

The Russians themselves, or at least the working classes, are uncouth and repulsive in appearance, and certainly cannot lay claim to much civilization. Our readers will keep in mind that we don't give these ideas as authority but merely as first impressions, which, by the way, are generally lasting, at least so far as the observer is concerned.

Time and space will not permit of going into details so will just describe their manner of worship, which was something new to us. Not alone in their churches but in numerous places on the most public thoroughfares, are images of the Virgin Mary and the child Jesus, of Jesus after he had attained to manhood, of the father of Jesus, or rather, the husband of Mary, and of many other saints, even to Alexander III.

Every good Russian, whether he is on the street or in the church, drunk or sober, does honor to these images, using the following formula: After doffing his hat he touches the forehead with the first three fingers of the right hand, then the breast, then the right shoulder, then the left, thereby describing a cross. The three fingers represent the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and as they go through the service they mumble what is meant for a prayer. We learned later that they really do offer their prayers to these images, having been taught that they themselves were unworthy of approaching God, but must use their images as a medium notwithstanding God says, "Thou shalt have no other God before me."

Their street worship is of course very plain and simple in comparison with their church services.

The walls of their church, which by the way are something grand and imposing, are hung all over with these images made of different kinds of costly metals and in different sizes, from a full life size to over six inches square built in the shape of a picture with a frame around it, the image itself being raised a little in bas-relief so as to give it shape.

Their church services as near as can be described it is as follows: The worshiper comes in any time during the day and as he enters he buys a small wax taper, or two or three as circumstances demand. He then places himself in front of his favorite image and drops down on his knees and makes the sign of the cross at the same time keeping his eyes fastened on the image; then he bows himself until his head touched the floor. This form is repeated three times. Then he gets up from his kneeling position and kisses the hands and feet of the image at the same time placing the taper, which he bought when he came in, in a candlestick which stands right in front of the image. They light this candle which ends the services except in serious cases when they go through the same formula in front of three gods.

We saw many other things of interest which time and space will not permit us to mention here now.

We held our meeting in St. Petersburg, the first public "Mormon" meeting ever held in Russia and baptized one woman.

After visiting in Petersburg six days we bade the Saints good bye, and left June 5th on the boat Finland, with which we went as far as Helsingfors, Finland, where we hunted up a few Saints. We also took a trip about five miles out in the country to a place called "Patpis" where we found an old couple who hadn't seen a missionary for six or seven years. They were overjoyed at seeing us, and cried like children when we left.

Stockholm's conference is the largest conference in Scandinavia and has

over thirteen hundred members. There are twenty-one Elders from Utah, and one local Elder, who work in the conference under the presidency of Brother C. A. Ahlquist.

Reports from the outlying branches are just coming in now and show that the work is making good headway.

In Stockholm's branch they have four Elders, including the president of the conference, and hold public meetings regularly besides a regular Sunday school. There is also a Relief Society and Y. M. M. I. A., which have regular meetings. The prospect in this branch are very promising.

The "Weekly News" comes to the office regularly, for which we are all thankful.

CARL A. AHLQUIST, Prest.  
NORMAN LEE.

## ON A SOUTH SEA FARM.

Siupapa, Upolu, Samoa.

July 28, 1897.

After meeting was dismissed last Sunday afternoon Brother Olsen and I were invited by Moses, one of our native Saints, to visit his farm some day this week, and as we had a desire to see how the farming industry was conducted by Samoan natives we accepted his kind invitation, and today, Wednesday, was decided upon as the day that we should make the visit.

This morning, almost before the gray dawn of day was beginning to break upon this land of perpetual summer, we were startled from a sweet dream of home by a rapping on the (wooden) window near where we were sleeping and a voice crying out in broken English through the cracks of the bamboo wall, "Miss Olasane ma Filo, do you want to visit my farm today."

It was Moses, who had come to ascertain if we were still desirous of fulfilling our promised visit. We reassured him that we would be pleased to be honored as his guests for a little sightseeing and dinner as soon as our morning school was over, and as he left he promised to have his boy on the ground to guide our footsteps in the right trails in order to arrive in safety at his "farm."

School over and armed with a coconut wood cane with Telona, Moses's boy, as our guide, we commenced the journey. Telona is a boy of about 8 years of age, has a shaved head one black eye, the other having been removed some years ago on account of being diseased, and a big sore on one foot which makes him walk in a very much crippled manner, and with his "lavalava" around his neck where you will usually find it instead of around his loins where it belongs, he is indeed a picture.

Starting from the meeting house here, Telona hobbled along, leading the way through a part of the almost continuous coconut grove that follows the beach of the great Pacific the entire distance around the island, and after walking for probably 100 feet over a very sandy trail we emerged as it were from a jungle and beheld the village of Siupapa laying before us. This village consists of just nine oblong and round thatched roofed native houses, having the usual cobble rock floors, and boasts of inhabitants not to exceed fifty persons. The houses are scattered along the beach with seemingly no idea as to order of position and none of them are to exceed 150 feet from the water's edge.

Following our guide to the back of these houses, being attracted on our way by innumerable Samoan dogs, where I use my cane to very good advantage by shaking it at one, and making a lunge at another, but missing it by a good ten feet, we arrived at an old rock wall about three feet in height, which probably for ages has

served the double purpose to this race of people of keeping the pigs which run loose in the village out of their "umu" or cooking houses, which stand immediately behind it, and away from their talo and banana patches, which are all found inland. Climbing over this wall we were led towards an almost perpendicular precipice of probably some 300 feet in height, and were told by our guide that his father's farm was on top.

Over this precipice and down a cliff of volcanic stone for a distance of some 70 feet trickles a small stream of water, having for its source a small spring on top. It falls into a rudely formed bathing pool of about 20x40 feet in size, in which the water stands waist deep. It is in this pool that we have our daily bath and from which we obtain our daily supply of water, as do also all the natives of the village. Nothing could be seen of this precipice from our position near the wall but a solid embankment of green trees and underbrush, which indeed looks impassable, but as we approach nearer we ascend for a short distance a very steep slope and then there opens before us a kind of natural stairway winding back and forth and up the cliff, which we began to climb.

From rock to root and root to rock we struggle up, seeking assistance by grasping a friendly branch or root which served us the double purpose of helping us up and securing our balance from a fall that is anything but pleasant to contemplate, we at last reached the top, out of breath and several "pounds" lighter from the loss of perspiration. It is down this dangerous and difficult trail that the natives carry and have carried their daily food for ages, but still the present generation seems in no way inclined to spend a little energy in placing it in a condition of safety and easier of access.

While we wiped the perspiration off our dripping faces and sought a cooling breeze from our hats which we kept in rapid motion, we looked down into the village we had just left as one from a housetop looking down into his garden. The roofs of village houses can be seen here and there through the thick growth of coconut trees that surround them; next is seen the white sandy beach, then the coral reef appears less than 200 feet from the shore, against and over which the great waves of the Pacific constantly roll, forming one long and beautiful line of white foam and causing a continuous roar which sounds not unlike that of an engine in the act of discharging steam. Next we saw the grand Pacific whose color is of the deepest indigo, stretching to the south until it joins hands with some gray floating cloud and sight is lost in ocean, clouds and sky.

Passing along over what appears to be a sort of table land, walking on a green carpet of ferns and other small shrubbery, climbing over fallen trees and piles of decaying coconuts which in themselves would make a Samoan wealthy if taken care of, in the course of a few moments' walk we reached our destination, and right in the midst of this chaos we found the "farm" of Moses. No barns, no cattle, no horses, no farming implements, in fact, nothing is visible that bears any resemblance to a farm excepting a few chickens and two small, scrawny, flea-eaten dogs. We found our host engaged in his talo patch of something less than half an acre, digging around the roots of some of the talo plants with a dangerous looking two-foot butcher knife which serves our friend the double purpose of farming implement and cooking utensil.

Our host Moses is a man of probably 50 years of age, stands about five foot six, of medium build, has a few