

[Translated for Life Illustrated by Anne W. Wood.]

About Moscow, in Russia—the Kremlin.

The Kremlin is an almost triangular citadel, formerly surrounded by fosses, at present by an inclosure of high walls, flanked by a massive tower at each angle. From the foundation of the Kremlin dates that of Moscow itself. This fortress existed as early as the middle of the twelfth century. It was at first only a simple building of wood inclosed by a palisade; Moscow was but a village.

Twenty years later—that is to say about 1160 or 1170—Andrew, grandson of Vladimir Monomach, Prince of Kiev, built in the midst of these frail habitations a stone church, and deposited there a miraculous picture (the portrait of the Virgin) painted by St. Luke. Sacked and burned in the middle of the thirteenth century by the Mongols, the young city was rebuilt soon after on a broader site. An anchorite's cabin was converted into a church; convents arose on both sides of the river.

Moscow became the residence of Ivan III., the capital of a principality which, from century to century, and, so to speak, from year to year, was destined to extend its limits to the North and South. Ivan Danelovitch endowed it with two new churches, and surrounded it with a strong barrier of oak. Dmitri, his grandson, replaced this barrier by a wall of brick. Toward the end of the fourteenth century, after the ravages of a disastrous pestilence and several wars, Moscow extended itself on both banks of the river, and already contained half a dozen churches and monasteries.

Churches, monasteries, fortress, these were the cradle of Moscow, and her whole history is here, between a sword which inspired terror and a relic which imposed respect. Devastated in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries by the princes of Lithuania, it rose a third time from its ruins, under the reign of the ambitious Ivan Vasilevitch, who gave it, for its first trophies, the spoils of Novogorod, enlarged its inclosure, and built the towers of the Kremlin. His successors continued his work with ardor, and, under the reign of Ivan the Terrible, Moscow already occupied an immense space.

The Kremlin, which was the original nucleus of this city, has remained its central point. It is thence that the different quarters have extended on each side, like the spokes of a wheel, and it is there that they unite like wool around a spindle.—The Kremlin, by its location, commands the whole city. Its steeple of Ivan Veciki with its gilded cupola, rises above the other steeples which surround it, and its thick, embattled rampart seem prepared to defend the dwelling of the czars and the sanctuary of the patriarchs. In the interior, it is a singular assemblage of buildings of different epochs and edifices of every sort. There is nothing symmetrical, nothing regular, either in the streets which traverse the inclosure, or in the empty spaces which separate the buildings.

Cathedrals, chapels, palaces, all have been thrown in from century to century by the pious thought or the caprice of the sovereign, expressed by the fantasy of the artist, and all this melange of religious and profane architecture, of the antique and Byzantine style, pointed steeples, all this variety of tints and colors, of facades and belfries, produces a singular, inexplicable effect, which surprises one like a dream, which presents to the fascinated glance now the attraction of an arabesque, now the august aspect of a monument consecrated by time and by noble memories.

The Cathedral of the Assumption was the first stone church built in Moscow. Its nave is narrow and somber, its vault supported by four enormous pillars, which occupy almost a third of its interior, and these pillars, this vault, these walls, are all covered from top to bottom with paintings in fresco, representing, under a gigantic form, figures of the saints and apostles with mantles of purple and golden aureolas. The iconostase, that is to say, the barrier which separates the sanctuary from the rest of the church, and which rises as high as the vault, is like one of those fabulous walls of which Oriental poets speak, a wall of silver gilt covered with jewels.

On the right of the doors which open in the middle of the iconostase, and which are called the royal doors, is a picture of St. John, painted, it is said, by the Greek emperor Emmanuel; on the left a venerated virgin, who wears upon her head, among other ornaments, two diamonds, one of which would render the poorest poet rich. What is even more valuable in the eyes of the Russian people than these paintings, these crowns of diamonds, these masses of gold and silver, are the relics inclosed here and there in shrines.

There are some for all devotions and every accident of life, from the tunic of Jesus Christ, whose authenticity no one dares call in question, to the bones of saints which heal divers maladies. A sacristan points out to the faithful those which have the most efficacy; they cross themselves before them, deposit on them a pious kiss, and pass on to another chapel equally full of relics; then they cross themselves again, prostrate themselves with humility, throw themselves with their faces on the ground, then approach a monk who stands before an altar, and gives them his right hand to kiss, which he takes care, it is said, to perfume with a pleasant odor to please the smell of respectful believers. I did not verify the fact and will not affirm it. It is in this church that archbishops are buried and emperors crowned.

Near the Assumption is the church of the archangel Michael, built nearly in the same form, surmounted also with five cupolas, enriched with a splendid iconostase and many relics of great renown. The Church of the Assumption is paved with agate, loaded with gold and silver gilt, and covered on every side with figures of apostles and martyrs, among whom appear some Greek philosophers, which seems to me a proof of rare toleration.

It is true that the images of the saints are surrounded with an aureola, while those of the sages

of antiquity do not wear this sign of celestial glory, so the good people of Moscow can still recognize them.

A few steps from this first space, toward the quarter called the ditaigorod, is certainly the most grotesque, most astonishing building in existence: a church of two stories, composed of twenty chapels, surmounted by sixteen towers of unequal form and size—this, like an incipient belfry, that pointed like a needle, another twisted like the folds of a turban, a fourth cut like an artichoke, a fifth adorned with three rows of round stones, a sixth surmounted by a globe like one of our honest village steeples, and with a Greek cross placed on a crescent; all these cupolas, all these towers, painted of divers colors, red and blue, like the beads of a chapel.

It is impossible to tell, on looking at this church, where the principal door is, the altar, or the nave; on which side it commences and which ends. It is a genuine fantastic tale. It was built in the year 1554, in memory of the capture of Kasan.—The prince who had ordered its construction was so enraptured with it, that, for fear the architect would decorate some other country with a similar chief d'œuvre, he had his eyes put out.

This was Ivan IV., surnamed the Terrible.—Two eyes more or less in his principality were of little consequence, and he was sure, by taking this course, to have an unique church, unique to such a degree that the most disorderly churches of Moscow appear very reasonable beside this assemblage of cones, bulbs, and excrescences.

The ramparts of the Kremlin, which inclose so many sacred edifices, also contain the palaces and the treasures of the czars, the former remarkable for galleries terraced like steps and terminating in a narrow belvedere. The most curious to visit is that which is called the Red Palace.

It contains all the crowns of the various countries subjugated by Russia, from that of Kasan to that of Poland, the globes, scepters, thrones of the czars, the garments which the emperors wear but once, on the day of their coronation, the whole history of the Russian empire contained in its insignia of monarchy, all the gifts offered to the ancient czars of Moscow and their successor by the chiefs of hordes and princes whom they had conquered, and the large golden vases on which the bourgeoisie of Moscow offer bread and salt every time the emperor deigns to honor it with a visit.

One should be a lapidary or jeweler in order to describe suitably the brilliancy and value of these innumerable bouquet of emeralds, sapphires, brilliants; these strings of pearls and necklaces of diamonds. I have seen the guardian of this storehouse exhaust himself in efforts to dazzle my eyes with the sight of this Asiatic luxury, and I noted only three articles which awoke in me any emotion.

The heavy and large boots of Peter the Great, in which the worthy emperor himself had driven a couple of nails when the heel threatened to become separated from the sole; the rude litter on which Charles XII caused himself to be carried from rank to rank in the midst of his troops, on the day of his terrible battle of Pultawa, and the book containing the constitution of Poland, which Nicholas offered as a holocaust at the feet of Alexander.

Another hall is filled with swords and casques, bucklers and armor, enameled, gilt, carved, with Oriental taste and exquisite art. But their heavy armor, these two-handed swords, these arquebuses with wheels, are but child's playthings, compared with the three gigantic cannon placed at the entrance of the arsenal. One has an open mouth as if it would swallow a whole regiment at once—the two others are as long as if they would throw their bullets from Moscow to Constantinople.

All three have but one small inconvenience—that they can never be used in a battle. Unfortunately there are near them others which have done glorious service, and on which I cast a side glance. They are those which our poor soldiers, dying with cold, abandoned with fainting hands on their frozen route, and which the Russians had time to collect.

Beside the Palace of the Czars is the Palace of the Patriarchs, narrow, gloomy, and full of a quantity of mitres, crosses of gold and silver gilt, garments loaded with pearls and rubies, which the monks display with pride. There is also the library of the synod, composed wholly of Greek and Slavic works, among which I was shown a very beautiful manuscript of Homer, which the librarian acknowledged he had never read, so that he did not know how far it conformed to the printed text.

And the bell! I was about to quit the Kremlin without speaking of the famous bell. I hasten to say that I saw it, no longer half buried in the ground as formerly, but placed on a pretty granite pedestal by a French engineer. The dimensions of this bell have been indicated in all statistics—it is twenty feet high and twenty-two in diameter.—If it had been cast three centuries sooner, the joyous curate of Mendon could not have chosen a more suitable bell for the mare of Gargantua.

The Kremlin communicates with the city by five gates, adorned with images and illustrated by some heroic or religious legend. There are two of them whose aspect alone inspires the people with the most profound respect. One is the gate of St. Nicholas.

An ancient picture of the saint, framed under a glass, decorates this gate, and an inscription placed on the wall reports that, in the explosion of 1812, while the ramparts of the Kremlin trembled, while the arsenal was overthrown, and the tower and gate of St. Nicholas rent from top to bottom, the image of the saint and the glass which covered it remained unharmed. I leave you to imagine the exclamations at this miracle, and with what pious glances the Russian peasant contemplates this palpable testimony of the favor of Heaven.—So from morning till evening people throng to this entrance, crossing themselves, and lighting before the fortunate St. Nicholas candles and lamps.

The other gate is still more venerated. It is

ornamented with a gloomy picture, the features of which can scarcely be distinguished, and which represents the Savior. Before this frame, blackened by time, is a rude lamp suspended to a massive chain, a genuine prison lamp; never did virgin's head, encircled with brilliants and sapphires, never did iconostase, bearing on its broad wings all the Old and New Testaments, inspire so lively a sentiment of devotion as this somber picture, incrust-d in the wall and hid behind this antique lamp.

It is related that it once arrested an invasion of the Tartars by its marvelous power, and preserved the city from their ravages. They arrived in triumph, imagining themselves already enriched with the spoils of the merchants and enthroned as proud conquerors at the Kremlin; they turned back confused and terrified; the holy picture had spread terror in their hearts and disorder in their ranks. It is also said that when the French, more intrepid than the Tartars, invaded Moscow, they attempted to seize this sacred picture, which they could not, in spite of all their efforts, take or destroy.

There is another history connected with the same gate which does it less honor. Under the reign of Catherine, when the plague broke out at Moscow, the people, decimated, terrified, having no longer any confidence in the physicians who attempted to come to their succor, or in the regimen they prescribed, bethought themselves of this miraculous picture as the only remedy which remained to preserve them from the scourge.

The whole population then precipitated themselves with a sort of frenzy toward this relic, disputed for it, seized it, pressed it to their hearts, covered it with kisses. The bishop, judging that this crowd, this contact of thousands of individuals, could but augment and propagate the germs of contagion, attempted to remove this object of a worship so dangerous; he was massacred on the spot. Some time after the plague ceased, the people attributed their safety to their piety.

The picture of the Savior was restored to its former place, and venerated more than ever. The gate that it decorates is called the holy gate; no Russian can pass through it without making the sign of the cross, and no foreigner, of whatever religion he may be, can pass it with impunity without uncovering his head. Not far from these is an image of the Virgin surrounded with a halo of military glory. It made the campaign of 1812, and to it was attributed the retreat of our unfortunate soldiers.

I should never have done if I attempted to relate these legends and adorations of the Greek Church. It is here that the piety of the Russian nation appears in all its primitive strength and simplicity. At Petersburg it is affected by the influence of a capital, by the variety of churches and worship, by the incessant contact of a multitude of foreigners.

Besides, it can not be exercised over so large a space, before monument so sacred. Moscow is therefore its true sphere. It is there that the most precious relics are found; there that miracles—that child of faith, as Goethe calls it—is perpetuated from generation to generation, dazzles the eyes and subjects the intelligence of the multitude. In fine, it is there that the nation has preserved, by another miracle, in the midst of the society more or less skeptical and corrupt of the nobles and the great, its faith intact, its religious thought, and its simple fervor.

Moscow is its sanctuary, its metropolis; it uncovers its head as it beholds from afar the ancient city; it calls her its mother, its holy city, and these two titles express at once all the tenderness which it feels for her and the respectful sentiment with which she inspires it.

On the evenings of fete days and Sundays, when the bells are all ringing, the peals from monasteries and cathedrals sounding from one extremity of the city to the other, one should see the thousands of men, women, and children who throng around the contracted oratories and little chapels, undulate through the streets and on the squares of the Kremlin, run from church to church to cover with kisses the relics of the saints; one should see them strike their breasts before the images of gold and silver, prostrate themselves before the monks, light lamps and candles before a head of Christ or the Virgin, and throw themselves with their faces to the ground.

All that I have heard related of the practices of the Spaniards, of their prayer, of their pious manifestations, or, if you please, of their superstitions, seems to me comparable with what may be seen here two hundred times a year.

During the time I passed at Moscow, I went every day to the Kremlin, and never wearied of contemplating its churches, its palaces. I descended every day into the city, and, on whatever side I directed myself, I was sure to find on my route the newest and most diversified scenes.—The city, burned in 1812, has preserved almost entirely, in its reconstruction, the architectural character which formerly distinguished it.

In certain places only the old walls were raised, thrown down by the conflagration; in others the houses have been only enlarged or raised; there are the same tortuous streets, the same irregular squares, and the same mixture of grand edifices and obscure habitations, coach-houses, and gardens. The police, which in Russia meddles with so many things, have not yet, it seems, interfered in the plans of building.

It has not determined the regularity of the houses, the height of the facades, the locations of great or small proprietors. Each has built his nest, here or there as it seemed good to him, with cathedral arches or attic windows, carved balconies or simple wooden stairways. You emerge from a rich warehouse, where you have seen displayed all the riches of modern industry, and find yourself before a miserable shop, where the long-bearded moujik, dressed like his ancestors, sells in the same manner, with the same eloquence, the same coarse products which were sold there two hundred years ago.

You admire the extent of a public edifice, the

pillars, the balustrades of a great nobleman's house, and your glance falls on a poor, contracted, and pitiful shop, which leans on the palace like a trembling shrub on the trunk of the oak. You have just traversed a quarter built with symmetry, decorated with art, and you say: Here is indeed a beautiful and great city! Takes a few steps farther, and you might think yourself in the midst of a poor village.

Taxes on Knowledge in England.

When newspaper were first known in England, only a very brave or a very craven man could publish one without interminable difficulty. In the seventeenth century there was a censorship imposed upon the press, which threatened a publisher with the pillory, with the loss of his ears, or with a brand of the letters "S. L." (Seditious Libeller) upon his cheek, according to the discretion of the government officials whose ire he might awaken.

In 1693 this censorship was abolished, and for eighteen years the press enjoyed comparative freedom. The publisher was required to be careful about allusions to members of Parliament, under penalty of fine or imprisonment, but he could publish as much news as he pleased, and comment as his judgment dictated.

This freedom encouraged editors and publishers, and then fairly began the newspaper—the paper of intelligence, and of opinions. The development of the press led those in power, who feared it, to devise ways and means for its restraint.—Force dare not be employed—public opinion was too strong to allow it. After much speculation and discussion, pecuniary restraint was decided upon.

In the year 1712, in the reign of Queen Anne, it was ordered that all new papers should be stamped. Every journal published at intervals of less than twenty-eight clear days, must be printed upon paper stamped by the government. But before this stamp could be impressed, the parties who required it had to appear before the Solicitor of the Stamp Office, or his Deputy, make a declaration as to the persons who are the printers, proprietors, and publishers of the paper, and enter into securities against libels. The smallest change of proprietorship involved the necessity of a fresh declaration; so did any change in the printing and publishing. There was a penalty for printing any newspaper before such declaration was made, and for copy printed upon unstamped paper, a further penalty could be recovered.

These stamps were imposed with the avowed intention of "checking the licentiousness of the press." The first levy was to the extent of one half-penny upon each single sheet. Gradually it was raised, until in 1836, and for many years before, it had amounted to four-pence for each stamp, less twenty per cent. discount. This last deduction rarely reaching the newspaper proprietors, whom it was intended to benefit, but being quietly taken by the manufacturers who sent in the paper to the stamp office to be stamped.

In addition to the stamp duty, a tax of twenty-four cents was levied on advertisements.—Whenever the government was hard pressed for money, it directed its fiscal energies toward newspapers. The poor publishers endeavored to evade the taxes, but with poor success. They were closely watched. In 1780, the government did indeed afford them help. There was a great demand for news, and papers were much borrowed. In order to protect the printer, a law was passed, declaring whoever lent out a newspaper for hire, was liable to a fine of five dollars.

Strenuous efforts were made, for many years, to obtain the total remission, or, at all events, a large reduction of the four-penny newspaper tax. In the Parliamentary session of 1836, the newspaper stamp was reduced to one penny for each journal not exceeding a certain quantity of print, and one half-penny for each supplement of not more than half that quantity. When the stamp duty was lowered, it was enacted that each newspaper should be stamped with a distinctive die, bearing its own name.

This came into operation Jan. 1st, 1837, and had the special object of correctly ascertaining the circulation of each journal. Previously, many of the London papers, anxious to show a large circulation, used to take out vast quantities of stamped paper, dispose of it to provincial journals at a slight discount, and rest content with obtaining, at that small cost, the reputation—of much avail among advertisers—of enjoying a larger sale than they really had.

In 1853, it was enacted that a one-sheet supplement to a stamped newspaper should be free of stamp duty, and that there should be a duty of only one half-penny on a further supplement.—The effect of this reduction was greatly felt, by, and in favor of the Times, the only journal which made any pretense of printing supplements, in order to "bring up" its advertisements. In March, 1850, there were issued three double supplements in one week.

Coincident with the reduction of the newspaper stamp duty, in 1836, was that of the advertisement duty. This, which had been three shillings and sixpence (eighty-four cents) upon each advertisement, long or short, was then brought down to one shilling and sixpence. But, by the act of 1853, the advertisement duty was wholly removed. The stamp duty, therefore, was the only tax (except the impost upon paper) to which British journalism was then subject.

The total number of newspaper stamps issued in Great Britain in 1835, was 35,823,859. In 1837 (the year next after the reduction), the amount was 53,897,926. In 1848, the year of European revolutions, as many as 86,500,000 were issued, and in the year ending April, 1854, the aggregate amount was nearly 90,000,000, showing clearly that the reduction of the stamp duty, causing a corresponding reduction in the price of the papers, was the immediate cause of and enlargement of their circulations.

When the Committee of the House of Commons