

THE NORTHERN CIRCUIT.



THE NORTHERN CIRCUIT

OR BRIEF NOTES OF SWEDEN,
FINLAND, AND RUSSIA.

"Came from the north, and thus it did report."
SHAKESPEARE, *Henry IV.* Part I.

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TO
BARON A*****,
THE BRIGHTEST OF
"NORTHERN LIGHTS,"
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED
IN THE HOPE
THAT HE WILL NOT PROVE A VERY SEVERE JUDGE
WHEN PASSING SENTENCE
ON THE
"NORTHERN CIRCUIT."

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THE NORTHERN CIRCUIT.

CHAPTER I.

CAMBRIDGE TO GOTHENBURG.

ALTHOUGH I started from Cambridge, I think it better to omit a description of the first part of my journey, as it would necessarily include some observations on the Eastern Counties Railway, which might perhaps recall to the minds of my readers recollections of the many discomforts they cannot fail to have experienced, should they ever have travelled by that line, and thus cause them to begin these pages in an irritated frame of mind.

It is no pleasant prospect for a man who can barely go on board a steamer without feeling as

embryo smokers usually do after their first cigar, to be awaked during the night previous to a long voyage by the roaring of the wind, and the crashing of the waves against the pier on which his hotel is situated. This, however, was my case at Hull, the night before my embarking for Gothenburg; and when I got up and drew aside my blind to see how matters really stood, the light of the moon, which here and there broke through the gaps separating the masses of dark clouds as they moved rapidly along, disclosed a scene in which ships struggling with their cables, boats disappearing entirely at intervals, and huge waves thrown back upon each other after fruitless efforts to storm the massive quay, left no doubt as to the nature of the voyage I was about to undertake.

My two friends and myself were early on deck. It is needless for me to say much about them, as they will probably speak for themselves in the pages of this little book; suffice it to say, that one of them I will call Tew, and the other we named the "Captain," from his knowledge and experience of nautical matters.

We found that our ship, besides her general cargo, had a number of black cases with their attendant "bagmen" on board. I could not help thinking what a comfort it would be if every large steamer possessed a commercial cabin for these gentlemen, where they might reckon up their accounts, talk over their prices, and discuss their spirits, as they do in the "commercial room" of an hotel.

Nothing could be more dismal than the prospect before us. The sea was covered with white-crested waves, "like angry dogs shewing their teeth," and thick heavy clouds were rolling along the horizon. The goodnatured skipper's experienced eye soon singled me out as a passenger on whom it would be a charity to bestow a few words of advice and consolation, so he came up, and told me to take a little brandy and pace the deck. I followed the latter part of his advice, until I was forced to tumble down into my berth, where I lay moaning and groaning and refusing the brandy which at intervals was offered me, for fifty-five hours. One evening, however, I was slightly amused by a

conversation, part of which I overheard, between the captain of the steamer and those of his passengers who were not *hors de combat*, and who had retreated from the wind and rain on deck into the state cabin, to add to our misery by smoking. The chief speaker professed some knowledge of science, and this he exemplified by observing that the Astronomer Royal had discovered a new method of weighing the world, which he, the speaker, believed gave its weight to the pound. "That I'm sure he has'nt," said the captain, "for land weighs different from water; now I may sound here to-night and find sixty fathoms, and do so again in twelve months' time, and find sixty and a half, therefore you see the weight can never be the same, but must always be shifting according to the soundings." This argument seemed quite conclusive to all but the first speaker, as they declared it to be common sense, and joining the captain in his hearty laugh, set about chaffing the scientific gentleman by asking him various questions regarding different weights, such as those of the sea serpent, and other bodies, until one of

them inquired if the Astronomer Royal could tell how many drams the moon weighed, which produced more laughter, as any allusion to that luminary generally does among some people. Upon this one person said that the last observation reminded him that he wanted another dram of brandy, which facetious remark drew forth a little more laughter, and then there was a silence. The man of science, thinking this a very favourable opportunity for vindicating his character, threw down the following challenge:—"There is not one of you here who can tell me whether as many trees can be planted on the slope of a hill as on a flat piece of the same size." The solution of this problem involved a slight difficulty, which none of the hearers, judging from their remarks, could have unravelled, even had they been conscious of its presence.

A great part of the coast of Sweden is fringed by a net-work of rocky islands, covered, in many instances, by fir-trees, which seem to flourish famously on rock. Here and there a few wooden huts, painted red, peeped out from

among them, while occasionally a boat rowed by round-faced, pink-cheeked girls, added a pleasing feature to the landscape.

On approaching Gothenburg, it seemed as if a great rent had been made in this net of islands, for here we have a splendid harbour capable of holding a large number of vessels. For nearly three miles we steamed past ships displaying the flags of all nations, most of which were loading with timber and iron, brought down the river Götha in quaint-looking boats from the forests and mines in the interior.

Having received at the hands of the Custom-house officers a good specimen of the natural politeness of the Swedes, we went off in search of the Hotel Garni, which we were told was as good as any in the town. We soon found ourselves in the presence of the Commissionaire of that establishment, who bowed three times to each of us, raising his hat at each movement; and here let me remark how continually the Swedes are taking off their hats. I never saw any thing equal to it. I verily believe that if a Swede passed a mirror he would take off his

hat to his own image. A portrait-gallery would sorely try the brim of a Swede's beaver.

The Commissionaire, having vainly endeavoured to put a few English words together in reply to our questions, led us up a monster stone staircase, and then along a dark corridor, on one side of which he found the door he wanted, and throwing it open, cried out, "Roomce." We found three large rooms communicating with each other as suites of bedrooms, and indeed all rooms generally do in Sweden, the houses being so large that each family inhabits a flat. Soon the flicka (waiting-maid) came in and immediately began rattling off Swedish, totally regardless of our ignorance of the language.

On our explaining to the Commissionaire that we were hungry, he exclaimed, "Ah ! dinnère," and again bowing three times beckoned us to follow him, which we did. He took us through several streets to a restaurant, which we entered, and were ushered into a small room where stood a table covered with bottles of finkel, a sweet kind of brandy, flavoured with anise seed, and various small dishes containing slices of rein-deer tongue,

smoked salmon, Dutch herrings, &c. Around this table several gentlemen were standing bowing to each other, and sipping their little finkel glasses.

The Commissionaire, pointing to the various viands, called out "Snaps," and having waited till we had investigated one or two which looked most tempting, he opened the door of a large and handsome dining saloon, and introduced us to a functionary who was sitting in state ready to receive visitors, and tender his advice on the all-important subject of dinner. This official immediately began bowing, but having no hat to take off, he politely raised the pen which lay on his ear, as frequently as he imagined the occasion demanded. He scanned us attentively for a few moments, and then looking as if he thought he had exactly hit the mark, turned to the Commissionaire and uttered a few Swedish words, which the latter translated into "beef stick very good." To their surprise, however, we shook our heads, whereupon a *carte* containing a long list of dishes was handed to us, from which, with the aid of a Swedish dictionary, and the Commissionaire, who pointed out to us the favourite

delicacies, with exclamations of "very good," we selected a dinner which proved excellent in quality.

It is a universal custom in Sweden to take snaps before and coffee after dinner. The snaps generally consist of six dishes, from which they are sometimes called "sexes." With the aid of finkel they are supposed to stimulate the gastronomic functions, and set the great internal machinery in motion, so that it may be ready at once to begin operations on the more weighty dishes which follow.

A stroll after dinner brought us to a pretty little grove in the middle of the city, where we had a warm bath, the greatest luxury after a voyage. Our ablutions here were not interrupted in the astonishing manner in which they afterwards were at Stockholm, and which I may allude to when I speak of that city.

Towards the close of the day the Swedes in large numbers congregate in the cafés and tea-gardens with which Gothenburg abounds. We followed the custom of the place, but soon discovered that if carried out rigidly, it involved

10 *THE PILE-DRIVERS AND THEIR SONG.*

our drinking a considerable amount of Swedish punch, a sweet thickish preparation, very pleasant to partake of at night for the first time, though on future occasions the pleasure would probably be marred by recollections of the effects which the first dose produced the morning after it was imbibed.

Sleeping at Gothenburg, when I was there in June, was no easy matter, as there was positively hardly any time for it. The latitude being high, the sun disappeared for only a very short interval, and until it did so, there were always a number of people who strolled about the streets, amusing themselves by singing, and as soon as it rose, another class, consisting of labourers of all kinds, began their various employments. Some worked to a kind of music, consisting of a "wild halloo and brutal noise." Among them I may mention one set who caused me to pass many a sleepless hour. These were the pile-drivers, and a very numerous body they are, for all the new part of Gothenburg which is being built, is founded on piles, and this makes the number to be driven down prodigious. Now each pile is

forced into the ground by letting a heavy weight drop on it, and this is drawn up to the point from which it descends, by a company of men (instead of by a wheel and axle as is generally done in other places), each of whom is supplied with a separate rope attached to a thicker one, passing over a pulley above and supporting the weight. These men, when pulling together, roar out furiously a few Swedish words to a sort of tune, which I shall never forget. When a number of gangs were working together within a stone's throw of my window, which I was obliged to keep open on account of the great heat, and all singing in different time, I found sleeping no easy matter.

But my voyage had so completely prostrated me that the first night after my arrival I managed to sleep through it, and it was not until a yellow glaring sun shone full in my face that I awoke. This was intolerable, so I got up with the view of migrating to a part of the room where it could not molest me. In a shady corner I found a narrow couch on which I threw myself, and drawing over me a light slippery kind of

counterpane, I was soon dreaming that I was before a church, the bells of which were ringing a merry chime. I suddenly opened my eyes, and there stood the flicka within a yard of me, rattling Swedish vigorously, and evidently expostulating with me on daring to leave my regular bed. I uttered two or three Swedish words in the hope that they would pacify her and induce her to leave the room, but unfortunately their only effect was to bring her still nearer, where she stood as unconcerned as if I had been another flicka; and from her manner I had dreadful fears that she intended compelling me by force to return to my former quarters. My position was now most critical, when a lucky thought struck me. I pulled the most horrible face I could, and shouted at the top of my voice the Welsh words "Cerdd i ffordd yr hên gynawes hyll." The effect was immediate; the terrified girl gave a start, then a loud scream, and turning round, rushed out of the room, slamming the door after her.

When she was gone, I saw at once what had brought her in, as on a small table she had left

a cup of coffee and a nice scorpa (rusk) as big as a large watch. Thus her visit was perfectly legitimate, and as I found afterwards by experience, entirely in accordance with a somewhat primitive custom of the country.

I had just reached that part of the toilet when the lower portion of a man's face looks as if it had been whitewashed, when I was startled by hearing several voices immediately outside my door, among which I recognized that of the flicka, who seemed greatly agitated. Whether she was endeavouring to prove to somebody the danger of entering my room, I cannot tell, but before I had time to settle on what course I should adopt, in case of another invasion, the door flew open, and in rushed an old lady of about seventy. She made straight for me, and with a scream of delight threw her arms round my neck, and kissed me furiously and affectionately. I in vain struggled to get clear, and cried out "Oh! don't, don't,—please don't," but it was not until her joy had vented itself in a flood of tears that she released me. She then threw herself down on the couch I had so

recently left, and sobbed pitifully; her face presenting a very comical appearance, as it was studded with islands of soap-suds between which rolled streams of tears. I was in hopes that all this grief was caused by her discovering that I was not some long-lost grandson whom she fondly fancied had been suddenly brought to life, but this delusion was quickly dispelled by her jumping up and again hugging me with redoubled energy. At this moment the Captain, attracted by the commotion, opened the door of his room, which was next to mine, and went into such a roar of laughter, that the old lady was forced to beat a retreat. It appears that she had attended upon me many years ago in Sweden when a child, and having heard of my arrival at Gothenburg, had hastily made her way to the hotel to testify the regard she still entertained for me.

CHAPTER II.

GOTHENBURG TO UDDEVALLA.

IT is not my intention to enter into any lengthened description of Gothenburg and the other towns we visited, or to write much about their museums, pictures, parks and palaces, as full accounts of all these may be found in any of the regular guide-books, and that, of course, I do not profess this little book to be. While I endeavour to describe some of the incidents which befel me, and the peculiarities I observed, I will try to say a few words about the places we saw, and the country we passed through, which, I trust, will not be altogether devoid of interest.

Gothenburg is a large, handsome, and rapidly increasing town, and is the residence of a number of English merchants, who I can truly say, form a very agreeable society. Lately they have built

an English church, which would have been an elegant Gothic building, had not some curious Swedish law regarding the height of church-roofs prevented them from carrying out their original designs. Canals run up the centres of several of its wide and bustling streets, and the whole town gives one the idea of a thoroughly flourishing commercial city. The public buildings, hotels excepted, are on a scale commensurate with the wealth of the place, and here I saw a suite of ball-rooms which might bear comparison with some of the magnificent saloons in Paris.

When we were there the season was rapidly drawing to a close, and many of the Upper Thousand, especially the ladies, were away at their favourite watering-places, Särö and Marstrand, where they resort during the summer-months for the purpose of bathing and being "*förlofvad*," i. e. entering on a matrimonial engagement. Although I am not aware that any one of us had either of these objects especially in view, we nevertheless determined on visiting these two "beautiful cities," as the Commissionaire called them, which, from what I have said, were naturally

associated with ideas so full of thrilling interest, and numbered among their present inhabitants those, who, by their absence from Gothenburg, greatly diminished its attractions.

As we found that we should pass through Marstrand on our way to the north, it was only necessary for us to make a special excursion to Särö; for Särö, therefore, we embarked in a small steamer, crammed with passengers and hampers.

A couple of hours' sail among the islands along the coast brought us to one as thickly feathered with pines as any of the others, and where no buildings of any kind were to be seen, except a few quaint-looking bathing contrivances, which derived their singularity from those appropriated to the ladies being attached to enclosures formed by high walls of canvass, inside of which the bathers might swim, float, or duck, as much as they liked, without fear of observation. The gentlemen seemed to delight in jumping from a great height into the water, and for this purpose ascended a lofty kind of stand, called a trampoline, around which boards were fixed at different elevations, for them to spring from.

At Stockholm I saw trampolines of very great height. Diving in this way, and indeed swimming in general, is very much practised in Sweden, almost every small town having its swimming-school.

A considerable stir on board, and cry of "Särö, Särö," gave us to understand that we had reached our destination. We landed at a small wooden pier projecting from one of the rocks, on which a number of people were collected to witness the great event of the day, the arrival of the steamer. Among these we found some friends who kindly undertook to lionize us over Särö, and we soon struck into the woods along a path which brought us to what, I suppose, the Commissionaire meant when he spoke of the "beauful city." It consisted of two or three dozen pretty wooden houses, most cosily situated among the trees, which here had been partially cleared away. We certainly were astonished to hear that this was Särö, as we expected to find a regular watering-place, in fact, a sort of miniature Brighton. Now although there is no more resemblance between Särö and Brighton, than between a brood of young ducks and a regiment of Horse-

Guards, it certainly is a very snug little place. Charming walks run in all directions through the woods, leading to spots admirably adapted for young people to develop the first germ of mutual affection, which growing into love might yield as its fruit a "förlofning," and where others not interested in such matters may enjoy glorious views of islands, bays, rocks, and woods.

We dined at a large table d'hôte where most of the beau monde of Särö were assembled. As there was a good deal of laughing and talking going on among the young ladies, many of whom seemed in high spirits, and one the very photograph of happiness, we suspected that something had occurred during the morning, besides the usual bath, to cause these radiant looks; and such indeed was the case; a short time before dinner a "förlofning" was announced as having taken place between two of the members of the little community. A handsome northern mountaineer having succumbed before the heart-piercing glances which the black brilliant optics of a southern maiden had for some time been aiming at him, had that morning, during a stroll through the forest,

obtained from her lips a pledge of undying affection. We were not long in singling him out; he looked as only those can look who have ever been in a similar position. This was the cause of all the joy at Särö, and gave rise to an infinite amount of bowing, taking off hats, and during dinner, tinkling of glasses, as every body touched every body else's glass, when drinking long life and happiness to the newly "förlofvad" couple.

Thanks to the kind friends we met at Gothenburg, we managed to pass ten days there very pleasantly, making several expeditions to various spots of interest in the neighbourhood, including the highly picturesque falls of Lilla Edet, about thirty miles from Gothenburg. We then got on board the steamer "Elf Kungen," and started for Uddevalla, a town some eighty miles up the coast.

Our steamer was to touch at Marstrand, and this would give us an opportunity of seeing the remaining belles of Gothenburg, and perhaps of witnessing the joys attending another "förlofning."

In about three hours we reached a bold rocky island on which Marstrand is situated, not far from the main land, and serving as a fine break-

water against the waves of the North Sea, which here is quite open.

The little town consists of perhaps a hundred red, yellow, and white houses, clustered round a massive fortress rising in the centre, and looks far more like a watering-place than Särö. A good number of people were sitting on the shore, and some of the young ladies were reading English novels, but there was no excitement, no kissing, and shaking of hands; every thing was dull and common-place,—there had been no “*förlofning*.”

Soon after leaving Marstrand the scenery greatly improved, as the islands became more lofty and richly wooded; we continually steamed across and along narrow fjords embedded in hills, covered to the very tops with fir and birch. Many little vessels, laden with timber, were sailing about. Here and there a small village, with its rustic pier, brought us to a halt, generally for the purpose of landing or receiving some peasant passenger, sometimes accompanied by a squeaking pig. The young ladies of the village, most probably belonging to the pastor's family,

as few others would be likely to live in these wild parts, were often awaiting the arrival of the steamer, and seemed to take much interest in inspecting its living contents, among whom, let me hope, we three were not altogether overlooked.

These young ladies possess an advantage which does not render it of such imperative importance for them to visit the watering-places as their less fortunate sisters, for their father's curate is always expected to solicit the hand of one of them, which I was informed, is rarely, if ever, denied. If he neglect to perform this important part of his duties, they find many ways of testifying their abhorrence of his unmanly behaviour, sometimes even by starving him into submission when he happens to board in the vicarage, and proves very refractory, but, if he comes forward like a curate of honour, he is received with open arms, and has, in addition to his pay, which is by the by exceedingly small, numerous favours showered upon him.

Among our passengers I noticed two sitting together in the bows. One was an old man with

snow-white hair, wearing the leathern apron used by the northern peasants; his head was buried in his hands, and he was apparently listening attentively to what the other, a young man, was reading. As they had been thus engaged for a long time, I went up to them in the hope of discovering what book afforded such interest. To my great surprise, I saw that it was an English Bible, and this the young man was translating into Swedish. On inquiry, I found that he,—who, if I remember rightly, was a shoemaker,—having heard that the English version of the Bible was better than the Swedish, had determined to master that language, and with this object had travelled to the University of Lund, where he studied English, while he supported himself by working at his trade; he was now returning to his Northern home, and as he went, was giving his old friend the benefit of his industry and zeal in the cause of Biblical truth.

After a few hours sail from Marstrand, we saw at the extremity of the fjord, which we were then ascending, a bright-looking town, pleasantly situated between hills and water. This was Udde-

valla, or rather what remained of Uddevalla, as a terrible fire had a short time before our visit destroyed several of its streets. The smaller Swedish towns being generally built of wood, burn like a box of lucifer-matches when once ignited.

We found our way up to a very tolerable hotel, where we soon got good rooms, but neither dictionary nor signs could make the flicka understand what we wanted for dinner. Under these circumstances the Captain's ingenuity devised a plan, which he immediately put into execution; threading his way through various passages, until he found the kitchen and larder, he pointed out to the cook and her satellites the most tempting looking viands he could find. This thoroughly practical scheme greatly amused the household, who were astounded at the Captain's boldness, and was the means of our obtaining an excellent dinner

At a short distance from Uddevalla is a peculiarly interesting spot, as there, at a height of nearly 200 feet above the level of the sea, is a large quantity of oceanic fossil-shells. We col-

lected a boxful of these, and sent them over to our geological friends in England.

The pavement of Swedish towns is generally very bad: that of Uddevalla execrable; in some of the streets it consists of stones, each as large as two family Christmas plum-puddings, joined together at their bases, strewed about any how. Occasionally these stones are collected together along the centre of the street, and there form a kind of causeway, along which, with the aid of a stick, walking is about as easy and agreeable as over the stepping-stones used by the shepherds and milk-maids for crossing the mountain-streams in Wales and Scotland.

When we were at Gothenburg we were so fortunate as to receive an invitation to stay with a Swedish gentleman who owned an estate twenty miles north of Uddevalla; this we now determined to avail ourselves of, and hiring a carriage started on our expedition. Swedish horses in this part of the country are small and hardy, but very fast; indeed a tolerable gallop seems to be their normal pace when in harness.

The first part of our journey over the town-

pavement was terrible, as we were shaken like dice in a box, but after that we drove smoothly along the beautiful banks of the fjord ; then we dived through some miles of forest, and emerged on a wild bleak tract, along which we went until we reached a point overlooking a well cultivated valley, situated at the extremity, and forming the continuation of a glorious fjord, lying between high and thickly wooded hills. Not far from the water's edge stood a large, quaint-looking, many-gabled building, with several smaller ones around it, which our driver informed us, was the house we were going to, and smacking his whip about a dozen times as if saluting it, frightened our little horses into their best gallop, which they continued until they reached the court-yard, where we found our host ready to receive us. He gave us a most hearty welcome, and then led us into a drawing-room where several ladies were assembled, who cordially and gracefully seconded the reception given us by the owner of the mansion. They all spoke English perfectly, and I saw the *Illustrated London News* and several English books lying on the table.

We passed two or three very delightful days here, roaming about the neighbouring forests, which were decked with innumerable wild flowers, among which the fragrant, star-shaped *Linnea*, peculiar to these latitudes, was frequently seen.

Our newly made friends shewed us their most beautiful walks, and pointed out the resorts of wolves and bears during the winter months, when the intense cold drives them from their dens in the interior to the outskirts of the forest, where they prowl about in search of food, to the great terror of the flocks and the herdsmen who attend them.

One afternoon an excursion by water was proposed. Two boats were to take us, one of which was large, but the other small, and only capable of holding four comfortably. After considerable discussion about the way in which the party should be divided, Tew and I succeeded in establishing ourselves as rowers in the smaller one, with two young ladies in the stern as coxswains. When this arrangement had been effected to our complete satisfaction, sundry hints from those in the other warned us that the sooner

we were off the better, or our passengers might be interfered with ; so after having been told by a facetious gentleman that we were carrying a cargo prohibited by the *customs* of the country, we put on a vigorous "spurt," making any attempt to catch us utterly hopeless.

Our charming young coxswains knew every nook in the fjord, and steered us to several lovely spots in succession. Suddenly they struck up a Swedish air, and as their voices re-echoed among the cliffs, the wild fowl left their resting-places above, and hovered around us, occasionally testifying their appreciation of the music by joining with their shrill screams in the chorus, and from the number of fish which soon began rising in every direction, I was led to remark, that the sweet sounds had penetrated the deep and attracted its scaly denizens to the surface. I trust that no naturalist will think it incumbent upon him to overthrow this little bit of romance by any scientific theory regarding the hearing and musical faculties of the piscatory tribe.

In this pleasant manner we paddled about until several duets had been sung, when after a short

whispering conversation in Swedish our fair steersmen suggested that they should row ; we of course complied with their request, after remarking that we were afraid the heavy oars would prove too much for them, an observation which justly excited their mirth, as they were soon occupying our places, making the little skiff skim rapidly over the water, apparently without any fatigue to themselves, and proving to Tew and myself, that we had yet much to learn in rowing, if we wished to excel in gracefulness of form and elegance of style.

As we were returning homewards, not feeling over-comfortable at the reception which might be awaiting us, we saw our consort lying almost stationary in the middle of the fjord. Under the circumstances we thought it most prudent to keep her at a distance, when cries of distress from those on board caused us immediately to alter our course and steer towards them. When we came near we discovered that in their efforts to overtake us, one of their rowers had plied his oar so vigorously that it had snapped in two, and as there was no other to replace it, the boat had been left to the mercy of the elements, which luckily were in a tranquil

mood. We took their boat in tow, and brought them home in safety, thus placing them under so deep an obligation to us that it would have been the height of ill manners for the strictest among them to have made any allusion to the original cause of their misfortune.

Long did we remain on the hills that evening viewing the surrounding woods and water illumined by the magnificent Northern Lights, which shot high into the heavens from beyond the fringe of forest forming the distant horizon; and when we returned home and heard a repetition of the songs we had listened to on the fjord, our enjoyment was not a little enhanced by the pleasing associations connected with them.

CHAPTER III.

UDDEVALLA TO TROLHÄTTAN.

THE day after the expedition which I have just described, we entered our carriage, and were soon on the return gallop to Uddevalla, whence we started the same day for the great falls of Trolhättan on the river Götha, about forty miles distant.

A considerable part of the road lay through a forest, and the rest across a wild country, which the inhabitants had reduced to a tolerable state of cultivation. It is quite wonderful what industry the Swedes shew in turning the sides of their rocky hills and the open spaces in the forests where the trees have been cut down, into fields for the growth of oats and rye.

As we drove along we were much struck by the civility of the peasants. All the men touched

their hats, and the women curtsied: good manners and politeness are natural to the Swedes, and you very rarely see any vulgarity among them.

Every peasant in this part of the country who can possibly afford it keeps some kind of "trap," which most frequently is a very plain, unpainted gig, and, curious to say, the gallant driver always sits on the left side, if accompanied by a lady. The horses are small almond-coloured animals, with black tails and manes, and a black stripe running down their back.

We reached the Götha at a point about a mile above the falls, the roar of which, like the sound of the gorilla striking his chest at the same distance (see M. Du Chaillu), could be distinctly heard. The village and hotel were near them, but on the other side of the river, so we had to cross it, and for this purpose got into a boat sculled by a boy, and were soon gliding quickly down the stream amidst eddies and whirlpools in a way which gave rise to rather uncomfortable thoughts, especially as the farther we went the louder grew the sounds of the rushing waters, which we

knew we were rapidly approaching, although not half way across. We urged our boy to pull harder, but he only answered by smiling and nodding his head. A little vigorous pulling on our part might soon have taken us over, but then if an oar had broken, we should have been in a far worse position than our friends on the fjord, so we thought it most prudent to leave it in the hands of the young native, who seemed quite comfortable. Suddenly by a few sharp strokes he brought us into comparatively still water within a strong wooden barrier which ran diagonally across part of the stream; a feat which we thought quite justified him in enjoying, for the remainder of the voyage, a broad grin in token of his triumph. We found a clean and cheerful-looking hotel close to the river, where the Captain again adopted the expedient which he invented at Uddevalla, and with equal success. I strongly recommend his plan to all persons in Sweden who are unacquainted with the language when they take up their quarters in country inns.

I must not forget to remind the traveller in Sweden that in some of these houses he will

find it desirable to put on his boots before jumping out of bed in the morning, as the floor is covered with fir-buds, and these, though very effectual in diffusing an agreeable scent throughout the room, are armed with prickly tops, which when sharply trod upon, penetrate the skin, causing a stinging sensation, literally from the very soles of the feet, and giving him some idea of what he would experience if he should ever be so unfortunate as to light on a nest of wasps.

About 12 o'clock we were led up stairs and shewn to our bedrooms. At the end of a passage were two doors, one on the right side, and the other in front. The side-door was thrown open for me, and the other for the Captain. In each of these rooms there was another door leading into a corner room, about which the flicka said something which we could not make out, though her look was sufficient to arouse our worst suspicions. The door leading into my room was locked, and as the key was on my side I had nothing to fear, but the Captain's could be opened, and there being no key visible, he did not relish passing the night in an apartment where he might be

robbed or murdered at any moment by some mysterious stranger, who possibly was occupying the inner chamber. I fully sympathized with him, and we determined on at once taking the bull by the horns, and exploring the corner room. I went first with the candle in my hand, followed by the Captain, who was close behind me. I had just time to catch a glimpse of the scene before us, which displayed two narrow beds, placed in a position at right angles to each other, in one of which lay a long-bearded German, and in the other, his youthful wife, both in a sound sleep, when a loud shout of laughter from the Captain produced a commotion I shall never forget. The German started to his feet, and stood bolt upright on his bed in a moment. His countenance was fierce, his eyes glistened, and as he threw his arms wildly about and shouted defiance, he almost alarmed us. As for the youthful wife, she gave a shrill scream, and instantly attempted to dive under her coverlet, but, alas! the great heat of the night had already caused her to dispense with this. I need not say that we tried to escape as quickly as possible,

but unfortunately, in the rapidity of our movements, the candle was blown out, so that we were left in the dark groping about for the door. Luckily, however, the Captain, with that presence of mind which never deserted him, secured the key, so that we were able to lock the infuriated German safely in his cage. It was long before he left off giving vent to his wrath in terrible threats against ourselves, the hotel, and Sweden in general; and at intervals, throughout the night, his agitated partner disturbed my rest by the ejaculations she uttered. Early on the following morning our prisoner knocked at the Captain's door, and demanded exeat for his wife and himself, but he stipulated that when she passed through the Captain's room, he should either get completely under his bed-clothes or remove himself into some adjoining apartment.

The grandeur of Trolhättan arises chiefly from the great body of water which comes down, and the highly picturesque nature of the country around. The Götha being the only outlet of the mighty Wenern lake, the receptacle of the vast quantities of melted snow which the Glommen.

and other streams bring down from the Norwegian mountains, is a wide and deep river. The whole height of the falls is about 130 feet, but this is taken in several leaps separated by cataracts, along which the waters rush with terrific fury. The uppermost fall, which includes nearly the whole body of water, forced by engineering art into a much narrower channel than nature had intended for it, is about 50 feet in height. At the foot of this begins a great sloping cataract, broken by pine-covered islands into smaller ones, which as they tumble over the crags produce other falls, until all uniting again, the whole mass rushes on for a couple of miles along a deep and richly wooded ravine, lashing the huge blocks of rock which at intervals present themselves above the surface. The view from many points in the walks which have been cut out along the banks of this ravine is exceedingly beautiful. Above, the falls look like an avalanche of billowy foam, and below, the Götha rolls on with all the mighty sweep of a majestic river.

In order that the navigation might not be interrupted, a canal several miles in length has

been cut on one side, at the lower extremity of which a number of locks have been most skillfully constructed, involving enormous cost and labour: eight or nine of these rise one above another forming a series of gigantic water-steps, up and down which vessels of all sizes, up to 200 tons, are continually passing.

Most waterfalls have some melancholy stories connected with them; I will try to tell one out of several which I heard relating to Trolhättan. Years ago, a young girl who lived on the hill-side, not far from the falls, had arranged to meet a peasant to whom she was engaged, at a fête which was to take place one afternoon in the village. Not finding him at the appointed spot she wandered around it until she was told that he had been seen walking along the bank of the river with one whom she had begun to suspect might prove her rival. Stung by jealousy, and anxious to learn the truth of this report, she followed the direction which they were said to have taken, until she came on a boat moored to the bank, in which lay the faithless lover and she who now possessed his affections, fast asleep and locked in each

other's arms. Distracted at the sight, she conceived and carried out a terrible revenge ; she loosed the chain which held the floating couch, and away went the sleeping pair down the stream to the brink of the watery precipice, where one awful leap launched them into the roaring gulf below.

Another story is told illustrating in a remarkable manner the prevalent custom of taking off hats, but for the accuracy of which I will not vouch. A poor fellow was once crossing the stream above Trolhättan, when he unfortunately got carried into a part of the rapids where the current was so strong that he lost all command over his boat. As he approached the falls, he observed several people on the bank, who had come to see if it was possible to render him any assistance, whereupon he politely raised his hat in token of their sympathy, and then was dashed over the edge of the precipice.

CHAPTER IV.

TROLHÄTTAN TO STOCKHOLM.

AFTER spending a couple of days in exploring the beauties of Trolhättan, and visiting the immense saw-mills, worked by the power of the stream, we embarked on board one of the steamers, which ply along the river, for a town called Lidköping, on the shores of the Wenern, in the neighbourhood of which we had been asked to stay with a gentleman who owned a large estate.

In a few hours we reached Wenersborg, a town standing at the entrance to the lake, and the capital of a province. It consisted principally of one very large square, surrounded by good houses and shops. A few streets ran outside of this, in one of which I saw a fine specimen of the "causeway" pavement which I

described at Uddevalla. Large squares for holding markets are quite necessary in Swedish towns, as they are few and far between, and the country people drive in on market-days from great distances, bringing with them not only farm produce, and the wild fruits with which the forests abound, but large quantities of wooden manufactures, such as household furniture, workman's tools, and many smaller articles, including spoons and platters and other things tastefully carved; and these are all spread out in the market-place. Sweden abounds in timber, and the peasants employ the long winter evenings in converting it into what is useful and pretty.

The telegraph has made rapid progress in Sweden; nearly every little town has its wires, and the people derive great advantage from it, as railways are still scarce, and letters consequently long on their way. Seeing an office at Wenersborg, I entered, wishing to send a message to a friend in Wales. I said to the director, whom I found a very intelligent and agreeable man, "I want to send a message to

Bangor, North Wales," to which he replied, "Pangonortvales," thinking it was all one word, "dat place I do not know;" but on my entering more fully into its geographical particulars, he immediately set one of his clerks to work, and I had the satisfaction afterwards of finding that the telegram had reached the banks of the Menai in a few hours after it was sent.

The captain of the steamer had told us that he intended remaining two hours at Wenersborg, but on our returning on board at the end of that time, he said that a "little gale" had sprung up on the lake, and as he was very unwilling to cause the ladies any inconvenience by taking them over its ruffled surface, he had determined to stay a few hours longer where he was, when he hoped the wind would abate. This was true politeness, and I told him so, as I felt that he had done me as good a turn as any lady on board. Let us charitably hope that the real cause of his delay was not a party given that evening at Wenersborg, to which he betook himself, just after discovering the sudden storm,

and where we heard the beauty and fashion of the neighbourhood would be assembled.

He returned about two o'clock, and we immediately got up steam in spite of the "little gale," and soon found ourselves coasting along the shores of the lake.

I left my berth about five, and never enjoyed a sail more. The grand old Castle of Leckö towering among the rich forests by which the lake is skirted, shewed to great advantage with its battlements lighted up by the rising sun.

At six we reached Lidköping, a town much resembling Wenersborg, and here we found a carriage ready to take us to Degeberg, where our friend resided.

A drive of fourteen miles brought us to this really splendid estate. Its owner had, after great labour and untiring perseverance, turned nearly 1000 acres of marshy land into fields of from 20 to 40 acres each. Here he had established two agricultural colleges, one for the sons of gentlemen who intended farming their own property, and another for young men who were designed for bailiffs and stewards

on estates. They were all thoroughly trained in practical agriculture, and heard lectures on Chemistry, Botany, Geology, &c. Agricultural implements of all kinds were manufactured, and sent into different parts of the country. The gardens and farm-buildings were perfect, and the latter of great size, as during the winter all the cattle and sheep have to be housed owing to the quantity of snow. The pig department was quite a sight; it consisted of several little streets of pig-sties arranged under one large roof. Among the rams I saw one bred by Mr. J. Webb, of Cambridgeshire. It was most delightful to witness what energy and industry had done in these northern wilds; the example of our friend had to a great extent been followed by others, who were rapidly bringing large tracts into cultivation. Many landed proprietors from different parts of Sweden and Finland visited Degeberg, to gain an insight into the management of a large estate, and see the improvements which were continually taking place there. Agriculture has made great advances of late years, as may be seen,

if we consider that Sweden, which imported corn not many years ago, now exports annually many hundred thousand quarters.

When at Degeberg our host took me to visit two or three of his friends living on their estates in the neighbourhood, where I formed a good idea of Swedish country life. At one of them, the mistress of the house, proud of her domestic arrangements, insisted on taking me up to her store-room, a large apartment immediately under the lofty roof and extending the whole length of the house. Its sides were partitioned off into a number of stalls, among which I noticed one filled with flaxen thread, another with hanks of cotton, a third with woollen skeins of every hue, and a fourth with hides of leather, to be made into boots and shoes for the use of the family, servants included, by itinerant shoemakers, who come round at stated times.

Another spacious room was set apart for keeping dried meat, fruit and vegetables, great quantities of which are prepared during the summer for winter consumption. I also saw the

looms where the women-servants weave linen and cloth, and was indeed surprised to hear that Baron A.'s pepper-and-salt suit of dittos, worthy of a Bond Street tailor, was the work of these maidens.

In remote districts servants' wages consist principally of home-manufactured clothes, and labourers are paid in milk, herrings, and other kinds of food.

Speaking of Swedish customs, I must not forget to mention their great national summer festival held on Midsummer's eve and day. At Degeberg the cottages were adorned with branches and flowers; and a gaily decorated pole, resembling a May-pole, stood in a large open space, around which the young men employed on the estate performed a number of skilful though grotesque evolutions. Later in the evening our host opened the ball in one of his large barns, and the *polksa*, the national dance, something like a Mazourka, was carried on to the sound of lively tunes. On the morning of Midsummer's day the country people were seen wending their way to church in crowds. All

the women carried their prayer-books folded in white handkerchiefs, on which were laid rural bouquets. In the evening the games and dancing were resumed.

Christmas is always looked forward to as a season of festivity, families then gathering round the Christmas-tree, and presents being given on a large scale. Sometimes amusing methods are resorted to in order to heighten the general merriment. Thus a friend will enter disguised as a foreign sailor, and opening his chest, discover in its inmost recesses a ring or a watch, which he says he has brought from distant lands for one of the fair damsels present. To be present on these occasions it is not unusual for the invited guests to traverse in their sledges thirty or forty miles of the frozen surface of lake or road.

We determined on proceeding to Stockholm by one of the regular line of steamers which ply between that city and Gothenburg. These vessels go up the river Götha to Trolhättan, and after passing through the locks sail through lakes, canals, and part of the Baltic, to the capital.

As the steamer we settled on going by touched at a point only a few miles from Degeberg, our friend sent us there in a boat. We found her very crowded, but otherwise tolerably pleasant to take a voyage in, and the captain, like many I met with in Sweden, was a thorough gentleman, and spoke English well. These captains are frequently officers in the navy, who during times of peace command steamers and other merchant-ships.

The time occupied in performing the whole distance of about 300 miles is nearly 60 hours, but this is owing to the large number of locks, 72 in all, which have to be passed through, and also the difficult navigation, which renders it necessary to proceed very cautiously in some places. These vessels will probably not be kept up much longer, as the railway between Stockholm and Gothenburg will soon be finished. Other lines are about to be laid down, and ere long one will be completed between Stockholm and Malmö, a town exactly opposite Copenhagen. This will make the first city very easy of access, and I have no doubt that many will then

visit a capital whose beauties have as yet scarcely been heard of in England. It is impossible to estimate how much railways will do for Sweden ; her grain-crops, which every year increase in quantity, and great mineral productions, will then be poured into the markets of Europe, even to a far greater extent than they are at present. Few of the rivers are navigable, and as the distances of the mines and forests from the ports are very great, the people labour under difficulties in exporting their ores and timber ; but these will all vanish when once a system of railways is established.

We coasted along the shores of the Wenern for a few hours. It is a hundred miles in length and fifty broad, so that on the outer side nothing but the horizon was to be seen, broken occasionally by a sail, or the cloud of smoke rising from a distant steamer. On leaving the Wenern we entered a canal which has been made to connect it with the Wettern, the second largest lake in Sweden. Here the country became hilly and bleak, but by means of locks we gradually rose up to the high land in which the Wettern lies.

Tew and I occupied the same cabin, and as the surface of the canal was as smooth as glass when we got into our berths, we left our port-hole open, forgetting the stiff breezes the ship might possibly have to encounter on the Wettern, which she was to cross during the night; we were therefore not a little surprised at finding Stina, the stewardess, standing in our cabin at a very early hour, busily engaged in screwing up the port-hole, and upbraiding us in vigorous Swedish for our carelessness. We found, on examination, that as each wave lashed against the side of the vessel, a portion of it was thrown into our cabin, the floor of which bore evidence of a thorough soaking, and the water having escaped under the door, had attracted the attention of the vigilant Stina. We afterwards heard that this lake is notorious for the sudden gales which sweep across its surface.

On emerging from the Wettern we found the scenery very pleasing. Bleak tracts were replaced by well cultivated farms and pretty villages, until we at length reached the Roxen, a lake justly celebrated for the variety and beauty

of the wooded hills which slope down to its shores.

On emerging from this, we again got into a canal, and gradually lowered ourselves to the level of the Baltic, by the locks which at intervals delayed our progress. We were detained by several for a short time near the exceedingly picturesque little town of Södertelje, with its two or three pretty spires and domes. Here I was reminded of the necessity of keeping a strict watch over my behaviour when in the society of Swedes. I happened to be standing on the quarter-deck whistling a lively air, when I observed the eyes of the captain and several of the passengers fixed on me. Under the luckless delusion that my Welsh melody was fascinating them, I added fresh vigour to my notes, and was on the point of giving them my most effective tune, when the captain left his paddle-box, and coming up to me, most politely requested me to abstain from what was considered by the company on board a flagrant breach of manners.

Soon after leaving Södertelje we reached the

Baltic, and passed the night coasting along its shores until in the morning we entered another canal which connects it with the Mälör, known as the thousand-isled lake. Here the Swedish scenery common to the southern part of the peninsula is met with in perfection. Water, wood, and rock,—or rather, lake, an endless variety of forest-trees, and rocky hills,—the last covered with birch and fir wherever the scantiest patches of soil permit them to take root, form a constant succession of pleasing landscapes.

After a couple of hours sail the Mälör grew narrower, and we entered the fjord which unites it with the sea, and on which Stockholm is situated. The villages which peeped through the woods on its shores, and the numerous sailing boats and steamers we met, indicated the approach to a great city; and such indeed was the case, for as we rounded a promontory a panorama of wondrous beauty burst upon us. In the foreground lay a broad expanse of water, on each side of which were hills whose sides were ornamented with villas, gardens, and plea-

sure-grounds, while in the distance rose the palaces and spires of Stockholm, lighted up by a brilliant sun. "Is not this beautiful?" I exclaimed to a Yankee on board. "It ain't equal to our Hudson river—our river is wider, the banks are higher, the trees are taller, and there are more of them," was his reply. We soon reached the pier where all the lake steamers stop, and thence found our way to the Rydberg, the best hotel in Stockholm, where we obtained most comfortable quarters.

CHAPTER V.

STOCKHOLM.

AND now let me endeavour to say a few words about Stockholm. It is not very easy to describe, so different is it from all other capitals—so numerous and varied are its elements. Stockholm is a medley of islands, palaces, quays, patches of forests, churches, lakes, statues, rocks, bridges, ships, and houses, grouped together in all kinds of fantastic ways, so as to present an endless succession of changing and picturesque scenes. The greater part is built on six or seven islands forming a kind of barrier across the fjord, and the remainder on the land adjoining its shores. Some of these islands are connected together and with the main land by bridges, but when this is impossible, owing to the distance being too great, the sheets of water which sepa-

rate them are alive with boats and miniature steamers, the cabs and omnibuses of Stockholm. The islands are so joined that it is possible, by making a circuit, to go from any one to any other without taking a boat ; but the great quantity of water causes the city to cover a much larger extent than others of equal population. On one of the largest islands, situated almost in the centre of the group, stands the King's palace, towering high above all the surrounding buildings, a noble structure, which for beauty of proportions, majesty of form, and the bold yet simple outlines of its lofty walls, is without a rival amongst the royal residences of Europe.

There is a variety in the ground on which the city stands, and in its buildings, which gives it a peculiar charm. Thus in the southern faubourg, the abode chiefly of artizans, and the seat of the principal manufactures, houses and terraces are perched high among the rocks, often in spots blasted out expressly for them, while the streets scramble up and down such steep places that it would be very unpleasant for any person of an asthmatic tendency to reside there.

Crossing the bridges leading to the neighbouring islands, which are almost level, where the merchants have their offices, and the principal business of the city is transacted, we find a perfect labyrinth of narrow streets, with lofty houses, reminding one of the old parts of Edinburgh. Further on in the northern division, the West End of Stockholm, where the best shops are to be found, are long streets crossing each other at right angles, and generally terminating in squares ornamented with statues of Sweden's great men. I fear, however, that many of the architects imagined that nature had been so lavish of the beauties she had showered on Stockholm, that it was unnecessary to add to them by works of art, as even the best streets are not what we should expect to meet with in the capital of Scandinavia; but, I am glad to say, much is being done to remedy this defect, as many handsome buildings, including a national Museum, are now springing up, and others are undergoing a complete restoration. But alas! the draining and paving are still terribly neglected. The only thing to be said for the abomi-

nable odours which often force themselves upon one, is, that it is absolutely necessary for the traveller to go through some ordeal of this kind to prepare him for what he will have to encounter in Russia. The pavement requires a thorough reform. The Yankee I before alluded to, on coming in from a drive one day remarked, "I say, ridin in a vehicle along one of these Stockam streets is enough to knock a man's eye-tooth out; just you ride up 5th Avenue in one of our elegant equipages, and I guess you'll say you're ridin over greased ice, you will."

Viewed from the neighbouring hills the city seems encircled by a wreath of forest, through which numerous inlets of the fjord entwine themselves, while here and there glimpses may be caught of one of those magnificent parks which add so much to the beauty of the environs, and afford such pleasant resorts for the people. Among these the Djurgården, situated on a promontory, almost surrounded by water, is the favourite. Many are the pleasure-seekers who come here on a summer's afternoon, and many the amusements which they may enjoy. Here are

theatres, concert-halls, some of the most celebrated dining saloons, and numerous shops for the sale of confectionary, coffee, and punch. In this park the beau monde take their airings, and lounge about its promenades and cafés.

The Djurgården may be reached by a regular road, but the favourite way of getting there is by one of the numerous boats which ply between it and different parts of the city. Until very lately several of these boats were propelled by paddles, like steamers, except that the moving power, instead of being steam, was that of four Dalecarlian girls. These Dalecarlians are from a province in the north of Sweden, and every summer large numbers of them migrate to Stockholm, where they are employed in working the boats. They are a very hardy, honest, and industrious race, and always dress in their gay national costume. They are surprisingly strong, as may be seen from the way in which they toil at their heavy oars, from morning to night. I remember once volunteering to take the place of one of these girls, during a voyage in a paddle boat, and at the end I was as much distressed

as if I had rowed in a race a couple of miles in length. Few of them are exactly pretty, as their features are somewhat large and coarse, but their smiling good-natured looks, and blue-eyed, pink-cheeked, healthy faces, make up a kind of rough beauty which it is difficult not to admire. "I tell you what it is," said an English "bagman," who was staying at the Rydberg, to me, "I know of no pleasure in Stockholm equal to being rowed about by two of these Dacalelian girls; I like looking at them."

There are several other parks around Stockholm; among them are those of Carlberg, Haga, Drottningholm, and Ulricksdahl. In each of the last three, as well as in the Djurgården, the King has a palace. As these parks are situated either on islands or on the indented shores of the lake, the water which lies near them adds much to their beauty.

Of all people, the Swedes seem most thoroughly to appreciate enjoying themselves. The inhabitants of Stockholm crowd the boats and steamers which ply to the parks in the neighbourhood, where they often take their dinner

under the trees. Pic-nics are very common, and dancing is a favourite amusement. Of course, the cafés are visited, as confectionary and punch are absolutely necessary to make a Swede's happiness complete; but I must say, I never saw a people more orderly, quiet, and well-behaved in their various recreations.

Among other places which they are particularly fond of visiting are the cemeteries; here many bring fresh flowers and garlands daily to lay on the tombs of their deceased friends; and I heard of some families who go so far, as on the birth-day of a lost relative, or some such special occasion, to drink their coffee and eat their cakes round his grave. At funerals they have a curious custom of putting their confectionary in mourning, for then black bonbons are laid on the breakfast-table.

Living in Sweden—Gothenburg excepted—is decidedly cheap, and every thing offered, even in the humblest inn, is thoroughly clean. Fish and game are plentiful, salmon is particularly fine; and among the birds tjäder or capercaillie, orre or blackcock, are most common.

Swedish cookery, in many respects, resembles the French; thus cutlets and all kinds of little entrées are dressed up in every variety of sauce, but joints are rarely seen. Soups are very common; every Swede who possibly can afford to do so, begins his dinner on soup, which often is a kind of syrup, made of plums, apples, or cherries, and sometimes a weak concoction of beer and treacle. The Swedes are very fond of these, but no Englishman would ever touch them again if he had been so unlucky as to do so once. The coffee is always good, but the great fault of the Swedish cook is that he is too much given to sugar: thus he applies it to vegetables, making peas literally sweet peas. I heard of an Englishman who to make sure of having no sugar ordered boiled eggs for dinner, whereupon the Swedish cook, in order to make them palatable, mixed a quantity of pounded sugar with the salt. In those dishes where sugar is really a necessary element he *does* excel. I believe the confectionary and pastry of Stockholm is not surpassed by any in the world. Bread is varied: thus at every dinner-table there are three or four

different kinds ; these include a sweet brown bread, and a hard thin rye-cake called knäkebröd, pleasant to nibble at between the courses. The latter is quite the staff of life among the common people, who bake it in large quantities once a year, and as it is thoroughly dry, it keeps, like sea-biscuits, for a long time. Wine is very moderate in price, and good in quality, and champagne is much drunk ; but punch and bishop are the favourite beverages. I cannot say more for dining in Sweden than that at the best restaurants in the capital, a dinner à la carte, consisting of soup, fish, meat, game, vegetables, pastry, and a couple of glasses of sherry, can be obtained for about three shillings.

The palaces and museums of Stockholm are rich in sculpture, natural history, and northern antiquities. Among the last are many relics of great interest, relating to the reigns of the three great kings, Gustavus Vasa, Gustavus Adolphus, and Charles XII., but the picture-galleries are poor ; one of the best, consisting of nearly two thousand paintings, chiefly historical portraits, is at Gripsholm, a noble old castle on the Mälör,

and still occasionally used as a royal residence. Here in one saloon were full-length portraits of most of the reigning Sovereigns of Europe, among which was an excellent likeness of our own Queen.

One afternoon we drove over to Ulricksdahl, where there was to be a review in honour of some distinguished foreigners staying with the King. We found two regiments of guards and one of rifles drawn up, and splendid fellows they looked. When we arrived the royal party were at dinner, but as soon as they came out the troops went through their various manœuvres, which they performed admirably; though it must be remembered that I only speak with the military knowledge of a volunteer. The King then placed himself at the head of the little army, and away they all set off at a good "double" for the top of a hill, where an enemy was supposed to be lying concealed in an orchard. After a rattling fire, a good deal of shouting, and a few charges, they were dislodged and routed, to the satisfaction of king and soldiers, who, to celebrate the victory, marched back to the palace all singing a national war-song, where the Dowager and the

reigning Queen were ready to welcome them. The soldiers had fine voices and sang well, and as they marched through the forest the effect was most animating. The King is evidently a great favourite with them, and if a war ever break out he will most certainly be found at their head, as well as in a sham battle.

I heard much of his Majesty's pluck. Once at a bear-hunt, he got so close to Bruin that he was forced to use the butt end of his gun in self-defence, but this breaking, he boldly attacked the monster with his fists, and pegged into his eyes till the other hunters came up.

He is anxious to make many improvements in the country, and was the first Sovereign in Europe who abolished the passport system.

Seeing that he appeared so fond of soldiers and fighting, Tew jocularly remarked, in the course of a conversation with one of his officers, "that king of yours will be coming over to London one of these days, burning it, and killing us all." "Oh! no," replied the Swede gravely; "do not alarm yourself and your relations;—he vill not come to Lonndon—he likes de English very

much—he vill not fight against dem ; but if de Rossian come, den he vill fight—ve vill all fight,” he added with energy, “ve do not like de Rossian.” I believe he here quite expressed the feelings of his nation both for ourselves and the Russians. The Swedes are well disposed towards us, and will, I think, always prove our allies, as many reasons suggest themselves for their doing so ;—but let the Russians shew the faintest symptoms of hostility, and ^{the} whole nation will rise in arms. Thus they have volunteers in Sweden to prevent a Russian invasion, as we have in England to keep our friends across the channel at a respectful distance.

While at Stockholm we made an expedition to Upsala, the first University in Sweden. It is about fifty miles distant, and being situated on a navigable river which runs into the Mälör, is easily reached by steamers.

We had a pleasant sail there, passing through some of the finest lake scenery. Among our passengers were several students, whom we could always recognize by their white caps, ornamented with a blue and yellow rosette. One of these

was reading *Waverley* in English—another was working at the Integral Calculus, and a third told us much about his University. These Upsala students read exceedingly hard—their course for a degree comprising classics, mathematics, natural sciences, modern languages, &c. If the author of *Wanted a Governess* had substituted Tutor for Governess in his song, he would have found plenty of students at Upsala capable of fulfilling the duties, multifarious as they were; but I fear that their physical education is sacrificed to mental training, and this may account for their sallow looks, and the very great proportion who wear spectacles. Athletic games are hardly known, and they do but very little in boating, although a tolerably good river runs through the town. I venture to say that a dozen Oxford and Cambridge “eight oars” would soon make them better scholars and stronger men.

There is nothing particularly pretty about the town, and *Bradshaw* must have chronicled the scenes of some dream, which had passed through the ivory gate, when he describes it as “one of the most old-fashioned and beautiful cities in Europe.”

There is a very valuable library here, and the lecture-rooms are commodious and museums well stocked. The cathedral is a large Gothic building with two high towers, but more interesting for the great names which adorn the tablets on its walls, than for the beauty of its architectural designs.

Upsala is a very cheap town ; a student can dine tolerably for 4*d.* and comfortably for 7*d.* I was told that his whole expenses for a year, including the necessary fees, need not amount to more than about £40. Most of the members of the University lodge in the town, as there are no colleges for them to “keep” in. They sing well, and, like the German students, are fond of chorus-singing, and like them also, employ this art in making the sleeping portion of the inhabitants aware of their proximity, when they return from their cafés late at night.

Before taking leave of Stockholm, I cannot, even at the risk of offending the least fastidious of my readers, refrain from alluding to a custom, which prevails at the warm baths in that city, so extraordinary, that many will scarcely credit

it. We went one day to the principal baths there, when Tew and I were shewn into two rooms adjoining each other, separated by a slight partition. I was just beginning to enjoy the luxuries of my bath when I fancied that I heard a voice in Tew's room, and this was immediately confirmed by hearing him cry out loudly, "Get away—get out instantly;" but it was some time before his expostulations produced the desired effect. My feelings were anything but enviable, as I feared I might be the next victim, when, just as I was looking towards the door to see whether it was properly secured, it was thrown open by an old hag, armed with a horrid rough brush, similar to that used by housemaids for scouring doorsteps. She approached me, in spite of my vehement ejaculations, and continued to do so, until a few handfuls of water, skilfully aimed, forced her to retreat.

But "every cloud has its bright side," and this saying was ere long exemplified in regard to the custom I have mentioned, for as I was sitting one afternoon in the saloon of the Rydberg my Yankee friend entered looking brilliant.

The unctuous coat, which his face had worn since the first day I saw him, was gone, and as he stood before the glass running his fingers through his lank hair, and smiling with admiration at his novel appearance, the improvement in his looks was unmistakable. Suddenly he exclaimed, "Well, I guess I'm clean, I ain't had such a scrubbin since the day I was weaned."

It is needless for me to enter into the particulars he gave us of his "scrubbin." I have only alluded to his case to shew that there are instances in which even this astonishing practice is appreciated, and productive of happy results.

CHAPTER VI.

STOCKHOLM TO ST PETERSBURG.

WE left Sweden with much regret, having received the greatest kindness and hospitality from all we met there, and I do not hesitate in saying that I thoroughly like the Swedes. They are, to say the least, a very sociable and friendly people. The art of "snubbing" is unknown among them; it would be totally incompatible with their courteous and sympathizing manners.

I cannot but think well of their honesty, for on my asking a lady the nature of her losses, who complained so bitterly of the robberies committed on her premises, that I was led to suppose the family plate-chest had been rifled of its contents, she replied, "Oh! they have stolen our acorns!"

The country has, as yet, barely recovered from

the state of exhaustion in which it was left by the wars of Charles XII, but is now steadily regaining the position which it once occupied; and I look forward with confidence to the time when Sweden, and her brave sister Norway, will take their place among the Great Powers of Europe.

The steamers which ply between St Petersburg and Stockholm touch at several of the towns on the shores of the gulf of Finland; and as the navigation is very difficult, owing to the innumerable number of islands which skirt the coast, they are obliged to proceed very cautiously: and generally take nearly five days to accomplish the voyage.

We left Stockholm for Finland and St Petersburg early one Sunday morning, in a large steamer commanded by a merry little captain, and proceeded down the fjord which connects Stockholm with the Baltic. It is bounded on both sides for about twelve miles by hills clothed to the tops with luxuriant verdure, until at a narrow bend we came upon the Castle of Waxholm, the key of Stockholm. The fortifications here are of immense strength, and as every ves-

sel trying to reach the capital would have to run under their guns, it is well guarded, especially since the position of Waxholm is such as to render it almost impregnable.

Soon after passing the castle the fjord is broken up into several others, along one of which we steamed until we entered the Baltic, when a couple of hours' sail brought us to the Åland Islands, where Bomarsund was situated. Here begins a perfect labyrinth of channels, lying between the islands, which reach almost to the Finnish mainland, and surround its shores. We often seemed to be crossing a lake which had no outlet, so narrow and tortuous are many of them. The proper course is determined by means of poles placed at their entrances; these, as well as others, marking innumerable dangerous rocks and shallows, were removed during the late war, so that the difficulties which Sir Charles Napier with his big ships had to contend with, when endeavouring to blockade these coasts, were immense. Expecting him with his three-deckers and heavy frigates to stop succours being thrown into Bomarsund from the neighbouring islands, was

almost like placing men on elephants round a warren, and requiring them to prevent the rabbits from running from one hole into another. A Fin on board our steamer told us that he took two vessels belonging to him up a creek, where they lay in safety throughout the war.

The first town of any size we touched at was Åbo. The approach to it is up a picturesque river, overlooked by an old Swedish castle, standing on a bold rock; but although the town is well built with very large and good houses, it has a lifeless and deserted appearance. Once it had a University, and was the capital of Finland, but it was nearly destroyed by a great conflagration, and is now quite eclipsed by Helsingfors, the present capital.

After leaving Åbo, we coasted along through innumerable islands, some bleak and bare, others covered with low birch and fir, among which a fisherman's hut might occasionally be seen, and passed on our way the blood-stained Hango Head. At length we came opposite the tremendous fortifications of Sveaborg standing on six or seven rocky islands, lying across an inlet of the gulf

on the shores of which Helsingfors is situated, and which we reached by steaming up a narrow channel separating two of them, flanked by heavy batteries. It will be remembered that the telegram in the papers after the bombardment announced, "Sveaborg exists no more," and some people in England to this day imagine that it was destroyed; but the fact is, that the fortress itself was almost uninjured by our shells. A vast quantity of timber, and a number of sheds for gun-boats, were burnt, and several terrible explosions took place, leading the allies to infer that the mischief was far more serious than it afterwards proved to be. The Russians, also, were thrown into such a state of consternation, that at a council of war held a short time before the firing finally ceased, the question of lowering the flag was considered, and it was determined to surrender should the bombardment continue four hours longer. Luckily, however, for them our mortars became so overheated that it was deemed expedient to stop firing before the end of that time. I heard this on what I may consider good authority.

The fortifications would certainly be easier to storm than those at Cronstadt, as it might be possible to effect a landing at some points, and the ramparts are low, and in several places not difficult to scale, whereas at Cronstadt the fronts of the huge forts rise precipitously out of the water like the cliffs in the neighbourhood of Dover and Penzance. Had an assault been made after the bombardment, when the garrison was in a state of great terror and confusion, by a few thousand of the famed "Blue Jackets" and Marines, it is a question whether the Russians, with all their impudence, would have been able to claim a victory, as they now do. But this is a point on which the opinion of a non-military man can be of no value, and it must be remembered that our admirals had then no army to back up their brave sailors, as they ought to have had, and perhaps they were not justified in running such a risk, considering that a large Russian fleet was lying at Cronstadt, ready, if it could only screw up sufficient courage, to take advantage of any mishap on our part.

Speaking of the Russian fleet reminds me of

what an Englishman who had lived many years in Russia told me about it; he said, "We never need have any fears about the Russian fleet, however strong it may be said to be, as their sailors are so infinitely inferior to ours." Certainly those we saw at Cronstadt could not for a moment be compared to British tars, as they had more the appearance of half-starved "bargees" than "A.B.'s," and they greatly amused the Captain by their miserable rowing and clumsy and unsailorlike ways of going up the masts.

By far the best part is that manned by the Fins, who, like their neighbours the Swedes, are good sailors. The Russian Admiralty allows them to form a distinct squadron under their own flag, and tries hard to get as many as possible into the service; but the population of Finland being small, this number can never be very large.

There is no doubt that the Russians were so unprepared when our fleet first visited Sveaborg, that had Sir C. Napier possessed a flotilla of gunboats, it would have fallen an easy prey. "De Rossians had got no gonce, dey had got no bolce," said a Swedish officer, who told us he

had been over the works just before the war began and added: "if you had had our gon-boats, you would have taken it." But, as every body knows, we had no gun-boats then.

It was unfortunate that in our naval operations in the Baltic the Finns should have had to bear the brunt of our blockade, as numbers of them, especially those living on the shores of the gulf of Bothnia, who suffered most, entertained very friendly feelings for us. In many instances these poor people lost much, when our cruisers were supposed to be destroying only Government property. I fear they are not as well-disposed towards us now as they were before the war began.

Helsingfors is a bright cheerful-looking town, full of life and soldiers. Several very fine buildings, including a Cathedral, University, and Senate-House, forming three sides of a square, have lately been built there. Although the city is of no great extent, yet the number of handsome houses and gay uniforms seen in its broad and regular streets give it all the appearance of a capital.

We crossed the gulf to Revel, a town containing many fine churches, and thence steamed away for Cronstadt, a distance of some two hundred miles.

Having now been on board four days, I had had plenty of opportunities of observing our fellow-passengers. Among them was a Russian prince, one of the first men in Russia, accompanied by his suite; an Englishman, belonging to that class of our countrymen whom we avoid at home, and feel ashamed of abroad; the American I met at Stockholm; a Dutchman who never changed his clothes during the five days of our voyage, as we were informed by a German who occupied the berth opposite his, and a newly-married young French couple, who amused the company by exchanging various little tokens of affection at all hours of the day.

The first day, when we were sitting at dinner, the Prince at the head of the table, the Englishman, in villainous German, told the steward to take his compliments and his black bottle of port, to the Prince, and ask him to have a glass of wine with him. The Prince declined the wine,

but helping himself to a glass of his own claret, bowed politely, while his attendants stared hard at each other, and then fixed their eyes with the utmost astonishment on my countryman, who, totally unconcerned, sipped his port, making some remarks on its quality and price.

I had several conversations with the Yankee, who sometimes amused himself by leaning over the bulwarks, apparently "measuring distances" of seaweeds and other substances floating on the water, but in a way which never can be brought into practice by our Volunteers, as he appeared to determine the distance of any object by the amount of expectorating power required to reach it. One morning he suddenly turned to me, and remarked, "Your English nobles count themselves rich; well, I guess ours are rich too." I replied that I always understood they had none. "Oh! yes, we have," said he; "all our senators are honourables, and I calculate they answer to your nobles: well," he continued, "how much do you think the Honourable K. P. Sneedon sent his wife to carry on with, when he went a travellin, after he had been away for two months?" I replied that

I really had no idea, as I did not quite understand what was meant by "carrying on with," and besides, something would depend on the time Mr Sneedon proposed remaining absent. "Oh!" he replied, "I mean just to carry on the place with; well, he sent her 4000 dollars: now, I guess one of your English nobles could'nt have done more, eh?"

About 20 miles before reaching St Petersburg we steamed close under the fortifications of Cronstadt. These huge masses of granite, bristling with many hundred guns, nearly the whole of which could be brought to bear on any vessel attempting to pass them, have of late been so frequently and minutely described, that I feel it unnecessary to say more about them, than that, since the war terminated, one or two additional forts of gigantic strength have been built, rendering them even more formidable than they were when our fleets anchored before them.

As we steamed up the shallow portion of the gulf which separates Cronstadt from St Petersburg, a glorious sun was gradually dispelling the light haze which hung over the capital. Suddenly a huge golden dome was seen apparently

suspended in the air. It was that of the great Isaac church, and as we sailed on, other gilded domes and spires became visible, until at length, on entering the Neva, the whole "City of Palaces" lay before us in its full splendour. All on board, who beheld it for the first time, were struck with wonder and admiration, except the Englishman, who was having a violent altercation with the steward, on the steps of the cabin, regarding some item in his bill, and the Yankee, who said "his breakfast lay so heavy on him," that he preferred remaining quietly below.

We had heard much about the trouble which the custom-house officers would give us at St Petersburg, that our books would be taken from us and examined, and so on; but really we had no reason to be dissatisfied with them, as they scarcely looked at the contents of our portmanteaus, so that we were able, without loss of time, to make our way to the comfortable hotel kept by the obliging Miss Bensons.

CHAPTER VII.

ST PETERSBURG.

AT the head of the gulf of Finland are a number of low islands, dividing the mouth of the Neva into several channels, of which the most southern is about a quarter of a mile wide, and called the Great Neva. Along the land side lies a plateau on which the greater part of the city and the principal buildings stand. This was a perfect swamp when Peter selected it as the site of his future capital, and its soil is so treacherous, that even now several tiers of piles have to be driven down in some places before a sufficiently firm foundation can be obtained. Numerous canals drain this part of the city, and these, as well as the Great Neva itself, are confined within their usual limits by massive piers of granite, but owing to the site of St Petersburg

being so flat and low, it is very liable to be inundated on a sudden rise of the river; and terrible have been the losses both in life and property which, at various times, have taken place owing to this cause. Two or three of the larger islands opposite are covered with the remainder of the town, and several of the others have been tastefully laid out in parks and gardens, and are dotted with numerous summer villas, exhibiting every kind of architecture. Among these islands, many of which are united by bridges, are the most pleasant drives and walks in the neighbourhood of the capital, and in the summer they are much resorted to by all classes of the population.

St Petersburg owes its grandeur to the immense number of gigantic buildings which rise up on all sides. These are what give it such an imposing appearance, fill a person on first seeing it with astonishment, and justify the appellation it has received of the "City of Palaces." Although the Russian nation consists of nobles and serfs, the latter are not permitted to sully the splendours of the capital with narrow streets

and small squalid dwellings. Here they are often packed in houses nearly as large as those of their masters, which can only be distinguished from theirs by the abominable odours they emit, and the dirty appearance of the stucco and paint covering their walls.

The largest buildings are those belonging to the Government, which are often of enormous size. Thus the Admiralty is nearly half-a-mile in length, and it is no uncommon thing for the side of one of the huge barracks, containing the fifty thousand military guardians of the population of the capital, to occupy a whole side of a long street. In the best streets and squares the smallest buildings are as large as the "Queen's," or "Royal Hotel," usually met with at an English watering-place, and in the worst, we saw houses well adapted to serve as palaces for German princes.

Having thus spoken of the size of the buildings, let me touch on the wonders which a few of them contain. First, then, there is the Winter Palace, the town residence of the Emperor, situated on one side of the Admiralty Square, a paral-

lelogram reaching a mile in length, and the focus of much that is magnificent in St Petersburg. Here are saloons decorated in the most gorgeous manner, affording ample proof of the enormous wealth at the command of the Emperor. The jewel-room, in which the imperial crown is kept, is a perfect blaze of brilliants; the crown is composed of upwards of a thousand diamonds of all sizes, from a currant to a small cherry, surmounted by an immense uncut ruby, said to be the largest in the world. On the walls of one of the halls are suspended a number of magnificent pieces of gold plate, presented to different Czars on their ascending the throne by the principal cities in Russia. Among them is a massive salver, given by the nobles of St Petersburg to the reigning Emperor, around which runs an inscription, made up of letters formed entirely of diamonds. In one gallery out of several, supposed to contain pictures of the battles in which the Russians were, or claim to have been victorious, I saw the glorious but unfortunate charge of Balaklava; and I certainly must say, that the artist had done justice to the impetuous

bravery of our gallant Hussars, as they are represented dashing up to the very mouths of the enemy's cannon, behind which the stolid gunners are standing, cool and regardless of danger, in such a way as to render it a difficult task to determine which side is intended to gain the victory.

Connected with the Winter Palace is the Hermitage, the great imperial museum for works of art, and quite the Louvre of St Petersburg. It was founded by the Empress Catherine II., who employed agents all over Europe to purchase, at any cost, the most famous pictures on sale. Succeeding Emperors have added much to its treasures, and now upwards of forty saloons are hung with choice works of the great masters. Here also is a collection of jewels, snuff-boxes, malachite vases, and all kinds of ornamental knicknacks which defy description. The precious stones are represented by numerous and beautiful specimens, and, in some instances, the largest ever found may be seen in the cabinets. Here too are hundreds of exquisite rings and watches. I remember one watch, not larger than a fourpenny

piece, set in a ring worn by Catherine, which enabled Her Majesty to see what time it was by merely glancing at her finger. On my asking how such a vast amount of riches had been brought together, I was told that formerly it was the custom for all Russian ministers, on their return to St Petersburg, to deliver up to their imperial master the presents they had received at foreign courts.

Among the other buildings in the Admiralty Square is the Isaac church, a stupendous structure in the form of a Greek cross. It has taken nearly half a century to complete, and we were assured that the whole cost was upwards of sixteen million pounds sterling. The huge dome is covered with a coating of gold, in which the amount of that metal employed is said to be equivalent to eight bushels of gold ducats. The walls inside are profusely ornamented with gold and malachite, and on its marble floor is placed a statue of the Virgin, as large as life, in solid gold. But perhaps the most wonderful features of this splendid edifice are the massive columns of polished granite, supporting the frieze pro-

jecting from the four arms of the cross, each of which is a single stone 56 feet high, 7 feet in diameter, and weighing more than 170 tons. They have been brought, after enormous labour, from the quarries of Finland.

The principal street, called the Nevskoi Prospect, is two miles and a half long, and quite straight; and the Russians are very proud of it. The houses on both sides are immense, and the street is generally crowded with foot passengers and carriages of all kinds, from the nobleman's four-in-hand, to the dirtiest *droshky*, all gliding over the smooth wooden pavement at the furious pace common to Russian coachmen, who announce their approach by wild halloos.

The shops are showy, and many of them well stocked with articles of French manufacture, but we never entered one without coming out disgusted at the cheating rascals who stood behind the counters. They invariably ask two or three times as much as they are ready to take, and when they see a person leaving without making any purchases, owing to the enor-

mous prices demanded, they call him back, and intimate that they are willing to take less, if he will buy.

Cheating is the great national vice; everybody cheats, high and low. I hope there may be exceptions, but we never met with any, and the English at St Petersburg warned us of the Russians in this respect, as detectives at races tell respectable people to beware of pickpockets. "The snuff-box destined to reward some act of benevolence, which leaves the Imperial hand embossed with diamonds, reaches that of its destined owner deprived of every gem," says a writer on this subject. "A silver key will open any door in Russia," was the remark made by an Englishman, on my telling him that we had not gone into a museum, because we had been told that it was opened only on certain days. At Moscow we once entered a church celebrated for its music; outside sat an official selling candles, which all who entered were obliged to buy. Not having any small coins about me, I put down a piece of money, worth about nine shillings, and demanded candles and

change. Three of the former we got, and I am perfectly willing to allow that they were a little thicker than those sold for about a half-penny each, but instead of giving us change, the man, after thrusting our money into his drawer, began bowing and crossing himself vigorously. In vain we expostulated with him, demanding change, but all the "change" we got was an endless bowing and crossing. Any one of us could easily have knocked him down, but it was not worth while running the risk of being shut up in the dungeons of the Kremlin.

But perhaps the greatest cheats may be found among the *droshky* drivers, creatures called *istvostchiks*. It is always necessary to make a bargain with them before starting on a journey, but this they sometimes endeavour to get over at the end. Thus one of the first I hired took his fare quietly, but in a short time came running after me with a dirty coin in his hand, the same size as the one he had received from me, declaring loudly that I had given him bad money! These vagabonds add hypocrisy to thieving, for they scrupulously cross

themselves before every church and image which they pass on their road. "He who is not cheated by a Russian must be a cunning fellow."

But having thus spoken of a glaring vice prevalent to a lamentable extent among these people, it is pleasing to turn to the bright side of their character. They are charitable, kind, and courteous. The charitable institutions of St Petersburg and Moscow are on a very large scale, and are said to be well conducted. In all our dealings with Russians, where money did not come into question, we found them particularly friendly and obliging. Thus in starting from St Petersburg, we had booked only for Tver, intending to leave the railway at that place and embark on one of the steamers plying on the Volga for the great fair of Nijni Novgorod, but on our journey, somebody said he had heard that the river was then so low, that we might very probably be detained on the voyage for several days, and as we had not time to warrant our running such a risk, we felt we must give up this plan, if the report proved to be correct. We consulted

a Russian student on the subject, and he immediately asked others, and soon the matter attracted the attention of many of our fellow-passengers, who seemed to take a lively interest in our plans, and were ready to shower upon us all the advice and assistance which lay in their power, had we only been capable of understanding them. The matter was settled by the guard declaring that it would be dangerous for us to make the experiment.

Again, as we were returning from Moscow to St Petersburg, the Captain sat in a place which an old Russian opposite fancied was rather draughty, so he begged him to move; this he did to satisfy the old gentleman, but in a short time happened to fall asleep, and then slid back to his former position. Our companion's eye was at once on him, and after a slight consultation with his wife, he gently awoke the Captain, reminding him of the danger with which he imagined he was threatened.

While at St Petersburg, we went by steamer to Peterhoff, one of the Emperor's summer pa-

laces. It is situated on the southern shores of that part of the gulf which separates Cronstadt from St Petersburg, in a park tastefully laid out, and ornamented with some of the most beautiful fountains in Europe. His Majesty was expected to arrive when we were there, and as he was to disembark at a small pier not far from the Palace, we went towards it in the hope of seeing him. We found about fifty officers and as many ladies standing on the pier, all in full dress. Two soldiers, one in scarlet, and the other in blue, were keeping guard at the entrance, who, to their honour be it said, made no objection to our passing on, although we did not offer them a single kopek.

Our position was somewhat incongruous as we were in our travelling costume, but we were nevertheless treated with the utmost politeness, and allowed to take our places among the assembled company, which included two Grand Dukes and their wives.

Soon a yacht steamed up, and out got the Emperor and Empress, and walked slowly to a

carriage which awaited them, followed by the two Grand Dukes who had come to receive them. The Czar is decidedly a fine looking man, with a handsome cast of features, but he had a frown on his brow. I was told afterwards, that his natural expression is so mild and gentle, that he finds it necessary to put on a somewhat fierce look in public, to inspire his subjects with proper awe.

We all stood in perfect silence, with our hats in our hands, as he passed. I must say, that I felt inclined to give a cheer for a man who had done so much for the cause of freedom. Think of upwards of twenty millions of serfs degraded, liable to be scourged, not allowed to move from their villages, suddenly transformed into so many comparatively free men, enabled to possess land of their own, and do almost what they please. This Alexander has effected, in spite of much opposition, especially on the part of the proud wealthy nobles who, conscious of the loss, both in money and position, which the freedom of their serfs would entail, used every effort to thwart his purpose.

The interests which the serf-owners had at stake in this matter were enormous ; for besides their estates they frequently possess large factories, and since the Russian peasant is a shrewd fellow and can put his hand to anything, his master employed him one day on his land, and another in his mill. As the labourer is now free to work where he pleases, the latter will have to be closed unless fair wages be paid, and as this is not very likely to be done at present, the result will be that for some time the manufactures of the Empire will probably receive a severe check, and their owners incur heavy losses.

But the consequences of the Imperial Ukase will be infinitely more momentous than those I have alluded to. It has not only loosed a heavy fetter from a caste for ages kept in a state of bondage, but has also awakened among the people generally a passion for liberty entirely unknown before. This, however, is a critical period. The people are greatly agitated. The few breaths of free atmosphere already inhaled are to them so strange and exhilarating,

that they seem for the moment almost intoxicated. The unusual excitement is aggravated too by the conduct of a cruel oligarchy, who, terrified at the prospect of enduring the vengeance of those they have so long tormented, are eagerly striving to induce their master to retrace his steps. What will Alexander do? If, alarmed at the passing commotion, he follow the counsels of his tyrannical advisers, and attempt to crush the people by force, a revolution terrible to contemplate will follow; but if the courage and wisdom which prompted him to abandon the policy of his fathers do not forsake him, and he allow his subjects to raise themselves to the level of civilized nations, Russia will ere long be a happy country, and the Emperor will have the satisfaction of seeing his magnanimous labours crowned by the gratitude of a people, loyal from principle, and not from instinct.

CHAPTER VIII.

ST. PETERSBURG TO MOSCOW.

WE experienced a good deal of trouble at St. Petersburg about passports. Before we were allowed to reside there, we had to get a *carte de séjour*, and for this purpose, were obliged to visit an office, where the length of our noses, colour of our eyes, and shade of our hair, were supposed to be examined and registered. Of course, this involved fees, and not very small ones either. We could not even travel to Moscow without new passports, and paying additional rubles.

I feel convinced that the whole passport system of Russia is nothing more than a design to extort money. It is a tax on each person, who enters the country, from which the Government derives a considerable revenue, and

it does much towards filling the pockets of the police. The Russians, in this respect, have not yet learnt the advantages of free trade, and never will, as long as the matter remains in the hands of their grasping officials.

I do not believe the authorities care one jot who enters or leaves Russia, or what a person does when he is there, provided they only get his money. Thus the descriptions of our physiognomies were given without any regard to our real personal appearance, and we were surprised, on hearing them translated, to find how like we were to each other, and what good-looking fellows we must be.

Again, the law requires that every foreigner should advertise in the newspapers the fact of his departure from Russia a day or two previous to starting; but when one of us contemplated returning to England so suddenly that there was no time to do this, he was told that the matter could be easily settled by means of a few rubles.

The distance from St. Petersburg to Moscow is 400 miles, and this the Express takes 20 hours to

perform, starting at 12, and arriving at Moscow at 8 the following morning. Ample time is allowed for luncheon, dinner, and supper, and at most of the 18 stations at which the train stops refreshments of some kind are provided. The dinner at Malo-Vischerskaïa,—which, if I remember rightly, was the name of the place,—was excellent, comprising a large variety of novel and recherché dishes; and indeed every thing set before us at the Hotels and Restaurants we visited when in Russia, was all that could be desired; and in them I tasted fish and birds, different from any I had seen before, and dressed up in sauces which would have stimulated the appetite of even a Lucullus.

But I am bound to say that we had to pay high for them. St. Petersburg and Moscow are both very expensive towns; every thing is dear, and wine exorbitant. I have no hesitation in saying that we found the charges at both these capitals three times as great as at Stockholm.

The country through which the railway passes is dreary and monotonous, consisting for the most part of large forests of brushwood, broken

by tracts of steppes. The trees are generally cleared away on each side of the line for about 100 yards, and this space is covered with blackened stumps interspersed with stagnant pools, forming a hideous picture. The steppes are tolerably well cultivated, and dotted over with serf villages, usually consisting of two rows of rough, unpainted log-huts, placed opposite to each other, with their gables fronting the road between them, in which troops of children are for ever rolling in the mud ; the whole scene is so ugly and miserable that, when a village happens to be near the railway, one feels tempted to draw down the blind of the carriage.

The adult portion of the population were generally working in the fields adjoining the villages. The men are strong, hardy, hairy-looking fellows, with somewhat repulsive countenances ; and most of the women we saw were utterly unfeminine and devoid of attraction ; though this remark does not apply to the brunettes of Moscow, whose delicately-cut features, black brilliant eyes, graceful figures, and elegance of attire, are justly proverbial.

In the larger villages the green dome of a church usually rises above the roofs of the houses, and does a little to improve their appearance. Many of the clergy are said to be extremely ignorant and degraded, and not at all calculated to set a good example to their parishioners. They often associate and drink with the peasants, and are much looked down upon by the landowners. The nature of their "Voluntary" and "College Testimonials" may be inferred from the following:—"A good pair of lungs, a reverend beard, long hair, and a black gown with a metal plate attached to the breast, are the only requisites for religious candidates." This, no doubt, arises from the desire of the Government to keep the people in as profoundly ignorant a state as possible. The pay of the clergy is often so small that they are forced to work in the fields to support their families; but they are able to make considerable additions to their incomes by the sale of tapers, and sacred pictures, and taking the latter to the bedsides of sick people. When they are in a position to prove that a picture has

worked a miracle, a good price is easily obtained.

Those we saw officiating in the principal churches in Moscow seemed in a very flourishing condition, and did not at all appear to be suffering from poverty. They were generally very fine-looking men, dressed in dark silk robes reaching down to the feet, and many wore a massive gold chain round the neck, from which was suspended a cross or some sacred ornament. All have long locks flowing far over their shoulders, which, coupled with their low-crowned hats, reminded us of the head-attire usually adopted by young ladies at watering-places for a couple of hours after their morning bath.

A parish priest is obliged to marry, but he may only do so once. When his wife dies he is transformed into a monk, though he usually retains his cure; but, to make up for the loss of his spouse, he is then eligible to high positions in the Church, which he was not before. He is forced to choose his wife from among the daughters of the clergy, and in this respect

resembles his brethren in Sweden, except that in their case it is a matter of honour, though it must be owned sometimes of necessity, while here it is one of law.

The police in Russia are the terror of all respectable people. They are probably among the greatest rascals in the world, and enjoy advantages for remaining such which no others possess. Their powers are prodigious; indeed, there is but one thing which they are not allowed to do, and that is, to take a tipsy man into custody; only let a man get drunk, and he is free from their clutches, for the Government derives a large revenue from the sale of spirituous liquors, and it is therefore found desirable to encourage this vice, which, judging from the numbers of drunken people seen in the streets, must be paying well. Should a person be so unfortunate as to be robbed or assaulted, he is indeed to be pitied, not so much in consequence of the losses he has sustained, or the injuries inflicted on him, as from the fact that he then becomes the victim of the guardians of the peace, who never cease extracting fees for

the trouble they pretend they have had in endeavouring to discover his assailants. Miserable would be the life of that man who dared to refuse the demands of his legitimate protectors.

Among the extraordinary regulations in this country, is that which prohibits any one from assisting a person who has met with an accident, until the police come up. "If a man fall down in a fit in the streets, the police must pick him up, and if no policeman be at hand the man must lie there till one arrives, it being against the law for any non-official person to offer him the least assistance."

I remember once reading, that "everything in Russia is different from what it is in England; there the crows are white, and the sheep black." The writer might have added, that the Russian peasants when intoxicated, instead of quarrelling and fighting, hug and embrace each other affectionately. Again, there, the corner of the room is the place of honour, whereas in England the reminiscences of the offences committed in our juvenile days will probably recall to our minds

the terrible disgrace attending a banishment to that locality.

The favourite beverage is tea (*tchai*), which is often drunk in tumblers with lemon-juice instead of milk. Much of this is brought overland, and its flavour is very superior. It is no unusual thing to see Russians sitting in their tea-houses, round tumblers of tea, as Scotchmen do round glasses of whiskey.

There is a drink very much in vogue with the peasants called *quass*, made of a quantity of salt, barley-meal, honey, and water. Vendors of this, standing at the corners of the streets, are much patronised by the poorer class of passers by.

The railway which connects St. Petersburg with Moscow is almost as the crow flies. It seems that the engineers who had been ordered to survey the line not agreeing as to the best route, were commanded to submit their plans to the Emperor, who cut the matter short by drawing a straight line on the map between the two cities, and observing, "Make it as I have drawn." The Imperial command undoubtedly brought

them within as short a journey of each other as possible, but, unfortunately, towns do not always lie on straight lines, and the consequence is, that Tver is the only place of importance passed through.

Exactly at eight in the morning we drew up at the Moscow station, a large building well stocked with police and other officials, and, soon after, found ourselves in a good hotel kept by a Frenchman named Bulot.

CHAPTER IX.

MOSCOW.

OF all cities which have passed through the disasters of fire and war, "Holy Mother Moscow" probably stands first in having accomplished her recovery with the greatest despatch. To the careless observer almost every building might, to all outward appearances, date back several centuries; the deception arising in a great measure from the musty, dirty method of erecting houses, common among the Muscovites.

The ground on which the city stands is undulating, and the streets are irregular and crooked. Large and small houses are mixed together in such a way that a great Government-building not unfrequently rises up between a couple of cottages whose roofs reach to about its first floor. In the centre is the Kremlin,

the glory of Moscow and of the Russians; and this every body ought to visit immediately after his arrival, as he has no notion what a marvellous city he is in, until he has done so.

Although the view from the different terraces of the Kremlin is magnificent, the tower of Ivan Veliki, or John the Great, must be ascended to see the entire panorama in its full grandeur. Immediately around lies the Kremlin, and beyond, in every direction, rises a perfect forest of domes, cupolas, minarets, towers, and spires, of all conceivable designs, gilded, silvered, painted in bright colours, star-spangled, knobbed like pine-apples, and fancifully fluted, in an endless variety of ways. Quaint as are the head-dresses of the Russian people, they are entirely eclipsed by those of their churches.

The serpentine Moskwa flows gracefully through the centre of the city, reflecting the fairy-like scene in its clear waters, and adding greatly to the beauty of the picture.

I have frequently been asked "What is the Kremlin?" and confess I have experienced considerable difficulty in answering this question,

It is every thing at once,—a maze of mighty temples, towers, ramparts, ^{and} palaces, thrown promiscuously together, and looking more like some wild freak of nature in the Rocky Mountains than the work of human hands. Raised on a high elevation above the rest of the city, it seems, when viewed from the distant hills, like an immense island floating in a wavy sea of domes, the surface here and there broken by the massive walls of an ancient monastery with its silvered minarets sparkling in the sun, and resembling some bold rocks among which the bright breakers are playing. The Kremlin is a stupendous fortress surrounded by massive Tartar walls, raised some five centuries ago to resist the attacks of the Eastern barbarians, who waged a perpetual war against the infant Russia. Here are arranged numerous guns, standards, trophies, captured from conquered foes. The Kremlin is the nation's sanctuary. Within a space of not more than a mile in circumference rise the spires and gilded domes of above thirty churches, sometimes in such close proximity that in passing from one to the other you seem to be traversing

the chapels of a huge cathedral. Here Emperors are crowned, and here lie the remains of the ancient Czars, and relics of the most revered Russian saints. The Kremlin is also an Imperial residence, and contains magnificent palaces. Among countless treasures are the crowns worn by the rulers who swayed their sceptres over the kingdoms of Poland, the Crimea, and Kasan, before they were absorbed in the ever-encroaching gulf of Russian conquest. No city but the "Holy Mother" could form so rich a setting for so splendid a gem, entwined with the glittering chain of the silvery Moskwa.

Although St Petersburg is the capital of Russia, Moscow is that of the Russians. Here far more thorough-bred, long-bearded, long-coated Muscovites are met with than in the former city, where Germans and other foreigners abound. Indeed, so common is the long-coat strapped round the waist, that we regretted not having our dressing-gowns with us to avoid persecution while rambling about the town.

The odours also of the ancient capital have something peculiarly leathery and musky about

them; they are quite overpowering, and I know of no other, no not even in Cologne, capable of giving any idea of their offensiveness. A large part of the city is very properly called Smelnoi.

A very striking view of Moscow is obtained from the Sparrow Hills situated on the southwest side of the city. It was from these that Napoleon and his army caught their first glimpse of its endless sea of glittering domes and spires; and well can we imagine the feelings which prompted those weary regiments to cry with one voice "Moscow!" when after traversing vast and desolate steppes, and undergoing terrible losses and sufferings, they beheld the beautiful, costly city lying at their feet, and heard their leader exclaim "All this is yours."

The hour for obtaining this view to the best advantage is just before sunset on the clear evening of some festival, for then it is that its gorgeousness is reflected back to the delighted eye in countless masses of gilding and colour, while the thousands of bells chiming for evening prayer add not a little to this singular and novel effect.

One of the most extraordinary places is the Riadi, a large covered bazaar full of narrow passages crowded with shops. "Pearls from India, scented wood from America, cloths from England, images from Italy, china from Saxony, coffee from Arabia, brooms from Holland, iron from Sweden, furs from Siberia, swords from Persia, meat from the Crimea, tea from China, skins from Ladak, fish from Archangel—sporting dogs, carrier-pigeons, Persian cats, singing birds, pismires, white mice, cockatoos," are all offered for sale, and Tartars, Siberians, Georgians, Circassians, Cossacks, Armenians, may here be seen in their different costumes, presiding over the wares peculiar to their countries.

In this bazaar each branch of trade has its own quarter. Thus in one part is a row of stalls, laden with little heaps of money, belonging to Jewish changers wholly engrossed in their coins; in another, a number of shops for the sale of pictures of native saints, and all kinds of ornaments to stick about them; in a third, stores filled with wax-tapers to put before them, and so on. The noise and hubbub going on

here cannot be described. Persons who enter, especially foreigners, are worried incessantly to purchase by energetic and vivacious dealers, who sometimes leave their counters, rush up close to you, perhaps seizing your arm, and declaim vehemently on the excellence of their wares, rendering it necessary to apply the handkerchief to the nostrils without loss of time.

The Russians excel in the manufacture of large and sweet-toned bells, the presenting of which to a church is considered a great act of piety, consequently the churches in Moscow are plentifully supplied. In the tower of Ivan Veliki hang nearly fifty, many of great size, and one weighing more than sixty tons. At the foot of this tower stands the "big bell of Moscow," on a massive stone pedestal. Its height is upwards of twenty-one feet; its greatest diameter twenty-two feet and a half, and it weighs a hundred and sixty tons, or about ten times as much as "Big Ben." A piece about six feet high and three wide is broken out, and this fracture is said to have taken place about a hundred and twenty years ago, owing to the bell falling, when a

tower in which it hung was burnt; but some say that it was never suspended at all, for until the Emperor Nicholas had it exhumed, it lay in a pit where it is supposed to have been cast.

The religion of the country is nominally that of the Greek Church, but superstition and fanaticism have added so much that it may now fairly be called the Russian religion. The houses and churches are crowded with pictures of multitudes of native saints. Portraits of St Nicholas and St Vladimir are far more highly prized than those of St Peter and St Paul, and the Virgin is here worshipped under the title of "Our Lady of Kasan," or the "Iberian Mother."

In the streets of Moscow may be seen numerous little chapels, each of which contains the portrait of some Russian saint. If it be a favourite, the owner, who has set it up as a pecuniary speculation, is sure of plenty of customers, who enter, muttering their prayers, bowing and crossing themselves, and always taking care to buy a candle, which they place before it, to make sure of a blessing.

The chapel most visited is that containing a

picture of the "Iberian Mother," having a slight scratch on the right cheek, from which blood is said to have flowed when the canvass was once pricked by the sword of a Turk. The drops of blood are represented by a little red paint, and, of course, are a sufficient guarantee of the supernatural powers of the picture. It is surrounded by splendid jewels and pearls, and scores of candles are always burning before it. Here people of all classes resort from morning to night. I never passed this little chapel without seeing a crowd of *droschkies* and carriages standing outside, waiting for their occupants, who were engaged in supplicating the "Mother" and kissing her hand.

The churches in Russia are very numerous; in Moscow there are several hundreds. They are generally in the form of a Greek cross, over the centre of which rises a bulbous-looking dome or spire, surrounded by four smaller ones emblematical of our Saviour and the four evangelists. Many of those at Moscow are decorated in the most gorgeous manner; the walls of some in the Kremlin are hung with pictures,—not very good ones by-the-bye,—and glitter with gold, jewels,

and richly-ornamented shrines. In one, among an enormous quantity of treasures, is a Bible, the golden binding of which is so studded with precious stones that its cost was about £50,000. Among the relics shewn are, a nail of the cross, a robe of our Saviour, a few drops of the blood of John the Baptist, and a portrait of the Virgin painted by St Luke.

Perhaps the most extraordinary church in Moscow is that of St Basil, standing near the Kremlin. Here every variety of dome, cupola, and pinnacle may be seen grouped together in marvellously grotesque ways, and so varied in their colours as almost to rival the different hues assumed by the chameleon. This edifice might be the pattern church in Moscow for domes, as there is scarcely one in the city, numerous as they are, whose counterfeit could not be found here. It is said that the Czar, who founded this church, well named the "dream of a diseased imagination," put out the eyes of the architect when it was completed, in order that he might never erect another of a similar kind.

Thousands of pigeons are constantly fluttering

around it, which birds may be seen everywhere in Moscow, for they are never disturbed or injured, being looked upon as living representatives of the Holy Spirit, and as such considered sacred.

A great part of the service is chaunted, and much incense is used. The choir is generally strong in deep bass voices, but I never saw an organ in any church. The congregation is occupied almost the whole time in bowing and crossing themselves, and they often cry out as a response, *Gospodi pomilui*, "Lord be merciful." They imagine that crossing themselves drives away evil spirits and keeps them free from troubles.

It is astonishing how many people may be seen in some of the churches taking their turns in kissing the relics, and with what earnestness they perform this ceremony, diving their heads into the shrines, and rubbing their mouths against the adored objects, quite regardless of the unpleasant fact that many others have just preceded them. The people stand during the service, except at certain periods, when they all suddenly fall down on their faces, like a battalion of soldiers when the enemy's artillery suddenly opens upon them.

The first time we entered a church where service was going on we were so much taken by surprise at this curious performance, that we did not go down at the same instant as the rest, but remained standing for a few moments in astonishment, while the eyes of the priests and those of the congregation who looked up were fixed upon us.

One of the entrances leading into the Kremlin is called the "Holy Gate." It owes its sanctity to a picture hanging on the wall above, which the Russians declare has performed the most astonishing miracles. Among others, it is said, that when the French tried to batter down the wall the powder used in the gun became perfectly wet, and could not be dried until a great fire was made about it. When at length it exploded the gun went off backwards, bursting to pieces, and killing the gunners.

No Russian whatever, from the Emperor to the humblest serf, ever passes through this gate without taking off his hat. Foreigners also are obliged to uncover, and a soldier is always on duty to see that they do so. I venture to say that he has not much trouble with the Swedes.

Although I will refrain from touching on the numerous creatures of many different species, which domicile themselves upon you as soon as you enter Russia, there is one at Moscow so persevering in his attentions, that he cannot be passed over in silence. I allude to the beetle, and I cannot do better than give Tew's graphic description of him. He says, "The Moscow beetle is as fine, lively, and healthy a beetle as any of his race in Europe. From the moment you set foot in 'Holy Moscow' you find in him an indissoluble friend. He is pulled out with your watch, he drops from your hat in bowing, he anticipates you in your morning coffee, and takes his bath in your wash-hand basin. He moreover evinces the liveliest interest in all your proceedings. You may be writing, reading, thinking, or talking, but a beetle is sure to have his eye on you. You can detect him looking at you out of the keyhole, a chink in the floor, a hole in the ceiling, or any other unaccountable retreat. But you are forced to put up with his company, and it is only in time, when habit has given you a second nature, that you become careless of his unwearied espionage."

There are several pretty public gardens near Moscow. One afternoon the Captain and I visited one of them, where crowds of people were assembled listening to music. In roaming about, we got into a place, which I suppose was forbidden ground, as several mounted dragoons were drawn up, two of whom rode towards us. One quickened his pace, evidently regarding our intrusion as a *casus belli*, but when he had advanced to within a few yards of us, the Captain sprang forward, and with all the bravery inherent to a young officer in the British navy, seized the bridle of his horse, crying out, "Now man, where are you coming to?" The astonished soldier reined his steed rapidly round, and hurried back to his comrades, as we retreated to more legitimate ground.

The richest collection of treasures in Moscow is in a building called the Treasury, within the Kremlin. Here are the crowns, thrones, sceptres, robes, saddles, which belonged to different Czars, sparkling with thousands of jewels. One throne is embellished with nearly 9000 turquoises, and a crown of Catharine I. contains upwards of 2500

fine diamonds. Others are splendidly ornamented with diamonds, emeralds, and pearls.

As I was once roaming about this gallery, I saw the Yankee I have before spoken of, sitting by himself, looking up at the ceiling, whistling a tune, and apparently utterly indifferent to all the splendours by which he was surrounded. On my approaching him, his first observation was, "What do you think of our Consul's equipage?" and before I had time to reply, he added, "I guess it's stylish; I rode in it yesterday." On my remarking that I was not aware I had seen it, he continued, "Of course you saw our Minister's at St Petersburg—that's elegant, but I don't like it as much as our Consul's here, this runs smoother; now which do you think costs most to keep?" I said I had not the least idea. "Well," he answered, "they tell me our Consul's costs thirty dollars a month less than the other; now, I say, that shews vegetation is scarcer at St Petersburg than here, eh?" This was one of the last conversations I had with my American friend; but before we parted he gave me his card, saying, "You'll visit the States—shew that in New York, and I guess you'll have civility shewn you."

And now, having jotted down a few "brief notes" of what I saw and did, when I went the Northern Circuit, I will conclude, but before I do so, let me recommend those of my readers who have six weeks to spare, to spend them in going to Moscow, through Sweden and St Petersburg, and I venture to say they will never regret it. They will see, hear, taste, and smell much that is entirely new, and find themselves in quite a different world from the beaten tracks they have been accustomed to tread in their usual summer rambles. If they can only get away for three weeks, let them go to Stockholm, and leave Russia alone. My partiality for that picturesque capital induced me to visit it again on my return journey, after which I coasted round the south of Sweden to Copenhagen, whence I soon found myself cutting across from Ostend to Dover, and in a few hours afterwards once more in my rooms in Alma Mater.

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