

holy water sprinkled on him by the Bishop or Archbishop, preparatory to his Easter rejoicings. He will practice harder austerity in winter with a snow bath. In the garrison town of Tiflis the soldiery proceed to church for a solution. There is no detailing of sins, but a form of general confession, a pronouncing of the formula of the faith. The priest makes over each the sign of the cross, the penitent prostrates three times, knocking his forehead on the stone floor, kisses the holy pictures all round, and going forth gives a coin to one of the crowd of beggars waiting outside, and he is duly shrived. Women, dressed in the height of modern fashion, go through the same ordeal. The penitential Psalms are sung by the choir at intervals, and the singing is of a high order. The deep bass of the priests mingling with the trebles and tenors of boys and men require no organ to fill the harmony, and the pure air of the steppes seems to be favorable to the formation of rich, clear voices. At one part of the service the choir utters the words, "Gospode pomilye nas," (God have mercy on us) beginning slowly and rising to a quicker repetition than the ear can follow.

From within the "iconostasis," or altar screen, comes a deep mysterious bass voice, all in the dark, which heightens the mystery. The priests march to and fro outside, giving the liturgical responses and swinging their censers. The prostrations of the crowd remind one of a cotton mill in motion. When the deep voice from within the dim chancel ceases, a soldier steps forth and cries

fifty times as fast as possible, "Slava Bogu!" (Glory to God!) and the service is over.

No lighted tapers are carried at this service. But from 6 p.m. on Easter Eve the towns and churches are flooded with light. The tapers are all of the same length and burn about the same time, and measure the length of a service. You are supposed to remain while it burns, and to have completed your worship when it goes out.

Easter is a time of social feastings, of going round to all the churches, of dramatic ceremonial in the churches, of wild exuberance of spirits, a good deal fostered by ardent spirits, for drunkenness is of all countries the crying sin of Russia; but Easter in Russia must form the subject of a future letter. We are touching somewhat upon the peculiarities of sister churches, but chiefly upon those common bonds of faith, hope, and love, which may at no distant time envelope the whole family in a happy reunion.

Politics enter too much into the methods of all, by which I mean the self interests of civil governments. The world and the church are, or should be, ruled by very different principles. This is one of the evils of "Church and State," or let us say rather of State and Church. In a democratic nation this evil is minimized. But in Russia the State uses the ignorance of the masses for its own ends, and many old traditions and customs of Pagan origin are made the occasion for a military display of power. Perhaps it will hardly be credited that the worship of "Diana of the Ephesians, and the