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EVERY one who has crossed the beautiful Italian plains on his way to the "Eternal City" remembers the fascination of the great dome of St Peter's as it gradually rose above the horizon and seemed to choose as its only proper contrasting background the faultless blue of the sky. A similar feeling must enter the mind of the traveller as he approaches the gilded domes of Moscow, the Holy city of the Russians—the Rome of the Greek church.

Situated as it is on the boundary line of civilization, a busy commercial and manufacturing city, it has much to interest and instruct. With a history peculiar in its originality, and with problems which puzzle the political economist of to-day, it might well serve as a text for the discussion of many delightful topics. To the average traveller, however, such information must be taken for

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WILLIAM LIBBEY, JR.

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the most part at second hand, and on faith, but what he can see is far differently treated, for he has some tangible evidence of its reality; and if he cannot believe all the wonderful tales of his encyclopædic courier—and much of the pleasure of sight-seeing is in believing—he can at least fall back on written history and find enough to charm him.

The city is unique in its way, and is one of the world's great centres in more senses than one, though it has few of the characteristics of other European cities. It seems like a gigantic village when viewed from some lofty tower, for, with the exception of the more densely populated portions, the houses are scarcely ever more than two stories high, generally situated in a garden or court, and surrounded by a wall. One of the striking peculiarities of the city, however, is its lack of unity in the various parts. It is a most curious mixture of the grand and the miserable.

As we pass along some magnificent street nothing would seem to be wanting to make the surroundings perfect, but a few steps to one side bring us into rough, irregular passage-ways whose pavement is hard to describe and which can only be spoken of as orientally unclean.

The city was founded in 1147 by the Grand Duke of Kiev, Jury Wladimirowitch Dolgoruky, but was of no importance until the Grand Duke Ivan transferred his residence thither in 1328, from which time it became the centre of the Russias; and his example was soon followed by the Metropolitan, Theognost, the ecclesiastical head of the Greek church.

In 1339 Ivan surrounded the city with a wooden

wall, and gave it the Tartar name of Kremlin, which signifies a fortress. This portion is now the heart of the city, and, in a most perfect sense, its Acropolis. The city grew, and soon a new wall was built around what is now called the Chinese city, which is very closely built up, and contains the bank and the great market place. This wall still exists in part, and the gaudily painted towers over the different gates present a very striking appearance. These old divisions as well as the more recent ones are now neglected, and the rust on the hinges of the gates and the portullis points indicates long disuse.

Of course, in those early days it had to pass through many trials, being almost destroyed by the Mongol hordes, and it only reached its first period of growth under Ivan III., called "the Great" because he freed Russia from the Tartar yoke and formed an independent state, with Moscow as its capital.

The prosperity of the city since that time has only been interrupted by fire in 1547 and by its surrender to the Khan of the Crimean Tartars in 1571. It almost seemed as though its glory was departing when the imperial residence was changed to St Petersburg in 1711, but Peter the Great's successor preferred Moscow, and since his day, although the former city has been the capital, Moscow has lost none of its charm even for the ruler.

The history of the city in 1812 is world renowned. After that terrible series of bloody battles with Napoleon, the Russian generals decided to surrender Moscow to the French, and on Sept. 14th the Governor of the city left it, accompanied by most of the inhabitants, after removing everything which would be helpful to their

enemies, and then setting fire to their homes. On Sept. 15th the French made anything but a triumphal entry into the city, now about two-thirds burned, and two days later they retired, leaving behind them 40,000 of that proud army of 150,000 men (which had been so successful up to this point) to die of hunger. This was the turning-point in the career of the "man of fate," and ever after, in spite of his desperate efforts, nothing seemed able to stay his downward course. Perhaps if the 400,000 men left on the weary Russian wastes, the best blood of France and the finest soldiers the world had ever seen, had not been sacrificed to ambition, the fate of the great Emperor would have been different.

The spot towards which the traveller first makes his way will probably be the famous public square of the city, the Krasnaja or Red Place. It is usually approached through the Iberian gate, an archway under a building which also contains the chapel of the Iberian Madonna. This chapel contains a copy of the Mt. Athos picture made in 1648, and is held in great repute among the Russians, nearly every one of whom enters the chapel, for a few moments at least, as he passes under the arch. The picture is believed to possess great power and is often removed from its place to be taken to the bedside of the sick, or to lend the benign influence exerted by its presence to increase the joy of family festivals. When it is thus taken away its place is occupied by a copy, while the original is placed in a carriage drawn by six horses, accompanied by liveried men, and is thus borne to its destination. These visits are well paid for, the chapel receiving the equivalent of fifty dollars for each one. Passing under the archway we come out

upon the square itself, on which so much that is terrible, awe-inspiring, and magnificent has taken place, and which has done so much in the formation of Russian history. On our right is the great mass of the Kremlin, with two of its gates opening upon the square; in the centre is the monument to Minin and Posharsky; at the further end is the odd church of St. Basil and the tribune, while on the left is a curious set of low buildings, the Gostiny Dwor, or market place. These arcades, with their 6000 shops, are always interesting. Here you will find a jumble of everything from a needle to a ship's anchor, or, as our German friend neatly expressed it, "everything possible and some one or two things besides." One is tempted to believe that a Russian would be deprived of half of the joys of life if he could be robbed of the privilege of haggling. Our sidewalk financiers seem to be modesty itself when compared with these vendors of clothes of all degrees of antiquity. Near the corner of this building, on the square, is a circular platform with a wall around it, which is built like a tribune. Here the Czars were proclaimed, and solemnly published their ukases, and the great religious processions start from this spot. It was formerly the place of execution, and the heads of the victims, lifted upon spear points or poles, formed the dismal and horrible decorations of the tribune. Here Ivan the Terrible in 1570 announced in person the executions as they took place. It was here that the false Dmitry in great state received the homage of his people in 1605, and but a year later the infuriated mob dragged his lifeless body to the same spot.

The monument which stands in the centre of the

square bears the inscription, "A thankful Russia to the peasant Minin and the prince Posharsky," and recalls the troublesome times of the interregnum of 1606-13. It was erected by Alexander I. in 1818, and is a handsome bronze group upon a granite base, with reliefs on the sides representing the liberality of the people. The loyal patriot Posharsky was born in 1578. He killed Dmitry at Colomna in 1608, dispersed the robber hordes in 1609, but in an uprising against Wasili was wounded near Moscow in 1611. He was taken from the battle-field to the Troizki cloisters, and then fled to his estates. At this juncture Minin, a butcher from Nizni Novgorod, came to his aid with money, men and arms, and he is represented on the monument as in the act of placing a sword in the hands of the Prince and inciting him to action. The result of this co-operation was a three days' battle in 1612, which ended in their enemies being driven away, and Russia was once more free.

We shall now turn to the consideration of St Basil, probably the most fantastic building in Moscow. It was built by Ivan the Terrible in 1554, and commemorates the taking of Kazan. The two stories contain eleven chapels, which are connected by labyrinthine paths, and are crowned by a dozen curiously carved domes, all of different shapes, and decorated with the most striking contrasts in color. The apostles of polychromatic architecture will find all their longings satisfied here. The old story of the relations between the Czar and the architect is interesting in spite of the number of grains of salt which must necessarily be taken with it. Upon the completion of the structure, the autocrat is said to have asked whether its author could construct another such

masterpiece, and upon being told that he could, ordered the poor fellow's eyes put out; and then, as if that were not enough, commanded him to be killed when he said that he could still build a more beautiful temple. The story may be in keeping with what we know of the character of Ivan the Terrible, but, whatever the fate of the architect, his work will always have a charm from its unique appearance, and will probably be more vividly retained in the mind than many of the other wonderful sights of this strange city.

Before passing from this square to the review of some of the more important buildings of the city, let us pause for a moment to look at the gay street life, which is so characteristically Russian.

Moscow is believed to be the only place in the world where the representatives of so many nations can be found. On its broad streets and squares the great markets and fairs are held, and during these seasons Bedlam itself could not present stranger contrasts or more interesting scenes. It is true that the so-called French clothing is much worn, but side by side with it we find the bearded mujik with his peculiar coat and high boots, the drearly priest with his long garmments, the merchant in his old skin cap, and among the crowd of curious costumes one can pick out here and there a Tartar or Kalmuck, and occasionally a Turk, Greek or Persian.

Passing along these busy streets we come to the square, where all the reviews take place, and find ourselves before the great theatre. It was built in 1853, and is one of the largest and most tastefully constructed in Europe; the interior is white, richly gilded, contains six galleries and has a seating capacity of four thousand.

The façade has eight well-proportioned Corinthian columns at the front of the portico, and a quadriga, or four-horse chariot, a magnificent piece of bronze, representing Phœbus in the chariot of the sun, crowns the richly adorned portal.

Moscow may be well said to be a city of contrasts, not only between the extremes of the palace and the cabin, but also between the palaces themselves. In many of these the former splendor is gone, but they have been made the repositories of countless treasures, and transformed into museums. Many have been used for other purposes, and altogether they form one of the peculiarities of the city, but a passing mention of a few is all that our space will allow.

The Paschkoff House, built in the Renaissance style, is now known as the Rumjanzoff Museum, as it contains the collections made by Count Rumjanzoff for the Government in 1828. They were placed here in 1861. The lower floor contains a fine library of 200,000 volumes, which is rich in historic works, particularly those relating to Slavic and Old Russian history. In the exhibition rooms above we find, among many other collections, that of Kotzebue, the celebrated navigator, comprising the ethnological objects brought together in his trip around the world. There is also a very instructive group of figures to be seen here, giving by means of original costumes from all parts of Russia a very good idea of the differences to be found among the various races under the sway of the Czar.

Another interesting as well as remarkable building is the Ssucharew tower, built by Peter the Great in 1695 in honor of the Ssucharew regiment, which protected the

young Czar and his mother in the insurrection of 1682, and enabled them to fly to the Troizki cloisters. It has served various purposes; at first it was used as the assembly rooms for the State Council; then as the Neptune Society Lodge, instituted and presided over by the Czar; then it became the Navigation School, and still later the Admiralty building. In 1829 it was transformed into a water tower, the upper part containing two immense reservoirs, with a daily capacity of 2,000,000 gallons. The water is brought from a distance of seventeen miles. Situated in a delightful park, which is the principal resort of the fashionable life of Moscow, we find the Petrowski Palace built by Catherine II. in 1776. It seems like a perfect waste of good material, as it is only used on grand occasions as a temporary residence. Here the general nobility await the coronation festivities. The great park was laid out by the Czar Nicholas in 1834, and its beautiful driveways and footpaths display much taste. The gardens contain a summer theatre, a *café chantant* and several restaurants.

The city abounds in convents and monasteries, which possess many wonderful shrines and treasures, but one only can be taken as an example.

The most attractive convent is that known as the Passion Convent. It is situated at one end of an open space called the Virgin Field, the spot being memorable because there the messengers of the Khan of Mongolia picked out the maidens who had to be sent to him each year with the tribute money. The convent is a conglomerate of churches and buildings surrounded by a wall, and was built in 1524 to commemorate the union of Smolensk and Moscow. Many of royal blood have

taken the veil in this convent, among the most noted being the Czarina Irene after the death of Feodor I. Here Peter the Great placed his sister for her intrigues. It will be remembered that the Strelitzians rose and offered her the throne. After this rebellion was put down, Peter considerably had some three hundred of the rebels hung before the window of his sister's cell, which is still pointed out; and as though this were not enough, he had the hand of Prince Chowanski, one of the conspirators, nailed in the window itself. Just as the French were leaving Moscow they tried to blow up this convent, but the catastrophe was prevented by the bravery of the nuns.

Probably the finest monastery in this whole region is the Troizki Monastery, situated not far from Moscow. Next to the famous monastery of Kiev, it is without doubt the finest and richest in the nation. Its wall with eight towers surrounds a royal palace, a theological seminary with a very valuable library, the residence of the Archimandrite, and twelve churches and chapels, with countless towers and domes, all of which are gilded or most elaborately painted. The history of this place is long and interesting, though bound up with much that is superstitious. Its humble beginning was made in the small wooden chapel built on the site of the present Trinity church by the Abbot Sergius. His piety soon drew the monks from all quarters towards the spot, and such was his reputation that on the death of Alexius he was chosen Metropolitan, the highest ecclesiastical honor of the Greek church. During one of the Tartar invasions the establishment, which was then very renowned, was destroyed. A few years later, the unde-

cayed body of Sergius was found among the ruins. People crowded to pray near his body, and soon became very rich. It has resisted many sieges, at one time owning 120,000 serfs and being able to call together 20,000 men-at-arms of its own. That it was not attacked by the French is said to be due to the picture of the revered Sergius, but the fact that it was rather out of their track is probably a better explanation. This picture of Sergius was taken to Sebastopol, but did not prevent the downfall of that stronghold, as it was thought it would. Among the many other wonders shown is a napkin with the features of Christ upon it, which is peculiarly sacred. Probably the finest building in the city, taking it all in all, is the church of the Redeemer. It was begun in 1839 by the Czar Nicholas in remembrance of the deliverance from the French. The main structure is composed of iron and stone and cost \$10,000,000. It is built in the form of a Greek cross and has five gilded domes, the central dome being one hundred feet in diameter and three hundred and twenty-five feet high. Thirty-six gigantic columns support the portico, beneath which the majestic bronze doors, handsomely sculptured, open into the temple. The interior is richly decorated with gold, marble, and costly mosaics. On the walls of the corridor of the main dome are the names of those who fell in the battles for freedom. Each portion of the building has the masterpiece of some Russian artist, and represents a scene from Biblical or Russian history. All are noteworthy, but two are especially worthy of attention. The great painting back of the high altar in the Holy of Holies, representing the Last Supper, was

painted by Ssemeradski and will repay close investigation, for it is a wonderful character study and is peculiarly impressive, being clearly conceived and strikingly executed. There are four other great paintings, which occupy the niches in the intersecting points of the arms of the Greek cross, and face the central part of the church under the main dome; that directly behind the spot where the Czar stands during service, when here, represents the anointing of David, and is probably the best of the four. The impression produced by this enormous mass, with its treasures of art, its wealth in gold and precious stones, and its graceful and highly ornate altar, is hard to describe. We often speak of barbaric splendor, but this is no place for such statements; here all the requirements of art and taste are fully met, and nothing disturbs the thrill of satisfaction and awe with which every one passes among the countless brilliant objects.

Nothing seems wanting to complete the charm until the grand burst of harmony with which the service begins, and then this is recognized to be indeed a temple perfect in every respect.

We shall now turn our steps to the Kremlin, in which all the memories of the past centre.

It is a great collection of cathedrals, palaces and state buildings, surrounded by a massive wall sixty feet high and a mile and a half long, with many towers and five gates, one upon each of its five sides, and all interesting from their architecture or history.

We pass in by the Holy Gate, the most remarkable of all the gates of Moscow. The older portion of the tower was built in 1491 and the clock tower was added in 1626. There is a chapel on each side of the door-

with its magnificent palaces and churches. The first object which strikes the eye is the cathedral and tower of Ivan Weliki, the chapel of the patron saint of all ladies about to be married. The most remarkable thing about the building is its bells, of which there are thirty-four. The tower is crowned by a large golden cross which has an interesting history. Napoleon had heard the legend which connected the fall of the Russian Empire with the fall of this cross, and accordingly was resolved to have it down. He offered large rewards for the accomplishment of the difficult feat, but none of the French dared attempt it. At last a peasant, allured by the tempting sum offered, accepted the terms and succeeded in his efforts, but his

way, but all interest centres on the picture of the Redeemer over the gate, before which a lamp constantly burns. This is the palladium of the Kremlin. It was brought from Smolensk in 1647 and an edict of the Czar Alexis required every one to uncover his head on passing through the archway, and the edict is still obeyed. The unfortunate stranger who fails to conform to the usage is very suddenly brought to his senses by savage remonstrances from the police and every Russian that happens to be about. The sanctity and power of this picture are believed to be very great. The French soldiers as they passed into the Kremlin under the archway are said to have fired at it without harming it in any way, a tradition which seems to make it all the more sacred to the Russians. Once inside we begin to appreciate the attraction which the Kremlin possesses for all visitors. Volumes have been written and will still be written upon the glories of this city within a city,

ill-gotten gain served him for only a short time. Napoleon ordered him to be put to death, using those words, so characteristic of him, "J'aime la trahison et je déteste le traître."

At the base of the tower lies the great bell of Moscow, and it is the historic bell of the place. When first cast in 1553 it weighed 36,000 lbs; it was re-cast in 1654 and then weighed 288,000 lbs, and was hung at that time on a frame at the foot of the tower. It fell in 1706, and in 1733 was cast once more, 444,000 lbs. of metal being used in its construction; it was hung again on a frame, but four years later the enormous weight proved too much for its supports and it fell, a large piece breaking from one side. Some years later it was placed upon the stone terrace where it now stands, the wonder of every one. It required twenty-four men to move the clapper in the days when it was used, and twenty persons can pass in an upright position through the hole in its side as it now stands, and find space to accommodate them inside. In the larger parts the metal has a thickness of two feet.

Every stranger is surprised at the number of the bells, but must admit that their sound at evening is one of the peculiar charms of the city. Their sweet tones are said to be due to the method of their construction and to the amount of silver and gold used in the compound. The peasants have the greatest reverence for these bells, and the weary and footsore pilgrim, as he trudges on towards this Russian Mecca, is said to forget all his trials when at last he hears their music far off, it may be on the distant hillsides. At any rate their bells are very different from ours, and it is quite true, as

Dr. Prime says, that "while our bells call us to worship, theirs praise God."

While upon the subject of such gigantic pieces of human workmanship, a passing reference should be made to the "Emperor Cannon," cast under the Czar Feodor I. in Moscow. It is mounted on a carriage cast in St. Petersburg. The gun is $17\frac{1}{2}$ feet long and weighs ten tons; its muzzle is three feet across, and the shot, four of which lie directly in front of it, weigh 1000 lbs. The only service it has ever seen was when it was pointed, while empty, at a mob, and the desired effect was produced; the logic of cause (or size) and effect was beautifully exemplified, for the mob instantly disappeared. It now stands a mounted guard over two long lines of French and Swedish cannon which decorate the sides of the arsenal.

Near Ivan Weliki stands the church of the Assumption—the crowning-place of the Czars and the burial-place of the Patriarchs. As we enter it we notice that its walls and columns are covered with paintings giving it an overcrowded appearance, which does not produce a fine impression. The Ikonostasis before the altar is very rich, and consists of five rows of holy pictures one above the other, mostly set in gold. The altar pieces are said to weigh 2700 lbs. and are all of precious metal. A picture of the Madonna, said to be by St. Luke, has a frame of gold valued at \$200,000, and a single emerald in the crown above her head is worth \$15,000. This treasure was carried away by the French, but was recaptured by the Cossacks, who presented the magnificent silver candelabrum with forty-six branches hanging before the altar, in commemoration of the event; two hundred pounds of silver were used in its construction.

In many respects this is the most interesting spot in Moscow. Between the four great central columns the coronation platform is erected. The Czar having separated himself from the people and fasted several days, enters the thronged cathedral attended by the most gorgeous pageant that the world probably ever sees; he ascends the platform, speaks, confessing his faith in the doctrines of the church, prays for his empire, and then, taking the crown, crowns himself, for no one is high or holy enough to crown him. He then goes into the Holy of Holies and takes the sacrament of the Communion, and thus alone consecrates himself to the throne of Russia. From Ivan the Terrible down to the present time all the Czars have been self-crowned on this spot. Here lie the great ecclesiastical heads of the Russian church—the Metropolitans. Among the treasures of this church are a nail of the cross and a piece of the seamless robe.

Near by is the church of the Archangel Michael, which contains the sarcophagi and relics of the Rurik and Romanof dynasties. One of the most curious of these is the coffin of Demetrius, the son of Ivan. He disappeared very mysteriously, and his remains are said to have been found by a miracle. They are greatly revered by the peasants, who kiss a portion of the Prince's forehead, which is exposed through a hole in the lid of the coffin. The church treasury is very rich, one source of its income being the holy oil which is prepared here. This oil is used in all ceremonies, such as baptism and the like, and is composed of gums, balsam and costly spices. Its holiness consists in the fact that it is supposed to be the same oil as that with which Mary anoint-

ed the feet of the Saviour. The true succession is kept up in an original and interesting manner. The oil was brought from Constantinople in the first instance, long ago, and is now kept in a copper vessel lined with mother of pearl. Each year when the oil is prepared, which is to be distributed afterwards throughout all Russia, a few drops are taken from this vessel and thoroughly mixed in the larger quantity, and the same number of drops is then replaced, the supply being kept good in this way. The silver vessels in which the oil is made weigh 1300 lbs.

At a short distance from this church of St. Michael is the church of the Annunciation. It was first built by Andrew III. in 1291, but the original structure and several others since erected upon the same site were destroyed by fire. It was finally rebuilt in 1554 by Ivan the Terrible, and was restored in 1863. It is the baptis-mal and marriage church of the Czars. Its nine gilded domes and the handsome gold cross over the central dome present an original and striking appearance. The floor of the chapel is of jasper, and the columns are decorated with the golden chains and crosses worn by the Czars, and fairly glitter with precious stones. The doors to the sanctuary are of solid silver. One of the peculiar ornaments of the interior, an ornament common to many Russian churches, is the historic battle-flags of the Czars. Famous among them is the black flag of Dmitry, which was also carried by Boris Godunow in his battles with the Tartars under the walls of Moscow. We now come to the Kremlin, or main palace. The older palaces were built of wood and were burned by the Tartars. The Empress Anne built the first palace of

stone in 1484, and this has been added to or modified by each succeeding sovereign in some way or other, the greatest improvement being the addition made by the Czar Nicholas I., which contains the grand state apartments and in all some seven hundred rooms. The house-warming occurred on April 3rd, 1849, when the Emperor received bread and salt from the chief cities and provinces of the Empire as an expression of their congratulations. The rich gold salvers and salt cellars which contained these gifts now adorn the walls of the main state halls of the Palace. The Empress Catharine planned a palace for the same site which would have been the wonder of the world if it had been completed. The model alone, now on exhibition in the treasury, cost the sum of \$15,000.

The Granowitaja and the Terem are the only remains of the older palaces—and we shall look at these first.

The Terem consists of two portions. The two stories composing the upper portion or "Belvidere Palace" are smaller than the two lower, and the space on the roof thus left open is called the Holy Floor. The two lower stories were built by Iván III. in the fifteenth century, and the upper portion was added by the Czar Michael for his sons in 1636. It was somewhat modified by Feodor in 1682, but, with the exception of some restorations in 1836, has been untouched for two hundred years. It contains many curious rooms, to which the low arched ceilings, quaint furniture and decorations give a decidedly antique appearance. Here we find the bedroom of the Czar Michael, the former council chamber, etc., all magnificent in their way, but simplicity itself

When contrasted with the glories of the more modern Palace. From the Holy Floor the famous "Red Stairs" lead to the court below; and if those stones could only speak, what tales they could tell of the past! On this floor Ivan the Terrible received the messengers that came from all parts of his wide realm; and when they brought him bad news he pierced their feet with his sharp iron staff, or had them thrown over the parapet. Here he also stood when he saw the comet which portended his doom. Napoleon passed up these stairs. The Czars all pass over them to the cathedral of the Assumption to be crowned.

The most interesting room in the older portion of the palace is that which was formerly the audience chamber of the Czars, but is now used as the banquet room, where the Czar takes the first meal after his coronation, in all his insignia and surrounded by all the great ones of Russia and the representatives of all the other European Powers. In the time of Feodor the walls were frescoed, the scenes representing stories from the Old Testament; they were covered with Gobelin tapes-tries later on, but since the time of Peter I. deep red velvet draperies studded with golden eagles have replaced them, giving the room a comparatively plain appearance. In one corner of the room is a platform with a canopy over it, where the Czar sits during the banquet, and facing it, directly over the main entrance, is the gilded frame of a window through which the ladies of the court are allowed to watch the proceedings in the room below.

Walking along the great esplanade facing the river we enter the Treasury, a portion of the Palace which corresponds with the Tower of London, and although

each of these great collections has its own peculiar charm for travellers, no one hesitates to describe this collection as the greatest and richest collection of jewels in the world, for the profusion of rare presents is simply bewildering. We pass in through the Armor Hall, where are preserved the curious old arms and the battle flags carried or captured by the Czars and notables of Russia during the past thousand years. Many of these arms are skillfully and finely inlaid and covered with jewels. In a hall-way we find the trappings used in the coronation festivities, the thrones, baldacchino and flags of the various Czars; and then enter the famous "Round Room." In this part of the collection the interest centres in the thrones, crowns, sceptres, orbs and robes of the Czars and their rich chains and orders. Among the greatest curiosities is the double throne of Ivan and Peter I. It is made of silver, gilded, and is a piece of very skillful workmanship. Near it is the throne of Ivan the Terrible, with its 9000 gems. Here are also the captured thrones, many of them among the richest in the collection—the throne of Kazan, the ivory throne of Constantinople, dating back to 1472, the throne of Persia of 1660, with its 876 diamonds and hundreds of other jewels—all these attract attention; but one, a comparatively simple affair, the throne of unhappy Poland, will always have an especial interest for Americans. The oldest gems in this room are those of the orb and crown of Wladimir, falsely called the crown of Monomachus. This mass of jewels was sent to the Czar by Constantine with a piece of the true cross, and has imbedded in rich enamels 58 diamonds, 89 rubies, 23 sapphires, 50 emeralds and 37 other stones, all of good size, and they make it a blaze of light.

Any one of these treasures would set our museums nearly wild with excitement, but here they seem to be things common and ordinary; nor is this all, for at the end of the series of ante-chambers we find an immense room, which is crowded with the choicest gifts to the Czar. Gold, silver, ivory and amber are there in enormous quantities and in all imaginable forms, which often serve as the mere basis or support for an amount of still richer decoration of precious stones which it is almost impossible to describe.

Descending from this fascinating spot, and crossing the parade square, back of which are the winter garden and green houses, we reach the main portion of the new palace, which contains the state apartments. The exterior of all of these buildings is somewhat tame and disappointing, but the moment we pass the vestibule and begin to climb the granite state stairway we are impressed with its magnificent proportions, and the sensation of surprise and delight is fairly overpowering. Through the ante-chamber, with its colossal crystal chandeliers, we enter St. George's Hall—the largest room in the Kremlin. It is 200 ft. long, 65 ft. wide and 55 ft. high. The colors in which the room is finished are white and gold. The ceiling is supported by eighteen piers, each of which has an artistic winding column on its inner face, while the capital of each column is crowned with a figure of Victory bearing a shield upon which are represented the arms of one of the conquered provinces of Russia. On the sides of the piers marble tablets have been placed, and upon them in golden letters are the names of the regiments that have been distinguished for valor in the various Russian campaigns, and also the names of officers hold-

ing the order of St. George, the highest Russian military honor. We cross a floor which is an artistic mosaic of more than twenty different sorts of wood, and above us are four thousand electric lights, and for once imagination deserts us, and we fail even to conceive the full glory of which this place is capable, but we have realized as much as falls to the lot of ordinary mortals. Next comes the Alexander Hall, decorated in red and gold, and constructed on the same grand scale with the addition of a handsome dome, the panels of the room being ornamented with the elegant golden salvers and salt cellars presented to the Czar upon the opening of the Palace.

Beyond this is the counterpart of St. George's Hall, but named for the order of St. Andrew, founded by Peter the Great in 1697. It is a little shorter than St. George's Hall, but otherwise the same proportions are maintained. Its walls are covered with blue silk and ornamented with gold. This is the throne-room of Russia, the throne standing at the extreme end of the room, beneath a pointed canopy richly decorated, above which gleam the arms of the Romanof family.

It is hard to break the charm and come down from such a scene to the contemplation of everyday affairs, but such is the invariable rule ; the more enchanting the dream the greater the contrast of reality. We have seen a bit of fairy land, which every charm of the mystic Russian skies has served to intensify in beauty ; and we must hope that the future of the land which has made such things possible will be brightened and elevated under the guidance of the Czar who lives among these influences, so potent for good.