

put it negatively, it was decided that we should take her there in easy stages.

We left Wiesbaden June 1st, and arrived in St. Petersburg May 19th! This apparently retrograde movement was due to the difference in the Russian calendar.

A few quaint, picturesque wooden houses, owned by English people, some peasants' huts, a fair-sized, brightly-painted Church, two or three shops, a post office, and a public-house. This constituted the little village of Mourino, on the borders of Finland, 12 miles from St. Petersburg. The country is flat and uninteresting; the only relief afforded to the dead level of ugliness is by this little English settlement. Former generations had laid out the gardens, and planted the trees, making the whole a pretty fertile spot.

And here it was that my patient, scarcely four weeks later, passed away in her own home, among her own relations. Our worst fears on behalf of her husband, were, happily, not realised; long years of practical self-control, and self-discipline, had probably saved him from that; and yet no man could have been more attached to his wife than he was.

We turned the dining-room into a Chapelle ardente, and the Chaplain gave us a private Celebration on the morning of the funeral. The English Church at St. Petersburg is situated on the "English Quay"; it is only an "upper room furnished," nevertheless, it is a beautiful Church, of a fair size. A very fine mosaic, representing the Ascension, forms the reredos, supported by two fluted Corinthian pillars; this is flanked on either side by the Annunciation, and the Nativity, also in mosaic; I believe they are all memorials. There are also several beautiful stained-glass windows.

The first part of the funeral service was held here, and then we laid my patient to rest in the English-German cemetery.

The Russian language is soft and pretty, but difficult. I have been told that not many Russians, except the highly educated, speak and write their own language correctly; and 75 per cent. of the population cannot read and write at all! As a consequence of this, shopkeepers paint their wares on the outside shutters, for the benefit of the unlearned; this gives a curiously quaint appearance to the towns and villages, St. Petersburg itself not excepted. Should it be a dairy, you will be sure to see a cow, some eggs, and one or two barn-door fowls! If a grocer, there will probably be packets of candles, a tea-caddy, and a loaf of black bread—a country grocer sells bread.

Russia is becoming slowly, but surely, more enlightened, education is compulsory, so, no doubt, this queer custom will die out in course of time.

Undoubtedly, one loses much of the enjoyment of being in a foreign country if one cannot speak the language; so, having resolved that I would not leave the country until I had acquired some knowledge of its soft, pretty, and musical language, I furnished myself with an elementary book, which became my inseparable companion, and so acquired a little, sufficient at any rate to ask the servants for what I wanted; and it was, indeed, a proud moment for me, when I was told

I spoke with a good accent; whether it was true or not I don't know, but I swallowed it, and liked it!

The Russians speak of people by their patronymics in all classes. For instance, you would not go into the kitchen and ask for a glass of hot milk for Mrs. W., you would ask the cook for a glass of hot milk for Ida, the daughter of Robert! That Robert had been dead 30 years made no difference! This sounds odd enough in English, but extremely pretty in Russian.

One day I was asked to go and see the gardener's wife who was ill. Now, the few words and sentences that I know of the language did not seem to apply in her case, and no one offered to come and interpret for me; so, guessing what was amiss, I looked up one word, which I used interrogatively! That was enough, the rest we did by signs and smiles. I then prescribed what I knew would make her better or worse; fortunately for my reputation, it made her better!

On another occasion, one single word served a good purpose for me. While in St. Petersburg, where I spent a week, seeing the sights, etc., I wanted to hear full choral Mass in the Greek Church, so I went one Sunday, only to find, when I arrived, the Church quite filled up to the west door by a standing congregation. They only stand and kneel in the Greek Church.

I had come to see and to hear, and I was determined to do both, so, putting my hand upon the shoulder of everyone who stood in my way, I said, with a smile, "Pahzhadlooista" (if you please), and they immediately made way for me, and I walked up to the top of the Church, and stood in front of the Sanctuary. The uniform of an English nurse is uncommon in St. Petersburg, therefore, I was something of a *rara avis*!

About six priests assisted at this service, clad in gorgeous gold-embroidered vestments, all with long hair, half-way down their backs, which looked strangely effeminate. Priests of the Greek Church are compelled to wear their hair long, in imitation of the Saviour. The singing is beautifully rendered, in harmony, and always without the aid of an organ accompaniment.

BEATRICE KENT.

(To be continued.)

All the schemes for the great exhibition in connection with the Emperor of Austria's diamond jubilee next year have now fallen through. The Burgomaster of Vienna proposes instead to spend £440,000 in reforming and extending the Vienna hospital system.

The Charities Register and Digest reports that the total income of charitable institutions last year was considerably over £10,000,000. Such figures convey an idea of the enormous sums continually being collected from charitably disposed persons, whilst the cry heard on all sides for help seems just as despairing as ever. Nearly £4,000,000 of the total income was made up by charitable contributions, and the balance by interest in invested funds, legacies, industrial receipts, and similar sources.

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