

THE CAPITAL OF RUSSIA.

St. Petersburg, the present capital of the Russian Empire, now containing a population of about 350,000, is little more than a century old, having been founded by Peter the Great, in 1703, when he raised with his own hands the first hut, which is still preserved for the inspection of the curious. The first brick house was built in 1710, and in 1712 the residence of the Emperor was transferred from Moscow to the new city, which was named St. Petersburg, after the patron saint of its founder. The approach to the city is through a wild and desert country. There are neither country seats nor gardens in the environs of this large town. The steeples are not sufficiently high to be seen at a distance. The entrance is under a wooden barrier, and for a mile the traveller drives through a street of small wooden houses. Turning an angle he finds himself on a bridge over the blue Neva, having before him the Admiralty, the winter palace of the Emperor, the Hermitage, the Marble Palace, and a succession of magnificent buildings on the granite quay. No dirty lanes or paltry huts are to be seen, the ground being the property of the Emperor or the nobles. Most of the houses are built on piles, as in Holland, the ground not being sufficiently firm for a stone foundation without them.

Most of the original edifices have been destroyed by time or by fire; and none of the principal streets are now permitted to be built of wood. The usual material is brick, well stuccoed; and the proprietors being compelled to renew the outer wash once a year, the buildings always look new. The modern houses are built on piles, the ground being marshy. They are lofty, and generally very handsome, with roofs nearly flat, sheeted with iron, painted red or green. They are all numbered, and the name of the proprietor is on each door. The ground floors are chiefly shops, the first and second floors being occupied by families. The panes of glass in the windows are as large as six feet by four feet and upwards, so that each appears a separate window. At the corner of each street is a policeman, in a gentry box. Three large and several small canals, studded with bridges of cast iron and granite, facilitate the intercourse between the different parts of the city, whose circumference on the banks of the Neva, is nearly twenty miles; though scarcely a fourth part of the area is covered with buildings. The waters of the Neva are perfectly blue and transparent, and reflect the long line of Grecian pillars on the banks. The river, at the broadest part, is about three quarters of a mile wide, and is deep enough for heavy ships; but a bar across the mouth prevents vessels drawing more than seven feet from going higher up. Near the Isaac bridge, in the centre of the city, is the famous bronze equestrian statue of Peter the Great, weighing sixteen tons, and resting on a piece of granite of nearly 1,500 tons, being the largest block ever moved by art.

The royal residences are so numerous that St. Petersburg may well be called the city of palaces.

LAND AND SEA FORCES OF RUSSIA.—The Russian army is gigantic on paper, and, no doubt, effectively most formidable. The following is the official return:—72 regiments of infantry, 24 of light cavalry, 90 batteries of foot, and 12 of horse artillery. Each regiment consists of seven battalions of 1000 each, so that the infantry alone, if complete, would contain above 500,000 men. The guards, composed of the prime pick of the whole population, consists of 12 regiments of infantry, 12 of cavalry, 12 batteries of foot, and 4 of horse artillery. Besides these there are 24 regiments of heavy reserve horse artillery, and the armies of the Caucasus, Oruberg, Siberia, Finland, and the interior, containing 100 battalions of 1000 men each, 40 regiments of cavalry, and 36 batteries of cannon. Then follow 164 regiments of Cossacks, of 800 horsemen each. If these regiments were complete, the total would give 800,000 infantry, 250,000 horse soldiers, and 100,000 artillery-men.

Sebastopol has four ports: the first three have 120 guns each, and the fourth 400 guns; but Mr. Oliphant, a recent traveller, says that if they were fired, the fortifications would tumble down, so inadequately are they built. There are in the Black Sea, four Russian three-deckers of 120 guns each, one of which is old and not sea-worthy; eleven liners with from 80 to 84 guns; five frigates of 54, and two of 48 guns; three sloops of 36, and four of 24 guns; ten brigs of 18, eight of 14, five of twelve, and five of 10 guns. There are also

Ladies' Department.

ROSA AND THE THRUSHES.

With beating heart and noiseless tread,
Fred, through the window peeping,
Saw Rosa dear, with cheeks so red,
Her little pantry sweeping;
But Freddy saw another sight,
That wasn't quite so pleasant—
Her mother, just to keep things right,
Was with her daughter present.

Now Fred, though but a timid lad,
As oft revealed by blushes,
A very cunning whistle had,
Clear as a singing thrush's;
So in a soft, and silvery tone,
The signal clear was sounded,
Which though by Rosa quickly known,
The mother quite confounded.

And Rose, in artless innocence,
Stepped out to fetch some water;
And Fred, for fear of accidents,
Went with the dutious daughter;
The spring was but a rod or so,
Just down beside the mountain—
Yet quite an hour it took to go,
And get back from the fountain.

The mother, frightened at the stay,
To seek her just was starting,
As Fred his prudence did display,
By kissing Rose and parting.
"What kept you so, my darling child?"
"Why, ma," said she, with blushes,
"I've had a chase so long and wild
After those pretty thrushes!"

"When you see a young lady so very delicate that she can't make her bed, or put a couple of plates up on the table, and yet trots all over town daily with the speed of a race-horse to mumble nonsense with the Scott-pates, and Snippers, and Jenkinsons, and Duzenberries, just chalk it down that she's a piece of calico you can't invest a single penny or pulsat on in. A girl who hasn't the muscle to lift three feathers and a pillow case, but can tire a locomotive and a whole omnibus line out of breath, is an institution that, like prussic acid and old maids, is to be kept clear of.—Young men will please button up the fact in their memory.

In the case of the young lady to whom we refer, the young gentlemen have buttoned the fact in their memory, and generally avoid her as one to be pitied. Let her learn the useful arts of kitchen life, and see how much more there is in life than she mistrusts.

In the olden time it used to be different, as we learn from the following song, whose moral we particularly commend to the can't make-a-bed portion of community:

I do not blame a bachelor,
If he leads a single life—
The way the girls are now brought up,
He can't support a wife.

Time was, when girls could card and spin,
And wash, and bake, and brew;
But now they have to keep a maid,
If they have ought to do.

I do not blame the bachelor—
His courage must be great,
To think to wed a modern miss,
If small be his estate.

Time was, when wives could help to buy
The land they'd help to till,
And saddle Dobbin, shell the corn,
And ride away to mill.

The bachelor is not to blame,
If he's a prudent man;
He now must lead a single life,
And do the best he can,

A PEEP INTO THE HAREM.

Mrs. Mackenzie gives us an insight into the state of things in a Mohammedan's "family," in her Eastern journal:—"From my frequent visits to Hasan Khan's family, where I can go when it is cool, I see a good deal of 'Life in the Harem,' and would refute authoritatively the five theories of Mr. Urquhart regarding the superior happiness of Mohammedan women. What can a man know of the matter? Did he go about visiting in the form of an old woman?—Had he friends and acquaintances in half-a-dozen Zenanas? Would any Mussulman woman speak freely with a Ferighi, even if he did obtain speech with her? or are the Turks to be taken as competent and impartial witnesses as to the relative happiness of their wives? I do not think so. I have seen a number of these

strongly felt by them, but it is not in human nature to be content with being only the fourth part of a man's wife. They are far from viewing the matter as we do, and I should suppose Hasan Khan's Renana a favorable specimen, as both Loila Bibi and Bibbi Ji seem very good tempered and very friendly to one another. Still as no man can love one or more equally, and as no woman can bear that another should share her husband's affections, I plainly see there are heart-burnings unnumbered, even in this family. Loila Bibi is the favorite, she is a very pretty, merry, clever little creature, who laughs and talks with Hasan Khan, much as an English wife would do. He is evidently very fond of her, but he takes not the slightest notice of poor Bibi Ji, who says nothing, but has an expression sometimes in her face which pains me to see. Luckily for her, she does not seem at all a sensible person; she is a good warm-hearted creature, not very bright. But then she has a little girl, and Loila Bibi who has been married four years has none. It is the old story of Hannah Peninah over again: the one is so anxious for children, and the other indirectly boasts of hers, by always talking of children, and pitying people who have none. Given a very slight knowledge of human nature, and we penetrate the closely veiled walls of seraglios. Selfishness and tyranny, disguise them as polished Oriental or crude Welsh Mormons may, will have the same result.



Youth's Department.

THE DRUNKARD'S CHILD'S REQUEST.

The drunkard's child came to his pa,
With looks so mild and sweet;
With eyes uplifted to his God,
Fell at his father's feet.

"O! father now believe your God:
Come, hear your son's request;
And vow, before the Lord above,
You'll put it to the test.

A happy family we were once,
When you the cup did hate;
But, oh! you've taken the social glass
(The vendor's *pois'nous bait*.)

My mother's gone to meet her God;
My sisters three have fled,
To meet that "ALL OMNIPOTENT,"
The "Judge of quick and dead."

My brother, that I loved so well,
Has filled a drunkard's grave:
O! father, leave those hellish ranks,
And join the "free and brave."

Come out! renounce your cursed cup,
Touch not a single drop:
To whisky's reign and rum's foul stain,
For ever put a stop.

The father heard this mild request;
And then, with tearful eye,
He drew his son unto his heart,
And said "My boy, I'll try."

Osbawa. J. E. D.
Yes; the words "I'll try" are the best, the wisest ever uttered by man or woman. We have only to TRY TO BE GOOD, to try to be temperate, and we will be so. Let a thing be resolved on, and it is more than half done already. Youths and fathers, mothers and daughters of Canada, try to be total abstainers, and you will soon become so.—*Editor Son.*

NORWICH, ENGLAND.—BANDS OF HOPE.—The visit of Mr. Gough to this city in the month of November last, has given a new impulse to the temperance cause, but in no respect have his labours proved more successful than in reference to the young. He most kindly gave a lecture to the children of Norwich. "Mr. Gough's entrance (says the Norfolk News) was greeted with loud applause, and the scene which was presented to him must have been highly gratifying; little hands were clapping, and little voices were welcoming him, in every corner of the spacious edifice (St. Andrew's Hall,) from its extreme east end to the very summit of the great orchestra. As soon as his applause had subsided the children sang

fully carried on. The principal Sunday Schools in the city have been visited by members of the Norwich Temperance Society, and the subject brought before the attention of the teachers. A meeting of delegates from various Sunday-schools has been held, and a Norwich Band of Hope committee formed, whose object is to promote the co-operation of existing Bands of Hope, and the formation of new ones. Already such societies have been established in connection with twelve schools, and it is expected that before long this number will be considerably increased. It is too soon to give any report of the numbers, but in the Wesleyan Reform Schools alone there are about 200, members.

The Bands of Hope which have been established are independent of one another in their management, but render mutual assistance in conducting their meetings. In most of the schools these meetings are held monthly, and in general a month's probation is required from those who desire to sign the pledge, in order that they may have time to consider the step they are taking, and obtain the consent of their parents. It is the intention of the committee to have occasionally a general gathering of the members of all the bands: one of the first acts of the committee was to call a meeting of Sunday-school teachers. This meeting, though not very numerously attended, was calculated to do good, comprising, as it did, teachers of Sunday-schools connected with the Church of England and the various denominations of Dissenters.

Mr. Gough's testimony is decided upon the point that, the present triumph of total abstinence principles in America, is owing to the inculcation of their principles in the minds of the young. If, in this country, Sunday-school teachers, and others who have the care of the young, are faithful in this respect, Total Abstinence principles must triumph here also. It may be added that the adoption of these principles by Sunday-scholars, is causing many of their teachers to enrol their names as members of the temperance society.

T. MUDGE, Sec.

—Bristol Temperance Herald.

THE POISONED VALLEY.

A singular discovery has lately been made near Batten, in Java, of a poisoned valley. Mr. Alexander Louden visited it last July, and we extract the following from a communication on the subject, addressed by him to the Royal Geographical Society:

It is known by the name of Guevo Upas, or Poisoned Valley: and following a path made for the purpose, the party shortly reached it, with a couple of dogs and fowls for the purpose of making experiments. On arriving at the mountain, the party dismounted, and scrambled up the side of a hill, at a distance of a quarter of a mile, with the assistance of branches of trees and projecting roots. When within a few yards from the valley, a strong, nauseous suffocating smell was experienced; but on approaching the margin this inconvenience was no longer found. The valley is about half-a-mile in circumference, of an oval shape, and about thirty feet in depth. The bottom of it appeared to be flat, without any vegetation, and a few large stones scattered here and there. Skeletons of human beings, tigers, bears, deer, and all sorts of birds and wild animals, lay about in profusion. The ground on which they lay, at the bottom of the valley appeared to be a hard sandy substance, and no vapor was perceived. It was proposed to enter it, and each of the party lit a cigar, managed to get within twenty feet of the bottom, where a sickening, nauseous smell was experienced, without any difficulty of breathing. A dog was tied to the end of a bamboo, and thrust to the bottom of the valley, while some of the party with their watches in their hands, observed the effect. At the expiration of fourteen seconds the dog fell off his legs, without moving or looking around, and continued alive only eighteen minutes. The other dog now left the party and went to his companion; on reaching him he was observed to stand quite motionless, and at the end of ten seconds fell down; he never moved his limbs after and lived only seven minutes. A fowl was now thrown in which died in a minute and a half. A heavy shower of rain fell during the time these experiments were going forward, which, from the interesting nature of the experiments, was quite disregarded.

On the opposite side of the valley to that which was visited, lay a human skeleton, the head resting on the right arm. The effect of the weather