

gold. From a good vantage point of view near the pavilion I saw a double line of soldiery which extended for a mile up to the barracks on the surrounding hills and down to a sort of pagoda erected over the shallows of the river with an approach from the shore. A cannon shot echoed from precipice to precipice. This was the signal, then the "feu de joie" of the soldiery crackled along the lines and back three times. Soon the procession of priests bearing the holy "eikons" appeared, headed by the archimandrite and bishops, all fine, strong-built men of leonine aspect. All these ecclesiastics seem to be chosen for effect, all had a fine presence and one could almost discern their rank by their size, quantity of hair, and generally imposing mien. Each "eikon" required two to carry it, and they staggered under their load in the hot sun and seemed to wish the passage over. The military band struck up a fine and solemn hymn as they approached.

The event celebrates the Baptism in Jordan. The military standards were first blessed, then a silver cross is thrown into the water by the archimandrite and fifty swimmers and divers plunge in struggling for the honor of finding it again and reaping a reward of five dollars. Some hundred horsemen have taken the water to their horsegirths below stream, awaiting the formula of blessing to fill their bottles with the lustral fluid to bless themselves with for the year, and they make a good trade of it in the city at forty copecks (25 cents) the half-pint. As the benediction is pronounced a large rocket ascends, cannon

roar from the heights around, again the "feu de joie" flies along the ranks. The shouts of the wild Cossacks arise as they plunge waist deep and dash the water over themselves, the crowd rush down to fill their bottles, a flight of doves is let loose to carry the tidings far and wide, intended to commemorate the descent of the Holy Ghost, the people disperse to feasting, carousing, maroon firing and dancing. The upper class takes it all as a good joke. "Well, the comedy is over," said one to me and this expresses the view of advanced Russia concerning all such ceremonies.

Wending our way to the Bishop's palace we pass through the Armenian bazaar which extends with its branching arcades for over a mile. The crowds rival those of Old London. Soldiers, Georgian beauties with little curls plastered on their temples, Greek turban and long veil depending from it, and tresses of auburn hair almost reaching their heels, buying their gifts. They look like wax dolls with little expression on their features. Booths lit with photogen, such costumes as this borderland of East and West alone can exhibit. "Chto bragash? Chto vamugodno? Who'll buy? What'll you have?" shouts a chorus of costers. They toss the famous Caucasian honey about with wooden spoons as in a Canadian candy-pull to show its clearness without letting a drop fall. Here's a fellow stuck all over with silver mounted daggers beautifully chased, and pistols. The Georgian silver is the purest in the world and their silver-work of great excellence. One large arcade is lined with valuable