

whatever, the military authorities, at the mere requisition of the said arch-arch-archrey Siemasko, lend him the assistance he may require ; and this ukase I sign with my own hand.

Signed : NICOLAS I.

Whilst I read this ukase, Siemasko applauded with a triumphant gesture, repeating : “ Read it, examine it well, look at it with your two eyes, and not with an eye and a half ; do you hear ? look at that paper with your two eyes.”

When I had done, he showed us the petition we had sent to the Emperor on our arrival at Polock, and in which we offered to abandon our estate, and the government pension promised to us at Minsk, but which we had never received, and everything, provided we were left free to die in our holy religion.

Siemasko opened the petition carefully as he had opened the ukase, and, with the hand in which he held it, he dealt me such a violent blow on the face, that I felt its effects a year afterwards. “ I will learn you, he said, I will learn you to write to the Emperor ! ”

We recognized our petition, and saw the following words written on the margin : “ *Their request shall be granted, if they change their religion.* ”

“ You see now, added the apostate, that the Emperor and I are one ; ” and he again struck me rudely, and taking me by the shoulders, he crushed me to the floor and trod me under his feet. My Sisters screamed for help, and my Assistant, Sister Wawrzecka, said to me : “ Mother, let me bring him to reason.” I forbid her to touch him, and she obeyed. Siemasko satisfied his rage upon me, not daring to strike Sister Wawrzecka though she came forward and defied him to attack her. When he was tired beating me, he asked : “ Who wrote that petition ? ” — “ I did,” said I. — “ We all wrote it,” answered my Sisters. — “ Who gave you the stamped paper ? ” — “ Some poor people bought it for us.” — “ Who composed the petition ? ” — “ We did.”

His rage increased beyond expression. “ When I shall have skinned you alive, and burned you like torches, you’ll tell me the truth.” And with this he went away in fury. That evening, we were flogged