

Baird, who had at one time extensive foundries in St. Petersburg. The structure rests on made ground, and literally a forest of piles each 22 feet in length was sunk under its foundations. The cost of this piling was \$1,000,000. The interior, with the exception of the richly gilded sanctuary, is not decorated, but in that part are found enormous columns of malachite and lapis-lazuli. These columns are constructed, it is true, on a basis of copper, and only overlaid with these substances, but when you find that the price of an ordinary penholder of lapis-lazuli is \$12.50, some idea may be formed of the cost of these great columns. The construction of the church was finished in 1858, at a total cost of \$16,000,000.

The great bell boomed out the call to worship from four in the morning, at intervals all day, and a small bell, sounding like a tin pot and rung with great rapidity, sometimes accompanied the rich and deep tones of the grand bell. What was the object of this discordant element, which was so incongruous with the solemnity of the deep tones of the other bell we could not discover. We were told simply that it was a call to prayer. The ringing of this wretched bell at four a.m., quite near his bedroom, does not inspire very devotional feeling in the wearied tourist. The general effect of the building is imposing, although from the quantity of dark red granite, bronze and gold employed in its construction, it has a somewhat hard and metallic appearance, and wants the softness of the gothic cathedrals.

We attended service in St. Isaacs one Lord's day. The service began at 10 a.m., and lasted till 1 p.m., and as there was not a seat of any kind in the edifice, we in common with all the congregation, stood during the whole time. In Athens, we observed in the churches, supports, like the arms of chairs projecting from the walls, about the height of the arm pits. Weakly persons could lean against the walls and throwing their arms over the supports find some rest. In St. Isaacs, there is no such assistance to lazy or feeble folk, but all had to stand unsupported during the service. There were no reserved places, and all worshippers rich and poor, men and women, soldier and civilian, old and young, stood, for the time at least, in perfect equality in the presence of the Almighty. This equality in the house of God, may possibly account to some extent, for the curious democratic feeling which exists among the Russians, side by side with an autocratic government. Several thousand worshippers were present, and of them three-fourths were men. No books of any kind were used by the congregation, and no movement was made by any one, save when some one moved by special devotional feeling, knelt down and touched the marble floor with his forehead. The congregation took no part in the service, but maintained a devout attitude throughout. No instrumental music was used; its absence was not missed. Indeed the sound of the grandest organ would have been out of place, among the tremendous bass voices of the singers. The alto and soprano voices could scarcely rise above the swell of these extraordinary volumes of sound. That the human voice was capable of producing such marvellous effects is inconceivable to any one not having listened to them. The service seemed one long chant, save when one of the priests read large portions of scripture. The general character of the chant was plaintive and sounded as if it were intercessory. The voice of the reader beggars description. It was indeed a voice of thunder, yet clear, resonant, and without a suspicion of huskiness.

A screen constructed of stone, between two of the columns which support the dome, closes the view of the congregation from the large window in the north arm of the cross forming the plan of the church. This window is filled with a gigantic figure of our Saviour, clad in a scarlet robe. At a point in the service, near its commencement, bronze doors in this screen are opened, and this imposing figure is suddenly disclosed, and stands out illumined by the sun light, amid the gloom of the church, as the central object presented to the worshippers. Along the base of this opening in the screen, are ranged seven golden candlesticks, with lighted candles. They apparently rise to about the level of the ankles of the great figure of Christ, who

thus appears to be walking forth in a blaze of glory, among the seven churches. For about two hours and a-half every one in the great edifice, and they were numbered by thousands, had this resplendent picture before them, as the one object for their contemplation. The sonorous swell of the marvellous voices, sometimes rising in triumphant storms of music, and again sinking into the almost inaudible appeal for mercy, together with the constant presentation of the sublime figure of the Redeemer, left an impression on our minds never to be forgotten.

At Chrystmasse Tyde.

RUGENIA PRUDEN, IN THE HOME MAGAZINE.

"Two sorrie Thynges there be—

Ay, three;

A Neste from which ye Fledglings have been taken,

A Lambe forsaken,

A redde leaf from ye Wilde Rose rudely shaken.

Of gladdo Thynges there be more—

Ay, four;

A Lark above ye olde Neste blythely singing,

A Wilde Rose clinging

In safety to a Rock, a Shepherde bringing

A Lambe, found, in his arms, and Chrystmasse

Bells a ringing."

HOLLY AND MISTLETOE.

According to an ancient tradition all the plants rejoice at the coming of Christmas; some bursting into blossom afresh in commemoration of the day. Partly for this reason perhaps as well as on account of the good cheer and joyousness of the occasion, all the Christian world of to-day decorates its houses and churches with flowers and plants for this fesal season.

No decoration seems complete without a little holly, no chandelier trimmed that has not a sprig of mistletoe suspended from it.

The use of the holly is said to have originated with the Romans, who were in the habit of sending boughs of holly and evergreens to their friends during the time of the Saturnalian festival which occurred about the same time of year as did Christmas. Oak boughs would have been used instead doubtless, had the festival not come at the time of year when the oak was naturally bare of foliage, and the beautiful holly with its shining green leaves and glowing red berries seemed the most fitting substitute.

In the course of time decorating became almost a part of the people's religious faith, so much so that the monks came to speak of holly as the holy tree.

The use of the mistletoe came from the Druids, those primeval priests who are well known to have held the oak in great veneration, and as that tree is the best loved home of the mistletoe, it may be that its connection with the sacred tree first gained for it notice and respect.

Many are the legends in which these two plants appear. One from the Norseland tells us that long years ago when gods and goddesses visited the earth, there was one god, the Apollo of the Norsemen, beloved by all, both men and gods, Baldur the Good. He is represented as having been the wisest, the most amiable, the most beautiful, in every way the most charming character. His very presence made continual sunshine, a brilliant light being said to stream from his body, and for this reason the whitest of the Northren flowers is named Baldurs-brow.

But Baldur did not possess immortality, which caused no anxiety until he became impressed through dreams, that he was to lose his life. When he told the gods of these dreams they became exceedingly troubled. At once they held a council and endeavored to decide upon some course which might insure to them the safety of their favorite. After deliberation, they sought the assistance of Thor to make him immortal.

He told them that their desire would be accomplished when every animal, plant and mineral should have sworn not to hurt or injure him. In order to secure this result, his anxious mother, Freyja (in whose honor we have our week-day named Friday) descended to the earth and received a promise from all created things, animate and inanimate, everything except one little insignificant plant which had attached itself to the