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NOTICE.

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PETER THE GREAT.

Peter I. Alexievitch, generally denominated Peter the Great, Emperor of Russia, the son of the Czar Alexis, was born at Moscow, 9th June, 1672. On the death of Alexis in 1676, his eldest son, Feodor, occupied the throne. This Prince, however, died in 1682 without issue, after naming Peter as his successor, to the exclusion of his own brother Ivan. This step immediately provoked an insurrection, fomented by their sister Sophia, who was a woman of great energy and ability, but of unbounded ambition. Disdaining the seclusion customary among females of the Royal family, she showed herself to the Strelitz, the ancient Russian militia guard, and, by an ingenious story of the assassination of her brother Ivan, excited them to fury, and let them loose on the supporters of Peter's claims. After a carnage of three days, during which more than sixty members of the most noble families of Russia were massacred, the difference was settled by the joint coronation in May, 1682, of Ivan and Peter, with the Grand Duchess Sophia as Regent.

During the Regency, Peter became acquainted with Lieutenant Franz Timmerman, a native of Strasburg, who gave him lessons in the military art and mathematics. After this he had the fortune to fall into the hands of a Genoese named Lefort, who, by initiating him into the sciences and arts of civilization, showed him how much Muscovy was, in these respects, behind the rest of Europe, thus influencing him in his future career. Lefort formed a small military company out of the young men of the nobility, and which company Peter entered, taking the lowly position of drummer. From this grade he gradually rose to be the highest in command. This course of discipline and training saved Peter from becoming a mere despot, which his brutal and passionate disposition inclined him to be.

In the year 1689 Peter defied the power of the regent Sophia by marrying against her wishes, and in the same year, he called upon his sister to resign the reins of government. This she refused to do, and in the contest that ensued Peter was worsted and obliged to flee for his life. He had, however, the sympathy of the foreigners in the Russian service, who, with a Scotchman, named Gordon, and the Swiss, Lefort, at their head, as well as the Strelitz who flocked *en masse* to his standard, thus leaving Sophia almost defenceless. She, therefore, had to resign the contest. On Oct. 11th, 1689, Peter made his public entry into Moscow, where he was met by Ivan, who voluntarily withdrew, leaving Peter in effect sole sovereign.

Peter's first care was to shut up his sister in

a convent, where she remained until she ended her life in 1704. He also banished her minister Prince Gallitzin. According to the valuable advice of Lefort and Gordon, both of whom were military men, and had served in some of the best disciplined armies of Western Europe, the new emperor organized a new army fully disciplined according to European tactics. He also labored to create a navy, and with this object in view employed Dutch and Venetian shipwrights to build several small vessels. Knowing that in order to make his infant navy of any practical use, he must possess some easily accessible sea port, he made war against Turkey, and after a long siege he took the city of Azof, at the mouth of the Don. To increase the power and prosperity of his country, great efforts were made. Skilled engineers, architects and artillerymen

amass useful information. During his stay he received the honorary degree of D. C. L. from the University of Oxford. On leaving England in April, 1698, he carried with him about five hundred English engineers, artisans, surgeons, &c., and next proceeded to Vienna to inspect the army, and was about to visit Italy when a rebellion at home compelled him to return. He arrived at Moscow 4th of September, 1708, and found that General Gordon had quelled the insurgents. In order to recover the provinces of Ingria and Karalia, formerly belonging to Russia, he entered into an alliance with Poland and Denmark, intending to make a combined attack on Sweden, and thinking to take advantage of the tender age of the monarch of that country. In this he was signally defeated, his raw troops being unable to cope with the veterans of Sweden.

destruction by the finesse and ability of his future wife, Catherine, who extricated him from his difficulties by a treaty by which Peter lost only his previous conquest, Azof, and the territory belonging to it. In the peace that followed this treaty he built defensive works in his capital, and by the construction of ships, &c., gave employment to thousands of laborers. By the loss of Azof, Peter was shut out from the Black Sea. The possession of a good sea-board on the Baltic thus became the more necessary to him, and he accordingly declared war against Sweden, in Pomerania, and in 1713 Finland was completely subdued. In the same year he removed the Senate from Moscow to St. Petersburg. He subsequently, with the Czarina, made another tour of Europe, and carried back with him a large quantity of works of art to adorn his new city.

In the year 1721, after the death of Charles XII., peace was made with Sweden on the condition of that power giving up the Baltic provinces, Ingria, Viborg and Keaholm and a small portion of Finland, with all the islands along the coast from Courland to Viborg, she receiving back the rest of Finland with a sum of \$2,000,000. Peter now devoted his energies to the improvement of his territory. He built canals and factories, established a uniformity of weights and measures, and paved the streets of Moscow and St. Petersburg. After some years of peace Peter commenced a war with Persia in order to open the Caspian Sea to Russia's commerce. He compelled the Shah to yield to his demands and to hand over the Caspian territories of Derbend and Baku. For the last years of his life he was chiefly engaged in beautifying and improving his new capital, and carrying out his early plans for the more general diffusion of knowledge and education among his subjects. In order to save the empire which he had established and constituted from being abandoned to the weak government of a minor, he, in February, 1722, promulgated his celebrated law of succession. In the autumn of 1724 he was seized with a serious illness. He, therefore, appointed his Empress Catherine his successor, and caused her to be publicly crowned. After enduring much agony, the result of his early imprudence and now habitual excesses, he expired on the 8th February, 1725, in the arms of his empress.



PETER THE GREAT.

were invited from civilized powers, especially Austria and Prussia, and many of the young nobility were formed into embassies to visit the courts of Europe, at whom Russia was not represented. Not being altogether satisfied with this arrangement, or being too impatient to wait and reap the results of this movement, he, being sensible of his own deficiencies, and wishing to visit those countries which were so highly civilized and advanced in the military art, science, trade and industrial pursuits, left Russia in the train of an embassy, of which Lefort was the head. They visited Prussia and Hanover, reaching Amsterdam, where, and subsequently at Saardam, he worked for some time as a ship carpenter.

A little later he visited England on the invitation of William III., and spent nearly three months in that country, laboring to

Three years later by skilful manœuvring he got possession of the River Neva, at the mouth of which, among marshes, he laid the foundation of St. Petersburg. In the long contest with Sweden the Russians were almost always defeated. But he was not at all discouraged at these defeats, being confident that the time would come when his raw troops would have gained skill and discipline from them. At Pottava on the 8th of July, 1709, he totally routed the army of the Swedish King, thus becoming master of the whole of Ingria and a portion of Finland. Charles XII., King of Sweden, who had taken refuge in Turkey, instigated Ahmed II. against Peter, who, after re-organizing his army, prepared for strife with the Turk. In the war which ensued Peter was reduced to such straits that he despaired of escape, and was narrowly saved from

A DOCTOR'S MISTAKE.—I am sure I do not envy the feelings of any professional gentleman who goes to a patient and says, "Now, my good friend, if you don't take some of this drink you will die," and subsequently finds out that he has not taken the advice but has got better. For any medical man to say that a patient will die if he does not take it is ridiculous and absurd. People are getting a good deal wiser than they used to be, and a great many people won't take it when it is ordered. I know an instance where a medical man prescribed stout for a child who had bronchitis. The mother stared at him and said, "This child has never taken a drop in its life." The reply was, "It must have a bottle of stout at once—a bottle every day." The woman very wisely refused to give it anything of the kind.—*Dr. J. J. Ritchie.*

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