

HOME AND SCHOOL

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Sights in Russia. BY THE EDITOR.

Russia presents the largest connected empire in the world. Extending 6,000 miles from west to east, and 2,300 miles from south to north—more than twice the size of the whole of Europe or the United States—it covers one-sixth of the land surface of the globe. But a large proportion of this vast extent consists of treeless steppes and inhospitable wastes. Its population, nevertheless, reaches an aggregate of 85,685,000, of many diverse nationalities. No empire in the world has such a variety

name Russian. They may have descended in part from the Finns and the Scythians. The Russian Church is emphatically a State Church. It is not merely connected with the State, like the Churches of England and Scotland, but enters into and forms a part of the State. The Czar is the father and founder of the whole ecclesiastical community. The veneration for him at times is almost as though he were Christ Himself. "God and the Prince will"—"God and the Prince know it!" These are the two arguments against which there is no appeal. The coronation of

not as works of art, but as emblems of instruction, is thus engendered beyond all example in other countries. In the army there is not a man but carries in his knapsack a gaudy picture, with which he never parts; and wherever he halts he sets it on a piece of wood and bows down before it. The Russian priests strongly condemn the use of tobacco, while very tolerant of the still greater evil of strong drink. But they discriminate in favour of the latter by a fanciful interpretation of the text, "Not that what goeth into the mouth," as strong drink, "defileth a man; but that

empire; rather Asiatic than European, and yet compounded of both. Moscow has a population of over 600,000, of many-mingled nations. It is described as at once magnificent and mean, splendid and grotesque, beautiful and sordid, and unequalled in picturesqueness. Its hundreds of spires, domes and minarets, diverse in form and colour; the strange intermingling of pagodas, temples and churches, of Chinese tea-houses, French cafés, Turkish bazaars, and Russian market-places, produces a bewildering effect. It is surrounded by an earthwork twenty-three miles long, and dominated by the



THE CITY OF KAZAN, RUSSIA.

of tribes and nations. Their number exceeds a hundred, and they speak over forty different languages. The immense majority are Slavs—56,000,000—and Poles, 4,800,000. Among the great nations of modern times, Russia is far the most recent in its origin. Instead of running back, like France, Spain, Italy, and Germany, to the opening of the Christian era, or earlier, it dates only to the sixth or seventh century. Its Church was established two or three hundred years later. The nation had its origin in the vast steppes of Eastern Asia, and its people were called the *Rossi*, whence came the

the chief ruler is not a mere ceremony, but rather a solemn religious consecration. The Russians have not only a liking for pictures, they have a religious veneration for them. They are the mainstay and support of their religious faith and practice. On the wall of every room, at the corner of every street, over gateways, in offices, in steamers, in stations, in taverns, is the picture hung, with a lamp hung before it. In the domestic life it plays the part of the family Bible, of the wedding gift, of the birthday present, of the ancestral portrait. A passion for pictures,

cometh out of the mouth," as tobacco smoke, "this defileth a man." The most sacred city of Russia is Moscow, the seat of the chief patriarchate, and the ancient, semi-Oriental capital. Most *bizarre* and fantastic it is with its vast turreted and venerable Kremlin; its countless churches, with their flashing spires and clustering and turbaned minarets glittering in green, purple and gold; its mosques, with the cross supplanting the crescent; its streets swarming with bearded merchants and ferocious Janizaries, while its female population were immature and invisible, was a true type of the

great sacred fortress, the Kremlin, encompassed by a massive wall, sixty feet high, a mile and a quarter in extent, and entered by five sacred gates, two of them of peculiar sanctity. The Kremlin comprises the principal buildings, such as the gorgeously decorated cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin; the cathedral of the Archangel Michael, containing all the tombs and portraits of the Czars, down to Peter the Great; the church of the Annunciation, the floor of which is paved with jaspers, agates and carnelians; the tower of John the Great, two hundred feet in height, surmounted by a mag-