

founded upon real knowledge of the subject, and upon deep reflection, let him devote to them a serious and conclusive work; but let him not stand up in the market-place and turn the heads of the mob by the propagation of half-digested theories, which the people, from selfish motives and want of judgment, will be much more prone practically to experimentalize than theoretically to investigate. And then, as to the style of such books! this mirror of a sensual exaltation stimulated almost to madness; this flowery patchwork, in which not one spark of truth is to be detected! I find it perfectly detestable. Montesquieu says, '*Le style c'est l'homme!*' If that be true, then do I greatly pity the French, for that style is an insane style, and all France is striving to make it its own."

The carriage stopped, and we alighted and went in to supper. Rarely have I been more surprised than I was to hear such discourse as this from the mouth of a Russian priest.

The inn at which we had alighted was of a comfortable aspect. It was built after the fashion of our little Swiss houses; to the left it looked out upon a spacious court-yard, and was enclosed to the right by a tolerably extensive hedge, which suggested the idea of a pleasant garden. A neat, cleanly-dressed girl, about fifteen years old, received us at the door; as soon as she saw the priest, she ran up to him and held out her hand in a friendly manner, as to an old acquaintance; then she conducted us into the strangers' room, on the first floor. The stairs were very clean; the room we entered was not less so. Its walls were hung round with pictures of saints, some painted, others merely drawn. Some landscapes were also there; but only a very few were framed. The whole furniture consisted of a table, some wooden chairs, a mahogany press, and a large mirror, which hung between the two windows, below a portrait of the Emperor. My companion walked straight to the mirror, took a comb and brush from his pocket, and began to arrange his hair. "Excuse me," he said, "but we shall not reach St. Petersburg till very late, or rather very early, and I must not neglect my head-dress." I turned away, and busied myself looking at the pictures. There was no lack of bad drawing, but the colouring was lively, and the choice of tints showed taste. The landscapes, with their bold masses of foliage, their waterfalls and fields of ice, indicated a vivid appreciation and strict observation of nature. As works of art, however, none of them were of any value.

When I again turned to my companion, he had tightly bound up his thick mass of hair and twisted it round his head, and was in the act of pulling a small cap over it. Remarking my surprise at this singular head-dress for a man, he said good-humoredly, "You will doubtless laugh at me, but I share this vanity with all my brotherhood; this is the only earthly ornament that we are permitted to wear, and by its abundance we compensate ourselves for all other privations in that respect."

"Indeed," I replied, "the remarkable growth of the hair of the Russian priesthood has often astonished me."

"There is nothing wonderful in it," said he; "anybody who devoted as much care and attention to his hair would attain the same end.

As you now see we every evening plait our hair as tight as possible, and braid it close round the head, and in the morning we comb and brush it for a long time, and with the utmost care; that promotes its growth, makes it flexible and soft, and causes it to flow down in light waves. But certainly it is not every body who has sufficient patience and perseverance. Allow me!"

He took my hand and laid it on the plaits of his hair. They were firm and hard as ropes. Smiling, he again drew his cap over them.

Meanwhile, the hostess entered the room;—a woman somewhat over thirty, rather thin, with pallid, sunken features, but having in her bearing a certain decent grace and natural dignity. Her clothes were of country fashion, but very neat and clean. Without heeding me, she hastened to the priest, who embraced her, kissed her on the brow, and laid his hand gently on her head. They conversed together with much animation; but all that I understood of their conversation was the oft recurring "*Pasluschi*," the term by which the Russians usually address each other. I returned to the examination of the pictures.

When the hostess had left us, I fixed my eyes upon the priest. He seemed discomfited. To begin a conversation, I spoke of the pictures.

"They appear to be all by the same hand, I said, "and although deficient in artistic skill, they show unmistakable talent."

"So it is," said the priest, with a bitter smile, "they furnish a remarkable document in relation to the usages of our times."

"How so?" I inquired, struck by his manner.

"It is a '*vertrake*' history," he replied; "but here, in this close, dark room, I cannot speak of it. Let us go down into the garden; if you please, we can take our *sakusko* there."

At the top of the stairs we met the little girl who had received us at the inn door. She was bringing up the *samoear*; but now she turned back, and carried it into the garden, which she placed on a table, in a snug arbor; went away and presently returned with cheese, ham, and fruit.

"We shall not be able to stay here long," said my companion, as he prepared the *schai* (tea); the sky is heavy with clouds, and a storm seems coming on."

"You were about to explain to me," I said—"Permit me first to drink a glass of *schai*," he replied; "to recall those sad memories in words would assuredly drive away my appetite."

He poured out the tea, filled the glass, cut a slice of lemon, added two spoonfuls of rum, and presented it to me. Then he prepared a similar mixture for himself, tasted it, gradually emptied the glass, and resumed our previous subject of discourse.

"I know not," he said, "how far you, as a foreigner, are familiar with the laws, customs, and usages of our country. Should you be unacquainted with them, I should regret displaying them to you upon their most unfavorable side."

"We are all, in one degree, dependent on the supreme power in the State. In the higher classes, this despotism is veiled, partly by community of interest, partly by delicacy of form. It becomes less endurable in proportion as it descends through the inferior grades of the popula-