

## MISCELLANEOUS.

## RUSSIA ON THE PACIFIC.

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**P**RIVATE letters which I have just received from the capital of Corea state that the Russian surveyors are exploring the harbor of Gensan, on the east coast of Corea.

This harbor is one of the finest on the Pacific. It is in about the middle of the east coast of the Korean peninsula, half way between Fusan and Vladivostock. It is open throughout the winter, and the Russians want it to use as a terminus for the Trans-Siberian railroad. Vladivostock, their present harbor, is on the southeastern edge of Siberia, and it is frozen up for about five months of the year, so that no ships can land, and so that the Pacific is practically shut off from Siberia during the winter. I visited both harbors last summer, and it was from Gensan that I sailed to Vladivostock in order to investigate the condition of the Trans-Siberian railroad. If the Russians should seize north-eastern Corea, as is supposed to be their intention from the fact of the above survey, Gensan will be one of the most important ports of Asia. Its harbor is large enough to float the navies of the world, and already there is a great trade connected with it. The gold mines in Corea lie not far off, and the country surrounding it, though it is mountainous, has many well-cultivated valleys. It has now a population of about a thousand Japanese and fifteen thousand Coreans. It has a missionary station, and Russian, German and Danish exporting houses. It has a little Japanese hotel, where I stopped while I waited for the steamer, and it has one Japanese bank. This bank, however, has not much faith in foreign letters of credit. It cost me three hundred thousand cash (or about one hundred dollars) to make my trip across the country, and I landed in Gensan with fifteen silver dollars in my pocket. I had a letter of credit with me, and I tried to get some money on it at the Japanese bank. They looked it over and jabbered in Japanese, but at last gave it back to me and told me they could give me nothing. I tried to get trusted by the Japanese steamship agency for my passage. They looked at the letter of credit and then looked at me, and told me it was no go. The fare was just fourteen dollars to Vladivostock, and by persuading my hotel keeper to wait until I came back I was able to buy a ticket and have one dollar left for incidentals. The ship was the Tokyo Maru, one of the greatest of the

Japanese steamers, which runs from Koke, Japan, to Siberia regularly. It was about two thousand tons, I judge, and though the sailors were Japanese, the officers were English. The accommodations were good and after a voyage of two days we found ourselves in the great harbor of Vladivostock.

## THE VLADIVOSTOCK HARBOR.

Vladivostock is the key to eastern Siberia. It is the great Russian city of the east, and is one of the most strongly fortified towns on the globe. It is the chief Russian naval station on the Pacific, and it is now the terminus of the Siberian railway. It fairly swarms with soldiers and officials. The military governor of eastern Siberia, including millions of square miles, lives here, and it has an admiral who governs the shipping, and who is independent of the governor. It has scores of police, and you can't throw a stone without hitting a general. The town now contains about 20,000 people, in addition to a large garrison of soldiers. It grows like a green bay tree and it is a slice of European Russia spread out over the mountains of Siberia. The houses are of brick, stone, and wood, and it has many fine buildings. It has magnificent dry docks, and its new floating docks admit of the largest vessels being laid up for repairs. An immense ocean steamer was under repair during my stay, and the harbor was filled with all kinds of shipping, including two Russian men-of-war and an American sailing vessel from San Francisco. This last had brought a cargo of wheat and flour to Vladivostock, and the captain, who was a bright young fellow from Maine, came on board to inquire his best route home by way of Japan.

## THE KEY TO SIBERIA.

There is no more picturesque bay on the Pacific than that of Vladivostock. It would float the navies of the world, and you could put all the shipping that comes into Liverpool in a year within it, and have room to spare. It is known as the Gulf of Peter the Great, and it has a length of about fifty miles, while its width at the entrance is more than one hundred miles. This gulf is divided into two large bays by a hilly peninsula, and the Russians call the straits which separate this peninsula from the islands in front of it the Eastern Bosphorus. Vladivostock is on the peninsula, which they call the Golden Horn, and the city has quite as beautiful a location as Constantinople. I lived on the ship during the week that I spent in Vladivostock, as there are no good hotels. We were anchored about two miles from the shore, and were in a harbor surrounded by hills, and spread out in the shape of a fan, with Vladivostock built upon the handle. On all sides of us were great fortifications, and the hills were crowned with what looked like immense factories or machine shops. They had many windows, and an army of men was continually marching about them. These are the barracks of the Russian soldiers, of whom there are 8,000 in this city alone. Two thousand of these belong to marines, and the other 6,000 are of land forces. I saw other barracks and soldiers in my trip over the Trans-Siberian railroad, and there are now, I

am told, about 30,000 soldiers in eastern Siberia, or more than we have in our army.

## RUSSIA ON THE PACIFIC.

As soon as the ship came to anchor I took a boat and was rowed to the shore. We went through all kinds of shipping. There were great Russian steamers from Odessa, on the Black sea, which were filled with immigrants and stores. There were ships from Japan, in the passenger and carrying trade, and there were hundreds of Chinese junks, which had sails like bats' wings, and which had brought vegetables and fruits from Chefoo and Shanghai, for sale. There were Corean boats, with straight sails and wooden anchors, and there were dozens of Chinese sampans, which were sculled through the water by swarthy Tartars. It was in one of these that I rowed to the shore. At the landing I seemed to have gotten into a mixture of China and Russia. There were droschky men, who wore hats like inverted spittoons and who had long blue gowns, for all the world like the coachman I saw in St. Petersburg three years ago. Their horses were Russian stallions, and their cabs were driven like mad through the streets. There were Chinamen by the hundred, who had come to Siberia to work for the summer, and there were dozens of Coreans, with packs on their backs, ready to take my baggage up to the city. I hired a droschky and took a ride through the streets. The roads were as muddy as those of the Black Swamp, and our two horses went on the gallop. We first drove through the main street of the city. This is about two miles long, and the town runs around the hills on the edge of the harbor. The houses are of two stories, with wide porches in front of them, and there are some substantial business blocks. The biggest houses of the place outside of the barracks are those of the governor general, the police station and the new railroad depot.

## A CALL UPON THE POLICE.

My first call was, of course, upon the police. You can do nothing in Siberia without a passport, and I knew I would be in danger of arrest until I had had an interview with the chief of the police. I had letters of introduction to Mr. J. Bryner, a wealthy Swiss, who had married a Russian lady, and who has one of the biggest houses in Siberia. He has large interests in timber and mines, and he is one of the most influential men in the country. It is with him that I went to call upon the high military officer who governs all police matters of this port. The police station is a big, two-story, red brick building, which looks for all the world like a country court house, and which is surrounded by soldiers and policemen. We took off our coats and our rubbers and combed our hair with our fingers before we went in to call upon the officials. We went through room after room, filled with pompous soldiers, until we came into the presence of a short, stocky man, with a head like a cannon ball, and with eyes as sharp as a shoemaker's awl. This was Col. F. Petroff, the chief of police, without whose assistance you can do nothing in eastern Siberia. Every permit has to pass through him, and my passport, vised by the Russian minister in Corea, was laid before him, while Mr. Bryner introduced me as a respectable American citizen and his friend. Nothing was said about