

prayer was in process, the people were one moment lying flat on the floor, and the next on their knees crossing themselves and mumbling a chant. All of a sudden the priest produced a Bible. A general rush was made to kiss this. The priest passing from one to another, pushed it up in my face. I drew back with a "no thanks." Old women with a year's growth of dirt on their faces, children with lines from their nose down, and respectable people all kissed the Bible. If they all made the gain one fellow did their would be a little reason in it. In one of the church emblems was a large diamond of great virtue. One day a devout man reverently kissed the image and when he arose the stone was missing. A glass case is over the image now the bird has flown. The man was never caught.

Paintings in the churches are dressed in gold and silver clothes with nothing but the face showing and that through a layer or two of gold. The light from the Savior's head is made by diamonds, emeralds, pearls, etc., some amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars. On every other corner there is a small box used as a church with crosses, etc., inside. When the people pass the off their hats and devoutly cross themselves a number of times. I stood out for a couple of hours watching the people pass a large church called The Lady of Kazan on one of the busy streets. Here comes a fellow drunk as a lord. He through force of habit jerks a cross across his breast. And staggers on to get his next drink. Here comes a street car with all the seats on top full up. Off comes every hat, and the hand move is on. It puts me in mind of the morning exercise I used to go through in school. When one considers that only five per cent of the people know how to read or write, you can't wonder their ignorance. Merchants sign their cross to checks for thousands not being able to write their own name. On coming out of St. Isaac's church there are a number of nuns standing at the door begging alms I saw a lady pass without contributing anything. And the way they shook their fists at her, and the language, which sounded pretty strong, did not seem very saintly. After that I did not dare to sneak out. So I gave them a good tip. Talk about contortionists. They bowed down to the ground. I was just going to save one from falling, as I thought, but she straightened up with a smile, blessing me in Russian.

It does seem as though the man who from outward appearance is rich, gets the most blessings promised him. An old seaman minister I met in Denmark said if I would make a donation to a fund he was getting up I would be blessed in all my travels. I don't know whether I am or not.

Among the most interesting sights in St. Petersburg is the Winter Palace, the czar's winter residence. Its fixtures are the finest I have ever seen, Versailles excepted. The best thing seen inside are the crown jewels. Among them is the famous Orloff diamond, the largest in the world, weighing 194½ carats more than the Koh-i-noor. Its history can be traced back to its being stolen from an Indian idol by a sailor, eventually getting into the hands of Count Orloff. The count paid \$60,000 in gold to an Armenian merchant, gave him an annuity of \$1,600 and secured him a patent of nobility. A good bargain for the Armenian. The count then gave it to Catharine.

Adjoining the palace is the hermitage. One of the finest collections of paintings and museum's in the world. Among the noted artists' works there are a great number of Rembrandts, Rubens, Van Dyke, Murillo and many more noted artists. The museum is small but

every foot interesting and valuable. Here you can see relics of Peter the Great, Catharine II, and other notabilities. Catharine was one of the greatest rulers Russia has ever had. A stateswoman of the first water. To get the throne she had her husband, Peter the III, imprisoned, and then murdered. A great many of her subjects were dispatched in a like manner, who were unlucky enough to gain her displeasure. But taking her reign, through Russia prospered through her. Here in the Hermitage are a thousand and one things of interest. It would take up too much space to go into details. There are two galleries of modern art which are well worth a visit. The royal carriages are the finest in the world. Some of them are covered with paintings with the coat of arms set in diamonds. Among the collection is the carriage Alexander the III was blown up in by anarchists. The seat and the whole back part are in splinters. The anarchists are rather quiet at present. Whether it is because the present czar is trying to further the interests of the common people or not, there seems to be little fear at present.

Among other things are the numerous palaces in and about town which are very fine, especially Peterhof, the czar's summer residence. The town here are as good as those at Versailles, Paris.

Last in my short synopsis but not least is the Church of St. Peter and Paul. Here all the rulers of Russia, with one exception, are buried, from Peter down. The royal tombs are very plain, just covered with plain marble box of no great size, with the name, birth and death engraved on the end in small characters. You hardly realize, in standing over the tomb of Peter the Great that he lies beneath such a plain covering. He was a great man, but considerable of the barbarian. After his day's work he used to get drunk; and as he often said, "I have reformed Russia but not myself. His heavy drinking brought on his early death. But whatever he was he has left a name behind, also a monument in the shape of the city he founded, which bears his name. That will last for ages.

RAYMOND McCUNE.

IN CHARGE OF A PRESIDING ELDER

The Second ward meeting house was crowded Sunday evening, and many people were unable to gain an entrance, some of whom remained standing in front of the building. There were probably between four and five hundred in the congregation.

The presidency of the Stake were all in attendance. President Partridge presided. After singing and prayer President Partridge explained the object of the visit of the presidency, as was generally known, was to present the name of a man to succeed Bishop Evan Wride as the Bishop of the ward. He stated that it had been considered advisable by the presidency to make a change in the bishopric and Bishop Wride had presented his resignation, which had been accepted. President Partridge spoke favorably of the good qualities Elder Wride had exhibited as a Bishop and suggested that the congregation signify their appreciation of Elder Wride's labors by a vote, which was unanimously given. He further stated that the presidency of this Stake had selected a man for the office made vacant by Elder Wride's resignation. This selection had been sustained by the High Council of the Stake and approved by the higher authority in the Church. A petition had, however, been received by the Stake

presidency, upon which they were unable to take any action.

Elder Reed Smoot read the petition, which was signed by 334 members of the ward. The petition in effect set forth that the signers had learned that Bishop Wride, on account of financial difficulties, had been influenced to present his resignation, and requested the presidency not to accept it, or if they had done so to reconsider their action, as the petitioners were desirous of retaining Elder Wride as Bishop. The petition also stated that the petitioners were convinced that if Elder Wride had erred, it was under circumstances over which he had no control, and that whatever mistakes he had made were of the head and not of the heart.

President Partridge again addressed the congregation, explaining the order of the Church in selecting men for office, and the duties and privileges of the Saints in sustaining those selected to preside by their votes and by their faith and prayers. The man whom the Stake presidency had selected was a good man, and, the speaker believed, with the support of the people, would make a good Bishop. If, however, they did not feel to sustain the selection made, it was their privilege to so signify. After naming Elder Bengt Johnson Jr. as the man selected for the position, a vote was taken, showing 90 in favor of sustaining Elder Johnson and 50 or 57 (the tellers disagreed) against sustaining him.

President Partridge expressed the opinion that under the circumstances it would be unjust to Elder Johnson to place him in the position of Bishop, as a large majority had not voted either way, and the speaker took it for granted that those who had failed to vote were not in favor of the appointment. The next thing to do was to appoint a presiding Elder until such a time as the people of the ward could unite upon some man whom they would sustain as Bishop, as the presidency of the Stake had done all they could do in the matter.

Elder S. P. Eggertsen Jr. was thereupon unanimously sustained as presiding Elder. Elder Eggertsen was one of Bishop Wride's counselors.

The financial difficulties referred to in the petition as the cause of Bishop Wride's resignation grew out of a shortage in his accounts as county treasurer, which position he filled previous to 1897. The deficit has been covered into the county treasury, Mr. Wride raising all the means he could for that purpose by disposing of his property, and the balance being contributed by the sureties on his official bond. He claims, and it is very generally believed by all his acquaintances, irrespective of party or creed, that he does not know how the shortage occurred. As a Bishop he has been very energetic in ministering to the needy and helping and encouraging the sick and unfortunate among his flock, and the sympathy of the people over whom he has presided has in turn been extended to him in his unpleasant position.

OUR COMMERCIAL PROGRESS.

New York, Aug. 15.—A special to the Tribune from Washington says:

The rapid gain of the United States in her invasion of the commerce of the world is intelligently discussed by the British consul at Stockholm, Sweden, by the aid of an important series of statistical tables just issued by the Swedish government covering the commerce and production of the world in a series of five year periods. These tables, which have attracted much attention by reason of the extensive resources, are discussed by Consul Constable in a special report to the British government, a copy of