

will not suffice to separate the hard-pressed particles.

The civilization of Russia, Dr. Wenyon remarks, may be less highly developed than our own, but it is very far ahead of the civilization of the Chinese; and what is spoken of as Russian encroachment in Eastern Asia may be not only the best thing for the welfare of our race, but, in the nature of things, inevitable. The military and religious music of Russian Siberia, now swelling again into exultation and triumph, seemed like the march music of that Christian civilization which some of us believe is destined to regenerate China and overspread the earth.

The only signs of human life on the Chinese bank of the Amoor were the wigwams of some wandering Tartars. The transference of this extensive, valuable, but altogether undeveloped territory from Chinese to Russian rule is only a question of time; and let us hope, in the interests of humanity, that the time will not be long.

It is only just to say, that in education and refinement, in frankness, intelligence, and common-sense, in uniform courtesy of demeanour, in freedom from bondage to the absurd conventionalisms of caste, Russian military officers appear to be at least the equals of any other members of their profession in the world.

The Russian Jews always complained bitterly of the treatment they received, and when I asked them why they were thus treated, they invariably replied, "Because we crucified Jesus."

At Nertchinsk, Dr. Wenyon left the Amoor. For the next two thousand miles, he writes, with the exception of one day's steamer trip across Lake Baikal, we must travel again by tarantass. But we went on continuously night and day, only remaining at a station long enough to change horses and con-

veyance; and from sunset to dawn not only was the temperature lower, but there was nothing to divert our attention from it. The wind was so cold it seemed to come direct from the North Pole. Eastward and westward there is not a town within hundreds of miles; southward are the waterless plains of Mongolia; and northward one might walk as far as the Polar Seas without meeting any sign of human habitation.

The Trans-Baikal is what Botany Bay and Van Diemen's Land were at the beginning of the century—a cesspool for the rascality and crime of the home provinces. Almost all the people engaged in menial employment—farm labourers, herdsman, and yemshiks—are ticket-of-leave convicts.

The piety of these people is peculiar. It never occurs to them that there is anything at all incongruous in showing their respect for the teachings of the Church by getting drunk. The heaviest drinking is at Easter, which is perhaps the most popular religious festival in Russia. Whole villages then give themselves up for several days to wine-bibbing; and if an astonished stranger asks the meaning of such carousing, a chorus of voices instantly replies—and without the slightest intention of irreverence—"Why, because Christ has risen"; and at the word they clink their glasses and drink again.

Baikal is a fresh-water lake, 1,500 feet above the level of the sea; it is nearly a mile deep; its length is equal to that of England. The early Russian settlers, looking upon its surface from the gloom of the forest, were so impressed with the mystic silence of that vast solitude, that they named it "The Holy Sea."

The gold-mines on the Lena have long been, and are still, very productive; and large fortunes have been made. Irkutsk, though