business is over, as many of the boys in a crowd into the building. They proceed to the floor of the exchange, where pursuant to this old custom, they are permitted to march about, sing and beating upon their drums.

The origin of this custom, it is said, is as follows:

One afternoon in the year 1622 a crowd of boys playing in the Dam lost a ball in the canal that in those days skirted one side of the square. One of the lads, while climbing in among the piles on which the building stood, found instead of his ball a boat moored in a dark corner and loaded with boxes of gunpowder. This showed clearly enough, what was afterward ascertained with certainty, the intention of the Spanish conspirators to blow up the Stock Exchange while it was crowded, as it was every day, with the leading citizens of the city.

The boy who stumbled upon the gunpowder at once hurried to the town authorities with his news. The location of explosives was quickly noted in the canal and the Spanish plot thus frustrated.

When the burgesses asked the boy what reward he desired for the service he had rendered the town he replied that so long as there was a stock exchange in Amsterdam the boys of the town would like to be permitted to make the floor of the exchange their playground during a certain part of the year. The request was granted, and is the custom survives.—New York Star.

## Nightcaps.

For external application the nightcap is rarely seen. It is first mentioned during the time of the Tudors. In the inventory of Henry VIII's wardrobe we come across the following items: "A nightcap of black velvet embroidered." No wonder that with such gear, as Shakespeare suggests, "woolly rests the head that wears a crown." Poor old Bishop Latimer was not content with one nightcap. Fox in his "Book of Martyrs" describes him as follows: "He held his hat in his hand having a handkerchief on his head and upon it a nightcap or two and a great cap, such as townsmen use, with broad flaps to button under his chin." They evidently believed in keeping their heads warm in those days.

## The Sailor's Toothbrush.

A bluff and coarse old time sea captain caught a sailor one morning cleaning his teeth with a toothbrush. The old man seized the brush, snapped it in two and tossed the pieces overboard. Then, his eyes flashing fire, he said:

"What are ye tryin' to do—corrupt the ship with this here effeminate 'Cleanin' yer teeth with a toothbrush? Why, ye swab, don't ye know that when an honest sailor wants to scrub the tobercker of his grinder he goes it, like a man, with a marble pipe or a hank of chain cable dipped in cinders outen the cook's galley!"—New York Tribune.

## A Satirical Reward.

There was perhaps more satire than gratitude in the reward bestowed by a French lady on a surgeon for bleeding her—an operation in which the lance was so clumsily used that an artery was severed and the poor woman bled to death. When she recognized that she was dying she made a will to which she left the operator a life annuity of 800 francs on condition "that he never again bleed anybody as long as he lives."

## The Hunters.

"I'm going off on a hunting trip with Binks, Dawson and Bildad," said Hick-enlooper.

"Fine!" said Wigley. "Big game or small?"

"Oh, we never go beyond the ten cent limit," said Hick-enlooper.—Harper's Weekly.

## Fast Color Tea.

Mrs. Moneybags—Why do you apply for the position when I stated specially in my advertisement that I desired a colored chauffeur? White Applicant—Because, madam, I am quite sure that I could fill the position. I am very green.—Judge.

## Some Improvement.

"Jane got her new bonnet wet."  
"Did it ruin it?"

"I should say not. It made it look more fashionably lopsided than before."—Detroit Free Press.

## Making Perfectly Sure.

Jack—Are you sure that I am the only man you ever really and truly loved? Ethel—Perfectly sure, dear. I went over the whole list only yesterday.—Boston Transcript.

## Changing Fashions.

Father (meditating on time's changes)—Ah, yes, the fashion of this world passeth away! Daughter—Indeed it does, papa. I shall want a new hat next week.

Life is the jaffer, death the snuff, sent to draw the unwilling both, and set us free.—Lowell.

The Russian, when being pursued by an enemy, will often be seen to throw up his hands in a gesture of despair, and the writer of the text notes that this is a common error for that reason not partial to him. One morning while staying at the Grand Hotel, Manhattan, he saw a Russian gentleman looking at a newspaper and observed a look on his face which indicated a momentary moment of despair.

When the Russian gentleman was asked why he had thrown up his hands in a gesture of despair, he replied that he had done so because he had just read in the newspaper that the Russian government had decided to throw up its hands in a gesture of despair.

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It was not easy to make one's way into Balzac's house at Chaillet, Rue des Batilles, for it was guarded like the garden of the Hesperides. Two or three passwords were necessary, which were changed frequently for fear they should become known. I remember a few. To the porter we said, "The plum season has come," on which he allowed us to cross the threshold. To the servant who rushed to the staircase when the bell rang it was necessary to murmur, "I bring some Brussels lace," and if you assured him that "Miss Bertrand was quite well," you were admitted forthwith. This nonsense amused Balzac immensely, and it was perhaps necessary to keep out bees and other visitors still more disagreeable. Miss Worthingley's "Memorabilia of Balzac."  
Oddly Expressed.  
In one of his letters William Brookfield tells how as school inspector he had to give an examination on physical science. "What was I to do? I knew nothing about hydrogen or oxygen or any other 'gen.'" So I set them a paper which I called "applied science." One of my questions was, "What would you do to cure a cold in the head?" A young lady answered, "I should put my feet into hot water till you were in a profuse perspiration."  
The Needle's Eye.  
Kathryn, aged five, was vainly trying to thread a needle. "Mamma," she asked, "don't they call a hole in a needle an eye?"  
"Yes, dear," answered her mother.  
"Well," continued the little miss, "I'll bet this old needle is cross eyed."  
—Chicago News.  
Again Our Queer Language.  
"Queer language, isn't it?"  
"Why so?"  
"Because of sickness I had to send my shorthand writer home yesterday."  
"Well?"  
"That left me shorthandless."  
—Cleveland Plain Dealer.  
Make It Help.  
Let every dissatisfaction with the present be made not a discouragement, but an inspiration, by the continual consciousness of the great law of eternal growth.—Phillips Brooks.  
The Life Line.  
Amateur Palmist—The life line indicates how long you will live. Skeptical Friend—Yes? Isn't it a wonder the life insurance companies pay no attention to it?  
An Excuse.  
Patience—What reason had she for marrying him? Patrice—Why, he had money. Patience—That is not a reason; that's an excuse.  
The Way of the World is to praise dead saints and persecute living ones.—Howe.

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