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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK TRAVELS IN KAMTSCHATKA, DURING THE YEARS 1787 AND 1788, VOLUME 2 ***

**TRAVELS
IN
KAMTSCHATKA,
DURING THE YEARS 1787 AND 1788.**

[Pg i]

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF
M. DE LESSEPS, CONSUL OF FRANCE,

AND

INTERPRETER TO THE COUNT DE LA PEROUSE, NOW
ENGAGED IN A VOYAGE ROUND THE WORLD, BY
COMMAND OF HIS MOST CHRISTIAN MAJESTY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME II.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.
1790.

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TRAVELS IN KAMTSCHATKA, &c.

[Pg 1]

At length the 18 arrived, and I took leave of M. Kasloff. I shall pass over our adieux; it will be supposed that they were equally affectionate and distressing. I departed from Poustaretsk at eight o'clock in the morning, in an open sledge drawn by seven dogs, which I drove myself; the soldier appointed to escort me had eight harnessed to his; and we were preceded by a guide chosen from the inhabitants of this hamlet^[1], whose sledge, loaded with the remainder of my effects, and our provisions, was drawn by a team of twelve. I was accompanied also by M. Schmaleff and the subaltern officers of his suite; but instead of travelling together, as had been agreed, as far as Ingiga, we separated a few days after.

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Upon leaving Poustaretsk, we descended the gulf. We proceeded at first with tolerable ease; the ice was solid and even, and in a few hours we arrived at the mouth: there our progress was attended with more difficulty. Obligated to travel upon the sea without leaving the coast, we were every moment interrupted with piles of ice, that appeared like so many rocks, against which we were to be dashed to pieces. It was impossible to avoid them by turning and winding; an unequal chain of these little mountains extended all along the coast, and intercepted our passage; we had no resource but to attempt to surmount them, at the risk of being overturned every step. More than once, in these falls, I had a narrow escape from being dangerously wounded. My musquet, which was fastened to my sledge, was bent to the shape of a bow; many of my companions were severely bruised, and not an individual came off unhurt.

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In the dusk of the evening we arrived at a hamlet situated upon the border of the sea, consisting of two yourts and three balagans, in a very wretched condition, and totally deserted. The only person who lived in the yourt which we entered, had fled upon our approach^[2]. I was informed that this man was a chaman or magician: seized with terror at the news that we were to arrive the next day, he flew immediately for refuge to the Oluterians^[3], where he would probably remain till M. Kasloff had passed.

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The Cossac who gave me this information, had been sent forward the evening previous to our departure from Poustaretsk, by M. Schmaleff, with orders to stop at this hamlet till we should arrive, and endeavour in the mean time to discover some concealed store of fish. This precaution was very serviceable to us. The Cossac, upon our arrival, conducted us to a cave which we found to be well stocked. I took a tolerable portion, having brought from Poustaretsk only provision enough for two days.

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The 19, early in the morning we pursued our route. This day's journey was still more fatiguing than the preceding one. The way was terrible. Twenty times I saw my sledge ready to be shattered to pieces, which would certainly have been the case, if I had not at last determined to proceed on foot. I was compelled to this, in order to guard myself against the danger of being overturned, and thus was I obliged to walk almost the whole day; but I only avoided one misfortune to fall into another.

In a few hours I felt myself so fatigued that I was going to remount my sledge, when a sudden jolt instantly turned it upon its side, and effectually cooled my desire. I had no resource but to drag myself on as well as I could. My legs bent under me, I was in a profuse perspiration, and a burning thirst still added to my weariness. The snow was a poor relief, and I had nothing else with which to quench my thirst. Unfortunately I perceived a little river; absolute necessity conduced my steps to it, and, without reflecting upon the consequences of my imprudence, I instantly broke the ice, and put a piece into my mouth. This precipitation was purely mechanical, and I soon repented it. My thirst was relieved; but from the excessive heat of which I before complained, I passed to the contrary extreme; a universal chill seized me, and all my limbs trembled.

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The sharpness of the night increased my aguish feeling, and my weakness at last was so extreme, that I was unable to proceed a step farther. I entreated my companions to halt in the midst of this desert. They complied out of pure civility to me, for the difficulty of procuring wood was otherwise a sufficient reason to determine them to proceed. Scarcely could they collect enough to place under a kettle; it consisted of a few little shrubs, so green that it was almost impossible to make them burn. How happy were we to succeed so far as to be able to make tea!

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After drinking a few cups, I retired to my tent^[4], where I lay down upon a small mattress spread upon the snow, and covered myself up with a number of furs, in order to revive perspiration. It was in vain; I did not close my eyes during the whole night. To the anguish of a

dry and burning fever, were added a continual oppression, and all the restlessness peculiar to the first symptoms of a disorder. I conceived myself, I acknowledge, to be dangerously ill, particularly when I found, upon getting up, that I could not articulate a single sound. I suffered infinitely both in my breast and throat; the fever was not abated; nevertheless the idea that a longer halt in this place would be of no benefit to me, and that I could only hope for succour by proceeding, determined me to conceal my extreme illness from M. Schmaleff. I was the first to propose going on, but in this I consulted my courage more than my strength.

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I had advanced but a few wersts, when my sufferings became insupportable. I was obliged to drive myself, and consequently to be in continual motion; frequently also I was compelled from the badness of roads, either to run by the side of my sledge, or call to the dogs to make them proceed. My hoarseness prevented their hearing me; and it was only by efforts that exhausted my strength, and tortured my lungs, that I at last succeeded. This exercise however, painful as it was, proved salutary to me; by degrees it created a perspiration; in the evening I could breathe more freely; the fever left me; I had no complaint but a violent cold, which was removed in a few days. Fatiguing exercise was the only remedy I used. I took particular care to continue the perspiration it occasioned, and to this I am persuaded I owe the rapidity of my cure. My breast however was so sore, that I felt the effects of it for a considerable time.

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During this interval I had nothing to suffer from the rigour of tempests; the air was calm, and the weather clear. We were blessed with the finest days of winter, or I should perhaps never again have seen my native country. Heaven seemed to favour my journey, that I might forget my sufferings.

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The most lively joy soon succeeded to the sorrow that had depressed me. We met, in different detachments, three convoys sent by sergeant Kabechoff to M. Kasloff. This unexpected succour gave me the more pleasure, as the deplorable state in which I had left the governor, was continually recurring to my mind. What a sudden change in his situation! He was upon the point of receiving a supply of provisions, together with an hundred and fifty dogs well fed and well trained. He will be able, said I to myself, to proceed immediately on his journey; and if I cannot flatter myself that I shall see him again, I know at least that he will be extricated from his embarrassment. This certainty relieved the anxiety which I had felt on his account.

The soldier who conducted the convoys, offered me part of his provisions; but I refused them. He had no profusion, and we were not in want. I detained him therefore as short a time as possible.

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Before he quitted us, he told me that prince Eitel, or chief of the Koriacs of Kaminoi, who had been accused of rebellion, was advancing to undeceive the governor, and prove the falsehood of the charge.

In pursuing our route, we perceived, beyond a small river bordered with some shrubs, a chain of steep mountains, which it was necessary to climb one after the other, in order to descend upon another river, called Talofka. Its banks diverged as it approached the sea; they were well wooded, and I perceived some trees of a tolerable size. We left this river at a distance from Kaminoi, in order to traverse an extensive heath, then a considerable lake; at length we crossed the river Pengina, almost at its mouth, and in a direction from south-east to north-west. Its breadth is striking, and the aspect of the heaps of ice that covered it, and which were of an extreme height, would have been still more picturesque, if we could have taken a more convenient way; but we had no choice, and were reduced to the necessity of hoisting, as I may say, our dogs and our sledges from heap to heap. The difficulty and slowness of this manœuvre is easily conceived; it required my utmost exertion and care to get off unhurt.

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It was still near two hours before we reached Kaminoi, where we arrived the 24 before noon. We were received by the inhabitants with the utmost civility. In the absence of Eitel, another prince called *Eila*, had the command. He came to meet us with a Russian detachment, and we were conducted to the yourt of Eitel, which had been cleaned and prepared a long time for the reception of M. Kasloff.

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Eila conferred upon us every mark of respect; we had constantly a centinel at our door, whose orders were to open it to such persons only as we had no reason to distrust.

This was not owing to any doubts we entertained respecting the report that had been spread of the rebellion of the Koriacs; it was evidently false^[5]. Their behaviour to us, and the reception they had prepared for the governor, plainly proved what was their disposition at present. Nor is it to be presumed that this was the effect of the arrival of the soldiers sent from Ingiga^[6]. Their wretched condition was little calculated to awe men like the Koriacs, who are too little attached to life, I understand, to be ever intimidated; and whom nothing can restrain, if they have the least ground for discontent.

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The sight however of the cannon, and of the Cossacs in arms, who had entered the village without announcing any hostile intention, gave them at first some alarm. Immediately advancing towards the subaltern officer who commanded the troop, they called upon him to declare, whether he was come to strike a blow at their liberty, and extirpate them; adding, that if such were the project of the Russians, the Koriacs would all die to a man, rather than submit. The officer removed their fears, by artfully answering, that the occasion of his embassy ought not to alarm them; that he was sent to meet M. Kasloff, which was an honour due to his rank, and prescribed by the military regulations of Russia towards their governors. This explanation was sufficient to remove their suspicions; and the Koriacs and Russians lived together upon terms of the best understanding. The confidence of the Koriacs was so great, that they took no

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precautions against a surprise, and would have paid no attention to the continued abode of these soldiers among them, but for a famine, which began to render such guests burthensome.

I had intended to stay no longer at Kaminoi than was necessary to rest my dogs; but on the night of the 24, the sky became obscured, and frequent gusts of wind threatened an approaching tempest; the fear of encountering it in the open field, made me defer my departure.

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This ostrog is three hundred wersts from Poustaretsk, and is situated upon an eminence near the sea coast, and at the mouth of the river Pengina. It contains a great number of balagans and twelve yourts, all of them very large, and built in a similar manner to those I have already described. Though very near to one another, these habitations occupy a considerable space of ground. The palisades which surround them are fortified with spears, bows and arrows, and musquets. They are thicker and higher than those placed round the Kamtschadale yourts. Within these wretched fortifications the Koriacs consider themselves as impregnable. Here they repel the attacks of their enemies, and among others, the Tchoukchis, who are the most formidable of their neighbours, both in point of number and courage^[7].

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The population at Kaminoi scarcely exceeds three hundred persons, including men, women, and children. I shall say nothing of the manners of the inhabitants till my arrival at Ingiga, which will I hope be in a few days.

Before I left the village, I saw a dozen baidars, or boats, of different sizes, similar to the one I mentioned upon coming out of Khaluli^[8], except that they were better constructed, and from their superior lightness, had the advantage in sailing. I admired also their remarkable breadth. Many of these baidars would hold from twenty-five to thirty persons.

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From the moment of our arrival, M. Schmaleff had foreseen that he should not be able to accompany me from this village. Beset evening and morning by the whole detachment of soldiers, who came to acquaint him with the urgency of their wants, he considered it as his duty not to abandon them, but to employ all the means which his office and his perfect knowledge of the country afforded him for procuring them assistance. He was equally impatient with myself to get to Ingiga, where his brother had long expected him: but he resolved nevertheless to let me depart without him.

He informed me of this circumstance with regret, and gave me at the same time a confidential soldier, named *Yegor-Golikoff*^[9]. He made me, he said, in this man a valuable present; and we shall find in the sequel that he was not deceived.

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This kindness increased the reluctance I felt at being obliged so soon to leave this good and gallant officer. My gratitude would lead me to repeat in this place, what the English have written of his humanity and politeness; but I leave to count de la Perouse the pleasure of acquitting the debt which every individual in the expedition owes to M. Schmaleff, for his assiduity in rendering it, while at Saint Peter and Saint Paul's, all the services that were in his power.

I came out of Kaminoi at eight o'clock in the morning of the 26, the weather being tolerably calm^[10]. At the distance of fifteen wersts, I again met with the chain of mountains which I had before passed on this side of the village. I traversed them a second time, and then crossed a river called *Chestokova*, from a subaltern officer of that name, who had been killed there at the head of a detachment sent to keep the revolted Koriacs in awe. Under advantage of the night the Koriacs had taken them by surprise upon the border of this river, and had not suffered an individual to escape: all the Russians were massacred. I halted in the same place.

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I was roused from my sleep by the gusts of wind that blew with extreme violence. The clouds of snow obscured the air to a degree, that it was not easy to distinguish if it were day. In spite of this dreadful hurricane I resolved to proceed; but I could not prevail on my guides to make even the attempt. They persisted in not quitting the place, from the apprehension of losing their way, and encountering other dangers in such bad weather.

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Opposed on all sides, I retired to my tent in no very pleasant humour. At noon I was agreeably consoled by the arrival of seven Tchoukchis. They were in sledges, similar to those of the wandering Koriacs, and drawn in like manner by rein deer. I received them under my tent, and invited them to remain till the storm was dissipated. Nothing could have flattered them more, as I judged from the air of satisfaction which my offer imparted to the countenance of every individual.

Among these Tchoukchis was the chief of the horde, called *Tummé*. He addressed himself to me in order to express the gratitude they felt for the reception I gave them. He assured me that ever since they had heard of me, they had desired nothing so ardently as my acquaintance, and had been greatly alarmed lest they should lose the opportunity. He added, that they would never forget either my person or my kindnesses, and that they would give an exact account of every thing to their countrymen. I answered with a profusion of thanks, informing them that I had been already made acquainted with their obliging curiosity, and that I had not been less desirous of the present interview.

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After this preface, we talked upon general subjects, particularly upon their country and mine. My curiosity was equal to theirs, and the time passed in perpetual questions. As I told them that, in returning to France, I must pass through the town that was the residence of their sovereign, they begged me to give her a faithful account of them, and to lay at her feet the tribute of their respect and submission. They added, that they were by so much the more happy in being tributaries of Russia, as they every day found the Russians more easy of access, and more affectionate in their behaviour. They spoke with particular commendation of M. Gagen,

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governor of Ingiga.

The kindness they had experienced, made them regret the want of opportunity to maintain a more frequent intercourse with the Russians. The only mode, they said, of surmounting these difficulties, would be for the subjects of the Czarina to form afresh their establishment upon the river Anadir. They promised for the future that, far from giving any interruption to the settlers, they would exert themselves by every office of friendship to make them forget the injustice of their past conduct. That conduct had originated in an error, under which they laboured as well as the Koriacs, in having formerly figured to themselves the Russians as consisting only of that small number of individuals, who came in this adventurous manner to plant themselves in their territory and neighbourhood. By a natural sentiment of jealousy, they had regarded these emigrants as so many adversaries, whose industry and activity were the objects of their suspicion; and they conceived that nothing could be of more importance to them than to rid themselves of the intruders, persuaded that in exterminating the settlers they should destroy the race.

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The Tchoukchis professed to have discovered their mistake, and their folly as soon as they had been properly acquainted with the Russians. It was in vain that they were now persuaded to revolt, they being on the contrary disposed to counteract the seditious intrigues of a prince, or chief of the Tchoukchis, whose residence was fixed, by name *Kherourgui*, either by curtailing his authority, or even by delivering him up to the Russians.

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Not being able to conceive in what part of the world I was born, they asked me if my country were not on the other side of the great river. Before I answered them, I desired to know the meaning of their question; and I found they imagined that beyond Russia, with which country itself they had little acquaintance, there was a very large river that divided them from another country inhabited by different people.

It was not easy to instruct them upon this subject. I talked a long while without their understanding a single word of my geographical dissertation. They had no accurate idea either of number or extension. It was not less difficult to give them a notion of the strength of a state, or the riches and power of its sovereign. They had never attempted an estimation even of that of Russia. That I might enable them to judge of it, I was obliged to illustrate the abundance of its commodities, its money, and its population, by comparisons drawn from the number of animals they hunted, and the quantity of fish they caught every year, without destroying the breed. This explanation, which I exerted all my ability to make level to their capacities, extremely pleased them. I adopted the same method to give them a notion of the way measure extension. I began with the ground that my tent covered, and the taking a sheet of paper, drew a sort of geographical chart, in which I marked pretty nearly the situation and distances of Russia and France, with respect to their country.

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It was not without some labour that I made myself understood. But for this I was indemnified by the eagerness and attention with which they listened to me. In general I was astonished at the solidity of their understanding, and the thirst they felt for the acquisition of knowledge. Superior in these respects to the Koriacs, they appear both to respect more upon what they say themselves, and what they hear and behold. These two people have nearly the same idiom; the only difference is, that I found in the Tchoukchis a habit of prolonging the final syllables of words, and a pronunciation slower and sweeter than that of the Koriacs. With the assistance of my guide, who served me for an interpreter, I kept up the conversation tolerably well.

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The attention with which I examined their dress, inspired them with a desire of seeing the French habit^[11], and I ordered my uniform to be taken out of my portmanteau. At sight of it they expressed admiration in every part of their attitude. Every one was eager to touch it, every one exclaimed upon its singularity and its beauty. My buttons, marked with the arms of France, were particularly inspected, and it was necessary anew to exert my ingenuity to describe to them intelligibly, what this figure represented, and what was its use. But they did not allow me to finish. They eagerly reached out their hands, and intreated me to divide them among them. I consented, upon the promise they gave me to preserve them with extreme care. Their object in keeping them, was to employ them as a mark of affection, which they might shew to all the strangers that touched upon their coast, in hopes that among the rest there might possibly arrive a Frenchman.

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Their countrymen had seen the English some years before. "Why, said they, do not the French also visit us? They might depend upon being received by us with cheerfulness and cordiality." I thanked them for their obliging disposition, and represented to them that the distance was an insuperable obstacle, and would not permit us to put their kindness often to the proof. Meanwhile I promised to give a faithful representation of it upon my arrival in France.

After regaling them in the best manner I could with tobacco, having nothing that could afford them greater pleasure, we parted upon the best terms of friendship. Upon leaving me, they said, that I should probably soon met their equipages and their wives, whom they had left behind in order to make the greater haste.

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The wind became calm shortly after the departure of these Tchoukchis, and I pursued my journey.

The next day, at the very moment when I was about to stop, upon seeing a convenient place by the side of a wood, I perceived farther on before me a numerous troop of rein deer browsing at liberty upon the top of a mountain. Upon examining them more attentively, I distinguished some men who appeared to be guarding them. I hesitated at first whether I should avoid, or join them;

but curiosity at length prevailed, and I advanced to reconnoitre them.

By proceeding along the skirts of the wood I was told I should come up with them. I conceived however that at the extremity I should be still separated from them by a river, a small arm of which I had crossed a quarter of an hour before: at this place it was tolerably wide. While I was examining these people from one bank to the other, I was approached by two women who were walking about. The eldest accosted me. How great was my surprise to hear both her and her companion speak the Russian language! They informed me that I was but two hundred yards from the camp of the Tchoukchis, the view of which was intercepted by the wood. As soon indeed as I got down to the side of the river I could see their sledges and their tents, and I entreated these women to conduct me thither.

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As we went on, I asked them of what country they were, their language telling me that they were neither born, nor had always lived among these people.

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One of them informed me that she was a Russian, and had been induced to accompany the Tchoukchis from a sentiment of maternal affection. Dangers, fatigues, ill treatment, she had braved every thing, from the sole motive of reclaiming her daughter, who was retained by them as an hostage. She had lost her in the following manner.

This young woman was travelling, two years before, with her father and a number of other Russians upon the river Pengina. Their caravan, consisting of nine persons, was proceeding quietly along in the midst of the Koriacs, threatened at that time by a party of Tchoukchis, headed by this very Kherourgui whom we just now mentioned. To get rid of their dangerous neighbours, the Koriacs conceived the design of informing the Tchoukchis of the passage of these strangers^[12], as a prize that ought not to escape them. The artifice succeeded. Seduced by the expectation of an immense booty in iron and tobacco, the Tchoukchis followed these travellers. Their courage could not save them, and four of them, with their arms in their hands, became the victims of a fruitless resistance. The husband of this woman was killed in defending his daughter, whom the conquerors carried off with the three remaining companions of her misfortune. The Russians had incessantly demanded the surrender of these prisoners, and the Tchoukchis had promised to send them back; but only two of them had yet been released.

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The affecting recital of this unfortunate mother, which was frequently interrupted by her tears, interested me strongly in her favour. Without knowing whether the mediation would have any weight with the Tchoukchis, I felt myself disposed to join my intreaties to hers, and I had the satisfaction to perceive that they were not nugatory.

The other woman told me that she was by birth a Tchoukchi. In her infancy she had been taken by the Russians upon the river Anadir, and carried to Yakoutsck, where they had given her the best education in their power. She afterwards married a soldier, by whom she was in a few years left a widow. At length, by order of government, she was sent back to her own country with her children, to render an account of the obligations that she owed to the Russians. It had been recommended to her to give the minutest details to the Tchoukchis, even such as lived to the greatest distance^[13], and insinuate to them the innumerable advantages they might derive from establishing a safe and peaceable commerce with the Russians.

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This woman spoke the Russian, the Yakout, and the Tchoukchi languages with equal facility. She told me, that the little knowledge she derived from her education, had gained her a sort of credit with her compatriots; that she had already taken advantage of her ascendancy over their minds, to destroy several of their prejudices; and she flattered herself that by degrees they would be taught to see their interest in its true light. Her hopes were chiefly founded upon the character of this people, which she assured me was perfectly generous, hospitable, mild, and preferable in every respect to that of the Koriacs.

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The conversation of these women had so engrossed my attention, that I was in the camp of the Tchoukchis before I perceived it. Their joy at seeing me was extreme, and I was surrounded in an instant. They all addressed themselves to me at once, to prevail on me to spend the night with them. I had no sooner answered that it was my intention, than they saluted me with new transports and huzzas. I ordered my tent to be erected at the extremity of the camp, and while it was performing I invited the chiefs to visit me. Eager to accept my invitation, they could not wait till I had entered my tent, and I found a more numerous assembly than it could contain.

After the first compliments were over, we entered into conversation, mutually desirous of receiving information. We talked in a summary way of our respective countries, manners, and customs; and the questions they asked me were nearly similar to those of Tummé and his companions. They expressed their submission to Russia, their desire of forming an alliance with that country by means of a commercial intercourse, and of seeing the establishment upon the Anadir revived. They then entered into particulars upon the motives of their journey. Their principal inducement was to visit some relations who had intermarried with the Russians, and settled at Ingiga. They had also, it was probable, some commercial project in view, though from their own account, attachment to their countrymen was their only motive; and in reality, this patriotic sentiment was visible I thought in their attention to this Tchoukchi woman, and the caresses they bestowed upon her children.

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They frequently entreated me to banish all distrust from my mind, and to rely upon their friendship. They seemed to suppose that I partook of the reserve which the Russians discovered in their intercourse with them; but not having the same reasons to fear them, I was a stranger to suspicion. I wished them to understand this by my answer, which was, that being unwilling to offend any individual I might meet with in my way, I imagined that no one would be desirous of

incommoding me, particularly in the midst of a nation whose civility and rectitude were already known to me. This mode of reasoning pleased them, and they appeared to be flattered by my security. I conceived of course that I ought to conceal my arms, and reject the proposal made by my soldiers of placing a centinel before my tent.

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I distributed tobacco to the most distinguished of these Tchoukchis, and afterwards treated them with tea and rye biscuit. Their chief, or prince, named *Chegouiaga*, of the same rank and authority as Tummé, two of his relations, and the two women who served as interpreters, supped with me. The repast was perfectly frugal but very gay, and my guests were as well pleased as if they had fared ever so sumptuously. The necessity of taking rest obliged us to separate.

As soon as I was alone, I embraced the opportunity of writing down the notes with which their conversation and my own observations had furnished me.

The camp of these Tchoukchis was pitched upon the border of the river, by the side of their equipages, and at the back of the wood which I mentioned. It contained about a dozen tents ranged in a line along the bank. They were of a square form, and made of rein deer skin, suspended by leathern straps to four poles erected at the four corners. Bundles of spears and arrows, fixed in the snow before every tent, seem to guard the entrance^[14], which is very low, and shuts *hermetically*. The tents are extremely hot. The partitions and the covering being made of deer skin, the air cannot penetrate, and there is besides a stove in the middle of each of them. The bed resembles that of the Kamtschadales when they halt, and consists of small branches of trees spread on the snow like litter, and covered with deer skins. Here a whole family will lie down and sleep together without distinction of age or sex. The space is so narrow that it is astonishing how so many people can crowd into it. The air and filthiness occasioned by it are insupportable; let it suffice to say, that they feel no disgust at seeing their food and their drink close to the most offensive objects, for no words can describe the excess of their indolence.

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Among these Tchoukchis, whose number amounted to about forty, there were fifteen or sixteen women^[15], and nearly as many children, who are employed in preparing the tents and provisions. Every principal person has valets in his service to take care of the deer, and guard them during the night from the wolves with which these coasts abound.

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The dress of the women is very remarkable. It consists of a single deer skin that is fastened round the neck, where it has an opening both before and behind, and which descends in the shape of large breeches below the knee. This garment is put on by means of the opening at the neck, and there is no other way of taking it off but by loosening the strings which tie it under the chin, when it instantly falls from the body, and leaves the woman naked. The inconvenience of this habit may easily be imagined, from the frequent necessity there must be of divesting themselves of it. When they travel, they wear a *kouklanki* over their common dress, and their feet have no other covering than boots made of the legs of rein deer. Their hair is of a deep black. Sometimes it is turned up in tufts behind, but it is oftener separated upon the forehead, and hangs in long braids on each side. Their ears and their neck are loaded with ornaments of glass beads of different colours; and when they are cold, the hood of their *parque* serves them for a head-dress.

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Their countenance is by no means agreeable; the features are coarse, though their nose is not flat, nor their eyes sunk in their head like the Kamtschadales. They resemble them in these respects less than do the Koriac women. They are also taller, but not slender. The thickness and bulk of their dress give them an appearance the very opposite to alert. In the mean time they perform the most laborious offices, such as lighting fire, cutting wood, fetching water, and other things required in their domestic œconomy. These cares devolve principally upon the oldest.

The features of the men seemed to be more regular, and not at all Asiatic. Their complexion, like that of the women, is very tawny; and their dress, their sledges, and in short, all their customs are exactly similar to those of the wandering Koriacs. I shall take an opportunity of describing them together.

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These Tchoukchis at present go every year to Ingiga. They leave their country in the beginning of autumn, and do not arrive at this settlement till March. As soon as their business is transacted, which only requires a few days, they set out upon their return, that they may not lose the advantage of travelling in sledges; but they seldom reach their home till the latter end of June.

The merchandise they take with them consists chiefly of sable and fox-skin *parques*, and moose teeth, which afford a very fine ivory. They receive in exchange kettles, tobacco, lances, musquets, knives, and other iron instruments. As yet they are little accustomed to the musquet, and scarcely make any use of it; but they are very expert in shooting an arrow, and managing a lance, which are therefore their principal arms.

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Like all the northern people, they have an astonishing propensity to drunkenness. Their love of brandy is so extreme, that if you once let them taste it, you must repeat your kindness till they are perfectly intoxicated, or they would consider themselves as insulted, and probably have recourse to menaces and violence, to obtain their ends. As incessant smokers as the Koriacs, they have the same pipes and the same method of using them.

Being unwilling to prolong my stay, I went as soon as it was light to take leave of these Tchoukchis in their tents, but the unwholesome air and the heat soon obliged me to withdraw. Our parting was very affectionate; each in his turn overwhelmed me with embraces. It may be supposed I did not fall short in my compliments, nor could I in reality too highly extol the reception of this hospitable people.

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I set off early enough to travel this day thirty wersts. About half way I found upon the sea coast two balagans and a yourt, inhabited by a Koriac family, and an hour after I reached the ostrog of Pareiné.

This village is less than Kaminoi, but more populous and well situated. It is upon a river, from which it takes its name, and about three wersts from where it pours its waters into the sea of Pengina, which forms at this place so narrow a gulf, that in clear weather one can see from one shore to the other.

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The first person I saw in the village was an old woman of a mixed breed, whose melancholy appearance struck me. Either from compassion or curiosity, I instantly approached her. Upon my questioning her respecting the cause of her distress, she uttered a loud shriek, and answered me only by her tears. My intreaties, and the sympathy I discovered, at last drew from her the recital of her misfortune.

About a fortnight before, she had left Ingiga with her husband, her son, and a number of friends, to visit some relations at Pareiné. Overtaken in their way by one of those terrible hurricanes, whose fatal effects I have been twenty times upon the verge of experiencing, these travellers had strayed from the road, and been separated from one another. The father and son were in the same sledge. Having wandered a long time in pursuit of a shelter, or to discover some vestiges of the road, they were at length totally lost. After two days search, they were found buried in the snow, and dead with cold. Their bodies were completely frozen, and their posture indicated, that these two unfortunate beings, no longer able to drag themselves on, had lain down close together to keep themselves warm, and died in each others arms. More successful than her husband, this woman had found a shelter by the side of a river, fifteen wersts from Pareiné, where she had arrived with her companions, exhausted with fatigue, and half dead with grief. She added, that during this tempest it was impossible to see either the heavens or the earth. The snow, frozen in the air, grew thicker as it fell, and was like a shower of icicles. Their clothes had been so pierced by it as to be perfectly useless. But what still increased this woman's affliction, was the inability in which she found herself of returning to her country. No person seemed disposed to supply her with the means, which she continually solicited, but without effect. Upon this she burst into a flood of tears. I said every thing that compassion suggested to me to console her; and quitted her with regret, at not being able to afford her any relief, and showing her only a fruitless pity.

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While I was conversing with her, the inhabitants of Pareiné crowded about me. Their chief or prince, called *Youltitka*, approached to invite me to pass the night in the village. His sinister countenance confirmed every thing that had been said of his perfidy, and I gave him to understand, that I had no desire to stop. Upon my refusal, he mentioned the impossibility of procuring me dogs and provisions till the next morning. The reasons he assigned plainly discovered his ill will^[16], and betrayed, I thought, some fatal intention. Resolved to escape, whatever it might cost me, I replied, that I could very well do without what I was unable to obtain, but that no consideration should induce me to stay. He feigned not to comprehend me, and alledged some new obstacle, regarding me at the same time with a bitter smile, that seemed to defy me to proceed. I felt that I must arm myself with the utmost firmness, or patiently submit to whatever law it might please this wretch to impose upon me. The whole village was present. Two hundred men at least pressed tumultuously about me, either to inspire me with terror, or to observe my embarrassment. In this perilous conjuncture, I conceived the design of addressing myself to them in the Russian language, hoping that there might be some among them who would understand me, and who might be less unmanageable than their chief.

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My harangue was short, but vehement. I enforced the consideration of my character as a stranger, my claims upon their assistance, my desire of meriting it by my behaviour towards them, and the kindness I had received from their countrymen in the course of my journey. I added, that except in the present instance, I had never had occasion to demand the succours of which I stood in need; far from waiting till I produced my orders, they had showed the utmost readiness to anticipate my wishes, before I could make them known.

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At the mention of the word order, I perceived that they looked with a kind of astonishment upon one another. In proportion as my address made an impression upon them, I assumed more warmth and assurance. Then drawing on a sudden my passport from my pocket, and fixing my eyes with an air of displeasure upon Youltitka, I presented it to him, declaring at the same time that I meant to depart in two hours at latest. This abrupt conclusion disconcerted him. He perceived that he could not avoid complying with my wishes, without rendering himself criminal; and the mandate of the governor was too formal and too authoritative for him to dare to oppose it. He therefore ordered that the quantity of fish which I wanted, should immediately be collected, intreating me at the same time to have some regard to the smallness of their stock, which I should very considerably diminish. It was this idea, he said, that had induced him to make any difficulties, as he was afraid that I should totally exhaust their caves. This was a mere subterfuge, as I was soon convinced that they were abundantly stored.

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In the mean time, that he might be thought desirous of making some amends for his uncivil reception, or perhaps with a view of making me repent the having forced him in his last intrenchments, he invited me to wait in his yourt, till my people had made the necessary preparations for my departure. To refuse would have shown a degree of inquietude; I wished, on the contrary, fully to convince him of my intrepidity. It was besides the hour for dining, and with the hope of imperceptibly gaining the traitor, I accepted his invitation, offering to treat him with a better repast than it was in his power to provide for me. I followed him with a countenance as

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tranquil as if I had felt myself in perfect security. To speak the truth, however, I was not without trouble, when, upon coming to his yourt, I found it necessary to descend forty feet under ground. The extraordinary depth of this retreat delivered me entirely to the mercy of my host. My companions could neither have heard nor assisted me. I shuddered at my own imprudence, but it was too late to draw back. I was well armed, and I prepared to defend myself as well as I could in case of an insult.

The first care of Youltitka was to seat me in the place of honour, that is, in a kind of alcove reserved for the chief of the family. His was a very numerous one, nearly eighty persons living with him in this yourt. They had all deserted it upon the report of my arrival, and were still about my people, so that I was alone to contend with three or four companions or relations of Youltitka, who surrounded me, thrusting their noses almost in my face. Supposing themselves to be adepts in the Russian language, because they were able to murder a few words, they asked me, in turn, a variety of questions, each more absurd than the preceding. My situation dictated politeness, and I answered them with mildness and precision. I thus passed an hour in the midst of these savage figures, truly calculated to inspire dread, particularly that of their chief^[17]. My soldier did not make his appearance, and I began to be uneasy. Upon a motion which I made to come out, these Koriacs placed themselves before me. One of them caught hold of my arm to make me sit down, asking me if I wanted to escape. I endeavoured to look as stoutly as I could, but I confess my heart palpitated. I again took my seat; and in spite of the alteration which they might perceive in my face, I replied, that I did not imagine I had any reason to fear them. Youltitka then endeavoured to excite my confidence. He swore that he had the highest esteem for me, and that I was in perfect safety. His past conduct, he added, might have given me reason to suspect his character, but he considered it as a point of honour to set me right. Proud of having been received among the judges of the tribunal of Ingiga^[18], he valued his reputation too much to suffer any one to treat me ill in his presence.

I knew my man too well to place any faith in these asseverations, and I considered myself as happy that he dared not do what was in his power, and probably what was in his heart. I hastened therefore to quit the yourt, upon the pretext of seeking for my people, and giving them orders for dinner. I could not however rid myself of this treacherous Koriac. He persisted in accompanying me. Every word I uttered seemed to alarm him. Not understanding the Russian language, he immediately asked the meaning of what I said, and watched all my motions with singular attention.

I found my people occupied in bartering the bad dogs they had left, for furs, and articles of dress made of rein deer-skin. Their avarice had made them forgetful of what I had recommended to them, and the danger in which they had left me; but I concealed my displeasure on account of my witnesses. I again descended the yourt, accompanied by Youltitka and my two soldiers, who began immediately to prepare our dinner. The women assisted them in cleaning the dishes^[19]; and with the help of brandy, good humour gradually succeeded to fears and distrust. Our repast was very jovial, and I frequently endeavoured to imitate my guests in their loud peals of laughter, outrageous expression of sentiment being the only thing that pleases them. The dinner being finished, I sent one of my soldiers to order the dogs to be harnessed, a part of which was a fresh supply. My provisions were also ready, and in ten minutes I was prepared to take leave of my Koriacs. They appeared to be satisfied with me; I know not whether they were really so, but I acknowledge as to myself that I was glad to escape from them, and I set off therefore as quick as possible.

It was only two o'clock in the afternoon; but I conceived that I ought to make up for the forced delay I had experienced, and did not therefore halt till I was fifteen wersts from Pareiné.

This day and the next, which was the 30, afforded nothing that was worth reciting. I crossed a variety of rivers, not one of which was considerable, but there were a few shrubs on the banks of some of them. Upon leaving Pareiné I had quitted the sea, and should see no more of it on this side of Ingiga, of consequence we had no chance of procuring dry wood, which we sometimes found while we travelled upon the coast. This was a considerable loss to us, from the necessity to which it reduced us of gathering every little shrub we could perceive, and the fear that even this paltry resource might fail us.

For a long time my principal food had been rein deer. Delicious as this meat is, there is I believe none of which one is so soon tired. The worst circumstance however was, that our stock began to be exhausted. We only eat of it once a day; our other meals consisted of dried fish and the flesh of the sea wolf boiled. I was highly gratified this day by a brace of partridges, which I had the good fortune to kill, and which were added to my table. This gave an agreeable relief to the tedious uniformity of my daily food.

The day was beautiful, and a clear sky seemed to promise us colder weather, which was what we wished, the snow being so soft that our dogs sunk to their bellies. To open a way for them, each of us was obliged to run before with our rackets. The hope that the next day would afford us better travelling, animated my guides, and we made tolerable speed. It was late when we stopped at a place that was not at all sheltered; there was no wood except a sort of dwarf cedar, resinous, crooked, and grovelling.

Before I retired to my tent, I perceived at the horizon some ill-boding clouds. I had been sufficiently habituated to the climate to be able to judge of the weather from the most trivial appearances, and I communicated my conjectures to my guides. They considered their knowledge in this respect as infinitely superior to mine, and replied, that the setting sun had been too beautiful to give us any reason to apprehend foul weather. According to their own account they

were never deceived, and I might implicitly rely upon their judgment. Upon reflection I was not sorry to find them in this security, as it relieved me from the fear of being constrained by them to pass the day in this place, which would not be tenable against the first gust of wind.

As soon as it was light I was waked by one of my guides, who, in a tone of raillery, came to hasten my departure, that we might not lose the advantage of the fine day we were likely to have. The moon still shone, and the sky was without a cloud. While I was at breakfast, as usual, upon tea and rye biscuit, which my people had reserved for me, willing rather to want it themselves than that I should be without it, they questioned me one after another respecting the weather. It was a contest who should banter me most. I persevered however in my opinion, desiring them to wait till the evening before they judged whether I was right or wrong in prognosticating a storm.

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We had scarcely broke up our camp, when we perceived at some distance a company consisting of five Koriac sledges, drawn by rein deer. Our dogs, allured by the scent of these animals, advanced towards them with astonishing ardour. The nearer we approached, the more these Koriacs seemed to avoid us. I imagined at first that it was the natural effect of their distrust, but the cry and eagerness of our dogs, soon told me what was the source of their terror. They would infallibly have rushed upon them if they had been more at liberty. I ordered my guides therefore to halt. The difficulty was to restrain our steeds, which we did not effect without considerable exertion. We then endeavoured by signs to make the Koriacs understand that we were desirous of a moment's conversation with them. They appeared to hold a consultation, and after a few minutes one of their company was dispatched to us. He stopped about three hundred yards from us, and desired us in like manner by signs to send also one of our body, and particularly to keep back our dogs. I ordered one of my soldiers to go with his rackets to meet this Koriac, and to ask him whence they came, whither they were bound, if they knew any thing relative to M. Kasloff, and what distance they imagined us to be from Ingiga.

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In the course of half an hour my messenger came back with the following information. These people were wandering Koriacs, returning to their families from Ingiga, where they had been to see their friends and sell their deer skins. They had heard they thought of a supply of dogs and provisions being sent a short time since to the governor-general, but they could give us no certain intelligence. Their account of our distance from Ingiga corresponded with the opinion of my guide, whom I had just before interrogated upon the subject, in consequence of a new debate between my people and me. It originated thus.

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While we waited the return of the soldier, I observed some clouds pass rapidly over our heads, the form and direction of which confirmed me in the idea that we were threatened by an approaching tempest. My confidential soldier, Golikoff, had been equally incredulous with the rest, and readily defended the contrary opinion; in the mean time he agreed that at present there was every appearance that my predictions would be verified; he had even mentioned me, he said, to the Koriacs, as a prophet in this respect, and he should be sorry to see me mistaken in the very first instance, and lose my credit.

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This simple avowal was the more diverting to me, as my conductors were witnesses to it. It suggested to me the desire of amusing myself in my turn with their ignorant simplicity. The opportunity was favourable. I repeated, that in two hours at latest, they would be convinced of my knowledge, but that it was first necessary I should be informed whether we should meet with any place of shelter in our way. One of them answered me in the negative. "Till we came to the river Ingiga, we had to traverse an immense and naked plain, where the eye could merely discern a few inequalities, occasioned by the soil, or the snow drifted by the hurricanes, and congealed by the frost." This intelligence embarrassed me, apprehensive that we should be compelled to return for shelter to a little wood which we had just passed. We were scarcely half a league from it, but the obstinacy of my guides in support of the opinion that we had nothing to fear, removed the difficulty. Imboldened by their supposed experience, they were desirous that we should proceed. I agreed with them, hoping to arrive at Ingiga in the evening.

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To execute my project with greater certainty, I intended to have recourse to my compass, which would be a sufficient guide in the midst of the whirlwinds. I asked therefore, the most intelligent of my conductors in what direction Ingiga lay, and he made it known to me immediately by pointing out at a great distance a mountain, the summit of which seemed to be lost in the clouds. "The town," said he, "is a little on this side, and in the same line. We are as yet fifty or fifty-five wersts from it." I interrupted him to examine in what point of the compass it was, and to calculate with my watch the pace we travelled. From the time we sat out we had gone at the rate of six or seven wersts an hour, but I considered that the hurricane would considerably impede us, and I counted therefore only upon three wersts. It was now six o'clock in the morning, and according to my calculation, I hoped to be at Ingiga before midnight. I learned also from my guide, that to gain the river which led to the town, it was first necessary that we should arrive at a very large forest through which it flowed. I was satisfied. The immense extent of this wood to the right and left, convinced me that we could not lose ourselves or miss finding it.

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Having taken these precautions, I told my people that I desired nothing better than to proceed, and that I was resolved not to stop, whatever might happen. I recommended to them to inform me when they thought that they had lost their way, and I would then set them right. The seriousness with which I gave this order, confounded them; they looked at each other with an air of astonishment, not daring to tell me in plain terms that I was out of my senses. The most intrepid of them however, addressed himself to me, and represented, that having never passed this way, it was impossible I could undertake to guide them, without running the risk of entirely losing them, and that I was certainly in jest. I made no other reply than ordering every one to his sledge, threatening to punish whoever should disobey, and I immediately gave the signal to

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depart.

At half after eight we had advanced fifteen wersts, and according to my estimate had only forty remaining; but the horizon had been for almost an hour covered with dark clouds. We saw the tempest gradually approach, and the wind began to raise the snow in eddies. My companions were silent. Terror acted upon them almost as strongly as their confusion, and they knew no longer where they were. The hurricane soon attacked us with a violence that deranged several of our sledges. By dint of vociferation we rallied them. My conductors confessed themselves conquered, and conjured me to halt, though we were in the open country. Blinded by the wind, which blew in their faces, they were afraid of misleading us.

I reminded them of my promise, and persisted in wishing to go on. I ordered that all the sledges should keep as close as possible together, that we might be informed of the least accident that should happen, and be able to assist one another. Then, by means of my compass, which I had fastened under my fur cloak, that it might be continually before my eyes, I began the office of directing our caravan. We travelled in this order during the rest of the day, and I might say in the midst of darkness, for I could not see the soldier who was in the sledge immediately behind me, and scarcely his foremost dogs.

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About seven o'clock in the evening, weary of the complaints and remonstrances of my people, who continually requested me to stop, and judging beside that we could not be more than five or six wersts from the wood, I assured them that if we did not reach it by nine o'clock, we would go no farther that night; unless when arrived at the wood and the river, they preferred going on, as we should be so near to Ingiga; but that they should be at liberty to do as they pleased. This condition appeared to pacify them; not because they imagined themselves to be so far advanced, on the contrary, they probably considered themselves as out of the road, and only wished to repose themselves, that with the advantage of day-light they might recover it again.

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At a quarter before nine a kind of dark veil began to be perceptible before us. As we drew nearer, it became blacker and more extensive. The next moment my conductors cried out that they could see the trees, and that they were safe. It was in reality the forest of Ingiga. I sent them a little way on to examine it, and they presently returned transported with joy to tell me that we were close to the river.

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The respectful tone with which they delivered themselves diverted me extremely. After thanking me for having guided them so well, the Koriac asserted that none of their chamans had ever performed any thing so miraculous. To have predicted the bad weather, at a time when every thing seemed in their eyes to promise the very reverse; to have been afterwards able to guide and preserve them in the midst of this *pourga*^[20], was a sagacity, in his opinion, supernatural. The gratitude of the rest of my company was almost equally absurd. They could not recover themselves from their astonishment. It was in vain I showed them my compass, and endeavoured to explain to them how I derived from it all my knowledge; they replied, that such a conjuring book was unintelligible except to persons like me, skilled in the art of magic.

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At so short a distance from Ingiga, I was fully assured they would no longer be desirous of stopping; each of them was anxious to see his wife, and embrace his children. So far were they from accepting my proposal to pitch our tent and pass the night in the wood, that they importuned me to gain the river, and they engaged in three hours to reach the town. I complied, and we coasted along the bank till we arrived opposite to Ingiga, where it was necessary to cross the river, which passed close to the walls. The ice was sufficiently firm, but the violence of the wind had covered it with water, so that our feet were very wet.

At the gates of the town I answered the interrogatories usual in fortified places, and was obliged to wait till a report was made to the governor. Having long received intelligence that I was on my way, major Gaguen had the civility to come immediately to welcome me, and offer me his house. I entered Ingiga the 31, exactly at half after eleven o'clock.

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This town is the largest and most populous I have yet seen. It is situated upon a river of the same name, thirty wersts from its mouth, and is defended by a square inclosure of palisades, the height and thickness of which surprised me, and by wooden bastions, erected on piles, at the four angles. These bastions are provided with cannon, and contain a variety of warlike stores. They are guarded day and night by centinels^[21], as are also the three gates of the town, of which one only is open. There is a small square, before the house of the governor, and a guard, stationed on one side of this square, defends it from attack. I was equally struck with the houses. They are of wood, and very low, but have all a regular front, and are evidently built upon one plan. M. Gaguen intends by degrees to give this uniformity to the whole town. The isbas that have been constructed since his arrival, besides a pleasant appearance, have all the conveniences on the inside that such habitations will admit of. He has it in contemplation also to rebuild the church, which is a wretched edifice, and almost in ruins.

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The population amounts to about five or six hundred inhabitants, who are either merchants, or in the service of government. The latter are most numerous, and form the garrison of the place. They are kept under the severest discipline, which is indispensable, from the frequent occasion there is to defend themselves. The circumspection and zeal of the governor in this respect cannot be surpassed. Their tribunals are the same with those of Nijenei Kamtschatka.

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The commerce of Ingiga consists of furs, and particularly the skins of rein deer. It is in general superior to Kamtschatka both in the variety and quality of its skins. It is true that we get the otter and sea wolf-skin from that peninsula, but the sables of Ingiga are much finer, though they are at the same time scarcer. The Kamtschadales besides have no common martens^[22], rabbits, or

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American rats, called *rissei*, which the Koriacs get by means of exchange from the neighbouring Tchoukchis, and which they bring to Ingiga with their rein deer-skins. These deer-skins are sold in their raw state, and at a very good price. They are afterwards tanned and manufactured with such surprising art, that the laborious activity of the workmen supersede the necessity of instruments invented by European industry. The skill and beauty of their work can only be surpassed by its durability. Gloves and stockings come from their hands in a state of perfection. Their sewings and embroideries are wrought with the hair of the rein deer, with silk, and with gold, and would do credit to our most skillful glovers.

But it is time I should speak of the customs of the Koriacs. I have only deferred my account so long that I might be more minute. To the imperfect observations which I have myself made in passing through their different ostrogs, I shall add others that are more exact, and derived from unquestionable authority. In my conversations with M. Gaguen and the principal inhabitants, I endeavoured to derive some light upon the subject; but my chief source of information was a Koriac, whom I shall here introduce to the reader.

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My first acquaintance with him was at Kaminoi. Struck with the civilities which M. Schmaleff bestowed upon him, I was curious to know the rank and situation of this personage. He was, they informed me, a *zassédatel*, or Ingiga judge, and was come to meet us to offer us his services. The facility with which he expressed himself in the Russian language, and the rectitude of his mind charmed me. I should have taken him for a Russian, if I had not heard him a moment after speak his native tongue. I understood also that he was a Koriac prince, called *Oumiavin*, and brother to one of the chiefs of the wandering Koriacs.

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Curiosity led me to ask him a thousand questions. He answered with a shrewdness and sagacity that I had not observed in any of his countrymen. The being able to talk with him without the assistance of an interpreter, rendered his conversation more valuable, and during my short stay at Kaminoi it was a source of instruction and amusement to me. Of the various topics upon which we discoursed, that of religion was the most interesting. Though equally informed respecting the Russian and the Koriac mode of worship, he in reality professed neither. He seemed disposed however to be baptized, and only waited till he was better instructed upon certain points which he did not comprehend. Full of admiration at the sublimity of the Christian morals, and the majestic pomp of its external worship, he acknowledged that nothing could give him a greater desire to become a convert to it; but the imperious severity of some of our religious rites^[23], the uncertainty of celestial happiness, and particularly the idea of a God threatening eternal torments, filled him with inquietude and dismay. With all its visions and all its absurdities, the religion of his country, he said, offered him at least more hope than fear; its punishments were confined to the present world, and it promised him a recompence in the next; the evil spirit could only torment him during his life, and happiness awaited him at his death. Agitated by these considerations, his mind floated in continual doubt and perplexity. He dared neither abjure, nor continue steadfast in the faith of his fathers. He blushed at its errors, yet his heart cherished them.

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The simplicity with which he avowed his irresolution, interested me the more, as I could discover in his conversation and in his heart, an uncommon fund of virtue, and a singular love of truth. To fix his wavering mind, it would have been first necessary to clear away the prejudices that obscured it, and which had originated from the false principles that he had imbibed. Any other person would perhaps have undertaken the talk. I was deterred from it by the fear of not succeeding in my attempt, from the short time I should be able to spend with him. He arrived at Ingiga the day after me, as he had promised, and rendered me very considerable services by his endeavour to furnish all the information respecting his country that I desired, and to supply me with what I wanted for the continuance of my journey.

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There is in many respects a great resemblance between the fixed and the wandering Koriacs: we cannot therefore but wonder at the little cordiality, or rather at the misunderstanding that subsists among them, on account of which they may be considered as two different people. Their country however is the same, and takes in a vast extent, terminated to the south by the peninsula of Kamtschatka, and the gulf of Pengina; to the east by the country of the Oluterians; to the north by that of the Tchoukchis, and to the west by the Toungouses, the Lamouts, and the Yakouts.

It is confidently asserted that this country was formerly very populous, but that the small-pox had made very considerable ravages. I doubt whether it has carried off more of the inhabitants than their frequent contests with their neighbours and with the Russians. The number of fixed Koriacs scarcely exceeds at present nine hundred; and though it is not easy to calculate that of the wandering Koriacs, it is imagined that they do not much surpass this amount.

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The manners of the former are the reverse of estimable, and are a mixture of duplicity mistrust, and avarice. They have all the vices of the northern nations of Asia, without the virtues. Robbers by nature, they are suspicious, cruel, incapable either of benevolence or pity. To procure the least service from them, it is first necessary to offer, and even to give them some recompence. Nothing but presents can excite their attention, or rouse their activity^[24].

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From this perfidious and savage disposition, it would not be easy for them to live in peace, or form any durable ties with their neighbours. So unsociable a spirit must also give them an abhorrence of all foreign dominion. Hence their continual insurrection against the Russians, their atrocious robberies, their daily incursions on the people who surround them; hence the respective animosities and revenge that incessantly spring up.

This state of war foments in every individual a ferocious spirit. The practice of attacking, and of

defending themselves, creates in them an inflexible courage that delights in perpetual combats, and glories in a contempt of life. Superstition lends its aid to ennoble in their eyes this thirst of blood, by imposing a law that obliges them to conquer or to die. The more important is the cause that calls them to arms, the more greedy are they of death. Neither the bravery, nor the number of their adversaries, can at all intimidate them: it is then they swear *to destroy the sun*. They discharge this terrible oath by cutting the throats of their wives and children, burning all their possessions, and rushing madly into the midst of their enemies. The combat can only terminate by the total destruction of one of the parties. The vanquished never seek their safety in flight; honour forbids it; and not a Koriac will survive the slaughter of his countrymen.

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The vicinity of the Russian settlements has hitherto produced no change in the mode of life of the resident Koriacs. Their commercial intercourse with the Russians, only renders them susceptible to the attraction of wealth, and desirous of plunder. Insensible to the advantages of a more polished life, they seem to feel a repugnance to civilization, and to consider their own manners and customs as absolutely perfect^[25].

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Their regular occupation is hunting and fishing; but every season will not permit them to follow it. During these intervals, shut up in their profound habitations, they sleep, smoke, and get drunk. Thoughtless of the future, without regret for the past, they come not out of their yourts till the most urgent necessity compels them. These yourts are larger than those of the northern Kamtschadales, but are distributed nearly in the same manner. I am not sure whether their filthiness be not still more disgusting: as there is neither door, nor *joupan*, or vent-hole, the smoke must be insufferable.

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These people, enemies to industry, live like the Kamtschadales upon dried fish, and the flesh and fat of the whale, and sea wolf^[26]. The whale is commonly eaten raw, and the sea wolf dried and cooked in the same manner as their fish, except the sinews, the marrow, the brain, and now and then a slice of the flesh, which they devour raw with extreme avidity. Rein deer is their favourite dish. Vegetables also form a part of their food: they gather in autumn various sorts of berries, of a part of which they make themselves a refreshing beverage^[27], and the rest is bruised to powder, and kneaded with the oil of the whale, or sea wolf. This paste, or sweetmeat, is called *toltchoukha*; it is held in high esteem in this country, but nothing is to my taste more disagreeable.

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Their passion for strong liquors, increased by the dearness of brandy, and the difficulty of procuring it on account of their extreme distance, has led them to invent a drink, equally potent, which they extract from a red mushroom, known in Russia as a strong poison by the name of *moukhamor*^[28]. They put it in a vessel with certain fruits, and it has scarcely time to clarify when their friends are invited to partake of it. A noble emulation inflames the guests, and there is a contest of who is best able to disburden the master of the house of his nectar. The entertainment lasts for one, two, or three days, till the beverage is exhausted. Frequently, that they may not fail of being tipsy, they eat the raw mushroom at the same time. It is astonishing that there are not more examples of the fatal effects of this intemperance. I have seen however some amateurs made seriously ill, and recovered with difficulty; but experience does not correct them, and upon the first occasion that offers, they return to their brutish practice. It is not from absolute sensuality, it is not from the pleasure of drinking a liquor, that by its flavour creates an irresistible craving for more; they seek merely in these orgies a state of oblivion, of stupefaction, of total brutishness, a cessation of existence, if I may so call it, which constitutes their only enjoyment, and supreme felicity.

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The features of the majority of the Koriacs are not Asiatic, and they might be considered as Europeans, but for their low stature, their ill shape, and the colour of their skin. The other Koriacs have the same characteristic outlines as the Kamtschadales; among the women particularly, there are very few who have not sunk eyes, flat noses, and prominent cheeks. The men are almost entirely beardless, and have short hair. The hair of the women is very much neglected; it commonly flows upon their shoulders, though there are some who wear it in tufts, or wrapt up in an handkerchief. Their dress I have already described.

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The women carry their children in a sort of cradle, the form of which I thought singular. It is a kind of nest or basket arched over, in which the infant is placed in a sitting posture, and sheltered from the weather.

Among their strange customs I shall mention the probation to which a young man subjects himself when he is desirous of marrying. As soon as he has fixed his choice, he waits upon the relations of his mistress, and offers to drudge for them, as the phrase is. The young lady is immediately enveloped in a multiplicity of garments, which conceal her to such a degree, that the face itself is scarcely visible. She is not left alone for a single instant; her mother, and a number of old matrons accompany her wherever she goes sleep with her, and do not lose her from their sight upon any pretext whatever. The aim of the lover, the point of happiness to which all his cares tend, is to touch her naked body, the only way by which he can obtain her. In the mean time he executes with zeal and submission all the functions that the relations impose on him. Become as it were the slave of the family, he is employed in all the domestic labours, to cut wood, fetch water, provide ice, &c. Love, and the presence of his intended, inspire him with courage. If he relax, a single look, however indifferent, is sufficient to make him forget the fatigues and drudgery of his servitude. The hope of abridging its duration influences all his actions. His eye is invariably fixed on the idol of his heart, he watches her motions, follows her steps, and intrudes himself incessantly in her way. But how deceive the Argus eyes of the duennas that surrounded her! It is a continual contest of vigilance against cunning; each party acts with equal zeal and

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perseverance. From such assiduities, from the agitation of the lover, and the precautions that are taken to counteract his manœuvres, one would suppose that he was about to carry off some extraordinary beauty. Who would imagine that the object of the thoughts and desires of this whining Koriac, was ugliness itself, and that he aspired to no other reward for so many exertions, than to touch a callous, yellow, greasy skin? In his leisure moments, at liberty to see and approach his mistress, he endeavours to merit her affection by some sly attempt to obtain a touch; but the number and thickness of her garments are an invincible barrier. Enraged at so many obstacles, he tears and pulls off this teasing dress. Woe betide him if he be surprised in his rash attack! The relations, the inexorable spies, dart upon him, and force him to relinquish his prize. It is commonly by the eloquence of the foot, or a stick, that they entreat him to withdraw, and find some better opportunity. If he resist, he is dragged by the hair, or the nails of these old hags are imprinted on his face. If he be disheartened, or murmurs at this cruel treatment, he is instantly dismissed, and forfeits for ever all claim to the alliance, which is considered as the most signal disgrace that can be inflicted on a Koriac lover. But difficulties only render his desires more vehement. Far from complaining, far from desponding at these rigorous proceedings, he considers himself as the more worthy of the felicity he has in view. He rejoices, he glories in all the tribulations he experiences during his amorous and painful servitude. It is frequently not till after the expiration of two or three years, more or less, that he obtains his end. Elate with his victory, he flies to inform the relations of his success. The witnesses are summoned, and the young lady interrogated^[29]. Her confession is necessary, as well as some proof that she was taken by surprise, and made fruitless efforts to defend herself. Her hand is then bestowed on the conqueror, but he is obliged still to wait till it is seen whether she can reconcile herself to living with him. From this moment, freed from his labours, he makes his court without restraint to his future wife, who is not perhaps sorry to find herself delivered from her cumbersome attire. This second stage of courtship is seldom very long; the damsel, in the presence of the family, soon accords her consent, and nothing more is requisite to give him all the claims of a husband. The nuptial ceremony and feast consist merely in assembling the relations of the parties, who are eager to get drunk in imitation of the new married couple. A plurality of wives is not allowed among the Koriacs; I have seen instances however of its being practiced without scruple.

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Their funeral rights have a striking similarity to the ancient institutions of paganism, still observed by various uncivilized people of the new hemisphere. When a Koriac dies, his relations and neighbours assemble to pay him their last respects. They erect a funeral pile, upon which they place a portion of the wealth of the deceased, and a stock of provisions, consisting of rein deer, fish, brandy, in short whatever they conceive he will want for his great journey, and to keep him from starving in the other world. If it be a wandering Koriac, his deer conduct him to the pile; if a resident Koriac, he is drawn by his dogs, or carried by his relations. The body is exhibited, clothed in his best attire, and lying in a kind of coffin. There it receives the adieux of the attendants, who, with torches in their hands, consider it as an honour speedily to reduce their relation or friend to ashes. They feel only the regret of a short absence, and not of an eternal separation. They wear no mourning, and the funeral pomp terminates in a scene of intemperance, where the fumes of their liquor and tobacco gradually efface the remembrance of death. After a few months widowhood, the women are permitted to marry again.

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The superstitious practices observed at their funerals, and their transient grief at the loss of persons the most dear to them, are in my opinion an evident proof of their indifference to life, the brevity of which neither astonishes nor afflicts them. Their religious system deadens them apparently to the consoling hope of a protracted existence. Death is in their eyes but the passage to another life; and in quitting the world, they do not imagine that their pleasures terminate, but that other enjoyments are reserved for them. This flattering prejudice, which I mentioned in my conversation with Oumiavin, sufficiently accounts for his religious perplexities, and the ferocious courage of his countrymen. But their absurd dogmas are entitled to a more particular relation, though the worship upon which they are founded is very simple, and what is marvellous in it by no means attractive. The following account contains the whole theogony of the Koriacs^[30].

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They acknowledge a supreme being, the creator of all things. He inhabits the sun, whose burning orb they consider as the throne or palace of the lord of nature, whom they probably confound with that celestial fire, which is supposed to be his dwelling. I am led to believe this, as they neither fear, nor worship him. They address no prayer to him: goodness, they say, is his essence; all the good that exists in the world proceeds from him; and it is impossible he should do an injury. May we not conclude from this statement, that the view of the constant and universal benefits conferred by this king of the celestial orbs which gives life, action, and power to all things terrestrial, while it taught them to consider this luminary of the world as their tutelary divinity, imbued them with the blind confidence I have described?

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The principle of evil they consider as a malignant spirit, who divides with the sovereignly good being the empire of nature^[31]. Their power is equal. As the one is intent on the happiness of mankind, the other endeavours to render them unhappy. Diseases, tempests, famine, calamities of every kind, are his work, and the instruments of his vengeance. It is to pacify his wrath, that they sacrifice their personal interest, and have recourse to devotion. Their homage is dictated merely by the terror with which this menacing deity fills every heart, and consists of expiatory sacrifices. They offer to him various animals, that have just began to exist, rein deer, dogs^[32], the first fruits of their hunting and fishing, and whatever they possess that is most valuable. Their devotional exercises consist of supplications and thanksgivings. There is no temple, no sanctuary set apart for his votaries. This fantastic god is equally worshipped in all places, and hears the Koriac who prays alone to him in the desert, as well as the assembled family, who conceive that

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they render him propitious by piously getting drunk in their yourt; for drunkenness is become with these people a religious practice, and the basis of all their solemnities.

This demon, this formidable spirit, is doubtless the same being as the Koutka of the Kamtschadales, whose ministers and interpreters the chamans consider themselves. Here, as in the peninsula, the mystic language of these magicians works upon the credulity, and obtains the veneration of the multitude. They exercise physic and surgery with equal success. These exclusive functions, which are supposed to be aided by inspiration rather than the light of experience, procures them an unbounded power. They are sent for from all parts of the country, and testimonies of gratitude heaped upon them before-hand. They demand with haughtiness whatever they please, and consider every thing that is given them as a tribute. It is upon the pretext of making an acceptable offering to the god, whose organ they are, that they appropriate to themselves whatever the inhabitants possess, that is most costly and beautiful. It is not necessary to suppose that these imposters gull their votaries by a parade of virtue, by rigid observances, and a more scrupulous life; on the contrary, they surpass them in their vices, and fall short of them in sobriety. On the eve of their magic ceremonies, they pretend indeed to fast all the day, but they make up for this abstinence at night by a profusion of the moukamorr, the intoxicating poison I have described, which they eat and drink to satiety. This preparatory intoxication they consider as a duty. It is probable that they feel its effects the next day, and that they derive from it an elevation of spirits that contributes to derange their minds, and give them the necessary strength to go through their extravagant transports.

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The idiom of the Koriacs has no affinity to that of the Kamtschadales; their pronunciation is more shrill, and slower, but it is less painful, and has not those uncommon sounds, those hissings, as difficult to be uttered as they are to be written.

I have still to give an account of the wandering Koriacs; but not satisfied with the information I have obtained upon the subject, I shall wait till my arrival at the house of Oumiavin's brother, where I shall have an opportunity of ascertaining its truth, by comparing it with the objects that will be immediately before my eyes.

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From the time of my arrival at Ingiga, M. Gaguen, in compliance with my entreaties, had been employed upon the means of hastening my departure as much as possible. Had it depended on myself, I should not have stopped more than twenty-four hours; but unfortunately my dogs were fatigued, and there were very few to be procured throughout the whole town, and these not in the best condition^[33]. It was therefore proposed to me to take rein deer, which I accepted the more readily, as I hoped to travel the quicker, and as I had long been desirous of trying this mode of conveyance. I was not left in ignorance of the inconvenience attending it. I had to expect greater risks, more fatigue, and less repose; but my impatience made me regardless of every thing but the possibility of proceeding, and the pleasure of being able to judge for myself of the speed of these animals.

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To satisfy my impatience, and enable me to continue my journey without interruptions, M. Gaguen resolved to concert with the chiefs of the wandering Koriacs that were in the neighbourhood, and accordingly sent to invite them to his house. Two days after, twelve of these princes arrived, and a number of other Koriacs, who had received similar invitations.

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After the usual compliments^[34], he presented me to the assembly, explaining to them, in a few words, by an interpreter, who I was, the importance of my embassy, and the necessity in which I stood of their assistance. This short explanation excited a general murmur. It was in vain M. Gaguen alledged the absolute orders of government respecting me; their clamours increased to such a degree, that it was impossible to be heard, or to learn the cause of their discontent. At last, amidst this confused noise, it was understood that they complained of all the labour of the averages falling upon them, while the fixed Koriacs were exempt from any share in it. What claim had they to this over bearing immunity? By what privilege, like idle drones, should they be allowed to vegetate in their yourts? Why not, like them, be subjected to the conveyance of travellers? These remonstrances, justly founded, but peevishly urged, began to alarm me respecting the success of my demand, when an aged prince rose up: "Is this," cried he, "the fit time to make our complaints? If our zeal be abused, is this stranger responsible for it? Has he the less claim to our good offices? He shall have my assistance, and I will conduct him as far as he shall think necessary. Consent only to escort him to my house. There are surely some among you who will render him this trifling service."

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Upon this short address, shame was visible in the countenance of the whole assembly, and the most mutinous were silent. After a moment's pause, every one attempted to exculpate himself from the reproach which he feared he had merited, and there was an emulation who should have the preference of conducting the stranger and his attendants to the *Stoudénaïa-reka*, or cold river, upon the border of which lived the obliging Koriac, who had voluntarily proffered his services. Every difficulty being thus removed, my departure was fixed for 5 April, and the whole company engaged to attend my orders on that day. The old prince, who had so generously pleaded my cause, was the first to withdraw from my thanks, upon the pretext of having various preparations to make before my arrival. How great was my joy to learn, that the person to whom I owed this change of disposition in my favour, was the brother of Oumiavin, whose acquaintance I had so ardently desired!

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From this instant, M. Gaguen put every thing in motion for my departure. A number of small wheaten loaves were made under his immediate inspection, and a supply of rye biscuit. A variety of eatables, reserved for his own use, was, in spite of my remonstrances, packed up with my baggage. He added also several presents, which I was obliged to accept, from the polite and

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friendly manner in which they were offered. In short, I know not how to enumerate all his kindnesses to me. Every hour, during my stay with him, was marked by an attention to my wishes and an endeavour to oblige. His cares contributed equally with my repose to re-establish my health, which had been in no very enviable state since the cold I had caught upon leaving Poustaretsk.

Prepared to depart 5 April, as had been agreed, how great was my surprise to see none of my conductors arrive! Various expresses were sent off; but the whole day passed before we had any intelligence. It was night when they made their appearance, each alledging that the delay had been unavoidable.

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The next day there was a new obstacle. It was Sunday, and the timorous consciences of my soldiers made them averse to travelling. Was it necessary to attend to this scruple, or rather this terror? for it was superstition more than devotion; it was not the sacredness of the day that influenced them, but the idea that they should meet with some misfortune. Notwithstanding the care I took to attend a Russian mass with them, they were not to be prevailed on to set out. After various intreaties to no purpose, I was obliged to stay and dine with M. Gaguen, who politely congratulated himself upon the delay. Finding, however, that it deprived me of all enjoyment, he proposed to cure my people of their chimerical fears. I defied him, and he accepted my challenge. Immediately he ordered brandy to be profusely dealt out to all my attendants, Russians as well as Koriacs. Imperceptibly their heads were warmed, and gaiety made them forgetful of the pretended danger. The most reluctant were the first to assist in harnessing the deer. It was no sooner said than done, and my sledges were ready in an instant.

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During this interval, a scene took place that diverted me extremely. Oumiavin, out of compliment to me, became completely fuddled. The vivacity of his regrets led him to practice every species of absurdity, which he called taking leave of me. He went out, came in again, officiously assisted in every thing. My sledge was no sooner ready than he must lift it, to judge of its weight; but unable to keep himself steady, this good Koriac fell, and in falling, broke the point of my sabre. His grief, at the sight of this trifling accident, was truly poignant. He precipitated himself at my feet, which he embraced, and washed with his tears, conjuring me not to depart till I had forgiven him. I attempted to raise him, and assured him of my friendship; but he persisted in his posture, and his tears continued to flow. It was not till half an hour, that, by means of entreaties and kindnesses, I was able to pacify him.

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I came out of the town on foot, escorted by almost all the inhabitants, who were desirous, they said, of doing honour to the only Frenchman that had ever visited them. M. Gaguen, and the officers of the garrison, insisted upon conducting me to the gates, where, having repeated my thanks for their civilities, we separated.

Of the four soldiers who composed my suite when I left Kaminoi, two only remained with me, Golikoff and Nedarezoff; I had left the others at Ingiga, which was the place of their residence. Upon the recommendation however of M. Gaguen, I accepted the services of a young merchant, who asked leave to accompany me as far as Okotsk. During my abode at Ingiga, I had had frequent opportunities of conversing with him, and knowing the value of his society, and considered myself as fortunate in meeting with so agreeable a companion.

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It was to no purpose that I had prepared to guide my own sledge; every one opposed me, from the fear that the want of knowledge and skill as to my new steeds, might occasion me some fatal accident; they had beside been expressly enjoined not to permit me, during the first day at least. When I came to my vehicle, I found my guide already seated in front, and I took my place, without paying any attention to him; but upon his looking round, I recognized in his features a Koriac prince, named *Eviava*. He was eager to express his joy in having the honour to conduct me, and then prepared to join the file.

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I have long owed the reader a description of a Koriac sledge, and am now able to satisfy his curiosity. The picture, I hope, will be sufficiently interesting to obtain his pardon for the delay.

Upon two skates, placed parallel to each other, that is, upon two branches of a tree, six feet and an half long, three inches wide, and very roughly finished, the extremities of which in front are bent upwards in the form of a demi-crescent, is placed the body of the sledge, which is really nothing more than a frame of open work, five feet long and eighteen inches wide, raised two feet and a few inches above the ground. Two small poles, about five inches in circumference, constitute the frame of this vehicle, the minuter parts of which are formed of thick laths, inserted the one in the other. A cross bar, more substantial than these poles, unites their forward extremities, which are prolonged to the arches of the skates, and fastened to them with leathern thongs. The lower part of this open work rests upon a sort of curvilinear feet, the lower ends of which, spreading out, are inserted in the skates, and the back is constructed in the form of an open calash, being sixteen inches high and twenty-four deep, disposed in a semi-circular form, with short poles ranged at the top, in the perforations of a demi-hoop, nearly like the backs of our arm chairs in a garden. In this narrow inclosure, the traveller commonly places his provisions, or whatever else is destined for continual use. For myself, I employed it to receive my box of dispatches, and seated myself upon it till the moment that I took the place of my guide. His seat is towards the middle of the open work, not far from the cross bar; here he places himself astride, with his feet resting upon the skates of the sledge.

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The team consists of two rein deer placed abreast, with no other harness than a leathern collar, which passes across the breast and between the fore legs of the animal, and is fastened to his flank by a thong, in the manner of a trace, so that that which belongs to the deer on the right, is fastened to the cross bar of the sledge, and that which belongs to the deer on the left, to the

bottom of one of the bent supporters of the carriage, and on the same side. As reins, they have two slender thongs, one end of which is twisted about the root of the horns of the deer^[35]. When they want to go to the right, they pull the rein gently in this direction, giving at the same time a sort of back handed lash to the animal on the left. When they want to go to the left, they give two or three smart shakes to the right rein, touching at the same time the deer to which it belongs. The left rein has no other use than as a curb to the deer to which it is fastened. The driver has also a stick, one end of which is armed with a sort of hammer. The head of the instrument consists of an horizontal bone, one of whose extremities is very sharp, and is principally used to disengage the traces of the deer, while they are going on, if they happen to become entangled about their feet; and this is considered as one of the nicest accomplishments of a driver. The other end of the bone is round and blunted, and serves the purpose of a whip; but the blows that are given with it are much more severe; and are beside distributed so liberally, that the poor animals are sometimes covered with streams of blood. These sticks are very apt to break, and they therefore take care to provide themselves with a number of them, which are fastened lengthwise to the sledge.

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We travelled very slowly till the evening. The only inconvenience I felt was the not being able, for want of an interpreter, to enjoy the conversation of my princely guide. It doubtless deprived me of a fund of information which it was in his power to have furnished, and our mutual taciturnity did not render my journey the more pleasant.

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We stopped at seven o'clock. It was necessary to gain a mountain well known to our Koriacs, and which had been marked in our itinerary as our first stage. I should in vain have wished to seek shelter in a wood, as had been my custom when drawn by dogs. The convenience of the traveller is left out of the account in the choice of a resting place; that of the rein deer only is consulted, and the spot that most abounds with moss is invariably preferred. Half way up the mountain our steeds were unharnessed, and no other care taken of them than that of tying them with leathern thongs. I saw them instantly scrape away the snow, under which they well knew how to come at their food. At a short distance we made a fire, and set on our kettle, and the length of our supper answered to its frugality. I admitted my Koriac prince to my mess, who appeared to be highly flattered with the honour. I then laid myself down on the snow, and was permitted to sleep a few hours; but when the time was expired, they awoke me without compunction to proceed on our journey.

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It is necessary to observe that the Koriacs will travel four, five, or six days incessantly without taking scarcely any repose. The rein deer are habituated to run day and night. In every two or three hours they are unharnessed, and allowed the interval of an hour to feed, after which they set off again with equal ardour; and this mode is repeated till they arrive at the end of the journey. It may be supposed from this account, that I considered myself as fortunate, when the night came, to be indulged with two hours uninterrupted sleep. The favour however was not long accorded to me, and by degrees I was obliged to accustom myself to the practice of my inflexible conductors, though it was not without extreme difficulty.

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Before I remounted, Eviava informed me that he was under the necessity of lightening our vehicle, the weight of two persons being for a continuance too much for our steeds, and that if I wished to make the experiment of being my own charioteer, he would take one of the empty sledges, with which we were furnished as a resource in case of accident, or the loss of any of our deer. The proposal coincided too well with my inclination for me to hesitate a moment in accepting it, and I instantly seized the reins, and began my new apprenticeship.

I found it equally arduous with that to which I subjected myself at Bolcheretsk, with this difference, that I was then the first to laugh at the frequency of my falls; whereas in the present case, I obtained the conviction of their danger at the risk of my life. The trace of the deer on the left, being fastened to the supporter of the sledge on the corresponding side, nearly touches the left foot of the conductor, who must be continually on his guard to keep clear of it. From forgetfulness or inexperience, I failed in this precaution, and my leg became entangled. The violence of my fall, or more probably the sudden and acute pain I felt in my leg, led me imprudently to relinquish my hold of the reins, in order to apply my hand to it. By what means could I disengage myself? The deer, finding no longer the same restraint, advanced with greater speed, and every effort I made to get free encouraged and irritated them. Dragged along in this manner, my head sweeping the snow and striking continually against the skate of the sledge, and feeling every moment as if my leg would be shivered in pieces, it is scarcely conceivable what I suffered. I was no longer able to cry out; I had lost all consciousness; when, by a motion purely mechanical, I extended my left hand exactly upon the reins that floated by chance. A new jolt of the sledge made me draw back my hand, and this involuntary check stopped my deer. Some of my people came up at the same time, expecting to find me either dangerously wounded, or already deprived of life. Meanwhile after a swoon of a few minutes, my senses returned, and I recovered my strength. The only injury I sustained was a violent contusion on my leg, and a headache, which were attended with no very material consequences. The joy of having escaped from this danger, gave me additional courage, and I ascended my sledge, and pursued my journey as if nothing had happened.

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Become more circumspect, I took care in future whenever I was overturned, to check immediately my deer, for I ought to consider myself as fortunate that, in their impetuosity, they did not proceed with me to the mountains^[36]. In that case how could they have been stopped? Three or four days are frequently spent in this pursuit, and sometimes without success. This intelligence, which I received from my Koriacs, made me tremble for my dispatches, which were in a box fastened to my sledge, and were thus liable to be taken from me every moment.

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I perceived at the left of our road the village of Karbanda, situated on the sea-coast, and ninety wersts from Ingiga. We did not pass nearer than a werst to it, and it appeared to be a very inconsiderable ostrog. Three wersts farther on I saw two yourts and six balagans, which are occupied only in summer.

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We had still seven wersts to the place destined for our halt, which was a wretched hamlet in the middle of a small wood watered by the river Noyakhona. It consists of a single yourt and three or four balagans, inhabited winter and summer by ten or twelve Koriacs, who gave me a tolerable reception; for they sheltered me at least; and this was no trifling convenience to a man frequently obliged to sleep in the open air, and upon a bed of snow.

About two o'clock in the morning we sent for our deer, which had been conducted to a distance from the hamlet, that they might have an opportunity of feeding, and be out of the reach of the dogs. We pursued our journey, but the day afforded nothing interesting.

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In the evening, Eviava, who was not well acquainted with the situation of the yourt of Oumiavin's brother, proposed to me to ascend a mountain at the left, where he expected to find one of his countrymen that could direct us. In the space of an hour and an half we reached the summit, but upon looking round, could perceive no trace of an habitation. The night would not permit us to extend our search. Perceiving that I was tired and little disposed to go any farther, Eviava was unhappy. To satisfy him, I desired that he would make the search without me, and that I would in the mean time, repose myself in this place till his return. In about three hours he came with joy to awake me. He had found his friend, prince Amoulamoula and all his herd. They entreated me not to quit the place where I was till the next morning, being all desirous of coming to meet me. I was not sorry for the event, as it procured me almost a whole night's rest.

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As soon as it was light my visitors came. The chief approached me first, to pay me his compliments in the Koriac mode. He accompanied them with a beautiful black and red fox skin, or *sevadouschka*, which he drew from his parque, and obliged me to accept^[37]. In return for this civility, I treated them all with brandy and tobacco, with which I had amply provided myself at Ingiga; and having thanked them for their kindness, I took my leave, supplied with the necessary information to direct our course.

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Though the snow was very deep, and not at all firm, our deer ran with surprising ease and lightness. Having broader feet, they do not sink so much as the dogs, and have in this respect the advantage, as there is no necessity of going before them with rackets to clear the way. But then the dogs are not so soon tired, and spare the traveller the disagreeable circumstance of stopping every two or three hours.

In my way I killed a number of partridges. From the quantity we saw, these cantons must be congenial to them. Some wild rein deer fled upon our approach with a velocity that scarcely gave me time to observe them. Happily the abundance of my provisions took from me all desire to kill them.

At noon we could distinguish the Stoudenaïa-reka, and in an hour after we had crossed it, or rather we were arrived at the yourt of the brother of Oumiavin, in whose hands Eviava had undertaken to place me.

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My new host came to meet me at the head of his family. Their satisfaction at seeing me was visible in their countenances, and they seemed to strive who should press closest. The address of the old prince was short, but replete with the cordiality which he had before demonstrated. Every thing he had was at my disposal, and I might command the services of himself and his family. They immediately began to place my sledges and effects under cover. I had no other care than that of my dispatches, and before they would permit me to have even this trouble, I was obliged to explain to them that I never trusted this box out of my own hands.

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When I entered the yourt, my first care was to pay prince Eviava my post expences. I had twelve sledges, each drawn by two deer; the distance we had travelled was a hundred and eighty-five wersts; and I was indebted therefore seven roubles forty kopecks. In receiving this sum, my good conductor exclaimed upon my generosity. It was in vain I endeavoured to prove that I paid him no more than his just due; he could not comprehend my calculation; and it was the continual burden of his song, that he had never met with so honest a man. To pay him for having conferred an obligation upon me, was in his opinion an act of sublime virtue. So many encomiums, give room for suspicion that the Russians practice something more than œconomy; and it is asserted, that their travelling in this country is not attended with much expence.

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We sat down to our dinner, which was very joyous. Eviava and my host eat with me; the brandy was not spared; and my enchanted guests never remembered to have fared so sumptuously.

I employed the rest of the day in making observations, and interrogating the people about me. But the reader may have perhaps the curiosity to know something more of the brave Koriac who received me with so good a grace.

His name also is Oumiavin, but he is distinguished from his brother by that of Simeon, in which he was baptized when an infant. He confessed to me with the utmost frankness, that he had no idea of the nature of the Christian religion. So little care had been taken to instruct this young proselyte, that he was ignorant of the very first principles of the gospel. Accustomed to an absurd mixture of the errors of his country, and a few external practices of Christianity to which he had habituated himself^[38], he happily found in his heart the principles of natural rectitude, by which alone his conduct was governed.

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Like all the Koriacs, he is small and sallow. His head is characteristic of his mind. An

expression of frankness and benevolence, confirmed by the whole of his figure, prejudices us in his favour; and his short white locks, added to the regularity of his features, give him an air of true distinction. He is lame of his right-arm, in consequence of an obstinate contest with a bear. His companions fled through fear, and he was left alone to oppose the monster, and though he had no other weapon but his knife, he defeated and killed him. The chase is his favourite amusement. Equally skilful and intrepid, he is regarded also as a very fortunate hunter.

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But it is the strength of his mind, that renders him most estimable and interesting. The project he formed, and which he laments the not having been permitted to execute, could only have been dictated by a head strongly organised. It proves at least much good sense and deeper reflection than can be ascribed to the rest of his countrymen. It originated thus.

Indocile and jealous of its liberty, this people had for a long time impatiently brooked the idea of being tributary to Russia. The severe administration of the governors was accused by this savage tribe as being a tyrannical abuse of power; and doubtless, among the numerous subaltern officers there were many who felt no compunction in harassing these new subjects of the empress.

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Simeon Oumiavin was the first whose indignation was roused. More enraged at the obduracy of these extortioners, than at what was taken for them, it was impossible, he said, they could be authorised by a sovereign whose justice and lenity were incessantly vaunted. This judicious reflexion made the strongest impression upon his mind, and awakened all his natural courage. Immediately assembling a few of his countrymen, who, like himself, were victims of the iniquity of these petty tyrants, he communicated to them his suspicions, and his design.

"My brethren," said he, "do you feel the weight of your chains? Were you born to wear them, to be the prey of these avaricious rulers, whose rapacity, abusing every day the power entrusted to them, leads them to regard us as a property which they may squander at their pleasure? How do we hope to deliver ourselves from this scourge? We cannot have recourse to arms; we are too weak; and new and more formidable enemies would spring up from the ashes of the dead. But we dare pass the immense tract of country which they traversed to come to us; we dare carry our complaints to the palace of our sovereign. It is in her name, but not by her order, that we are harassed, that we are robbed. The mildness of her government gives the lie to such injurious treatment, such perfidies. Her licentious ministers are the most forward to boast of its lenity. Let us go in person to claim it, throw ourselves at her feet, and declare our grievances. She is our common mother, and will not turn a deaf ear to the cries of a part of her subjects, of whom she can have no knowledge but from the false accounts of her wicked agents."

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This speech, which I have reported nearly as it was delivered to me by Oumiavin, inspired every mind with the indignation and enthusiasm of its author. It was a zealous contest among them who should go to Petersburg. Meanwhile the most wealthy and intrepid were selected for the office. Oumiavin, from his ability to speak with tolerable readiness the Russian language, had the honour of being placed at the head of the deputation, and they departed, furnished with a variety of valuable articles which were intended as presents. Arrived at Okotsk, our travellers stood in need of succour. They applied to the governor, intreating him to supply them with the means of gaining Irkoutsk at least. He had got some intelligence of their design, and foreseeing its danger, took measures to prevent it. Under the specious pretext of first obtaining the consent of the governor general, he detained them several months. During this interval, he employed every means to seduce them. Reasonings, intreaties, kindness, every thing was resorted to; but nothing could dissuade them from continuing their journey; they were inflexible. Violence was then made use of; a thousand snares were spread for them; it was easy for monopoly and persecution to create wrongs; and as a punishment, they were constrained to return, with the shame and mortification of having sacrificed to no purpose the greatest part of their wealth, and their deer.

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This melancholy experience discouraged not the chief of the Koriac confederacy; it was in his eyes an additional proof of the utility of his design, and the necessity of executing it. From this moment he treasured up the remembrance of it, hoping that more fortunate circumstances would one day offer. At the time of my visit, his heart was still inflamed with the desire of undertaking this expedition. "Yes," said he, "in spite of my age, I would set off this moment. My motive indeed would be different, and I should no longer have the same obstacles to fear, as our present governors are entitled to our confidence and praises. My ambition would be to see my sovereign. I endeavour sometimes to form an idea of her splendid palace, and the wealth and variety with which it abounds, and it revives my regret at not having been permitted to behold her in all her magnificence and glory. We should have considered her as a divinity, and the faithful account we should have given to our countrymen, would have filled every heart with respect and submission. Influenced still more forcibly by love, than we had before been by fear, we should cheerfully have paid every tribute imposed by moderation. We should have taught our neighbours to venerate her government, by making them the witnesses of our satisfaction and gratitude."

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Almost my whole conversation with this honest Koriac was of this nature. I considered myself as bound to transcribe it in this place, to give the fuller description of his character. I beg leave to add another anecdote.

The expences he had incurred had nearly ruined him. A considerable time was necessary to repair his flock, which, from the neglect and infidelity of the keepers, had during his absence fallen into decay. It was at this very moment that he gave a striking proof of his generosity. One of his relations had some months before lost all his deer, and was reduced to servitude. Simeon Oumiavin came to his assistance, and made up for him a small flock which he lent him without

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interest. On his return from his fatal embassy, he refused to take it back, because it was not yet sufficiently augmented to leave his friend wherewith to support himself.

Their deer is the only source of riches to this wandering people. The chief of a horde has seldom less than two or three hundred, and many of them have three or four thousand. Oumiavin's flock amounted, when I was with him, to about eight or nine hundred, the view of which afforded me very great pleasure.

This multitude of deer are seen on the top of a mountain, near the Stoudenaïa-reka, sometimes collected, and sometimes scattered, seeking under the snow for moss. It is seldom that any of them wander from the flock, and they are always caught without difficulty. On the evening of my arrival I had an opportunity of enjoying this spectacle. They had been assembled in order to select what were necessary for my use, which required only a quarter of an hour. Upon a particular cry of their keepers, the tame deer came towards us. The young ones, and those which are unaccustomed to, or exempt from, labour, go off in a different direction. The slow and the restive ones were next separated from the rest, and those that were wanted were easily caught by means of a running noose which they threw over them with singular dexterity. The choice being made, they separated those destined for my use, and which if they had not been detained by force, would speedily have gone to rejoin the rest.

They do not ordinarily employ in labour the female deer, which are reserved for the propagation of the species. They are coupled in autumn, and foal in the spring. The young males designed for draught, are castrated nearly in the same manner as the dogs of Kamtschatka.

There are almost always three or four deer in a flock that are trained for the chase. The instinct of these animals is inconceivable; they hunt even while they are feeding. If a tame deer perceives a wild one, he immediately, without showing any sign either of joy or surprise, imitates in browsing the gait and manner of the other, who sometimes approaches him without suspecting a snare. Presently one sees them play together; their horns become entangled, they part, they join each other again, they fly and pursue each other by turns. In these sportive amusements the tame deer gradually draws his prey within musquet shot of the hunter. With a well managed deer, one is able to seize his companion alive; a cord is hung upon the horns of the former, which, in their play, he entangles in the horns of his adversary. From that time the greater the efforts made by the wild deer to escape, the closer the running knot is drawn, and the more strongly the tame deer pulls at the cord, in order to give his master time to come up. It frequently happens however that the wild deer suspects the trick, and escapes the danger by flight.

When a Koriac comes out of his yourt in the morning, the deer flock about him in expectation of a drink, which is the highest treat to them; this is nothing more than human urine, which is carefully preserved in vessels, or hampers made of straw, and of so nice a contexture that the liquor cannot penetrate through them. The flock are so extremely fond of this beverage, that whatever quantity you give them, it is all swallowed in an instant.

Simeon Oumiavin ordered a young deer to be killed, the best of his flock. It was cut up for my use, and the half of a wild deer added to it, the flesh of which appeared to be still more succulent. He gave me also four very beautiful skins^[39]. We then entered the yourt, where I passed the night upon a mattress spread in one corner.

Though the appellation be the same, there is no kind of resemblance between the habitations of the wandering, and the underground dwellings of the fixed Koriacs. Not knowing how to distinguish the different lodgings of these people, the Russians have given the name of yourt to all of them, without troubling themselves with the primitive signification of the word, which means a subterraneous apartment. The yourts in question are, properly speaking, mere tents in the form of huts placed on the surface of the ground. No other care is taken as to the foundations, than that of drawing the boundary, and removing the snow that may be within the line. Round the circumference, a number of poles are erected at equal distances, which uniting at the top, serve as supports to each other. This rustic timber work has a wretched covering, of tanned deer skins, extended from the base^[40] to within a foot or two of the summit, which is left open for the admission of air, and as a passage for the smoke. A considerable inconvenience results from this circumstance, as there is nothing to protect the centre of the habitation from the rain and the snow; in the mean time it is on this very spot they make their fire, and cook their victuals. The family, and the servants, who have the care of the flocks, sleep under *pologs*, which are a kind of huts, or low tents ranged in distinct apartments round the wall of the yourt, and resembling the square tents of the Tchouktchis.

The unsettled state of these wandering people led them to invent this species of habitation. The conveyance of their whole house being equally easy and commodious, they feel the less reluctance to changing their quarters. Upon the first necessity or inconvenience, they take up their tents, fasten the poles lengthwise to the sledges, and stow the coverings with their baggage. A new spot is fixed upon, and deserted again almost immediately, and thus they remove from one place to another every moment. Their sledges are of course always kept loaded by the side of their habitations, and the provision and other articles taken out in proportion as they want them.

On my arrival I found twelve sledges prepared for me. The first care of Simeon Oumiavin was to assure me, that he would himself be my guide, and would conduct me, if it were necessary, as far as Yamsk. I manifested a becoming sense of this obliging offer, and at eight o'clock in the morning of 10 April, we took our flight, and at noon had reached the Tavatoma, being a space of twenty-five wersts.

Desirous of seeing a hot spring which Oumiavin pointed out to me in the neighbourhood, I put on my rackets to cross on foot a small wood, by the side of which it forms a stream three fathom wide, which pours itself into the Tavatoma. I left my people therefore at an elbow, formed by the river at this place, and it was agreed that they should proceed over a high mountain that was at the right, and take the opportunity while they waited for me, of feeding the deer, and preparing our dinner. Accompanied only by M. Kisselioff, I travelled two wersts to reach the spring.

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It is said to be composed of a number of others issuing from a mountain at the left of the river, and which unite in their descent. A thick smoke rises in clouds above these waters, but it has no offensive smell. The heat is extreme, and the bubbling continual. Their taste is sharp and disagreeable, which seems to imply that the waters contain sulphurous and saline particles; by analysing them, they would probably also be found to have iron and copper. It is certain that the stones we picked up along the stream had all a volcanic quality, but the most singular circumstance was the effect the water produced upon us. I merely, in a slight manner, washed my mouth with it, and M. Kisselioff his face; he had the skin of his face taken off, and I had my tongue and palate flayed, and for a long time was unable to eat any thing hot or high seasoned.

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Having satisfied my curiosity, we prepared to join our company. To effect this, we imagined that we were to pass a mountain opposite to that from which the hot spring issued. Our rackets made us retreat instead of advancing, and we were obliged to take them off, and ascend by the help of our hands and feet. About three fourths of the way, overcome with fatigue, and apprehensive that we had mistaken the road, I intreated my companion, who was more accustomed to this mode of climbing upon the snow, to endeavour to gain the summit, from whence I hoped he would be able to discover our equipage. He succeeded, and after waiting an hour and half in anxiety, I saw the good Koriac coming with a sledge to my assistance. We had in reality taken the wrong direction, he informed me, and Kisselioff had been ten times on the point of perishing before he found our camp. Upon my arrival we proceeded immediately on our journey, and did not halt till it was late, and we were twenty-five wersts from the hot springs of Tavatoma.

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We had determined the 11, to push for the chain of mountains called *Villeguinskoi-khrebeut*, but it was not practicable. At the close of day we could but just perceive them; we advanced however till we came near enough to be sure of reaching them early in the morning.

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They appeared to be close to us, when we were still at the distance of eight wersts. Having passed this place, we had to cross a small river that winds at the bottom of these mountains, when we came to that of Villegui, which is the loftiest, and gives its name to the rest. At first sight it appeared to be inaccessible. A narrow passage presented itself, and, confiding in my princely conductor, we entered it. Four hours scarcely sufficed to bring us to the peak. Conceive of an enormous mass, at least two hundred yards high, and nearly perpendicular, with rocks and stones projecting in various places, and cleared by the hurricanes from the snow. The little that remained made the footing so slippery that our deer fell down every moment. In spite of our exertions to support the sledges, the steepness of the declivity made them recoil, and we were under the continual apprehension of their falling upon us, which would infallibly have happened if we had slipped. Frequently in laying hold of a rock that seemed to adhere to the mass, it gave way, and I lost my equilibrium. But for Oumiavin and my soldiers, who were by my side, and gave me timely assistance, I should infallibly have precipitated to the bottom. Arrived at the summit, I became giddy upon looking down the precipice I had climbed, and my heart shuddered at the danger I had escaped.

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I was far from thinking myself safe, as I had to descend. My obliging Koriac, to give me confidence, minutely explained the method I was to take, and his instruction freed me from all fear of accidents; but I was still uneasy, having left a part of my baggage at the foot of the mountain. Who, thought I to myself, will have the courage to go for it? The intrepid Oumiavin undertook the office, attended by some of his people.

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I was tormented by a burning thirst. The top of the mountain was covered with snow, but how were we to dissolve it, as there was not a shrub to be seen? The hope of finding some at the bottom made me resolve not to wait for my guide, but to avail myself of his lessons, and descend. We began by unharnessing our deer, and fastening them to the back part of our sledges, in each of which two men placed themselves. We then slid down in the manner of the inhabitants of Petersburg, who, during the carnival, thus amuse themselves upon the mountains of ice which they form on the Neva. With the aid of our sticks we guided and kept back our vehicles, and in less than ten minutes we were safe. I had the good fortune to perceive some small cedars, and a fire having been kindled, I allayed my thirst. It was now two o'clock, and at seven we were all assembled; Oumiavin met with no accident, but he was so fatigued that it was nine before we could proceed.

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The next day's journey was less painful to us than to our deer. The snow was more than three feet deep, and so little firm that they sunk to their necks. Many of them refused to draw, and it was necessary to leave them behind us. Such is the inconvenience attending these animals, when one wishes to make a long journey with only short intervals of rest; as soon as they are tired, we must abandon them or stop; it is no longer possible make them move.

I had hoped to reach Toumané in the morning of 14, and we were within ten wersts of it, when a violent gale of wind, accompanied with snow, almost blinded us. It obliged us to relax our speed, and we did not enter the village till four o'clock in the afternoon.

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It is situated south-west of Ingiga, at the distance of four hundred and forty wersts, in a little wood through which the river Toumané flows. Three yourts, an equal number of wooden

magazines, and a dozen balagans make up the whole ostrog, the population of which amounts to twenty families. Though the river abounds with fish^[41], I saw the inhabitants, either from indolence, or a vitious taste, feed upon the bark of the birch tree steeped in the oil of the whale.

The bad weather continued during the 15 and 16; but it would have been impossible to have proceeded if we had been ever so desirous, as our deer were incapable of drawing us any farther. Oumiavin dared not avow it, but his melancholy appearance told me what he would willingly have concealed. Upon my mentioning it to him, he began to make apologies, as if I had a right to complain, because he found it impossible to conduct me, as he had intended, as far as Yamsk. I had much difficulty to make him understand that I was fully satisfied of his good will, and owed him my thanks for all his civilities; it was necessary to assume an air of displeasure before he would accept some presents that I thought myself bound to add to my post expences.

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By his advice, I intreated the inhabitants to supply me with what dogs they had, but with all their efforts they could only procure me a very small number, and there was no other way of making up what I wanted, than that of harnessing young dogs, and even females that were ready to whelp. The generosity of these people was carried so far as to offer me a part of their dried fish, of which they had no abundance.

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The 17 the wind abated, but the sky was covered with black, and very ill boding clouds. In the mean time having taken leave of Simeon Oumiavin, and my Toumané hosts, I departed at one o'clock in the afternoon with my escort, and all my baggage, in five open sledges. Each team consisted of eight or ten dogs. I had taken a man extraordinary to serve me as charioteer, having no longer either strength or courage to undertake the office: this fatiguing exercise had wholly overcome me.

We soon came to the sea, upon which we travelled in order to avoid seven mountains, which rendered the common route extremely difficult. We had scarcely advanced fifteen wersts, partly upon the ice, and partly upon the coast, when fortunately for us, we were obliged to return, as the snow began to fall, and the wind to blow with an impetuosity that drove our dogs back, and made our sledges totter. My guides delayed not to inform me of the danger; and from the fear of misleading us, they proposed that we should take shelter in a deserted yourt that was at no great distance, and the situation of which they were perfectly acquainted with.

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It is upon a small river called *Yovanna*, twenty wersts from Toumané. When we came up to it we were covered with snow, and almost frozen. We were all eager to descend that we might be screened from the tempest, but we found its entrance stopped up with snow four feet deep. Having hastily arranged our sledges, we took our rackets, for want of shovels, and began to open a passage. This work occupied us an hour. We were still in want of a ladder; the most hardy ventured to leap down, and the rest followed them. We fell upon the carcasses of sea wolves entirely frozen, and some of them half devoured, doubtless by ravenous beasts, who, in the depth of winter, had made this subterraneous habitation their den. A leathern seine in one corner of the yourt, was the only indication that it had been visited by human beings. It is to be presumed that the neighbouring Koriacs had made use of it as a reservoir. The walls were surrounded with icicles, which fell down in chrySTALLIZATIONS; and in truth, I can only compare this dwelling to a large ice house. Its form was square, and its dimensions about five feet deep by ten large.

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While we were employed in placing the sea wolves out of the way, that we might have more room to lie down, my conductors fastened our dogs^[42], and gave them their allowance of food; at the same time a fire was kindled, and having warmed ourselves and eaten our supper, I extended myself upon the leathern net we had found in the yourt. A sea wolf under my head served me as a pillow. My companions imitated my example; and, excepting the disadvantage of having too confined a space, we passed a very good night. We ceded an entire corner to the Koriacs of my suite, who huddled together, and were unable to stretch themselves at their length; but they made no complaint, and appeared not to be conscious of any inconvenience. I saw them squat down, like apes, their head muffled up in their parque, and their elbows resting upon their knees; and in this posture they slept as soundly as if wholly at their ease.

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The next day the wind changed, but its violence did not abate, and it was the more troublesome to us, as it drove the smoke into the yourt to such a degree that we were suffocated and blinded, and were obliged not to light our fire except at our meals.

I was desirous of remedying this inconvenience by some external contrivances; but I had no sooner placed my foot out of the yourt than I was almost blown down. M. Kisseloeff, who accompanied me, had his cap carried away, and was willing to pursue it with some of our conductors; but it was to no purpose; at the distance of fifteen paces he entirely lost sight of our retreat, and was only able to find his way back by the cries we made in answer to his.

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We at last succeeded in placing a fence sufficiently high to secure a free passage to the smoke. From this moment we continued our fire, without intermission, night or day; but in spite of this care, we were all chilled. The dampness became equally insupportable with the cold. The fire gradually melted the ice that surrounded us and we had a thousand dribblings over our heads, and a stream of water under our feet. To increase our difficulties, the sea wolves began to thaw, and diffuse a noxious odour. That which exhaled from our bodies^[43] was more than sufficient to make our asylum a true sink. As it was impossible to purify the air, we endeavoured at least to get rid of our neighbours, the sea wolves; and my guides were the first to propose that our dogs should be fed with them while we continued in this frightful situation. I consented the more readily, as the scantiness of our dried fish obliged me to consult œconomy. In thus appropriating to myself what chance threw in our way, I doubtless did an injury to some unfortunate

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inhabitants of this quarter; but when reduced to extremities, selfishness is sometimes pardonable.

Impatient to pursue our journey, I sent my Koriacs to observe the weather. In two minutes I saw them descend perfectly covered with snow, and so chilled, that they could not open their mouths. Their report corresponded with their sad appearance; but of all their exclamations, I was most struck with the account they gave me, that the rocks, which were a few paces from our yourt, and very perceptible the preceding evening, were now wholly invisible. [Pg 167]

The 20, the weather becoming calmer, and the snow having almost subsided, I ordered preparations to be made for our departure. Our dogs were therefore harnessed, and we had hoisted ourselves out of the yourt, when a terrible gust of wind deranged all our measures. The snow came on as thick as ever, and we were obliged to retreat with precipitation, happy that we were within reach of shelter. Almost instantly I found myself ill. I know not whether it were occasioned by passing suddenly from cold to heat, or by the putrid air I breathed in plunging myself into this sink, or the vexation I felt at so many obstacles; but I continued nearly a quarter of an hour without sensation. The zeal of my soldiers manifested itself on this occasion; in order to restore me, one deluged me with water, while the other chafed my temples so roughly with snow, that he rubbed off, I believe, the skin. [Pg 168]

My reflections, after this swoon, were as melancholy as my situation. I considered my plan as wholly defeated by these impediments and delays, and was apprehensive of not arriving at Okotsk till the rivers were broken up. In the mean time this was indispensable, if I intended to make use of the mode of sledge travelling, to reach the place called the Cross of Yudoma, or *Yudomskoi-krest*. Hence I had designed to proceed to Yakotsk by a circuitous passage down the rivers Yudoma, Maya, and Aldann^[44], by which means I found that I should escape the inconveniencies of the thaw, which renders the road impracticable even to horses. But according to the calculation I had made, the hindrance of a single day might occasion me a delay of more than two months. It is necessary to have been in my place, to judge how very discouraging was my prospect; the dangers that beset me appeared in my eyes to be less terrible. [Pg 169]

At length, the 21, it was possible to proceed. The sky was still covered with clouds, and the snow fell heavily, but the wind had ceased, and we resolved to set off in spite of our apprehension of another hurricane, which would exceedingly have distressed us, as we had no hope of refuge till we came to Yamsk. We directed our course towards the sea, upon which we constantly travelled at the distance of two wersts from the shore; but in the evening we thought it prudent to approach nearer, in order to halt. The ice was perfectly smooth, and our little camp was easily erected. [Pg 170]

The next morning we rose tolerably early, and in order to avoid the curvatures of the shore, we made for the main ocean. We had observed some bays the preceding evening, but they were less extensive than one which we crossed in the afternoon of this day. Unfortunately, when we were opposite to it, a gust of wind prevented us from examining it.

I understood, from my guides, that it was called from the river Iret, which falls into it, that it is almost entirely closed, and is dry in summer, when the sea is low. In spring it abounds with water fowl. The inhabitants of Yamsk and its environs catch them with nets, and hunt them with sticks in the moulting season. The shallowness of the bay, which is in all places fordable, is favourable to the diversion of these sportsmen. [Pg 171]

Upon the approach of night we came on shore, and halted till the morning in a wood of firs, upon the banks of the river Iret.

The 23 furnished nothing remarkable. The wind assailed us with considerable violence in the middle of a plain, the extent of which was twenty five wersts. I had again recourse to my compass, and we had not proceeded fifteen wersts, when the sky suddenly cleared up. We met a sergeant with dispatches from Okotsk; and a little farther, about three wersts from its mouth, the river Yamsk presented itself. We pursued its course, and passed at the right an habitation of fishermen, resorted to only in summer. Six wersts farther we came to the ostrog of Yamsk, which is more than a hundred and fifty from Toumané. My biscuits were nearly consumed, and I was constrained not only to sleep there, but to remain a considerable part of the next day, to supply myself with a fresh stock of provisions. [Pg 172]

The serjeant who commanded the garrison, which was composed of twenty men, received me with civility. Upon the recommendation of the governor of Ingiga, he assiduously provided every thing of which I stood in need, and gave me the necessary information.

The ostrog, or fort of Yamsk, is upon the border of the river, ten wersts from its mouth, where it forms a bay that seems to promise excellent anchorage; but a variety of capes advancing a considerable way, and a great number of shoals with which the entrance is as it were blocked up, render it the more dangerous, as the passage is narrow, and obliges the ships frequently to beat about, or lie to for a favourable wind, in order to pass over them, for it is almost impossible to succeed with a side wind. From this account it is evident, that if the place were more considerable and more frequented, shipwrecks would be more common^[45]. [Pg 173]

There are at Yamsk only twenty five houses, built of wood; a part of which, where the church^[46] is situated, is surrounded with a square enclosure of pallisades, like that of Ingiga, but not so high or so thick. The inhabitants amount to twenty families, whose mode of life is similar to that of the Russians. [Pg 174]

They have a method of making salt, that was new to me. The wood which the sea throws now

and then upon the shore, is collected with the greatest care. When it is dry, they burn it; the ashes are afterwards boiled, and the sediment which it leaves is a very white salt.

Two days previous to my arrival at Yamsk, a troop of wandering Tougouses had left this settlement. To console me under the disappointment of having missed them, I was favoured with a sight of the full dress, both of the men and women. They wear no chemises, but a kind of stomacher fastened behind, and which descends to the knees like an apron. It is embroidered with the hair of rein deer, and ornamented with glass beads of various colours, to which are added at the bottom plates of iron and copper, and a considerable number of small bells. Under this apron they wear a sort of breeches, or pantaloons, made of skin, and their legs are covered with long boots, which have the hair on the outside, and are embroidered. A long waistcoat covers their shoulders, to the extremities of the sleeves of which gloves are fastened, with an opening under the wrist for the sake of pulling them off more conveniently. This waistcoat, close at the breast, and fitted to the shape, terminates near the middle of the thigh, and is also ornamented with embroidery and beads. From the small of the back hangs a tail, two feet long, but not very large. It is made of the hair of sea wolves, died of different colours. The head dress is a small round cap, which widens a little on each side to cover the ears. The whole attire is made of the skin of young deer, and trimmed with sables, otters, or other furs of equal value.

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The garb of the women is nearly the same, except that it has no tail or gloves, and that there is a small opening in the crown of their caps of about two inches in diameter, which is doubtless made for the purpose of passing the hair through.

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Such is the mode of these people. In winter they wear thick fur clothing; but they are careful, for fear of injuring it, to change their dress the moment they enter their yourts, and to put on their worst garments; and upon the most trivial occasions they strip themselves entirely naked.

We felt this day the force of the sun, which announced an approaching thaw. Of consequence I furnished myself with plates of whale-bone to be fastened under the skates of my sledges, in case of necessity; and by the advice of the people of the country, founded on the experience of travellers in this season of the year, I resolved to travel in the night, and to rest in the day, when the sun had most power. I came out of Yamsk at eleven o'clock in the evening, our caravan consisting of nine large sledges, or *nartas*^[47].

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At break of day we found ourselves at the foot of a mountain, fifty wersts from Yamsk. The Koriacs have given it the name of *Babouschka*, or *grandmother*. The summit, they say, is the tomb of an old sorceress, equally renowned and formidable. My guides maintained that it was the loftiest mountain in this part of the world; but their superstitious fears seem to have magnified it, as, in my opinion, that of Villegui is much steeper, at least I found more difficulty in ascending it. Arrived at the top of the Babouschka, they placed iron cramps under their feet, in the form of small tripods, and fastened, transversely under the sledges, tolerably large sticks, in order to impede the velocity in descending. No farther care was necessary than that of guiding them with the *oschtol*, or stick pointed with iron, and we came to the bottom without any accident. The inhabitants of the country however consider this descent as dangerous, particularly when the inequalities are filled up with snow, which in that case become so many concealed and inevitable gulphs, and, I am inclined to believe, frequently prove fatal to travellers.

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In all probability, the dread which the Koriacs entertain of this Babouschka originated in the following manner. As a natural effect of their prejudice, they feel disposed to acts of gratitude the moment they find themselves out of danger. The Koriacs who attended me were eager to hang up their offering, which consisted of small quantities of tobacco, scraps of fish, pieces of iron, &c. upon the summit where they suppose the sorceress to sleep. Others had left there before them old cramps of iron, knives, arrows, and broken arms. I perceived a Tchouktchi javelin ornamented with ivory, and I advanced to seize it with a view of keeping it, but the cry of my conductors stopped me. "What would you do?" said one of them. "Are you desirous of ruining us? Such a sacrilege would draw down upon us the most dreadful calamities, and you would be unable to pursue your journey." At this apostrophe I could have laughed in the face of the timid prophet, if I had not stood in need of the succour of these people. To continue to merit it, it was necessary to respect their error, and I assumed therefore a becoming gravity; but no sooner had they turned their backs, than I laid hold of this terrible arrow, as a monument of their absurd credulity.

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The first village I came to was Srednoi There is something picturesque in its situation, which is upon the border of the sea, at the entrance of a deep bay that loses itself in the land, by forming the channel of a small river, the water of which is always free from any brackish taste. The Koriacs, who inhabit it, received me with cordiality. I rested myself for a few hours in one of the two yourts, which, with a number of magazines, constitute the whole ostrog. The yourts are constructed like those of the fixed Koriacs, with this difference, that they are not subterraneous, and that the entrance is by a door upon a level with the ground. Muscles abound on these coasts, and are the principal food of the inhabitants.

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I came away in the evening with fresh dogs, and travelled eight wersts upon the river Srednoi. The ice, in various places, broke under our sledges, but the hardiness and skill of my guides extricated us from the difficulty. Obligated to go on shore to free the vehicles, they had the precaution to put on their rackets, that they might have a more extensive footing on the ice. But the greatest inconvenience in travelling on this river was occasioned by the slipperiness of the ice; our dogs were unable to support themselves, and fell down every moment one upon another.

Before noon of the 26, we reached the ostrog of Siglann, the last in the Koriac territories, which is upon a river of the same name. It is seventy seven wersts from the preceding, and is neither larger nor more populous. It contains only one yourt, built like those of the Yakoutes, the

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description of which I shall defer till my arrival with these people. I stayed at Siglann to arrange the skates of our sledges, that is, to fasten plates of whale-bone under them, which the melting of the snow rendered necessary, and I departed at five o'clock in the evening.

I first crossed a bay, called by the name of the village. It was large, and appeared to be well defended, except at the south and south east. The whole coast is of considerable height, and the bay extends so far, that I was eight hours in gaining the western cape. Farther on I found another curvature not less considerable, called the *Bay of Ola*. In spite of the velocity of our pace, we were ten hours in passing over the widest part of it.

The 27, about three o'clock in the afternoon I stopt at Ola, a Toungouse ostrog, a hundred and fourteen wersts from Siglann. It is situated upon a sandy flat at the mouth of the river Ola, which, widening at this place, affords a small harbour, to the extremity of which the Toungouses retire in the severe weather. They had quitted it two days before, and had taken possession of the ten yourts that make up the village, and in which they reside as long as the warm weather lasts. [Pg 183]

These yourts are not formed underground, like those of the Kamtschadales and the majority of the fixed Koriacs; they are also longer and of a superior construction. The walls are supported by thick posts, and there is a narrow opening at the top of the roof, that extends from one end to the other; the fire place is in like manner of the same length as the house. Eight feet above the fire, which is kept in during the whole summer, they hang upon cross beams their stock of fish and sea wolves, in order to dry and smoke them, and this indeed is the chief advantage of these buildings. By means of two doors in opposite sides of the yourt, they are able to introduce whole trees and enormous pieces of wood, with which the fire is supplied. Each family have their bed in little distinct huts in the sides of the building. The yourt I entered was divided into apartments, the walls of which consisted merely of prepared fish skins, sewn together, and stained with different colours. This singular tapestry has by no means a disagreeable appearance. [Pg 184]

The winter yourts are round, and built upon the ground like the summer ones. The walls are constructed of large beams, placed perpendicularly, and the covering is inclined like the roofs among us, with a hole in the top for the evaporation of the smoke. They have a door, the bottom of which is upon a level with the foundation. Some of them have within a kind of corridor, which breaks the column of air, so that the smoke issues more freely. [Pg 185]

The instant of my arrival at Ola, I was visited by a number of women, some dressed in the Russian, and others in the Toungouse mode. Expressing my surprise at seeing them so fine, I was informed that it was the village feast; it was also, I understood, a part of their coquetry to appear in their best attire before strangers. Of their most esteemed ornaments, embroideries of glass beads seem to have the preference. Some of them are wrought with tolerable taste; among others, I observed one on the boot of a young girl that had an admirable air of lightness; it concealed in no respect the beauty of the leg, that was covered with a kind of pantaloon of skin, nicely fitted, over which hung a small petticoat. [Pg 186]

There is a striking resemblance between the Russians and Toungouses; they have similar features and the same language. The men are strong and well made; some of the women have an Asiatic appearance, but not the flat nose and broad face of the Kamtschadales and the majority of the Koriacs. Mildness and hospitality seem to be characteristic qualities of these people. It was not from a defect of zeal, on their part, that I did not procure the succour I wanted; but their ability was so small, that they could only change a part of my dogs.

Upon leaving this village we proceeded on the sea. The ice embarassed us considerably in the course of the night, and the frequent cracks which we heard under us, were not calculated to dispel our fears.

At break of day we reached the main land, in order to surmount a steep promontory. Our way was so complicated, that we had allowed ourselves seven hours to gain the sea again, but the descent was more difficult than had been represented, and it was necessary to make ourselves a passage through a wood of birch trees. One of my guides, suffering himself to descend like the rest, by the mere force of the slope, from the top of the mountain to the bottom, was overturned by the shock of a sledge, which struck against him just as he was turning an angle. He endeavoured to lay hold of the trunk of a tree, and unfortunately fell upon the pointed end of his stick, which entered his side; he had also received a violent blow in the head, and we were obliged to place him on one of our baggage sledges. [Pg 187]

At the foot of the mountain we had another perplexity, occasioned by the sea being broken up. How great had been our risk during the night! My conductors were terrified at it equally with myself. "What will become of us," cried they? "It is now that we have the most alarming dangers to encounter." Dissembling my uneasiness, I attempted to encourage them. We continued our course for some time along the shore; a melancholy silence prevailed among my people, whose countenances were expressive of consternation. [Pg 188]

In about half an hour the person at the head of the file suddenly stopped, exclaiming that it was not possible to proceed any farther. I conceived at first that his terror magnified the difficulties, and I sent my soldier Golikoff with one of the most experienced of my guides to examine our situation. They quickly came back, and confirmed the ill tidings. Golikoff advised that we should return, and endeavour to find a way by land, but my guides rejected his counsel, declaring that it was nearly impossible to ascend, on this side, the mountain we had just passed, and that even if we succeeded, the route would be too considerable, and also too dangerous on account of the rapidity of the thaw, and their little acquaintance with the country. They concluded by proposing to us to abandon our sledges, to select the most valuable part of my property, and to cross the [Pg 189]

bay by leaping from one sheet of ice to another. But the current began to put them in motion, and the sea was covered with isolated pieces; it may be supposed therefore that I felt no great inclination to adopt this mode of travelling, to which however the people of the country are frequently reduced. I knew not what plan to follow; at length I resolved to try myself if I could not find some practicable path along the shore.

A chain of rocks, which, through its whole extent, presents to the sea a flat perpendicular surface, and consequently without the least appearance of strand, was the description of the shore I visited. The sea, in carrying off the mountains of ice which had concealed its surface, had left a horizontal crust suspended to the side of this enormous wall, which was not more than two feet wide, frequently not more than one, and scarcely one foot in thickness. Eight feet below this sort of cornice, you saw the waves beating against the rock, and innumerable shelves that the eye discovered in the sea, and that seemed about ten feet below its surface.

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I did not suffer these observations to discourage me, but immediately committed myself to this perilous cornice. Emboldened by its solidity, I advanced softly in a sidelong direction, my face turned towards the rock. It offered no hold to the hands, but only now and then a narrow cavity, into which I threw myself to recover breath; after having passed the gaps of the crust, which continually presented themselves to my steps, the ice being in certain places completely washed away, and a breach left of two or three feet in length. At first I must confess I felt myself intimidated, and did not leap them without trembling: the least error in position, the most trifling accident would have destroyed me. My companions could not have relieved, nor even so much as have seen me. This progress continued for three quarters of an hour, at the end of which I reached the other extremity of the rock, and no sooner had I arrived than I forgot the dangers of the way to think only of my dispatches. I had left them under the care of my soldiers, but I alone could undertake to save them. The experiment I had made encouraged me, and proud of my discovery, I did not hesitate to return upon my steps.

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My people condemned my conduct, which they considered as rashness, and expressed their astonishment at seeing me again. I concealed not from them that the way was hazardous; "but as no accident had happened to me, why, I asked, should you be deterred from following me? I will once more make the attempt, and I hope upon my return to find you free from apprehension, and disposed to imitate my example."

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I immediately took up my port-folio, and the box that contained my dispatches. My two soldiers Golikoff, and Nedarezoff, whose dexterity I had already experienced, consented to accompany me. Without their assistance it would, I believe, have been impossible to save this precious deposit; we carried it in turn, exchanging it from one to another. He that had last received it, for instance, who always marched foremost upon this narrow parapet, threw it suddenly into a hollow place of the rock, advancing at the same time a few steps; the others came after him, took up his burthen, and relieved themselves from it by the same manœuvre. I cannot express what I felt during this operation; at every stride of the bearer over the gaps of the path, I imagined I saw my box ready to fall into the sea. Twenty times it was upon the point of escaping from our hands, and I felt my very blood curdle as if I had seen death itself gaping under my steps. Indeed I am not able to say what would have been the effect of my despair, if I had had the misfortune to lose it. I knew not a moment's ease till I had deposited this solemn charge in a place of safety; my joy was then as vehement as had been my anxiety.

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This second success inspired me with so much confidence, that I no longer doubted of the possibility of transporting our sledges in the same manner. I communicated my ideas to my soldiers: animated by my example, and by the event of their first experiment, they cheerfully returned with me for this new undertaking. By my order they had unharnessed a part of the dogs; they now fastened to the four corners of the sledges long thongs of leather which I directed to be held by those who were before and behind the vehicle. We presently found the utility of this precaution; our sledges were sometimes wider than the parapet, and of consequence only rested on one skate, so that the load must have overturned them into the water if they had not been strongly supported; at other times the ice, as I have said, was entirely gone, when it was necessary to give them a sudden elevation in order to preserve their equilibrium. The muscular arms of my guides were scarcely equal to the weight, and it was sometimes as much as all of us could do to keep one another from falling. It was to no purpose, for us to grapple the rock; it was perpetually to be feared that one of us should draw in the other, or that the ice should suddenly fail under our feet. We however suffered nothing but the apprehension.

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We returned once more to fetch the rest of our dogs. It seemed as if these poor animals judged better than ourselves of the extent of the danger, so much did they bark and draw back, particularly at the difficult passages. It was to no purpose to cheer them with our voice, it was necessary to strike them, or to pull them rapidly after us. There were four of them, who from awkwardness or terror, could not leap like the rest. The first perished in our sight without the possibility of our assisting him^[48], the second remained suspended by his fore feet; one of my guides, supported by his comrade and leaning forward, was fortunate enough to save him; the other two were supported by their traces, and were easily extricated from the peril.

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These various crossings backward and forward occasioned us seven hours incessant labour and apprehension. We were no sooner out of danger than we returned thanks to heaven like so many persons escaped from death. We embraced one another with transport, as if each had owed to his companion the preservation of his life. In short, our happiness was better felt than it is in my power to describe.

We made all possible haste to remedy the disorder of our equipage, and immediately proceeded

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on a flinty strand, the breadth and solidity of which relieved us from all disquietude. In about two hours, at a little distance from the ostrog of Armani, we met a number of sledges returning empty to Ola, and which of course could have no other way than that which we had just passed. We informed the conductors of the difficulty, and wished them equal success.

The village of Armani is eighty wersts from Ola. It consists merely of two yourts, a summer and a winter one, situated by a river of the same name. We passed on to the house of a Yakout, three hundred paces farther, where, it was said, I should find a better lodging. It was a yourt in the middle of a large wood of fir trees, and had been inhabited by him thirty years.

In his absence his wife received me with the utmost cordiality. She offered us milk, and a sourish beverage made chiefly of mare's milk, called *koumouiss*. Its taste was by no means disagreeable; and my Russians, in spite of their superstitious aversion for every kind of food that comes from the horse, highly relished it. The husband arrived while this was passing, who was a venerable old man, but as yet full of health and vigour. Informed of the object of my journey by his wife, and my soldier Golikoff, who, being a native of Yakoutska, served as interpreter, my host instantly cleaned the most distinguished place in the room that I might repose myself. I was awaked by the lowings of the herd which came into the yourt. Eight cows, a bull, and a number of calves, divided the apartment with me. Notwithstanding this company, there was an appearance of cleanliness, and the air was sweet and wholesome. This Yakout does not pass his time like the Koriacs and Kamtschadales, in catching and preparing fish, a species of food upon which he sets little value; hunting, and the care of his cattle, occupy his whole attention, and supply all his wants. Besides his herd, he has also ten horses, which he uses for various purposes, and which are kept in an inclosure at a little distance from the yourt. Every thing about this habitation has an air of ease, and creates in the spectator tranquil and cheerful feelings. I know not whether the sight of the herd, the appearance of plenty, or the excellence of the milk provisions communicated some charm to our repast, but I conceived it to be the most sumptuous I had made for a considerable time. The master of the house had the kindness before my departure to add some game to my stock of provisions.

We separated the same evening mutually satisfied with each other. I travelled the whole night, and arrived in the morning at the fort of Taousk, being a distance of forty-two wersts. This ostrog, where, in conformity to the plan we had laid down, we spent the day, is situated on the river Taon. It contains twenty isbas, a small church served by the vicar of Okotsk, and a building for the reception of tributes, surrounded by palisades in the form of bastions. Twenty Yakouts, two chiefs, and some other Koriacs, who, attracted by the situation, have settled there, make up the whole of the inhabitants. The garrison consists of fifteen soldiers, commanded by a serjeant named Okhotin, at whose house I took up my abode till the evening.

In the night I passed through the village of Gorbé, peopled by Yakouts, and a small number of Koriacs. At break of day we lost sight of the sea. We had for some time journeyed upon the banks of the Taon, and gradually we advanced farther into the land. During 1 and 2 May, we travelled through fields, and upon the river Kava, without perceiving a single habitation.

The 3, at the very instant when we were about to halt in the middle of a wood of fir trees, a gale of wind rose, accompanied with a heavy snow. My tent, suspended over the sledges containing our baggage, served us for a shelter. But it was necessary to have a fire. My conductors, who undertook to procure wood, were buried as high as their waists in snow, and even with their rackets they sunk up to their knees. In the afternoon the wind changed, and the sky became clear. We immediately mounted our sledges, but the depth of the snow obliged us to alight in turns to open a passage for the dogs.

In the morning of 4 May, we passed over the mountain of Iné, two hundred and twenty wersts from Taousk. It may be compared in height to that of Babouschka. When at the summit, the cold pierced us to such a degree that we stopped to kindle a fire. In about five hours we came again to the sea, which we left at a short distance from the village of Iné, where we arrived in the dusk of the evening.

This ostrog is thirty wersts from the mountain, and is peopled by Russians and Yakouts, whose habitations are isbas and yourts. They have the care of a stud of two hundred horses, which we had an opportunity of seeing, ten wersts from the village. I intended to have changed my team, and sat off again immediately, but I was detained by the difficulty of procuring dogs. The chief of the place was dead drunk, and it was not till after an hour's importunity and search that we were able to procure an adequate supply.

Twenty-five wersts from Iné, where, that I might make the greater speed, I had left my equipage under the care of my faithful Golikoff, with orders to follow me as quickly as possible, I passed two yourts inhabited by Yakouts and Toungouses. The name of this hamlet is Oulbé. Farther on I met a number of convoys with flour, which was to be distributed in the neighbouring villages, and made into biscuits to supply the ships of M. Billings, of whom I shall presently have occasion to speak.

We came again upon the coast, and I travelled forty-seven wersts without quitting it, during which time I saw a number of sea wolves, and a whale driven upon the shore. At the top of the mountain called Marikann, that is at the distance of twenty-five wersts, I had the pleasure to discover the town of Okotsk, but I was attacked by a gale of wind that made me apprehensive of a new delay. Regardless of every thing but my impatience, I continued my route, resolving to brave all accidents. My courage however was not put to the test; before we reached the shore the weather was calm, and I was able to satisfy my curiosity by examining the wreck of a vessel that was driven on the coast. Having crossed, with trepidation, the river Okhota^[49], I entered Okotsk

5 May, at four o'clock in the afternoon, accompanied only by Nedarezoff.

I alighted at the house of major Kokh, vested with the command in the absence of M. Kasloff, whose arrival with me he had long expected. The governor's letter informed him of the cause of our separation, and I gave him a brief account of the melancholy circumstances attending it. I hastened to pay my compliments to Madame Kasloff, and deliver the packets entrusted to my care, but she was in the country four wersts from Okotsk, and I was so fatigued that M. Kokh would not permit me to wait upon her that day. An express was sent off with the letters, and my apologies, and I fixed on the next day for my visit. Presuming that I principally stood in need of repose, the major obligingly conducted me to the apartment destined for me in the house of M. Kasloff. I found every convenience of which I had been deprived ever since my departure from Ingiga. In the space of three hundred and fifty leagues I had not, except once at Yamsk, slept in a bed.

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As soon as I rose in the morning I was visited by M. Kokh, and the principal officers and merchants of the town. M. Allegretti, surgeon to the expedition of M. Billings, was among them. From the facility with which he spoke the French language, I should have taken him for a countryman, if he had not, upon introducing himself, informed that he was an Italian. My meeting with him was the more fortunate, as the pain in my breast had returned. I hesitated not to consult him, and am happy in having an opportunity to declare, that to his skill, and the care he bestowed upon me during my stay, I am indebted for the perfect cure of my complaint.

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M. Kokh conducted me to his house to dinner, where I had an opportunity of becoming better acquainted with him^[50]. His kindness extended so far as to form a thousand plans of amusement, which he was eager to communicate with the hope of inducing me to make some stay with him.

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If my duty had not prohibited every voluntary delay, I could not easily have resisted the urgency of his invitations, and the fascinating pleasure of his society; but faithful to my trust, it was necessary to sacrifice my inclinations and my repose to the rapidity of my journey. I convinced my host of this, and yielding to my reasons, he became satisfied with my eagerness to quit him, and even seconded my zeal by assiduously providing the means for my departure.

The rain had been incessant since my arrival, and the people who were sent out to examine the roads, conceived them to be impassable, at least with dogs. From their report, the daily increase of the thaw deprived me of all hope of advancing farther, unless by means of rein deer, and M. Kokh therefore sent an express to a horde of wandering Toungouses that had left Okotsk a few days before, to procure me a supply of these animals.

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Having taken these measures, the major accompanied me to Boulguin, the country house of Madame Kasloff, who received me as the friend of her husband, and the companion of his dangers. The object of her affections was the subject of our whole conversation. She demanded an account of all our difficulties at the period of our separation. It was in vain that I attempted to soften in my description such circumstances as were calculated to impress themselves too forcibly; her sensibility told her that it was from an unwillingness to give her pain, and it only alarmed her the more. I did not well know how to console her, for I was not myself without anxiety respecting this valuable man; but assisted by M. Kokh, I assumed with tolerable success an air of serenity. I had recourse to conjectures; and the major, on his part, mentioned a variety of consoling expedients; and at last we restored tranquillity to the mind of this affectionate wife, by flattering her with the speedy arrival of M. Kasloff. This lady was born at Okotsk, and appeared to have had the best education; she spoke the French language with elegance. In the solitude of her retreat, her chief happiness was placed in educating a daughter about three years old, the express image of her father.

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Having made all my visits to the officers of the garrison, I returned to Boulguin to dine with Mrs. Kasloff, as I had promised, when she gave me letters to her relations at Moscow.

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The next day our express arrived, but he had not been able to overtake the Toungouses, who had separated, and were dispersed through the country. Here ended of course our hope of rein deer. Meanwhile it seemed necessary that I should not defer my departure, as the roads became worse every day. The longer I wait, said I to myself, the less capable shall I be of reaching the cross of Yudoma before the rivers are entirely broken up, and the greater will be the risk of my being stopped by the floods. Filled with these reflections, I renewed my entreaties that M. Kokh would allow me to proceed. It was in vain he alledged the many disagreeable circumstances I should experience, the obstacles I should encounter, the dangers to which I should be exposed, from the season being too far advanced to travel with sledges; I persisted in my resolution. At last he complied, and promised to give the necessary orders, that nothing might prevent my setting off the next day, upon condition that I would return the moment I found myself in any imminent danger. I was glad to obtain my liberty, and consented to all that he proposed. I spent the remainder of the day in walking about the town in order to give a description of it, accompanied by a number of persons who were able to assist my enquiries.

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Longer than it is wide, the town of Okotsk extends nearly in a direct line from east to west; the sea is at the south within a hundred yards of the houses, and the interval between consists of a flinty strand; at the north the walls are washed by the Okhota; to the east is the mouth of this river, that is, at the extremity of a neck of land upon which the town is built, and that extends from thence to the west. The town has nothing in it extraordinary; the structure of the houses has little variety, as they are only isbas, a few of which, situated to the east, are larger and more commodious than the rest, and are destined for the use of the officers. M. Kokh lives at the other end of the town; the gate of his court yard opens into the high street, the regularity of which is broken by a square, in which are the house of the governor, and the sessions-house, both of them

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under the same roof. Opposite to them is the guard-house, and on the left side of the square the parish church. These buildings have no very splendid appearance. They were formerly enclosed with palisades, of which there are still some vestiges. The remains of a gate to the west of the government house, shews that this was what they called a fortress. Behind it is a street reaching almost to the river, inhabited by tradesmen, whose shops, regularly arranged, line each side of the street.

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The port is so very insignificant, that I could not have called it by this name, if I had not counted in it seven or eight vessels or galliots, some of them belonging to the crown, and others to merchants, who carry on a fur trade with America. The port is to the east, almost at the extremity of the town, and near the river, by a kind of appendage to which it is formed. Upon the invitation of M. Hall, lieutenant in the navy, I accompanied him to the dock to see two small ships that were building for the voyage of discovery intrusted to M. Billings. The sailors, soldiers, and carpenters, had been sent out at a very considerable expence; and the armament, which goes on rapidly, must cost the empress an immense sum.

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Faithful to his promise, M. Kokh had made all the preparations for my departure, and 10 May in the evening, my sledges being loaded and harnessed, I took leave of him and the rest of the officers, who expressed their desire of seeing me return.

My company was augmented by two men, who were to serve me as pilots on the river Yudoma. I travelled all night, notwithstanding the wretched state of the roads, which corresponded with the report that had been made. They were completely covered with water, and in some places, the woods in particular, it reached to the bellies of our dogs. The wind continued south, the sky became more clouded, and every thing indicated that the thaw was not likely to cease.

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In the mean time, having crossed the river Okhota, I arrived without accident to the village of Medvejé-golova, or *bear's-head*, which is forty-five wersts from Okotsk, and is inhabited by Russians and Yakouts. I entered very early in the morning, but our dogs were so weary that I was obliged to spend the day and even the night there, being unable to procure a fresh supply.

I had hoped to be at Moundoukan the next day, which is twenty wersts from the preceding ostrog. Half way a part of our dogs refused to draw, and we reluctantly ventured upon a river that seemed to offer us a more commodious way. We had scarcely advanced a few paces, when we heard a sudden crack under our sledges; the next moment I felt myself gently sink, but a piece of ice still kept me up. It broke a second time, and my skates became almost invisible. Every effort to extricate myself would have been fruitless, as the least motion must have carried me forward and plunged me into the water. Fortunately it was only four feet deep; by their exertions, my people at last drew me from my embarrassment, but they were nearly as much in want of assistance themselves. Deaf to the remonstrances of my conductors, I was desirous of proceeding, but we soon found it necessary mutually to aid each other in gaining the bank. Meanwhile the snow melted so rapidly, that our dogs paddled in the water without advancing a step, and fell one upon another exhausted with fatigue.

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Among my guides was a serjeant, whom M. Kokh had given me for my better security. His reputation for courage and experience led me to consider him as my compass and guardian, and I kept my eye fixed upon him, observing his motions and studying his countenance, which had hitherto been inflexibly composed. In the midst of the murmurs of the rest of my company, he had not uttered a word nor altered a muscle of his face, so as to discover any emotion. I naturally construed this silence into a disavowal of the fears with which they attempted to fill me, and his tranquillity as an encouragement to go on. Never had my astonishment been greater than to see him suddenly stop, protesting that he would not proceed a step farther. I interrogated him, and urged him to explain himself. "I can no longer be silent," he answered, "influenced by a sentiment of vanity, and a desire to display superior courage, I have hitherto withheld from giving my opinion respecting the hazardous measure you are desirous of pursuing; but the more I admire your intrepidity, the more I think myself bound to prevent the fatal consequences it may occasion, and to inform you of the many dangers and obstacles that will every instant spring up before you. The majority of the rivers are already disencumbered of their ice, and could you so far succeed as to pass them, you would soon be overtaken and surrounded by the floods. What will then be your resource? To seek an asylum on a mountain or in a forest, if you should be fortunate enough to meet with one. Like the inhabitants^[51] of these cantons in such circumstances, can you build yourself a cabin on the tops of the trees, there to remain a fortnight or three weeks till the waters shall subside? And are you sure that even in this lofty retreat they will not reach you, or force you down, together with the tree that serves as your support? Are you sure that your stock of provisions will preserve you, during this interval, from the apprehensions of famine? If this summary view of the calamities that await you are not sufficient to intimidate you, proceed; you are your own master; I have done my duty, and must beg leave to quit you."

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This blunt remonstrance, and the terrible prediction it contained, did not fail to make a strong impression on my mind, and I considered that I could not do better than return immediately to Okotsk, from which we were only fifty-five wersts distant.

We reached Medvejé-golova the same evening, where I stayed till four o'clock in the afternoon of the next day. From thence to the river Okhota I felt no other inconvenience than that of travelling very slowly, but to compensate for this short respite, we experienced, when we came to cross the river, new perils and new alarms. I confess that I was equally terrified with my people, and dared neither measure with my eye the width of the river, nor lose sight for a moment of the trace of my sledge. The instability of the ice, which was moved up and down by the current, made me apprehensive that it could not bear the weight of so many passengers, and I expected every

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instant that an abyss would open and swallow up some of us. At length having gained the bank, we counted over the company one after another, to convince ourselves that no one was lost, and the pleasure of having escaped this tremendous danger, gave wings to the remainder of our journey to Okotsk, where we arrived the 14 at noon.

So speedy a return, occasioned some pleasantries on the part of M. Kokh and the other officers; each reminded me of his prediction; but I was less confused at the folly of my attempt, than mortified and distressed at its failure. I calculated with grief that my stay in this town would not perhaps be less than a month. Engrossed by a thousand melancholy ideas, I was for some time incapable of returning any answer to the demonstrations of joy and friendship which were heaped upon me. All the obstacles I had met with from my first landing at the port of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, occurred at once to my mind, and I conceived that the invincible hand of fate opposed itself to the success of my embassy. It was to no purpose that I employed every means of being expeditious; it was to no purpose that I had pushed my zeal to rashness, and on many occasions hazarded both my life and my dispatches. What a distance was I still from Petersburg! In the mean time six months are frequently known to be sufficient for this journey; and a vessel leaving Bolcheretsk in July, will, if it meet with no accident, commonly arrive at Okotsk in three weeks or a month, and sometimes in twelve or fifteen days. From Okotsk to Yakoutsck, on horseback, is only the business of a month, and in like manner from Yakoutsck to Irkoutsk, whether we sail down, the Lena, or ride along its banks. At Irkoutsk it will probably be necessary to wait six weeks till the frost sets in, and by means of sledges it is easy travelling to Petersburg in a similar portion of time; the governor general has performed it in twenty eight days.

It is impossible to express my impatience and despair, when I contrasted the tediousness of my journey with this expeditious mode of travelling. Eight months had already elapsed, and I was no farther than Okotsk. It is true, I had no choice of season, and had been detained nearly three months at Bolcheretsk; obliged beside to make by land the tour of the peninsula of Kamtschatka, I had had to contend with tempests and a thousand obstacles, each more grievous than the preceding. These delays had been equally involuntary and unavoidable; and though they may be pleaded in my justification, they do not remove the regret that is inseparable from the recollection of them. It is always distressing not to be able to execute the trust reposed in us, particularly when it is known, that at a different season, and under other circumstances, the task would have been easy; but it is still more distressing, when attended with the anxiety to see our native country and our dearest friends. Such were the reflections which agitated my mind on my return to Okotsk; and for many days they poisoned the pleasures that every one was desirous of procuring me. At length, however, the attentions I experienced, and the amusements that poured in upon me on all sides, dispelled my chagrin, and there was no longer any merit in my resignation.

Among the officers of the garrison, I owed peculiar obligations to M. Loftsoff, inspector general. He gave instant orders that the belt of their wretched horses should be collected from the environs, and kept in readiness to set off at a moment's warning^[52]. This precaution enabled me to seize the first favourable opportunity, which, I flattered myself, would be sooner than they gave me reason to expect.

Mrs. Kasloff, informed of my return, had the kindness to send me every day an abundance of milk, which she knew had been prescribed by M. Allegretti, as the only food that could relieve my breast. I was the more obliged by this attention, as it was not possible to procure milk at Okotsk at any price.

In a few days I heard news that gave me real pleasure. An express from Ingiga informed us of M. Kasloff's arrival in that settlement; but he had brought no letter from the governor; and our joy soon gave place to anxiety. In what situation had he arrived? Why had he not written? His health perhaps would not permit him? We all questioned the messenger in turns, and it was with difficulty he could convince us of his safety; but the probability of his account, its invariable uniformity, and our own hopes, so natural, when the person in question is dear to us, persuaded us at last that our fears were vain; and in spite of my melancholy experience of the difficulties of the route, and the unfavourableness of the season, blinded by my attachment, I frequently deceived myself, and lessened the obstacles, from my desire to see him before my departure.

Okotsk being the seat of administration, and the entrepôt of the Russian commerce in this country, I found myself at the fountain head of knowledge respecting these subjects. The society in which I lived, offered me a thousand opportunities of instruction, which it was impossible not to embrace. I first applied myself to the study of commerce, by enquiring into the causes that gave rise to, that favoured and increased the enterprises of the Russian colonies in this quarter of the world. I was assisted in my enquiries by the most enlightened persons and the best informed merchants; and to ascertain the truth of their accounts, I frequently contrasted them with each other, and compared them with the assertions of Coxe. I beg leave to transcribe, in this place, the notes which I minuted down for my own information. If they should contain any details sufficiently interesting to obtain pardon for the digression, I shall have gained my end, and be amply rewarded for my labour.

By the conquest of the eastern part of Siberia, the Russians came into possession of the fruitful mines with which it abounds, and which were held in no estimation by the inhabitants. To the extraction of iron, the conquerors added that of silver, gold, and other precious metals, the eternal objects of the avarice of mankind. The discovery of these new sources of wealth, enflamed the courage of the adventurers; the result was, that they were desirous of extending their dominion still farther, and their eager regards reached beyond Irkoutsk, which ought on this side

to have bounded their empire.

Upon their first incursions into the neighbouring countries, they perceived, with regret, that they had not the same advantages to hope for. Nature appeared every where to have acted as a step-mother. The sterility of the soil, which equalled the rigour of the climate, and the stupid sloth of the savage inhabitants, who were chiefly hunters, herdsmen, or ichthyophagi, men who subsist on fish, offered no flattering resources to industry, and was directly calculated to check all speculative ideas. But ingenious avarice knew how to acquire wealth even here. The view of the clothing of the savages, suggested instantly the idea of robbing them of it, and the emigrants calculated the possibility of succeeding by the lure of exchange, and the immense profit that would accrue from this branch of commerce, when it was once in their possession.

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As they proceeded farther to the east of Asia, it was remarked that the furs were more beautiful; and this was sufficient to persuade Russia that it was her interest and glory to subject every part of this vast country to the obedience of her laws. Hitherto it had been the theatre of the piracies of a herd of Cossacs and Tartars, with whom some Russians, instigated by the same spirit of plunder, had united themselves. The success of their attempts being known, the allurements of riches attracted a greater number of emigrants, whose audacity increased in proportion to the resistance they met with from the indigenes. In vain had nature placed these savages in barren deserts, in the midst of forests, where their independence seemed to be out of the reach of attack; in vain had she given them frosts, mountains, and seas of ice as barriers; every thing is surmountable by ambition, a rage for conquest, and a thirst for riches. The courage of the natives incited them every day to fresh combats, but it could not save them from oppression; the conquerors, if I may so speak, sprung up again in proportion as they perished in these bloody contests. Frequent reinforcements, countenanced by the government, repaired these losses, and gave no time to the vanquished to recover from the surprise and shame of having yielded to a handful of foreigners, whose usurpations became more enormous on every victory. By force of arms they were already masters of the whole territory as far as Okotsk, and northward had advanced to the banks of the Anadir.

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To secure so many advantages, a system of government and commerce was necessary; and immediately forts were constructed and towns built. These establishments, paltry as they were, opened an asylum to Russian, and other commercial speculators, who were acquainted with the route through these provinces. Here they could resort, when tired of their perilous expedition, and derive succour against the insults of the primitive inhabitants, who were always disposed to throw off the yoke and make reprisals.

Independently of the vexations of every kind that were exercised against them, doubtless without the knowledge of the court to which they were become tributary, the natives frequently suffered still farther from the treachery, cruelties, and all the excesses practised by ferocious conquerors, when intoxicated with success, and goaded on by the abuse of riches and power, and the hope of impunity. In practising these barbarities, individuals were emboldened by the example of their superiors, even of such as were appointed to stop the disorders, which became at last so enormous as to excite the indignation of the empress. The produce of the customs no longer flowed with equal abundance into the treasury; the tributes were either annihilated or diminished by the persons appointed to collect them. Hence the frequent change of governors, whose depravity or incapacity was justly accused, and merited at least an instant recall. Hence the want of discipline among the troops, the confusion of all order among the colonists, the daily accusations, the murders, and all the crimes that anarchy engenders.

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It happened exactly the same at Kamtschatka, when a chief of the Cossacs^[53] reduced the inhabitants of that peninsula to submit themselves to the Russian yoke. How heavily did it at first bear upon them! how many troubles, how many depredations, how many revolts did it occasion! This intestine and cruel war ceased not till a better mode of government was adopted.

A new order of things then took place; the rights of the indigenes were more respected, the taxes were less arbitrary, every function was more faithfully discharged. Freed from the shackles that loaded it, commerce began to prosper, speculations multiplied, the wealthy merchants of Russia sent their factors to Okotsk, and this town became the metropolis to other settlements that gradually sprung up. The eligibleness of its situation in the center of the conquered provinces, gave it this preference, notwithstanding the smallness of the port; but the navigation is almost entirely confined to coasting, and the ships that trade to Kamtschatka are chiefly galliots.

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The cargoes which they brought back, that is, the valuable skins obtained from the inhabitants by way of exchange, or as tribute, were afterwards sent to the center of the empire, where they were sold under the eyes, as it were, of government, and chiefly on its account. The caprice of the purchasers, whether natives or foreigners, was the only standard of the market: the art of the sellers was directed to raise the price of their merchandise; but from the skill of the one, and the eagerness of the other, no real benefit accrued, except to the revenue, in consequence of the enormous duties levied upon every thing that is bought and sold.

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In the mean time Okotsk flourished, and the number of merchant ships that arrived in and sailed out of the port increased every day: more considerable connections gave rise to more extensive views.

Russian caravans, leaving Siberia behind them, passed from desert to desert to the very borders of China. After some warm contests, and a variety of treaties infringed and broken, it was at last settled that the two nations should trade together on the frontiers. This privilege, which China had not granted to any of the neighbouring powers, was calculated to give to Russian

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commerce^[54] an unbounded extension.

The merchants were no sooner informed of this new market for the sale of their furs, than they exerted themselves to procure a greater abundance. Their vessels, entrusted to pilots chosen from government ships, sailed for the east of Kamtschatka. These navigators, more daring than skilful, were fortunate beyond what they had reason to expect; they not only discovered some unknown islands, but returned from their voyage loaded with so considerable a cargo of most beautiful skins, that the court of Petersburg considered herself as bound to bestow a more particular attention to these discoveries.

Resolved to pursue them, from the hope of one day adding these islands to the number of her possessions, she entrusted the execution of her designs to the most able marine officers, such as Behring, Tchirikoff, Levacheff, and others equally celebrated. Some fitted out their vessels at Okotsk, and others sailed from the port of Avatscha, or Saint Peter and St. Paul, at the point of Kamtschatka; all were eager to traverse the vast archipelago that opened before them; all proceeded from one discovery in pursuit of another. Copper island, Behring island, the Aleutienne and Fox islands, were found in turns, and new tributes enriched the royal treasury. Having wandered a long time over the seas, these happy Argonauts reached the coast of America. A peninsula (that of Alaxa) presented itself to their view; having landed, they understood that it formed a part of the main continent; every thing indicated that it was the new quarter of the world, and full of joy, they sailed back to their country.

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Scarcely had they given an account of the success of their voyage, proved by the useful observations they made, when the views of commerce were eagerly directed towards a region that offered inexhaustible resources. Russian factories were established at Alaxa^[55], and the immense profit accruing to them has, in spite of the distance, supported ever since between the factors and their principals, the strictest correspondence. The following is the mode of traffic adopted at Okotsk, whence a number of vessels sail every year for America.

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When a merchant has resolved to make this voyage, either in person or by means of one of his agents, he asks the consent of the governor, which is seldom refused. The cargo is divided into shares, and every person is at liberty to purchase. The shares amount only to the sum necessary to defray the expences of fitting out, and purchasing the articles of merchandise, which consist of stuffs, iron utensils, glass trinkets, handkerchiefs, brandy, tobacco, and other things held in estimation by savages. The officers and sailors have no wages, but are allowed a part of the cargo, which is called *paï*. The voyage lasts three, four, or six years; and from a spirit of avarice, the vessel is conducted to such places as are the least frequented, and even new discoveries are attempted^[56].

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Upon their return, these ships undergo a strict search. The owners pay duties to government, regulated by the nature of their cargoes, and estimated by the bills of lading. An appraisement is then made of the remainder, which is divided into equal portions: each owner receives either in kind or in money the amount of his capital, (allowing for freightage, and loss) and his share in the profits, if any have accrued. It will readily be perceived that it is chance alone in a manner that decides upon the quantum of dividend or deficit. In fine, part of the goods are sold at Okotsk, and part transported to Yakoutsk, from thence to Irkoutsk, and last of all to Kiakhta, where the Chinese are the established purchasers.

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The mode of government is equally entitled to attention. During my abode in the peninsula, the tribunals of which, as I have already observed, hold from those of Okotsk, I obtained the fullest information on this subject^[57]. I had only therefore to consider more attentively the discipline of the garrison, and the police of the town, which equally astonished me.

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I expected to see, as it formerly was, a licentious soldiery; that is, a band of ferocious Cossacs, robbers by nature, and ignorant of every law but their caprice or interest. Not a day passed without some of them deserting with arms and baggage, and frequently the magazines were pillaged by this audacious troop. It was to no purpose that the representatives of the sovereign practiced severity to put a stop to these desertions and plunderings; it was to no purpose that all the criminals, whom it was possible to apprehend, were subjected to the *battogues*, or gantlet, and other punishments practiced in the Russian army. These desperadoes were so hardened to stripes, or so incorrigible, that they incurred the next day new penalties; nor could the severest punishment restrain them, or deter others. At present however the garrison is subjected to a still severer discipline, and instances of disobedience are more rare. Great praise is due to the reformers, whose perseverance and ability have operated such good effects.

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Equal attention has been paid to the department of the police, which it was no easy task to establish in a town that has a considerable number of exiles among its inhabitants. The majority bear the indelible marks with which the hand of justice has branded their guilty heads, and the rest, condemned to the galleys, meditate incessantly during their labours in the port, how to break their chains with impunity. Sometimes escapes are effected, and woe to those places where these culprits betake themselves! But the continual vigilance of the governor does not long permit them to enjoy this fatal liberty; they are soon apprehended and punished, and by being loaded with heavier chains, all fears for the public safety are removed. The conduct of M. Kokh on this occasion struck me as equally prudent and determined; to a spirit of moderation, which forms the essence of his character, the utmost inflexibility is united.

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The Lamouts, the Toungouses, and the Yakouts, fail not also to find employment for administration, either by the complaints which they occasion, or by their frequent insurrections, particularly at the time of levying taxes. This department is intrusted to the care of M. Loftsoff,

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inspector general, who, by his activity and prudence, has the art of appeasing the tumults, accommodating the disputes, and executing without violence the decrees of his sovereign. I had an opportunity of judging how perfectly satisfied all parties were with his conduct.

Such was the prosperous situation in which I found this branch of the general government. May the testimony which I am desirous of giving in its favour, be contrasted with the first accounts, and guard the reader against the disadvantageous prejudices, which a view of the former defective government is calculated to inspire. The new governors are at least intitled to this justice, that if abuses still prevail, they exert themselves without intermission to put a stop to them, in proportion as such abuses become known.

A report lately prevailed, I know not from what authority, that there was an intention of removing the inhabitants of Okotsk, either to Oudskoi, or some neighbouring settlement. If the court have really such a project in view, it must have felt, I should suppose, the necessity of having a more considerable town in this quarter, and that convenience, extent, and security, will determine its choice of a new port.

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I have promised the reader some account of the commission of M. Billings. I have already observed, that he has two ships building in the dock of Okotsk, but I should be considerably at a loss to say what is their destination. It is not possible to penetrate the mystery; and all I know is, that M. Billings, from his reputation, and the abilities he displayed in one of the voyages of captain Cook, who was his countryman, has been invited into Russia, and, with the rank of captain, appointed to command a secret expedition, the object of which is supposed to be that of discovery. The powers accorded to him seem to be boundless; and materials, workmen, sailors, every requisite, in short, have been supplied by the court.

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For the sake of dispatch, M. Billings had divided his men, and sent a part of them to Okotsk under the superintendance of M. Hall, his lieutenant, to construct two vessels, while he himself made, with the remainder, for the Frozen Ocean, in stout sloops and other ships hastily built in the river Kolumé.

The end of this first expedition is as yet a secret, and various conjectures are formed respecting it. The most intelligent persons agreed in supposing that he was to make the circuit of this part of Asia, to double cape Svetoï, and endeavour to return to Okotsk by the sea of Kamtschatka. If such were his project, it is probable that he met with some insurmountable obstacles in its execution, as he returned, after three months navigation, to the river Kolumé, and sailed from thence for Yakoutsk.

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The armament under the direction of M. Hall had been suspended for a considerable part of the winter, but was revived and carried on with vigour during my abode at Okotsk. The hull of one vessel was already finished, and the keel of another laid in the dock. The ropemakers, blacksmiths, carpenters, sailmakers, caulkers^[58], had separate workshops. The continual presence of the superintending officers animated the zeal of the workmen. Notwithstanding this diligence on all sides, to which I was a witness, I doubt whether these ships will be fit for sea these two years.

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The river Okhota had always been disencumbered of its ice before 20 May; to the great astonishment of the inhabitants it did not begin to float this year till the 26 in the afternoon. It was a spectacle for the town, and I was invited as to a party of pleasure; but from the idea that it must be similar to what I had seen at Petersburg, I discovered little inclination or curiosity. Importuned however upon the subject, I went to the river. The crowd was already assembled, and I was immediately assailed on every side by the unanimous vociferations of those about me, who exclaimed in full chorus at sight of the enormous sheets of ice which were lifted up by the rapidity of the current. The noise of some seemed to drown that of others, and the multitude flocked together without end. The next moment loud groans struck my ears. I endeavoured to discover whence these cries proceeded, and I saw a number of men and women running like so many persons in despair along the bank. I approached with trepidation, persuaded that some unfortunate child was in danger of being drowned; but I soon discovered my error.

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A troop of about a dozen dogs was the cause of this lamentation. Their masters, either from avarice or compassion, bewailed in concert the fate of these poor animals, whose loss seemed inevitable. Seated tranquilly on the ice that supported them, they looked with an air of astonishment at the crowd collected upon the bank, whose clamours and signs could not move them from their posture. Two only had the instinct to attempt to save themselves, and gained with difficulty the opposite side; the rest were out of sight in a few minutes, and, conveyed into the main ocean, must there infallibly have perished.

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These dogs were the only victims of the breaking up of the ice; but its effects have been sometimes so terrible, as to have occasioned the removal of all the houses^[59] near the river. The scattered ruins bear witness that many of them have been overturned by this fatal event, and I was informed, that in the course of some years, nearly a fourth part of the town had been destroyed by it.

The inhabitants wait with impatience for the period when the river shall regain its natural state; it is time that the fishing season should commence, and relieve them from the famine that begins to prevail. The stock of fish procured in the preceding summer had been scanty, and was nearly exhausted. The supply of meal was also considerably diminished, and what remained was so dear that the common people were unable to purchase. The humanity of M. Kokh signalled itself on this occasion. There was a reserve of rye flour in the stores belonging to government, and he distributed it among the indigent class of the inhabitants. This afforded them some relief,

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but it was not of long duration. M. Kokh, who received a number of persons at his table, was reduced to the necessity of having recourse to a few eatables which he had laid by in the preceding year. At last we had nothing to eat but beef dried in the sun. To get a supply of fresh provisions, the major sent out a party to hunt deer and argali, but they had only once the good fortune to be successful.

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The thaw being ended, he ordered the seine to be immediately used. I was present with a large party, and the spectacle was much superior, in my opinion, to that to which I had before been invited. It is not easy to express the pleasure, the transport of the multitude of spectators upon the first cast of the net. A prodigious quantity of small fish, like smelts and herrings, were caught, and the joy and clamour redoubled at the sight. The most famished were first served, and the whole produce of this fortunate beginning given up to them. I could not restrain my tears on perceiving the ravenousness of these poor creatures; whole families contended for the fish, which were devoured raw before my eyes.

To these fishing enterprises, which became more successful every day from salmon^[60], and other large fish coming up the river, succeeded the diversion of hunting water fowl^[61], which were so abundant as to cover the surface of the water: this was a new means of subsistence for the inhabitants.

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In the mean time the season advanced, and in spite of the frequent fogs, we had now and then some fine days. They were the more acceptable, as the snow had fallen during the night of the 29 two inches deep, and the cold was so severe as to be one degree below zero. The waters gradually abated, but there was no appearance of vegetation. Some blades of rotten grass, the melancholy fruit of the last efforts of Nature at the close of autumn, was the only nourishment that the earth afforded to the horses, till the return of the genial influence of spring.

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I was already anxious to be gone, and though I could not deceive myself respecting the miserable state of these animals, I intreated M. Kokh to order such as had been appointed for my use to be collected, resolving to leave Okotsk 6 June at latest. His orders were punctually executed; and thanks to his cares, to the kindness of Mrs. Kasloff, and the liberality of a number of friends, whom I left in this settlement, I found myself all at once amply provided with bread and biscuit. Had it not been for the recollection of the famine, I should have felt myself flattered by these presents; but the idea that I was to support myself with the sacrifices of friendship, hurt my feelings, and it was not without considerable pain that I was obliged to keep what no refusals could induce them to take back.

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The evening preceding my departure was devoted to taking leave. I had the pleasure to learn that M. Loftsoff intended to accompany me to Moundoukann, and that lieutenant Hall, called to that place by some affairs relative to the armament under his care, was to go with us. I had little expected a third companion, doubly dear to me, but M. Allegretti informed me, that he had prepared every thing to conduct me as far as the cross of Yudoma. How great were my surprise and gratitude, when I understood that personal attachment was the sole motive of his journey! Of my two soldiers, Golikoff only attended me; Nedarezoff staid at Okotsk, but I took his father to serve me as pilot on the river Yudoma. A number of workmen, as I had agreed with the major, were to set out immediately after me, to repair the boats, which would be found unfit for service, that I might not be exposed to new dangers or new delays.

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All my preparations being completed, I tore myself from the arms of M. Kokh. A number of inhabitants did me the honour to attend me to the gates of the town, where our horses waited for us, and where, after mutual reiterations of good wishes, we separated: my hosts carried with them, I trust, the conviction, that they had not entertained a man insensible to obligation.

At sight of the horse I was to mount, I drew back with horror and compassion. I had never seen so wretched an animal. His sides were lank and hollow, his buttocks narrow and peaked, so that you might count every bone they contained, his neck unsupported, his head between his legs, his haunches nerveless and weak. Such is the exact description of my steed. You may judge of the figure of the other horses, among which mine passed for one of the least despicable. The saddle had a considerable resemblance to our own. Those which were provided for our baggage were smaller, made of wood, and perforated with holes; upon the top there were two sticks fastened cross-wise on which the load^[62] was suspended, taking care however to make the weight equal on both sides, as the smallest disproportion would infallibly have prevented the beasts from maintaining their equilibrium.

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It was in this pitiful plight that our caravan sat out. To console ourselves for the slow pace we travelled, each was merry at the expence of his steed. Twelve wersts from Okotik, a tolerably large salt work was pointed out to me on the sea coast; the men employed in it were all malefactors or convicts. Beyond this house we left the sea at our left, and travelled for some time on the banks of the Okhota.

If the breaking up of this river occasion such alarm to the inhabitants of the town, its overflowings are not less fatal to the environs. Rising above the banks, the water not only floods the adjacent country, but becomes a torrent, that swells as it extends itself. It has been said to rise two feet above the tops of the highest trees. From this account one may suppose its ravages to be dreadful, and certain it is that I saw in the forests gulfs of an astonishing depth, said to be the work of these floods.

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Within a short distance from Medvejé-golova, my horse fell under me, and it was impossible to make him get up again; I had fortunately time to quit the saddle, and received therefore no injury. We left the beast on the spot^[63], where it doubtless expired a few hours after. We had still

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eleven horses remaining; I was therefore remounted in an instant, and reached the village without meeting with any other accident.

We proceeded the next day, at nine o'clock in the morning, and forded the river Okhota, the course of which we were no longer to pursue. I perceived here and there some Yakout yourts at a considerable distance from each other: seldom are any number of them seen together.

The disposition of these families to live in this isolated manner, results from a motive of interest that is of the first importance. Horses being their chief source of wealth, if the proprietors (some of whom possess more than a thousand) built their habitations nearer to each other, how would they be able to procure nourishment for their numerous studs? The neighbouring pastures must soon be exhausted, and it would be necessary to send multitudes of them to a considerable distance; but how many inconveniences would result in consequence of the negligence or dishonesty of the keepers.

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Arrived at Moundoukann, our horses were so fatigued that we passed the night there and all the next day, which was 8 June. I have already observed that this village is twenty wersts from Medjevé-golova; it gives its name to a river on which it is situated.

At break of day I separated from M. Hall and M. Loftsoff, who were to stay in this place. I first climbed a high mountain called *Ourak*, the summit of which was still covered with snow; it reached to the bellies of our horses, who suffered extremely in this passage.

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A river of the same name runs at the foot of the mountain. It is wide, deep, and rapid; and on its bank is a yourt inhabited by watermen. They were at this time all absent, probably a hunting, as their open house indicated that they had not long been departed.

Tired of calling and waiting for them, we launched the least defective of the boats that were fastened on the bank, and after searching about we found some oars. We unloaded and unsaddled the horses, and placed the baggage in the boat, which in turn conveyed us to the other side. Our steeds still remained, and I trembled lest they should not be able to swim across. The security of my Yakouts in this respect appeared to me unaccountable; by dint of whipping them, they forced them into the water; the boat went before to guide them, and one of our conductors was left on the bank to pelt them with stones and frighten them with his cries, so as to prevent their turning back. In about half an hour they all arrived safe, when they were immediately saddled and reloaded^[64], and we pursued our journey.

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The weakness of our horses obliged us to halt twenty-five wersts from Moundoukann, in a place that offered us most pasture, and that seemed to have few traces of bears. From a fast of six months, it is easily conceived how much the voracity of these animals is to be dreaded. Deserting their dens, they prowl about the country, and from the want of fish, with which the rivers do not yet abound, they ravenously attack every animal they meet, and particularly horses. We were obliged to take precautions even for our own safety. From the following description, the reader will be able to form an idea of the nature of our halts.

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Having fixed upon the spot, the horses were eased of their burthens and permitted to graze at liberty. Fires were then kindled at equal distances round our little camp, and at the entrance of my tent I repeatedly discharged my musquet, being assured that the report and smell of the powder would terrify and drive away the bears. At break of day our horses are assembled; if any of them were dispersed they came at the cry of my Yakouts, who possess the same talent in this respect as the Koriacs with their rein deer.

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Surprised at seeing tufts of horse hair suspended to the branches of trees, I asked the cause of it, and was informed that they were offerings made by the people of the country to the gods of the woods and highways. My guides had their favourite places, where they piously deposited similar gifts. This superstition is at least productive of one good effect, as the offerings may serve to point out the road to travellers.

In the course of the preceding day we had crossed various branches of the river Ourak, the ramifications of which are infinite, but none of them occasioned us any delay. The 11, about five o'clock in the afternoon, we met this river again: its width was not very considerable, and, but for the rain^[65] that had fallen and swelled the current, we should have felt no hesitation in fording it as we had done in the preceding instances. My principal guide represented it as dangerous; but having been forewarned that if I listened to their advice they would frequently make me halt even at noon day, to repose themselves rather than from a wish to refresh their horses, I resolved at least to have the depth founded. The experiment however convinced me that my guide was in the right. The person whom I ordered to go into the river was quickly obliged to return, as his horse lost footing a few steps from the bank. It was necessary to pitch our camp in the neighbourhood, where our horses fortunately found something to eat.

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That I might lose less time, I restricted myself to one regular meal in the evening, satisfied with the refreshment of rye biscuit in the course of the day; but I had desired my people to inform me whenever they perceived any game^[66], and we lived for some time on the fruits of my success. Necessity is an able master, and custom supplied the want of skill.

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If I happened to kill any small animals, they fell to the lot of my Yakouts, except the skins, which they returned to me. Golikoff had given me a disgust to this food, which I conceived from his report to be very nauseous. Tempted however one day by the whiteness of the flesh, when boiled, I eat part of one of these little animals: they taste of the fir, but are less disagreeable than I had been led to believe. In a time of scarcity, I should have considered them as very acceptable, and can forgive the Yakouts their high relish of them.

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Their principal food, which they call *bourdouk*, gave me infinitely more repugnance. It is a kind of thick frumenty, made of rye meal and water, into which, after it is taken off the fire, they pour fish oil: the quantity they eat of it astonished and shocked me. I was told that in general they were not very great eaters; it was however added, that they now and then, as a treat, roast a horse, which is demolished in a few hours by a very small number of guests, and the intestines of the animal are by no means the least precious morsel. Who would suppose that men of such voracious appetites, practice at other times a frugality that seems scarcely sufficient to support life, and frequently continue a number of days together without food?

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I was awaked at an early hour by my guides, who came to inform me that the river had considerably abated during the night. While they were loading our baggage a number of horsemen arrived, who had in like manner been detained on the opposite side; they crossed without any risk, and inspired us with the fullest confidence.

They were bankrupt merchants going to try their fortune, as factors of a man of property, whose speculation had obtained the concurrence of the court, and all the succours that he wanted. Its object was the fur trade, particularly that of sables, caught by the Koriacs and Tchouktchis. These factors were to separate at the mouth of the Pengina, and advance considerably into the country. They were allowed four or five years for their undertaking, and their intention was not only to collect furs from every quarter in the way of purchase, but to hunt themselves the animals that furnished them. Apprehensive of no other obstacles but what might be occasioned by the natives, they were provided with ammunition and arms to repel their insults.

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In quitting us they turned an eye of pity on our poor beasts, while we on the contrary observed with envy the strength and good condition of theirs. Coming from the environs of Yakoutsk, where there is no scarcity of winter provisions, these horses were a perfect contrast with ours, which appeared still more wretched from the comparison.

When we had passed the river, I asked my guides if I might hope that it was the last we should cross. They replied in the negative, informing me that we should meet with three others in the course of the day. From their description I judged that they must be new branches of the Ourak. Be this as it may, my fears increased every time, and the idea that the horse might fall with my box, made me shudder.

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Upon coming out of a thick wood, I found myself on the bank of a real torrent, the stream was so rapid, and the breadth of the river scarcely less than two hundred yards; at a little distance it poured itself into the Ourak. In the mean time we conceived it to be fordable, and with this confidence I spurred my horse to make him descend. In the middle of the river I felt his legs tremble. I encouraged him; he proceeded, and the water now reached no farther than my knee. Emboldened by this circumstance, I placed myself firm in my seat, having been thrown something off my center by a sort of dizziness which the continual view of the current perpetually excited. Already I approached the opposite bank, the climbing of which required new efforts. To ascend it, it was necessary to surmount a ridge of ice which still remained attached to it. The declivity was steep, but it would have been in vain to have fought for a better landing-place. My resolution was soon taken, and I directed the animal towards the perilous ascent; already he had gained a position for his fore feet, and he rested them as well as he could to bring forward his hind ones. He lost his footing, and fell backward into the water; the horse and the rider floated in different parts of the stream. The water was deep, and the cumbersome of my dress restrained my efforts. Both the animal and myself were carried along by the violence of the current, and I insensibly grew weaker. I was approaching the place where the two rivers joined, when on a sudden I heard a voice saying, "Catch at the bridle of your horse, or it is over with you!" The sound, the idea of the danger re-animated me; I struck forward with all my strength, stretched out my hand, and seized the rein. Providence was undoubtedly watchful for my preservation, for at the same moment my horse took footing and breath; an instant later, and we had been lost. I slid my hand to the upper end of the bridle, and then threw my arms strongly round the neck of the animal. Thus I remained suspended as it were between life and death, not daring to move a finger, and calling aloud for succour. My faithful Golikoff had in vain endeavoured to follow me in my misfortune; the vigour of his horse did not correspond to the zeal of the rider; anxious and impatient, it was he that had given me the salutary and terrible advice of grasping at my horse; and no sooner did he perceive its happy effects, than he hastened on his part to climb the shore. To land, to run towards me, to lay hold of my horse and drag him out of the water, and to restore me to life, was all the affair of five minutes.

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My first care, having leaped on the neck of my deliverer, was to tear off the port-folio which was fastened to my girdle. In spite of the oil case in which it was enveloped the water had penetrated into it, and I trembled for the fate of two important packets which count de la Prouse had particularly recommended to my care. I had the pleasure to find that they were but little injured.

My box I had left on the other side; my uneasiness respecting it was soon dispelled by the arrival of M. Allegetti and my other companions, who placed it in my hands. They were still pale and dismayed at the accident I had encountered, and considered it as a miracle that I had been able to save myself. I had seen death too near me, not to be of the same opinion.

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We again mounted our horses, but I confess that my blood froze in my veins, when we approached a river; I took care in future to send one of my guides before, and was not free from apprehension till he made me a signal from the opposite bank.

During this day, as well as in every preceding one since our departure from Okotsk, we

constantly travelled through forests, or along the banks of rivers. In the woods the trees^[67] that line the roads are small, but so bushy and so beset with briars, that my Yakouts were frequently obliged to clear the way with their hatchets^[68], which still slackened our pace, though we never went at a greater rate than a walk.

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I arrived in tolerable time at Oratskoï-plodbisché. This was the first habitation I had seen since the yourt belonging to the watermen, and I spent there the rest of the day. The river Ourak flows at the foot of this hamlet; the number of inhabitants amounts only to five soldiers, each of whom has an isba. They are appointed to guard a magazine for the reception of effects belonging to the crown, sent from Okotsk or Yakoutsk. Upon occasion they convey the merchandize as far as the mouth of the Ourak; but this river is so obstructed, sometimes with flats and sometimes with cataracts, and the embarkations at the same time are so weak, that the navigation is equally painful and dangerous.

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The next morning, which was the 13, I crossed this river in a boat; it takes its rise at no great distance, from an immense lake where we halted in the evening. The lake is situated upon an eminence, is about seven wersts in circumference, and is said to abound with fish.

I cannot pass over in silence a scene that took place this day among my Yakouts, respecting a horse that it was necessary to leave in the road. They had stopped, and were holding a consultation round the animal. Impatient at seeing no end to their discussion, I was about to witness my discontent, when they forestalled me, intreating my indulgence for the delay they occasioned me. Accountable for the horses committed to their care, it is customary, when they lose any of them either by accident or from excess of fatigue, to cut off the tail and the ears, which they are obliged to produce to the proprietor to exculpate themselves, or pay the value of the animals. The dispute at present was, whether they should put an end to the poor dying beast. This required some time, which I was not in a humour to sacrifice to them, and I replied therefore somewhat angrily, that there was a more simple, more expeditious, and less cruel way of effecting this end. I promised them a certificate, that should attest the loss and supply the place of the usual proofs, by taking the blame of their failure in this respect upon myself. They acquiesced without hesitation in my proposal, and this deference was no small proof, I was told, of their respect.

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From the hope of travelling quicker, I committed our baggage to the care of old Nedarezoff, and went on before with M. Allegretti, Golikoff, and a Yakout. A pond presented itself, the depth of which might be about a foot. I rode into it with M. Allegretti, and Golikoff followed holding my box on his saddle. He had scarcely advanced ten steps when the horse stumbled and threw him off sideways; but more intent upon his deposit than his own preservation, he fell upon the box, having taken care not to relinquish his hold. I immediately alighted to assist him; but having fallen in the mire, he had sustained no injury. His greatest trouble proceeded from my box being wet, but I consoled him by shewing him that the water had not touched the inside.

Our horses were so fatigued, that we were obliged to alight and lead them by the bridle, while the Yakout whipped them severely behind. We travelled in this manner the whole day, resting every half hour, where the new grass^[69] began to appear, in order to recover in some measure our poor beasts.

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About three o'clock in the afternoon we arrived at the cross of Yudoma^[70]. On an eminence, secure from the overflowings of this river, which extends its impetuous waves to a great distance, are a number of magazines guarded by four soldiers, and which serve them as an asylum when their common habitations by the side of the Yudoma are flooded: these soldiers practice also the business of watermen, and are at the service of travellers.

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Upon seeing my passport they submitted themselves entirely to my disposal. Unfortunately all their boats were in a condition the most wretched that can be imagined, and we had neither materials nor workmen to refit them. Those who had been sent from Okotsk were not likely to arrive soon, and I was impatient to embark^[71] in order to sail down the rivers Yudoma, Maya, and Aldann. Among these soldiers, one only had ever made this voyage, and nine years having since elapsed, he had totally forgotten the course. I was advised not to try him, unless all the others refused.

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My only resource therefore was Nedarezoff, who had attended me in order to serve as pilot; but what a pilot! He had once, twelve years ago, been upon this river, and all he remembered was, that he was three years in going from Yakoutsk to Okotsk. He conducted at that time a considerable convoy of timber, anchors, cordage, and other materials for fitting out an armament.

Of the four boats that were on the strand, I chose the best and the narrowest, which was twelve feet long by six wide^[72]. On examining it, I found that it must be caulked, tarred, and have an additional plank at the head to enable it to resist the force of the waves. With two boards, and some nails from an old boat, one of the soldiers, who understood a little the trade of a carpenter, effected the latter part of the business, but we wanted every material for the other repairs. We ransacked the magazines to no purpose, and during the whole night I ceased not to puzzle my brain in order to invent some expedient.

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At break of day, as I was going to visit the workmen, I trod on an old and large cord that lay on the bank. Elate with my good fortune, I carried it to my soldiers; instantly it was cut to pieces, and unravelled; we had thus a supply of tow, and the three most important leaks were stopped. The difficulty was to fasten and keep in the tow; my workmen proposed to me to cover the chinks

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with laths, but we had no nails of any sort. Necessity is the mother of invention. With a wimble, which was the only tool we had, we made holes round the leaky places; some small cord, which I found in my baggage, being passed through them, and the holes afterwards filled up with pegs, the laths were so firmly fastened as to prevent the water from penetrating the boat. At three o'clock in the afternoon our repairs were completed, the helm fixed, and the oars adjusted; and I ordered my people to be ready by the next morning.

When we were just on the point of setting off, a caravan of Yakoutsk merchants appeared; they were going to Okotsk, and I entreated M. Allegretti to embrace the opportunity of accompanying them. Our separation took place at nine o'clock. On leaving him, all the services he had rendered me, and the proofs of attachment he had evinced, presented themselves to my view, and made an impression on my heart.

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I engaged two of the soldiers to row me, one of whom was the man that had before made this voyage; Nedarezoff was at the helm; and Golikoff and I were to relieve him when he should be tired. The rapidity of the current carried us on with such violence, that we could easily dispense with the oars. At the rate we sailed my soldiers had no doubt that we should reach the famous cataract before night, which was more than eighty wersts from the place of our departure. Their conversation turned solely upon the dangers we should have to encounter. Though I was already prepossessed with the idea of their inexperience, by continually hearing these discourses, dictated by fear, I began at last to be alarmed myself, and resolved to act with all possible prudence, that I might have no reason to reproach myself. I frequently went on shore, and walked along the river to see how far the navigation was safe. Towards the evening a west north-west wind, brought on rain. Rather than run any risk in such bad weather I halted, and ordered my tent to be pitched over the boat.

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The next day, after four hours navigation, interrupted by frequent landings to observe the approach of the cataract, we at last perceived it. Accompanied by my two pilots, I went to examine the spot. At a short distance from it I saw a little stony island, which is only perceptible when the waters begin to fall. My soldiers advised me to pass, if the waters were sufficiently high, by the way of a canal which we should find at the right; though the descent was very rapid, they assured me that it was nothing in comparison with that of the cataract. This advice engrossed my whole attention, and having convinced myself of its utility, I returned to the boat, resolved to put it in practice. I encouraged my people in the best manner I could, and then took the helm. Nedarezoff sat by me, and Golikoff assisted one of the rowers, for we had only two oars. We proceeded in this manner till we reached the conflux of the two streams, one of which led to the canal, and the other lost itself in the cataract. The impetuosity of the latter would have drawn us into the abyss, but for the skill and strength of my rowers. The instant the signal is given, their nervous arms are stretched to strike the oar, and to struggle against the waves; the waters rage and foam, and the violent shocks they give to our boat, my unceasing exhortations, and more than all the fear of being destroyed, redouble the ardour of my soldiers. We are at length extricated from the treacherous current, and enter into the canal. How smooth did its waters appear after this terrifying passage! To give my people rest, I abandoned myself to the gentle declivity of the stream: the helm was sufficient to direct the boat.

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When we were at the foot of the cataract, curiosity led me to turn my head. I trembled at its dreadful aspect, and thanked heaven for having afforded me a different way. Nine boats out of ten that should attempt this passage, would infallibly be wrecked:—the reader shall judge.

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What must be the fate of so small and feeble a float, if, in defiance of danger, it should be permitted to follow the course of the torrent? In its precipitate descent, I see it the sport of the waves that roll one upon another, and fall with a deafening noise from a height of twenty feet upon three enormous rocks concealed by the foam, and over which it must necessarily pass. Without a miracle, how should it avoid sinking, or escape the being dashed to pieces? Meanwhile, when the water is so low as to render the canal not navigable, there is no other way left. My guides informed me that the boats were always unladed before the risk was attempted, and that this was all the precaution that was taken, and all the skill that could be displayed by the pilots. These cataracts are called *porog*.

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We had still a difficult pass to make, that terrified my people; it is called *Podporojenei*, or the ebb of the cataract, which is about the distance of a werst from it. They were still talking of it when we arrived, and I had scarcely time to explain to them the manœuvre which I thought it necessary to practice. Our object was to choose the deepest side; the blackness of the water seemed to point it out, and I steered towards it. The multiplicity and bulk of the waves tossed us about with more violence than if we had been in the open sea. All at once our boat was pitched upon a rock that was on a level with the water, and which none of us had perceived. We were thrown down by the force of the shock; my companions imagined themselves to be lost, and had not the courage to raise themselves; it was in vain I called upon them to row on; they paid no attention to my cries. I caught hold of the helm, and perceiving that the boat had sustained no injury, I animated their drooping spirits, and prevailed on them to take their stations. We owed our safety to the moss with which the rock was covered; the boat touched it in its passage, and glided along without suffering any damage.

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To avoid this accident, it is necessary to pass exactly in the middle of the stream, and to pay no attention to the waves which rise, and seem to break against the rocks. The passage is about three hundred yards. At the bottom of this *podporojenei*, another river empties itself; the clearness of its water, and the smoothness of its current by the side of the agitation and turmoil of the Yudoma, form so striking a contrast, that the eye for a long time distinguishes the one from the other.

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At the left of this last is another arm equally formidable, and which is called *Tschortofskoi-protok*, or devil's arm. It pours itself into the Yudoma about thirty wersts from where this river joins the Maya. It is known by the number of rocks and dead trees that obstruct its entrance; if you are not careful to steer constantly to the right, you are drawn in by a very rapid current, and your ruin is inevitable.

I hoped to kill a bear that was prowling on the bank; I loaded my gun with deer-shot, and fired at it, but in spite of its wound it fled to the woods, and I lost sight of it. The next moment a beautiful rein deer started fifteen paces before me, but my gun not being charged, it escaped. I saw also a number of argalis, swans, geese, and a fox, but I could reach none of them.

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This day I perceived, for the first time since my departure from Yudomskoi-krest, a forest of pine trees. To make up for it, I had not been able to count the numerous woods of firs that presented themselves to my view, both on the right and left, and it is this tree^[73] that furnishes the masts and other timber used in all the dock yards on this coast.

I felt myself indisposed by the attack of a fever, but I paid no great attention to it; I merely laid myself down in the boat, and observed no other regimen than that of drinking cold water. We no longer halted during the night, as our navigation was become perfectly easy.

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Notwithstanding the assertions I had heard, I could not easily believe that the Ourak was more rapid than the Yudoma. We sailed on the latter ten, twelve, and frequently fifteen wersts an hour. Its most regular direction appeared to be west, and it forms at its mouth a great number of small islands.

I entered the Maya on the 22, at two o'clock in the morning, and proceeded in a direction nearly north, but inclining now and then to the east. The banks of this river are less steep, less dreary than those of the preceding, though at intervals there are mountains and even rocks. The difference of the current was still more perceptible, as we only sailed four wersts an hour.

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About noon we met nine boats loaded with a variety of military stores for M. Billings' expedition. They were drawn by men, and were going up the rivers that we had descended. I was not able to approach them, but I knew that they were bound for Okotsk, under the command of M. Behring, son of the navigator, to whom Russia owes such interesting discoveries on the north-west coast of America. He expected, I was told, to be six weeks in performing what had cost us only four days.

The gnats became troublesome to us to a degree that was almost insupportable. We had no other way of keeping them off than by the smoke of rotten wood, with which we were obliged to make an incessant fire in the night as well as in the day.

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In the afternoon of the 23, I quitted the river Maya for another, larger and more rapid, called the Aldann^[74]; but I merely crossed it, in order to gain a habitation on the other side, opposite to the mouth of the Maya^[75].

I found there some marines belonging to M. Billings's expedition, who advised me to embrace the opportunity of a number of horses of burthen, lately arrived, and that would on their return convey me as far as *Amgui*. According to my itinerary, I was to go by water to *Belskaïa-pereprava*, which is in the usual course from Okotsk to Yakoutsk, but in going by way of Amgui I should considerably shorten it. This certainty, and the happy chance that provided me with horses, induced me to alter my previous plan.

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I paid my guides^[76], and as their orders were to leave the boat at *Belskaïa-pereprava*, which was a hundred and fifty wersts farther, they continued their course on the Aldann. They were not a werst from me, when I repented the having dismissed them. The Yakouts, to whom the horses belonged, and who were apprehensive of fatiguing them too much, heard with regret that I intended to make use of them. Not daring openly to refuse me, they endeavoured to escape by stealth: they were pursued, and by dint of promises brought back. To make sure of them we were obliged to shut them all up in one *isba*, from which they were not permitted to come out till they had consented to conduct me to Amgui; the precaution had in the mean time been taken of selecting ten of the best horses for my use.

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After a good night's rest, which effectually recovered me from my slight indisposition, I gaily mounted my horse, accompanied by the Yakouts, who had been lectured by Golikoff, and were become more docile. I was astonished at their good humour, which made them sing the whole way.

Their music is by no means agreeable, and consists of a monotonous and continual shake in the throat. They are however great improvisatori. Their words cost them no labour or efforts of genius, and the subject is derived from whatever passes before them, or occurs to their mind. If a bird flies by their side, they will make a song of it that shall last for an hour. Not that their imagination accumulates ideas; the song, on the contrary, is nothing more than an endless repetition of the words, *Lo! the bird in his flight!*

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For the space of a hundred wersts we travelled across a moving swamp, in which our horses sunk so deep that we were obliged to alight in order to assist in extricating them; the rest of the way was not so bad. In the midst of a large wood, I saw upon the border of a lake two fishermen employed in making their winter provisions. Their whole habitation was merely a roof made of the bark of trees; when the summer is at an end, they seek among their relations a less exposed and warmer retreat.

The 25, we had a great deal of rain, particularly while I halted, which was from four o'clock in

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the afternoon till eight in the evening. My Yakouts, to defend themselves from it, placed upon their shoulders a bears' skin in the manner of a cape. The tail of a horse, fixed in the large handle of a whip, served to keep off the flies. We were so harassed by them, that I hesitated not in having recourse to this species of fly flap.

The 26 furnished nothing remarkable. I arrived in the evening at the border of the river Amga, two hundred wersts from the harbour of the mouth of the Maya. Its depth took from us all desire of crossing it by fording, and the boats in the mean time were all on the opposite side. We called for assistance, but it was to no purpose. Out of patience at seeing no person appear, one of my Yakouts stripped himself, and swam over to fetch us a boat. The crossing of our whole caravan was not completed in less than an hour. We immediately mounted our horses, in order to reach the habitation of a Yakout prince, named Girkoff. In our way I saw a number of yourts, but they were all at least a werst from one another. At a little distance from that of the *knesetsk*, or prince, Golikoff went on before, to endeavour to procure us a good reception.

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The prince really showed me great civility; he not only offered me his yourt, and treated me with milk and excellent butter, but promised that his best horses^[77] should the next day be at my service. Being informed that I stood in need of repose, he pointed out the hut he had destined for me, and while it was preparing, he had the politeness to show me the conveniences of his yourt, which was one of the best I had yet seen.

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The size of these houses varies according to the wealth of the proprietor, and the number of his family. Beams, placed by the side of one another, and plastered with clay, form the walls, which are not like ours, perpendicular. Inclining towards the top, they support a roof, the slope of which is very inconsiderable: in some yourts the roof is supported by posts. The house has but one door, and is divided, as I have already observed, into two apartments. The cleanest is inhabited by the family, who sleep in distinct huts, distributed at equal distances against the walls, and which I can compare to nothing better than the small cabins in Dutch ships: every couple have a hut to themselves. The other part of the yourt is for the cattle, and is nothing more than a stable. In the center of the building is a round chimney made of wood, and guarded from accidents by a thick clay covering. When they light a fire, the wood is placed perpendicularly. Cross beams are occasionally placed in the chimney, upon which they hang their kettles, and these are repeated, in proportion to the number of vessels they have to boil.

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In one corner of the yourt a leathern trough is fixed, and mare's milk every day put into it, and stirred with a stick, similar to what is made use of in churning butter. Every person who enters, the women particularly, before they attend to any other business, stir the milk a few minutes; it is by this means they procure that sourish, but at the same time pleasant beverage, called *koumouiss*. If allowed to ferment, it becomes a very potent liquor.

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My host spoke the Russian language tolerably well^[78]; I embraced the opportunity of drawing from him some information respecting the customs, manners, and religion of his countrymen, which I shall insert in this place, together with some notes that I had before made on these subjects.

When summer commences, they leave their winter habitations, and with their families, and a small number of horses, go to make their harvests of fodder for consumption during the frost season. They repair to a considerable distance from their yourt, and to the most fertile cantons. In their absence, the horses are left to the care of the servants, and the neighbouring pastures serve for the maintenance of all their herds.

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I very much regret the not having been present at their festival in the month of May, in celebration of the return of spring. They assemble in the open country, where they roast oxen and horses; and being supplied with an abundance of fermented *koumouiss*, they eat and drink to satiety, dancing and singing at intervals, and concluding at last with necromancies. Their chamans preside in these festivals, and deal out their extravagant predictions.

These sorcerers are more at liberty and more revered than in Kamtschatka. Regarded as interpreters of the gods, they grant their mediation to the stupid Yakout, who implores it with trembling, but always pays for it. I have seen these dupes give their finest horse to conduct a chaman to his village. Nothing can be more frightful than the magic exhibitions of these impostors. As I knew nothing of them but from report, I was desirous of being present. I was astonished at the veracity of the account that had been given me: as I have already accurately related it^[79], I shall content myself with describing the chaman that exhibited before me.

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Dressed in a habit that was ornamented with bells and plates of iron, which made a deafening noise, he beat besides on a *bouben*, or tabor, with a degree of force that was terrifying. He then ran about like a maniac, with his mouth open, and his head turned in every direction. His black deshevelled hair^[80] concealed his face, and beneath it proceeded at one moment real groans, the next tears and sobs, and then loud peals of laughter, the usual preludes of these revelations.

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In the idolatry of the Yakouts, we find all the absurdities and superstitious practices of the ancient Kamtschadales, Koriacs, Tchouktchis, and other inhabitants of these countries. They have however some more solid principles; and amidst the ridiculous fictions under which they are buried, we meet with ideas ingenious enough respecting the supreme being, miracles, and future rewards and punishments.

But I was chiefly struck with the vivacity and singularity of their turn of mind. They delight in the fables drawn from their absurd mythology, and they relate them with all the confidence of credulity itself. By comparing them with our own, one is tempted no longer to hold in such

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esteem our ancient and modern fabulists, when we see this species of composition cultivated by such rivals. The two following fables were translated for me by Golikoff, word for word.

There arose one day in a large lake, a violent contest between the different species of fish. The question was the establishment of a tribunal of supreme judges, whose business it should be to govern the whole finny tribe. The herring, and most diminutive fish, conceived that they had as much right to the prerogative as the salmon. From one thing to another the dispute became so warm that the small fish united in a body against the large, who took advantage of their weakness to insult and persecute them. Hence intestine and bloody wars that end in the destruction of one of the two parties. The vanquished, who escaped from being killed, fled to the small canals, and left the large fish, who had the victory, masters of the lake. Such is the law of the strongest.

The other fable bears a greater resemblance to our old women's tales, with which children are terrified, and the tediousness of a rustic evening beguiled. I should be apt to suspect that it was the production of a chaman.

A Yakout had failed in respect, or done some injury to his chaman. The devil, to avenge the latter, transformed himself into a cow; and, having mixed in the herd, contrived, while it was feeding by the side of a wood, to steal the finest heifers. In the evening when the herdsman returned, his enraged master ascribed all the loss to his negligence, and drove him from his house. Immediately the devil appeared in the dress of a herdsman, an agreement was made, and the next day he drove the cows to field. One, two days passed, and the Yakout saw nothing of his herd. In his distress he went with his wife, searched every where for his cows, and at last found them—but in what disorder! Upon his approach they began to skip and dance to the sound of the flute^[81] of the perfidious herdsman. The master stormed and raved. "Hold there," said the devil to him. "It well becomes thee indeed, who hast abused the confidence of the most respectable of chamans, to accuse me of stealing thy herd. May this serve thee as a lesson, and teach thee to give to every man that which belongs to him." Upon this the herd and the herdsman disappeared, and the poor Yakout lost all his property.

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The place where this scene passed, has since that time been considered as the abode of infernal spirits. The incredulous scruple not to assert that the devil who stole the cows, was no other than the chaman himself; but such is the simplicity of the honest Yakouts, that they feel a repugnance at this suspicion, and treat it as horrible blasphemy.

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Remains of old tombs of the Yakouts were frequently pointed out to me in the woods. They were coffins clumsily made, and suspended on the branches of trees. I know not from what motive they have renounced this custom of exposing their dead in the open air, and at a distance from their habitations; but at present their mode of interment is similar to that of Christians.

The funerals are attended with a kind of pomp more or less magnificent, in proportion to the rank and wealth of the defunct. If a prince, he is arrayed in his finest habits, and most splendid arms. The body, placed in a coffin, is carried by the family to the tomb; deep groans announce the solemn procession. His favourite horse, and another the best of his stud, both richly caparisoned, and led by a valet, or near relation, walk by the side of the corpse. When arrived at the burying place, they are tied to two stakes^[82] fixed near the grave, and while the master is interred, their throats are cut over the corpse. This bloody libation is the homage paid to his attachment to these animals, who are supposed to follow him into the other world, where it is imagined that he will again be able to enjoy them. They are then flayed; the head and hide, in one entire piece, are fixed horizontally upon the branches of trees at a small distance from the grave; and such is the memorial that is erected. A fire is then kindled, and the last proof of friendship for the deceased consists in roasting and eating upon the spot these favoured animals. The feast being concluded the company disperses. The same ceremonial is observed for a woman, except that instead of a horse, they sacrifice her favourite cow.

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The Yakouts are robust, and in general large. They resemble the Tartars in the cast of their features, and there is said also to be a great similarity in the idioms of these two people; I can only affirm that the Yakouts are very abrupt in their manner of speaking, and do not connect their words.

Their dress is simple, and nearly the same all the year round, the only difference is, that in winter it is made of skins. Over their chemise they commonly wear a large striped waistcoat with sleeves. Their breeches do not extend below the middle of the thigh, but their long boots, called *sarri*, reach above the knee. In hot weather they wear nothing but the breeches.

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They pretend to ride better than any other nation in the world, and their vanity in this respect is carried so far, that they avoid, from a sentiment of disdain, giving to travellers their most mettlesome steeds^[83].

Polygamy forms a part of the political code of these people. Obligated to make frequent journies, a Yakout has a wife in every place where he stops, but he never assembles them together. Notwithstanding this licence, they are jealous to excess, and the sworn enemies of whoever shall dare to violate the rights of hospitality.

Thanks to the cares of prince Girkoff, I found when I awoke nine excellent horses ready saddled^[84]. He wished me to ride his favourite horse, because it ambled with perfect ease.

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Overwhelmed with his civilities, I left him the 27 at an early hour, with the consoling hope of more frequently meeting with habitations, where I might sometimes rest myself, and get a fresh supply of steeds.

A few paces from the preceding habitation, which is called *Amguinskoi-stanovie*, or Amgui halt, I saw in the road wooden images of a bird about the size of a duck, or a cormorant; they are emblematical representations of a malicious divinity, the terror of the whole canton. The most absurd stories are told upon this subject; it is said, for example, that this diabolical spirit has frequently led travellers out of their road, and devoured their horses.

I alighted in the evening at the house of another Yakout prince^[85], who had just settled himself in his summer habitation, which seemed to be equally neat and pleasant. I shall here insert a description of their *ourassis*, for such is the name by which these picturesque dwellings are called. [Pg 315]

Like the yourts of the wandering Koriacs, they are circular, spacious, and constructed with poles, fewer in number, but ranged in the same manner, and kept asunder by a sort of hoops at the top; the whole covered in with the bark of the birch tree^[86], formed into pieces eighteen inches wide, placed in a downward direction. These pieces are edged with a kind of ribband equally made of this bark, and shaped into festoons, and the inside of the yourt is ornamented in the same manner. The taste of these ornaments is governed by the caprice of the proprietor, and there is in them a sort of wildness that is sufficiently amusing. The same decoration is annexed to the chairs and beds of the heads of families. The domestics lie upon the ground on mats or skins, and the fire is lighted in the middle of the house. [Pg 316]

The 28, I came to the river Sola, and rode for a considerable time along its banks. The heat incommoded me as much as the flies, and I was so thirsty that I stopped at every yourt to drink koumouiss.

The next morning I reached a place called *Yarmangui*, which is two hundred wersts from Amgui, and on the border of the Lena. By crossing this river I should be at Yakoutsk; but by a regulation of the governor, every traveller was obliged to wait here till he had permission to enter the town. Disagreeable as was this kind of quarantine, I had reconciled myself to it, when a subaltern officer requested me to go two hundred yards farther, where I should find the inspector general, and a lieutenant belonging to Mr. Billings. They were informed of my arrival, and received me with the most flattering demonstrations of esteem and joy. I had no sooner explained to them how much the delay with which I was threatened would counteract my views, than they gave instant orders for my being conducted to the other side of the river, adding, that they were sure of the approbation of the governor, to whom I had long since been announced and recommended. [Pg 317]

At noon I entered the boat provided for me, and was four hours in crossing the Lena in a diagonal direction. As far as I could judge by my eye, this river cannot be less than two leagues wide. [Pg 318]

When landed, I was interrogated by an officer of the police, who, as was customary, led me to the apartment which he thought proper to fix upon for my residence. I requested him to direct me to the house of M. Marklofski, the governor, whom I immediately visited. He received me with the utmost politeness, conversing entirely in French, which seemed very familiar to him. After complimenting me upon the rapidity of my journey^[87], and my fortunate arrival, he invited me to stay a few days at Yakoutsk, to recover myself from my fatigue.

But of all his obliging offers, nothing flattered me more than his engaging me to sup the same evening with M. Billings. I had a strong desire to be acquainted with him, and I waited with impatience till the hour arrived. Our common profession of travellers, gave us a degree of familiarity the moment we met, and we might have been taken for old acquaintance; in the mean time we were both perfectly reserved upon the subject of our respective missions, carefully avoiding in conversation every thing that might lead to it. I admired the delicacy and prudence of M. Billings in this respect: during my stay I dined once at his house, and we met every morning and evening at the governors^[88]; but during our intercourse not a single indiscreet question escaped him. [Pg 319]

He very much regretted the not having met in his cruize the frigates of our expedition. He would have considered it as a happiness and honour to have executed the generous intentions of his mistress, by furnishing the count de la Pouse with every assistance in his power. It is a debt that he owed, but had no other way of discharging, he said, except towards me. There was in reality no sort of kindness that he did not shew me. [Pg 320]

Riding having extremely fatigued me, I was advised to sail up the Lena as far as Irkoutsk. This was the more agreeable to me, as it would give me time to recover, and as the delay it would occasion could not be more than four or five days. As soon as I had resolved upon it, M. Billings assisted me in procuring a boat, ordered two sails to be made of my tent, gave me one of his trusty soldiers for a pilot, and in short furnished me with every thing that might be useful in my passage.

The five days that I stayed at Yakoutsk were spent in preparations for my departure. I had leisure however to remark that this was the most pleasant and populous town I had yet seen in the whole extent of country through which I had passed. [Pg 321]

It is built on the western side of the Lena; the houses are of wood, but large and commodious; that of the governor faces the port. The majority of the churches are of stone. The port, which is

dry at low water, is formed by an arm of the river^[89], that, in describing an angle, flows under the walls of the town. The vessels that trade here are merely barks; the greater part of them are used for transporting the provisions sent by government, such as salt and flour. The merchants hire or purchase these boats, for the conveyance of their commodities, from the neighbourhood of the source of the Lena, where they are built.

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The Yakouts come not to the town but when business obliges them; it is almost wholly inhabited by Russians. The effects of civilization are perceptible in their manners and customs; the social spirit, and the gaiety that is diffused among them, concur, with the interests of commerce, to keep up among the inhabitants that active intercourse which is the source of wealth, and augments the pleasures of life^[90].

Having supplied myself with a fresh stock of provisions, I left Yakoutsk 5 July at one o'clock in the morning. In the northern latitudes, it is known, that for more than a week the interval between day and night is scarcely perceptible. Already therefore the twilight announced the approach of the sun, and we could perfectly distinguish the sand banks that line this river as far as the first stage. Not being able always to avoid them, my guides, or rather the men who drew my boat, besought us every instant to place ourselves in the water like them, to assist in hauling it over the shoals. Frequently also, notwithstanding the enormous width of the river, we resolved to row a cross, with the hope of finding a more easy passage; but in this attempt the violence of the current drifted us half a werst, more or less, back again. Large pieces of ice were still visible on the bank, and would continue so, I was informed, all the year.

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I shall not give a regular account of every day's navigation. The observations it furnished are too little interesting not to spare the reader the tiresome uniformity of such details.

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The stages are estimated by stations, and are frequently thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, and even eighty wersts^[91]. The reader may judge from this of the labour of those unfortunate beings who are condemned to this service, that is, to haul the boats from one station to another. For the space of twelve hundred wersts, this terrible employment is the punishment inflicted on convicts and malefactors. They share this labour with horses; but when the boat runs aground, the beast is supplied by a man, and then he has the most difficult passes to surmount. The only relief afforded to these culprits is a small quantity of flour allowed by government. The Yakout princes in the neighbourhood are obliged also to contribute to their support, and in case of need, to assist them with men and horses.

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Many of these miserable beings are married; they retire with their families in isbas that are half in ruins, and scattered here and there along the right bank of the river. I was one day obliged by the rain to seek a shelter in one of these habitations; I chose the most promising, but in entering it I was nearly overcome by the noxious air, and words are too weak to describe the shocking picture of misery that struck my eyes. So far from finding a shelter in this house, I was in the course of a quarter of an hour almost deluged; the rain poured down like a torrent from every opening in the roof, and I preferred the braving it in my boat.

Fishing and hunting fill up the leisure hours of these out-laws; their vicious propensities are still the same, and they are influenced by no other motive than interest or fear. Upon the approach of a boat, they always attempt by flight to escape from the painful service imposed on them by government. They played me this trick more than once. When I arrived at a station, of five or six men who ought to be constantly ready to receive the commands of travellers, one only appeared; the rest had hid themselves in the woods, and my preceding guides were obliged to conduct me to the next station^[92]. I recompensed these unfortunate creatures the more readily, as upon dismissing them I frequently saw their feet covered with blood.

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They over-reached me one morning in a singular manner. A post boat going down the river, passed near ours; it was Golikoff's turn to watch. The cunning rascals asked his leave to change with their comrades, and they knew so well how to persuade him it was for our advantage, that he consented. Eager to inform me of our good fortune, he awaked me, but it was merely to make me a witness with what speed our villains sailed away, instead of joining the boat that drifted by us. The confusion of Golikoff at the sight may well be conceived; he knew not what excuse to make me, as we were obliged to draw the boat ourselves to the next station; fortunately however it was at no great distance. The men who had conducted the post boat were still there, and my two soldiers quickly engaged them in our service. Their ready compliance was I believe chiefly owing to the brutal tone of Golikoff; our adventure had put him so much out of humour, that he could no longer be prevailed upon to use moderation. "You do not know," said he to me, "how to treat these rascals. If I were to imitate your example, we should be insulted at every poll, or be reduced to difficulties similar to what we have just experienced."

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Meanwhile we arrived 14 July at Olekma^[93] without meeting with any other inconvenience. This town, the first I had seen since my departure from Yakoutsk, is seven or eight hundred wersts from it, though in the post expences it is only estimated at six hundred. It is situated at the mouth of a river of the same name, and is small, badly built, and offers nothing worth notice. I stayed there but two hours.

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A few wersts on a small canoe came up to us, with only one man in it. He offered some bark of the birch tree, which he had stripped in the neighbouring woods; my soldiers were eager to purchase it in order to cover our boat. My trader was a Toungouse, and belonged to a family that was settled on the left bank^[94]. I did not lose so good an opportunity of being better acquainted with these people; I ordered therefore my boat to be fastened on the right bank, and accompanied only by Golikoff, I entered the canoe of the Toungouse, who was as highly pleased

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as myself with the visit I was going to make to his relations.

I was struck with the form and lightness of their canoes, the bottoms of which are however so nearly circular as to present but little surface to the water, and consequently they are easily overset. They consist of laths disposed in net-work, and covered with the bark of the birch tree sewn together and fortified with tar. The ends are narrow and pointed, and the oar is kept in equipoise in the middle of the vessel, so as to enable the rower to strike alternately with either end.

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The Toungouses expressed the utmost joy at seeing me: surrounded, welcomed, caressed, I was at a loss how to answer their professions of friendship. A young deer was killed and laid at my feet; in making me this present, these good people regretted that their poverty deprived them of the ability and pleasure of being more useful to me. I was not able myself to be very bountiful in my presents, and I only showed my gratitude by leaving them some of my cloaths.

They are unsettled, like the wandering Koriacs, and live nearly in the same manner. Their yourts are not so large, and are covered with the bark of the birch tree; there is no other difference. Every family has a distinct yourt; the chief ornamental piece of furniture is a small wooden idol of the human shape, but with an enormous head; it is dressed in their cloaths, and decorated with rings, bells, and other pieces of metal. They give to this image the name of Saint Nicholas, in allusion to the patron saint of Russia.

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I have already described the dress of the Toungouses, and have therefore only to speak of their features, manners, and mode of travelling.

They are not so large as the Yakouts, and have the sunk eyes, flat nose, and broad face of the Kamtschadales. They are equally hospitable; their characteristic qualities seem to be frankness and good-nature. In religion, they have the stupid credulity of the Koriacs, believing in all the absurdities of idolatry. The chamans equally obtain their homage and confidence: these impostors govern every where by means of the fears they inspire.

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After fishing^[95] and hunting, which in the season, oblige these families to be a little more settled, nothing engages their attention so much as their rein deer. These animals constitute all their wealth, and repay with usury the care bestowed upon them. They not only provide these people with food^[96] and clothing, but docile to the hand that guides them, they permit their masters, both men and women, to mount their backs, and ride them at a swift pace wherever they please^[97]. Instead of harnessing them to a sledge, like the Tchouktchis and the Koriacs, they train them up to carry in this manner, and make them obedient to the motions of a bridle twisted about their horns. The saddle is ornamented, and of the same size as ours, but without stirrups; it is fastened by a very weak girt, and the rider, when he totters, has nothing to support him but a long stick with which he strikes his steed: it is manifest that this exercise requires great skill. The baggage is put into small panniers, covered with rein deer-skin, and fixed to the saddle, which hang on each side against the flank of the animal. During the stay of the Toungouses in any place, the burdens are ranged methodically round their yourts.

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My navigation became less disagreeable when I had reached Pelodoui, a large village, the inhabitants of which are Russians, descended from the first cultivators of Siberia, called *Starogili*. There I was freed from the dangerous exiles, and had no other guides than honest peasants, who were equally assiduous and complaisant. The houses were not so distant from one another, and promised me at least some resource. In each of these villages there are six men appointed to conduct the business of the post: no privilege exempts them from this service; like all the Russian peasants they are annexed to the glebe, pay the same duties to the crown, and furnish recruits. The produce of their harvests are not adequate to their maintenance during the whole year; they are obliged to purchase and lay up a stock of corn. Rye is no where so dear as in this place; it sells at seventy or eighty copecs the *poud*.

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Vitim is the village nearest to the preceding one. As it resembles all the Russian villages, I need not describe it; churches are less common than the *cabacs* or public-houses.

Birds are fond of the environs and the borders of the Lena, where they very much abound. The clouds of gnats which cover it, account for this. To keep off these insects, we had taken care to furnish ourselves with a quantity of horse-dung, with which we keep up a continual fire in our boat; but another unavoidable inconvenience on this river is the vermin it engenders; the more we bathe, the faster they multiply.

Four hundred wersts from Peledoui I passed by a small town called Kirinsk, or Kiringui, at the bottom of which the Lena flows, and farther on the Kiringa. In the midst of the houses, none of which make any figure, we could distinguish the church, which is built of stone.

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The bank becoming wider and more sandy, we were frequently drawn by horses^[98]. The ropes were weak, but it gave me no uneasiness; the pleasure of advancing inspired me with a blind confidence, for which I was soon punished. In the night of the 29, my boat touched upon a rock, which the darkness concealed from us. The rope broke with the violence of the shock, and our boat was in a minute full of water; we had only time to get out, in order to draw it upon the shore, which required all our efforts. I immediately mounted one of the horses, with my box before me. We were but four wersts from a village, and it was easy to have speedy succour. My boat was refitted in the course of the day, and the next morning I proceeded on my route.

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In quitting the village of Ustiug, I perceived a considerable salt pit that was pointed out to me, and beyond it three *zavodes* or copper founderies.

My boat was broken a second time, and again hastily repaired; this day also, which was 4 August, my rudder, which continually struck against the bottom, was carried away, as well as a kind of keel that was fastened under the boat, and I abandoned it without hesitation. It became the requisite of my faithful Golikoff.

I took horses at Toutoura, which is three hundred and seventy wersts from Irkoutsk, and having passed through the large village of Verkhalsensk, I arrived the 5, at two o'clock in the afternoon, at that of Katschouga, where it is common to land in order to avoid the elbow of the Lena, and also because this river soon ceases to be navigable. In this village travellers are provided with *kibitks*^[99], or Russian four wheel carriages, which are conducted by exiles, and from time to time by the Bratskis.

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Between Katschonga and Irkoutsk is a *step* or uncultivated district, inhabited solely by these Bratskis, a colony of shepherds, supposed to be descended from the Tartars, so strongly do they resemble that people. There is something ferocious and savage in their appearance; they are extremely addicted to robberies, and I saw one of them apprehended for stealing some cattle. Their flocks are numerous and consist of oxen, cows, horses, but chiefly sheep. The speed with which I travelled, prevented me from visiting their habitations, or making more minute observations respecting them.

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We passed over a number of mountains, through very horrible roads, and which made my poor Golikoff frequently cry out, bruised by the continual jolting of our infernal vehicle; it was the first time he had experienced this mode of travelling. At length, having left the monastery of Voznessenskoï at our right, whence Irkoutsk begins to be visible, we came to a small arm of the river that winds along under the walls of the town, and which we crossed without coming out of the carriage. There I was stopped by a centinel, who was desirous, agreeably to his office, of informing the governor; but satisfied with my name and office, which I gave him in writing, he permitted me to go before him. It was about eleven o'clock in the evening of 6 August, when I entered this capital, having travelled, since I left Yakoutsch, fifteen hundred and ninety-four wersts.

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I alighted at the office of police, to enquire for a lodging. The *kvarter-mester*, or superintendent of that department, led me to a house, the master of which, far from obeying the orders enjoined on him to receive me, deigned not to rise from his seat to declare his refusal. I saw the moment when the officer of the police, irritated at so uncivil a behaviour, was on the point of avenging his insulted authority. I succeeded however in pacifying him, and besought him to chuse me another lodging. In the interval the *gorodnitsch*, or commandant of the place, major Dolgopoloff, had heard of my arrival, and the trifling mortification I had experienced; he came immediately to the place, which I had scarcely taken possession of, made a thousand apologies for my having been so indecently treated and so badly accommodated, and in spite of all I could say in favour of my apartment, he obliged me to quit it, and to go with him. I lost not by the change: nothing could be more neat and elegant than the apartments to which he conducted me. It was a suite of rooms perfectly furnished and ornamented with paintings in fresco; but what pleased me most was the zealous attention that was bestowed upon me, and by which all my wishes were anticipated.

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The next day M. Dolgopoloff presented me to the governor, major general Arsénieff, and I gave him the dispatches of M. Kasloff, as the governor general was then at Petersburg. I was highly flattered by the manner in which M. Arsénieff received me. After loading me with civilities, he insisted that I should have no table but his, and introduced me to his family^[100], whose harmony, good sense, and cheerfulness, render his house a truly delightful habitation, and communicate their own character to the society whom their merits attract.

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I profited of the disposition and obliging offers of the governor, to recommend to him with warmth my soldier Golikoff. The innumerable services which this brave fellow had rendered me, his fidelity, his devotedness and zeal, which had stood every proof, pleaded more strongly in his favour than my recommendation, and M. Arsénieff was desirous of securing to himself so good a subject; but the ambition of poor Golikoff^[101] wished for nothing farther than the being incorporated in the garrison of Yakoutsch, where he was attracted by affection to his father, who lived in that town, and attachment to M. Kasloff, under whose orders he considered it as a happiness to serve. Such sentiments increased the interest which my account of him had inspired, and my protégé instantly obtained the favour I solicited for him.

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I afterwards made a visit to M. Poskatschinn, the intimate friend of M. Kasloff, whose recommendation procured me every species of civility. I found at his house a catholic priest, sent into Siberia to assist the Christians of the church of Rome, by his ministry. His usual residence is at Irkoutsk.

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This town, the capital of the government of Irkoutsk and Kolivania, is situated on the border of the Angara, and near the mouth of the Irkout, from which it takes its name. Within its vast circumference many stone edifices are seen, and churches built with bricks; the wooden houses are large and commodiously distributed; its population is numerous, and its society brilliant; the multitude of officers and magistrates who reside there, have introduced the modes and customs of Petersburg. Every person in office has an equipage; rank and quality regulate the number of horses that draw their carriages, which are similar to ours.

I have already observed, that all the tribunals of the neighbouring provinces are under the jurisdiction of those of this town; it is also the see of an archbishop, a venerable prelate, who exercises the functions of that office through the whole extent of this part of the Russian empire.

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But it is to commerce that this capital is chiefly indebted for its splendour. By its situation, it is

the entrepôt of that which is carried on between Russia and China. It is known that an intercourse is kept up by land; sometimes active, sometimes languishing; frequently interrupted, it has undergone so many variations, that it is necessary, in my opinion, to go back to the origin of this connection to judge of its consistence, and the improvements of which it is capable.

The first accounts are dated in the middle of the last century, about the time of the invasion of the Mantchew Tartars, who, having for a long time ravaged the northern provinces of the Chinese empire, at last subjugated it entirely. It was to a governor of Tobolsk, that Russia was indebted for the first idea of effecting this commerce, in consequence of an attempt made at Pekin by persons of confidence whom he sent thither. Far from being discouraged by the trifling success of these emissaries, Russian and Siberian merchants united together to profit, if it were possible, by their discoveries. They sent out a caravan in the year 1670, which brought back new lights upon the subject, and unequivocal proofs of the possibility of succeeding. From that time companies multiplied, the journeys became more frequent, and establishments increased.

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This progress alarmed the Chinese, who resolved to set bounds to it. Forts were erected to restrain a neighbour, who, advancing nearer every day, by the river Amour, the Eastern Sea, and the Selinga, insensibly approached the frontiers of China. These defensive measures were the source of very warm disputes between the two empires upon the subject of their respective boundaries; a few hostilities took place, and at last an open rupture. Many years were spent in besieging places, in demolishing and erecting them in turns, till the year 1689, when the two courts, by the mediation of father Gerbillon and father Pereira, Jesuits, authorised by the emperor of China, signed, at Nertschinsk, a treaty of peace and perpetual alliance^[102], which was to be engraven on two stones or posts erected on the confines of each empire.

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By this reciprocity, there was a free commerce secured to all the subjects of the two powers, who were furnished with passports by their courts. Meanwhile China had taken care to be paid for her condescension by the surrenders she demanded of Russia, who lost not only an important part of its possessions, but the navigation of the river Amour as far as the Eastern Sea.

To make amends, or with a view of deriving greater advantages from this commerce, Tzar^[103] Peter the Great commissioned, in 1692, Isbrand Ives, a Dutchman, in his service, to ask of the court of Pekin, the same privilege for caravans, which the late treaty granted to individuals. The result of the embassy corresponded with the desires of the court of Petersburg; the caravans were admitted; and as the court reserved to itself the exclusive right of sending them, it received the whole of the profit^[104]. These journeys lasted three years; caravanseries, for the exchange of their commodities, were appointed for the Russian merchants who composed the caravans, and during their stay at Pekin their expences were discharged by the emperor.

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This calm did not long continue between the two powers. New troubles, occasioned by the misconduct, drunkenness, and insolent proceedings of some Russians, in the midst even of the Chinese capital, had nearly annihilated their commerce. The embassy of Ismailoff saved it. By the skill of this negociator, captain of the guards to the Tzar, the disorders were stopped, and the complaints suppressed; security and confidence succeeded to this misunderstanding. To preserve this happy disposition, Laurent Lange remained at Pekin, under the denomination of agent to the Russian caravans.

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Upon the departure of this resident, affairs continually declined and the enormities of the Russians increased. They excited the pride and distrust, natural to the Chinese. The refusal to deliver up a number of hordes of Mongouls, who were become tributary to the Tzar, completed the indignation of the emperor; every Russian was banished from his territories, and there was no longer any communication between the two nations.

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In 1727, count Ragouzinskoi, ambassador from Russia to the successor of the vindictive Kamhi, effected the renewal of these commercial ties by a new treaty, that fixed irrevocably the bounds of each empire^[105], and subjected the merchants to an invariable regulation, calculated for ever to remove all source of division.

The court of Russia was permitted to send a caravan to Pekin once in three years, and the number of merchants was limited to two hundred. On their arrival at the frontiers of China, they were to inform the emperor, that a Chinese officer might be sent to escort them to the metropolis, where their expences would be defrayed during the time of their traffic. It was agreed also that the merchandize belonging to individuals should not pass the frontier, and that they should no longer enjoy the privilege of trading in any of the Chinese or Mongoul territories. Of consequence, two places were assigned them on the confines of Siberia, the one called *Kiakhta*, from a stream that waters the environs, the other *Zurukhaire*^[106], situated on the left bank of the Argoun, and they were obliged to deposit their merchandize in the magazines of these two settlements.

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In spite of the solemn ratification of all the clauses of this compact, its execution encountered various impediments; the leaven of resentment fermented, or dishonesty gave birth to fresh knaveries. Be this as it may, in the space of twenty seven years, only six caravans sat out from Russia; and after the last envoy this commerce fell into a state of languor consequent upon the loss of credit.

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I suppress the detail of grievances alledged by the Chinese against the Russians. Many well known historians have given an account of the complaints that occasioned the successive emigrations of the Kalmouk Tartars, and a multitude of Tougouses, who were all received by the court of Petersburg; we have seen its subtle policy, moderate and threatening in turns, always

evading the satisfaction demanded by China.

These disputes continued till the accession of the reigning empress. No sooner had Catherine II. ascended the throne, than she renounced, in favour of her subjects, the monopoly of furs, and the exclusive right of sending caravans to Peking. This act of justice and beneficence, worthy the genius and heart of this empress, was still insufficient to give to this commerce its antient vigour. The enmity between the two nations was farther heightened by the fickleness of these Tougouses, who, tired or discontented with their new establishment, suddenly eloped from the dominion of Russia, and returned to their country to replace themselves under the Chinese authority.

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It has since been seen that the two nations, discarding all animosity, entered into a sincere connection, and that the intercourse between the merchants became every day more active and interesting. As the Russian factories multiplied at Kiakhta, which is peopled, enlarged, and fortified, the Chinese resorted to the settlement of Zurukhaire or Naïmatschinn; the commissaries on each side presided in the exchange of commodities, and the Mongoul language was adopted in the contracts which were made by interpreters.

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The Russians have not the advantage in this commerce. The Chinese, who trade in a body, are infinitely more watchful over their interests and circumspect in their dealings; they know how to discover the real value of the Russian commodities, and they have the skill to sell their own at the price they first fix, and from which they never depart. Tea, for instance, procures them an immense profit^[107]; they sell it so dear that the purchasers are afterwards obliged to get rid of it with loss. To indemnify themselves the Russians endeavour to raise the price of their skins, of which the Chinese are extremely fond; but the cunning of these people puts them on their guard against this trick.

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It would be too tedious to enumerate in this place all the articles that enter into these exchanges. I refer the curious reader to Coxe or Pallas, who are both diffuse on the subject. By a calculation which they made of exports and imports at Kiakhta, in the year 1777, the amount of this commerce was estimated at four millions of roubles; but since that time, various accounts deserving of credit assert that it has considerably lessened, and at present it may be said to be reduced to nothing^[108].

I had no preparation to make for my departure, but that of purchasing a kibitk^[109]. I no longer troubled myself about provisions, as I was sure of finding wherewith to subsist myself at every stage. The governor gave me a *poradojenei*, or a passport, as far as Petersburg. It was resolved that I should be escorted by a soldier of the garrison, whose courage and fidelity were known, and that one of the couriers of the governor general, who had particularly recommended him, should accompany me to assist me by his services and experience.

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I took leave of M. Arsénieff; his son and M. Dolgopoloff insisted upon conducting me to the first stage, in spite of all my remonstrances. We were seated in the carriage, where my honest Golikoff came with tears in his eyes, conjuring me to permit him to accompany me as far as these gentlemen; it was, he said, the sweetest recompence I could bestow on him. This last instance of attachment affected me, and I felt that in complying with his request, my pleasure was not less than his.

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Having crossed in a ferry boat the river Angava^[110], we soon arrived to the place of our separation. While I repeated my thanks, and took leave of my two friends, Golikoff, concealed behind my carriage, endeavoured to hide his tears, and recommended me to the care of the soldier who succeeded him. His despair burst forth when my horses were harnessed; he embraced my knees, and exclaimed that he would never quit me. It was to no purpose I repeated that, as he well knew, I had no right to take him; my reasonings, my caresses, nothing could prevail on him to leave his hold; it was necessary to force him from my feet, then from the carriage, which he seized on being torn from me. Never, I believe, had my sensibility experienced a more violent shock; I departed with a wounded heart. The regret of not having been able to follow the dictates of my gratitude^[111] still torments me, and I can only hope that he may be informed of it, for I cannot flatter myself that I shall ever see him again.

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I am obliged at present to discontinue my practice of making notes every day. My journey to Petersburg was so rapid, that is, from 10 August to 22 September, that it was impossible to observe the same accuracy; for this reason also the reader will pardon the brevity of my observations. The country through which I passed has beside been described by so many accurate and intelligent pens, and these travellers have given so much attraction and interest to their recitals, that I should only be accused of presumption, or plagiarism, if I attempted to enlarge on a subject, which they profoundly studied, while I had scarcely time to skim the surface. Many of these performances^[112] are recent, and the curiosity of the reader may be amply satisfied by them. I shall only speak of what relates to myself.

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I first passed through a small canton inhabited by Bratskis. Are not these the same people described by other French writers, under the appellation of *Burates*? Beyond Oudinsk I came to Kransnoyark, where I stopped twenty-four hours to repair the axle-trees of my carriage. This town derives its name from the red and steep bank of the Yenisei, which runs under its wall.

I afterwards entered the desert, called *Barabinskoi-step*. The post service is performed by exiles of every description, whose settlements are at the distance of twenty-five, and sometimes fifty wersts from one another. These unfortunate beings live in the same manner as those who conducted me from Yakoutsk to Peledoui; they are neither more serviceable nor less ferocious,

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and their indolence is still more mortifying.

Accustomed to the fertile and rich country about Irkoutsk, cultivated by the laborious Starogili, the eye cannot survey, without pain, this barren waste. We are disposed to ascribe this melancholy contrast to the sloth of the perverse inhabitants, though it is acknowledged that the soil yields them no return. One might say, that in conformity with the vindictive hand that pursues them, Nature acts towards them as a step-mother; the earth, to which justice has banished them, seems to feel a reluctance in bearing them; its withered bosom refuses all success to their culture.

My courier, who had the rank of serjeant, did not treat these miserable creatures with more attention than was expedient. To enforce obedience, he frequently made use of his stick, and my remonstrances could not restrain him from these sallies, which he called, in pleasantry, his reigning sin. One day he had near paid for his cruelty in a terrible manner. Arriving at a stage we found no horses; the man upon whom the business this day devolved, had been guilty of the daring crime to absent himself, in order to get hay. Two hours passed away, and no one appeared; my courier at length resolved to go himself, with my soldier, and seize the first horses they could find. In about half an hour they returned, in a very angry humour, with a single horse, for which they had been obliged to fight. While they were relating the transaction, the man whom they accused of being the aggressor, ran to complain to me of their having plucked off half his beard. At the same moment I was surrounded by more than fifty persons, assembled from I know not where, for as we entered the village, we could perceive no one but the *starost*. They seemed to contend who should reproach him most; I spoke a long time without being heard. My courier, instead of assisting me in pacifying them, ran to the postillion, who returned from the fields, and made his arm pay dearly for the delay he had occasioned us. The man, whose beard had been torn off, prepared to avenge his comrade, but the soldier, by order of the courier, prevented him, and I was obliged to deliver him from his hands. By dint of vociferation and entreaties I at last suspended the fury of the combatants. I had great reason to applaud myself for my moderation; the spectators were enraged at the treatment their neighbour received; they would infallibly have murdered us, if I had not immediately ordered my two indiscreet attendants to return to the carriage, and the postillion to make haste and harness the horses. The crowd was desirous of pursuing them, but at last I succeeded in appeasing it, and they escaped with a few invectives. I hastened to my kibitk, and did not think myself safe till I was out of their reach.

I trembled lest this event should circulate; in the mean time, till my arrival at Tomsk, a town at the end of this desert, I saw not the least appearance of commotion. My people were eager to carry their complaints before the inspector general, and to my great mortification they appealed to me as a witness. This officer explained to me the dangerous influence the affair would produce upon the maintenance of order and subordination, if these exiles of Baraba were not severely punished; he accordingly prepared to set out for the spot, to make an example of them.

My visit to the governor of Tomsk soon consoled me for this disagreeable adventure. I found him to be a Frenchman, of the name of *Villeneuve*: his rank was that of colonel; I was received by him as a countryman, and I need say no more to express our mutual joy at meeting. I conceived myself to be already in France.

The town of Tomsk is tolerably neat; it is partly upon an eminence, where the house of the governor predominates, and the other part descends to the river Tom. I only staid while my wheels were repairing.

I met many companies of exiles, or galley slaves^[113], and I was advised to be on my guard against them. As individuals frequently escape, the peasants are obliged to pursue them as much from duty as for their own safety. Nothing is in reality more easy than for these exiles to make their escape on the road; they are well guarded, it is true, but they are never fettered. I have seen in woods as many as eighty destined to the same place; they were divided into companies of four, five, or six men and women, who followed at the distance sometimes of two or three wersts. They are afterwards distributed in the different mines of Siberia: these were going to Nertschinsk.

I crossed the principal rivers of this province, as the Oka, the Yenisei, the Tom, the Obi, which the Russians call the *Ob*. On the last I ran a considerable risk in a small ferry, which was in so wretched a condition, that in the middle of the river it filled with water. We should have found some difficulty in saving ourselves, but for a smaller boat, that I had had the precaution to fasten to the ferry, and others that were quickly brought to our succour by the inhabitants on the opposite side.

Before I arrived at Tobolsk, I passed the Irtisch twice, the last time near the mouth of the Tobol. This capital, situated between these two rivers, would have been one of the most beautiful towns of Siberia, but a fire has made such havock as to reduce the greater part of it to ashes. Prior to this event, it was in two divisions, the upper town and the lower town; the one, built upon the platform of a mountain, presented many beautiful edifices of stone; the other was made up of wooden houses, which were the first devoured by the flames. By degrees the fire reached the upper part of the town and the stone houses, where it left nothing but the walls. I made no stay at this melancholy scene; the impression it made upon me was equally deep and forcible, and I shall never forget the air of consternation that was visible in the inhabitants, who, from the highest to the lowest, laboured indefatigably, but in mournful silence, to repair their losses. Already the ravages begin to disappear, and the foundations of some houses and shops, all rebuilding of stone, arise above the surface: it is probable that the rest of the town will have the same solidity.

In quitting it I passed the Irtisch a third time to reach Catherinebourg, or Yekaterinbourg,

where I stayed twenty-four hours, that my carriage might again be repaired. I employed the time in visiting a gold mine in the neighbourhood, and the place where the copper money is coined.

I refer the reader to the authors I have already cited, for a description of the colonies of Tcheremisses, Tschouvaschis, Votiaguis, and Tartars. I shall only say of these last, that the neatness of the inside of their houses astonished me, doubtless because I had been a little too much accustomed to the contrary defect among the Kamtschadales, Koriacs, &c. These Tartars lead sedentary lives; they are husbandmen, and have considerable quantities of corn and cattle: the religion they profess is the Mahometan.

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The head dress of the Tcheremisses struck me with its singularity; it is a small shell of wood, eight or ten inches long, and four or five broad, placed near the root of the hair upon the forehead, and the upper part with an inclination forward. This is fastened with a knot, and then covered with an handkerchief, white embroidered or figured, and, out of preference, they chuse the most glaring colours and the most crowded patterns. The handkerchief, which is very large, and hangs loosely behind, is edged with a broad fringe, or lace of gold or silver, in proportion to the wealth or luxury of the wearer. The rest of their dress cannot better be compared than to a robe de chambre.

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I met a caravan of Bohemians who asked me for money, and informed me that they were going to people and cultivate a small canton on the borders of the Wolga, near Saratoff.

The necessity of having my passport examined by the governor of Casan, and the difficulty of procuring horses, as I arrived late, kept me in this town till break of day. The Wolga, which washes its walls, renders the situation pleasant; the houses are for the most part built of wood, and the churches of stone. I was told that it is the see of an archbishop.

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Beyond the Wolga^[114], a river famous for its navigation, and which pours itself into the Caspian sea, I passed before the towns of Rouzmodemiansk and Makarieff. The latter, celebrated for its linen manufactures, is, property speaking, but a village. I was at a small distance from it, and had just crossed a bridge, ill constructed, and that trembled under my carriage, when my impatience was near costing me my life. My postilion, animated by my repeated exhortations, drove me with great rapidity^[115]: on a sudden I heard something strike hard against the box of my kibitk; I thrust out my head, and received a blow that made me instantly fall back in my carriage. A cry, uttered by the courier who rode with me, informed me that I was wounded. In reality a stream of blood ran down my forehead: the carriage stopped, I alighted; it was the circle of my wheel that was broken, the edge of which had struck me with the greater violence, in consequence of our speed. On putting my hand to the wound, it appeared large and deep: I conceived that the skull was injured, and I considered myself as a dead man.

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It is here I can say with truth, that language is too weak to describe the excess of my despair. After surmounting so many obstacles, so many perils; at the very gates of Petersburg, where I ardently longed to embrace, in my arms, the best of fathers, whom I had not seen for four years; on the eve of entering my native country, of acquitting myself of my embassy, by delivering my important dispatches, and to be struck by a mortal blow! The reflection overcame me; I felt my knees tremble and my head turn round; the succours of my companions fortunately brought me to life: I armed myself with courage, tied a bandage tight about my head, the wheel was adjusted in the best manner it could, and we soon gained the preceding stage to Nijenei-novogorod.

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I left my kibitk in this village to the care of my soldier, with orders to have it repaired, and to follow me immediately to the next town. While my post carriage was harnessing, and my box put into it, I entered a public house, and had some very strong brandy poured into my wound, and a good compress placed on it, which enabled me to proceed to Nijenei-novogorod, which was from twenty-five to thirty wersts.

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The surgeon major, at whose house I stopped, was not at home, and in order to wait for him, I was conducted into a most filthy habitation. The desire of not being known, and the uncertainty I was in respecting my wound, induced me not to announce myself to the governor. In the afternoon I returned to the surgeon's, but to no purpose. Impatient of suffering, without knowing what might be the effect of my wound, I asked if there was no one else who could assist me, and they mentioned a *podleker*, or surgeon's mate, who, after many difficulties on his part, came to me. His address gave me no favourable impression respecting his talents and sobriety; it had all the bluntness and tottering gait of a drunken man. In the mean time the necessity of having my wound probed, overcame the repugnance I felt of trusting myself to such hands; but the wretch had forgotten his instruments. Who would suppose that a pin was the probe he borrowed? Having examined it, he informed me, in a fluttering manner, that my skull was laid open, but not at all fractured, and that with the application of brandy and water I might continue my journey; he then advised me to be blooded. The idea of trusting my arm to such a drunkard made me shudder. Having thanked, paid, and dismissed him, I got into my carriage, happy to be rid both of the operation and the operator.

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Nijenei-novogorod is situated, as every one knows, upon the Wolga, and is similar to all the Russian towns. When I passed through it, it boasted of the honour of having a company of national comedians.

Leaving Vladimer, I came to Moscow. M. de Boffe was anxious to have my wound examined by the most skillful surgeons. Their report gave me confidence, though the pains in my head were tolerably acute. I found myself the more consoled by the removal of my fears, as I learned at the same time a circumstance very much calculated to increase them. M. de Boffe told me that my father was not at Petersburg: if therefore I had been dangerously wounded, and this town had

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been the termination of my career, I should have been deprived of the consolation of ending my life in the arms of him to whom I owed it.

My carriage being in a shattered condition, I left it at Moscow, and sat off in one of the common post carriages; but they were so small and so incommodious, as not even to shelter me from the rain. I passed by Tver, Vonischnei-volotschok, Novogorod, and Sophia near Tsarskocelo^[116], and I entered Petersburg in the night of 22 September, having travelled six thousand wersts in forty days, eight of which were lost in the unavoidable delays I had experienced.

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Agreeably to the instruction of count de la Perouse, I delivered my packets into the hands of count de Segur, minister plenipotentiary from the court of France to the empress. I had the pleasure of seeing him on his arrival in Russia, and I count it among the happy events of my life that I now found him at Petersburg, to console me for the absence of my father. This minister not only received me in the most gracious manner, but interested himself in my health with every mark of affection. He offered one of his couriers to accompany and take care of me during the remainder of my journey. Meanwhile as the skill of his surgeon had effected my cure, I thanked the count for his obliging offer, but was unwilling to deprive him of a man who might be necessary to him.

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Charged with his dispatches, I left Petersburg the 26, between eleven and twelve at night. At Remer, as the weather was foul, I was eight hours in engaging watermen to take me across an arm of the sea called *Courich-haff*. I slept at Berlin, count d'Esterno, minister plenipotentiary of the king to this court, being also desirous of sending dispatches by me; I was well requited for this trifling delay, by the flattering things which it occasioned me from this minister.

At length I saw my native country, and 17 October at three o'clock in the afternoon, I arrived at Versailles. I alighted at the house of count de la Luzerne, minister and secretary of state for the marine department. I had not the happiness of being known to him, but the very kind reception he gave me, instantly prepared my heart for the gratitude, which on so many accounts I owe him. To his favour, upon which I set the highest value, I am indebted for the honour of having been presented, the same day, to his majesty, who condescended to interrogate me respecting various circumstances of my expedition; expressed a desire to know the particulars; and recompensed me the next day by appointing me consul at Cronstadt; a recompence so much the dearer, as it reminded me of the eulogiums that had been bestowed on the zeal of all my family, in the civil and political offices with which they had been entrusted.

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THE END.

FOOTNOTES

- [1] During my stay at Poustaretsk, the governor had dismissed our Kamtschadale guides. Some of them belonged to the environs of Bolcheretsk, and were four hundred leagues distant from their home. These poor creatures, almost all their dogs having died of fatigue and hunger, were obliged to return on foot.
- [2] All the wandering Koriacs avoided us in the same manner, that they might not be obliged to assist us.
- [3] These people are at the south of the Tchouktchis, upon the eastern coast.
- [4] This tent was made of linen; I had purchased it of M. Vorokoff before I left Poustaretsk.
- [5] This report had gained credit from the false representation of Bogonoff, the engineer. He asserted, that the Koriacs had, by force of arms, opposed his entrance into the river Pengina. When I mentioned it to them, they protested, that so far from opposing the passage of this engineer, they had treated him during his stay with great kindness and friendship.
- [6] This detachment had originally consisted of forty men; but at the requisition of Kabechoff, ten Cossacs were added to it, who arrived at Kaminoi with the supplies, which we have already mentioned.
- [7] These people, informed that I was on my way to Ingiga, would, I was told, probably come to meet me, were it merely from a spirit of curiosity.
- [8] See Vol. I. p. 225.
- [9] My escort thus consisted of four men; this Golikoff, the soldier who had accompanied me from Poustaretsk, and two others chosen from the detachment as my guides: I thought it necessary however to add a Koriac guide, as I conceived that he must be better acquainted with the road.
- [10] The scarcity of dogs at Kaminoi, and the wretched state of mine, had determined M. Schmaleff to let me have those belonging to the detachment.
- [11] The reader will recollect that I was then in a Kamtschadale dress.
- [12] The perfidy of the Koriacs has almost always endeavoured to inflame the enmity of the Tchouktchis against the Russians, either by false reports, or by inciting them to attack such parties of Russians whom they could not, or dared not, attack themselves. These

artful manœuvres have been the cause of the many acts of cruelty with which the Tchoukchis have been reproached, but which form no part of their character.

[13] That is, beyond the cape of Tchoukchi, known in maps by the name of *Tchoukotskoinos*.

[14] The fear of being surprised in the night by the Koriacs occasions this precaution.

[15] Polygamy is allowed by these people; one may say indeed that they admit promiscuous cohabitation, for they are said to carry their politeness so far as to offer their wives or daughters to their guests. To refuse the offer would be an insult. I cannot answer for the truth of this report.

[16] I had the greater reason to suspect him, as his mode of introducing himself, reminded me of the expedients he had employed the preceding year to detain a sailor, charged by government with important dispatches. The sailor, anxious to arrive at the place of his destination, was prepared to leave Pareiné, when Youlittka pressed him to wait till the next day. He showed no disposition to comply, but was desirous of proceeding immediately. The dispute became warm. The enraged Koriac fell upon him, and would instantly have assassinated him, if he had not been torn from his hands. He was bound, and kept in confinement for three days. At length, after having suffered every sort of ill treatment, Youlittka permitted him to go, with the hope perhaps of putting an end to him more easily in his way; but the prey escaped him.

[17] It is difficult to conceive of a man more completely ugly. Large and squat, his whole face seamed with the small pox, and various other scars, a sullen countenance, black hair, that joined enormous eye-brows, under which there was only one eye, and that sunk in his head, haggard and fierce; the other he had lost by accident: such is the exact picture of this Koriac prince.

[18] This tribunal is called in Russia *nijenei-zemskoisoud*, or inferior territorial tribunal. The judges are selected in turn from the peasants in the ostrogs of each district. The exercise of their office is limited to three years. These judges are called *zassédatsels*.

[19] They use no kind of cloth or napkin for this purpose. They take a stick, scrape it for a few minutes, and with the shavings they rub and clean their dishes and other utensils used in their cooking.

[20] So they call these tempests.

[21] It is necessary to be incessantly on the watch for fear of a surprise on the part of the neighbouring Koriacs, whose daring and turbulent character leads them frequently to revolt, and to attack the town at a time when it is least expected. When they come to Ingiga for commercial purposes, they are not permitted to make any long stay.

[22] Called in Russia *kounits*.

[23] He was chiefly terrified by the fasts, which, with the Greeks, are very rigid and very frequent.

[24] I have not the same complaint to make against the wandering Koriacs. I found them in general more frank and obliging, and shall presently give a proof of it.

[25] The wandering Koriacs were for a long time still more untractable. The independence to which they were accustomed, and the natural restlessness of their character, little disposed them to submit to the yoke. The Russians, beside, from a love of conquest, were perhaps not remarkable for moderation, and endeavoured probably to make themselves feared rather than loved. It is certain that they experienced the regret of seeing whole hordes suddenly disperse upon the least appearance of oppression, and fly, as in concert, far from the settlements where they hoped, by the attraction of commerce, to fix them. These frequent flights took place till the arrival of major Gaguen. By the mildness of his government, his repeated invitations, and beneficial proposals, he has gradually brought back these fugitive families. First one returned, then two, then three; the force of example, and a kind of emulation operated upon others, and when I was at Ingiga there were no less than eleven yourts in the neighbourhood of that town.

But the skilful policy of major Gaguen has still more successfully effected the views of the Czarina, by taking advantage of the necessary commercial intercourse, gradually to establish between the Russians and the Koriacs of both descriptions in the neighbourhood, a reciprocity of good offices, a kind of agreement between individual and individual, that reminds us of ancient hospitality, and that will one day infallibly operate a revolution in the manners of this people.

If a Koriac be obliged by his business to pass the night in the town, he demands a lodging of his Russian friend, and without farther ceremony takes possession. His host considers it as his duty to receive him, to study his inclinations, to anticipate his wants, and his wishes; and in short, spares nothing in order to entertain him in the best manner he can, that is, to make him completely drunk. Upon his return home, he relates with pleasure the flattering reception he has met with. He considers it as an obligation, a sacred debt, of which he is anxious to acquit himself the first opportunity that offers. This is a pleasing custom, particularly to a Russian soldier, who is obliged to make frequent journeys to the neighbouring villages. The gratitude of the Koriac towards his friend, does not confine itself to the affording him a lodging, regaling him, and supplying him with provisions for his excursion; he protects him, and becomes his defence against his countrymen.

[26] All the Koriacs whom I met with on my way from Poustaretsk are equally subject to famine with the inhabitants of that hamlet. The bark of the birch tree mixed with the fat of the sea wolf, is then their whole subsistence.

[27] The rivers near this ostrog are so small as to be entirely frozen up as soon as the cold sets in, and during more than half the year the inhabitants are obliged to drink melted snow or ice.

- [28] It is used in the Russian houses to destroy insects.
- [29] The enamorata probably is not always obdurate, but equally impatient with her lover to put an end to this laborious novitiate, and acknowledges herself touched, before it has taken place.
- [30] It is also that of the Tchouktchis, and before the introduction of Christianity was the system of the Kamtschadales.
- [31] They believe also in inferior deities. Some they consider as household gods, the guardians of their rustic habitations. These idols, coarsely carved and blackened with smoke, are hung up in the most conspicuous part of their yourts. They are dressed in the Koriac mode, and adorned with bells, rings, and various other iron and copper trinkets. The other inferior deities they consider as inhabiting mountains, woods, and rivers, which reminds us of the nymphs in the mythology of the ancient Greeks.
- [32] I frequently perceived in the course of my journey the remains of dogs and rein deer suspended on stakes, and testifying the devotion of the sacrificers.
- [33] I dismissed my conductors of course. I have not yet mentioned the post charges. While I travelled with M. Kasloff, they were defrayed by him, and I did not pay my share, till I came to quit him. The reader is intitled to a note upon the subject, which I shall here give him.
- These charges are called in Russia *progonn*: a courier pays two kopecks per werst for every horse, and other travellers four kopecks. A kopeck is equal to a French *sou*, or an English halfpenny. In Kamtschatka and Siberia the expence is less by one half, and as dogs are almost invariably made use of in the peninsula, they are charged at so much per *podvod*, or team of five dogs. Three *podvods*, or fifteen dogs, are considered as equal to one horse in Siberia, for which a courier pays a kopeck per werst, and other travellers two kopecks.
- [34] These compliments do not, as with us, consist of mere ceremony and cold civilities, accompanied with unmeaning words. The assembly is no sooner seated, than brandy is introduced. A domestic distributes three enormous bumpers to every individual, one of which would be sufficient in any other country to make a man give in. Here it is merely a provokative to double and triple the dose. A Koriac toper considers it in no other light, and when it is presented to him, he gives a complacent smile to the whole company, and particularly to the master of the house, to whom also he makes a slight inclination of the head. He then swallows, one upon another, without the least sign of repugnance, three glasses filled as fast as possible. The children drink it with as little aversion. I have seen a child six or seven years old take off one of these glasses, without making a wry face.
- To this copious distribution of brandy M. Gaguen never fails to add some presents of iron, stuffs, or tobacco, and carries his attention so far as to consult the taste and wants of each individual. The Tchouktchis, and the fixed Koriacs, are treated with similar kindness. By this means he has gradually tamed these savage minds, and gained an influence and ascendancy over them: a poor recompence for the sacrifices he is obliged to make to provide these liberalities, the expence of which falls solely upon himself, and from the dearness of every article in this country, must be a heavy burthen to him.
- [35] Sometimes the lower part of this rein is furnished with little sharp pieces of bone, which, with the smallest shock, serve to goad forward the animals that are untractable, and are continually employed for that purpose. In harnessing the rein deer, they are careful not to put on the right the beast that is trained to draw on the left, the sledge would otherwise, instead of advancing, be instantly overturned. This trick, however, the Koriacs frequently play upon the Russians, who they think have treated them ill.
- [36] They had indeed quitted the road, but had only dragged me about fifty paces from it.
- [37] This proceeding was the more agreeable to me, as being perfectly unexpected. It was the first present that any Koriac had offered me. I should not have observed this, if, as having just quitted the hospitable Kamtschadales who had loaded me with gifts, I had not been tempted to compare the characters of the two people.
- [38] In the presence of the Russians, he crosses himself before and after his meals, and when he enters his yourt.
- [39] Among a hundred of these skins scarcely two can be found fine enough for furs. There are some entirely white.
- [40] The yourt of my host was about eight yards in diameter, and nearly of the same height. The circumference at the base was twenty-four yards, and the top similar to that of a cone.
- [41] We caught some excellent trout.
- [42] The snow fell in such abundance, that these poor animals were in a manner buried under it. Accustomed however to such weather, they crowd together, and always holding their noses in the air, the heat of their breath, by penetrating their cold covering, creates a free passage for respiration. They have the sense also to shake themselves when the snow becomes too heavy.
- [43] Our company consisted of ten, seven of whom were Koriacs, whose filthiness is well known.
- [44] Though this circuit was more than seven hundred wersts, the rapidity of these rivers insured me a speedy navigation, by which I should have gained a considerable advantage in point of time, besides the pleasure of enjoying the first appearance of spring.
- [45] A vessel from Okotsk was wrecked in this place a few years ago. The whole cargo, consisting of provisions, was lost, and almost all the crew perished.
- [46] All the fixed Koriacs between Ingiga and Yamsk are baptised. These two settlements have but one priest, whose habitual residence is at Ingiga. He seldom makes the circuit

of his district, which extends as far as the ostrog of Taousk, the first place belonging to the diocese of Okotsk.

- [47] The post expences are the same here as in Kamtschatka for common sledges, though the teams of the nartas consist of double the number of dogs.
- [48] This was a real loss to my conductors: there are dogs of a price as high as fifty roubles, and not one of them is sold for less than five.
- [49] The ice bent under my sledge at every step.
- [50] M. Kokh was born in Germany, and spoke the Russian language as fluently as his own; he wanted only confidence to express himself equally well in French. He had long retired to this settlement with his wife and three children, where he lives in peace, surrounded by his little family, rich in the public esteem, and happy in the opportunity which his situation affords him of doing good.
- [51] Accustomed to such accidents when they travel in this season of the year, they ascend the loftiest trees, where they fabricate with the branches a kind of hut called *labazis*; but it often happens that the torrents do not abate, and in this case they equally perish for want of food.
- [52] This was no very easy task, if we consider the extreme weakness of these poor animals, who have no other sustenance, during the whole winter, than the branches of willows, or birch trees. With such nourishment, what service was to be expected from them! To support so long a fast, they surely stand in need of the respite from labour which is commonly allowed them during this season of the year; and even at the commencement of spring, it is not prudent to make use of them till they have recovered their strength by better pasture. The fields are no sooner freed from the snow, than they disperse in eager pursuit of every little blade of grass, and devour the shoots almost before they spring out of the ground; rapid as the vegetation is in this country, it must be supposed that a considerable time is necessary to recover their vigour.
- [53] See Coxe, Chap. I.
- [54] I might here give an account of the origin, progress, and nature of the commercial alliance between these two empires; but as the caravans sent by the Russians to Kiatka, commonly assemble at Irkoutsk, I shall defer it till my arrival at that settlement, where I shall perhaps acquire still more accurate information.
- [55] I shall not enter into particulars respecting the manner in which these settlements were made. The Russians unfortunately displayed neither more integrity nor greater humanity than in their preceding conquests; and I wish it was in my power to draw a perpetual veil over the scenes of horror which they repeated on their arrival in these climates. But the many instances of injustice and dishonesty practiced by the chiefs, pilots, merchants, and sailors, have given rise to such a variety of complaints and suits, and so many authors have written upon the subject, that my silence could have no effect. It is well known that a number of ships employed in this trade have been accused of taking by force, instead of purchasing, the furs which they brought back, and sold at an immense profit. Not content with tearing from the unfortunate indigines these fruits of their courage and labour, they sometimes compelled them, under the immediate inspection, and for the sole profit of the crew, to hunt otters, beavers, sea cows, foxes, and other animals; and frequently from an excess of distrust or avarice, they hunted themselves. Such conduct induces us to believe that they were guilty of crimes still more shocking. It is not to be supposed that at so great a distance, the injunctions and menaces of the empress should in all cases so far operate as to prevent enormities. Experience has too clearly demonstrated, particularly in the extensive empire of Russia, that authority becomes weak, in proportion as it is farther removed from the center. How many years of vigilance and discipline are necessary, before abuses can be suppressed, and obedience effected! This has long been the object of the existing administration, and there is reason to presume that its exertions have not been fruitless.
- [56] Such was the project of a merchant of my acquaintance, who expected to derive from it the most considerable advantages. With the map of Cooke's voyage in his hand, his intention was to enter the river that bears the name of this celebrated navigator, and to extend his course as far as the environs of the bay of Nootka. If he found himself able to execute his plan, it is possible that he would not be wholly deceived in his hopes, and his countrymen may, perhaps, be hereafter indebted to his information and courage for the knowledge of new sources of wealth.
- [57] See Vol. I. p. 140.
- [58] All of whom, as well as the different naval officers, are brought hither from Russia. To complete however their complement of sailors, M. Hall was obliged to raise recruits in the country; and the orders he brought were so precise, that the governor supplied him both with men and materials at his first requisition.
- [59] We have seen in the description of Okotsk, that these buildings constituted the part of the town appropriated to trade. Alarmed at this incident, they immediately unfurnished their shops, determined to remove into the government square, of consequence they undertook to rebuild the barracks, and considerably augmented the number of them.
- [60] The mode of preparing salmon is the same as at Kamtschatka.
- [61] I have already given an account of this sport, which takes place in the moulting season, and observed that a stick is the only weapon used on the occasion.
- [62] They consisted of leathern bags and portmanteaux; with this advantage, that they never gall the sides of the horses. The usual weight is five *pouds*, or two hundred pounds, and it never exceeds six *pouds*; that is, two hundred and forty. These loads they call *viouki*, and the horses that carry them *viouchni-loschadei*. If the baggage to be carried be lighter or less cumbersome, they place it upon the back of the animal, and fasten it with a cord of hair that passes under his belly.

- [63] The Yakouts seemed not to be much concerned at the loss of these animals, and have no idea of affording them any assistance. When they refuse to go on, or fall down from weakness or fatigue, they are abandoned to their deplorable fate, and their carcasses are left to be devoured by bears, who never relinquish their prey while any thing remains but the bones. Every ten steps we see skeletons of these horses, and from Okotsk to the cross of Yudoma, I imagine that I passed more than two thousand. My conductors informed me that the majority had perished the preceding year, in conveying from Okotsk to Yakoutsk the different materials required for M. Billings's expedition, in consequence of having been surprised by the floods, which had been so sudden that the guides saved themselves with difficulty. A part of their loads were still under a kind of *labazis*, of which I have already spoken, where travellers place their effects till the waters subside. It was added, that the Yakouts lose in this manner every year four or five thousand horses, in transporting the different objects of the commerce which they undertake.
- [64] The Yakouts are so habituated to this exercise, that they might defy the most expeditious groom. They tie the horses three and three to each others tails, and a single rope serves to lead them all.
- [65] I was a witness on this day of a circumstance that deserves to be related. My Yakouts skilfully peeled off large pieces of bark from the pine tree, of which they formed a sort of tent or parapluie, under which they took up their abode during the night.
- [66] Beside various sorts of aquatic birds, we frequently met with the heath-cock and the white partridge; we also appropriated their eggs to our use, wherever we could find them.
- [67] They were chiefly willows and alders; but deeper in the forests we perceived some firs and birch trees of a good height.
- [68] They use for this purpose a long and wide blade fastened at the end of a stick three feet long. This instrument serves them both as lance and axe.
- [69] I have already mentioned the quickness of the vegetation. Its progress was every day perceptible; the trees, which had been so long bare, gradually recovered their dress, and the country soon appeared like a vast meadow enamelled with rural flowers. What a spectacle for a man whose eye had for the space of six months seen nothing but frozen rivers, and mountains and plains covered with snow! It seemed to revive with nature, and to spring out of its ruins.
- [70] There is actually a cross erected on the bank of the river.
- [71] The abatement of the water was every day perceptible to the eye, and a longer delay would have exposed me to all the dangers of shoals, and the most formidable cataracts.
- [72] These boats are flat, and terminate in points at the two extremities.
- [73] It is called *listvenischnoie-derevo*.
- [74] It pours itself into the Lena, at a little distance from, and north of, Yakoutsk.
- [75] This place is called *Oust-mayapristann* or harbour of the mouth of the Maya.
- [76] During my five days navigation I had travelled near seven hundred wersts.
- [77] Independently of various other cattle, he had a stud of two thousand horses in very good condition, though he had lost a considerable number by the conveyances occasioned by M. Billings' expedition. From the manner in which he spoke of his submission to the will of the empress, I judged that he felt no reluctance at any sacrifices that proved his zeal.
- [78] I met with many of these chiefs, to whom this language was as familiar as their own.
- [79] See Vol. I. p. 184.
- [80] Nothing is more easy than to distinguish the chamans, who let their hair grow, and tie it behind, from the Yakouts, who wear their hair short.
- [81] The instrument which I here style a flute, is a bone hollowed and fashioned somewhat like our *flûtes à l'oignon*, and its tone is not less acute.
- [82] The bark is stripped off, and the stakes either painted various colours, or ornamented with rude sculpture.
- [83] In speaking of the saddles, I ought to have added that the stirrups are very short.
- [84] Three horses pay here the same as one in Siberia.
- [85] There would be no end to my repetitions if I were to mention all the civilities I received from each of these Yakout princes.
- [86] The bark of this tree is stripped off in the spring.
- [87] I was the first traveller this year from Okotsk that had yet arrived at Yakoutsk. The distance between these places is about fifteen hundred wersts.
- [88] M. Marklofski was to hold the office till M. Kasloff arrived.
- [89] The Lena crosses Siberia in nearly its widest part, from north-east to south-west, and pours itself afterwards into the Frozen Ocean.
- [90] I shall say nothing of the mode of government, as it is similar to that of Okotsk.
- [91] The post expences are not the greater on account of this distance; a man is paid at the same rate as a horse.
- [92] They always fastened to my boat a small canoe, in which they return home, and which is carried along by the mere current of the river.
- [93] It is also called *Olekminsk*.

- [94] He informed me that the borders of the Lena were inhabited on this side by different hordes of his countrymen. I must observe, that the Toungouses and Lamouts may be regarded as the same people.
- [95] The fish with which this river principally abounds is the sturgeon, or *sterled*. The industry of the Toungouses, makes caviare of the eggs of this fish, as we do.
- [96] From a principle the reverse of that of the Koriacs, the Toungouses always milk the female deer. This milk, which they made me taste, is very thick.
- [97] Their journeys extend as far as the frontiers of Tartary and China.
- [98] As we approached Irkoutsk, the direction of the river became narrow. I remarked that the country was better cultivated; the wheat especially was very fine.
- [99] These kibitks are in the shape of a large cradle. They are not hung upon any thing, and though you may lie down in them, you feel every jolt of the carriage.
- [100] Almost all his children speak French; one of the sons writes it correctly, and possesses, as well as his brother, a thousand amiable qualities. They have a sister married to the vice-governor.
- [101] During my stay at Okotsk, M. Kokh, at my request, had willingly conferred on him the rank of corporal. This unexpected favour made so strong an impression upon him, that, on his return from the parade, I thought he would have become mad from joy and gratitude.
- [102] This treaty, which had been drawn up in Latin by these religious negociators, was translated into the Russian and Mantchew languages, and respectively ratified by the two sovereigns. This was the first instance, since the foundation of the Russian empire, of a treaty of peace being entered into by this nation, and foreigners permitted to enter the capital. At this epoch there were a number of Siberian families at Pekin, deserters or prisoners, and who, from the goodness of the emperor Kam-hi resolved to settle there, and even to naturalize themselves.
- [103] It is in this manner the Russians write and pronounce the word Czar.
- [104] Individuals soon freed themselves from the tyrannical shackles of the royal monopoly; they carried on a secret intercourse with China, by means of the Mongoul Tartars, who sold their mediation at a high price.
- [105] The reader will find in Coxe all the details respecting these boundaries.
- [106] This, I believe, is the place called by the Russians *Näimatschinn*.
- [107] When I was at Okotsk, tea was sixteen roubles a pound, and very scarce. I was told that it was sent from Petersburg, and that Russia at present procured this article either from England or Holland.
- [108] On my arrival in Siberia I was informed, at various times, that the Russian merchants repented of the speculations they had made in consequence of the late adjustment; and as a proof that they considered it as void, many of them, who opened their warehouses to shew me the prodigious quantity of skins which they had buried in them, agreed in saying that they waited impatiently for the time when a new treaty would give them an opportunity of getting rid of their commodities.
- If I might be permitted to give my opinion, I would venture to assert, that the dearest interests, both of Russia and China, are concerned in the speedy accomplishment of this new compact; but, that it may be cemented in a manner more durable and beneficial to the respective commerce of the two nations, it will perhaps be first necessary that they should, in concert, lighten the burthen of taxes, and take away all the restrictions that intimidate and discourage the merchant. It might also be expedient for Russia, profiting of the physical and natural advantages she possesses from her situation, to fit out ships from Okotsk or Kamtschatka, or some other port, which might go directly to Macao or Canton, and carry on the trade at a much less expence than by land. The communication between Okotsk and Siberia is not very difficult, and this province would doubtless become more flourishing when this route was more frequented. These reflections naturally led me to what I have said in the first volume of this work (*note, p. 9.*) of the project of an English merchant at Macao. Why should not the Russians make similar attempts? Have they not better opportunities than the English of monopolizing the fur trade with China? When the way was once opened, it would be easy to extend the communication to new objects. I say nothing of the inestimable advantage that Russia would derive from this commercial navigation, in having numerous and skilful seamen.
- [109] Desirous of finishing my journey more expeditiously, I left the greater part of my effects with M. Medvedoff, a merchant, who politely undertook to send them to Petersburg.
- To settle this business, he invited me to sup with him. While we were at table, the town experienced an earthquake, which was tolerably violent, and lasted two minutes. We perceived it by the shaking of our glasses, table, and chairs; all the bells sounded, and many turrets were thrown down. Upon the first terror it occasioned, various conjectures were formed respecting the cause of this shock; as I perceived that the motion, or undulation, was from south to north, it was supposed to originate in a neighbouring lake, called *Baikal*. I leave it to naturalists to decide the question.
- [110] This river, taking the name of *Toungoutska*, runs as far as Yenisei (near the town of Yeniseisk) and, at some distance from Irkoutsk, falls into the vast lake, which the Russians call the sea of *Baikal*. This lake is said to be surrounded with lofty mountains, its water is fresh, but the navigation of it is unsafe, on account of the frequent storms to which it is exposed. I much regret the not having been able to visit it.
- [111] The strength of my expressions in describing my sentiments towards this soldier, require, in my opinion, no apology. I have nothing to say to any one that shall blame me,

when informed of the services he rendered me.

- [112] Among these authors I shall mention Gmelin, Neveu, Lepekinn, Ritschkoff, Falk and Georgi, abbe Chappe, and Pallas. The last particularly has in his descriptions the triple merit of accuracy, energy, and extensive information.
- [113] There were some persons of distinction among them.
- [114] Its borders are said to be infested with robbers, who are probably nothing more than the watermen. I saw many of them in my route, but never received the smallest insult.
- [115] It is a praise due to the postilions of Russia; in no part are we driven so rapidly, and the reason is that they are almost always tipsy. In the villages, after harvest, it is necessary to take them by force from the public houses.
- [116] These towns are well known: I passed them with such speed as scarcely to see them.

VOCABULARY OF THE KAMTSCHADALE, KORIAN, TCHOUKTCHI, AND LAMOUT LANGUAGES.

ENGLISH.	RUSSIAN.	KAMTSCHADALE.	KORIAN.	TCHOUKTCHI.	LAMOUT.
God	Bokh[1]	Douchtéakhtchitch, Kout & Koutka	Kamakliou <i>or</i> Angag	En-iéga	Kh-éouki
Father	Otets	Epep	Empitch	Illiguin	Amai
Mother	Matt	Engatcha	Ella	Illa	Eni
Child	Dittia	Péétch	Kmouiguin	Ninkhai	Khoutean
I	Ia	Kimméa	Guiomma	Guim	Bi
Name (of a thing)	Iméa	Kharénétch	Ninna	Ninnéa	Guerbin
A circle, <i>or</i> round	Kroug	Kill la Kil	Kamléll	Kilvo	Miouréati
Smell	Doukh	Tchékh outch	Voui voui	Vouie guirguin	Ounga
An animal	Zvér	Kazit kenguia	Alliougoullou	Illpouilla	Boioun
A stake	Koll	Outlept kouitch	Oupouinpin	Oupinpekhai	Tipioun
A river	Réka	Kiig	Veiem	Veiem	Okat
Labour	Rabota	Kazonem	Iakhitchat guiguin	Tirétirkigssinn	Gourgalden
Death	Smért	Eranim	Veiaiguin	Veiéigou	Kokan
Water	Voda	Azamkh <i>or</i> Ji	Mima	Mimil	Mou
The sea	Moré	Ezouk	Ankan	Ankho	Nam
Mountain	Gora	Inzit	Guiéguéi	Neit	Ouraktchan
Evil	Boll	Lodonim	Tatch guiguin	Téguél	Eien
Indolence	Lénn	Kh-alacik	Kouloumgatomg	Télonga	Ban
Summer	Léta	Adempliss	Alaal	Elek	Anganal
The year	God	Tkhatkhass	Guiviguiv	Guioud	Angan
The universe	Svétt	Atkhat	Khétchguikhei	Kheiguikéi	Guévan
Salt	Soll	Peipiem	Yamyam	Teguio	Tak
An ox	Bouik	Kezioung	Tchimga	Penvel	Gueldak
The heart	Certsé	Guillioun	Lingling	Liig ling	Mévan
Strength	Cila	Kekhkékh	Nikétvoukhin	Nikatoukhin	Egui
Health	Zdrava	Klouvesk	Tmelessvouk	Gué mélevli	Abgar
Well	Kharacho	Klioubello	Nimélkhin	Nimelkhin	Aïa
Ill	Dourno	Keiel	Khatkin	Guetkin	Kanioulit
The hand	Rouka	Tonno <i>or</i> Cettoud	Mouina galguin	Mouinguit	Gal
The foot	Noga	Katkha <i>or</i> Tkada	Guit galguin	Guitkalguin	Bouidel
The ear	Oukho	Aillo <i>or</i> Jioud	Véliouguin	Véliouguin	Gorot
The nose	Noss	Kekiou <i>or</i> Kika	Enguittaam	Ekhkhaiakh	Ogot
The mouth	Rott	Cekcé <i>or</i> Kissa	Ikniguin	Guikirguin	Amga
The head	Glava	Khobel <i>or</i> Tkhouzgéa	Léout	Léout	Del
The throat	Gorlo	Kouikh	Pilguin	Pilguin	Belga
The forehead	Lob	Tchoutschel <i>or</i> Tchikika	Kitschal	Kitschal	Omkat
A tooth	Zoub	Kip khépp	Bannalguin	Ritti	Itt
The tongue	Iazik	Ditchel	Lill	Guiguil	Enga
The elbow	Lokott	Tallotall	Nitschiouvétt	Kirvouéliin	Etschénn
The fingers	Paltsi	Tkida <i>or</i> Kik-énn	Iélguit	Tchnilguit	Kh-abrr
The nails	Nokhti	Koud <i>or</i> Kououn	Véguit	Véguit	Osta

The cheeks	Choki	Aié ioud <i>or</i> Pr-énn	Elpitt	Irspitt	Anntschinn
The neck	Chéia	Khaitt	Ennainn	Inguik	Mivonn
The shoulder	Pletcho	Tanioud <i>or</i> Tenno	Iilpitt	Tchilpiv	Mirr
The belly	Brioukho	K-Khailita	Nannkhénn	Nannkhinn	Ourr
The nostrils	Nozdri	Kanngassounn	Innvalté		Kh-Elonn
The eyebrows	Brovi	Talténn	Litchvétt		Kh-aramta
The eyelids	Réssnitsi	Khenng-iatschourenn	Illiatichiguit	Virvitt	
The face	Litso	Gouénng	Lioulgoulkhal	Lioulgolkhill	Itti
The back	Spina	Karo	Khaptiann	Khéptitt	Néri
Natural parts of a man		Kalkhann			
Natural parts of a woman		Kouappa			
The blood	Krov	Bechlem	Moulliou moul	Moulliou moul	Souguial
Great	Véliko	Tgolo	Niméankin	Niméankin	Ekjam
Small	Malo	Outchinnélo	Ouppoulioukhin	Niouppoulioukin	Nioukischoukan
High	Vouisloko	Kran-alo	Niguinéguimakhen	Nivlikhin	Gouda
Low	Nisko	Disoulo	Nivtokhin	Nivkhodin	Niatkougak
The sun	Solntzé	Koullétch	Tikiti	Tirkiti	Nioultian
The moon	Mécéts	Kirrh-kirrh	Yalguin	Tschatamoui	Bekh
A star	Zvézda	Ezeng-itch	Lillia petschan	Eguér	Ossikatt
The sky	Nébo	Kokh-khéll	Kh-igan	Keh-iguin	Nian, <i>or</i> Djioulbka
A ray	Loutch	Ts-eiguilik	Tikakh-Mouinpen	Tirkhikh-mell	Elganni
Fire	Ogonn	Briououmkhitch <i>or</i> Panitch	Mouilguin	Mouiltimouil	Tog
Heat	Jarr	Kékak	Koutigué-létonn	Nitilkhin	Khokhssin
The voice	Goloss	Khaélo	Koumguikoum	Khoullichoul	Delgann
A door	Dvér	Onnotch	Téllitél	Titil	Ourka
A hole in the ground	Iama	Khieuép	Zolou ioulguin	Nouterguin	Kengra
Day	Dénn	Taaje	Alvoui	Liougiout	Ining
Night	Notsch	Kiounnouk	Nikinik	Likita	Golbani
A town	Grad	Attéiim	Gouina	Vouivou	Gorad
Life	Jizn	Zoït léném	Kioulgatnguin	Toukoulguiarm	Inni
A forest	Léss	Ou out	Outitou	Outit	Khenita
Grass	Trava	Chichtch	Biigai	Bagailing	Orat
Sleep	Sonn	Caéksn	Miéll khaiirik	Guilkhét iarinn	Oukléan
A tree or wood	Drévo	Ou <i>or</i> Outé	Outouout	Outtiougout	Mo
To sleep	Spatt	Oun ekleni	Kouel khalangui	Miilkhamik	Oukladaï
To cut	Rézatt	Lzinim	Koutch Viguin	Khitschviguin	Minadaï
To tie, to fasten	Vézatt	Tratak	Tién mouiguin	Trémitim	Gadgim
Measure	Méra	Tiakinioung	Tenn métén	Nig eni	Ilkavonn
Gold	Zoloto		Elnipélvouitinn	Tschedlioupouilvouiténn	Mérka
Silver	Srébro		Elnipélvouitinn	Nilguikinpouilvouiténn	Méguén
A hearth	Otchag	Ak kannim	Melguippioulguin	Milguipialguin	Nerka
A house	Domm	Kizd	Ia ianga	Valkarad	Djou
The hearing	Sloukh	Ioulloteliim	Tikovaloming	Valioulm	Issni
The sight	Zrenié	Eltchkiounnim	Tikila ounguin	Mogourkim	Igouroun
The taste	Vkouss	Tal tal			Amtam
The smell	Obonanié	Kheisk	Kot-keng	Tikerkin	Moiéni
The skin	Koja	Salsa	Nalguin	Nelguin	Iss, <i>or</i> Nandra
Stay, stop	Stoï	Khimikhitch	Khanni vouilgui	Khvellia	Illé
A dog	Sabaca	Kossa	Kh attaan	Guéttin	Ninn
An egg	Iaitso	Dilkhatch	Ligli	Liglig	Oumta
A bird	Ptissa	Disskhilt	Gallia	Gallia	Dei
A feather	Péro	Cissiou	Téguélguin	Téguél	Detlé
Husband	Mouje, <i>or</i> Mouch	Kiskoug	Ouiakhotch	Ouréakhotch	Edi
Wife	Géna	Tigen outch	Névgann	Névgann	Achi
Brother	Bratt	Tig-a	Khaita kalguin	Khaïta kalguin	Akann
Sister	Séstra	Dikhtoung	Tchaa kiguit	Tchakiguitch	Eken
Love	Lioubov	Allokhtel anim	Kekmitcha angui	Nitvaïguim	Goudj mona
To love	Lioubitt	Tallokhtel azinn	Ekroukounniguin	Tchivéatchim	Aïa vrovou

A letter	Zémliá	Cimmit	Noutelkhen	Noutlenour	Tor
A girdle	Poïass	Ciititt	Iguit	Ririt	Boïat
A stone	Kaminn	Kouall	Gouvién	Vougonn	Djoul
Give	Daï	Katkou	Khinéélgui	Kétam	Omouli
Go, begone	Padi, padi potsch	Téout	Khallikhatigui	Khél khit	Khourli
No	Niétt	Biinakitlik	Ouinnié	Ouinéa	Atcha
Yes	Da	Lébell	E	E	Ya
To drink	Pitt	Ekoss kholnim	Mouiv vouitschik	Migoutschi	Koldakou
The weather	Vreméa	Takkhit, <i>or</i> Takkhiiat	Khoulitik	Khouriti	Khéren
Thick	Tolst	Khaoumouilli	Nooumkhin	Nioumkhin	Dérom
A bone	Kost	Kotg amtch	Kh attaam	Ettemkai	Ipri
To sing	Pétt	Ang iéssonim	Kagannguiang	Khoulikhoul	Ikann
Light, (not heavy)	Légok	Dimss khoulou	Ninnakhin	Nimirkoukhin	Aïmkhoun
A cow	Karova				Khoukoum
A sheep, or Argali	Barann	Koulem	Kitéb	Kétéb	Ouiamkan
A pig	Svinia ^[2]				
A goose	Gouss	Kissouiéss			Erbatsch
A duck	Outka	Ditchimatch			Néki
A ditch, or canal	Rov	Aétchpouinnim	Nota guilguiguin	Nivékhshinkoutérguin	Khouniram
Fruit	Plod	Issgatessitch	Iévouinann	Vouinnia khai	Baldaran
Horn	Rov	Détténn	Innalguin	Aïvalkhschléa	Tannia
Good	Dobro	Klioubello	Malguiguin	Nimelhhin	Aïa
Bad	Khoudo	K'kéllello	Kh antkinn	Guerkin	Kannaialit
A root	Korén	Jaéngettsch	Nimmakin	Kingakaï	Kh obkann
The trunk of a tree	Pénn	Enni mellokoll	Tattkhoub	Outtékhaignéttchvouili	Moudakann
The bark	Kora	Ireitch	Il khelguin		Ourta
White	Bélo	Guénnkalo	Nilgatkhin	Nilgakin	Guéltadi
Red	Krasno	Tchatch-alo	Neit Tschikhin	Tchédlionl	Khoulania
Wine, or brandy	Vino	Koabkho-azamg	Akhamimil	Akamimil	Mina
To sow	Séiatt				
Bread	Khléb	^[3]			
Oats	Oveuss				
Rye	Rosch				
To cover	Scritt	Khankhlidinn	Khiniatchéiaguin	Khinvaguini	Djairam
To carry	Nossit	Lénouiarenk	Khinéalguitati	Traïavam	Gue-énoum
To draw	Vozit	Khéningekhtch	Kouénguinin	Guérévouli	Gue-élbouttiann
An oak	Doub		Atviniakou	Etvou	Tschourna
A ship	Soudno, karable	Tokh, khatim	Konaoutiguing	Matarkin	Koptonn
Marriage	Brak	En itipositch	Kitilkhin		Avlann
A plain	Poléa	Ouskh			
A field	Pachnéa				
To till	Pakhatt				
A plough	Sokha				
An harrow	Borona				
Pain, fatigue	Troud	Akhltipkonnim	Iakhitchatguiguin	Lioulngatt	Gourgaldénn
A girl	Déva, <i>or</i> Dévka	Oukhtchitch	Ianguianaouv	Névouitchkhatt	Kh-ounatch
A boy	Maltchik	Pekh atchoutch	Ak kapill	Nénkhai	Kh-ourkann
A pigeon	Goloub				
A guard	Storoje	Annatchourna	Koun oung	Eioulakaï	Etteiram
Growth	Rost				Goudatch
A bed, to lie in bed	Rodini	Iouss ass khénizatch	Kmigatalik	Guékmiiél	Baldajakann
Power, will	Vlast	Inatch kékvaouv	Katvouguiguin	Tschinvo	Ekjéanni
The evening	Vétschér	Ettém	Anguivénguvin	Arguivéiguin	Khisseatchin
A horse	Konn, <i>or</i> Lochat				Mourak, <i>or</i> Mourann
The morning	Outro	Moukoulass	Iakhimitiv	Réakhmitiv	Badjakar
Now	Téper	Eéngou	Ettchigui	Ettchigui	Ték
Before	Préjédé	Koummétt	Inkiép	Ettiol	Djoulléa

After	Possé	Déméll	Iavatching	Iavatchi	Essiméak
Thou	Ti	Kizé	Guitché	Guir	Ssi
We	Moui	Bouze	Mouiou	Mouri	Bou
He	On	Tié	Enno	Inkhann	Nong annioubeï
She	Onna	Tschii	Ennonévit khét	Inkhann névann	Nong ann achi
They	Onni	Tié nakil	Ioutschou	Innkahatt	Kong artann
You	Voui	Souze	Touiou	Touri	Kh-ou
Here	Zdéff	Tétchkh	Gouitkou	Voutkou	Ellia
There	Tamm	Kék koui	Nanko	Nenko	Tala
Look there!	Vott	Tétk oun	Gout-Tinno	Nottkhan	Er
A beard	Boroda	Elloud	Lélou	Léliout	Tchourkann
Hair	Voloss	Tchérahtchr, <i>or</i> koubid	Nitchouvoui	Kirvouitt	Niouritt
Cries	Krik	Orang torritch	Koukomgalag	Nikétéméruginéa	Irkann
Noise	Schoumm	Oukh véchtchitch	Kouvitchiguitchiguéto	Ioulnorkinn	Ouldann
Waves of the sea	Volni	Kéga	Kantchiguitang	Guittchguin	Bialga
Sand	Péssok	Bezzalik	Tchiguéi	Tchigaï	Onéang
Clay	Glina	Kitt khim	Att ann		Télbak
Verdure	Zélénn	Dokhle kralo	Touiévégai	Tourvéguéi	Tchoubann
Green	Zélénoié				Tchoubalrann
A worm	Tschérf	Gepitch	Enniguém	Enniguén	Oug-ill
A branch	Souk	Iousstiltch	Elligér		Garr
Leaves	Listi	Bouilt lell	Voutou outo	Khokhonguit	Ebdernia
Rain	Dojede	Tchoukh tchou	Moukhémouk	Ront-ti	Oudann
Hail	Grad	Koutg atta	Nikléout	Guéguélironntiti	Bota
Lightning	Molnia	Kig kikh	Kigui guilann		Agdiou tapkittann
Snow	Snég	Korell	Gallag-all	Ellg-ell	Imandra
Cold	Stouja	K-ennétch	Khialguin	Tchaghtchéngg	Iguénn
Mud	Gress	Tcha ou ésch	Ekékaguiguin	Guékitchkaguirguin	Boullakékh
Milk	Moloko	Doukh énn	Lioukhéi	Lioukhaï	Oukiouln
Man	Tschélovék	Krochtcho	Ouiémtévouilann	Khlavoll	Béi
Old	Starr	Kizékh kétlinn	Enn pann	Guénpiévli	Sagdi
Young	Molodd	Linnétt-lék	G-oiitchik	Goradchik	Nioulsioukhtchann
Quick	Scoro	Dikh-ak	Innaéï	Iïnggué	Oumouchéat
Slow	Tikho	Dikh-létchoull	Métchinné	Noulméagué	Ett niou Koukann
The world, people	Liudi	Krochtchorann	Toumgou	Nilchikhikhlavoll	Béill
How?	Kak	Libékh	Mintchi	Miniri	Onn
Where?	Gdé	Binnié	G-aminna	Guemi	Illéa
When?	Kogda	Ittia	Tité	Tita	Ok
What?	Tchto	Enokitch	Inna	R-éakhnout	Ek
To whom?	Kémm	Kiouliout	Méki	Mikiném	Ni
To what, with what	Tchémm	Enok kaïell	Ioukh-khé	Réakh-kha	Etch
Fish	Riba	Ennitch	Innaénn	Innéa	Ola
Meat	Méssa	Talt gall	Khostokvoll	Khoratoll	Oulra
Bank	Bérég	Khaïmenn	Antchouimm	Tchourma	Kh-olinn
Depth	Gloubina	Amm-amm	Nimm khénn	Nimkhinn	Kh-ounta
Height	Vouissota	Krann-all	Niguinéguillokhénn	Niélikinn	Oousskiassoukounn
Width	Chirina	Ank Iakill	Nalamkhinn	Niougoumkhinn	Démga
Length	Dlina	Ioulijél	Nivlikhinn	Nivlikhinn	G'onaminn
An axe	Topor	Kouachou	Khaall	G-algaté	Tobar
Dust	Pouil	Tézitch	Guitkaouétché	Noultschkhininnbouial	Kh-énguiélrénn
A whirlwind	Vikhr	} Tvétvi, <i>or</i> Pourga			Kh ouï
A tempest	Bouréa		Noutéguinn, <i>or</i> pourga	Ménivouial, pourga	{
A knife	Kholm	Tek khoultch	Ténoup	Néittipell	Kh-oupkann
A boundary, a leading string	Méja				Khidléa
A mouse	Mouich	Dekhoulth	Pipikhilguin	Pipikhilnik	Tchaliouktchann
A fly	Moukha	Khalimltch	G-alamit	Mrénn	Dilkann
A nail	Gvozd				Tipkitinn
A dispute	Brann	Letch khalikalim	Kaouv tchiténg	Nipilvouitoukhinéat	Djargamatt
Warrior	Voïnn	Tesk koullou	Enn khévlann	Nikétioukhin-khlavol	Tchékti
War	Voïna	Ar-rokhl-konim	Nonn mitchélangui	} Maraourkinatt	Kh ounniattia
Battery	Draka	Loss-komozitch	Kotkinaoutchélangui		Koussikatchinn
Breastplate	Lati		Mitchiguév	Ekh-ev	Djbouvla

Agreement	Lad	Killiouch	Kovélevlangui	Ténguég-iarkim	Antaki
Peace	Mir	Lomstach	Mitang étvéla	Minvouilimouik	Anmoldar
Content, delighted	Rad	Khaiouk	Tiguinévak	Teiguég-iarkim	Ariouldiounl
A robber	Tad vorr	Soukh atchoutch	Koutou lagaiténg	Nitouléakhénn	Djiourminn
A hole	Dira	Palp gall	Khénpi	Patriguinn	Kh-angar
To pour	Litt	Lioussézitch	Koutag-annguinn	Nékoutéaniét	Ouniétchip
To boil	Varitt	Kokazok	Koukouvévang	Khoutik	Oladjim
To go to bed	Létch	Kh-alitch	Matchégatik	Mingaitchamouik	Dastchissindim
Sex	Pol	Ozatitt	Tchéthchaguing		Kh arann
Below	Pod	Céssko			Erguidalinn
Above	Nad				Oïdalinn
Without	Béz	Innakinévka	Ekh-é	A	Ag idali
Misfortune	Béda	Titch Kéink	Tschémgaïkitchhoguidinn		Ourgadou
Victory	Pobéda	Danntch-tchkitchéth	Mouitintaouvnaou	Guéinnitillim	Dabdarann
The softest and whitest part of a tree under the bark	Béll	Guenn kalo	Nilgaguinn	Nilguikhin	Guéltaldi
Been	Bouill	Déllitch	Nivannamm	Nitvanguim	Kh-oulssinn
Ice	Léd	Kirvoul	Khilléguil	Tinntinn	Boukoss
To beat	Bitt	Emill tchaliim	Ténnikplénn	Tratalannvouim	Maddia
A whale	Kitt	Dénn	Iounni	Rég-év	Kalim
Fallen	Pall	Etkhl khlinn	Vouiégguéi	Vouiééi	Tikrinn
A vapour	Par	Tchounéssétch	Kipil-ating	Nilnik	Okssinn
Lamentation	Volp	K-khanagtch	Kotéinn gatinng	Térnatirinnat	Kh-ogandra
Briskly	Jivo	Zountchitch	Koukioultinng	Evguika	Inenn
Disease	Zlo	Khakaitt lilézitch	Kh-antt kinn	Akhali	Mbouvkatchalrann
Or	Jli	G-akka	Méttké	Evouirr	Irék
To them	Imm	Doué énkaldakioul	Enninng	Innkhananténgg	Nogordoutann
One	Iédin	Dizitt	Ennann	Iniéenn	Oumounn
Two	Dva	Kaacha	Niékékh	Niréakh	Djiour
Three	Tri	Tchook	Niyoukh	N-rioukh	Elann
Four	Tchétiré	Tchaak	Niakh	Nrakh	Digonn
Five	Pétt	Kom étak	Mouillanguinn	Mouilliguénn	Tonngonn
Six	Schéft	Killk-okk	Ennann-mouillanguinn	Innann-mouilliguénn	Niougann
Seven	Sémme	Ettgatanok	Niakh-mouillanguinn	Nirakh-mouilliguénn	Nadann
Eight	Vossémm	Tchokh-otténokh	Niyoukh-mouillanguinn	Annvrotkinn	Djépkann
Nine	Dévét	Tchakh-attanokh	Khonnaï-tchinkinn	Khonatchinki	Ouiounnv
Ten	Déssett	Tchom khotako	Mouinéguikinn	Mouinguikinn	Mér
Twenty	Dvatsétt	Kaachatcho-khotako	Kh-alik	Khlik-kinn	Djir-mér
Thirty	Trissétt	Tchook-tchom-khotako	Kh-alikmouinéguikinn	Khlipkinn mouinguitkinnparol	Elak mér
Forty	Sorok	Tchaak-tchom-khotako	Niékh alik	Nirakh-khlipkinn	Diguén mér
Fifty	Pettdéssétt	Kom-iétak-tchom-khotako	Niékh alikmouinéguikinn	Niérahk-khlipkinn-mouinguitkinn parol	Tongam mér
Sixty	Schésdéssétt	Kilk-ok-tchom-khotako	Niékh kh-alik	Nrokhkhlipkinn	Niougam mér
Seventy	Sémdéssétt	Etaganokh-tchom-khotako	Niyoukh alikmouinéguikinn	Neurde khlipkinn mouinguitkinn parol	Nadann mér
Eighty	Vossémdéssétt	Tchokh-atténokh-tchom-khotako	Niakh-khalik	Nrakh khlipkinn	Djépkann mér
Ninety	Dévenosto	Tchakh-attanokh-tchom-khotako	Niak alikmouinéguikinn	Nrakhkhlipkin mouinguitkinn parol	Oulonn mér
An hundred	Sto	Tchom-khotakotcom-khotako	Mouilanguinn kh-alik	Mouil liguéing khlipguitkinn	Niata
A thousand	Tissétcha		Mouinéguikinn mouilanguinn kh-alik	Mouinguitkinn khlipkinn	Ménn namall

[1] The reader may consult the Preface for the pronunciation.

[2] They have no knowledge of this animal.

[3] The blank spaces in the Kamtschadale, Koriac, Tchouktchi, and Lamout columns are not filled up for want of proper words in the respective languages of these people. When they want to express the objects meant by those words, they make use of the Russian terms.

VOCABULARY OF THE KAMTSCHADALE LANGUAGE,

At St. Peter and St. Paul, and at Paratounka^[1].

ENGLISH.	RUSSIAN.	KAMTSCHADALE.
<i>Picture of a saint</i>	Obrass	Noukhtchatchitch
<i>Isba, Russian house</i>	Isba	Kisout
<i>Window</i>	Okno	Okno
<i>Table</i>	Stoll	Ouzitor
<i>A stove, furnace</i>	Petch	Patch
<i>Subterranean house</i>	Iourta	Kéntchitch
<i>A Kamtschadale</i>	Kamtschadal	Itolmatch
<i>An officer</i>	Afitsér	Houizoutchitch
<i>An interpreter</i>	Pérévodtschik	Ka aa touss
<i>A sledge</i>	Sanki	Skaskatt
<i>Harness the dogs</i>	Japrégai Sobaki	Kozaps nouzak
<i>Harness for dogs</i>	Alaki	Tennemjeda
<i>A mirror</i>	Zerklo	Ouattchitch
<i>Water</i>	Voda	I, i
<i>Fire</i>	Ogonn	Panitch
<i>Light the fire</i>	Dostann ogonn	Na anidakhtch
<i>Gun</i>	Fouzeïa, or Roujié	Koum
<i>A bottle</i>	Boutilka	Souala
<i>A bag</i>	Méchok	Maoutch
<i>Tea</i>	Tchaï	Amtchaoujé
<i>Forks</i>	Vilki	Tchoumkoussi
<i>A spoon</i>	Lochka	Kachpa
<i>A knife</i>	Nojik	Vatchiou
<i>A plate</i>	Torélka	Trélka
<i>A table-cloth</i>	Scatért	Iétakhatt
<i>A napkin</i>	Salfétka	Toutkcha
<i>Bread</i>	Khléb	Kop kom
<i>A waistcoat</i>	Kamzol	Ikoumtnakh
<i>Breeches</i>	Schtani	Kouaou
<i>Stockings</i>	Tchoulki	Païmann
<i>Boots</i>	Sapogui	Kotnokot
<i>A sort of boot made of the skin of the sea wolf or the feet of rein deer.</i>	Torbassi	Skhvanioud
<i>A shoe</i>	Bochmaki	Konkot
<i>A shift or shirt</i>	Roubachka	Ourvann
<i>Gloves</i>	Pértchaki	Kikaskhroulid
<i>A ring</i>	Persténn	Konnazoutchémm
<i>Give some food</i>	Daï iést	Ségcha
<i>Give some water to drink</i>	Daï pitt vodi	Kotkoiï
<i>Paper</i>	Boumaga	N, ks
<i>A book</i>	Kniga	Kalikol
<i>A cup</i>	Tchachka	Saja
<i>The head</i>	Golova	Tkhouzja
<i>The forehead</i>	Lop	Tchikika
<i>The hair</i>	Volossi	Koubid
<i>The eyes</i>	Glaza	Nadid
<i>The nose</i>	Noss	Kika
<i>The mouth</i>	Rot	Kissa
<i>The hands</i>	Rouki	Séttoud
<i>The feet</i>	Nogui	Tchkada
<i>The body</i>	Télo	Konkhaï
<i>The eye-brows</i>	Brovi	Titdad
<i>The fingers</i>	Paltsi	Pkida
<i>The nails</i>	Nokhti	Koud
<i>The cheeks</i>	Schtchoki	Abalioud
<i>The neck</i>	Schéïa	Khaitill
<i>The ears</i>	Ouchi	I-ioud
<i>The shoulders</i>	Plétcha	Tanioud
<i>A cap</i>	Chapka	Khalaloutch

<i>A sash</i>	Kouchak	Sitit
<i>A needle</i>	Igla	Chicha
<i>A Thimble</i>	Napérstok	Oulioul
<i>Give your hand</i>	Daï roukou	Kot kossoutou
<i>Take this present</i>	Primi présent	Kamaïti
<i>Thank you</i>	Blagodarstvouiou	Déléamoui
<i>Wash the shirt</i>	Vouimoui roubachki	Kadmouikh
<i>Soap</i>	Mouilo	Kadkhom
<i>A sable</i>	Sobol	Komkom
<i>A fox</i>	Lissitsa	Tchachiann
<i>An otter</i>	Vouidra	Mouichémouich
<i>A hare</i>	Ouchkann, Zaïts	Mouis tchitch
<i>An ermine</i>	Gornostall	Deitchitch
<i>A goose</i>	Gouss	Ksoaïss
<i>A duck</i>	Outka	Archimonss
<i>Chicken</i>	Kouritsa	Kokorok
<i>A swan</i>	Lébéd	Maskhou
<i>A bear</i>	Medvéd	Kaza
<i>A wolf</i>	Volk	Kotaioum
<i>A cow</i>	Korova	Kououja
<i>Fish</i>	Riba	Etchiou
<i>Meat</i>	Méssou	Tatal
<i>Butter</i>	Masso	Kotkhom
<i>Milk</i>	Moloka	Nokonn
<i>Give food immediately</i>	Daï-iést-po skoréié	Kotkotakossask
<i>Give something to drink immediately</i>	Daï-pitt-poskoréie	Tikososok
<i>Husband</i>	Mouje	Alkou
<i>Wife</i>	Baba, jéna	Kanija
<i>Daughter</i>	Défka	Outchitchiou
<i>Infant</i>	Malinnko robénok	Paatchitch
<i>A church</i>	Tsérkov	Takakijout
<i>A priest</i>	Pop	Iakatchitch
<i>A priest's wife</i>	Popadiia	Alnatsch
<i>A servant of the Church</i>	Diatchok	Diiatchok
<i>A church chandelier</i>	Padilo	Kapoutchitch
<i>One</i>	Iédinn	Dizk
<i>Two</i>	Dva	Kaza
<i>Three</i>	Tri	Tsoko
<i>Four</i>	Tchétiré	Tsak
<i>Five</i>	Pétt	Koumnak
<i>Six</i>	Schést	Kilkok
<i>Seven</i>	Sémm	Idadok
<i>Eight</i>	Vossémm	Tsoktoug
<i>Nine</i>	Dévétt	Tsaktah
<i>Ten</i>	Déssétt	Koumouktoukh
<i>Eleven</i>	Yédinn nadssét	Dizkkina
<i>Twelve</i>	Dva nadssét	Kachichina
<i>Thirteen</i>	Tri nadssét	Tchokchina
<i>Fourteen</i>	Tchétiré nadssét	Tchakchina
<i>Fifteen</i>	Pétt nadssét	Koumnakchina
<i>Sixteen</i>	Schést nadssét	Kilkoukchina
<i>Seventeen</i>	Sém nadssét	Paktoukchina
<i>Eighteen</i>	Vossém nadssét	Tchoktoug
<i>Nineteen</i>	Dévétt nadssét	Tchaktak
<i>Twenty</i>	Dvatssét	Koumhhtoug
<i>Fifty</i>	Péttdéssét	Koumkhtoukha
<i>An hundred</i>	Sto	Koumkhtoukhoukhtoukha

[1] Though the language at Bolcheretsk be different from what is spoken at both these places, all the words of this Vocabulary are there made use of.

END OF THE VOCABULARY.

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