

THE RUSSIAN OFFICER.

A "Splendid Fellow, a Great, Full-blooded Man"—An Intimate Sketch of Him.

Charles H. stands in the London Mail. Mukden, Manchuria, May 12. I traveled half way across the world with the Russian officer—a trainload of him from the general officer down to the junior subaltern—and by the time you reach the other end of the Siberian Railway you know something of your fellow passenger. I have lived with him in a smelly base town through the dreary longeurs of the concentration stage of warfare. I have eaten with him the ill-cooked food of the tenth-rate Eastern hotel, and drunk with him the sweet champagne of far Eastern conviviality. I have talked politics with him and cookery and religion. I have played chess with him and done horse deals with him, and played vint with him—which is bridge of the fourth dimension. It is true I have seen nothing of him—out with his men in the open, and the other fellows on the skyline, but that is neither his fault nor mine. Nevertheless, I have seen enough of him to think that I know him pretty well. And he is a splendid fellow, a great, grand, big-hearted, full-blooded man, and for friend and comrade as good as I either hope or desire ever to possess. There are some 8,000 versts of line between Moscow and Harbin, and I estimate that the acts of kindness, consideration and courtesy extended to me by my officer fellow passengers averaged one to every verst of the journey. I was an absolute stranger to every one on the train, utterly unknown and speaking scarce a word of the impossible: Russian language, but on the first day out the three officers aboard who spoke English came to me and introduced themselves, and I nearly all the remainder took pains to let me know that they spoke French or German, or both. Some of them took infinite trouble in trying to teach me Russian. There was a general officer of high distinction with whom I had exchanged but a few words on the journey, since he spoke no language but Russian. But at Irkutsk he put himself to no end of personal trouble to have a place found for me in the next Trans-Baikal train. The Russian officer is a gentleman. But what is more, he is a man as well as a gentleman, and his gentlemanliness is of the rich lustre of the polish that only a rough surface can take. He is without trace of affectation or pose. In all the Russian officers I have met I have never encountered a single example of the family—the curled darling of the fashionable regiments of the ornamental armies. Perhaps it is because there are too many of him to regard himself as a class apart. The officers of an army that runs up into millions can hardly look upon themselves as a little ultra-fashionable set with special social privileges. The Russian army officer is very much like the American army officer. Ridiculous anomaly that anything in the great Western democracy should seem to bear a resemblance to anything in the great Eastern autocracy. But it is true. Although in the United States there is not much of an army for a man to belong to, while in Russia there is not much else, soldiering in the two countries has at least this much in common—that in both it offers a career which the man of enterprise and ambition need not despise. In America it is sufficiently well paid to make it worth the while of the competent man whom the limitations of commercial life do not satisfy. In Russia, as yet, the commercial life does not provide the same kind of man with opportunities, sufficient to appeal to his imagination. Business in Russia is in its infancy still. The associations of serfdom still cling to it. A merchant, though prosperous to the English or American degree, has no place in the larger life of the nation. A manufacturer, though he controls a vast enterprise which adds enormously to the national wealth, is without standing or recognition, except among his own class. In fact the greater his commercial success, the greater suspicion that his father was a peasant, a Jew or a foreigner. Nor have the learned professions the same attractions and advantages as in Western Europe. For the young Russian of brains and energy and character

and ambition there is always the army and only the army. Soldiering is the largest and most important of the national employments—he staple industry, so to speak, of the country, with all the sense of dignity and real importance that attaches to the staple industry. It offers a career, and a real and satisfying career; and it offers, moreover, all the attractions of the larger, more spacious life, such as appeal to the Russians, who have not yet become a nation of town dwellers. It shows them the world as no other army, not even our own, sees it—the adventure of distant frontier lines, the strange sights of old civilizations and old barbarisms. You may find among the Russian officers here and there a prig and here and there a boor, but he will be one only among thousands. Whenever and wherever you may chance to encounter a Russian officer you may safely make sure that you will find him a healthy minded, hearty gentleman, brimming over with good humor and good spirits, with the cheerfulness and kindest interest in yourself and your affairs, that makes you feel after an hour's casual acquaintance as though you had known him all your life. When you are introduced to him—and even when you are not—he grips you by the hand in the heartiest way, tells you his name, joins with the most perfect frankness in whatever discussion is going on, without the slightest trace of affectation or self-consciousness. He has a healthy hunger for meal times, and whether the food be good or bad—in the far East it is almost invariably bad—he eats it all. When he takes a glass of vodka or wine he drinks it at a draught. When he laughs it is great, healthy, hearty laughter, and when he is angry it is great, healthy, hearty anger that he shows. A cheerful, healthy, hearty, full-blooded man getting all there is out of life—a good lover, a good hater, and a fine fellow all round. You see him at his best, perhaps, when he is with other officers on account of the perfect camaraderie and entire absence of restraint that mark the social intercourse of officers of all grades. A little group of them round a dinner table are as light heartedly happy as a hunting party, and you may see a gray-bearded old general and a boyish lieutenant seated together at the same cheerful supper table with such a perfect frank understanding in their camaraderie that the younger man lacks nothing in deference and the senior nothing in dignity. It is in lonely, frost-bound posts in Siberia, in the isolation of stations among Central Asian tribes along the frontiers, where the companionship of one's own kind means so much more than it is realized to mean in cities, that this spirit of camaraderie is bred and developed. And in the American army the same result comes from somewhat similar conditions. But of the Russian officer as a fighting man I am unable to speak because I know nothing. He is too good a man to be anything but a good soldier—of that I am certain. But as to the manner in which his qualities translate themselves into terms of war I know no more than I know of the fighting planet Mars. I know that it is blood-colored and that is all.

THE A. & N. C. RAILROAD.

Alleged Terms of the Various Offers to Lease.

Raleigh Times. Although no official statement can be secured as to the terms of the several offers to lease the A. & N. C. Railroad, now in the hands of the Governor, it is said that they are substantially as follows: The meeting to take up the lease propositions takes place at New Bern next Thursday, September 1st. The Philadelphia syndicate's bid is something like 5 per cent for a fifty-year term. It is not yet known whether it will complete its offer. The Atlantic Railway Company has put up a guarantee of \$100,000 and so has R. S. Howland, of Asheville. The local syndicate has not yet filed its bid, but if it does so it will probably be on Monday. Howland's proposition is not so good in point of rental as that of the Atlantic Railway and averages a little over 4 1/2 per cent for something like 90 years, being for a term which will end at the same time as the lease of the North Carolina Railway to the Southern so that both these leases would fall in together. Howland's proposition is to pay the rental and interest on the bonded indebtedness, taxes, and the cost of maintaining the organization of the Atlantic & North Carolina Railway. It does not cover any extension of the road. The lease to Howland is said to be a valuable one because it is not doubted that he would at once proceed to develop that section and the road as well; that he is able to do these things and that in order to make any money he would have to do them. The proposition made by the Atlantic Railway Company is for an extension, and the rental rate is something like 6 per cent on a 50-year basis. It is declared that there is really much more opposition to any lease at all that has been made public; that is not by its stockholders, but by people living along the line of the road. There is considerable inquiry for stock of the road, and there must be some speculation in it. The highest sale reported officially is said to have been made during the present week at \$55 a share. It is declared that the stock is really worth \$75 a share. No one can tell what may happen during the next few days; what new bids will be made, what changes proposed, or what bids withdrawn.

IMPORTED ELANDS.

South Africa Game to be Introduced in the Southwest.

Yorkville Enquirer. The introduction of elands into this country is likely to be attempted before long, the Department of Agriculture having given its approval to the idea. All that is needed is money which Congress will be asked to give. The animals which are the largest of all antelopes, would be very valuable in the desert regions of the Southwest as a source of meat supply. They require almost no water, are accustomed to forage for themselves and are quite tractable. The eland is nearly six feet high at the shoulder when full grown and weighs 1,600 pounds. It is not particularly swift (unlike most of its congeners), and a man can, sometimes overtake it by running. Its flesh is considered a delicacy. Commonly it browses in herds in the waterless deserts of South Africa, to which it is a native, its ability to get along for months together without water being a mystery. To some extent doubtless, it depends upon moisture derived from succulent plants, such as the wild water-melon.

Confederate Soldier Gets Pay for His Horse Taken Soon After the War.

Durham Dispatch. At least one Confederate soldier in this county is to recover the price of property taken by the Union army directly after the surrender. Under the act of Congress of March 27, 1902, J. L. Hall, of Durham, will receive the price of a horse, saddle and bridle taken by the Yankee troops. He sent in his claim, and after considerable correspondence and filing of evidence he has received a voucher from the government, which means he will get \$105 from the United States Treasury.

Keeping in Touch With Oneself.

Saturday Evening Post. It's good to have money and the things that money will buy, but it's good, too, to check up once in a while and make sure you haven't lost the things that money won't buy. When a fellow's got what he set out for in this world he should go off into the woods for a few weeks now and then to make sure he's still a man, and not a plug hat and a frock coat and a wad of bills.

THE TOO AFFECTIONATE MAN.

Is an Overdose of Love on the Husband's Part Equivalent to Cruelty?

Philadelphia Inquirer. Divorce courts have produced many strange causes for marital separations, but we venture to say that the most astonishing one on record is that of the woman who wants the bonds severed because her husband since marriage has gratified her every wish. She cannot consent to live with such a man, and the courts are asked to give her a chance to marry a man who may be expected to fight at the drop of the bat. The astonishing thing about this is not the fact, but the admission of the woman. It seems certain to the unprejudiced man who has followed the course of divorce cases for many years that the same reason underlies all such applications, but it has not been generally expressed. We leave it to husbands, even to those who are undr fire, if they will not state with an unprejudiced mind, that every wish of their wives has been granted, that nothing has been done from the beginning except to let them have their own way. It would be absurd to suppose that a man would beat his wife or otherwise abuse her, after having taken the most solemn obligations to the contrary. Men are too good to their wives and suffer accordingly. A recent sociologist of distinction wrote a book on the subject: "Why are divorces so much more common now than formerly?" He failed to mention the fact that women now get everything they want, while the husband is not permitted to use even moral suasion to protect his own interests. Has it ever struck this man that the divorce problem came up at the very time when the husbands gave up beating their wives? It used to be that a man who married a woman had a perpetual ownership in her. He secured her under a contract, as he did a horse or dog, and when things did not go right he administered the corrective lash—always, mind you, in a thoroughly Christian spirit and for the good of the punished. It hurt him much more to beat his wife than to take a licking himself, but he did it in a spirit of self-abnegation, which had most admirable results. In these days when a man cannot knock his wife down without unfavorable comment, it is natural that there is a laxity of discipline. It would appear that the good old days are gone forever.

No Account Labor an Imperishment.

It is editorially stated in the Washington Post that the South needs 2,000,000 Italian laborers to cultivate her cotton fields.

The South can make more cotton now than the balance of the world can spin and weave. A few years ago cotton went down to 4 cents a pound. The people planted other crops, which they hoped to be more profitable, and so the supply of cotton went off. The number of mills multiplied the demand for cotton, the price went up, and hence an increase in the supply of cotton. The crop now promises to be more than 12,000,000 bales, the largest the world ever saw. If we need more cotton we can have it simply by raising the price. Poor labor, that is, the poor quality and cheap, always hinders and never helps any locality. There is no incentive to invent any labor-saving implement while cheap labor can be had. It's when labor is high and scarce that men tax their inventive genius to plow two furrows where before he cut but one. Labor, when it becomes high and scarce, causes men to fertilize their farms so that one acre shall make more than two used to. None of these things will be done when poor, no-account paper labor is standing around to work for whatever it can get, and be dear at that. A typesetting machine is worth eight slow printers. A sulky plow can cultivate more land and do it better than a half dozen Dagos following deadline mules. And so we can show that reapers, binders and separators have come in the absence of labor. There is always compensation for what we must give up. When our wives and daughters and sisters must cook and keep house we look out for better cooking utensils, better well fixtures, more convenient cook rooms, and warmer dining rooms. The clearer is any country from unreliable, cheap, inefficient labor, the better; in fact, as long as any section relies upon it, it will have nothing better to look to.

Was Sanctified and Destroyed His Tobacco Crop.

Smithfield Herald. Some time ago Rev. Gaston W. Caswell was holding a meeting in Bentonsville township and Mr. Jas. Johnson accepted the doctrine of sanctification and made a profession of it. During the meeting the minister spent the night with Mr. Johnson. The next morning the two men took hoes and went into the field and cut down all of Mr. Johnson's tobacco. They believe it is wrong to make or use tobacco and so they decided to destroy it.

Investigation of Scuppernon Grape.

The United States Department of Agriculture is investigating the Scuppernon grape with a view to determining the best varieties, methods of culture, pruning, training, etc., as well as the uses to which the fruit can be put. One of the features of this investigation which is considered of particular importance is the locating of vines of this type, either wild or in cultivation, that are known to excel in productiveness, size, color or quality of fruit, or in some other important particular. In this connection, the Viticulturist of the Bureau of Plant Industry, who has the work in charge, will be glad to receive reports on such vines from persons who know of their existence, stating the facts regarding them and the points of special merit that have been observed in them. Correspondence regarding such vines should be addressed to Geo. C. Husmann, Viticulturist Bureau of Plant Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. The department will, upon application, furnish special mailing boxes and franks with which specimens of choice varieties can be forwarded to the Viticulturist for examination, without cost to the sender.

In the Neck.

Liberty, Kan. Express. Jess Pinkston's neck was as stiff as an old ax handle the first of this week, the direct cause of which, it is universally thought, was too much arm pressure.

The State has offered a reward of \$150 and the authorities of Madison county an additional reward of \$150 for the arrest of John Pate, who some weeks ago wantonly and brutally killed Mrs. John Crowder in that county.

SEPTEMBER NOTES.

The month which marks the close of summer is here. The advent of autumn is at hand and autumn thoughts and plans are springing in the mind.

In our own case we are preparing for a larger business and better service for our customers than ever before. Our new store-room is nearing completion. In a week or two we shall be at home in our new modern quarters. Meanwhile our fall goods are arriving, new, stylish, up-to-date. These goods are of exclusive patterns, superior qualities, and reasonably priced. We invite you to inspect them, and if you are not already so, we feel sure you will soon become one of our many satisfied customers.

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CRAIG AND WILSON

HIS MOTHER'S PORTRAIT

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