RUSSIA THROUGH EUROPEAN EYES, 1820-61 : THE PEASANT.

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PART ONE

CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

> No part of the world can be thoroughly understood until it has been described by various persons visiting it at different times, and under different circumstances; by private individuals as well as government agents, by travellers whose province is the passing impression and daily incident of travel, as well as by observers of a wider grasp.[1]

At the beginning of the nineteenth century Russia to Western Europe was a remote though imposing country about which little was written and even less known. Few foreigners visited Russia for other than official reasons: the government and climate together with the relative remoteness and singularity of this great portion of the earth's surface discouraged tourism.

However, with the advent of Napoleon, Russia assumed a new importance in European affairs, and the literate public began to take a greater interest in her internal condition as well as her diplomatic and military exterior. Already, as early as 1799, William Tooke had published an important three-volume View of the Russian Empire,[2] and other accounts followed his. After 1815 the information about Russia increased greatly and was widely read, partly out of curiosity, partly out of fear. Curiosity had been aroused by the contact with Russia during the Napoleonic wars; fear, by her power and the increasing involvement of this power in European affairs. If the French already had reason to fear and dislike Russia, Alexander I's increasing opposition to liberalism in Continental Europe (for example the revolutions of the 1820's), the Decemberist episode and the crushing of Poland in 1831, alarmed other countries in Europe. Up to this time it had seemed that Russia was playing a beneficient role in European affairs by crushing the Napoleonic 'tyranny' in concert with other European powers, and Alexander I appeared to have somewhat liberal tendencies. But after 1830, Europe

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interior, and more particularly, the life of the vast majority of the Russian population - the peasant - it is this topic which is the most interesting. This is so for two reasons: firstly because, as stated, the peasantry made up most of the population (nearly 90 per cent), and secondly, or rather despite this fact, because there were so few Russian descriptive sources dealing with their own peasantry in precisely this period (1820-61).

This thesis then, is a study of European travellers and residents accounts of the Russian peasant - his way of life, whether a serf, a crown peasant or a freeholder, his relations with his masters and fellows, his mode of agriculture, and his living conditions. However it is not intended to be a comprehensive account of the Russian peasant before emancipation - only a survey of what the European travellers and residents saw and recorded, with some indication of what they did or could not see and record.

The significance of this thesis does lie in the comprehensiveness as well as the accuracy of the accounts of these Europeans. For what the author is trying to establish here is how far these accounts can be used as primary sources for studies of the Russian peasant before emancipation. Some of the books used here were insignificant in their own day (though most books on Russia provoked some interest), but even these are important where they give gleanings of peasant life.

Literature on Western Observers and the Russian Peasant 1820-61.

There has been very little written about the Westerners who described the peasant in Russia during the period 1820-61. Of course many of the books dealt with here were reviewed when they were first published: these reviews often comment on the usefulness and accuracy of the account concerned, but much of the review is often taken up by quotations from the work or a discussion of current foreign relations vis-a-vis Russia. Some of the reviewers were indeed quite erudite and had been to Russia themselves (such as Elizabeth Rigby and Roderick Murchison in the Quarterly Review); others however had to rely on the little they had read in similar accounts or newspapers. Few knew enough of peasant life in a far away country such as Russia to be able to

comment critically on descriptions of, or discussions about, this topic. Reviews then, are useful in so far as they give some opinion on the merit of the respective accounts and especially when they give some information about the author of the book reviewed. But most deal too briefly with the peasant for the purposes of this study, and were in any case meant for the book buying public rather than for the serious investigator.

The only relatively modern work which does try to assess the usefulness of Western commentators' accounts of Russia is a book by A. Babey called Americans in Russia, 1776-1917. A Study of the American Travellers in Russia from the American Revolution to the Russian Revolution.[4] To begin with, as the title indicates, this book is limited to American travellers, and furthermore it concludes (in a chapter entitled "The Peasant") that in the period before emancipation American visitors to Russia wrote scarcely anything about the peasant. This conclusion is largely justified in that only three Americans are mentioned in this thesis: two of these are noted by Babey, one having something to say about the peasants (Maxwell), the other very little (Buchanan). The third American (Stephens) is not mentioned by Babey. Although this traveller writes only a little about the peasants, what he says is significant.

Apart from Babey there are three other works which make some mention of European travellers in Russia in the period 1820-61. The first of these is an article entitled "Free Europe versus Russia, 1830-54", by O.J. Hammen.[5] This gives a background to the reasons for European interest in Russia after about 1830 and the results of this interest: namely more travel in, and books about, Russia. Hammen believes that European fears about her post-Napoleonic ally heightened curiosity not only about Russia's power but also the way of life of this nation's people. It is certainly true that Russia's role in the Napoleonic wars did much to arouse Western European interest in her as well as fears that she would meddle in European affairs henceforth. But of the

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4. (New York, 1937).

5. In Slavic and East European Review, XI, (1952), pp. 27-41.

travellers themselves, the more enlightened ones went to Russia mainly out of inquisitiveness: those who feared Russia almost always provide the least reliable reports about her condition.

The other two works are specifically about Russophobia - one on Britain, the other dealing with France. Gleason's work The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain[6] is an excellent work concerning British policy and public opinion about Russia in the nineteenth century up to about 1841. It says little about the British travellers except the impression some of their books made in England, but the bibliography provides an extensive list of British travellers in Russia up to 1841. McNally's article "The Origins of Russophobia in France, 1812-30" again says little about French travellers, merely noting their bias in being mainly upper class and thus having but a limited and biased view of Russian society.[7] Custine is of course an example in this respect. Recently a book To Russia and Return. An Annotated Bibliography of Travellers' English-Language Accounts of Russia from the Ninth Century to the Present, by Harry Nerhood, was published (Ohio State University Press, 1968). This book has a short comment on each writer and his book about Russia.

There is, therefore, almost no literature dealing with European travellers in Russia, at least in the period 1820-61, despite the large number of accounts of Russia coming from such people, the interest in such accounts at the time, and their possible relevance for studies of nineteenth century Russia to-day. Indeed to adequately investigate and analyse all these accounts would be a huge task which would involve looking at many books of a similar nature, often worthless in literary and even informational content. But as far as the Russian peasant is concerned, there is a special reason for examining these works, that is, the lack of contemporary Russian works on the subject.

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6. The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain. A Study of the Interaction of Policy and Opinion, (Cambridge, Mass., 1950).

7. In American Slavic and East European Review, XVII, (1958), pp. 173-89.

Russian sources on the peasantry; 1820-61 and after.

A few words are in order here concerning Russian works on the peasantry - mainly to illustrate their inadequacy - at least up to 1861. There were two major reasons for this inadequacy; firstly, governmental censorship, and secondly, lack of interest in any case. Lack of interest in the peasantry was extremely prevalent amongst most of the people who would have had the ability to write or understand works on the subject, such as the great historians Karamzin and Soloviev. The peasantry, after all, was merely an amorphous mass which took little part in the nation's affairs and was for the most part a passive element in the Russian state. What part of the literate public would be interested in such people anyway? Thus the history books tended to follow mainly the political evolution of Russia. In 1858 Konstantin Aksakov, the great Slavophil , protested that Soloviev, in a work of seven volumes spent only six pages on the peasant.[8] The peasant, it is true, did have champions in such men as Aksakov and other Slavophils, as well as the earlier radicals Radischev, Novikov, Belinsky, Herzen and the Decemberists. But works by these people were usually of a purely polemical nature and purpose, and often censored into the bargain.

Despite lack of interest, censorship was probably the more important reason for the failure of Russians to write about their peasantry. For a start, the government could stop anyone from looking at records of the peasantry generally, and especially those concerning unrest or poor conditions. Furthermore, works on many aspects of the peasantry were explicitly forbidden by the government. Since the Pugachev rebellion and the French revolution the government had begun to fear subversion from the general population rather than from Guards regiments. Thus Radischev's Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow which described the miserable condition of the peasantry, nearly lost the author his life at the hands of the "enlightened" Catherine the Great in 1790. Following the waning of Alexander I's liberalism after the Napoleonic wars, in 1818

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8. In Michael V. Petrovich, "V.I. Semevskii (1848-1916), Russian Social Historian", in J.S. Curtiss (ed.), Essays in Russian and Soviet History in Honour of Geroid Tanquary Robinson, (New York, 1963), pp. 63-4.

the Minister for Public Education, A.N. Golytsin, issued an order forbidding written works which expressed any opinion on peasant rights. He called the attention of the censor "to the journals and other works being published, in order that there not appear in them, under any guise whatsoever, anything either in defense or condemnation of the freedom or slavery of the peasants ....."[9]

This attitude continued under Nicholas I and his conservative Minister for Education, Uvarov. When the latter was dismissed in 1849 the censorship became even more sensitive concerning serfdom under the reactionary Prince Shirinski-Shikhamatov (Minister for Education 1849-53). The Prince instructed censors not to permit descriptions of excessive poverty, or the abuse of serfs by landlords; further they might not allow works which expressed immoderate regret for the condition of the serfs or which tried to prove that emancipation would improve the conditions of the serfs.[10] Only in 1858 were these restrictions lifted, for by now the government, under Alexander II, was seriously considering emancipation.

This ban on works dealing with the condition of the peasantry included literary works about peasants. Thus although the period 1820-61 saw the flowering of Russian literature, with writers such as Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol and later Turgenev - very few of these writers' works made mention of the peasant. This was indeed partly out of lack of interest: nearly all of these writers came from the landed classes. Thus Gogol's Dead Souls (1842), which is entirely set in the Russian countryside and deals with the trafficking of "souls" (albeit dead ones), includes very little description of peasant life. Most of the characters are landowners of various types: very few are of the peasant class. The earlier Evenings Near the Village of Dikanka (1831), similarly shows nothing of real peasant life.

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9. Quoted in Donald Fanger, "The Peasant in Literature", in W.S. Vucinich (ed.), "The Peasant in Nineteenth Century Russia", (Stanford, 1968), p. 240.

10. Daniel Balmuth, Censorship in Russia, 1848-55. A Thesis presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Cornell University for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, June, 1959. (Microfilm).

In 1846, D.V. Grigorovich published some stories of peasant life,[11] but these stories, while showing something of the gloomy situation of the peasants show nothing of their character. Only with Turgenev's A Hunter's Sketches, first published in 1847, do we find a picture of the peasant as a human being, his way of thinking and acting. Unfortunately in describing his characters Turgenev plucked them out of their surroundings - the family and the village - so that while the peasants appear very human and quite real, one learns little of their society and way of life. The book earned Prince Lgov, the censor who passed it, dismissal from his post by Shirinski-Shikhamatov. The Minister accused the book of presenting landlords "from the most disadvantageous side, frequently in a ludicrous and caricatured, more frequently in a reprehensible light."[12] The book was not immediately banned, though Turgenev was banished to his estate where "he fought boredom by entertaining himself with an attractive young chambermaid (a serf) .... reportedly bought .... from his cousin ... (for) 700 rubles ...."[13] The only other literary work in the period dealing with the peasantry is Tolstoy's fragment The Morning of a Landed Proprietor (1852), which gives a glimpse of the difficulties of a liberal proprietor dealing with stubborn peasants.

Disinterest and censorship then, resulted in few literary efforts to describe the lot of the peasant. Even the publication of folklore was stifled by Nicholas I according to Y.M. Sokolov.[14] What then of scholarly works on the peasant? Almost until the censorship was relaxed in 1858 there was very little on the subject except for incidental references in history books. A few years before this ban was lifted however the first scholarly work on the history of Russian agriculture was published: a work by O. Turchinovich, called The History of the Agrarian Economy of Russia. However, in line with government policy this work avoided any

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11. For example "The Peasant", in B. Tollemache, Russian Sketches, Chiefly of Peasant Life, translated from Russian by Beatrise Tollemache, (London, 1913).

12. Quoted in Balmuth, p. 261.

13. Jerome Blum, Lord and Peasant in Russia from the Ninth to the Nineteenth Century, (Princeton, 1961), p. 426.

14. Y.M. Sokolov, Russian Folklore, Translated by Catherine Ruth Smith, (Hatboro, 1966), pp. 62-3).

discussion of serfdom which might have offended the authorities, and concentrated mainly on government policies. The next two works in 1856 and 1858 took similar attitudes.[15] After emancipation there was of course much discussion of serfdom, but little of this was of a scholarly nature (mainly journalistic articles), except when dealing with matters of an administrative or legalistic nature, such as the work of K.P. Pobedonostsev, who later took part in the legal reforms of 1864.

Even as late as 1881 the soon to be famous historian of the Russian peasantry, Semevskii, said: "We have a history of the Russian State; it is time to think of a history of the Russian people."[16] Indeed there had since 1860 been histories dealing with the Russian peasant (rather than government measures), but these had largely relied on already printed sources and vast archival material lay almost untouched. These however were in a very neglected and haphazard state. And in 1909 the Ministry of the Interior sold to a paper factory about 18 tons of archives including materials concerning free farmers, tenant farmers, and uprisings in the reign of Nicholas I.[17] Despite such difficulties Semevskii managed to gain a prize and a medal for his work called The Peasant Question in Russia in the Eighteenth and First Half of the Nineteenth Century (1888).

Now this work by Semevskii (and his Peasantry in the Reign of the Empress Catherine II) was the first major work on the pre-emancipation peasantry written by a man who actually had personal recollections of this era (born 1848, son of a landowner). Semevskii's work was thus of monumental importance, and is still most significant to-day (for example Robinson and Blum who have written the most important English works on the peasantry, refer to him frequently).

Therefore only in the 1880's - twenty years after the end of serfdom - did the first scholarly work on the Russian peasantry appear. In other words, the work could no longer be an account of present conditions, only

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15. M.V. Petrovich, "The Peasant in Nineteenth Century Historiography", in W.S. Vucinich (ed.), p. 193.

16. Quoted in M.V. Petrovich, in J.S. Curtiss (ed.), p. 65.

17. M.V. Petrovich in J.S. Curtiss (ed.), pp. 75-6.

a record of past events put together mainly from government archives. So, although there have been many books written since the late 1850's, and especially since Semevskii, describing the development and demise of serfdom, except for accounts by foreign residents very little has been recorded of the real living conditions of the peasant, his actual (rather than legal) relations with his master, and his attitude to life, before the emancipation. The only information then is (1) government records which survived, (2) very occasional Russian records of peasant life (for example Turgerev and autobiographies such as that of Kropotkin), and (3) the accounts of foreign visitors and travellers. Class (1) is essential if used with caution for statistics, legal measures and so on; class (2) is interesting because it gives Russian views of serfdom, but is too negligible and often in fictional form, to be important. So if one wishes to gain an insight into the daily life of the Russian peasant under serfdom, it is essential to consider class (3), sometimes comparing with class (2), and checking with material from group (1) which can be gained from secondary sources, and such semi-official sources such as Tengoborski's Commentaries on the Productive Forces of Russia (1855).

Scope of This Study.

A few notes on the scope of this thesis are necessary. As outlined earlier this thesis is a study of what European travellers and residents in Russia saw of the Russian peasant. The period is 1820 to 1861, that is, a little after the Napoleonic wars to Emancipation. I have chosen this period as to a large extent there was little change in peasant way of life in these years, and thus books in different years can be compared. Some of the books were published a little after the emancipation of 1861, but it was only after a few years that the emancipation was fully carried out. The year 1861 however, indicates that this is a study of travellers and peasants before emancipation only.

Russia, in this study, does not include the whole of the Russian Empire; only Great Russia lying West of the Urals as well as Little Russia and the Baltic Provinces. Finland and Poland were separate entities composed of mainly non-Russian peoples. Siberia was only in its formative stages of development and was only slowly taking peasant immigrants.

Also excluded are the Caucasus regions, much of the Southern Steppe area, as well as the far North, partly because there were very few peasants in these regions - mainly herdsmen or non-Russian tribes, and also as there are few accounts of those Russian peasants who did live in these regions.

The word "Peasant" in this thesis indicates those people who "specialized in farming (on a wholly or partially subsistence basis), fishing, hunting and handicrafts or combinations of these, usually with little or no mechanization."[18] In Russia before emancipation this includes serfs (owned by landed proprietors), 'crown' or 'state' peasants (owned by the state), and a few freeholders. It does not include people from the peasant class who resided permanently in the cities or were engaged full time in other than agricultural occupations (for example in the mines or in the army). Serfs working as servants on country estates are discussed as they still formed part of the rural peasant population being drawn directly from, and sometimes returned to, this class.

Before going on to the body of this study a chapter will be devoted to describing the history and growth of serfdom (this includes 'state peasants') in Russia up to emancipation. A discussion of the enserfment of the peasantry is important for showing how, by the nineteenth century, the Russian peasant was (apart from the American negro with whom he was often compared) in the unique position of still being the property of someone else and hence a cause for curiosity for many Western Europeans, while his condition of servitude also aroused much condemnation from the same people.

Following this background is a chapter on the authors whose descriptions are used in this study: their lives, biases, reasons for visiting Russia, and reactions to their accounts. The main part of the thesis sets forth the descriptions, compares and criticises them, while a concluding chapter is devoted to estimating the value of these works as sources for studying the Russian peasantry 1820-61.

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18. Stephen P. and Ethel Dunn, The Peasants of Central Russia, (New York, 1967), p. 2.

CHAPTER II - PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF RUSSIA, POPULATION. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERFDOM IN RUSSIA.

The area of Russia considered in this study is usually known as European Russia. This area, bounded to the east by the Urals, is mainly a great plain broken in places by hills and upland areas running north and south. Three great rivers run south: the Volga on the Eastern side; the Don through the Centre and then to the East, and the Dnieper through the Western part. The climate of the area is continental, average July temperatures being from 15°C to 20°C, average January temperatures range from -20°C in the North to 0°C in the South. Much of the area around and North of Moscow has snow cover for about five months of the year, while Western Russia, the Ukraine and the South have less than three months of snow. The growing season (the period free from killing frosts) is relatively short therefore. Around Archangel it averages 120 days, Moscow 130, Kazan 146, Kharkov in the Ukraine has 151 frost-free days, Saratov on the lower Volga 161. "The relative brevity of the frost-free season in Russia limits the choice and variety of crops that can be grown, and compels much work to be concentrated in a brief period."[1]

Precipitation, including snow, is in few places more than 25 inches per annum. This is adequate in the North because of low temperatures and consequent small evaporation, but in the South and South-East, where rainfall is less (down to 6 inches) moisture is often insufficient. In this area too there is considerable variation in rainfall from year to year. Overall, the soils of Russia are not very fertile except for the Southern band of chernozem or black soil, especially in the Ukraine, which can produce good yields. Dense forest with lakes and swamps in the North and North East gradually gives way to wooded land in the centre and open steppe in the South.

Russia can be divided into several horizontal belts for the purpose of describing vegetation, soil and suitability for agriculture. Blum suggests five zones[2] (see map from Parker[3]). The first of these is the

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1. J. Blum, Lord and Peasant in Russia from the Ninth to the Nineteenth Century, (Princeton, 1961), p. 9.
2. Blum, pp. 11-12.
3. W.H. Parker, An Historical Geography of Russia, (London, 1968). Map on front endpaper. See Appendix.

tundra zone with its poor, frozen sub-soil and little vegetation. Hence it is almost useless for agricultural purposes. The second zone, the forest zone, is by far the largest of the five. This area was once covered by coniferous and mixed deciduous forest. There are many navigable rivers here and the northern part has many bogs, swamps and lakes. The soils are predominantly light grey podzols, which are sandy, clayish or stony in composition. These soils can be farmed, but as they absorb moisture poorly, have a low humus content and are deeply leached of minerals, they provide rather low yields without fertilizer. The northern portion is too cold for agriculture in any case, while poor drainage and the difficulty of clearing the land make most of this region difficult to cultivate.

The next region described by Blum is an intermediate forest-steppe zone. It is a comparatively narrow belt (not extending as far South as the wooded-steppe on the map from Parker it seems), with small stands of trees surrounded by grassland of the steppe. The soils are also of a transitional type, degraded black soil of a dark grey colour, suggesting its gradual degradation from black soil into grey podzol. Though not as fertile as true black earth, these soils are well suited for farming.

The fourth zone is the steppe - a region of open plain, and grassland. Here is found the famous chernozem or black soil - the most fertile in European Russia. It absorbs moisture readily, is rich in humus and easily worked. The climate is milder than that of the forest zone. Rainfall however is lighter, especially to the south-east: this together with its unreliability, presents some problems for agriculture. This fourth zone gradually fades into the fifth, the semi-desert of the dry steppe. Vegetation here is limited to spring grass and shrubs. The chestnut soil here is often fertile, but cannot be cultivated without irrigation.

The population of Russia proper (excluding Poland and Finland) in

1859 was about 62 million.[4] Nearly all of these people lived in the European part of Russia. The figure of 62 million marks an increase of 24 million since 1800 when the population was only 38 million. Most of the increase was in already well-populated provinces of central and Western Russia. Nevertheless there was considerable migration to newer regions in the South-East and Siberia.

Compared to Western Europe, the population density of European Russia in the nineteenth century was only moderate - about 30 per square mile in 1859. The Ukraine had slightly more per square mile, the rest of the area slightly less.[5] Italy and Britain had about eight times this density, France about six times. Compared to France's 74 per cent and Britain's 45 per cent, 92 per cent of the Russian population was rural. Walsh calculates that out of every 100 people, 88 were serfs or members of the state peasantry, four were in the military services, three were free commoners of some sort, two were merchants, two nobles, and one was a clergyman.[6]

The Development of Serfdom in Russia.

In the first half of the nineteenth century the Russian Empire was the only remaining serf state in Europe. This fact provoked the curiousity, and frequently the condemnation of European visitors to Russia. It meant that the landowning nobility led a different type of life from its Western counterpart, and that the peasantry with whom this study is concerned lived under entirely different legal and economic conditions than did

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4. A. de Buschen, "On the Origin and Numerical Development of Serfdom in the Russian Empire", in Quarterly Journal of the Statistical Society, XXIV, 1861, p. 320, and Frank Lorimer, The Population of the Soviet Union : History and Prospects, (Geneva, 1946), p. 10. This figure of 62 million is only approximate: the first census in Russia was carried out only in 1897. All figures before this time are based on 'revisions'; enumerations of males for purposes of Taxation, made over a series of years. These were certainly subject to error.

5. Lorimer, p. 13.

6. W.B. Walsh, Russia and the Soviet Union, A Modern History, (Ann Arbor, 1958), p. 227.

this class in Western Europe. Furthermore, the institution of serfdom in Russia was different even from what it had been in Europe, far apart from its existence into a much later age, it had developed in response to peculiar Russian circumstances. The development of serfdom is outlined below in order to give a background to what Western European observers saw of the people living under this institution 1820-61. The practices of serfdom in Russia in the nineteenth century up to 1861 will be outlined in the body of this thesis, together with the observers' descriptions.

How and when did serfdom in Russia originate? To answer these questions it is necessary to go far back into Russian history, for serfdom, like most social institutions, developed only over a long period of time. From the seventh century Slavic peoples began to move into parts of what is now known as European Russia. The tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries are known as the Kievan period. This was an age of economic and territorial expansion in which the original Slavic population began to migrate out of south-west Russia (Kievan Russia) and up into the forested area near the Oka and Upper Volga. This migration increased greatly by the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries with the fall of Kiev to the Tatar hordes of the East. At first the Slavs of the Kievan period had lived in large patriarchal communes. But by about the eleventh century the family commune was changing into a territorial one. At this time the peasant farmers held their lands in their own right, albeit communally, and owed allegiance only to the local prince (theoretically appointed from Kiev), as did other classes of the realm.

But the eleventh century marks the beginning of the depression of the peasant's status in Russian society. The peasantry began to lose at least its social equality with other classes. With the consolidation and expansion of Kievan Russia a more stable social order arose. The Kievan Prince, the local princes under him, with their respective retinues and bureaucracies formed the elite. Then came middle class town dwellers, servants and artisans, and the better-off peasants. The ordinary peasants (_liudi_) occupied the lowest social position among the freemen. (There were also slaves.) The Kievan word for a peasant, "_smerd_", was associated with the verb "_smerdeti_", to stink; so that "_smerd_" is best translated as "stinker", indicating that the peasants must have been held

in very low esteem.[7] And when in the early eleventh century the men of Novgorod fought Prince Iaroslav of Kiev, all but the smerdy received ten silver grivnas; the smerdy received only one apiece.[8]

Although the peasantry of Kievan Russia were personally free, the law did, to some extent, discriminate against them as time went by. In the early eleventh century the bloodwite, a fine to be paid to the prince for the murder of any freeman was equal to 40 grivnas.[9] But later in the eleventh century, class differences began to require differing bloodwites. That for a member of the prince's retinue doubled to 80 grivnas; the bloodwite for a liudi or the middle class of freeman remained at 40 grivnas, while the bloodwite for a smerd was equal to only 5 grivnas.[10]

There were also other legal limitations on the peasantry. Vernadsky says that the smerdy were subject to the special jurisdiction of the prince. The peasant's land was inherited by his sons: if there were no sons the land reverted to the prince (though some of it had to be left for unmarried daughters). The smerd could not simply bequeath or sell his land as he wished: the land was for the perpetual use of the peasant and his descendants, but it was not his property.[11]

At first then, the state (that is the prince) held most of the land. It did not charge dues for the occupancy of this land, but peasants were expected to pay state taxes and serve in the army. The key to the

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7. Blum, p. 27. G. Vernadsky, Kievan Russia (New Haven, 1948), p. 137. There is some dispute over the application of the term "smerd" however; some investigators feel it applied only to bonded peasants. But the weight of evidence suggests that it was a general term for the peasantry - cf. R.E.F. Smith, The Enserfment of the Russian Peasantry, (Cambridge, 1968), pp. 11-12, and S.G. Pushkarev, Dictionary of Russian Historical Terms from the Eleventh Century to 1917, (New Haven, 1970), p. 129.

8. Blum, p. 28.

9. 4 grivnas = 1 silver grivna. It is almost impossible to estimate the value of a grivna, but the comparative amounts illustrate class differences.

10. According to Vernadsky, p. 136. Blum p. 28 disagrees here, believing that the smerdy should be included with the liudi, that is, worth 40 grivnas. It is difficult to resolve this argument conclusively because of lack of evidence. In any case, peasants who were at all dependent or indebted were worth only 5 grivnas, cf. Smith, p. 10.

11. Vernadsky, p. 144.

development of serfdom in Russia lies in the holding of lands by people other than the princes. However, it is not certain as to when and how this began.[12] The first grants of land by the princes were to the church it seems. By the twelfth century the church possessed large estates, which had sometimes been presented to them complete with villages, peasants and slaves.

The nobility too acquired most of their lands as gifts from the princes. The nobility in Kievan Russia made up the retinues of the various princes. Originally they had lived with the prince and depended on war booty and tribute for their incomes. By the end of the twelfth century however these retinues had grown too large for the prince to pay out of his own income. But the princes' lands continued to grow and they now began to give some of these away to their retainers as payment for services rendered. These retainers however were not bound to continue in the service of their benefactors, and many broke away to become independent proprietors of the land they had been given.

What happened to the peasants who now found themselves dwelling on what had suddenly become the land of some-one else? If they were lucky they became free renters of their erstwhile land; otherwise they were pushed off and were forced to sell their labour. So, by the end of the Kievan period, although most of the land was still in the hands of free peasant communes, the principle of forcible acquisition of land by the nobility had been established. The peasants were forced to become tenants or hired labourers, entering an economic relation with their landlords.

The next three centuries (the 13th, 14th and 15th) were the Mongol age. The power of the princes declined, and the landlords gained increasing power over their peasants. The peasants in their turn became increasingly dependent on their landlords who provided protection in times of war and security in case of famine or disease. Yet the peasants still had the right to move when and whence they chose - provided that they owed nothing to the landlord.

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12. I am following Blum, "The Beginnings of Large-Scale Private Landownership in Russia", Speculum, XXVIII, (1953), pp. 776-90.

It was the restriction of this right to move that completed the enserfment of the peasantry. At first restriction on the right of removal applied only to those peasants who had not fulfilled a contract and those who were in debt to their lord. But soon it was not merely the fulfillment of obligations which threatened to tie down the peasant to a particular estate; rather it was the concern of the landlord to keep his labour force, which limited peasant right of movement. At first this took the form of agreements between princes not to attract neighbouring peasants by better conditions, and laws against theft by nobles of others' peasants.

By the end of the fifteenth century peasants were by law only allowed to move at certain times of the year, and then only when the peasant had given his lord notice of his intention. Earlier, various princes or lords had set their own departure times, but by 1497, when the Muscovite prince (Ivan III), held power over the other princes, it was possible to legislate for the entire realm. In the Law Code of 1497 it was ordered that "peasants are to withdraw from the volost[13] from village to village at one term a year, the week before St. George's day in the autumn and the week after St. George's day in the autumn."[14] They could only move provided that they had met all obligations to their landlords and furthermore, they had to pay an "exit" fee before leaving the estate. The full payment of ever-increasing obligations and a steep exit fee on top of this was too much for many peasants, who were now effectively enserfed dependents of their seigneurs.

Yet as the new Muscovite state grew (late fifteenth century), opportunities for peasant migration to newer freer border lands arose. Thus "the landlords of the forest, threatened with the abondonment and consequent ruin of their estates, became all the more active in their attempts to establish and maintain control over the valued person of the peasant."[15] The growth of the pomestie system of land holding in the

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13. "Volost" here refers to a peasant commune on the estate.

14. Quoted in Smith, p. 82.

15. G.T. Robinson, Rural Russia Under the Old Regime. A History of Landlord Peasant World and a Prologue to the Peasant Revolution of 1917, (New York, 1967), p. 14.

sixteenth century only heightened these tensions. Under this regime the noble was granted land on condition that he serve the grand prince, later Tzar, in the growing armed forces. These holdings were relatively small, so that the pomeshchik (holder of this type of land), had to extract more from his peasants to maintain himself in war as well as in peace.

At the same time, the oppressions of this system encouraged peasants to migrate to the borderlands. So did the oppressive rule of Ivan the Terrible, with its long wars and consequent heavy taxation; crop failures and epidemics; and the plundering of the violent oprichniki (Ivan's agents). Many peasants were forcibly carried off by large landholders during this time.

Now the government was well aware of these tensions between landlords and peasants, and was especially sensitive concerning the welfare of the pomeshchiks. The pomeshchiks were losing their peasants and this made it difficult for them to fulfil their obligations to the state. So the government began to put an end to this freedom of peasant movement. At first this was merely a temporary measure - enacted for the year of 1581. But these temporary interdictions became more frequent; as well as this, landlords were allowed (in 1597) to search for and bring back any peasants who had fled or been stolen over the five previous years. From 1603 all the years were "forbidden years", so that the peasant was in effect forever bound to his landlord of that year.

The final legal confirmation of serfdom came with the Law Code of 1649. This code "sealed the fate of the seignorial peasantry, once free renters of the land belonging to members of the upper classes, and now converted to the serfs of their erstwhile landlords."[16] Runaway peasants could now be recovered "without term of years".[17] Furthermore, all members of the family, not just the head (as before), were bound to the estate. But the lord himself could move his peasants about under some circumstances. The Code confirmed the loss of the peasants' legal

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16. Blum, Lord and Peasant in Russia, p. 263. Subsequent references are to this work.

17. Quoted in Smith, p. 141.

rights: he could not own property (it belonged to his lord), and was under the jurisdiction of his lord in all but the most serious cases. Not only did the Code confirm all sorts of disabilities for the peasant class; it also omitted any reference to the rights, or even relation, of the peasant vis-a-vis his seigneur. "By its omissions, then, as well as its commissions, the Code of 1649 contributed generously to the degradation of the peasants."[18]

According to Blum the Code of 1649 effectually enserfed ninety per cent of the peasantry - only ten per cent did not belong to the boyars, Church or Court, to which these laws applied.[19] The other peasants, the "black peasants", had earlier formed the larger portion of the peasantry. Over the decades however, they and their lands had been given by the princes and Tsar to private owners. Even so the remaining black people were only a little freer than their fellows on the manorial estates. Originally, the "black peasant" had been free to leave his commune if he had paid his dues to the state. But over the years he was only allowed to do this if he had found someone else to take his place and continue to carry out his obligations. Still, this privilege for the time being, gave him more freedom than the ordinary seignorial peasant.

This state of affairs lasted only up to the reign of Peter the Great (1689-1725). Then Peter, desiring to organize everyone so that they could serve the state, reorganized the state peasantry. This group now came to include not only the black people, but also the descendents of minor servitors and various non-Russian peoples. Eventually all people living on state lands became state peasants and had to fulfil the obligations of this class (see Chapter IV), losing their unique rights in the process. When church lands were secularized in 1764 their peasants too became state peasants. While the number of state peasants grew however, this only made easier the completion of the enserfment of all the Russian peasantry. For Peter the Great ordered that the state peasants pay, apart from the universal soul tax on all non-nobles, a quitrent to the state. "By demanding this quitrent the state was

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18. Robinson, p. 20.

19. Blum, p. 268.

asserting its claim to ownership of all land not privately owned, and its seignorial authority over the peasants who lived on that land."[20] Furthermore, as in the case of seignorial peasants, the state peasants were not allowed to move from their holdings: a law of 1797 permitted temporary absence only with the permission of the commune. Apart from a less oppressive and direct landlord then, the state peasants were effectively enserfed by the end of the eighteenth century, although they were never called serfs.

The peasantry did not always take kindly to its gradual enserfment. Apart from fleeing oppressive masters (even after 1649) or murdering them in their beds, there were several mass revolts of the peasantry. The first major one took place in 1606-7, during the "Time of Troubles". An ex-slave Ivan Bolotnikov preached the abolition of restrictions on the peasants and encouraged them to murder their masters. After a few victories this mass movement was totally defeated. Again, in 1670, the Don Cossack Stenka Razin led a mass rising of the peasants of the Volga basin, promising the peasants their freedom if they followed him and slew their masters. Razin was becoming dangerously successful when he was finally defeated in a pitched battle with the Tzar's troops at Nizhnii Novgorod.

The last and most serious mass revolt was also led by a Cossack, Emelian Pugachev, in 1762. He pretended to be Peter III, declared the peasants free, and ordered them to kill their erstwhile landlords. He was defeated in 1774, but only after having captured Kazan, causing the death of hundreds of the aristocracy, and instilling fear into the remainder as well as the government. But this fear did not lead to the loosening of the bonds of the peasantry: rather the government and aristocracy strongly reasserted themselves in order that such a conflagration should never recur.

By 1649 then, ninety per cent of the peasantry were bound either to a nobleman or the state, and by the end of the next century almost all the Russian peasantry had lost its right to freedom of movement, possession of property and equality before the law. There was little

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20. Blum, p. 485.

change in the lot of the peasantry until the abolition of serfdom in 1861, but the further development of serfdom will be discussed here to show how the state and aristocracy tightened their hold on the peasantry and how they then began to consider abolishing the social system which they had set up.

One of the major developments in serfdom to 1800 was its spread to other areas of Russia which were being newly colonized. By 1796 it had reached down through the steppes as far south as New Russia and the Caucasus. After this time however, serfdom spread no further; in terms of area, in fact, its spread diminished. Serf-ownership had never been allowed in Siberia: all the peasants here belonged to the state. In 1839 Tsar Nicholas I forbade the expansion of private serfownership there by law. Also, between 1811 and 1819, Alexander I had emancipated the serfs of the Baltic Provinces (Estland, Livonia and Courland) without land. But this landless emancipation was of very little benefit to the peasants: what they gained in personal freedom they lost in security.

In the eighteenth century many of the relatively freer state peasants found themselves consigned to the authority of private landholders as a result of large gifts of state lands to private owners made by the Tsars (or more frequently, Tsarinas). Between 1740 and 1801 over two and a half million people found themselves thus transferred. Also during the eighteenth century, the peasants continued to lose the little freedom that remained to them. The state peasants, for their part, were forbidden to engage in non-agricultural activity. As described above, they found themselves tied to the government; and its officials "were set over them to supervise their activities and make sure they met their obligations to the state."[21] If these officials were corrupt (and there were few Russian officials who were not) they could exercise even wider powers over their charges.

"By the last part of the eighteenth century the Russian serf was scarcely distinguishable from a chattel slave."[22] This was partly due to an increase in the legal privileges of the nobles. By 1731 pomestie

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21. Blum, p. 489.

22. Blum, p. 422.

lands had become hereditary (the other major class of estates, votchini, were already so). And in 1762 nobles were no longer required to serve the state as they had been in Peter the Great's time, in return for holding land. Thus the nobles were allowed to exploit the peasantry with no reference to service to the state in return, and the peasants, instead of being bound to what was technically the state's land, became bound to the person and whim of the landlord. The landlord moreover, was able to sell his peasants without the land (weak legal prohibitions were abandoned in 1792), and separate from the rest of their family. Landowners could forbid marriages between one of their own serfs and one from another estate. As mentioned above, the Code of 1649 gave the landlord judicial power over his serfs: he could order a flogging, and by laws of the 1760's, he could send recalcitrent peasants to penal labour in Siberia or hard labour in the Admiralty. A degree of 1767 forbade petitions to the Tzar except in cases of treason. Other decrees at this time prevented serfs from entering into any legal contracts without the permission of their owner. During the eighteenth century too, the peasant's fiscal obligations to his landlord and the state increased.

All this is not to say that there were no attempts by the government to improve the lot of the peasantry. Such attempts however were few and far between, and rarely enforced. Peter the Great threatened oppressive landlords with exile to a monastery. There were orders to landlords and government officials (in the case of state peasants) requiring them to take care of the peasantry in times of famine. Tzar Paul ordered that serfowners ensure that there were granaries stocked with spare grain in every village for emergencies; he allowed petition to the Tzar and forbade landlords making their peasants work for them on Sundays. He also suggested that landlords require their peasants to work for them only three days of the other six. A new popular[23] administrative unit, the volost, was introduced among the state peasants in 1797, and they were gradually allowed to engage in non-agricultural occupations. Movement out of the commune was made easier, and from 1801 state peasants were permitted to buy and own land.

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23. 'Popular' meaning (to some extent) elected and run by the people.

During the reign of Alexander I (1801-25), the major reform concerning the peasantry was the landless emancipation of the Baltic serf. Little else, however, was done during Alexander's reign to better the conditions of the peasantry. Even their role in the Napoleonic wars gained them nothing

> but a single line in Alexander's manifesto of 1814, in which the Tzar 'most graciously' thanked all classes and granted them various privileges. This single line ran: 'The peasants, our loyal people, will be recompensed by God.'[24]

Starting in 1810, however, Alexander began to establish the military colonies. Here troops were settled amongst state peasants and the two groups were expected to co-operate in defence and agriculture. The government paid much attention to the people on these colonies, educating them, and giving them economic and social assistance. But in 1831, after violent revolts in the colonies, they were gradually disbanded. The reason for their failure, put simply, was that "the soldiers objected to being made to farm, [and] the peasants objected to having their lives ordered for them on military lines."[25]

Nicholas I, Tsar for thirty of the forty-one years under review here, had a conservative if humanitarian attitude towards serfdom. He realized the injustice of the system, but feared taking a large and definite step to abolish it. Instead he muddled round for thirty years with various committees, issued minor laws to protect the peasantry, which did little good; or turned his attention to the state peasantry who needed help less than the serfs of the landlords. Nicholas' attitude is epitomized in this statement to the Council of the Empire on the 30th March, 1842:

> There is no doubt that serfdom in its present situation in our country is an evil, palpable and obvious for all, but to attack it <u>now</u> would be something still more harmful [and] ..... no less than criminal sacrilege against public security and the welfare of the state .... Nevertheless the present situation cannot last for ever .... The only answer is thus to prepare the way for a gradual transition to a different order, and, not fearing change as such, to examine cold-bloodedly the advantage and consequences of change.[26]

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24. E. Tarle, <u>Napoleon's Invasion of Russia, 1812</u>, p. 269, (New York, 1942), quoted in Lazar Volin, "The Russian Peasant and Serfdom", <u>Agricultural History</u>, XVIII, (1943), p. 48.

25. H. Seton-Watson, <u>The Russian Empire, 1801-1917</u>, (Oxford, 1967), p. 162.

26. Quoted in Seton-Watson, pp. 227-8.

Some of Nicholas' efforts to ameliorate the condition of the peasantry include laws forbidding the sale of human beings in the public market place, the prohibition of the splitting up of families through sale, and the curtailing of the punitive power of the landlord. Several committees set up to examine ways to improve the conditions of the peasants came to nothing. One in 1842 did bring forth a decree allowing serfs to make agreements with their proprietors for their personal freedom and the right to till a piece of seignorial land in return for continuing payment of dues in money, kind, or labour. Like most of Nicholas' enactments concerning the peasantry this one had little effect.

The major achievement of the reign however was the reforms of Nicholas' Minister for State Domains, Kiselev, among the state peasantry. Kiselev was appointed Minister in 1837, after making a detailed survey of the conditions of the state peasantry. One of his first moves was to re-organize the administration of the peasants by setting up popular local government. Model farms were established and agricultural exhibitions held. Resettlement of families to more thinly populated areas was carried out. Roads were built in state peasant districts, while the Ministry established primary schools, churches and a rural medical service.

But these reforms, while demonstrating a new attitude on the part of the government, failed to make much headway among the peasants themselves. The administrative reforms suffered from want of qualified local people for popular government, as well as from the usual Russian bureaucratic illness, corruption. The model farms turned out few graduates and even these found it difficult to change the ways of local elders. Resettlement, while populating unsettled areas, did little to relieve over-crowding in already populated districts. The Russian peasant in any case disliked innovations and was slow to accept them. This, together with the dislike of some officials, produced disorder in some regions.

If Alexander and Nicholas's attempts on behalf of the serfs: the landless emancipation of the Baltic serfs, regulations to limit the landlords' power, and activities to better the lot of the state peasantry; had not attained the specific ends intended, they did signify an

important change. The government was now intervening on behalf of that long forgotten class of its subjects, the peasantry. Its attitude also indicated that serfdom would be abolished sooner or later; it was freeing its own peasants and encouraging landowners to do likewise. Nicholas I moved slowly and fearfully along the path to full emancipation; and a disastrous war and increasing public support for emancipation impelled the new Tsar, Alexander II, to liberate his bound subjects in 1861.

CHAPTER III - TRAVEL AND THE TRAVELLERS.

> Russia is not an inviting country to the dilettante tourist, for the accommodation is execrable - the means of locomotion barbarous - the obstacles thrown in the way by the Government annoying .....[1]

The main purpose of this chapter is to consider some personal details concerning the travellers whose descriptions are utilized here, as well as contemporary reaction to their accounts. The information here then includes personal data, biases, and motives for visiting Russia. Contemporary opinion is mainly in the form of reviews of books published by the travellers. Both types of material help to anchor the accounts to the life and times of the authors, and this perspective is important when evaluating the veracity and significance of these writings. Firstly, however, a few notes on conditions for the traveller in Russia are in order, to illustrate the hardships which these visitors had to undergo when venturing into the Russian interior, and why so few ventured from the usual St. Petersburg-Moscow route with its chausée.

Nearly all the travellers made unfavourable comments about the roads, carriages and accommodation in the Russian provinces. For travel in Russia was rarely equal to the standard the foreigner was used to in his own country - particularly in England and France with their large coaches and relatively good main roads. In Russia, apart from a few gravel chausées, the roads were invariably of dirt. In wet weather this became an impassible quagmire (annually in the spring thaw and autumn rains), and in very dry windy weather dust might pile up in drifts a few feet high. Ruts were seldom repaired and this made travelling in the springless vehicles most uncomfortable so that pillows and hay were taken to soften the ride. The poor repair of the roads made them dangerous too, especially at night when travelling was often done in summer to avoid the heat. Passengers were often thrown from their vehicles, and delays were frequent because of breakdowns. Ferries, floating bridges and fords were most often used to cross watercourses: the few bridges that existed were poorly constructed and, like the roads,

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1. L. Oliphant, The Russian Shores of the Black Sea in the Autumn of 1852, with a Voyage down the Volga, and a Tour of the Country of the Don Cossacks, (Edinburgh, 1853), p. vi.

usually in bad repair.

Winter travelling was in several ways easier - across smooth snow and frozen rivers. Roads in this season were often no more than a series of posts to indicate the way. Disadvantages lay in the possibility of travel sickness from swooping over the undulating snowscape, and the cold experienced in the usually open means of transport - either a sledge or a small light carriage called a kibitka.

During the rest of the year travel was accomplished either in large coaches - by the well-to-do, or more usually, in a lighter 'telega'. Most travellers used the posting system set up by the government. Use of this system was available on the payment of a fixed tariff and the production of a podarozhnaia. The latter was an official warrant entitling the traveller to use the posting system, stating his route of journey, its purpose and the type of carriage and number of horses to which the traveller was entitled. The post house had to provide the conveyance and horses as well as a driver, and food and a resting place, if necessary. Each of these was harder to obtain than the traveller might have hoped for. The post stations were usually run by local peasants (later they began to be farmed out to private individuals). On arriving at the station the traveller could expect to be greeted by the bellow of "no horses", and only an offer to increase the tariff or outright bullying would produce the necessary animals. The drivers were often wild and careless, adding to the already uncomfortable and hazardous travelling conditions. As for food and sleep, the usually filthy post-houses offered a poor repast and the traveller, who, incidentally had to carry his own bed with him, was fortunate if there were no vermin or insects to keep him from sleep.

In the 1820's diligences or public stagecoaches began to be established on major routes, especially between St. Petersburg and Moscow. These enabled rapid and more comfortable travelling. Travellers also sometimes used waterways if there was no hurry to complete a journey. In Russia this was by far the most comfortable and relaxing form of travel.

The Travellers.

> Much of the ground here traversed has already been described by British travellers - a circumstance which, to some minds, might appear to supersede the observations contained in this volume; but as different men, having different objects in view, and habituated each to his own peculiar mode of observation, may be expected to contemplate the same things in a different light, it may not be deemed presumptuous to affirm, that at least some new matter is here presented to the public.[2]

Like most travellers, those in the Russian Empire in the first half of the nineteenth century came away with varying accounts of what they saw. A consideration of several factors may help to explain why these impressions varied from individual to individual. In the first place travellers saw different parts of a large empire, and, because of diverse conditions, gave different accounts. Sometimes, too, their treatment by Russian officials and people generally, influenced visitors' points of view. Different personal backgrounds in terms of occupation, belief and biases also accounted for differing descriptions and conclusions, as did the original purpose for visiting Russia. Finally, only a few of the travellers could understand Russian: those who did might be expected to gain a much deeper insight into Russian and especially peasant life.

The remainder of this chapter then attempts to give a little information about each traveller; his journey, his account of his journey (mainly in terms of his impressions of the peasantry), and contemporary reactions to his account. The amount of information available on each writer varies a great deal - a few were famous, had their books frequently reviewed and are described in biographical dictionaries and encyclopedias. For many of the writers however, details must be gained from books published by them and reviews of these. Some authors refused even to divulge their names, and others failed to merit reviews in the journals of the day. For these then the information is

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2. E. Henderson, Biblical Researches and Travels in Russia; including a Tour in the Crimea, and the Passage of the Caucasus : with observations on the state of the Rabbinical and Karaite Jews, and Mohammedan and Pagan tribes, inhabiting the Southern Provinces of the Russian Empire, (London, 1826), p. vi.

very scanty. The authors below are listed alphabetically in national groups.[3]

AMERICAN.

James Buchanan in The Works of James Buchanan. Comprising his Speeches, State Papers and Private Correspondence (12 vols., New York, 1960). Vol. II, 1830-36. Buchanan (1791-1868) later President of the United States from 1848 to 1852, was in Russia as ambassador 1832-3. Buchanan's only journey was between St. Petersburg and Moscow during which he noticed the poor condition of peasant villages.

John S. Maxwell, The Czar; His Court and His People (Dublin, 1849). Maxwell was the Secretary to the American legation to Russia during 1842 and travelled in the Russian interior: from St. Petersburg to Moscow and into Vladimir province where he stayed at a noble's residence. Then he continued to Nijni Novgorod and Kazan before returning to St. Petersburg. In his preface Maxwell states that although he is deeply impressed by the evils of despotism, his dark picture is supplied not from democratic prejudices, but the truth.[4] Maxwell finds the peasants and their dwellings filthy and their attitude melancholy; and indeed it seems that his observations rather than his prejudices supply this picture.

John L. Stephens, Incidents of Travel in the Russian and Turkish Empires, (2 Vols., London, 1839), Vol. II. Stephens (1805-52) was a traveller, author, and steamship and railroad executive. He was a graduate in law but had a wanderlust and was a born raconteur according to the Dictionary of American Biography.[5] His wanderlust and curiosity was probably the real reason for his journey (though ostensibly it was for health reasons), undertaken in 1836. Landing at Odessa, Stephens passed through Kiev, Orel

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3. The list of authors and books here is not, of course, definitive, although it does represent a large cross-section. Nerhood lists nearly all English travellers in Russia (though only some of these wrote about the peasant of course). Catalogue de la Section des Russica ou Ecrits sur la Russie en Langues Etrangeres, published by the Bibliotheque Imperiale de St. Petersbourg, (2 Vols., St. Petersburg, 1873), also lists many works by European observers in Russia.

4. p. ix.

5. D. Malone (ed.), Dictionary of American Biography, (New York, 1935), Vol. 17, p. 579.

and Tula on his way to Moscow, St. Petersburg and thence Lithuania. Like Maxwell, Stephens described the peasants as miserable and compares them to the American slaves. What Stephens describes is credible, but it is drawn only from a few roadside scenes.

ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH.

[Robert Anderson],[6] Sketches of Russian Life Before and During the Emancipation of the Serfs. Revised and Edited by Henry Morley (London, 1866). There is little information on this writer, though he is apparently Scottish.[7] Some of the 'Sketches' appeared anonymously in the journal All The Year Round in 1862. The book, also appearing anonymously, is revised and edited by Henry Morley who was Professor of English language at University College London, and a literary critic as well. Morley, having met the author, believes that Anderson "is incapable of imagining fictitious incidents."[8] The stories seem authentic although the author's style vivifies them somewhat. Anderson says that he lived for fifteen years in Russia[9] with his wife in the city and country, and that he was involved in all sorts of business. He mentions travels in Iaroslav, Tula and Orel provinces. It is possible, considering the length of his stay in Russia and his records of conversations with peasants, that Anderson spoke Russian. Most of the material concerning the peasantry described individual incidents or the peasants' dress, houses and villages. Anderson mentions that for a time he sojourned on a noble estate. Interestingly, Anderson took the trouble to ask several peasants what they thought of emancipation.

The book was reviewed in The Athenaeum.[10] This journal noted that the book came under the good auspices of Professor Marley, but wondered if the sketches were not a little worked up or "merely fiction founded on fact."[11]

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6. British Museum, General Catalogue of Printed Books, (London, 1965), Vol. 31, Col. 5.
7. Ibid., "Anderson of Dunfermline" - which town is in Scotland.
8. Anderson, p. vi.
9. p. 1.
10. No. 2025, (18 August, 1866), pp. 206-7.
11. p. 207.

Robert Bremner, Excursions in the Interior of Russia; including Sketches of the Character and Policy of the Emperor Nicholas, Scenes in St. Petersburg, etc., etc., (2 Vols., London, 1839). Bremner travelled in Russia during the autumn of 1836, accompanied by three friends, "with no object in view but to make ourselves acquainted with the manners, condition and prospects of the people", and to describe the interior of the country about which so little had been written of late.[12] However Bremner, who calls himself a "Conservative"[13] feels there has been too much praise of Russia recently,[14] and his sympathies obviously lie with the serfs whom he believes are oppressed. The tour made by Bremner was rather hurried: from St. Petersburg to Nijni Novgorod via Moscow and then to Tula, Kharkov, Poltava and Odessa all in a few months. Despite this there is much detail on the countryside Bremner passed through, the villages, houses and agricultural activities of the peasants, but there is little on the condition of the people themselves.

There were several reviews of Bremner's book, most of which praised his venture into the interior of Russia. They described Bremner as an intelligent and impartial observer, though The Athenaeum felt he was often superficial.[15] In that Bremner had little time to stop and indulge in more detailed observation this criticism is correct, but Bremner admits that the book was compiled only from hurried notes made while travelling.

Selina Bunbury, Russia after the War. The Narrative of a Visit to That Country in 1856. (2 Vols., London, 1857). Volume II. Miss Bunbury appears to have been a professional traveller as well as a writer and novelist. She spent most of her time in, and her account on, St. Petersburg and Moscow, but did venture onto estates and into peasant houses near Moscow. She was not impressed by the attitude or domestic comforts of the peasants she saw.

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12. p. v.

13. In Robert Bremner, Excursions in Denmark, Norway and Sweden, (2 Vols., London, 1840), Vol. I, p. vi.

14. p. v.

15. No. 589, (9 February, 1839), p. 108.

James Carr, Russia as it is at the Present Time. In a Series of Letters. By James Carr, a working man, lately returned from the interior of that Empire to England. Second Edition. Revised and Corrected. (London, 1855). Carr, unlike most of the other visitors, went to Russia to work - he calls himself "a working man". Carr was engaged while in England to go to Russia to supervise a cotton mill in Moscow province for a Russian nobleman. He used the Holy Days, when there was no work at the mill, to travel ('Holy Days' sometimes lasted weeks). The travels, together with his experience with factory serfs enabled Carr to observe many aspects of peasant life. These he describes in a rather rough and simple style which, however, adds to the credibility of the book. Most of the information on the peasants is in the form of description of specific events - Carr makes few generalizations or inferences from what he has seen.

The Athenaeum,[16] despite the Crimean War, maintained its traditionally anti-Russophobic stance, and praised Carr for being unprejudiced and fair when judging Russian manners and deeds.

John D. Cochrane. A Pedestrian Journey Through Russian and Siberian Tartary, to the Frontiers of China, The Frozen Sea and Kamchatka, (Two Volumes, Edinburgh, 1829). Cochrane is probably the most extraordinary traveller considered here. He lived from 1780 to 1825 and joined the navy at the age of ten. Already having toured France, Spain and Portugal on foot (for the sake of economy), in 1820 he set out for Russia. In three years he travelled, mainly on foot, to Kamchatka (where he married one of the natives), and back. There is some comment on the countryside and the peasantry, although this is fairly superficial.

Journalistic reviews and the Dictionary of National Biography[17] admit that Cochrane's book is extraordinary if devoid of scientific value.

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16. No. 1450, (11 August, 1855), p. 924.

17. Edited by Sir L. Stephen and S. Lee (London, 1887), Vol. XI., p. 618.

[George J. Eldridge],[18] "The Internal Sufferings of Russia from the War", and "Life in the Interior of Russia", Blackwood's Magazine, 78, Nos. 478 (pp. 249-58) and 479 (pp. 269-87) respectively, (1855). Eldridge was an intelligence officer during the Crimean War who died in 1890.[19] These articles were published anonymously, but the editor of Blackwood's Magazine says that the writer had recently left Russia having resided there for many years, and that there is no doubt about his sincerity and truthfulness.[20] Eldridge seems to have spent his time in the South of Russia and "Little Russia". He also appears to have a knowledge of Russian, sometimes recording his conversations with Russians (including peasants). Eldridge gives a detailed account of the peasant way of life (in South and Little Russia) and feels that they enjoyed a reasonably good life given fair conditions and humane masters. Eldridge's account seems authentic, and the result of a detailed knowledge of his subject.

The Englishwoman in Russia; Impressions of the Society and Manners of the Russians at Home. By a Lady, Ten Years Resident in That Country. (London, 1855). Like Eldridge's account, this book was published with the advent of the Crimean War and increased interest in Russia. According to Nerhood the lady was the wife of a British business man living and trading in European Russia about 1844-54.[21] The Englishwoman travelled at least in Northern Russia between Archangel and St. Petersburg, and probably in other regions, and stayed with noble families. The Englishwoman makes several observations on the peasant way of life and their treatment by their masters. Though not systematic her comments are interesting, and her general conclusion is that the peasants are oppressed.

Three reviews of this book (including one in The Times[22]) felt that the Englishwoman's account though negative was accurate. And despite the Crimean War and the attendant hostility to Russia this

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18. Identified in W.E. Houghton (ed.), The Wellesly Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824-1900, Vol. I, (Toronto, 1966), p. 100.

19. Ibid.

20. At head of first article (No. 478), p. 249.

21. p. 229.

22. 5 January, 1855, p. 8, Cols. e and f.

assessment seems correct. The Saturday Review however, when reviewing another book by an English lady about Russia, calls the Englishwoman's book a "discreditable publication".[23] The Englishwoman does discredit the Russians, but the book is not a discredit to the authoress.

Robert Harrison, Notes of a Nine Years Residence in Russia, From 1844 to 1853. With Notices of the Tzars Nicholas I and Alexander II. (London, 1855). Harrison, (1820-1897) who was Librarian of the London Library, 1857-93, went to Russia in 1844 having met a Russian noble family in Paris. He accompanied this family to their estate on the Volga.[24] Here he was probably a tutor to Prince Davidoff's family. He also lectured in St. Anne's school in St. Petersburg while in Russia.[25] Harrison says that he left Russia in 1853 for health reasons. While residing on the nobleman's estate Harrison noticed much about the peasants, their villages and agricultural activities. Furthermore Harrison must have spoken Russian. Despite a ridiculous title to the section dealing with the peasantry: "The Moojiks or Peasants, who form the substratum on which the social edifice of Russia reposes"; and some terrible illustrations by the author, the book covers many topics and offers a few intelligent insights concerning peasant life.

The book was reviewed in the Athenaeum, which felt it was not profound but trustworthy; and in The Times, which said that the book gave a good description of the country life of a noble among his vassals (which it does).

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23. VII, (16 April, 1859), p. 470 - cf. p. 43 below, on Smith's book.

24. The Times, 22 August, 1855, p. 12, Cols. b to e.

25. The Times, 7 January, 1897, p. 4 (obituary to Harrison). The Athenaeum, No. 3611, (9 January, 1897), p. 50, however names the noble as "Prince Demidoff" and has St. Anne's "school" rather than "college" (as in The Times). F. Boase, Modern English Biography, (London, 1912), Vol. V, Cols, 592-3, quotes The Times' information on both points. Most probably the nobleman was Davidov for A. von Hoxthausen, The Russian Empire : Its People, Institutions and Resources, (London, 1856), Vol. I, p. 342, wrote of Davidov's estate on the Volga.

26. No. 1438, (19 May, 1855), p. 58.

27. 22 August, 1855, p. 12, Cols. b to e.

Ebenezer Henderson, Biblical Researches and Travels in Russia, including a Tour in the Crimea, and the Passage of the Caucasus : with observations on the state of the Rabbinical and Karaite Jews, and the Mohammedan and Pagan Tribes, inhabiting the Southern Provinces of the Russian Empire, (London, 1826), Henderson, Ph.D. and D.D. (1784-1854) at first trained as a bootmaker and watchsmith entered the ministry in his early twenties and joined the British and Foreign Bible Society. He first went to Russia for this Society in 1816 where he printed the bible in ten different languages and dialects (Henderson was an accomplished linguist). He was in and out of Russia between 1816 and 1825, and in the spring of 1821 travelled in 22 Russian provinces for the Bible Society.[28] Henderson, an intelligent observer, made only a few significant remarks on the peasant's way of life and living conditions.

[Charles F. Henningsen],[29] Revelations of Russia : or The Emperor Nicholas and his Empire, in 1844. By One who has seen and describes. (2 Vols., London, 1844). Henningsen (1815-77) was a professional soldier and a scholar. Despite the title of the book ("one who has seen and describes") most of the work seems to rely on other accounts such as Custine (whose book Henningsen rates as the best on Russia to date[30]) and Kohl; and it is a polemic against the Russian political system. As such the book is of little value and its descriptions of the peasantry must be taken with caution.[31]

The New Quarterly Review of October 1844, swallows Henningsen's polemic fully, praising his book as the result of "a most accurate observation."[32] The reviewer, like Henningsen is a Russophobe - a favourable review of Custine's work in the July issue supports this thesis.[33] "The Athenaeum [which on the other hand] always laughed at Russophobia"[34] derides Henningsen's book feeling that he could not possibly have had a

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28. Information from William Canton, History of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Vol. I, (London, 1904), and Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. IX, (1891), p. 397.
29. British Museum Catalogue, Vol. 101, Col, 824.
30. Vol. 1, p. 8.
31. There are other accounts with obviously second-hand descriptions of the peasantry. These have not been noted here as they are of course not suitable for the purpose of this study.
32. Vol. IV, No. II, p. 365.
33. Vol. IV, No. I, pp. 55-114.
34. No. 856, (23 March, 1844), p. 265.

good knowledge of all the topics he talks so convincingly about. Henningsen mixes up his inferences with his facts says The Athenaeum.[35]

Samuel S. Hill, Travels in Siberia (2 Vols., London, 1854). Vol. I. Hill, a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society travelled in Italy and Turkey (1845) and Egypt and Syria (1866) as well as making a voyage round the world about 1847. His travel through European Russia (Moscow-Nijni Novgorod-Kazan-Ural Mountains and then to Siberia), was part of his three year trip around the world. Hill describes peasant villages and houses, and comes away with a very favourable impression of the condition of the Russian peasant.

The Athenaeum though describing Hill's information as interesting, criticises him, quite justly it seems, for his "unmistakeable intention to soften our judgement of despotism and its influences."[36]

William Jesse, Notes of a Half-Pay in Search of Health : or, Russia, Circassia, and the Crimea, in 1839-40. (2 Vols., London, 1841). Captain Jesse (1809-71) was a soldier and writer, as well as an acquaintance and biographer of Beau Brummell. He had joined the army at the age of sixteen and served in India for six years. But this experience ruined his health, so that on his return to England he was given a certificate of retirement and advised by his doctor to travel. In 1839-40 he (and his wife) travelled in Russia from Odessa to Kharkov, thence to Orel, Tula, Moscow, St. Petersburg and home. Jesse was not impressed by the condition of the peasantry he saw along the road and criticized the government and aristocracy for their failure to look after the peasants.

The Times found Jesse's book quite agreeable and instructive.[37] Elizabeth Rigby of the Quarterly Review, who had also visited Russia (see below) felt that although Jesse was honest, his picture of the peasantry was excessively pessimistic and based on observation of too few peasants.[38]

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35. No. 883, (28 September, 1844), pp. 869-72, and No. 885 (12 October, 1844), pp. 921-3.

36. No. 1378, (25 March, 1854), pp. 369-70.

37. 21 December, 1841, p. 3, Col. a.

38. Quarterly Review, 69, (September, 1842), pp. 380-428.

It is true that Jesse's picture was unrepresentative, but the misery he did see was quite striking and significant.

Robert Lyall, The Character of the Russians, and a Detailed History of Moscow, (London, 1823), and Travels in Russia, the Krimea, the Caucasus and Georgia, (2 Vols., London, 1825). Lyall (1790-1831) was a Scottish botanist and traveller, but a doctor by profession. Failing to make an impression at home he went to live in Russia where he attended various noble families as a doctor.[39] Lyall first published The Character of the Russians, which, together with the other work, gave a "vivid and malignant" picture of Russia.[40] According to Gleason, The Character of the Russians was a shoddy piece of work showing great ungraciousness with regard to the hospitality of the Russians with whom Lyall had stayed, and contributed to the growth of Russophobia in Britain.[41] The comments on peasant life and their food in this volume are largely favourable however. The second work was the result of a tour of the Southern provinces of Russia made in 1824 from Moscow to Tula, Orel, Kiev and the Crimea. Lyall admits that not all he says in this book is taken from the present journey - some of the information having been collected before and after. Because of this and Lyall's admitted dislike of Russians,[42] this work must be used with care, although most of the material dealing with the peasants seems to be actual description of roadside scenes.

A review of The Character of the Russians by John Barrow expressed doubt about Lyall's statements and ridiculed his style.[43]

Alexander Michie, The Siberian Overland Route from Peking to Petersburg Through the Deserts and Steppes of Mongolia, Tartary, etc., (London, 1864). Michie (1833-1902) was a writer on China. He first went to China in 1853 to join a merchant company and spent most of the rest of his life there. In 1863 he returned temporarily to England by the unusual route of Siberia, which journey resulted in the present book. Although most of the work

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39. Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. 12, (1893), p. 304.
40. John Gleason, The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain. A Study of the Interaction of Policy and Opinion. (Harvard, 1950), p. 69.
41. pp. 69-70.
42. Vol. I, p. xii.
43. Quarterly Review, XXXI,(December, 1824), pp. 146-66.

deals with China and Siberia, there is a chapter on "Russian and Siberian Peasantry" which outlines some interesting comparisons between the free Siberian and bound Russian peasant.

Henry Moor, A Visit to Russia in the Autumn of 1862. (London, 1863). Moor, a British aristocrat, was invited to go to Russia with his wife to visit a Russian friend at his country house near Pskov. Here Moor made notes on the condition of the peasantry. These present the peasant's condition in a rather favourable light, but Moor is superficial and says little of significance.

[Roderick I. Murchison],[44] "Tours in the Russian Provinces", Quarterly Review, CXXVII, (1841), pp. 344-75. This article is a review of several books on Russia (including Pinkerton, Venables and Bremner) by a famous English geologist who had himself travelled in Russia a few years earlier on a geological expedition. Murchison (1792-1871) here draws on his own recollections to comment on the books he reviews.

Lawrence Oliphant, The Russian Shores of the Black Sea in the Autumn of 1852, with a Voyage down the Volga, and a Tour through the Country of the Don Cossacks. (2nd ed., Edinburgh, 1853). Oliphant (1829-88) was a novelist, war-correspondent, diplomat, sometime M.P., traveller and an incredible adventurer who later turned to mysticism. In 1852 he travelled through a considerable area of Russia: from St. Petersburg to Moscow and Nijni Novgorod and then down the Volga through Kazan, Samara and Saratov, thence across to Odessa. Oliphant is an intelligent observer with a simple style, but has only a few notes on the peasantry.

Reviews of Oliphant's book in the Athenaeum[45] and Eclectic Review,[46] both praised Oliphant for an intelligent and observant book.

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44. Wellesly Index, p. 723.

45. No. 1358, (5 November, 1853), pp. 1311-12.

46. Series 5, Vol. VII, (January, 1854), pp. 55-69.

[Charles H. Pearson],[47] "Russia by a Recent Traveller". Continental Review, I, (1858), Nos. 38 to 44. Pearson (1830-94) was a colonial politician (being a member and a minister in the Victorian Parliament 1879-90) and an historian, as well as editor of the National Review 1862-3. He visited Russia in 1858. The series of articles appearing in the Continental Review are mainly about the proposed emancipation but include a few comments on the appearance of the peasant's home. Pearson could not believe that the people were as poor as it seemed.

Robert Pinkerton, Russia, or Miscellaneous Observations on the Past and Present State of that Country and its Inhabitants. Compiled from Notes made on the spot, during Travels at different times in the Service of the Bible Society and a Residence of Many Years in That Country. (London, 1833). Pinkerton (died 1859), like Henderson, was in Russia working for the British and Foreign Bible Society. Pinkerton was in Russia for various periods between 1805 and 1820, teaching in noble families, establishing the Bible Society in Russia, and travelling over the country to inspect auxiliary societies.[48] For example in 1819-20 he travelled down through the Western Provinces to Odessa and back up to Moscow via Kiev and Orel. He describes in detail what he sees of peasant life on this journey: their villages, houses and food. Pinkerton states that he possessed a thorough knowledge of the Russian language.[49] He says that some of the information in his book is drawn from other sources than his own observations. However, most of the material on the peasantry is direct description of what Pinkerton himself saw, though caution is necessary in this regard.

A review in the Literary Gazette praises Pinkerton for honesty, impartiality and setting down plainly and without theorising what he has to say.[50] Pinkerton certainly has no intention of misleading the reader, but his failure to "theorise" after such a long stay in Russia is certainly a disappointment for the inquisitive reader.

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47. British Museum Catalogue, Vol. 182, Col. 537.

48. Canton, Vol. I.

49. Preface.

50. No. 929, (8 November, 1854), p. 753.

[Elizabeth Rigby],[51] A Residence on the Shores of the Baltic, Described in a Series of Letters, (2 Vols., London, 1841) and review article in The Quarterly Review, CXXIX, (September, 1842), pp. 380-418.[52] Elizabeth Rigby (later Lady Eastlake), (1809-93), was an art historian and writer, and the daughter of a one time mayor of Norwich.[53] In 1838 she went to Reval near the Baltic to visit a sister who lived there, and stayed for some time. In one of her "Letters" she describes a peasant hut in detail, and has something to say on the food of the Baltic peasants. Her article in the Quarterly Review was a review of three books, including Jesse's work. Rigby refutes Jesse's miserable picture of peasant life and believes that the peasant is best off in his unemancipated condition.

A Residence on the Shores of the Baltic is highly praised in the Quarterly Review of 1841,[54] by J.G. Lockhart,[55] editor of the Quarterly and a friend of Rigby's. But Rigby's own article in the Quarterly reveals that she has in fact seen little of serfdom while staying with her noble friends.

Leitch Ritchie, A Journey to St. Petersburg and Moscow Through Courland and Livonia. (London, 1836). Ritchie (1800-65) was a Scottish novelist and journalist. He had travelled widely having been commissioned to write two series of travel books. His trip to Russia in 1835 was part of one of these projects. In his book on Russia, Ritchie describes what he saw of the peasantry in the Baltic Provinces and Russia Proper. The contrast between the emancipated but more miserable Baltic peasants and the Russian peasants is interesting, but Ritchie is a rather superficial observer. He believes that the Russian peasantry would oppose emancipation because they would be deprived of their land.[56]

A review by Henry Mildmay in Fraser's Magazine states that Ritchie's is a brief and satisfactory account of what he saw. The reviewer concludes

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51. See British Museum Catalogue, Vol. 203, Col. 39 for authorship.
52. Re authorship see Wellesly Index, p. 883.
53. Marion Lockhead, Elizabeth Rigby, Lady Eastlake, (London, 1961), p. 1.
54. Vol. 68, (September, 1841), pp. 444-69.
55. Re authorship see Wellesly Index, p. 724.
56. Ritchie is of course thinking of the landless emancipation of the Baltic peasantry - he does not consider the reaction to emancipation with land.

from the book that Russia is uncivilized.[57] The reviewer however is more superficial than Ritchie himself.

"Russia during the War", The Times, 12 September, 1855, p. 5, Col. e. An English gentleman who has resided in St. Petersburg for fifteen years, as manager of the spinning department in a cotton factory, gives some noteworthy information about serfs who worked seasonally in the factory.

[Mary A.P. Smith],[58] Six Years Travels in Russia, by an English Lady. (London, 1859). This Lady travelled from St. Petersburg to Novgorod, thence to Yaroslav, Moscow and to the property of a lady friend about sixty miles from the town of Riazan. Nerhood says that her "point of view is upper-class British diplomatic family, 1852-8."[59] She makes a few general remarks on the peasant's way of life, and believes that he will not understand emancipation. She makes very little criticism of Russians and believes that the peasants are well off as they are.

The Athenaeum comments that the book is interesting although its conclusions can not always be agreed with.[60] The Saturday Review welcomes Smith's uncritical attitude, considering that The Englishwoman in Russia is quite discreditable because of its critical nature.[61] The latter is however a far better book than Smith's frivolous and superficial account.

Edward P. Thompson, Life in Russia, or the Discipline of Despotism. (London, 1848). Thompson was a naturalist who had also written a book on Austria (London, 1849), in which he spoke out strongly against the revolutions of 1848. In his book on Russia he makes only a few comments on the peasant. In all, he is critical of Russia and the Russians.

The Athenaeum thinks that Thompson did not venture very far out of St. Petersburg to gather material for his book,[62] though the Eclectic

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57. "A Glance at Russia in 1835", in Vol. XIII, No. 73, (January, 1836), pp. 160-9.
58. Re authorship see British Museum Catalogue, Vol. 224, Col. 600.
59. p. 244
60. No. 1639, (26 March, 1859), p. 416.
61. Vol. VII, (16 April, 1859), p. 470.
62. No. 1055, (15 January, 1848), p. 67.

Review felt the book was a work of sound judgement, shrewd observation and extensive knowledge.[63] The Athenaeum is probably correct in its criticism.

Richard Lister Venables (Rev.), Domestic Scenes in Russia : in a series of letters describing a Year's Residence in that Country, Chiefly in the Interior, (London, 1839). Venables (1775-1859) who had an M.A. and D.D. from Cambridge was a vicar and archdeacon. In 1837 he visited Russia with his wife who had relatives there. They stayed for twelve months spending some time in the provinces and travelled from St. Petersburg to Tver, Yaroslav and Tambov provinces. Venables spent the winter with his wife's brother in Tambov province. The book describes the peasant's lodgings, feast days, agricultural methods, and the conscription of soldiers. Venables concludes that only a bloody revolution can bring freedom and liberal institutions to Russia.[64] He writes clearly and with some intelligence and critical observation.

The Monthly Review of 1839 however felt that Venables' book was meagre and unsatisfactory if truthful.[65] Murchison, in his Quarterly Review article, believes that Venables' book can be taken in full confidence as an accurate picture of the Russian interior, but Murchison feels that the peasants are not as unhappy as Venables seems to think.[66] This comment arises mainly from an inference by Venables that the peasants, dancing on a feast day were not as happy inwardly as they appeared at first glance. Perhaps Venables is being a little subjective here, but his account (at least that of the peasantry) is by no means meagre as the Monthly Review contends; indeed it is quite detailed on certain topics.

William Rae Wilson, Travels in Russia, (2 Vols., London, 1828), Vol. II. Wilson (1772-1849) was a lawyer and the author of several travel books. He says only a little about the peasants living between Novgorod and Moscow while travelling to the latter from St. Petersburg. The book was generally badly reviewed for containing too much useless detail.

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63. Ser. 4, XXIV, (1848), p. 490.
64. p. 319.
65. CXLVIII, (1839), pp. 403-16.
66. LXVII, (1841), pp. 350-1.

FRENCH.

Astolphe de Custine (Marquis). La Russie en 1839. (Second edition revue, corrigée et augmentée. 4 Vols. Paris, 1843). Custine (1790-1857) was a French aristocrat whose father and brother had been executed during the French Revolution. He is probably the best known of European travellers in Russia in the first half of the nineteenth century. At the time he was already an established traveller, journalist and author with anti-revolutionary and monarchical sympathies. In fact he says: "J'allais en Russie pour y cherche des arguments centre le gouvernment representatif, [mais]; en reviens partisan des constitutions."[67] Custine set out for Russia in 1839. He travelled from St. Petersburg to Moscow and Nijni Novgorad and up to Yaraslov. Most of his book is on the political state and prospects of Russia. He does however make some observations on the condition of the peasantry and comments on the evils of serfdom. But unlike many of the other travellers, Custine is more concerned with his expressing his own views than making observations on rural life.

This book was widely noticed and brought forth diverse comment. The editor of the Tory Quarterly Review, J.G. Lockhart,[68] said that the "grand staple of the volumes [is] abuse of Russia from the Czar to the Moujik";[69] on the other hand the New Quarterly Review spends nearly fifty pages refuting the charges of Lockhart and others against Custine.[70] The general opinion however was that Custine was prejudiced, conceited and inconsistent, but that he did show the rotteness and cruelty on which the Russian state was based.

P.G. Ferdinand Le Play, Les Ouvriers Européens, (2nd Edition, 6 Vols, Tours, 1877-9), Vols. 1 and 2. Le Play (1806-1882) was a French mining engineer and sociologist. Until 1855 he had worked as an engineer indulging in sociological field studies in his spare time, but after that year he decided to devote all his time to his sociology. His main interest was

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67. Vol. I, p. XIX.
68. See Wellesly's Index, p. 726, for authorship.
69. LXXIII, (March, 1844), p. 325.
70. IV, No. I, (July, 1844), pp. 55-114.

the relation between the type of family and the rest of society: Le Play felt that a patriarchal family ensured a stable social order (something non-existent in France Le Play felt). Thus over many years he and his collaborators studied at first hand the way of life of selected families in different parts of the world, especially by examining their budgets. The result of this was a six-volume work, Les Ouvriers Européens, which described the way of life and budgets of fifty-seven different families. Later De Play tried to convince Napoleon III of his ideas concerning social stability.

Le Play first went to Russia on an important mining mission (study of Donetz coal resources) in 1837. Le Play confesses that he had had preconceived notions about serfdom but that observation inclined him to believe (already in 1837) that the serfs were content with their lot, and that the emancipation of 1861 was a step in the wrong direction.[71] However, when he came to Russia Le Play already strongly believed in a patriarchal society based on religion, so it is not surprising that he liked what he saw of the organization of Russian society. Moreover, his position while in Russia meant that he met mainly wealthy and influential noblemen whose ideas were akin to his and who probably treated their serfs better than poorer nobles. And when in 1853 Le Play and a collaborator settled down to observe two Russian peasant families it is evident that both these families were at least somewhat better off than many other Russian peasant families.

Despite these reservations, for the purposes of this study Le Play's work is important, for only he, of all the European observers, goes into such detail concerning the peasant way of life. Obviously generalizations from Le Play's subjects to other families must be made with great care and then with reference to other sources. A review of Le Play's work in the Revue des Deux Mondes suggests that the budget figures of one of the peasant families (Orenburg) may have been supplied to a large extent by the owners of the estate and are consequently biased.[72] However it is

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71. Vol. I, pp. 418-20.

72. Leonce de Lavergne "Economie Rurale : Les Ouvries Européens", Revue des Deux Mondes, 2me periode, (Ser. 8), Vol. I (1856), p. 542.

not necessary to take the figures literally to derive value from Le Play's studies, for this is but a small portion of the quantity of information contained in them.

Le Play's general conclusions (drawn from his total experiences in Russia as well as from the two peasant family studies) that the Russian peasant was contented and well off under serfdom or state-ownership is certainly disputable and the reviewer in Revue des Deux Mondes (Leonce de Lavergne) sharply criticises Le Play for coming to such conclusions. But Le Play's view is the result of his own prejudices and lack of wider study: not the result of a deliberate desire to falsify his own research matter to justify his personal conclusions.

J. Sanrey, "Les Terres Noires de la Russie", Revue des Deux Mondes, 2e periode (Ser. 8), XXV, (1860), pp. 832-67. Sanrey was impatient to resolve the conflicting reports he had read on Russia, so he decided to go there himself. He states that he stayed for a long time in Southern Russia[73] and came to the conclusion that the only thing wanting to make Russia a civilized nation was the abolition of serfdom. This would be of special value to the rich agricultural regions of Southern Russia (the black soil area). Sanrey describes the villages and houses of Little Russia and the peasants' good and bad qualities. He mentions that he stayed on an estate[74] and describes peasant agricultural methods. He concludes that the peasants would be more industrious but for serfdom. Sanrey's account is an intelligent and observant one which notices the practical disadvantages of serfdom without being polemical.

G E R M A N.

W. Hamm (Review of) Südöstliche Steppen und Städte, (Frankfurt, 1862) in Bentley's Miscellany LII, (July-December, 1862), pp. 65-72. Dr. Hamm, a German agronomist, apparently travelled down the Danube from Pest to Odessa. Bentley's Miscellany quotes two of his observations on the peasant

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73. p. 832.

74. p. 858.

in Southern Russia - one regarding peasant superstition, another concerning agricultural methods.

(Baron) A. von Haxthausen, The Russian Empire : Its People, Institutions and Resources. Translated (from German) by Robert Faire.[75] (2 Vols., London, 1856 and 1968). Haxthausen (1792-1866) was a specialist in rural institutions before he visited Russia, having been commissioned by the Prussian government between 1830 and 1838 to study rural organization in that country.[76] Haxthausen believed that the rural institutions of a people are based on their nationality - in Russia this was embodied in the ancient and still existent mir, or commune. Like Le Play, Haxthausen (also a conservative) saw virtue in the patriarchal society of Russia. The commune, he believed, was the macrocosm of the family, in which each member has his place and a right to a share of land. This right of land, Haxthausen believed, would prevent the spread of socialism in Russia for there would be no landless proletariat.[77] However he did believe that serfdom had outlived its usefulness.[78]

Haxthausen arrived in Russia early in 1843 and travelled over a large part of the country during that year. Starting from St. Petersburg he went to Moscow, then north to the centre of Vologda province, back down to Nijni Novgorod, thence to Kazan and along the Volga to Saratov, then to Penza, Kharkov and the Crimea and the Caucasus. Returning from the Caucasus Haxthausen proceeded to Odessa, Kiev, Orel and back to Moscow. This is one of the most extensive trips made by any of the writers considered here (though not all state where they travelled), and if perhaps Pinkerton and Henderson covered more territory, they are not nearly as informative as Haxthausen. This thorough German writes on a host of topics in detail - peasant agriculture, villages, houses, dress, way of life and the commune. Despite an aristocratic background and biases, and a subsequent failure to record some of the harsher aspects of Russian

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75. Faire states that there has been some abridgement - due to repetition and disarrangement in original - with some detail omitted. Haxthausen approved of the method of abridgement says Faire (Vol. I, p. vii).

76. Vol. I, p. ix.

77. Vol. I, pp. 123-4.

78. Vol. I, p. 112.

peasant life,[79] Haxthausen provides a wealth of information not found in other travellers' accounts. For this reason, providing that Haxthausen's preconceptions are kept in mind, he must be considered the most important observer of Russian peasant life in the pre-emancipation period.

Haxthausen's work was widely reviewed, and most of the reviewers came to the same conclusion: that Haxthausen was "trustworthy in all his statements, but too decidedly conservative in all his views ...."[80] The Times, however, defended Haxthausen up to a certain point, saying that his sympathy for Russian institutions was the result of a liberal tolerance of diversity as opposed to the apparently current attitude that all civilization should develop along the same lines.[81] This point is missed by the other reviews and reminds one that Haxthausen's basic premise was that "the rural institutions of every people have a peculiar basis of nationality, and can only be rendered intelligible when the importance of this fact is clearly understood."[82] On the other hand, Haxthausen's tolerance of Russian institutions is certainly buttressed by his conservatism which results in a too uncritical view of his subject matter. Haxthausen was rightly praised in several of the reviews for his enterprise in travelling all over Russia and recording so much of what he saw.

J.G. Kohl, Russia : St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kharkoff, Riga, Odessa, the German Provinces on the Baltic, the Steppes, the Crimea and the Interior of the Empire.[83] (London, 1842). Kohl (1808-78) was a German traveller and historian who wrote many books on America and several on Russia. This work is in fact an abstract of "nine closely printed volumes" by Kohl on Russia.[84] Kohl travelled over much of Russia in the late 1830's from the Baltic Provinces to the Ukraine, minutely recording his impressions. Concerning the peasantry, he described agriculture, housing and

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79. John Maynard in his The Peasant and Other Studies (New York, 1962), p. 38, suggests that Haxthausen, travelling under the auspices of the Russian government, may have felt that his hosts would not have welcomed a discussion on serfdom.

80. "Slavery in Russia", North American Review, CXXXII, (April, 1856), p. 294.

81. The Times, 20 September, 1855, p.8, col. e.

82. Vol. I, p. xi.

83. Translated and abridged from German: translater unnamed.

84. Kohl, p. iii - preface by editor. 9 Vols. from four separate works.

emancipation in the Baltic Provinces; the villages, estates and a wedding in the Ukraine.

Reviews of Kohl's work praise him for his apparent honesty and detailed observation, but the Foreign Quarterly Review criticises Kohl for rarely alluding to "the servile condition of a large portion of the rural population of Russia."[85] This type of detailed description without reference to social conditions is reminiscent of Pinkerton and likewise unfortunate, in that the author has travelled so widely and described so much, but meditated so little.

[Edward Kolbe],[86] Recollections of Russia during Thirty-Three Years Residence, by a German Nobleman. Revised and translated by Lascelles Wraxall. (Edinburgh, 1855). There is little information about this work. Wraxall, himself a writer and traveller, states that he has been informed, in confidence, of the name of the Author who vouches for the authenticity of the information contained in the book.[87] However, the book is written in polemical style describing the misery of the peasants at every turn. Some of the reports are most interesting but Kolbe seems inclined towards exaggeration and grandiloquence. But if he describes only misery this is interesting to contrast with more favourable accounts.

A review in Taits Edinburgh Magazine describes the book as gossip with no permanent authority, but interesting nevertheless.[88]

N O R W E G I A N.

Christophe Hansteen, Souvenirs d'un Voyage en Siberie. Traduits du norvegien par Mme Colbon et revus par Mm. Sedillot et de la Roquette. (Paris, 1857). Hansteen (1784-1873) was a Norwegian astronomer and geophysicist who travelled through Russia to Siberia 1827-30. He gives a little information on peasant houses and dress. The Saturday Review felt that Hansteen's character and nationality probably made him an impartial witness.[89]

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85. XXVIII, No. LV, (1842), p. 116.
86. Re authorship see Nerhood, p. 173.
87. Preface of Recollections.
88. XXII, (September, 1855), p. 635.
89. Vol. IV, No. 89 (July, 1857), p. 43.

PART TWO.

CHAPTER IV - THE GOVERNMENT, THE LANDLORD AND THE ARMY.

Before considering the peasant's own society, agricultural methods, attitudes and way of life, it is necessary to define and where possible illustrate (by traveller's comments) his relations with other parts of society. The major external influences on the peasantry came, firstly, from the Russian government and its organs, and secondly, and more directly, from the landlord or government agents who directed peasant life at the local level.

What then was the peasant's relation to his overlords, both state and seignorial? In the first place of course, the peasant was the subject of an absolute monarch, the tsar of the Russian Empire. Three tsars ruled in the period considered here: Alexander I (1801-25), his brother Nicholas I (1825-55) and Nicholas' son, Alexander II (1855-81). Under the tsar there was a large body of central government bureaucrats including, since 1810, the Council of State, which was composed of elder statesmen who advised the tsar. There were various ministries, two of which, the Ministry of the Interior and that of State Domains, were especially concerned with the peasantry. The latter was concerned mainly with the state peasantry. The Ministry of the Interior on the other hand was in charge of provincial administration. Imperial Russia was broken up into fifty-four provinces (excluding Poland and Finland) most of which were headed by a governor appointed from St. Petersburg. Subordinate to the governor were a host of provincial officials.

The peasants themselves, of course, were allowed almost no part in the governing of the nation of which they formed the major proportion. The state peasants, it is true, especially after the Kiselev reforms, were able to elect some of their own officials. They elected the mayor and board of their own volost (a volost consisted of 6,000 male peasants). Above the level of the volost however control was vested in government appointed officials and the county police. These officials supervised the peasants' activities and that of their institutions, and made sure that they met their obligations to the state. The seignorial peasantry were almost wholly under the control of their landlords, only important criminal cases being reported to the police. The landlord regulated all

relations between himself and the peasant: he fixed the peasant's obligations and exercised through himself or his steward any amount of interference with his vassals' lives which he felt necessary. Both the state and seignorial peasants exercised a very local form of self-government and carried out their obligations through their communes or miry. (See Chapter V).

It was through his obligations that the peasant had most contact with people outside his own society - government officials and landlords. The obligations of the peasant were many, and they varied from place to place. All peasants, since the time of Peter the Great, had to pay poll tax to the state. This was levied on every male peasant. Both serfs and state peasants had to pay a road tax, build and maintain highways and provide horses and carts for travel and postal services where necessary. Military service was another duty to the state borne by a percentage of all male peasants unless they could pay for a substitute. The rate of recruitment varied with periods of war and peace, but after 1831 it was usually about seven conscripts per thousand males, though this was increased to about ten in wartime. The period of service was very long: twenty-five years at the beginning of the reign of Nicholas I; twenty years from 1834; and twelve years after 1855. A serf was freed after serving in the army but this hardly compensated for the break up of his family life. Peasants were torn from their wives, children, and parents, and lamented as dead. Many never returned after twenty or so years in the army, and if they did, found it difficult to fit back into the village and family they had left. Sometimes the terror of enlistment caused peasants to maim themselves so as to be unfit for service. Pinkerton said that many youths did this.[1]

Venables, staying with his brother-in-law near Tambov, attended a recruitment board on which his brother-in-law was sitting. The prospective recruits, says Venables, came in stark naked, were measured, and looked over by a doctor. If the man was approved a patch was immediately shaved on his forehead to mark him; if he was rejected a patch was shaved on the back of his neck to show that he had been examined. At the conclusion

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1. p. 78.

of the day's sitting the enlisted men were marched off to church where they took oaths of allegiance and fidelity before a priest.[2]

Venables said that the conscription of a man frequently led to pitiable scenes, such as when married men, sons of widows or aged parents were torn away from thier families. The recruits, he said, often cry and lament bitterly their hard lot before the board. For example three brothers (state peasants) enter before the board accompanied by their father, mother, wives and children. The board listens to the men and their relatives urging that they be excused, but decides to enlist one man. Thus the three brothers are examined. The eldest is fit but has a wife and family, the second is too short (under five feet three inches), and the third is under age although he may join voluntarily if he wishes. A pathetic and ludicrous scene follows says Venables: the elder brother, his wife, the father and mother and little children beg the youngest to go voluntarily; the members of the board add their exhortations and the lad finally agrees.[3]

Carr, supervising in a rural cotton mill, states that in the time he was there a government official several times came for recruits. However it was the steward who went to choose the men and in so doing he usually chose the "idle, worthless, troublesome, profligate" fellows and those noted for theft. (This practice of dispatching troublesome serfs to the army was common it seems.) Carr says that although he never saw a peasant resist recruitment they frequently tried to make themselves sick if they had foreknowledge of the recruiting officer's visit. Being in a factory, Carr's peasants were usually separated from their families when recruited: "frequently their parents [and] ..... wives have been in entire ignorance of their departure until long afterwards."[4]

In another way the army directly affected the peasants of Russia: this was when they were enrolled into the military colonies set up by Alexander I. Soldiers and peasants were settled together and shared agricultural and combat duties, receiving aid from the government. But the attempt to turn peasants into soldiers and soldiers into peasants failed, and after a serious revolt in Novgorod province, Nicholas I

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2. pp. 189-90.
3. pp. 189-93.
4. pp. 6-7.

abandoned the colonies.

Few of the travellers, it seems, noticed the military colonies. Lyall, travelling in 1822 when the colonies were still being built up, felt that villages on the steppes towards Odessa had been put in very good order by their transformation into military colonies.[5] Later Bremner noticed the neat, well kept government built cottages in the Novgorod colony, which compared most favourably with those of other villages.[6] Haxthausen made a similar observation in Kharkov province.[7]

Sometimes the peasant felt the influence of the army in another way: when soldiers were billeted on him, usually during winter. This was very hard for poor peasants who had enough trouble providing for themselves, let alone a soldier. However it seems that the practice was not very frequent. Le Play records one instance: one of the families he studied used a small amount of food to feed troops who passed through the village.[8] Eldridge says that the state peasants in Southern Russia were abused by soldiers quartered on them about the time of the Crimean War.[9] The soldiers fell on the peasants' stacks of winter provisions. The peasants also had to help transport artillery over the snow.[10]

Thus a few travellers noticed the effect of the army on the peasantry - mainly concerning recruitment. The peasants greatly feared enlistment of themselves or their relatives and did all to avoid it, it seems. Also, peasants disliked by their landlords or stewards were more likely to find themselves enlisted than others. The military settlements, noticed by three observers, seemed to be in better order than ordinary peasant villages. And finally, it was observed that the army might deprive the peasants of some of their food when quartered in the villages.

Apart from the above relations with the state the peasants had many dealings with their direct superiors: government officials if they were

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5. Travels, I, 144.
6. II, 22-3.
7. I, 407.
8. II, 207.
9. "Life", p. 276.
10. "Sufferings", p. 252.

state peasants, and landlords and stewards if they were serfs. Again obligations to the state and landlord were important in these relations.

All peasants had to pay some sort of due to the state or the landlord for the land which they held. There were two sorts of payment: barshchina and obrok. The barshchina was the equivalent of the European corvée, whereby the serf worked part of the time on his master's land (the seignorial demesne) in return for being allowed to cultivate a plot of land for himself on the landlord's estate. The obligation was set either at a certain number of days (usually three) or a certain amount of labour to be completed. The other sort of obligation was an annual payment (obrok) in cash or kind, or both, to the seigneur or state in return for the land used by the peasant. All state peasants were on obrok. In the case of serfs the landlord obviously set the obligation in relation to his own needs: if he had fertile land he would usually require bashchina to raise produce for commercial purposes. If the land was poor, or the landlord lazy, the peasants would be required to pay obrok, which they could raise by agricultural efforts, the sale of goods made by themselves in their homes, or from wages gained by migratory factory or other work. Thus (in 1850) north and north-east of Moscow obrok was generally predominant, while in the Central Agricultural Provinces and the Ukraine bashchina was the more common form of obligation. Over the whole of Russia barshchina was slightly more prevalent than obrok, though the percentage of peasants on obrok had been increasing slowly for some time.[11] Some landlords required both types of obligation. The state and the landlords could make the peasants work in their factories and mines while landlords usually took some peasants off the land and turned them into full-time house servants of the most menial kind. Travellers' comments on peasant obligations will be discussed below as part of their observations on peasant-landlord (or peasant-official) relations as a whole.

Most perceptive travellers realized that the situation of the peasant in Russia vis-a-vis his superiors could not be described in black and white terms. They recognized that there were some kind and thoughtful landlords as well as some who were cruel and oppressive. The state peasant too could be well treated or oppressed by government officials, although

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11. See appendix for map re peasant obligations in European Russia.

it was generally agreed that they were better off than serfs (see Chapter IX). Several travellers made generalizations about the treatment of the peasantry, but sometimes these were not the result of very wide observation. Jesse, for example, making a quick tour from Odessa to St. Petersburg, arrived at the conclusion that the nobles did nothing for the serfs, after he had seen some starving peasants by the roadside.[12] Lyall, on the other hand, from a much wider experience, although critical of the Russian nobility generally, felt that they were not generally cruel or oppressive to their "slaves", though there were many exceptions, he added. The peasants were in fact better fed, clothed and lodged than those in most European countries.[13] Pinkerton states that he was acquainted with many nobles who looked after their peasants, and said that "the actual state of the great mass of the Russian vassals, in point of enjoyment, may perhaps be, in some respects, better than that of many of the free poor in some other countries ...."[14] Bremner, though he believed that the peasants were at times ill-treated, compared them favourably with Irish and Scottish peasants.[15] Cochrane, still early in his travels also said that the Russian peasantry were better off than the Irish.[16] The American, Stephens, however said:

> I was forcibly struck with a parallel between the white serfs of the north of Europe and the African bondsmen at home. The Russian boor, generally wanting the comforts which are supplied to the negro on our best ordered plantations, appeared to me to be not less degraded in intellect, character and personal bearing. Indeed the marks of physical and personal degradation were so strong, that I was irresistibly compelled to abandon certain theories not uncommon among my countrymen at home, in regard to the intrinsic superiority of the white race over all others.[17]

Henningsen also compared the Russian peasantry to the negro slaves.[18] But neither Stephens nor Henningsen were qualified to make such generalizations having in fact seen little of the Russian peasantry. It is interesting that Maxwell, another American, who saw more than Stephens

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12. p. 302.
13. Character, pp. viii and Lxxxii.
14. pp. 287, 289.
15. I, 154-5.
16. p. 58.
17. p. 38.
18. p. 83.

or Henningsen, made no such observation - indeed, like Bremner and Cochrane, he felt that the comfort of the Russian peasant was "greatly superior to that of many British and Irish cottiers."[19]

From all evidence it was difficult and dangerous to generalize about the situation of the peasantry however. Their position, especially that of the serfs, depended on the nature and practices of their overlords. Eldridge, for example, qualifies his overall impression, saying that if the master was kind and resident on his property, the serfs looked up to him as their father and protector. The majority of masters, he stated, were not cruel, but if he was, or if the estate was left in the hands of a steward, the peasants could suffer greatly.[20] Eldridge is supported by other observers in his condemnation of absenteeism and his suspicion of stewards. Haxthausen for example felt that to be useful the nobility should live in the country: "Country life alone gives that freshness of spirit, that practical view of life and tact in appreciating the wants of the people, which a genuine aristocracy ought to possess." He also confirmed that absenteeism was a frequent practice - most of the nobles did have country houses but visited them for only a few weeks or months, residing the rest of the year in town.[21] However, he felt that absenteeism had declined since 1812 and that the nobles were taking more interest in their estates than formerly.[22]

While in the Ukraine, Sanrey remarked that nearly all the seigneurs were absent from their estates, their houses being occupied by stewards.[23] On passing through Tver province in the early 1820's Cochrane noticed several villages in a state of decay which he suspected was due to absentee landlordism.[24] Harrison said that on the estate at which he stayed the owners had not appeared, except briefly, in a space of ten years.[25] And Jesse, having passed through villages of starving peasants from which their

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19. p. 223.

20. "Life", p. 271.

21. II, 208-9.

22. I, 395.

23. p. 841.

24. I, 58.

25. pp. 124-5.

owners were absent, records that one such landlord, who had in fact just returned from his estates in White Russia, said to him: "It is the first time I ever saw my peasants."[26]

When the owner of an estate was absent he nearly always left his estate in the hands of a steward, bailiff, or other officials outside the peasant class (though Haxthausen believed that in Little Russia the estates were entrusted to peasant Starostas, rarely to educated bailiffs[27]). Stewards were of different types: some were specifically hired for the purpose and even came from other countries, especially Germany. At other times the steward was merely a trusted peasant. But whatever their background, stewards were nearly always hated by the peasants, usually because they exacted more than they were supposed to in order to line their own pockets. Some stewards, especially foreign ones, did try to make improvements to the estate for their master's and even for the peasants' sake, but many cheated an absentee landlord who rarely went deeply into the affairs of their estates so long as income was forthcoming. Stewards were of course also present on estates where the master was not absentee, though then they usually exercised less power.

The "Englishwoman in Russia" felt that landowners were for the most part humane towards their serfs, but that if the master did not reside on the estate all year round the serfs would be sure to be subjected to quite oppressive and tyrannical stewards.[28] Some peasants told Anderson that their "baron" was a good man, but that he spent time and money in St. Petersburg, leaving his peasants to a harsh German steward.[29] After his thirty-three year stay in Russia, Kolbe came to the conclusion that stewards oppressed the peasants and cheated the landlords at the same time.[30] And although the usual corvée obligation was three days (there was no law to this effect however) Eldridge reported that when the master was absentee the steward sometimes forced the peasants to work on their own days without wages.[31] Even Haxthausen, having praised the efforts of Count Sheremetiev

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26. p. 58.

27. II, 174.

28. p. 172.

29. p. 21.

30. pp. 120-1.

31. "Life", p. 272.

(reputedly the richest landowner in Russia) on behalf of his peasants, continued: "..... but I cannot say that some of his officials do not indulge in many kinds of exactions."[32]

As on Sheremetiev's and other large estates, there were many stewards and officials on the estate at which Harrison stayed. But Harrison recorded that the chief steward was an intelligent man who had studied agriculture in Scotland and elsewhere. He kept the estate in excellent order and set up a model farm. However the power of the stewards here was absolute; for example, they could send an offending peasant off as a soldier.[33] As noted above, the steward at Carr's factory kept what he called his "soldiers book" to record the names of recalcitrant peasants to be sent as soldiers at the next recruitment levy.[34]

The family which Le Play studied on the Oka lived on an estate where the seigneur was absentee and a bailiff ran the estate. Le Play criticized this practice, saying that the stewards were rarely honest, and that absenteeism destroyed the patriarchal relationship between the peasant and seigneur. Le Play listed the following duties of the steward here. He collected the obrok due from the peasants, directed the model farm here, collected taxes including one on forest products made by the peasants for sale outside the village. He raised and sent off army recruits. Le Play also says that the steward, as far as possible, had to protect the peasants and guide them with paternal authority. Finally he noted that these jobs were not always filled by men equal to the task.[35]

Few of the travellers record an occurrence of peasant revolt: only Anderson was told of an occasion when a group of peasants on Count Pomerin's estate flogged the steward for his maltreatment of them and their old Starosta (he was told this by the son of the starosta.)[36] These revolts, often against landlords themselves (or against state officials in the case of state peasants) did occur quite frequently,[37] with nobles and their

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32. I, 370.

33. pp. 99, 119.

34. p. 7.

35. II, 182, 189, 224-5.

36. pp. 277-80.

37. 1467 recorded 1801-61, Blum, p. 558.

families being massacred and their homes burned. But as Henningsen points out "unless the traveller should pass within a few miles of the spot, or unless he happen during a protracted residence and constant intermixture with the natives, to meet individuals who have either witnessed [revolts] or suffered by them, they are little likely to come to his knowledge."[38]

If absenteeism and the rule of stewards often oppressed the peasants the residence of the landlord on his estate could be just as oppressive. This might be the case if the landlord was personally cruel or if he was exacting, as often happened with poorer nobles. For those landlords who were not rich enough to reside in the towns lived on their estates and tried to extract more from their peasants in order to make ends meet. Pinkerton[39] and the "Englishwoman in Russia"[40] affirmed that the peasantry on smaller estates were worse off than others. Some nobles were so poor that they lived amongst their peasants in the villages owning but a few serfs - as Kohl found in Little Russia.[41] Haxthausen, travelling West from Tambov, said that there were many petty nobility there and villages divided between ten to fifteen nobles, some owning but two tiaglos (a working unit - usually a man, wife and a horse). Nearly all these were deeply in debt and oppressed their serfs.[42] Later, Haxthausen criticized the practice of split-inheritance of villages which resulted in impoverished nobles who oppressed their peasants who in turn were without the protection of a Commune.[43]

Not many travellers saw specific instances of ill-treatment, though these undoubtedly occurred. Henningsen said that he saw a nobleman amuse himself by making his serfs stand for hours on one leg.[44] Harrison saw a group of women working on their lord's land under the superintendence of an overseer with a long twig in his hand.[45] Eldridge reported that

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38. I, 93.
39. p. 291.
40. p. 135.
41. pp. 522-3.
42. I, 373.
43. I, 400.
44. I, 83.
45. p. 112.

corporal punishment of the serfs was arbitrary and quite common.[46] Harrison said that sometimes masters moved their peasants about for "selfish motives which display the cruelty and injustice of serfdom", such as when the land was worked out.[47] Jesse saw many starving peasants on his journey and felt that the proprietors were most neglectful of their serfs. For example, near Orel he passed near the village of "Sergiefscoi". The proprietor of this village and its inhabitants was a Prince Gorgarin whose house stood on the hill above the village. The people, said Jesse, were in a most destitute state and there was a great number of beggars. "Anything more deplorable than the state of this village under the proprietor's eyes cannot well be imagined", he wrote.[48]

Sometimes of course, writers described specific instances of good serf-landlord relationships. Haxthausen said that the well-known reforming proprietor, E.S. Karnovitch, was beloved by his vassals,[49] and speaks of a village which always had considerate landlords.[50] Haxthausen also recorded that he went to the estate of a Russianized German, von Pirch. Von Pirch said that he gave his peasants anything they wanted and then enquired whether it was necessary or not - if not, severe punishment was meted out. Hence the peasants asked only when in real need. Apparently Herr von Pirch told them he was God and Emperor in their world. However, Haxthausen says that von Pirch provided for his people well, and though feared was also loved by them. In late years of severe dearth, instead of selling his grain, von Pirch fed the peasants from his own stores.[51] When Moor entered a village with his landlord host all the peasants seemed glad to see their master and invited him as well as Moor and his wife to come into their houses for tea and liquour. (This landlord was on the local emancipation committee).[52]

Sometimes however the welcomes by peasants to returning landlords

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46. "Life", p. 273.

47. p. 104.

48. p. 52.

49. I, 115.

50. I, 184.

51. I, 334-7.

52. p. 20-21.

were performed partly out of fear and slavishness rather than true devotion. When Harrison and the noble family with whom he was travelling arrived at the peasant villages the serfs met their master with bread and salt to congratulate him on his arrival. At one place they all fell on their knees. But

> amid all the joy and satisfaction apparently caused by our arrival, there were, however, occasional indications of the misery that was kept in the background by prudent stewards and overlookers. One wretched looking man threw himself at the feet of the landlord, and piteously implored justice, but he was briefly referred to the steward's office and bid to depart.[53]

And Anderson returning from a hunt with Count Pomerin observed that the peasants showed no signs of joy or admiration for their master who had just been delivered from the clutches of a bear (though Anderson could not understand this).[54]

Like Haxthausen's von Pirch claimed to be, many of the Baltic landowners, according to Kohl, were almost independent sovereigns, with no interference or control. Every Saturday they would examine the lists of dead and sick peasants, settle accounts with stewards, give audience to their peasants, issue various decrees, to execute which a hundred willing hands were immediately ready, and perhaps make a "tour" of the estate.[55]

The landlord then, controlled nearly all aspects of his serf's life - or at least as many as he cared to. For example, peasants were rarely allowed to marry without the master's consent, or to inter-marry with those of neighbouring estates without the consent of both masters. On the other hand landlords could and did force the serfs to marry against their will - the propagation of working hands being an important consideration in the serf economy. "The Englishwoman in Russia" records that once, while staying in the household of a lady of high rank the following took place. There were about sixty servants in the house and over time their numerous sons had grown up into young men. The nobleman felt that there were too many servants and that these young men should be down in the village getting married. So he gave them, about twenty in number, three weeks to get married. On inquiring later, the Englishwoman

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53. pp. 85-8.

54. pp. 107-8.

55. p. 304.

was assured that they had all got married and had done so in the time specified.[56] And Bunbury found a girl in her household crying because her mistress had ordered her back to the estate, where she did not want to return, to marry the cook, whom she disliked.[57]

While the nobleman could thus make and unmake domestic servants out of his village serfs, he could also place them in any position he saw fit. Jesse knew one nobleman who had his serf taught music - this man always played piano at the master's quadrille parties in the country; but in St. Petersburg he was a footman.[58]

The landlord of course also decided what obligations the serfs owed to him, and how these would be fulfilled. Le Play in his two studies gives a detailed description of obligations on the two estates. On the estate near Orenburg (where Le Play studied a family in the village of Tuchli) the peasants did barshchina. Here the available land was divided into 17,400 hectares for the 4,724 male peasants and 4,800 for the seigneur. In exchange for the land each family worked 125 days a year on the seigneur's land. Often this was converted into piece work however says Le Play: a certain amount of work being equivalent to a day. Each male worker had to supply two horses for transport. The full obligation of the corvée applied to those between 19 and 52, for those 14 to 19 and 52 to 55 it was halved, and outside these age limits none was required. In the case of women the corvée applied from marriage until the age of 48, but was waived for those with more than six children.

The landlord on this estate had also distributed, by lot, one hundred obroks amongst his peasants to encourage the industrious among them. Those who did not receive one could purchase one from those who had no use for it. Those with an obrok were exempted from corvée and paid an obrok (200 francs) instead.

Apart from the villagers, the landlord had made some of his serfs into shepherds, artisans, administrators and vodka distillers. Finally there were the domestics attached to the landlord's household.

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56. pp. 103-4.

57. II, 114.

58. p. 302.

The landlord on this estate allowed the peasants to use his forest to gather wood for heating and light, charcoal, the construction and maintenance of the house, sheds and carts. Unlike in Europe, says Le Play, the peasants were allowed to hunt, fish and gather in the forest or streams. Finally, as a landlord was supposed to, this nobleman helped his peasants in time of scarcity, epidemics and fires. This was not only because of obligation or generosity Le Play points out; it was also in the landlord's own interest.[59] It was the duty of all landlords to look after their peasants in time of want (though as shown above this was not always the case - cf. Jesse's comments), and to keep spare grain for such emergencies. For example, Eldridge said that in Southern Russia each village had provident magazines containing a certain amount of rye and barley.[60]

On the other estate studied by Le Play, which was situated on the upper Oka river, the peasants discharged their obligation by paying obrok (68 francs 60) levied on each male inhabitant aged between 18 and 55. The peasants (2,469 males of whom 1,104 paid obrok) held 10,164 hectares of land; the seigneur himself had merely 655 hectares - a model farm, which was exploited by a small amount of corvée work. The peasants here also held most of the pasturage. They worked their land as they saw fit in order to support themselves and pay the obrok. To raise further money the peasants were allowed to emigrate to work in towns or do other non-agricultural work (a right frequently given to peasants on obrok in Russia). Some of the young men of the village (Le Play studied a family in a village called Eractour) worked in St. Petersburg; others on the nearby Oka River (see Chapter V).

As on the estate near Orenburg the landlord allowed his peasants wood from his forest for heating and light, construction and maintenance of the house and its dependencies, and to build bee-hives and fishing boats. However Le Play says that on this estate seignorial aid was given only in unusual circumstances, because the peasants, said Le Play, paid only a moderate obrok and were allowed to emigrate.

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59. II, 49-58.

60. "Life", p. 272.

On this estate the peasants, apart from paying obrok, had to do what Le Play calls corvée work in working the model farm and maintaining the roads of the estate and the seignorial mansion. However the seigneur here paid the peasant's poll tax - perhaps this was included in the obrok paid by the peasant.[61]

Few of the other travellers make much mention of peasant obligations and the execution of these. Haxthausen noted that on von Pirch's estate over three-quarters of the land was used by the peasants.[62] According to Haxthausen when the corvée system was used the landowner usually kept for himself about one-quarter to one-third of the available land. On another estate he found the proprietor in possession of over 8,000 acres of the richest soil.[63] Later Haxthausen discovered peasants doing extra corvée work to pay off new brick houses built for them by their proprietor.[64] Anderson was told by one peasant that he and his son work in a cotton mill (presumably on the estate) between 5 a.m. and 8 p.m. for low wages. His wife and two daughters worked for five days a week in summer on the lord's fields for no wages. In winter they did any work required of them by the steward. The family had about nine acres of land but on this they raised only a few vegetables, and the women did the tilling. They obtained black flour from the steward's shop - this was deducted from the wages of the men.[65]

On the expansive southern steppe Haxthausen found that peasants on one estate (and on others no doubt) were allowed to cultivate as much land as they liked in return for three days corvée per week.[66] Eldridge also noticed this practice in Southern Russia.[67] Also in Southern Russia Haxthausen found proprietors hiring serfs from other nobles in central Russia during summer.[68] This practice occured in other parts of Russia too - Haxthausen recorded it in Kubensk (between Yaroslav and Vologda) - labourers were hired in the summer months from further north because there

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61. II, 180-1, 188-9, 196-7, 207.
62. I, 338.
63. I, 341.
64. I. 365.
65. p. 172.
66. II, 139.
67. "Life", p. 271.
68. II, 139.

was so much work to be done.[69]

Technically obrok was a payment for the holding of land, but landlords felt that if their peasants, by working at home or in towns, earnt more money than from agriculture alone, they were entitled to a share of the proceeds. Thus at Velikoye Selo near Yaroslav, Haxthausen found that the obrok was calculated firstly, from the rent derivable from the land; secondly, from the number of individuals to whom it was granted; and thirdly, "from the peculiar resources of skill and industry with which the inhabitants carry on certain branches of manufacture." The obrok here was levied on the village as a whole, not on individual peasants.[70]

Frequently, apart from paying a monetary obrok, or doing barshchiva, the landlord required payment in kind. Sometimes this was in the form of agricultural produce but often it was merely food for the landlord's table. Rigby said that the peasants in the Baltic provinces, apart from doing corvée work, also had to contribute corn, a calf, a goose, fowls' eggs and so on to the lord's provisions.[71] Lyall mentions one landlord who ordered each peasant family to produce fifty eggs for the Easter table.[72]

Haxthausen found some peasants in Vologda province under what was known as the Polovnik law (polovina meaning half). The peasants, who were not serfs it seems, occupied the noble's land in return for handing over half of the produce. The contract was for six to twenty years. The peasant was under his lord's protection; the landlord paid the peasant's taxes to the state and maintained him in years of scarcity. The peasants could spend the seven or eight winter months doing other work to complement the family income (Haxthausen felt that half the produce was obviously not enough for the peasant to live on). These peasants were generally well off, Haxthausen said, but some feared that this system might lead to enserfment and hence tried to become state peasants if they could.[73]

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69. I, 183.

70. I, 106-7.

71. Residence, I, 186.

72. Character, p. Lxxxviii.

73. I, 215-18.

Unfortunately few of the Western observers noticed, or made remarks on, the relations of crown peasants with government officials and the obligations due from them to the state. Haxthausen found a crown village near Yaroslav where the peasants had twenty acres of arable and meadow land each (whereas peasants of a neighbouring landlord had only six acres).[74] In another village in the same area Haxthausen found the government aiding the peasants by setting up model farms. The general plan of the farm, he said, was prescribed by the government, but the peasants were left to operate it themselves. The owners of the farms had been trained in a St. Petersburg school of agriculture and received government aid after leaving the school to help set up the farm.[75] Further south, in Kostroma province, the government had set up a School of Industry for the state peasants. Here from twelve to eighteen of the better peasant boys learnt various trades while being supported by the state.[76]

Eldridge was careful to distinguish between the state and privately owned peasants in Southern Russia. He felt that the state peasants were abused by their officials[77] (as well as the soldiers quartered on them), and one state peasant told Eldridge that the rural police also oppressed them.[78] Moor said that in one of the state villages he visited (in north-west Russia) the peasants said that they had been robbed a few years earlier by government officials.[79]

Western observers then expressed many and varied comments about the serf's relations to his landlord. Some presented general statements that the serfs were either well off or badly off, but most were wise enough to observe that the peasant's position depended to a large extent on the individual landlord. Nevertheless, several English travellers felt that the Russian peasant, despite his enserfment (or state-ownership) was better off than those at home - especially in Ireland. On the other hand two travellers saw fit to compare the Russian peasantry with the negro

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74. I, 185.

75. I, 187-9.

76. I, 221.

77. "Life", p. 276.

78. "Life", p. 280.

79. p. 30.

slave of the Western Hemisphere. More specifically, the travellers cited the frequency and ill-effects of absenteeism in Russia, and generally felt that stewards were worse oppressors than the actual landlords, cheating the latter, and forcing the peasants to do more work than laid down by the nobleman himself.

As for the noblemen themselves, the observers noticed that these exercised great power over the serfs, that some indulged in cruelty or at least negligence, but also that some tried to improve their estates and the lives of their vassals. Of the two major types of obligations, barshchina seems to have been the more oppressive - the obrok left the peasants freer to organize their own lives. Few travellers obtained details of the obligations. However it was noticed that the obrok was not merely a charge for using land but a means to profit from the work undertaken by the peasants. Sometimes payment in kind might be required by the landlord. In return for fulfilling these obligations the master had to look after the peasant in time of hardship, and Le Play listed "subsidies" given to the peasants by their landlords. Very few travellers commented on the relations of crown peasants with the state officials overseeing them, but sometimes it seems that the latter abused their offices and robbed or oppressed the peasants. Haxthausen recorded that the government set up model farms and schools for the crown peasants - no doubt this was part of the Ministry of State Domain's efforts to improve their lot.

CHAPTER V - ORGANIZATION, AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY.

Having examined the peasant's relation to people outside his society it is now necessary to study the peasant's actions within his own society, village and family. Most peasants, whether on state or private lands, belonged to an institution called the commune or obshchina. Originally this had been an institution uniting a family group, but probably during the Kievan period the commune began to consist of people living in territorial proximity to one another. The commune included all the members of the village unless the village belonged to two landlords in which case there were two separate communes. However usually only men went to its meetings and only the head of each household had a vote. The commune elected a leader called a starosta as well as other officials.

The commune had several functions, though on a private estate these would depend on the amount of interference or participation from the landlord. The usual functions were to keep the peace in the village and arrange minor matters between villagers. It had its own treasury, the funds from which were used to look after the old and sick, or to complete business transactions (such as renting land or buying and selling communally produced goods). The elders of the commune represented the village before the landholder or government officials. The commune also organized the execution of the various obligations which the peasants owed to the state and/or their proprietor.

In order that all peasants should be equally able to fulfil these obligations, one of the main functions of the commune was the periodical redistribution of the land held by the peasants. To this end the land available to the commune was divided into several fields, each household holding a strip of land in each field. The size of this strip was determined by the number of tiaglo units per household or the number of adult males in a household. Thus one of Le Play's families (the one at Eractour, on the Oka) had its 16 hectares of land divided into twenty-one parts scattered around the outskirts of the village and lying at a distance of from one half to four kilometres away.[1] Woodlands, pastures, ponds and

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1. II, 186.

streams were held in common by the members of the commune. The commune allotted work in the lord's fields on barshchina estates, organized labour on the peasant's communal plots (each agricultural operation was done by all the peasants at the same time) and in state villages and some serf villages determined which young men should serve in the army. The commune was collectively responsible for taxes to the state and obrok paid to the state or seigneur. (On serf estates the owner was at least technically responsible for the payment of the peasants' poll tax, though often this responsibility was delegated by the lord to the commune). In the case of state peasants the commune was responsible for the issuing of passports to its members, for it would have to fulfil the absent peasant's obligations.

Because the commune was a rather unique institution and often played such an important part in peasant life it is unfortunate that few travellers mentioned it or described its actions. In fact Haxthausen, who virtually 'discovered' the Russian peasant commune for Western Europe, is almost the only traveller to say anything of significance about the institution. Haxthausen says:

> the Russian communal system [is] one of the most remarkable and interesting political institutions in existence, and .... possesses great advantages for the social condition of the country. The Commune presents an organic coherence and compact social strength which can be found nowhere else, and yields the incalculable advantage that no proletariat can be formed so long they exist with their present institution.[2]

Le Play expressed a similar sentiment to Haxthausen. He felt that communal ties and obligations stopped young men emigrating to the cities and would continue to do so after emancipation.[3]

While praising the commune as an institution, Haxthausen had reservations about the practice of frequent redistribution of the land. He believed that this was harmful for agriculture in that peasants would not try to improve land which they possessed for only a few years.[4]

Haxthausen found that there were different methods of land re-

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2. I, 123-4.

3. II, 230.

4. I, 124-6.

distribution. Sometimes land was allotted so that shares, although varying in size, were of equal value - the larger strips having poorer soil.[5] In Yaroslav province Haxthausen discovered communes which only redivided the land at every census revision (about every ten to fifteen years). The land was then resurveyed and assigned by lot with a reserve set aside for increase in population.[6] Herr von Pirch near Kazan did not allow the commune to divide the land as was usual but had himself allotted the peasants 5½ acres in each field[7] (there were probably three fields - for the three-field system).

Communal land-holding was practised throughout most of Russia, though Haxthausen found one village where some of the land was held communally and some heritably under the Polovnik law.[8] Even in a village where the peasants had bought their freedom from the bankrupt landlord Haxthausen noticed that instead of dividing the land in perpetuity according to the proportion of the purchase money provided by each peasant, the villagers decided to continue holding the land by the communal system.[9] Haxthausen says that only once in his tour of Russia did he find some small villages where the communal system of landholding did not occur. This was near Yaroslav where each house had its own permanent share of land attached to it.[10]

Haxthausen and some other commentators provide some information about the functions of the commune and also their <u>starosti</u>. Haxthausen reports that near Yaroslav in the village of Velikoye Selo, where <u>obrok</u> was levied on the whole village, the Commune asked for larger contributions from the richer peasants.[11] On Prince "Soltikof's" estate near Nijni Novgorod the <u>obrok</u> was also levied on the commune as a whole - for every one hundred souls there was one whitehead (<u>starosta</u>) who again taxed members of the group according to their means, so that the richer paid more.[12] Haxthausen asserted that when corvée work was done this was usually under the

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5. I, 120.
6. I, 124-5.
7. I, 338.
8. I, 206.
9. I, 348-9.
10. I, 190.
11. I, 114.
12. I, 237.

superintendence of a _starosta_.[13] No doubt this did occur, but probably just as often the peasants were supervised by stewards (as Harrison, for example, found on the estate on the Volga[14]) and not their own elders. Again Haxthausen suggested that in Little Russia the landlords usually entrusted their estates to peasant _starosti_ rather than bailiffs when they were absent,[15] but it is doubtful whether this was a frequent practice.

Although landlords and their stewards often chose recruits for the army, Harrison said that on his estate the elders were also consulted as to which men could best be spared from the village for military service.[16] Again, Le Play records that on one of the estates he studied the commune and its elders were allowed to choose the recruits.[17] This no doubt occurred on other estates than these two depending on the landlord. Le Play also says that when members of a large patriarchal family wanted to separate from the main family the landlord or steward would call a meeting of the village elders to discuss the problem. In one case, the elders, advised by the steward, agreed to the partition of a family under the supervision of four elders nominated for this purpose. Their main function would have been to ensure the equitable division of the family's land, produce and chattels between the two groups.[18] Henderson found that at villages with post stations it was up to the _starosti_ to see that the post-master's orders for horses were executed by the peasants.[19] And near Nijni-Novgorod, Cochrane was lectured by an elder for smoking in the village.[20]

Harrison said that on the estate where he sojourned, besides the _starosta_ who was responsible to the master for the conduct of the village, the peasants of each village chose other elders who represented their interests before the master and the steward. These usually formed a deputation to the master to air complaints and make various arrangements.

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13. I, 121.
14. p. 112.
15. II, 174.
16. p. 118.
17. II, 226.
18. II, 67, 228.
19. p. 11.
20. I, 71.

The elders could also inflict punishment to a limited extent for immoral conduct.[21]

In the village of Kubensk, near Yaroslav, Haxthausen found that the starosta was appointed and paid by the landlord. The commune, under the direction of the starosta, annually elected five deputies and twelve elders who, with the starosta, constituted a Communal Tribunal. A communal clerk was also paid by the proprietor. The tribunal had some administrative and judicial functions and could inflict minor punishments.[22] Haxthausen also found a crown village near Nijni-Novgarod which had a public store to which each head of family had to make a small contribution.[23]

Haxthausen witnessed a meeting of a commune of state peasants (they had recently bought their freedom from their proprietor), near Yaroslav. Haxthausen was accompanied by the local President of the Court of State Domains, Herr von Hahn, and they had stopped in the village to change horses. Haxthausen explains:

> The villagers were all assembled; and as there was some business to transact, Herr von Hahn, in order to show me how a Russian communal meeting is conducted, held one on the spot. All the men placed themselves in a circle around us in the road; the Golova (head of the Volost, or several united Communes), the Starosta of the village, and the "White-heads" joined us, and a lively discussion commenced; it was however carried on in Russian, and I did not understand a word, but the subject was explained to me. It related to some general affairs of the Commune, and minor disputes between different members of it, which, after a brief consultation among the "White-heads", were decided by the Golova, with the concurrence of the President of Domains. Everything took place with the greatest of order, and only the Golova, the Starosta, and the White-heads spoke. Among the younger men who stood around them profound silence and attention reigned; the others however spoke with vivacity, and seemed to express themselves clearly and connectedly; at least none appeared at a loss for words. No-one screamed or blustered, or interrupted the other; the greatest politeness prevailed on all sides.

Of course this may to some degree at least, have been occasioned by the presence of the government official. Later Haxthausen went to the Communal-house where the clerk of the commune placed various papers before Herr von Hahn.[24]

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21. pp. 118-19.

22. I, 184.

23. I, 221.

24. I, 96-7.

Haxthausen noticed that there were some villages with communes whose members were all engaged in some trade or other. These would normally be on state lands or possibly on private estates where the peasants were on obrok. For example, in the village of Yurinsk, in Tver province, all the peasants made boots and shoes. These were then sent to Moscow where some peasants of the village lived keeping large stores and selling the goods wholesale and retail.[25] In northern Russia where agriculture was carried out only in four summer months many peasants combined into artisan or manufacturing communes said Haxthausen.[26] And near Kharkov he found villages in which all the women made clothes to be sold at fairs.[27]

Le Play illustrated another dimension of communal arrangement among the peasantry - the artels formed by them in towns while working away from home. Such associations divided equally the benefits gained, between its members, and possessed a certain independence against employers according to Le Play. On leaving their village the fifteen to twenty workers of Eractour formed a temporary association or artel in order to make their voyage safely and at little cost. (However, since the opening of the Moscow-St. Petersburg railway this practice had been abandoned, says Le Play - the workers still left together but paid their own fare). On arriving at St. Petersburg the worker joined a new artel of forty men made up of workers of the same occupation and all coming from Eractour. On the first day a meeting was held where the opinion of the most experienced men was given about the organization of the society and in particular to fix a sum which those who joined subsequently must pay. Four officers were then chosen. The first was an "Artelchik" whose duty was to find work, discuss wages, and divide up the work. A second official, a "Cloutchinik", was to keep the cash box of the community, receive money for work performed, to pay the expenses of the society, and, on his own responsibility, to make individual advances to members. The two other officials were "Starchi" (elders) chosen for their experience. They were to control the acts of the first two officials. The meeting ended with the official proclamation of the association followed by a prayer. Two weeks later the artel had increased to 65 members; after this no new

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25. I, 16.
26. I, 153-4.
27. I, 410.

members were accepted.

The food eaten by the members of the artel was bought communally, though clothes, wine, medicine and so on were purchased individually. At the end of the season profits were divided equally between members despite inequality in respective strengths or apptitudes for the work. (This included cartage, sawing firewood, driving in posts and terracing gardens). However if there were times when there was not work for all, those who did the most difficult work were allowed to rest. Furthermore, each worker was allowed to do sixteen days work on his own account. Le Play says that there were never arguments about these matters, but this seems unrealistic. Finally the profits were divided, the artel dissolved, and the workers returned home.[28]

About the commune then, Western observers did not provide a great deal of information, except for Haxthausen, who found the institution very interesting but criticized one of its main functions - land redistribution - as harmful to agriculture. Few communes departed from the traditional method of redistribution he said. Haxthausen and other travellers noticed some of the other functions of the commune, and the importance of the starosti, for example in the fulfilling of obligations, the selection of army recruits, partition of families, and representations to the landlord on behalf of the peasants. Only Haxthausen seems to have witnessed an actual communal meeting, where he found reasoned discussion taking place. Haxthausen found that there were also communes made up of tradesmen, and Le Play wrote about the artels formed by migratory peasant workers, which according to him, worked very well.

The commune then was an institution which, apart from other functions, organized the peasant's industrial and agricultural activities. Concerning the latter a contemporary Russian economist, Louis de Tengoborski wrote the following:

> .... at all events it is abundantly true that in many districts of Russia the soil is so fertile that, to obtain abundant harvests, no more labour is necessary than slightly stirring a very thin slice of the surface; and this fertility, which is in itself a precious gift of Nature, does alas! but encourage the indolence of our peasants, whose mode of

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28. II, 185, 197, 218-22.

agriculture is as negligent as their implements are defective.[29]

Most of the travellers made some notes on agricultural practices in Russia, usually lending support to Tengoborski's statement. However Russia was such a large country, with areas of different climate, vegetation and soils, that agriculture varied greatly from one region to another, and it is necessary to give a brief outline of these variations. The regions described below correspond roughly with the geographic zones outlined in Chapter II. The description is taken largely from Tengoborski's Commentaries on the Productive Forces of Russia.[30]

The northernmost zone of Russia, consisting mainly of tundra marshes and dense forest, was little suited to agriculture. There was some nomadic subsistence farming here. The southern part of this region with its still very short summers did support some barley, potatoes and vegetable growing. There were also some cattle.

The second geographical region, the forest zone included the main part of the empire. In fact the forests were disappearing here. Rye and flax were the main crops. Buckwheat, wheat and oats were also grown. However in the centre of this region agriculture failed to feed the large industrial population and grain was increasingly imported from the south.

The third region, the forest-steppe zone, though a narrow belt was called the "granary of the empire" by Tengoborski.[31] Wheat, rye, millet and buckwheat were all grown here as well as other cereals. Tobacco and hemp were also grown, and spirits were distilled. Sugar beet was grown in the west. There was however, a deficiency of wood in this zone.

The steppe region supported sheep and cattle though wheat was becoming increasingly important. Maize was also grown, together with the vine, and salt was extracted from the lakes of the region. The Crimea and some of the Caucasion region also produced fruits, olives and sugar.

What did travellers see of peasant agriculture - firstly their crops,

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29. Commentaries on the Productive Forces of Russia, transl. from French, (2 Vols., London, 1855), Vol. I, p. 284, footnote.

30. I, 9-19. See also map of agricultural regions in appendix.

31. I, 17.

gardens and cattle - in these regions? Travellers often commented on the types of crops which were grown by the peasants in their fields. Some peasants were able to grow a large variety of crops, some of which they could sell, but most raised barely enough for themselves, it seems. However this differed from region to region and must be examined in this light.

Few travellers ventured into the northernmost regions of Russia. Haxthausen went as far as Velikii Ustiug (on the junction of the Dvina and Sukhona rivers). Here, in the dense forest, he found good and careful cultivation of the ground in partially cleared forest near the rivers.[32] He also saw however, evidence of the primitive slash-burn technique used in the forests.[33]

In the forest zone mostpeasants grew only what they needed and tried to supplement their incomes by working at cottage industries during the long winters or by sending members of the family to work in the towns. Thus the family in the village of Eractour described by Le Play grew a large amount of rye and smaller quantities of buckwheat, oats, millet, barley and a little wheat. Hay was grown for the horses and cattle though one-fifth of this was sold. Millet and some rye was bought. All this, it seems, was eaten either by the family or the animals or kept for sowing next season. The family also grew a small amount of flax and hemp for domestic use. Together with a garden and numerous livestock then, this family was almost self-supporting, and to gain extra money sent two sons to work away from the village.[34]

Carr stated that in the village near his mill (near Moscow) the serfs grew all that they needed - grain for their black bread as well as various vegetables and hay for their cattle.[35] Cochrane, travelling through Tver province, felt that with "ordinary industry and economy" the peasants might become rich, but that in fact they cultivated only so much land, and bred only so many cattle, as were necessary for their

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32. I, 190-1.

33. I, 205.

34. II, 204, 208-9.

35. p. 23.

immediate wants.[36] Kohl found that the Estonian peasants adopted little from their German masters, merely raising barley, oats, rye and cabbages for subsistence purposes.[37] Some wheat was also grown in the Baltic provinces he said.[38]

Le Play's family at Tachli in Orenburg province lived just inside the forest-steppe zone, but in a region with rich black soil. There they raised wheat, rye and oats, mainly for home consumption, but had to buy small amounts of buckwheat, millet and barley. Hay was mown for the cattle. Furthermore, the family had a small piece of land on which they grew flax and hemp - this was used for making the family's clothes.[39] On another estate in this region, which Haxthausen saw between Kazan and Simbirsk, the same major crops were grown: rye, wheat and oats.[40] And near Penza, a little further south-west, Haxthausen came across a village where the peasants sowed only rye.[41] In the Ukraine, according to Sanrey, the main crop was also rye, but in several villages tobacco was an important crop.[42] Kohl found a Ukrainian village where the fields were covered "with rye, wheat, corn, barley and weeds."[43]

In the steppe region of the southern Ukraine, Bremner found that buckwheat and wheat were important crops, but that while the former was eaten by the people and livestock, the wheat was usually exported. Oats, Indian corn, sunflower, hops and hemp were also grown in this region he said.[44] On the steppe near Odessa Haxthausen recorded that the serfs cultivated (for themselves and their masters), wheat, millet, rye and barley.[45]

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36. I, 59.
37. p. 389.
38. p. 360
39. II, 48, 78.
40. I, 338.
41. I, 365.
42. pp. 855, 863.
43. p. 523.
44. II, 413-16.
45. II, 139-40.

By these few examples it is evident that the growth of different crops did not strictly follow the agricultural regions outlined above, but was to some extent dictated by the whim and industry of the masters and serfs as well as climatic and soil conditions. The peasants' kitchen gardens were also affected by the industry and prejudices of the cultivators.

Some families in Northern Russia had small kitchen gardens. In Vladimir province Maxwell saw peasant gardens with apple, plum and cherry trees.[46] Le Play's family at Eractour in the Oka basin grew potatoes, cabbages, peas, carrots, turnips, horse-raddish and cucumbers.[47] In Yaroslav province at Mr. Karnovitch's estate Haxthausen said that one peasant family grew only cabbages in its garden.[48] Most peasants grew some cabbages, it seems. Further north at Kubensk, near Vologda, Haxthausen observed that each house had fairly large gardens permanently attached to it. The vegetables thus produced brought good prices at Vologda.[49] Again, on the reforming Mr. Karnovitch's estate, potatoes were being introduced, Haxthausen said, though the peasants regarded them as sinful[50] (the other family studied by Le Play regarded "pommes de terre" as "pommes du diable.")[51] The model farm near Vologda grew potatoes and Haxthausen said that the example was spreading to adjoining villages.[52] The peasants near Carr's mill (near Moscow) grew potatoes as well as cabbages, peas and other vegetables.[53]

Peasant gardens in the intermediate forest-steppe zone were noticed by a few travellers. Le Play's peasants at Tachli grew only peas, onions, cabbages and probably cucumbers - potatoes were still considered sinful here, and the head of the household forbade the growing of carrots and turnips, though he did allow the women to buy these.[54] In Tambov province

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46. p. 247.

47. II, 208-9.

48. I, 102.

49. I, 183-4.

50. I, 137.

51. II, 81.

52. I, 189.

53. p. 23.

54. II, 48, 54, 75.

Haxthausen noticed that the peasants' gardens were "industriously cultivated and had excellent fruit with a profusion of flowers, a sign of advancing civilization."[55] And in the Ukraine Sanrey also praised the vegetable gardens which also included fruit trees, cucurbits (gourds), maize, flowers (which Sanrey said the Ukrainians loved), and sunflowers.[56] Bremner also observed the cultivation of sunflowers on fertile spots in gardens throughout the centre and south of Russia. The sunflower seeds were used mainly for oil he said, but also for eating.[57]

Towards the steppe region near Kharkov Bremner again passed large gardens in the villages planted with shrubs and fruit trees.[58] Haxthausen said that outside the town of Kharkov, and also others in the region, there were villages of old peasants who cultivated kitchen gardens to supply vegetables to the towns - these gardens however were generally in open fields, not enclosed.[59]

Most peasants in Russia possessed some livestock - at least a horse to draw a plough and perhaps some other animals which provided meat. In a crown village in the north of Russia (near Vologda) Haxthausen commented that although some people had to hire horses, the richer peasants owned two horses, up to five cattle, ten to twenty sheep, but rarely swine.[60] Le Play's family at Eractour certainly must have been fairly well-to-do for they ownedfour horses, two cows, one heifer, 28 sheep, nine pigs, 31 fowls and thirteen geese. The meat, dairy produce and eggs from these animals were mainly used at home, though some extra meat was bought, and some young beasts sold. However the animals were badly cared for and of poor quality, says Le Play.[61] This seems to have been the general pattern, in Northern Russia, at least. Kohl noticed that the cows in the Baltic provinces were miserable and the horses ill-treated though strong.[62]

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55. I, 378.
56. p. 840.
57. II, 288.
58. II, 376.
59. I, 393.
60. I, 187.
61. II, 187, 204, 208.
62. p. 364.

Ritchie said that each peasant farmer in Livonia generally owned two pigs, but that these animals had very little to eat in spring.[63] Kolbe further attests to the poor condition of livestock in Northern Russia when he records that often, after winter, he saw horses and cattle which had to be lifted out to the barren fields.[64] And Thompson,[65] Venables,[66] and Custine[67] all noticed the poor cattle on their respective trips from St. Petersburg to Moscow. Often because of the cold weather livestock were kept inside the house. Thus Rigby entered a peasant hut in Estonia to find children together with a very filthy sow and her litter in a passage between a double wall around the hut. Under the projecting shelf of wood used as a bed (about two feet from the floor), were hen coops. Adjoining the house were the cattle sheds.[68] At Mr. Karnovitch's estate Haxthausen found that the lower part of the peasant's house served as a shelter to the smaller animals, fowls and swine at night, and that cows were milked here in winter. Again, immediately adjoining the house were the cattle stables: it was very cold here in winter says Haxthausen.[69]

Further south on the wooded steppe with its warmer climate and more adequate provender, cattle seemed to live better. Travelling in Riazan province Bremner saw good herds and stated that at each village one could obtain rich cream and milk.[70] Le Play's family at Tachli owned more animals than the one further north though these again were badly cared for and often carried away by epizootic diseases. The tally here was ten horses, three cows and two bulls, over twenty sheep, twelve pigs, 31 fowls and ten geese. This provided a relatively large quantity of meat, eggs and dairy products for the family. Some meat and skins were sold.[71] In the Northern Ukraine Lyall entered a village together with flocks and herds

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63. p. 33.

64. p. 119.

65. p. 252.

66. p. 29.

67. III, 66.

68. Residence, I, 183-5.

69. I, 102.

70. II, 295.

71. II, 57, 78.

of the peasants' cows, calves, sheep, goats and especially pigs.[72] Further south, in Kharkov province, Bremner noticed much poultry, including geese and turkeys.[73] In the Ukraine oxen were commonly used as beasts of burden instead of horses. Henderson and Sanrey both noticed this, though the latter said they were badly fed and sheltered.[74] Eldridge also saw oxen being used for ploughing in Southern Russia.[75]

Domestic animals, it seems were rare in Russia. Bremner found many dogs in the villages of the Ukraine but said that he had seen few elsewhere.[76] Kohl also said that there were many dogs in these villages - several on each farm in fact, but he also noticed that they were little cared for.[77]

What did European observers say about Russian agriculture and its practices? It is usually stated that Russian agriculture in the first half of the nineteenth century was primitive. How far do the Western observers 1820-61 support this conclusion?

Several observers agreed that the equipment used by the peasantry in their agriculture was decidely backward. Venables said that all the agricultural implements used by the peasants were very rude: his spade was a mere paddle of wood, sometimes shod with iron, but more often not; the plough was ineffective and drawn by a weak pony; the harrow was merely made of boughs fastened together with thin branches cut off a few inches from the base so as to form projecting teeth.[78] However Venables probably took the plough to be ineffective because it merely scratched the soil, but in the more fertile regions of Russia little more was needed to produce a reasonable (if not abundant) crop. Stephens also saw ploughs and harrows made out of the branches of fir trees, without iron or ropes in Lithuania[79] (most ploughs had one or even two iron shares however). Haxthausen was

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72. Travels, I, 70.

73. II, 376.

74. pp. 857-9.

75. "Life", p. 272.

76. II, 349.

77. p. 524.

78. p. 67.

79. II, 197.

astonished to find a Belgian plough used together with the Russian one in Vologda province. Peter I was said to have introduced them in the district.[80] Heavier ploughs were used in Southern Russia - Sanrey said that the peasant harnessed his pair of oxen to either end of the log (plough). Then he walked in front of the animals without looking at the furrow traced by the ploughshare[81] (instead of walking behind the horse and plough). Venables also said that the wagons were small and drawn by miserable horses.[82] Some of the harvesting and milling implements were also backward - these will be discussed below.

Le Play listed the agricultural implements owned by the two families he studied. The people at Tachli (Orenburg) owned three ploughs of the sokha type - these were light and of simple construction with one or two iron ploughshares; three harrows; three large and three small carts; three sleds for winter transport; ten forks and ten rakes for hay; flails, six scythes, ten sickles, three spades and two hoes.[83] This inventory was probably larger than that of most peasants. The family at Eractour (on the Oka) owned three ploughs, each with two ploughshares of bent iron; three birch harrows with oak points; three scythes and five sickles; three rakes for harvesting rye; forks and rakes for harvesting hay; two iron shovels; three carts and three sleds; flails, sieves, bags, casks and so on.[84]

Few travellers made observations on the field system used in Russia - which was usually the three-field system, whereby each of three fields would be cropped for two years: firstly with a winter crop, and then a spring one; and then be allowed to lie fallow in the third year. Thus Haxthausen found rye grown in the winter on von Pirch's estate, wheat and oats in summer.[85] And in Yaroslav province, about July, the peasants supplied the winter field with manure, which was then allowed to lie for four to six weeks before being ploughed in. Soon after, the winter corn

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80. I, 182.

81. p. 857.

82. p. 67.

83. II, 57.

84. II, 187.

85. I, 341.

(i.e. grain) would be sown. The summer seed time was over by mid-May, and this field was not ploughed again in the autumn.[86] At Tachli, the landlords' fields on which the peasants did barshchina were divided up as follows: 1,600 hectares for the winter crop of rye; 1,600 hectares for the spring grains of oats, wheat, millet, buckwheat and barley; and 1,600 hectares lying fallow. Apart from these fields the peasant might possess hayfields - both Le Play's families did.[87]

If the three-field system was backward and relatively unproductive the methods of agriculture in the far north of Russia were even more so. Here Haxthausen found that the primitive slash-burn technique still remained[88] - by this method the peasants sought out a suitable piece of forest, cut down most of the trees and burnt away the other vegetation. The land was then farmed for a few years until it became infertile, whereupon the peasants took over a new piece of the forest.

Bremner, travelling near Kursk, found another simple method of cropping it seems: "On inquiry about the mode of farming here," he said, "we found it a very simple affair; it may be explained in two words:- they take as many crops out of the ground as it will give, and then let it lie fallow a year or two."[89] Haxthausen described this in greater detail. On the southern steppes, he said, the serfs could cultivate as much land as they liked. In spring a fresh portion of the steppe was reclaimed and sown with millet. In the second spring, wheat was sown, as in the third. Immediately after the latter harvest, and after being ploughed in the autumn, winter wheat was grown, and in the following autumn, rye or barley. After all this the ground was left fallow for several years and other land cropped.[90]

On Mr. Bunin's estate in Tambov province, Haxthausen found this landlord using a nine-year crop rotation cycle. Mr. Bunin had also enclosed a number of his fields with hedges, "something that Haxthausen did not see

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86. I, 136.

87. II, 56, 91, 187.

88. I, 165, 205.

89. II, 420-1.

90. II, 239-40.

anywhere else in his wide travels through Russia."[91]

Some travellers noticed that only a very light furrow was ploughed in the soil - "it is only the most magnificent soil which could produce such fine crops," said Oliphant.[92] (cf. Tengoborski, above.) Bremner came to a similar conclusion - Russia was rich agriculturally despite the primitive techniques, only because of the rich soil in such areas as Little Russia.[93] Haxthausen said that on von Pirch's estate the soil was only scratched with a three inch furrow.[94] Again several observers noticed that very few peasants seemed to use manure (except for fuel), Bremner[95] and Haxthausen[96] among them. This was because of the already rich soil said Haxthausen.[97] In Yaroslov province however (where the soil was probably not so fertile), Haxthausen observed manure being used - the winter field lying with manure on it for several weeks before being ploughed in.[98] Ritchie says that he saw land being burned for the sake of "manure" (he probably means potash), and the seed being thrown over the almost hot ashes, in north-western Russia.[99]

Once the field had been ploughed and the seed sown it was often left untouched until harvesting. Thus, in the Ukraine, Kohl observed the weeds among the growing crops.[100] On the other hand, towards Kazan Haxthausen occasionally noticed groups of women in the fields weeding.[101] In fact, women often did field work in Russia, just as the men. Cochrane[102] and Bremner[103] both noticed this. One serf told Anderson that his wife and

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91. Blum, p. 412.

92. p. 72.

93. II, 327.

94. I, 338.

95. II, 381.

96. II, 140.

97. I, 338, 365.

98. I, 136.

99. p. 177.

100. p. 523.

101. I, 315.

102. I, 59.

103. II, 323.

two daughters worked five days a week in the lord's fields in summer. The women also tended the kitchen garden here[104] - this was usual in Russia. Wilson even saw women ploughing near Moscow.[105] Le Play states that the women in the family at Tachli, apart from cultivating the hay and cereals with the men, were specially charged with cleaning up the fields (weeding?) and threshing. In fact the three women here worked as many days in the lord's fields as did the three sons in the family. They also cultivated the vegetable garden.[106] On the other estate (on the Oka) while the men were charged exclusively with the tillage, sowing and transport, the women concentrated particularly on weeding, harvesting and threshing of the grain. In this village the women of the family did slightly less agricultural work (in terms of days) than the men. Again they cultivated the garden.[107] Venables says that on the estate where he stayed the women used the flail together with the men.[108] The Englishwoman in Russia stated that in the autumn the peasant women were very busy: they helped to reap the corn, cut the flax and pull up the hemp stalks, then prepare them for sale by beating them with a piece of wood. This work was very fatiguing she said, but the women enlivened it by singing national songs.[109]

Several travellers noted the practice of migration in Southern and Eastern Russia. While travelling down the Volga in Eastern Russia (through Simbirsk and Samara provinces) Haxthausen observed that

> the land under cultivation lies sometimes fifteen, twenty or twenty-five versts distant from the villages, and agriculture assumes quite a nomadic character. When the season arrives, all the inhabitants proceed with their cattle to these distant fields, erect huts or tents, cultivate the ground, and then return home. As the land is never manured, there are only two periods in the year, seed-time and harvest, when this migration is necessary.[110]

Oliphant also noticed this migratory type of agriculture in Simbirsk province.[111] Carr said that on the estate where he worked (near Moscow)

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104. p. 172.

105. II, 17.

106. II, 59, 72.

107. II, 189-90, 202.

108. p. 67.

109. p. 158.

110. I, 341. A verst is about 2/3 of a mile.

111. p. 77.

the landlord also adopted this practice for his hay-cutting. He would tell a certain village that they must start off on a certain morning. Then the whole village, men, women, children and horses, packed up and, taking tents with them, moved to the fields to be cleared. One of the pieces of land to be cleared might equal twenty or thirty English fields Carr said, and the peasants would live there until all the hay was mown. Only three or four people would remain in the village to look after the cattle.[112] Eldridge said that on the southern steppes the grass-growing (hay) lands might be up to 20,000 acres in size, needing 500-700 men, women and children to do the harvesting work. In the haymaking season then "these vast solitudes [of the steppes] became thickly sprinkled over with an active population." The men would cut the grass while the women and children raked it together and formed it into cocks so that it would dry in the sun. Sometimes the hay was stacked on the spot, being drawn to the stack by oxen.[113] Haxthausen asserted that in field labour there was a sort of spontaneous military order - all the peasants went out to the fields, did their ploughing, and returned home at the same time. Haxthausen felt that this was the influence of communal life.[114]

The short summer often influenced the peasant's agriculture. Of Le Play's two families, the one near Orenburg (Tachli, 52° 24′N), did agricultural work from the 1st of March to the end of September;[115] the other however, situated a little further north (54° 40′N) had its warm season only from the 15th May to 15th September.[116] On the estate near Moscow, Carr said, the men often worked into the night (twilight) resting in the middle of the hot day.[117] In many districts, said Murchison,

> the Russian cultivator exceeds (the English) in <u>celerity</u>. With his light tilega and his active little nags, knowing the value of time in the short and precarious summer of this region, he gallops back for his load of hay; and in the seed-time we have seen several harrows in a field moving about <u>at a trot</u>.[118]

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112. pp. 59-60.

113. "Life", pp. 274-5.

114. I, 136.

115. II, 48.

116. II, 180.

117. p. 61.

118. p. 354. Italics in original.

On Boris Petrovich's estate, Harrison said that because of the large and fertile property, there was ample agricultural employment all year round. Every hour of summer was precious: hay was stacked in the fields and not carried away till frost and snow ended the labours of tillage; corn was stacked similarly to be threshed in winter, while wheat, rye, millet and buckwheat were stored for a couple of months in wooden warehouses ready for exportation.[119] And Bremner noticed in north-eastern Russia that until the approach of winter the grain seemed to be left in the fields in very neat stacks - square or round - with an open passage through them to let the wind circulate.[120]

Harvesting, processing and storing of the grain frequently evinced primitive methods of agriculture. For example, Bremner saw in both north-eastern Russia[121] and the Ukraine[122] buckwheat being pulled up by the roots rather than cut. In Riazan province however he saw men cutting the grain with short scythes.[123] In Orel province he saw women and children threshing the grain in the open air. A large amount of grain was spread on a floor of wood or hard earth, "round which the happy household sing and beat away with great zeal." Bremner said that this practice was common in Little Russia.[124] Harrison observed the same method on the Volga: the grain was threshed on the nearest spot of hard ground, then it was winnowed merely by throwing it into the air and letting the chaff fly before the wind.[125] Venables also noted that the corn was often threshed on the ground, but said that on the estate where he stayed a machine worked by horses was used to complete this task. Then the grain was dried by fires in large open sheds built for this purpose. This was a dangerous practice because it often caused fires Venables said.[126] Kohl[127] and Ritchie[128] found a

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119. p. 111.

120. II, 192.

121. II, 186.

122. II, 413-4.

123. II, 295.

124. II, 326-7.

125. p. 112.

126. p. 67.

127. p. 362.

128. p. 176.

similar method being used in Livonia and up to Novgorod - the home was divided into two apartments - one for drying the grain which was spread on the store and shelves near the roof where the air was hottest, and another room where the grain was threshed.

Carr partly attributed this method of processing the grain to the short summer. Because of this he said, the grain was often picked before it was ripe. The peasants then ripen and thresh the grain in the following way: each family has a kiln of one, two or three floors, but without boards - merely formed of small trees laid across, not quite touching one another. Upon each floor a quantity of unripe grain is laid. Then below, on the ground a fire is made, the smoke of which heats the grain. After this the grain is taken out and threshed while still hot (so that the husk could be separated easily). Then another kiln-full is smoked until all the grain has been processed. Like Venables, Carr noted the risk of fire attendent to this procedure.[129]

After harvesting the grain might be exported as on the estate where Harrison sojourned;[130] put in bast bags and sent to market, as on von Pirch's[131] estate; or kept in the peasant's own granary, as on Karnovitch's estate.[132] Usually it was up to the government or proprietor to keep spare grain in case of famine. Thus, Eldridge explained, in Southern Russia provident magazines were established in each village in which were kept a certain quantity of rye and barley per soul. As the harvest was rarely a complete failure, these stores would not be drawn on for more than two or three months in the worst years. However in 1848-9 the stocks were completely exhausted owing to the occurrence of two bad years, and in the spring of 1849 many people died of want and scurvy even in the best villages. Bad communications during winter had prevented the importation of grain from places about 300 miles away where food was plentiful.[133] Although it was usually up to the proprietor to keep the spare grain, in villages in the province of Tambov, Haxthausen observed that every peasant

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129. pp. 64-5.

130. p. 111.

131. I, 138.

132. I, 102.

133. "Life", p. 272.

himself kept a whole year's crop in his yard against the tchorni den (literally, "black day"), that is, famine.[134]

If the peasant kept the grain for himself after harvest he would eventually have to turn it into flour. Thus the family at Tachli had its grain converted into flour at the seigneurial mill (for a moderate rental says Le Play).[135] The other family was not so fortunate for they had to prepare their flour using a mortar and pestle. This was a greatly disliked work - the young women of the family had, in turn, to spend four hours a day, five days a week, making flour for the family's bread. The work began at 3 or 4 p.m. and the head of the family, in order to accelerate its execution, did not allow the person doing the work to eat until she had completed it. Le Play noticed however that windmills were starting to be introduced in the village to grind the grain.[136] In Orel province Bremner saw many water mills which were used to grind the corn,[137] and Haxthausen said that on von Pirch's estate the grain was ground by windmills, of which there was an extraordinary number.[138]

Apart from cultivating the soil the Russian peasant frequently engaged in other semi-agricultural activities. For example, he would have to gather or cut wood for fuel, though cow dung was often used after being dried in the sun - as Bremner observed in the Ukraine, a region in which wood was very scarce.[139] Kohl saw peasants in the Ukraine with 40 or 50 light wagons collecting dry weeds and dung to kindle fires.[140] Indeed, in many areas of European Russia wood was running out: for example, Haxthausen observed that the peasants on Karnovitch's estate took no care with their diminishing forest resources.[141] On von Pirch's estate on the Volga, the forest was protected says Haxthausen, because there was no abundance of wood here.[142] And further north, near Vologda, the village of Kubensk

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134. I, 378.

135. II, 88.

136. II, 223-4.

137. II, 326.

138. I, 338.

139. II, 381, 413.

140. p. 523.

141. I, 137.

142. I, 341.

possessed a small forest, the wood from which was available for fires only - building wood had to be bought.[143] The peasants of Tachli near Orenburg were allowed to use the seigneur's forest for firewood, charcoal (for industries) and building.[144] On the other hand, the forest at Eractour, which contained magnificent wood, was ravaged by the peasants of neighbouring proprietors. The wood here was assigned, as far as possible, to those peasants who made objects for sale in the neighbouring countryside. However the peasants still had the right to gather wood for fuel and the construction and maintenance of the house, its dependencies, hives and fishing boats.[145] On one estate Haxthausen found peasants doing barshchina by cutting wood and conveying it to a distillery three versts distant.[146] Harrison said that on the estate where he was staying many peasants also worked in the forests.[147] Le Play's peasants at Tachli spent some of their time cutting down and transporting wood for fire and lighting; charcoal and the construction of carts; and pulling off bark and transporting it for the manufacture of sandals.[148]

Some peasants (depending where they lived) were able to take part in fishing, hunting or gathering. Thus one of the "subsidies" given to the peasants by the seigneur to the peasants at Tachli was the unrestricted right of hunting, fishing and gathering on the estate. Hunting was very lucrative work here says Le Play, and it provided at least some food for the family.[149] The right of hunting was also granted on the other estate (Eractour) but brought no profit to the family says Le Play.[150] Sometimes the peasants went hunting with their landlords. Thus the Englishwoman stated that some serfs were trained as hunters, and their whole lives would be devoted to this.[151] When Count Pomerin went hunting, according to Anderson many serfs were enlisted to shoot and beat up the game, as

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143. I, 186.

144. II, 57.

145. II, 181, 188.

146. II, 365.

147. p. 112.

148. II, 58.

149. II, 58-9.

150. II, 188.

151. p. 159.

well as attending to the horses and dogs.[152]

On the estate where he stayed, Carr said that although all the millhands were serfs, a great number had guns, powder and shot. They also possessed fishing tackle and nets, and after the early morning church service on Sunday would spend the day (and other holidays) in shooting, fishing and other amusements. With a large net, the men, boys, women and girls would go to catch fish in different places along the river. One group of people held the net while another group held hands and waded the river in front of the net to prevent the fish from escaping. An immense quantity of fish was caught in this manner, says Carr.[153] Le Play's peasants near Orenburg (Tachli) caught about 36 pounds of fish, which supplied two-thirds of the family's annual fish intake.[154] The other family, at Eractour near the Oka river, possessed an old boat made of a tree trunk plus lines, willow nets and other fishing gear. One of the sons caught about 80 pounds of fish in the Oka per year - the family's total fish intake.[155] Sometimes the landlord might require the peasant to fish for him: many peasants worked on the fisheries on the Volga belonging to the estate where Harrison stayed.[156] Haxthausen stated that the fisheries could be a great source of wealth, or at least a means of subsistence, for all the rivers and lakes were plentifully supplied.[157]

Both Le Play's families were engaged in gathering activities. The women at Tachli gathered wild berries, mushrooms and herbs,[158] while those at Eractour also collected these as well as strawberries in the forests and marshes.[159] Haxthausen found peasants engaged in another type of activity near Lipetsk (Voronezh province) - breeding horses for profit.[160] Bremner found many Ukrainian peasants involved in bee-keeping.[161] Le Play

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152. p. 107.

153. pp. 39-40.

154. II, 74.

155. II, 187, 204.

156. p. 112.

157. II, 361-2.

158. II, 59, 84.

159. II, 190, 213.

160. I, 374.

161. II, 376.

described in detail the methods of bee-keeping practised by the family at Eractour on the Oka. These people had a small "farm" for bee-keeping. It was situated in the middle of the meadows, according to Le Play, and was "a characteristic establishment of this locality". It was composed of a hut, and a clump of bushes and shrubs. The whole area was surrounded by a hedge which protected the hives from animals. The hives stayed at this place during the swarming time and during the flower season; but at the end of autumn they were taken to the rye fields and during winter were kept in the cellar of the house and that of a neighbouring house rented for this purpose. This family had, when Le Play studied it, 43 full hives and 35 empty ones in reserve. The hives were made of oak trunks, rotted pine, and intact elm trunks. There were also vessels for keeping honey in and for purifying the wax. During summer, and especially during swarming time, the head of the family was involved almost wholly with the bee-culture (spending 70 days on the "farm"). He was helped by his two youngest sons (aged 14 and 19), who lived with him in the bee hut, and by one of the daughters-in-law, who came every day from the house about three miles away, to bring food. Most of the honey and wax produced was sold.[162]

Western observers, then, made many comments on Russian peasant agriculture. They noticed the subsistence nature of peasant farming, especially in the north. Rye was a major crop, but buckwheat, millet, barley and oats were also grown, with corn (maize) in the south. Often, peasants in the north seemed to raise flax and hemp with which to make clothing. Hay was usually grown for the cattle. The Russian peasants frequently had vegetable gardens, and the Western observers record seeing these with apple, plum and cherry trees; potatoes, which were however still considered sinful by many peasants; cabbages - grown by most peasants; and also carrots, peas, turnips, horse-radish and cucurbites. In the south, sunflower, corn and flowers were also found in these gardens.

Most Russian peasant families had some livestock it appears - at least a horse or two, and perhaps a few cattle. The better off peasants also possessed sheep, pigs, fowls and geese. On the whole livestock were badly cared for, especially in the cold north where the small animals sometimes stayed in the house in winter. Conditions were a little better in the south, where oxen were often the major beast of burden.

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162. II, 186-9, 202, 209.

Several travellers commented on the poor quality of the agricultural implements used by the peasantry - including the primitive light plough, the sokha, used in the north. The field system too was often primitive. The three-field system prevailed, though Haxthausen found that the slash-burn technique was still used in the northern forests. On the southern steppe where land was plentiful the peasants used land until it was exhausted and then cultivated a fresh portion.

Many travellers saw the peasants working in the fields. They noted the failure to use manure and the light furrow traced by the plough, and concluded that only fine soil could be productive under such cultivation. Sometimes the crops were left till harvest time, but some travellers saw women weeding the fields. This task and the tending of the vegetable garden seem to have been the special agricultural duties of the women, but they were often seen reaping and threshing as well.

Two especially Russian conditions were noticed by several of the commentators. Firstly, the Russian peasant was often forced to migrate, with his whole family, to cultivate fields which lay far from the village. Secondly, the short summer seemed to add a special urgency to the work of the Russian cultivator, especially at harvest time. Harvesting was sometimes begun by pulling the stalks out of the ground, though usually scythes were employed. The grain was threshed on the ground, winnowed in the wind, and dried by large fires in sheds or the peasants' houses. Finally the grain was sent to market or stored - perhaps as spare for seasons of dearth. Then the peasant had to mill it - sometimes himself with a mortar and pestle, otherwise in windmills, possibly rented from the landlord.

Most peasants, it seems, indulged in some semi-agricultural activities, such as gathering firewood - although this commodity was becoming scarce in much of Russia. In the north and centre some peasants were able to add the products of fishing, gathering and hunting to their agricultural livelihood. Bee-keeping was also practised in different parts of Russia.

While most peasants worked on the land many spent some time doing non-agricultural work. In the long winter most peasants used some of their time making personal effects or working at various cottage industries. Most of the peasants' clothing was made at home by the women of the family. Thus the women in the family at Tachli spent about 80 days each making

materials and clothes of flax, hemp, wool and cotton, as well as making various special clothes (probably for Sundays and holidays). Both men and women made sandals for themselves out of tree bark.[163] At Eractour Le Play listed the instruments used for making cloth and clothing. For the making of hempen and flaxen materials there were two combs with ninety teeth of maple, together with stands for the preparation of unprocessed flax; twenty spindles of turned wood for spinning; two looms with shuttles (one of the looms being old and in a bad state); plus steel needles for sewing. For the making of woollen materials there were twelve spindles of turned wood for spinning; one loom with shuttle; four sets of knitting needles made of goose bone, for the knitting of gloves. Five women here spent about 75 days each making clothes of flax, hemp and wool.[164]

Cochrane, passing through Tver province, noticed that apart from sharing in the field work, the women spent their time making very good coarse woollen cloth and linens, knitting stockings and spinning thread.[165] Carr said that every family made its own loom and other machinery for weaving, grew its own material and spun, wove and completed its own linen. However, Carr felt that the weaving methods were primitive and presumed to show the peasants an easier way. However he was pushed away and told that the peasants' fathers did not do it so; that there was no point in saving time as the peasants had nothing else to do in winter anyway; that there was no purpose in making more cloth as everybody made their own; and that using fewer looms would be no saving as they cost nothing to make.[166]

However it was not always the case that there was no point making additional cloth, as many peasants did so and then sold it. Anderson stopped at a peasant's hut near Pereslaf (in north-west Russia) and found the whole family spinning and weaving flax. The father of the family told Anderson that they did this all winter and discussed with him the prices they obtained for the flax.[167] The Englishwoman also said that in winter both men and women wove Russian linen and canvas, and that some girls

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163. II, 59.

164. II, 187-8, 202.

165. I, 59.

166. pp. 58-9.

167. pp. 20-21.

made pretty lace. This produce was either sent to the proprietor, who disposed of it to shopkeepers, or otherwise the women themselves hawked it for sale.[168] Haxthausen observed that much linen was woven in the Yaroslav district: the people bought yarn and sold the linen they wove. This gave a much better monetary return than agriculture, said Haxthausen.[169] The same writer spoke of the manufacturing communes (in Kharkov province) where the women made clothes which were sold by the men at fairs.[170] In the Ukraine Kohl found women weaving carpets.[171] Only Le Play and Haxthausen record instances of peasants engaged in other industries at home for profit. The men of the family at Tachli were part-time charcoal makers, and one son was a cartwright, spending 45 days a year on this work. The charcoal was sold in Orenburg (100 kilometres away), the wheels probably locally.[172] Similarly, one son of the family at Eractour spent 50 days making ten sledges which were sold to travellers and in villages away from the forest[173] (probably because there was no wood at these places). Haxthausen spoke of the bootmakers of Yurinsk (Tver province) and Vizena (near Nijni-Novgorod). The boots and shoes of Yurinsk were sold by other peasants of the village residing in Moscow. These owned large stores and sold the goods wholesale and retail.[174]

Often the products of cottage industries were sold at local fairs. Few travellers noticed these (save for the large ones such as that at Nijni-Novgorod, which was not a peasant establishment). These fairs were usually found only in the larger villages. Haxthausen found a bazaar in Velikoye Selo (Yaroslav province)[175] and Kohl saw one in a large village in the Ukraine.[176] Fairs and bazaars were usually temporary affairs. Thus Henderson, having left Tula on a Saturday, hoped to spend a quiet Sunday in a country village where he had arrived at 11 p.m. However he was awoken at 5 a.m. in the morning by the noise of carts, and on getting up

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168. p. 158.
169. I, 101, 113.
170. I, 410.
171. p. 525.
172. II, 79-80.
173. II, 210.
174. I, 16, 236.
175. I, 112.
176. p. 525.

found the streets full of peasants who had arrived with hay and all kinds of country produce to sell at a country bazaar.[177] Only Eldridge however, gives a detailed account of a local fair. In the crown villages of Southern Russia, he said, there were few trades, so that the people had to make many things themselves, go without, or wait for a fair nearby. Such fairs generally collected all the peasantry from the adjoining villages as well as small proprietors who could not go to town. At the fair one could buy such articles as kitchen utensils, glazed windows, ribbons, wires, hides, boots, carts and so on. The peasants disposed of their spare cattle and grain here. There were gypsies buying and selling horses. Eldridge saw fairs with 4,000 to 5,000 people, but said that there were rarely disturbances. The fairs in winter usually lasted a week, but in summer they were only of one or two days duration as time was valuable during the hay-making season.[178]

Some peasants worked almost full-time in factories established by proprietors on or near their estates. Carr, who managed such a factory (a cotton mill), gave some information concerning this practice. When a landlord ran a factory, he said, he gathered up hands from his estate or estates and sent them to work at the mill, although it might be (as Carr's was) thirty miles from the estates. Men, women and children all ate, slept and were provided for at the works. The landlord prepared large rooms in which all his hands would eat, sleep and be accommodated, and they were then never allowed to go outside the gate without leave. The mills in the country always had two sets of hands, said Carr. One set would begin at 7 p.m. and work till 1 a.m. Then the other group would work for six hours while the first set ate and slept before resuming work at 7 a.m. Thus the peasants worked and slept alternately, six hours at a time. After a week the shifts were changed round.[179] Anderson was told by a serf that he and his son worked in a cotton mill from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. for low wages.[180]

It was a common practice for crown peasants and serfs on <u>obrok</u> to work part of the year or even all of their lives in the towns. The latter

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177. p. 147.

178. "Life", p. 278.

179. pp. 6, 54.

180. p. 172.

group virtually became townsmen and are not examined here, but several writers throw light on the practice of temporary migration by the peasants. Le Play gives the most detailed account. At about the age of eighteen, the young men of Eractour would start their seasonal migratory work. Their first job involved working on the boats on the Moskva and other rivers whose waters fell into the Oka and Volga. The young men would leave Eractour together at the beginning of spring, returning in autumn when the rivers began to freeze. The second son of the family studied by Le Play had been working on the rivers for four years. He worked for proprietors or merchants who sent their grain and other foodstuffs to contiguous provinces on the Oka and Volga. He was away from the 15th April to the 15th October, and was paid for 160 days (that is, 6 days per week). He lived on the barges themselves while working.[181]

After seven or eight years of this sort of work the emigrant usually began to go further afield. In this second period, said Le Play, the migrants of Eractour worked either in the mines which the seigneur owned in the Urals, or in St. Petersburg as coachmen, carpenters, masons or pavers, as did the eldest son of the family specifically studied by Le Play. The artel to which this worker belonged (see above) was engaged in loading and unloading barges involved in the iron and timber trades, sawing and carting firewood, driving in posts for building foundations, and terracing gardens in the city and its surroundings. This worker spent only every second winter with his wife and family in the village, following an eighteen month stay in St. Petersburg. By the age of 36 or 40, however, says Le Play, the peasant usually had a son to take his place as emigrant-worker and subsequently stayed home running the family and organizing agricultural activities. Le Play also says that two of the sons of this family did the work of Izvostchiks - those who transported merchandise for long distances reaping the double profit of carter and merchant. Many peasants were keen to do this work if they could, said Le Play. The two sons here each spent 55 days a year doing this work.[182]

Peasants living near the Volga often worked as burlaki - touring vessels up the river, as Haxthausen observed in Tver and Nijni-Novgorod

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181. II, 190, 196, 217.

182. II, 181-2, 197, 211, 216, 219.

provinces. The burlaki, he said, were usually the peasants of private proprietors - they rarely belonged to the corwn. The need to obtain money to pay a high obrok made the peasants into burlaki, said Haxthausen. Those who pulled his boat on the Volga lived in a village with too little land. The women, old men and children looked after the land and if this was not enough, a servant was hired to help.[183]

Peasants were engaged in various trades in the towns (apart from manual labour - cf. Le Play above). Haxthausen cites the case of one commune in Yaroslav province in which were inscribed 9,500 male souls, but only 2,500 of these lived in the village. The rest had gone off to Moscow and St. Petersburg where they worked together in communes of artisans, sharing the profits.[184] At Arzamas, in Nijni-Novgarod province, Haxthausen found a serf and his two sons who painted frescoes and sold paintings. They paid their landlord obrok.[185] Sometimes noblemen sent their serfs to town to learn a trade, Haxthausen said. When the education was finished, the best tradesmen were retained by the nobleman himself, while the others remained in town and paid obrok.[185] Such was the case with a barber found by the same traveller in Penza.[186]

However, it is obvious that many of these people were almost permanent townsmen and no longer really peasants (as defined in Chapter I). They were still, of course, inscribed in communes or were serfs belonging to some nobleman. But the artisans described by Haxthausen (above) probably rarely returned to the land. In another commune in Nijni-Novgarod, Haxthausen records that some 5,000 members were away in search of work, and that some of these would stay away fifteen years, others permanently.[187] And Kohl said that many serfs of the Baltic regions wandered about doing various trades while paying obrok.[188] However one observer who spent fifteen years in Russia, as the manager of the spinning department of a cotton factory in St. Petersburg, stated that the factory was always subject to a temporary reduction in its labour force. This was because the workers

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183. I, 16, 221, 243-4.

184. I, 169.

185. I, 177.

186. I, 363.

187. I, 236.

188. p. 370.

here were serfs from country estates, and as such they could be recalled at any time. This occurred especially in autumn of course, when many hands were needed to harvest the crops.[189]

It is obvious then that many peasants (at least in the northern part of Russia) were engaged in some non-agricultural work. This might be limited to making cloth and clothing for the family; but sometimes this became a commercial venture to gain extra money. Some peasants made other goods for sale, such as Le Play's, who made wheels, charcoal and sledges, and Haxthausen's bootmakers. Sometimes there were fairs in large villages where peasants could buy and sell such merchandise.

Some noblemen forced their serfs to work in factories on or near their estates, often for long hours, it seems. Peasants on obrok, however, often voluntarily migrated to do such work in towns, or perhaps nearer home on the rivers, where they worked as boatmen or burlaki. Of the peasants who migrated from their village, some, notably artisans, came to reside perhaps permanently in the towns where they made a living, while paying obrok to their seigneur or the state.

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189. "Russia during the War", The Times, 12 September, 1855, p. 5, col. e.

CHAPTER VI - VILLAGES AND HOUSES.

Whether they lived on private estates or state lands, the peasants almost always lived together in villages. Settlements ranged in size from one homestead with a few people up to some with five hundred or more dwellings and thousands of people. According to Blum, in 1859, 22 provinces (containing 47 per cent of the total population of European Russia), had 100,348 rural settlements in them. Of this number,

6 per cent had only 1 homestead,
16 " " " 2 to 5 homesteads,
18 " " " 6 to 10 " ,
29 " " " 11 to 25 " ,
24 " " " 26 to 100 " ,
6 " " " 101 to 500 " ,
.3 " " " more than 500 " .[1]

Thus most villages had somewhere between six and one hundred dwellings. In terms of people,

5.2 per cent had fewer than 10 inhabitants,
22.5 " " " between 11 and 50 " ,
53.0 " " " " 51 and 300 " ,
8.5 " " " " 301 and 500 " ,
6.6 " " " " 501 and 1,000 " ,
3.0 " " " " 1,001 and 2,000 " ,
1.2 " " " " 2,001 and 25,000 " .[2]

Therefore most villages had between eleven and three hundred people. Villages in European Russia were larger in the old South West, and smaller towards the northern forests.

What did travellers observe about Russian peasant villages - their size, layout and component parts? The most miserable villages seem to have been in north-western Russia, especially in the Baltic provinces. In

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1. p. 504.
2. Blum, p. 506.

Livonia, Ritchie said, the people did not live in villages - merely in rude and lonely huts.[3] In Courland, villages were only isolated groups of dwellings.[4] Further north, in Estonia, Ritchie saw villages of thirty to forty houses, but these, he said, were wretched, and there was no plan in the villages. He did however, see one neat and uniform village; this, it turned out, belonged to the crown.[5] Kohl also noticed that the Estonians lived in straggling, irregular villages which

> look as if they had been plundered by a Tartar horde .... The appearance of an Esthonian village, is one of the most cheerless in the world. The houses stand crooked and rough near one another, generally half-fallen and decayed. Some are inhabited, and others deserted. There are no gardens; scarcely a trace of cultivation is to be seen.[6]

Kohl admits that a friend of his, travelling on a different occasion, noticed some quite pretty and clean villages is Estonia[7] - these may have been crown villages such as that seen by Ritchie. Like Ritchie, Kohl stated that the Lettes of Courland and southern Livonia lived in isolated dwellings.[8] However, further south, in Lithuania, Stephens again found villages, but these were "miserable collections of straggling huts, without plan or arrangement, and separated from each other by large spaces of ground."[9]

Once the traveller entered Russia proper isolated dwellings almost disappeared. Travelling between St. Petersburg and Novgorod Bremner noticed that nearly all the people lived in villages.[10] Yet, according to James Buchanan, they still had a wretched appearance.[11] Bremner said that between the road and the houses there was an expanse of seven or eight yards of impassable mud.[12] However in several villages on this route,

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3. p. 32.
4. p. 13.
5. pp. 41-2.
6. pp. 384-5.
7. p. 385 footnote.
8. p. 385.
9. II, 197.
10. II, 18.
11. p. 350.
12. II, 19.

according to Wilson, the streets were floored with planks of wood.[13] (No other writer spoke of this however.)

Contrary to the above observations, Custine said that he was surprised to find several villages around St. Petersburg manifesting signs of wealth and even rustic elegance. These possessed neat wooden houses forming a line along a straight street.[14] However the villages became less neat as the distance from St. Petersburg increased, said Custine.[15] On the next stage of the journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow, between Novgarod and Torjock, Cochrane observed that the villages, although neat, were in a rapid state of decay.[16] Venables agreed that the ordinary villages were dirty and cheerless looking, but said that some of the crown villages were pretty and picturesque.[17] The Englishwoman made a similar comment.[18] Entering the province of Tver, Henderson felt that the villages improved, possessing larger and better constructed houses. They also had wells on both sides of the street, he said.[19]

Recording his journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow, Haxthausen said:

> All the Russian villages through which I passed on this road consist of a long, broad, and generally straight street, seldom with side streets. The dwelling houses stand close together - very frequently two immediately adjoining; then come, right and left, the narrow courtyards of the houses with entrance-gates; then again two more dwelling-houses, and so on ..... The houses stand, almost universally, with the gable-end toward the street [nearly every traveller remarked on this], the house-door being always at the side in the yard.[20]

Haxthausen's observations support Custine's (above) for he noted that the houses and farmsteads on the last stage of the journey (Tver to Moscow), were much poorer, smaller, and less ornamented than the earlier ones.[21]

Haxthausen admitted that he had only seen the road-side villages

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13. II, 17.
14. II, 358.
15. III, 69.
16. I, 58.
17. p. 30.
18. pp. 23-4.
19. p. 33.
20. I, 20-21.
21. I, 20.

so far.[22] Hill said that there was probably only one road through the better villages, and that those which were distant from the road were generally of very poor wooden houses and often did not possess a church. Those on the main roads were usually composed of two long rows of wooden houses, between which the road passed, he said; and these generally had a church. In most of the villages the houses were twenty to thirty yards apart; the spaces in between often being occupied by vegetable gardens, or perhaps straw-yards or sheep-folds.[23] Of course Hill was wrong to think that most villages away from the main road did not possess a church - this was an unfounded generalization - whether a village had a church depended on other things such as the wealth of the landlord, number of peasants and so on. Haxthausen, travelling north into the province of Vladimir noted that most villages were ill-built, but that most of them possessed handsome new stone churches. Some still had wooden ones, but Haxthausen explained that these were diminishing: "The Russian country-people take a particular pride in having stone-churches in their villages: to leave a village with a stone church for one with a wooden one, is looked upon as degradation; nay its inhabitants would scarcely marry those of villages with wooden churches!" No doubt Haxthausen is over-enthusiastic here, but he said that the peasants of these villages (which probably belonged to the crown) worked hard to raise money to build a new church.[24] Hill and Haxthausen also differ in their description of the layout of the houses in the villages, but this is probably the result of observation on different parts of the road. Hill, who went on to Nijni-Novgorod and Kazan may have been describing cottages in this area. Oliphant also described the houses on the road from Moscow to Nijni-Novgorod as standing detached, and at some little distance from the road. The churches occupied the centre of the villages, he added.[25]

Pearson said that sometimes the villages were built more or less of brick and that the cottages had grown up here and there as fancy directed. However, he concurred that in general they were long straight rows of timber houses.[26] The Englishwoman (in northern Russia) said that villages

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22. I, 19.
23. I, 80-81.
24. I, 83-4.
25. pp. 15-16.
26. p. 606.

often had a line of birchtrees in front of the houses. Also at the entrance of a village, she said, was a board with the number of men and cattle in the village - the fair sex not being thought worth the trouble of enumeration, she complained.[27] Harrison said that the boards also showed the name of the proprietor and the number of houses. He also said that the villages (between St. Petersburg and Moscow at least) varied according to the wealth and attention of the proprietors of the serfs, and fell into three classes: the selo - a village with a church; a seltzo - a smaller village; and a derevnya - a hamlet without a church.[28] The villages on the two estates studied by Le Play were relatively large - the estate on the Oka had five villages with 4,941 people, or about 1,000 each;[29] the one near Orenburg possessed eleven villages with 4,724 people or about 400 per village.[30] Yet both of these estates were in the north of Russia where, according to statistics, villages tended to be smaller than in the south.

So much for villages on the road to St. Petersburg, Moscow and the Urals. What did travellers say about the villages in the other provinces? There were fewer remarks about these because many travellers did not venture from the usual route mentioned above, but such descriptions as are provided are usually more meaningful than the passing comments of post-haste tourists. Only Haxthausen describes in detail the villages of the far north of Russia. Having left Moscow he took the road north. At first, in Vladimir province, the villages were poor: the houses and barns were under one roof here.[31] Bremner also found the villages in this province miserable and lifeless.[32] But in Yaroslav province, Haxthausen stated, the villages became "richer and more stately". The dwellings did not form streets (as between St. Petersburg and Moscow), but stood in detached courtyards.[33] On Karnovitch's estate Haxthausen saw a village "prettily rebuilt" after a fire. This village (of freemen) consisted of

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27. pp. 27-8.
28. pp. 65-6.
29. II, 181.
30. II, 49.
31. I, 70.
32. II, 184.
33. I, 86.

23 farms with 82 males (that is about 160 inhabitants).[34] Further north in Vologda province Haxthausen passed through some prosperous-looking crown villages.[35] Here also he noticed that there were many small villages consisting of only six to ten houses. These villages and their gardens were all surrounded by enclosures, shut in by gates.[36] Next, Haxthausen proceeded to the large privately owned village of Kubensk, which, together with small associated villages, contained 800 male souls. Each house here had fairly large gardens attached to it.[37] The nearby crown village of Simonkeyeva had only nineteen houses without about 130 inhabitants. This village was part of a group of fourteen crown villages which in total had only about 1,730 inhabitants and 258 homes - or an average of 120 inhabitants and 19 houses each.[38] Further north, along the Sukhona river the size of villages diminished to six or eight houses each, and later to four to six houses situated in "oases" along the river in the thick forest. These villages were quite pretty, Haxthausen said.[39]

Having completed his travels in northern Russia, Haxthausen proceeded from Kazan down the Volga. Here he passed villages completely enclosed by hedges.[40] On the estate of the Russianized German, von Pirch, he found the village near the mansion built with military uniformity - there was a straight and broad street divided into halves, each of which was intersected by straight bye-streets. Five peasant houses formed one square and its inhabitants formed a section of labourers. Von Pirch had been obliged to completely rebuild the village to establish this order.[41] Travelling from Simbirsk to Samara, Haxthausen noticed that the villages became larger, generally containing 2,000 to 4,000 people.[42] Oliphant also remarked that villages in this region rarely had less than 1,000 inhabitants.[43]

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34. I, 96, 98.
35. I, 178.
36. I, 180.
37. I, 180-84.
38. I, 185-6.
39. I, 192-4.
40. I, 333.
41. I, 337-8.
42. I, 341.
43. p. 77.

A few travellers described the villages they saw in Central European Russia. Haxthausen, travelling from Penza to Tambov saw a new and regularly built village belonging to a Mr. Vsevolodski. There was a straight street, along which, at equal distances, houses stood in a row. The houses were, quite unusually, said Haxthausen, of brick and tile. The landlord here had built them all according to the same plan. The villagers were quite well off, Haxthausen concluded.[44] The same observer passed through a village belonging to Count Sheremetiev with a population of 5,000. This village contained "entire streets of splendid houses", said Haxthausen.[45]

Anderson contrasted two villages (probably in southern Tula where he stayed with a nobleman). The first, which he called the "Little Village", was unlike any other he had ever seen in Russia, in that it was clean, well built, contained factories and excellent stables and gardens. The people of this village had paid for their freedom a few years before, he said. The other village, the "Black village", was made up of "shapeless hovels of wood and mud", with poor-looking peasants.[46]

As the Englishwoman had noticed birch-trees in front of the villages in northern Russia, so too Haxthausen found that in Tambov province all the houses had willows before them.[47] Bremner, in neighbouring Riazan, said that there was a village in every hollow, and that these were sheltered by fine clumps of oaks.[48]

Peasant villages in southern Russia, especially those of the Ukraine, seem to have differed considerably from those in the North. Kohl described them:

> Villages in Little Russia are mostly embedded in a ravine, [where spring water was often found] and extend generally over a large space of ground, containing sometimes as many as five or six thousand inhabitants, and seldom less than two thousand. In the centre of the village, on an elevation, stands, usually, the church; and sometimes, when the village happens to be a large one, there are as many as five or six churches .... The houses lie scattered about, concealed by a

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44. I, 365.

45. I, 369.

46. pp. 200-207.

47. I, 372.

48. II, 294.

> luxuriant foliage ..... Without the village, on the plateau of the steppe, are grouped the windmills, of which there are usually from fifty to one hundred.[49]

Lyall records that when travelling over the steppes he saw few villages because they lay chiefly in hollows and on the banks of rivers.[50] At the bottom of the hollows or ravines there was almost always a large pond, said Kohl, full of dirty water, frogs and ducks. If the village was large there might also be a bazaar. And, as in some northern villages, at the entrance there were posts with signs concerning the population of the village and so on.[51]

The villages of southern Russia were not laid out in such an orderly fashion along the streets as in northern Russia. In fact, Sanrey said, "un village n'est qu'une agglomération d'un nombre plus ou moins grand de chaumières semblables." The houses were often scattered over a wide area, he said, each separated from its neighbour by a wooden enclosure or one made of branches.[52] Haxthausen said that the villages had several crooked irregular streets rather than one long straight one.[53]

The villages of the Ukraine, though sprawling, were often cleaner and neater than those of the north. Stephens said that the houses were much cleaner than he expected to find.[54] And in Podolya Haxthausen found the villages (of 500 to 800 people) with detached houses, well-fenced courtyards and gardens with fruit trees.[55]

Russian villages then, according to European travellers, varied considerably. In north-western Russia the peasants frequently did not live in villages at all, or if they did these were rude and straggling. The village pattern became better established once the traveller entered Russia proper, though here villages were often still wretched in appearance. But at least they formed a recognizable pattern of houses on either side of a straight street. In the far North of Russia, the villages, though

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49. p. 522.

50. Travels, I, 144.

51. pp. 524-5.

52. pp. 840-41.

53. I, 411.

54. p. 13.

55. II, 157.

often quite small, were better constructed. In the East, the significant feature observed by travellers was the large size of the villages, and here and in the centre there were sometimes modern villages established by enterprising proprietors. Finally, in the south-west, the foreign observers found quite large if irregularly laid out villages, often lying in hollows, which were however generally cleaner than others in European Russia.

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the Russian peasant's house - its construction, its subdivisions and annexes, and its furniture. Much of the peasant's way of life was characterized by the house he inhabited and the way he used it. The peasants nearly always built their houses themselves from materials locally available. Some travellers, for example the "Englishwoman," said that the Russian peasant was very skilful with his axe and could build and furnish his house with this tool alone.[56] And Haxthausen stated that "every peasant is a carpenter, and knows how to frame, build, and fit up a house."[57] Often serfs were able to obtain wood for their houses from their proprietor as were both Le Play's families.[58] However, Pinkerton said that if a proprietor was unable or unwilling to aid his peasants in procuring materials for new huts the peasants would divide into parties and go about the towns and villages to collect money for this purpose by begging.[59] No other traveller makes such a statement however, so this was probably not a universal practice, or on the other hand most proprietors provided the peasants with some material for house building. When a new house was built for a branch of the family at Eractour studied by Le Play, 200 trees were felled in the seignorial forest.[60]

Frequently the cause for building a new house was not the enlargement of a family or the arrival of new peasants but the destruction of old houses by fire. As the houses were usually of wood and often stood close together whole villages were sometimes consumed. Thus Bremner saw a burnt

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56. p. 160.

57. I, 62.

58. II, 58, 188.

59. p. 24.

60. II, 224.

out village near Moscow of which there was nothing left,[61] and Haxthausen saw a similar case near Kazan.[62] In Yaroslav province Haxthausen also saw a village which had been prettily rebuilt after having been recently burnt down.[63] In fact Haxthausen felt that "it might be calculated that every village in Russia is entirely or partially burnt down once in thirty years."[64] However Tengoborski felt that this was a little exaggerated.[65]

Fires might occur for several reasons, though peasant carelessness was often to blame. Henderson did find a village near Tver which had been burnt down by lightning,[66] but both Carr[67] and Venables[68] felt that villages were often burnt out because of the practice of drying grain over open fires. Harrison said that the use of lighted pine faggots thrust torch-like into the crevices of the wall of the house for illumination often caused fires, for these crevices were usually filled with hemp or other combustible material. The same observer said that he had seen several such fires, and he was struck by the apathy of the owners of the dwelling contrasted with the dashing activity of other peasants, directed by their landlord, to stop the fire. In the villages on the estate where he stayed Harrison said that the peasants had to answer a tocsin in the event of fire, bringing with them some implement with which to extinguish the blaze. Thus the board which has the peasant's name on the front of the izba (house) was embellished with a representation of a pail, axe, mop or ladder, which the owner had to bring in case of fire.[69] Moor observed precisely the same practice in villages near Pskov where he stayed with a nobleman on his estate.[70] Le Play's peasants near Orenburg had a large barrel in which they kept water in case of fire.[71] And Hill said that the houses in eastern Russia were well separated so that fire would be less likely to

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61. II, 38.
62. I, 333.
63. I, 96.
64. I, 342.
65. I, 235.
66. p. 34.
67. p. 65.
68. p. 67.
69. p. 102.
70. pp. 26-7.
71. II, 62.

engulf an entire wooden village.[72]

The most miserable houses in Russia, like the villages, were to be found in the north-western area near the Baltic Sea. Stephens characterizes the outside of the houses of the Lithuanians thus: "[they were] about 10 to 12 feet square made of mishapen trunks of trees heaped on each other, with the ends projecting over; the roof [was] of large shapeless boards, and the window a small hole in the wall answering the double purpose of admitting light and letting out smoke."[73] As Kohl[74] and Rigby[75] also noticed, houses in this area often lacked chimneys despite their huge stoves. However the houses of the Lettes (Latvians), according to Kohl, often did have chimneys and were better built. They were long, low and one storied, made of fir-tree trunks laid horizontally on each other. The gaps between these were stuffed with moss and oakum, though sometimes the whole was covered first with cow skin and then with dung. Apart from the house there were stables, a bathing house, a storeroom and rooms for the threshing and drying of grain. These lay together in a circle or square with a courtyard in the centre and perhaps a birch tree or two.[76] Ritchie however, said that homes in Livonia were usually divided into two apartments - one of these was used for drying grain which was spread out on the stove and shelves near the roof where the air was hottest. This also served as the winter sleeping area. The second room, the summer-dormitory, was used for the threshing of grain.[77] Kohl said that these agricultural operations were in fact carried out in buildings separate from the house.[78] Probably both arrangements occurred.

"These dwellings of the Lettes," said Kohl, "are altogether superior to those of the Esthonians, who build no separate houses for different purposes. When we enter an Esthonian house, we are generally at once in the bedroom, sitting room, kitchen, provision room, sheep-pen and pigsty."[79]

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72. I, 80.

73. I, 197.

74. p. 378.

75. Residence, I, 185.

76. pp. 377-8.

77. p. 35.

78. p. 362.

79. pp. 377-8.

Rigby went into one such Estonian hut and only confirmed Kohl's words. Like Kohl,[80] she noticed that the hut was built straight on the ground, not raised above it. Her eyes were stung by the smoke from the fire wafting around the hut. Lying together on the floor were filthy pigs and children, while hens also lived in the house. The same roof housed a horse and other cattle, she added.[81]

Like the houses of the Baltic provinces, most of those of Northern Great Russia were also built of wood. Around St. Petersburg Custine noticed that although the roofs were painted and gaily carved, the houses themselves were in fact ill-built.

> Ce sont des poutres et des solives à peine équarries, echancrées aux deux bouts, et enchevêtres l'une dans l'autre pour former les coins de la cabane; ces madriers, grossièrement entassés les uns sur les autres, laissent entre eux des interstices soigneusement calfeutrés de mousse goudronnée, dont l'odeur savage se repond dons toute l'habitation et meme au dehors .... Les dependances rurales se trouvent dons une courplancheiée .... c'est triste et fangeux.

Because of the cold, Custine added, the rooms were not aired frequently so that darkness and bad odours pervaded these houses.[82]

Haxthausen's book includes illustrations suggesting that some peasant houses were of decidedly better construction than Custine suggests.[83] He states that the houses were eight to ten feet above the ground which necessitated a small staircase to approach the door (which was on the side of the house, not the front). The space underneath the dwellings contained stables for the cattle, as well as storerooms. The houses were however, rarely painted he says - only the ornamental carved work and the shutters added relief. "In the courtyard behind the house are several buildings generally one behind the other - cattle stalls, barns, granaries; although these frequently stand altogether in a row at the entrance of the village," said Haxthausen. At the end would be the threshing floor or the bath. The yard was sometimes enclosed but often opened onto cabbage gardens or cattle pastures.[84]

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80. p. 385.

81. Travels, I, 183-5.

82. II, 358-9, 365; III, 100.

83. e.g. I, 20 and 213.

84. I, 20-21.

Ritchie suggests that houses around Novgorod were generally of two stories,[85] but the other story probably accounts for the cattle shed and store beneath as described by Haxthausen, or possibly a loft in the house where young girls slept - again described by Haxthausen.[86] Moor also said that the peasants on an estate near Pskov had two storey houses, but he is probably to be believed, for he remarked that this was not usual.[87]

Haxthausen pointed out that the houses mentioned above were those of North Russia where wood was plentiful - south of the Volga towards Moscow the houses were "poorer, smaller and less ornamental."[88] And those of the poorer peasants certainly had no carvings and even lacked windows, said the "Englishwoman."[89] Near Tver, on the Volga, Custine said that the houses were even more poorly constructed than the earlier ones he had described near St. Petersburg (see above), being merely piles of tree trunks badly put together and supporting roofs of planks, to which, in winter, an extra cover of thatch was sometimes added.[90] Venables, also travelling on the St. Petersburg-Moscow route, said that most villages were dirty and cheerless looking, but that in some of the crown villages the houses, especially if new, were really very pretty and picturesque. The gable faced the street, and across the front ran a gallery with a neat balustrade; the weather boards were very handsome, being carved in open work like lace. Most of the windows had gaily painted and ornamented shutters.[91]

Possibly Haxthausen described the better houses, and (as he admitted), merely those along the main road. Perhaps too, the houses described by him belonged to crown villages. Nevertheless, when Venables went to a private estate near Tver for two months, he found that the peasants' houses were warm and substantial; and although the logs of which they were constructed were unsquared they were firmly and neatly secured at the corners. The four corners of the house were only supported by large stones

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85. p. 176.

86. I, 21.

87. p. 27.

88. I, 19-20.

89. p. 241.

90. III, 100.

91. p. 30.

or tree roots, but at least the floor was not at ground level and this allowed air to circulate and keep the floor of the cottage dry. In winter the peasants piled earth up around the bottom of the hut to exclude the cold air however. As usual the interstices between the logs were stuffed with moss and clay. The windows were very small, so that the stove heated the cottage unbearably, Venables said. The roof was usually merely covered with thatch, because this was cheapest, but sometimes with boards, thin sheets of iron or even tiles.[92]

The construction of houses described above are those seen on the road from St. Petersburg to Moscow. However, elsewhere in northern Russia the pattern was much the same. Pinkerton, travelling in the north-west (south of St. Petersburg) said that the houses were built of blackwood and covered with shingles or straw, as in most other parts of Russia. Each hut had its own gate and courtyard from which one entered the dwelling. The stables, sheds and other outhouses formed the other sides of the courtyard.[93]

Bremner, travelling in Vladimir province, saw some cottages built of clay and stone instead of wood.[94] Haxthausen, also in Vladimir province, said that the houses were "small and bad, generally joined to a barn under one roof" instead of having a yard and outhouses. In this province he (and also Bremner[95]) noticed that near most of the houses there was a high pole atop of which was a kind of basket for starlings to build their nests; this he said was found all over great Russia.[96] He also found them in adjacent Kostromia province,[97] and Harrison noticed them on the St. Petersburg-Moscow road.[98]

Travelling further north, into Yaroslav province, Haxthausen said that the houses improved, becoming like those he had described between St. Petersburg and Tver. Now however, the house had its entrance on the

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92. pp. 35-6.

93. p. 24.

94. II, 185.

95. II, 210.

96. I, 70-71.

97. I, 213.

98. p. 55.

street, which was quite unusual Haxthausen said. Below the house was the patpole, which served as a store and was a place where the smaller animals, fowls and swine stayed the night. Haxthausen continues:

> Immediately adjoining the house is the stable for the cattle, into which is an entrance from the house .... Behind the stable stands the sarai, a building in which the carts and agricultural implements are kept. Here the supply of salt and meal is also stored, and a strong padlock is put upon the door. Some paces distant, but in line with it, is a covered cellar, containing cabbages, fruit, etc., then a small cabbage garden, with the granary at the end, then a spot where the peasant places his grain before putting it in the granary and dries the hay; the last of this row of buildings is always the bath house. Every courtyard is long and narrow.[99]

While some travellers criticised the exterior of peasant houses in northern Russia they were frequently disgusted by what they found inside these dwellings. The main item within the hut was always the peasant's huge stove, which served as an oven, fire, and could be slept on during the cold winter. Bremner said that the stoves (in Vladimir province at least), were built of clay and stone,[100] while Pinkerton (travelling in western Russia at the time), said that they were built of brick, were six to eight feet square, five feet high, and level at the top - so that part of the family could sleep there in winter.[101] Haxthausen, in Yaroslav province, recorded that the ovens were built of brick, took up one-third of the room, and again served as the winter sleeping place.[102]

Apart from this built-in oven most peasant houses seemed to possess very little, or only rude, furniture. Entering a house in Yaroslav province, Haxthausen commented that "the dwelling room (izba) .... had no other furniture than a bench running round it." This bench around the wall was often used to sleep upon and was a feature of most peasant houses, which almost never had beds. Another universal feature, noticed by Haxthausen in this hut, was the icon corner with its holy pictures and light. Apart from this there were some shelves with "all kinds of vessels and utensils."[103]

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99. I, 101-2.
100. I, 185.
101. p. 24.
102. I, 101.
103. I, 101.

Pearson too noticed the lack of beds and the icon frame. However he said that the peasants usually had tables and chairs, though of the "roughest manufacture". The nearest approach to a basin, he said, was a hand bowl, and the utensils were of the cheapest type, except for the samovar.[104] "In all houses of the peasants we almost always found a samovar, or tea-urn," said Haxthausen.[105] Thompson agreed with this statement.[106]

Pinkerton also gave a generalized description of the contents of an izba. Apart from the stove there would be a fir table near a glazed or unglazed window. Along the side of the hut were the benches, a few earthen pots for cooking food in the oven, some wooden trenchers, a salt box and wooden spoons, a wooden vessel or two for holding water, a trough cut out of a tree trunk for washing linen in, and a chest for clothes. Finally there were the icons.[107] Moor said that in the huts he entered (near Pskov), there were icons in every room, the largest of which, in the main room, had a lamp with it. The pictures on the icons were badly painted, he said, but were ornamented with little bits of glass and beads.[108]

The Englishwoman in Russia said that most peasant cottages had a wooden "setee" (this probably should read "bench"), a deal table and a chair or two, a samovar, a few earthenware pipkins or basins, some bowls of birch wood and spoons to match (very rarely were there metal utensils said Bremner[109]); an icon - and if the peasant was rich enough, a lamp filled with oil, burning before it. Burning splints of wood were used to light the hut on dark days and in the evenings. The bedroom was also the living room and cooking area, with its flat-topped stove, where the peasants slept together with cocroaches in heat sufficient to bake them. The air, she added, was foul and close.[110]

The infestation of peasant huts by vermin was a common complaint of

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104. p. 606.

105. I, 118.

106. p. 254.

107. p. 24.

108. p. 28.

109. II, 186.

110. p. 241.

travellers who spent a night in them. Cochrane said that he was attacked by insects while staying the night in a peasant dwelling near Novgorod.[111] Custine, also spending a night with peasants, affirmed that "le bois des cabanes n'y sert de refuge qu'aux insectes apportés de la forêt."[112] Hansteen, sleeping in a peasant house found the heat excessive but was even more troubled by the flies, gnats and fleas.[113] Thompson even suggested that the peasants slept outside during summer to avoid the heat and closeness of the dwellings as well as the innumerable bugs in their houses.[114]

Only Haxthausen described clean peasant huts in Northern Russia. The first instance was the furniture-less house in Yaroslav province described above. "It might be imagined that the dwelling would be very dirty, the atmosphere mephitic - with so many animals and a low heated room - but it was not so; the air was purer than I could have expected, to which the constantly burning fire and open windows contributed: moreover the room was kept so clean and neat that it was a pleasure to see."[115] This contrasted strongly with the comments of other travellers who visited peasant huts in this area. Perhaps this had something to do with the fact that this peasant belonged to the reforming landlord Mr. Karnovitch. However, apart from this one, and the dwelling described immediately below, Haxthausen had to admit that he found all the houses overheated.[116]

The other exception to the usual lack of care about the house Haxthausen found in Vologda province where, in Kubensk village, Haxthausen records that he

> met with a very friendly reception .... from a rich handsome young peasant, who welcomed us in his large clean house, showing us into a spacious, well-lighted room, the walls of which were wainscot, and the well scrubbed floor strewn with fir-tree leaves. The furniture, utensils, and ornaments constituted a singular mixture of old Russian simplicity and modern innovations. In the corner was the picture of the Saint with a lamp burning before it. To the walls all round the room were fixed the simple Russian benches, and in addition there were six cane chairs; on one side was a heavy table, together with a modern one, covered with cloth, upon which stood a modern tea-service with porcelain cups.

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111. I, 51.

112. IV, 29.

113. p. 34.

114. p. 18.

115. I, 102.

116. I, 197.

On the walls Haxthausen found quite a mixture of pictures - Russian saints, wood cuts illustrating legends - "and, in elegant glass frames, the engravings of the Emperors Alexander and Nicholas, with one of Napoleon between them!" This peasant had worked for some time in St. Petersburg and even knew a little German. This was a crown village, and Haxthausen stated that all the houses were similarly large and clean.[117]

The peasant houses in Central and Eastern Russia were in many ways similar to those described above, though obtaining wood was often more difficult. Thus in Penza and Tambov provinces Haxthausen commented on the mean construction of the houses here compared to the large ones he had seen in Vologda province. This was because of lack of building material he said. (He excepted the large, rich Sheremetiev village he passed through here[118] and a neat village of brick and tile houses[119].) Lyall, travelling south from Tula, noticed that there was not such a profuse waste of timber here in the building of houses as was the case near St. Petersburg. Lyall said that the huts of the peasants on both sides of the road were more paltry in appearance and more simple in structure than those between the two capitals, and they became more miserable as one proceeded southwards. Some houses indeed, he remarked, were of wattled wicker-work rather than tree trunks.[120] Haxthausen too noted that the houses here were of plaited willow rods, except for the dwelling rooms. The fences and cattle stalls were often also of willow rods he said. As in northern Russia the stables formed the lower part of the house. There was also a type of balcony near the entrance of the house where the family spent most of its time in summer.[121] Passing through the village of Barshova in Tambov province, Haxthausen noted that

> the transition to the Southern Russian character is manifest in [the] ..... arrangement and construction [of the houses].... The dwelling house alone is built of logs, the outhouses are of wickerwork. The former consists of the summer room (seni), the walls of which are commonly plaited, and the izba, with the usual divisions for sleeping places. The house has generally its side toward the street.[122]

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117. I, 180-82.

118. I. 369.

119. I, 365.

120. Travels, I, 51-2.

121. I, 372.

122. I, 378.

Anderson noticed on Count Pomerin's estate (Tula) that the huts were very low, so low in fact that he wondered how a grown man could stand up in them, especially as the walls were sunk in all manner of angles off square. The windows, he said, were mere pigeon holes. Like Venables in northern Russia, Anderson found that the peasants here also piled up cow and horse dung three to four feet high and about one and a half feet thick around the huts to keep out the coming winter frosts.[123]

Lyall, journeying into Orel province from Tula, stated that the huts here had a very mean exterior and consisted of straw-covered cottages, in which were stoves without chimneys. The huts were consequently filled with smoke in the mornings which only escaped through the door, which, according to Lyall, was nothing more than a hole in the wall. Thus the roof and upper parts of the walls were covered with soot. Lyall said that this type of negligence and dirt continued to the frontiers of the Ukraine. And, unlike the Little Russians, the Great Russians thatched their houses poorly; merely heaping straw on the roof and fastening it down with young birches laid over the roof in all directions. For this reason, he said, whole villages were unroofed on windy nights, but this was no lesson, for the peasants merely rethatched their cottages in the same manner.[124]

Maxwell, commenting generally on the huts of the Great Russians, agreed that they were filthy from want of ventilation and the incessant heat of the stove. The interior of the hut consisted of long wooden benches on three sides, with the stove on the fourth. There would be a table, two or three stools, a teapot, a few bowls, plates and wooden spoons, earthenware dishes, old sheepskins, spinning wheels, bunches of flax and hemp, and an icon. This was the total of utensils and furniture said Maxwell, but often there was less. Everybody ate and slept in the one room he said. He also noticed the sleeping arrangement on top of the stove.[125]

Only Carr and Le Play spoke of the peasants maintaining their houses. Carr said that just before the snowfall the huts underwent an examination. All the crevices, as well as faulty places in the roof, foundations, and around the windows were well stuffed with plaited straw. This made the hut

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123. pp. 110-111.

124. Travels, I, pp. 61, 64.

125. p. 220.

quite warm for the winter, he said.[126] Le Play notes that one of the subsidies given to the peasants by both proprietors was wood for the maintenance of the home.[127] According to Le Play the ten men of the two families spent about ten days each per year maintaining the house and vehicles.[128]

Le Play describes in detail the make up and contents of the two peasant houses. The first of these is in Central Russia, in the Oka Basin. The house which had been recently constructed had three main rooms and was made of large unsquared wooden beams. The outhouses consisted of stables, a barn with a hayloft, cellars for keeping bees in winter, a storehouse and a shed. The outhouses and courtyard, together with the house itself, covered about a quarter acre, and according to Le Play were looked after with little cleanliness. Thirteen people inhabited the home.

The furniture of the house consisted of the following: a niche, for twelve icons, crosses, incense and candles; bedding of mats, sheepskins, rugs, as well as cushions; two cradles suspended from the ceiling by a hook and moved with the foot; benches around the izba; a table with four stools; shelves for dishes, five chests for clothes, 3 little mirrors and implements for making flour and bread.

The utensils included three cauldrons, two cast iron pots and six earthenware pots for cooking, as well as three large pots for qvaŗs and milk. Then there were four home-made knives, nine birch tablespoons, two cabbage-cutting knives, a cleaver for making fir-wood splints for light, a fire poker, four large forks for removing pots from the fire, and an old type of steelyard. There were five bowls for eating out of, two large mugs and a salt bin. Apart from this there were tubs in which provisions were kept, sieves, a mortar and pestle, and baskets for carrying food to the fields. Le Play notes that linen was almost never used - there were, of course, no bedsheets, though the family possessed serviettes, hand wipers and dishclothes made of flax and hemp.[129]

These articles of furniture and utensils were probably more than most

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126. p. 27.

127. II, 58, 188.

128. II, 72, 202.

129. II, 186, 192-4.

peasants possessed, nevertheless, especially for the eating of food, very few bowls, plates or utensils seem to have been used.

Le Play's family in Eastern European Russia, near Orenburg, also had a house of unsquared wooden beams stuffed with moss. The house consisted of a cellar; a covered landing with stairs opening onto the courtyard and about four feet above the ground as was the rest of the house; the main part - the izba, which contained an oven and served as a kitchen, dining room as well as a bed chamber for one part of the family; and a second part which served as the sleeping quarters for the two young households. There was also a tchouane, or storing area, for clothes. In this house lived ten people.

Apart from the house there was a bathroom, a cartwright's workshop with a hayloft; stables, a barn and another hayloft as well as a courtyard. The whole area was again about a quarter acre. Le Play is the only traveller to notice a special workshop such as the cartwright's, but no doubt other peasants had these for home industry.

Le Play remarked that the house was maintained with little cleanliness and that one could see large insects teeming in it. The outhouses were similarly badly looked after and were only covered with straw. Thus it could be cold and wet in the stables, which in part explained the poor condition of the livestock. However the family consumed an enormous amount of wood in fuel, as all parts of the house, and sometimes even the granaries, were heated during the winter.

The furniture of the cottage was "reduced to strict necessity and looked after with little care," said Le Play. It consisted of six icons; bedding of mats, sheepskins and cushions, as well as two cradles; a table; the usual bench around the isba; step-ladders, shelves for dishes, four chests for clothes and one little mirror.

The utensils included iron and earthenware pots for cooking; earthenware and wooden casks and vessels for holding liquids, including two pails for water and a large barrel for water in case of fire. There were two knives and four utensils for working with the oven; three wooden bowls for soup, kacha and so on, twenty wooden spoons (but no forks at all). There was also a bowl for drinking, and two little wine glasses. Finally,

there was a 'candlestick holder' for holding torches of resinous wood. Again linen consisted only of hemp serviettes and dishclothes as well as a cloth of hemp for use at weddings.[130]

A few other travellers made notes on the houses they saw in Eastern Russia, often noticing their poor condition. Bremner said that the huts near Nijni-Novgorod were nothing more than a roof descending to the ground.[131] Hill, on his way to Siberia, went into some peasant houses near Nijni-Novgorod. "The first of these dwellings into which we entered," he said, "gave us no very good opinion of the domestic comforts and cleanliness of the people. It consisted of two rooms, one of which was full of farm-yard implements; and in the other, in which we took our tea, there were several dirty women, and several very dirty children half-naked, and about a score of barn-door fowls."[132] Later however he was surprised to see two or three houses and a church in one village which were painted - a luxury in Russia he felt.[133]

The American, Maxwell, having reached Kazan, set out on the return journey to Nijni-Novgorod on a cold autumn night. However the party was forced to stop at a peasant hut after the drunken driver had overturned the carriage. On entering the peasant hut, Maxwell found that it consisted of only one room which was overheated to suffocation and was pervaded by bad odours. On the floor lay a father, mother and a new-born infant. The walls and ceilings were alive with bugs, and when these got into the travellers' clothing they decided to spend the rest of the night in the carriage.[134]

Michie, travelling overland from Siberia near Perm, noticed the difference between the peasant houses of Siberia and Russia proper, which region he had now entered. The houses here were very inferior to the Siberian ones, lacking the air of rude comfort peculiar to the latter, he said. For example, the windows of the Russian houses were broken and stuffed with straw, while the roofs were in poor repair.[135] Haxthausen

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130. II, 51, 60-62.

131. II, 209.

132. I, 81.

133. I, 82.

134. p. 277-8.

135. p. 320.

also noted that the roofs of houses near Kazan were poorly thatched.[136] However, Harrison, staying on the Volga, said that the houses here had roofs of planks which were covered with loose straw held together by pronged branches of trees. He went on to describe the rest of the house. The door usually had a porch with a bench inside it. The interior of the houses had two apartments with a small window in each, and an enormous brick or tile stove which separated the rooms. The temperature in these dark dwellings was usually seventy to eighty degrees Farenheit in both winter and summer, he said, though wealthy peasants often had two houses, each suited to a different season (some proprietors even built a winter and summer church, said Harrison).[137] Haxthausen also observed this practice in Kostroma province. There were three buildings - a wide low shed, the winter house, and the summer house, all adjacent. Each building had a separate roof. The shed was connected to the winter house by a kind of staircase. The winter and summer houses were "united internally in a convenient manner." In both, the lower story served as stalls and stables, the upper being the dwelling place. "The winter house had the izba (blackroom) next to the street; behind which were the tchulani (chambers) (probably a storing area for clothes and so on). The summer house contained the sarai (store for provisions) and in front the garnitza, or summer room, with large windows."[138]

Completing his travels in Eastern Russia, Haxthausen came upon a village of Little Russians near Saratov - these people had been settled here by Catherine the Great. Here, for the first time, Haxthausen saw the dwellings of these people who, although removed from their traditional homeland, had retained all their national peculiarities. Their houses, instead of being of lags, were made of framework filled in with stone or wickerwork. The whole house, both inside and out, was carefully whitewashed said Haxthausen.[139]

All the travellers who ventured into South-Western Russia noticed the difference in the dwellings of the Great and Little Russians. Eldridge gives a detailed description. The Little Russian hut, he says, was built by inserting a number of posts in the ground, at distances of about four

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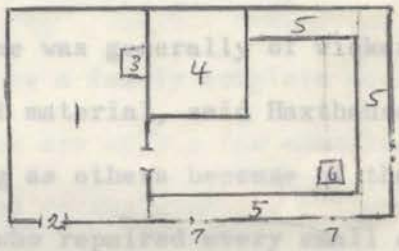
137. pp. 101-102.

138. I, 213-14.

139. I, 353.

feet from each other, which are wattled between, with spaces left for door (2)[140] and three or four small holes for windows (7). This done, the walls are plastered with mud by the women so as to be five or six inches thick. The building is covered with a straw roof. The stove (4) takes up about one-third of the living room with its chimney (3) in the lobby (1). A bench (5) runs round this room and a large chest (6) serves as a table. The stove, in front, is built nearly up to the ceiling, but there is a large opening behind which serves as a bed for the aged people: there are generally three generations living in the ten foot square room said Eldridge. The rest of the family sleeps on the bench or on the floor on sheepskins. But unlike the Great Russians who tended to enlarge a house when it became too small, Eldridge said, the Little Russians split up when the parents died - the family remaining in the house paying the others for their share of it. Also, unlike most Great Russian peasants, the Little Russians kept their houses clean, and whitewashed them in and out.[142]



Plan of Little Russian house.[141]

Bremner, entering Kursk province, noticed the clean whitewashed cottages which, he said, were thatched with straw or tough grass. These huts had low walls and a high tapering roof, he said.[143] Further south Bremner noticed large heaps of small cakes of cow dung piled up by the doors of the houses. These were used for fuel because of the scarcity of wood he said.[144]

Haxthausen also described the Little Russian houses he saw in Kharkov province. The house, he stated, was square and surrounded by farm buildings. Because chalk was abundant here it was said that the people whitewashed their houses every month. (Sanrey reckoned that it was at least twice a year.[145]) The house was entered directly from the street into the hall,

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140. Numbers refer to diagram below.

141. "Life", p. 277.

142. "Life", p. 277.

143. II, 348-9.

144. II, 413.

145. p. 840.

to the right and left of which were various rooms with the kitchen separate from the others.[146] Here Haxthausen differed in his description from Eldridge (see above) and Sanrey, who also said that there were only two rooms separated by the oven.[147] Lyall however, travelling in a different part of Little Russia (probably Chernigov), supports Haxthausen, saying that even in small houses the interior consisted of three separate rooms: kitchen, living room and bedroom. The rooms were furnished with tables, chairs and bedsteads (benches?) of unpainted fir wood, he said.[148] Haxthausen goes on to say that the house was generally of wicker and clay (as Eldridge said). Despite the slight material, said Haxthausen, these Little Russian dwellings lasted as long as others because of the cleanliness, order and care of the people, who repaired every small defect. This contrasted with the carelesness of the Great Russians. The Little Russian house was, furthermore, inexpensive, for the materials were at hand and it was easily constructed by the family.[149]

A few of Sanrey's remarks throw additional light on Little Russian houses. The small windows of no more than a foot square, he said, gave too little light but suited the climate by keeping out the cold in winter and the heat in summer. Three or four people could sleep on top of the stove. In a Little Russian house a few pots on the ground represented all the dishes, and the bench served as a table for all the family, who sat on the floor to eat. As in Northern Russia, a child's cradle might be suspended from the ceiling in the middle of the room. The walls of the house were covered by climbing plants in summer which made the wooden or clay house look quite pretty.[150] Kohl said that the whitewashed houses stood side by side but were almost concealed by a luxuriant growth of thistles and weeds.[151] Like Sanrey[152] he agreed that most of the houses were similar, being built in the same style; but he added that they often had balconies and porticoes.[153]

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146. I, 392, 411.
147. p. 840.
148. Travels, I, 62.
149. I, 412.
150. p. 840.
151. p. 524.
152. p. 840.
153. p. 524.

In the very south-west corner of Russia (Poltava and Kherson) Bremner saw many detached farms with good houses in the centre. Villages were scarce here, he said. The back of the house here faced the road and had six or eight windows (an unusually large number). Each house was surrounded by a neat garden and bee hives.[154] In Podolya Haxthausen also saw these detached type of houses with "well fenced courtyards ..... pretty enclosed gardens, full of fine fruit trees," though here the dwelling houses were small and low, and the houses did form part of larger villages.[155]

Western European observers then give a fairly complete account of peasant housing, though frequently there are only a few examples of certain matters, such as the type of cooking and eating utensils employed. Generally the Europeans felt that the Russian peasant's housing was of a low standard, and their descriptions support this view. The house was usually constructed by the peasants themselves, who, it appears, were quite clever with their only tool, the hatchet. The houses in Northern Russia were constructed of usually unsquared logs, the interstices being filled with moss and hemp. Seigneurs often provided wood from their forests for serfs to build houses. But because the houses were of wood and often stood close together, fires were frequent, often destroying whole peasant villages. In Southern Russia, where wood was scarce, the peasants resorted to wattle branches and clay to build the walls of their houses. Roofs all over Russia were usually thatched with straw, though planks were sometimes used.

Houses were seldom pretty - they were almost never painted, though carvings often adorned the gables of houses in the North. In the South houses were whitewashed which at least gave them a clean appearance.

Doors rarely faced the street, it seems. Most houses had some windows though these might lack glass and were often mere holes in the walls. Some houses in North-West Russia (around the Baltic), were build straight on the ground - elsewhere they usually had floors and often a type of stable underneath. The outhouses were sometimes attached to the house; sometimes they surrounded a courtyard. Outhouses included stables, barns with haylofts, stores and granaries, cellars and bathhouses. The travellers

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154. II, 413, 421.

155. II, 157.

rarely mentioned the wells which each house or village possessed if not on a river or near a spring.

The inside of a Russian peasant house often had no more than one room where the whole family washed, ate and slept. Sometimes there was a loft, sometimes a type of hall (seni) and occasionally other rooms where another part of the family slept, clothes or agricultural implements were stored, or which was used as a summer sleeping place. Occasionally a wealthy peasant had two houses adjoining - one for summer, another for winter.

The main item in a peasant house was the stove. This was built of bricks or clay and often took up one-third of the living room or izba. This stove was used for cooking, heating and even sleeping upon (on its high, flat top). Another universal fixture was a bench running round three sides of the hut, also used for sleeping (sometimes some members of the family slept on sheepskins on the floor). Apart from the stove and bench there might be a table and a few chairs of fir-wood, some shelves for utensils, and an icon corner. A cradle might be suspended from the roof. There was usually little else in the way of furnishings however.

Utensils in peasant houses included pots and cauldrons of clay and iron for cooking, bowls and other vessels of wood or clay for storing provisions and eating and drinking out of, and wooden spoons. Sometimes there were knives and large forks for cooking purposes, but these were rarely used for eating. In fact metal utensils were rarely seen except for use with the fire.

Many travellers complained of the want of cleanliness on the part of the peasants inhabiting these dwellings. Too frequently the houses were filthy and vermin-infested. It was often excessively warm in the peasant houses, as the fire was usually kept burning all year, and the lack of windows made them airless. Some houses did not have chimneys in which case the smoke wafted through the house and out of the door or windows. Light was provided by burning splints of resinous wood stuck into the walls - surely a fire hazard in such houses. Sometimes there were even animals inside the house. However several observers contrasted these houses of North and Central Russia with the clean, well kept ones of Little Russia, with their well-thatched roofs, whitewashed walls, and neat interiors.

If the Russian peasant was poorly housed this was at least partly his own fault. For in most regions materials for building houses were plentiful and the expense minimal. Therefore it seems that the peasants did not really care for better houses and accepted the primitive usages of their forefathers. Perhaps better education and encouragement by landowners and state officials was necessary, but as will be seen in Chapter VIII such attempts often came to grief.

CHAPTER VII - WAY OF LIFE.

It is difficult to obtain a complete and accurate account of the Russian peasant's way of life - his customs, routine and social relationships - from any one source. To have a real appreciation of these matters it would have been necessary to live with peasants for some time, observing their daily routine. In the period 1820-61, when Russians were on the whole forbidden to write about the peasantry, the only significant Russian literary source on these matters is Turgenev's Hunter's Sketches. Even here however, the peasant is not observed going about his daily tasks, for the book concentrates on incidents and personalities rather than conditions and way of life (though there are illustrations of landlord-peasant relationships).

Foreign observers in this period, (unlike D. McKenzie Wallace in the late 1860's[1]), spent little time in the peasant villages. Le Play was perhaps an exception, and on some matters provides information not found in other works, though frequently this is of a statistical nature. On the peasant's daily routine, especially, Western observers provide very little information. In summer at least it seems that the peasants rose relatively early. Henderson, spending a night in a peasant village near Tula in the latter half of April, was awoken at five in the morning by peasants already in the streets ready to participate in a "country bazâr."[2] And Hansteen, who stayed the night in a peasant hut in July also found that the peasants arose before daybreak.[3] Le Play confirms this habit of early rising among the peasants saying that in summer the people near Orenburg took their meals at 5 a.m., 11 a.m., and 6 p.m.; in winter at 6 a.m., 12 p.m., and 9 p.m.[4] Those on the Oka ate at 7 a.m., 12 p.m., and 8 p.m. (Le Play does not distinguish between seasons here.)[5] Sometimes meals were eaten in the fields, as evidenced by Le Play's families. The peasants near Orenburg had a large birch vessel for transporting drink to the fields,[6] while those on the Oka had three birch baskets specially for carrying provisions to the

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1. Donald MacKenzie Wallace, Russia, (London, 1877).
2. pp. 146-7.
3. p. 34.
4. II, 60.
5. II, 192.
6. II, 62.

fields, and even a cauldron of copper for preparing food in the fields during harvesting.[7] In summer, too, because of the long days and the short season, the peasants probably retired late. Carr spoke of peasants working in the twilight, though they rested during the middle of the hot day. In winter it seems that the peasants either spent their time in their huts working at cottage industries, or went out to work in the cities and transported provisions for themselves or others, as did Le Play's peasants at Tachli.[8]

Concerning many individual matters in the peasants' lives (as opposed to daily routine) the Western observers provide more complete information. However, it is again Le Play who gives the most detailed accounts of these subjects - such as health and hygiene, food and drink, dress, family life and festivities.

Judging by the way in which most peasants kept their houses, it can be assumed that they cared little about hygiene. Maxwell stated that they were personally filthy, wearing their sheepskins for most of the year. These lasted a lifetime and became very filthy with vermin, he said.[9] But Custine said that although the peasants' houses and clothes were dirty, the people, with their steam baths, were fairly clean.[10] It seems that the peasants bathed once a week - Carr said that he did not know of any peasant who omitted his weekly bath, and that the priests insisted on it.[11] Le Play said that the peasants at both Eractour[12] and Tachli took a weekly bath - those at Tachli in a special outhouse of the home.[13] As in this case, the bath house might be one of the outhouses of each home, or there might be a common one for the whole village. However Maxwell said that (some) peasants took their vapour baths in the izba - the usual temperature of the room was 70 to 80°F, but by throwing water every few minutes onto the heated surface of the stove, steam resulted and the temperature rose to 210°F. The peasants, all nude, would rub and whip each other with birch

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7. II, 193.
8. II, 181.
9. p. 222.
10. II, 365.
11. p. 62.
12. II, 206.
13. II, 62.

twigs, pour cold water on themselves, and run out into the snow and perhaps roll in it.[14] Venables however, said that in the village on the estate where he stayed near Tver there was a separate bath house where bath stones were heated on a stove, and water thrown over these giving off steam.[15] Moor said that after the bath in the village near which he stayed (near Pskov), the people ran nude down to the river and plunged into it. The peasants said that they never threw themselves in the snow in winter.[16]

Few travellers made any reference to sickness and medicine among the peasantry. Venables said that there was a hospital run by a German doctor in the village mentioned above.[17] This was a rarity however. At Tachli, said Le Play, work, good food, plenty of rest days and a salubrious climate contributed to the maintenance of the health of the family. In case of sickness, medicines were provided free by the seigneur. However, except in exceptional cases, the doctoring was left to the experience of old women in the family or customary practices, which were sometimes successful. But the care accorded to children, whether ill or not, was foolish said Le Play. For example, the peasants exposed them to the air even at the coldest times of winter when they had fever from measles or other eruptive diseases. Surgery was practised poorly, and the bringing forth of children was left to ignorant women paid a small fee for the service. Two young children had died in this family but Le Play does not say whether this was in childbirth, by sickness or through accident. The family spent a small amount of money per year on medicine and medical help.[18]

At Eractour Le Play again stated that the climate was healthful, and he added that the physical constitution of the majority of the inhabitants was excellent, examples of longevity being numerous. However when listing the family Le Play again records two instances of child mortality, though the cause is not given. As at Tachli, illness was treated by knowledge handed down over generations. But here, he says, the eruptive illnesses of the children are treated more intelligently than in other parts of

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14. p. 221.
15. p. 36.
16. p. 61.
17. p. 36.
18. II, 51, 55, 71.

Russia (Le Play's knowledge might extend only to Tachli however). In case of severe illness, people who showed a particular talent in healing and had made a reputation for themselves over the countryside, were called in. In each village there was a midwife to deliver children.[19]

Only Rigby and Eldridge mentioned sickness among peasants, though Pinkerton states that the Russian peasant was a stranger to many of the diseases of civilization.[20] Rigby said that in the Baltic the peasants ate well enough at the beginning of the long winter but by spring the rye bread was exhausted, for the stoves were never well husbanded, and the coarse rye flour was eked out with a little chopped straw. When the season was more prolonged straw became the chief ingredient of the loaf. There would often be epidemics after this, she said.[21] Similarly, in Southern Russia Eldridge was told by one proprietor that all the peasants in his village had died of scurvy. Eldridge said that the people here mixed straw with their already poor bread. This, he felt, contributed to the poor health of these peasants. The want of medical aid was severely felt in this part of the Empire, Eldridge continued. In large districts of 400 to 500 square miles there were often only one or two doctors. Furthermore, the peasants disliked doctors and it was impossible to restrict them to any good diet.[22]

Briefly then, travellers found the peasants living in dirty conditions but taking regular (usually weekly) steam baths. Illness was treated by methods handed down over generations, with the aid of local "experts" if necessary and midwives for childbirth. Few observers recorded instances of illness, though bad food caused this at times, it appears.

What was the food usually eaten by the Russian peasants? According to Le Play, the two essential dishes of both the families he studied were "chtchi" and "kacha" (shchi and kasha). The shchi was a soup of meat (pork, mutton or beef), and preserved cabbage, eaten with bread. When the cabbage supply of the Oka peasants was exhausted in the spring the people used young crushed nettles or wild sorrels gathered in the fields. Kasha was made of the flour of buckwheat or millet which was boiled in milk with

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19. II, 182, 184-5.

20. p. 78.

21. Residence, II, 3-4.

22. "Life", p. 273.

butter, grease or oil, with the addition of salt. Le Play said it could be varied with different seasonings and length of cooking. It was served in the form of liquid porridge or a thick paste. Both these dishes were made once a day and kept at a mild temperature in the oven, which did not diminish the quality, said Le Play. Bread and kvass were also essential parts of the diet. The bread was of course baked in the oven at home. Kvass was a drink which was prepared once a week with water and rye-flour. Another stronger drink, braga, was used on feast days - this was made with scorched barley.[23]

Apart from these major dishes, Le Play listed in detail the food eaten by each of the families. The family at Eractour, which consisted of ten people (two of whom were infants) ate three meals a day, mainly of kasha and shchi. During fasts, together with cereals, especially butter, milk, eggs, fish and peas were eaten. During the year the family consumed a reasonable amount of milk (probably in the kasha) and 1,040 eggs. Wheat, followed by rye, was the main cereal. Compared to most Russian peasants they probably ate a large amount of meat - mainly from pigs and sheep (about 300 pounds per year). Potatoes were not eaten because of superstition, while carrots and turnips were only obtained by barter, as the head of the family would not allow the women to grow these novel vegetables. A large amount of peas and horse radishes were consumed, as well as some mushrooms, pumpkins and cucumbers. Apart from over 300 pounds of watermelon and a few berries and wild cherries, no other fruit was eaten. The most unusual feature of the food account concerned tea. "L'usage de cette boisson," said Le Play, "habituel chez les paysans d'autres regions de la Russie, ne s'est point encore introduit chez les paysans de cette localite." In terms of monetary value, less than ten percent of the total food was not produced at home.[24]

The family in the Oka Basin consisted of thirteen people including two infants. However, of the men, three were absent about two months, six months, and nine months per annum, respectively. This family, apart from the kasha, shchi, bread and kvass, had another major dish called oukha. This, said Le Play, was really a fish soup seasoned with salt and various condiments. The best of this soup was prepared with sterlet caught in

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23. II, 60, 191-2.

24. II, 60, 74-5.

abundance in the neighbouring river. The family usually had three regular meals: breakfast (at 7 a.m.), was of kasha, bread and kvass; dinner (12 p.m.), of shchi, kasha and kvass, and possibly other foods; and supper (8 p.m.), consisted of the remainder of the dishes left at dinner. On feast days there might be roast suckling pig, shchi with beef in it, frozen fish, and wine.[25]

Rye was by far the main cereal of these people, though fair amounts of millet, buckwheat and barley were also consumed. Again a reasonable quantity of milk was used for making kasha, though fewer eggs were eaten here - 560 including 140 duck eggs. Only half the quantity of meat eaten at Tachli was consumed here - from cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry and fish. Over 200 pounds of potatoes were eaten here; again a large amount of horse radish; also peas, carrots, turnips, mushrooms, cucumbers, strawberries and bilberries (but no water melon). Here food to the value of seventeen per cent of the total amount was brought in from outside the family.[26]

How do the descriptions by other commentators concerning peasant food compare to Le Play's? Often it is evident that many peasants did not eat quite the large variety of food that Le Play's peasants did, nor did they eat so much meat. Pinkerton gives a generalized account of food eaten by the peasantry. It was different from that of the lower classes of other European countries, he said. The Russian peasant ate more fish, if possible. He was very fond of mushrooms which were dried and preserved in great quantities for use during winter fasts. He also liked cabbages and cucumbers - salted cucumbers were a daily dish - but was not fond of vegetables in general. The Russians seemed to be fonder of smoked and salted meat rather than fresh. Cold dishes were relished, especially in summer. Much of the food was highly seasoned. Rye-bread was common in the whole empire, and there was very little white bread eaten by the people or the soldiers. Kvass, which Pinkerton described as "a fermented acidulated liquour made of rye-meal and malt," was the common drink, while shchi was also very popular. Oxen, sheep and swine were slaughtered by the peasants on holidays, but meat was rarely eaten otherwise. During fasts, one of the longest of which fell during hay (winter crop) and

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25. II, 191-2.

26. II, 204-5.

harvest time (Easter), no flesh was eaten: only black bread, kvass, buckwheat, cucumbers, radishes, onions and mushrooms were consumed at this time.[27]

Haxthausen recorded that

> the principal food of the Russian people consists of bread; potatoes are almost unknown in most districts; cabbage is the only vegetable which is much used. Animal food, milk and butter are little eaten. In the army each soldier receives two pounds and a half of bread daily besides groats, etc. A healthy Russian peasant cannot subsist without three pounds; in the harvest he eats five pounds, and in White Russia even as much as seven pounds.[28]

While several travellers disagreed with Haxthausen's comments on milk and butter (for example Le Play (above), Lyall in his Character of the Russians,[29] Harrison,[30] Carr[31] and Bremner, who travelling in Riazan province, said that rich cream and milk could be procured at every village[32]), they often commented on bread and its importance in the Russian diet. Jesse condemned the black bread feeling that it was uncivilized,[33] but Harrison said that contrary to the usual calumny, it tasted quite good and was made of good rye-flour.[34] In the Baltic region (Livonia) Ritchie stated that the peasants' food consisted mainly of black rye bread and barley gruel, the latter occasionally enriched with vegetables, or in the autumn, even pork.[35] In Vladimir province, Maxwell found that only bread and tea were available at peasant huts for breakfast, at dinner only eggs and shchi. There were also a few apples and pears, however.[36] Hansteen said he obtained coffee in a peasant house near Novgorod.[37]

On the Volga Haxthausen said that the principal foods of the peasants

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27. pp. 69-77.
28. I, 163.
29. p. 482.
30. p. 74.
31. p. 55.
32. II, 295.
33. p. 143.
34. p. 74.
35. p. 32.
36. p. 246.
37. p. 34.

consisted of wheaten bread (rather than rye of Central Russia), mutton, a kind of vermicelli soup and dishes of milk and cabbage. The peasants here ate three or four meals a day he said.[38]

In Little Russia Haxthausen found that the food differed somewhat from that of Northern Russia. Here, apart from rye and wheaten bread, the peasants ate borshtch, or soup made from red turnips (probably beets), with beef and bacon in it; patties filled with sour milk; flour dumplings, and a few vegetables. They drank water, or kvass made of fruit.[39] Further south near Ekaterinoslaf, Haxthausen found that the peasants' food consisted of rye or wheaten, and sometimes barley bread; millet-pap; mutton, pork and geese. Few vegetables were eaten here Haxthausen said, but much animal food. "The people therefore live quite differently from those in North Russia," he concluded.[40]

Sometimes the peasants' diet depended on the season or fortune of agriculture. Thus Henderson entered a hut between Moscow and Kaluga where the peasants had not tasted milk or animal food for over a year, subsisting entirely on the shchi.[41] Rigby and Eldridge (see above), cite peasants mixing straw with flour in times of scarcity, and Lyall also noted this practice.[42] Ritchie recorded that the peasants of Livonia had little to eat in spring,[43] and Kohl said that in the Baltic provinces, "if the spring is unfavourable, the barley crops fail, and potatoes, carrots, and other vegetables are very scarce, ... the poor peasants, whose barley porridge is their chief or only means of subsistence, are sure to suffer much from hunger."[44]

Alcoholic beverages were usually kept for feast days, it seems. Thus Le Play's peasants drank their braga (home-made beer) and wine (bought from outside or the seigneur) on the feast days.[45] Some villages however had inns, though tea was often the most common drink here. Nevertheless

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38. I, 345.
39. I, 413.
40. I, 416.
41. p. 139.
42. Character, p. cxxxiii.
43. p. 33.
44. p. 363.
45. II, 75, 91, 205.

Haxthausen stated that "the consumption of brandy is one of the greatest evils, the true plague of the Russian Empire." There were national differences in drinking habits said Haxthausen - the most inveterate tipplers were the White Russians, the Great Russians would occasionally indulge in drinking sprees, whereas the Little Russians drank a little daily but for the most part moderately.[46] Eldridge (and Kohl[47]) said that the peasants in Southern Russia were much addicted to drinking, however. There was generally a distillery in every village here, said Eldridge.[48] The village inn was important in the life of the rural population of Little Russia, said Sanrey, for the peasants spent their feast days here.[49] Henderson felt that it would be pointless to distribute "portions of the Sacred Scriptures" among peasant villagers early one Sunday morning, for these people, participating in a bazaar, "had already become noisy through liquour .... [and] to have proceeded would only have been to 'cast our pearls before swine'."[50]

The Russian peasant then, according to European travellers ate reasonably well, though his foods were simple. Black rye bread was probably the most important food (sometimes the bread was made of wheat), though kasha, shchi and the drink kvass, were important parts of most peasants' diets. Often, however, the peasants ate little else - few vegetables apart from cabbages and cucumbers, and little fruit. Some milk and eggs were eaten, though often this went into the kasha. Meat was rarely eaten other than on feast days, unless the peasants were fairly well-to-do. Food varied a little from region to region and village to village, and was sometimes affected by the season or productivity of agriculture - some people almost starved or ate poorly in times of dearth. Not much evidence is given on the drinking habits of the peasants though this seems to have been a problem when distillers were allowed to operate.

What type of clothing did the peasants wear and possess? As shown above (Chapter V) most of the clothing was home-made. It is difficult to obtain a complete description of clothing from any one traveller, though

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46. II, 174-5.

47. p. 526.

48. "Life", p. 274.

49. p. 841.

50. p. 147.

most gave some details. Venables, travelling near Tver found that the men wore a usually red, collarless shirt which, though tied by a leather belt around the waist, hung over a pair of loose trousers of blue linen or calico which were tucked into a pair of boots reaching half-way up the leg. (These were not always of leather - Anderson described them as of black or grey felt.[51]) Over this they rarely thought it too hot to wear their sheepskin (Smith makes exactly the same observation[52]). Venables said that the men sported (often red) beards and wore their hair divided on top of the head, having it cut round the neck like the edge of a bowl. When they were working, however, they wore a band round the head to prevent their hair falling into their eyes. (Hill said that they wore it over their eyes.[53]) The women, according to Venables also wore a sheepskin and boots and generally tied a handkerchief round their heads to conceal their hair. Venables did not find the women attractive.[54] Neither did Haxthausen, who said that their ugly dress detracted from their appearance.[55] Thompson said that the peasant women had their waist above, instead of below the bosom, and that this looked hideous.[56]

Smith described the peasants' clothing in a similar way to Venables but said that the men's trousers were of tick or canvas and that over their shirt and trousers they wore a coarse brown long-skirted coat or kaftan. She (and Haxthausen[57]) also noticed the common practice of wearing linen bandages round the legs over which leather or felt boots were worn in winter, bast shoes (from linden bark) in summer.[58]

The "Englishwoman in Russia" said that in some villages the men had boots but that most only had shoes of a kind of basket work made of strips of birch tree (bark). The women had a coarse chemise over which they wore the national dress, the sarafan, made of common red or blue cotton. (The women also wore a "petticoat" according to Wilson,[59] Bremner[60] and

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51. p. 110.
52. p. 175.
53. I, 122.
54. pp. 26-7.
55. I, 66.
56. p. 255.
57. I, 23.
58. pp. 175-7.
59. II, 16.
60. II, 209.

Haxthausen.[61]) Children, said the Englishwoman, ran about at play almost in a state of nature generally wearing only a shirt with sleeves.[62]

Wilson found the head dress of the females peculiar (and different from what Venables had described), saying that they divided their hair into two parts which were plaited and hung down the back with a ribbon in each part.[63] Pinkerton[64] and the Englishwoman[65] however, explained that the Russian maidens wore their hair in a single plait (which often reached the hem of the sarafan), but that when they were married they covered their heads with handkerchiefs of richly embroidered silk, cotton or linen; they were never bareheaded. In fact, married women did wear two plaits but it was unusual that Wilson saw these hanging loose (if he was observing accurately, that is).

Haxthausen made the important comment that sheepskins were worn with the hairy side inwards. However, he said that in summer he often saw peasants in kaftans rather than skins. In winter the women too wore sheepskins, he said, but these only reached a little below the hips. (Le Play confirms this - see below). The peasant men wore wide topped, broad-brimmed hats between St. Petersburg and Tver but after this their hats had narrower brims and peaked tops. Concerning the men's trousers, Haxthausen said that these were formerly of coarse linen but that cotton was becoming more and more common as it was increasingly manufactured.[66]

Maxwell had more to say about the sheepskins. A sheepskin was worn for most of the year he said - it was put on like a coat, wool side in, descended below the knee, and was fastened by a girdle. A sheepskin lasted a lifetime and became very filthy with vermin said Maxwell.[67] Custine said that the peasants even slept wrapped in their sheepskins.[68]

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61. I, 378.
62. p. 28.
63. II, 16.
64. p. 301.
65. p. 28.
66. I, 22-3.
67. p. 222.
68. III, 30.

And Carr recorded that no-one, no matter how poor, did not possess a sheepskin.[69]

Hansteen and Ritchie noticed that the peasants wore different clothes on Sundays (and festivals), as did Le Play (see below). Ritchie found the holiday garb of the peasant girls on the road quite rich - there was silk, satin, white lambswool, sarafans of rich materials and ear rings.[70] Hansteen said that on Sundays the men wore a crimson shirt and the women put on a red or white serge skirt with white cotton stockings and special sandals. He also noted that the peasants put on clean clothing every Sunday after their bath. This outfit remained on for the rest of the week and was also worn to bed.[71]

Both Anderson[72] and Koble[73] noticed that the peasant men often wore their hatchet in the belt around their shirt. This belt was not often leather, as Venables stated (see above) - Le Play found them to be of wool,[74] and Kolbe described them as of "shirt cord" or "rope".[75]

There was a little difference between the dress of the Great Russian peasants and those of Little Russia. Haxthausen said that the dress of the men here was not as picturesque as that of the Great Russians. The Little Russians wore a short cloth coat, like a jacket, girt round the body with a woollen band, and wide trousers half-way up the calf.[76] Eldridge said that the shirt and drawers were of very coarse, home-made linen.[77] Haxthausen said that the Little Russians wore high-heeled boots and a fur cap.[78] This cap, said Eldridge, was called a svitka, was tall, and made of lamb skin with the wool outwards. In winter, Eldridge said, the men also wore a sheepskin fur. The women wore a skirt to the knees with bare feet and legs except on holidays when boots and a svitka were

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69. p. 34.

70. p. 175.

71. pp. 37-9.

72. p. 110.

73. p. 118.

74. II, 194.

75. pp. 117-118.

76. I, 412.

77. "Life", p. 277.

78. I, 412.

added. They also wore a sheepskin in winter.[79] Haxthausen's description differs here: the women wore a shift with a long cloth around the hips bound round the waist. In cold weather they wore a kind of dressing-gown over this - rarely a fur.[80] Possibly the clothing varied somewhat in different parts of Southern Russia.

Le Play gives lists of clothes possessed by the various members of the two families he studied. The clothing of the family at Tachli was "perfectly adapted to the climate and the requirements of work, and distinguished by its elegant cut," he said. The clothing of each of the men in this family consisted of the following: two kaftans, one being of fur; two overcoats, one being of fur; two girdles; two cloth and two linen trousers; four shirts and four girdles for these; two pairs of wrappings (strips) for winter (made of cloth), and two pairs (of linen) for summer; one pair of leather boots from Kazan; twenty pairs of sandals of linden bark (in stock); two fur caps; one pair of hemp gloves for Sundays and two pairs made out of leather and wool.

The women of Tachli possessed the following: two dresses (sarafans) one red cotton for Sundays (from trousseau), lasting a lifetime; two dresses of blue linen for ordinary days; two white aprons of calico for Sundays; two aprons of blue drill for ordinary days; one blue kaftan (from trousseau) for Sundays, lasting a lifetime; one fur overcoat (trousseau); two shirts of fine linen decorated with white calico (for Sundays); four linen shirts for ordinary days; two girdles for shirts; two pairs of linen wrappings for summer and two pairs of cloth for winter; two pairs of knitted woollen stockings; one pair of leather shoes; fifteen pairs of sandals of linden bark (in stock); seven linen headkerchiefs; three Russian linen ornamented bonnets for festivals; four pairs of knitted gloves.[81]

The men's clothing was fairly simple though they seem to have had a little more than bare necessity would dictate; the women had a sizeable wardrobe for Russian peasants, with several holiday clothes, though some of their clothing had come with them as part of their trousseaus.

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79. "Life", p. 277.

80. I, 412.

81. II, 63.

The clothing of the people at Eractour was more simple than that of most Russian peasants said Le Play. However perhaps he was merely comparing the people here with those at Tachli, for probably many Russian peasants had little more than that which was possessed by these peasants on the Oka. The men of the family owned one long and one half kaftan of brown cloth; one overcoat of sheep fur; two belts of coloured wool to tie the clothes mentioned above; three cloth trousers for winter, two of linen or blue drill for summer; four linen shirts and two belts to tie these during work; two pairs of woollen leg strips for winter, two linen for summer; one pair of leather boots; ten pairs of linden bark sandals in reserve; one cotton cap tied with velvet; one bonnet; and two pairs of knitted woollen gloves.

The women had one dress made of coarse muslin for Sundays and holidays; one semi-kaftan; one short overcoat of sheep fur; four petticoats of short muslin, forming with the shirt the work clothes; six linen shirts with embroidered fronts; two belts of red wool; two pairs of woollen stockings for feasts; two pairs of strips for summer, two for winter; one pair of leather sandals, ten pairs of linden bark sandals; four headkerchiefs of printed cotton, and one of silk for Sundays; one pair of silver-gilded ear rings.[82]

Unfortunately none of the Western travellers took the time to describe, in detail, the dress of the peasants, and evidence must be computed from semi-complete accounts. However as many of them say something on the topic, and Le Play provides detailed lists of the clothing, it is possible to give a fairly complete picture of what the Russian peasant wore.

The usual dress of the male Russian peasant then, consisted of a shirt tied around the waist and overhanging loose linen, cloth, drill or calico trousers. The trousers were often tucked into boots. Legs were swathed in linen or cloth bandages. At some times, and if he could not afford boots, the peasant wore sandals made of tree bark. Nearly all peasants possessed sheepskins which were worn with the fur inwards and lasted a lifetime. These they seem to have worn most of the year, though kaftans were worn in warm weather. Most Russian peasants had beards it seems.

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82. II, 194.

The women were usually dressed in a shirt and petticoat over which they wore a sarafan. They too might possess sheepskins though these were shorter than those of the men. Before they were married they wore their hair in a long plait but afterwards it was covered by a kerchief. Both sexes wore special, often gaily decorated clothing, on Sundays and holidays.

As most of the Western observers were travellers rather than sociologists they do not give much information about family life among the Russian peasants. Le Play provides most of the information available from Western Europeans, in his descriptions of two Russian peasant families. The following people comprised the family studied by Le Play near Orenburg:

1.	Jegor Grégorevitch S**, père de famille ou Starchi, veuf depuis 3 ans d'une femme âgée 59 ans au moment de son déces	61 ans
2.	Sidor Jégorévitch, premier fils, marié depuis 10 ans	30 ans
3.	Matréna Pavlowna, sa femme	30 ans
4.	Stepan Sidorovitch, leur fils	3 ans
5.	Avdotié Sidorovna, leur fille	1 ans
6.	Jevdokim Jégorévitch, deuxième fils, marié depuis 5 ans	25 ans
7.	Loukeria Jephimowna, sa femme	26 ans
8.	Nicanor Jégorévitch, troisième fils, marie depuis 2 ans	22 ans
9.	Maria Fedorowna, sa femme	24 ans
10.	Prascovia Jégoriewna, fille non mariée	15 ans

Le Play adds that the first son and his wife (2 and 3), have lost two children who would have been the eldest had they survived, that the second young wife (7) has been barren until now, and that the third (9) is expecting her first child.[83] The family above is an example of the usual extended Great Russian family with several households living under the one roof.

Le Play emphasized the obedience of the younger members of the family to the father and said that respect and deference towards the parents was usual in family relationships. All members of this family he said, answered

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83. II, 51.

to the father who distributed work and disposed of the produce. The well being of the family, said Le Play, rested essentially in the organization of three or four young families within the larger one. Thus paternal authority was essential. This was especially so in Russia where the lack of education made the experience of the older men so much more valuable. Few young men, he said, will run the risk of paternal malediction. In rare cases where dissension does flare up (most frequently between daughters-in-law), the father here had recourse to the authority of the seigneur who, in effect, had to approve the splitting up of a family, for it was he who allowed the building of a new house by permitting absence from work and providing materials. This splitting up of families rarely happened in Tachli, according to Le Play, and when such a case arose, the seigneur called a meeting of the village elders to decide on the case. When the father died authority was passed on (with the approval of the seigneur) to the brother or son designated by the father.[84]

The family owned, indivisibly (except in cases of partition) the house, its outhouses, most of the livestock, the rural property and agricultural implements. However each smaller family within the household usually possessed, apart from clothes, a small sum of money made up of presents given to the young marrieds, money derived from the sale of merchandise made by the woman or poultry specially raised by her. These personal funds prevented the possibility of friction caused by the young women desiring objects of finery, which would otherwise have to have been paid by the cashbox of the household.[85]

The second family was the one living on the Oka at Eractour. It was comprised as follows:

1. Philip Amelianovich O***, chef de famille ou Starchi, marié depuis 37 ans; resident a poste fixe depuis 26 ans, apres avoir émigré pendant 13 ons — 58 ans
2. Foedora Agapiowna, sa femme — 58 ans
3. Fama Philipovitch, 1er fils, marié depuis 8 ons émigrant depuis 9 ons, passant seulement un hiver chaque 2 ans dans la famille — 28 ans

84. II, 52, 55, 66-7.

85. II, 98.

4. Avdotié Philipowna, sa femme 28 ans
5. Dmitri Famentévitch, leur 3e fils (ils ont perdu 2 enfant plus âgés) 8 mois
6. Aphonsie Philipovitch, 2e fils, marié depuis 3 ans, émigrant depius 4 ans pendant la belle saison, passant tours les hivers dons la famille 22 ans
7. Ierina Karpowna, sa femme 22 ans
8. Vassiouta Aphonasiewna, leur fille 14 mois
9. Ilia Philipovitch, 3e fils marié depuis 1 an 19 ans
10. Matriena Ivanowna, sa femme (grosse de son premier enfant) 19 ans
11. Stepan Philipovitch, 4e fils, célibataire 27 ans
12. Vacili Philipovitch, 5e fils 14 ans
13. Amelian Philipovitch, 6e fils 9 ans

This whole family, said Le Play, lived under the authority of its head. This authority extended to the migratory members of the family who regularly had to give him all their earnings.[86] In Eractour, according to Le Play, most of the young migrants scrupulously brought back to the head of the family as much money as possible - usually a half or two thirds of their gross earnings. Those who did not, forfeited the respect of the villagers.[87]

Le Play stated that a larger family was better off because it had more work hands and diminishing expenses per head. For this reason it was in the interest of the family not to split up if possible, and the head of the family would be especially interested in this despite differing personalities or lack of space. After the death of the father of a family the brothers often remained together under the direction of the one who showed the most aptitude for maintaining internal harmony and directing agriculture and industry; or the one who had accumulated the most capital for himself.[88] However this regime did not always endure, as was the case with the family Le Play studied in this village, where a partition had taken place in 1842 with the authorization of the seigneur, following many

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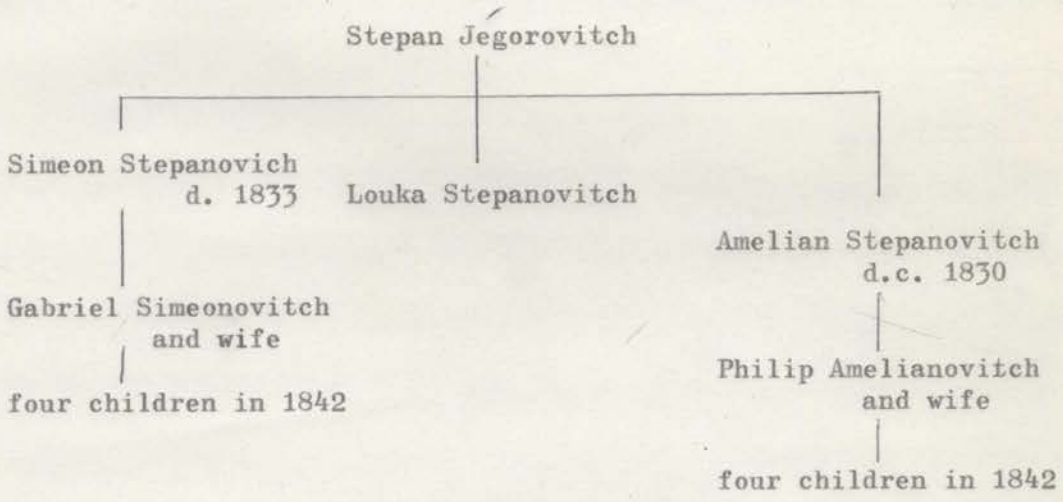
86. II, 182.

87. II, 199.

88. II, 197.

births and internal dissensions which had made difficult the running of the family.

In 1822, the grandfather, Stepan Jegorovitch, had died leaving three sons, each with their own families. The sons, Simeon, Louka and Amelian, had continued to live together under the direction of the eldest, Simeon, until he died in 1833. By now Amelian had also died leaving a married son Philip (the elder of the family studied here). Simeon however, had also left a son Gabriel, who was also married. Thus:



Following custom, the uncle, Louka Stepanovitch would now become Starchi, but he had no taste for leadership and had agreed with his dying brother that Gabriel would now become Starchi. The two cousins, Gabriel and Philip, then continued to live side by side, by which time the three families consisted of thirteen people. At this time business dissensions had destroyed the harmony between Gabriel and Philip, and the family was in any case too large. Thus the council of elders agreed to a partition under the supervision of four of its members. Gabriel and his wife and four children, plus his uncle Louka, remained in the old house, while Philip, his wife and their four children, formed a new household and took up temporary abode in the outhouses of the old house, of which the land was then divided into two equal parts. The animals, grain and agricultural implements were divided in the proportion of three to two. Besides this, Philip had to pay his cousin an amount of money to be spent in the future helping their uncle Louka who was approaching his old age.

The principal preoccupation of Philip and his family since the partition, was to gather, by hard work and severe budgeting, the materials for a new house. The new house was finally built in 1851 - nine years after Philip and his family moved into Gabriel's outhouses. However, after all this,

Philip's family was again prospering.[89]

Haxthausen found what he considered a strangely composed family on Mr. Karnovitch's estate (Yaroslav province). The head and master of the house was an old man, who had been a widower for more than twenty years, and was childless. With him lived an old woman, who was a widow, and she had a daughter of fourteen living with her. The husband of another daughter who was dead had remarried, and he, with his wife and five children did the principle work on the farm. "The family therefore was not at all related by blood, but there prevailed among them, M. Karnovitch assured us, the greatest harmony and affection. A relationship of this kind is not at all unusual," continued Haxthausen, "the Russians cannot live without a strong family tie; if he has none, he invents one."[90] Haxthausen also found a household in Kubensk composed of three brothers, all of them married and with large families but unconditionally subject to the oldest brother as head of the family.[91]

Eldridge said that in Little Russia it was also usual for three generations to inhabit a house - a patriarch and his wife with two or three married sons and daughters with children. However, when the father died, the children left the house, giving it up to one member of the family, who paid the others for their share of the hut.[92]

Not a great deal of care seems to have been accorded to children by Russian peasant parents. Mackie described them as ill-clad and squalid[93] as did Oliphant[94] - though both these cases were in Eastern Russia. As seen above Le Play said that the children at Tachli were poorly looked after, being allowed into the coldest air whether well or unwell. At Tachli the children were brought up together with several brothers, sisters and cousins in each house. There was no education except religious instruction, so they developed in complete freedom except for helping the family by caring for animals and collecting mushrooms. At fourteen however,

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89. II, 182, 228-9.

90. I, 103.

91. I, 182.

92. "Life", p. 277.

93. p. 320.

94. p. 70.

the boys began to work for both the family and seigneur. The girls on the other hand, worked only for the family until marriage. Marriage was usually at an early age - seventeen to twenty for men, eighteen to twenty-one for women. Young wives had the help of old parents in bringing up children, which made the task easier.[95]

At Eractour, said Le Play, the children were also allowed great freedom from an early age. They played outside all the time, even in the coldest parts of winter. Their principle amusements, he said, consisted of running about in the woods and fields, finding birds' nests, catching small game with traps, and looking for wild duck eggs for domestic consumption. In these forays the eldest child usually watched over the others and kept them from dangers such as water and wild beasts.

At seven years of age however, the children began to look after the animals in the stables; at about eight they helped the mother in cleaving the wood necessary for lighting and cooking, and also helped prepare the linden bark for sandal making. At nine to ten years of age they lead horses to the fields and woods together with children of neighbouring households (shepherds looked after cows and sheep). As he became stronger the young man took part in more and more agricultural work - he began ploughing at sixteen or seventeen and henceforth did all the work expected of a man. At eighteen he might begin to work as an emigrant (see Chapter V).[96]

The young girls met often in summer to sing and dance. However, meetings of young people of both sexes could practically only take place on winter evenings because of the work to be done during the summer months.[97] Thus at Tachli, during winter, the girls of the village gathered each evening to spin, in three or four houses. The young men also came, and it was on these evenings that most of the marriages were decided.[98]

Russian peasant women seem to have had a fairly hard life, according to the impressions of the travellers. As seen above (Chapter V) they participated in agriculture almost as much as men. However, at Tachli for

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95. II, 65-6.
96. II, 194-6.
97. II, 195.
98. II, 65.

example, while the men did corvée from the age of 14 to 55, the women only did so from the time they married until 48 years of age, and were exempted if they had more than six children.[99] But apart from the agricultural work the women often had to look after large families - to cook, sew and wash for them. At Eractour, the women did the house-work in turn. This included the hand-milling of cereals, the preparation of bread, fermented drinks and other foods; caring for the young children; cleaning the house and furniture; and maintaining and laundering clothes and linen.[100] Haxthausen noticed that in the villages men and boys were always to be seen on the roads, but women seldom.[101] Those women the travellers did see were rarely praised for their beauty (see above).

Le Play believed that except for matters of food and clothing, the women of Tachli were more conservative than the men. (See Chapter VIII). However, he felt that the women were not ruled by a deep sense of chastity. But paternal authority and early marriage contributed to the maintenance of good morals, he said.[102] The case was similar at Eractour. But here the practice of emigration by the men had unfortunate results: in this village about six children had been born after long absences of the fathers. These however were adopted into the family and treated in the same way as legitimate children.[103] Carr said that on the estate where he worked (near Moscow) a mother was allowed to send illegitimate babies to the foundling hospital in Moscow. The child then became the property of the crown. The landlord was not allowed to put any obstacles in the way of the mother said Carr, despite the fact that he was losing a valuable "soul".[104] Generally however, illegitimate children were probably treated as at Eractour

The family then, was an important influence on Russian peasant life as was the power of the elder of the household. This is obvious from Le Play's investigations and was probably applicable to other peasant families in Russia. The elder directed the life of the members of his family - he allocated work, money and produce. Families were usually large andmight

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99. II, 50.

100. II, 189-90.

101. I, 24.

102. II, 52, 54.

103. II, 183.

104. pp. 69-70.

consist of three generations, though when they became too large a separation took place.

Children in peasant families were allowed a great deal of freedom in their early years, but they were soon involved in aiding the family to support itself. Women worked hard at agricultural work and looking after the household though the housework in large families could be taken in turn, and old grandparents must often have looked after children while mothers were out in the fields. The practice of emigration by husbands must have produced difficulties for young women living with their husband's families, and long absences might result in extra-marital sexual relationships.

Although they noticed little about family life, most of the Western observers saw something of the peasants' holidays and festivities. These included ordinary Sundays, special feast (usually saint's) days, and marriages. Le Play said that there were about thirty-five such holidays on private properties and forty on crown lands. The following is the calendar of a seignorial forger in the Orenburg region:[105]

	DAYS OF FÊTES			TOTAL:	Days of Fasting
	Fêtes other than Sundays	Fêtes coinciding with Sundays	Ordinary Sundays		
January	2	-	4	6	-
February	3	-	4	7	-
March	1	1	4	6	30
April	9	1	3	13	18
May	2	-	5	7	-
June	3	1	3	7	14
July	1	-	4	5	-
August	4	1	4	9	14
September	2	1	3	6	-
October	2	-	4	6	-
November	2	-	5	7	16
December	2	2	2	6	24
TOTALS:	33	7	45	85	116

Le Play explained that the fête days usually involved copious meals to which were invited the poorer families and especially those whose harvests had been diminished because of some misfortune. At such a meal, apart from

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105. II, 92-3. "Fêtes" here means "festivals".

the usual dishes, there would be soup of meat, turnips or vermicelli, frozen meats, stuffed paties, roast ox, sheep, suckling pig, chooks, ducks, turkeys, geese; puddings of fine flour with milk, cream, butter and eggs; and cakes and tarts with honey. About a quarter litre of wine was usually bought for such a meal. (This seems a rather small amount, though braga - home made beer - was probably also drunk.) Le Play said that there were about twenty-nine such feasts a year at Tachli.[106] The people on the Oka also had such feasts: Le Play lists the occasions as baptisms, marriages, burials, name days, the birthday of the head of the household, and other important holidays. The family here bought 53 litres of wine a year for such occasions.[107]

Western observers noticed that peasants wore their best and gayest clothes on Sundays and holidays (see above). On such days Ritchie saw women dancing and singing.[108] At Eractour young girls often sang and danced in the summer months, and on certain feast days they would go singing through the streets of the village.[109] At Tachli, during spring, in the week before the harvesting of hay, the young girls would go singing up to the seignorial house before which they would perform slow dances.[110] The Englishwoman said that in summer on Sunday afternoons, the peasants would assemble before the proprietor's house, all dressed in their best clothes, and dance and sing, not only for their own amusement but to amuse the master and his family. Some of the dances were very pretty she said, but others were monotonous.[111] Pinkerton commented that the peasants were generally fond of dancing.[112] Venables, while on a property near Tver, went to a fête in honour of the mistress of a nearby estate. The peasants scrambled for ginger-bread men thrown to them he said.[113] Moor also said that the landlord's wife held a fête for the peasants who were very gaily

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106. II, 64, 92-3.

107. II, 195, 206.

108. pp. 175-6.

109. II, 195.

110. II, 65.

111. pp. 181-2.

112. p. 78.

113. pp. 46-7.

dressed.[114] Custine however, said that silence presided over the festivals of Russian villagers. They drank plentifully, he said, but spoke little, being almost silent unless singing.[115] Perhaps this was true on some estates, but perhaps Custine was trying to paint a black picture. However, Maxwell also came across a village in Vladimir province on a holiday, where the people were quite silent. The inhabitants of the village, he said, were lounging about in the sunshine wearing their holiday costumes. The men were sitting lazily before the doors or lounging about the village inn while the women were assembled in groups, "maintaining a profound silence." Some younger people were doing a jig, others were on a see-saw (Custine also said that this was popular[116]), while someone else would be playing a balalaika or reed pipes. But there was no real atmosphere of happiness and gaiety, Maxwell said.[117] And when a festival was held on the Volga estate where Harrison resided, following the laying of the foundation stone of a new church, Harrison observed that the peasants were all solemn and quiet; there was no merriment.[118]

On a saint's day the Englishwoman observed the peasants hurrying, in their best and gayest attire, to the church.[119] Probably only after this did they partake of their feast-day dinner. Carr said that on Sundays, having attended their early morning church service, the peasants spent their time in shooting, fishing and other amusements.[120] In Southern Russia, according to Sanrey, the peasants spent their feast days at the village inn.[121]

One of the most important causes for festivities in peasant villages was a marriage. Le Play describes a marriage at Tachli. There were three principle ceremonies he said: the betrothal at the father of the bride's place; the distribution of presents, also at the father of the bride's;

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114. p. 70.

115. III, 97.

116. III, 97.

117. p. 238.

118. pp. 89-91.

119. p. 301.

120. p. 40.

121. p. 841.

and the church wedding, and marriage feast which was held at the father of the groom's place.

The request for marriage was addressed to the parents of the girl by a female relative of the young man.[122] Anderson also said that a swakha (a woman ambassador from the intended bridegroom) came to discuss the trousseau and marriage. There was no courtship before marriage. Anderson explained - the woman generally submitted to anybody nominated by the lord, steward or her father.[123] Le Play said that if agreement was reached, a betrothal ceremony was then held at which the father of the bride received a present in money equal to the value of the trousseau. The betrothal ended with the consumption of about three litres of wine.

The day before the wedding the bride's friends came to her place where they ate and took a bath. Then the presents were given. The bride gave each of those attending small presents such as serviettes, handkerchiefs, or embroidered linen while she herself was given presents. These always included a cow, several domestic animals, household objects, and money, said Le Play.

On the day of the marriage two boys of the wedding party bought from the bride her unnecessary tress of hair. Then the young girls dressed the bride. She was blessed by her father, mother and godparents. Finally the parents took the young girl to the church and then went to the father of the groom who had prepared a feast for them. (The betrothed's parents never attended the church service.) The bride remained with her head covered until the marriage was consecrated by the priest, then she was uncovered and her headress changed to that of a married woman. The day ended with a copious meal where the parents, friends and married couple re-united. Here food and braga were consumed in huge quantities, together with about fifty litres of wine.[124]

Anniversaries of deaths of parents were also celebrated with religious ceremonies and meals. At burials at Tachli there would be mourners and a gravedigger to be paid. The coffin here was donated by the

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122. II, 96.

123. pp. 21-4.

124. II, 96-7.

seigneur.[125] The Englishwoman noticed a burying ground in one village. Most of the graves were marked by rudely constructed crosses of wood she said, but some were very decayed.[126]

Another occasion for feasting was the pomotch (literally "assistance"). Le Play described a pomotch as a day of recreation; when someone needed a large task to be done such as harvesting hay, or transporting wood, he would invite a large number of people to help him, in return for which he provided a large meal with much wine at the end of the day for all the participants.[127] The family at Tachli engaged in two such help days during the year when Le Play studied them.[128] On the other hand, the family on the Oka needed to call a pomotch when building their new house. This was for the transportation of the wood for the house from the forest. This was done by a pomotch of fifteen to twenty workers over three days. A large meal and a copious quantity of wine was provided to repay the helpers.[129]

Festivities then, were an important part of Russian peasant life, relieving the drudgery of hard work for the master or the peasants themselves. Fortunately there were a large number of feast days in the Russian calendar (about thirty excluding ordinary Sundays). Feasts were also held on other occasions such as baptisms, marriages and name days. But most Westerners in Russia during this period were able to provide little more than passing comment on these occasions. Several observers noticed the different dress worn on these days as well as the singing and dancing that took place. Others however, were struck by the peasant's moroseness even on holidays (though this is not evident in Le Play's studies). The next chapter deals with the peasant's attitude to life as a whole, his ideas concerning reforms, his religion and his education or lack of it.

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125. II, 95, 97.

126. p. 30.

127. II, 64.

128. II, 85.

129. II, 229.

CHAPTER VIII - ATTITUDES, EDUCATION AND RELIGION.

His faggots on his back, in winter's bitterest cold,
Worn out with toil and stress, a peasant frail and old,
With heavy sighs and groans, each moment faltering more,
Towards his smoky hut his heavy burden bore.
For miles and miles he dragged his load,
Then halted on the road,
And dropped it on the ground, and let it lie,
Sat down on it to rest and pondered with a sigh:
'Lord what a wretched man am I!
Kept short of everything, with wife and children too;
Ground rent and master's dues and tax on tax to pay;
And when's the time I ever knew
A single really happy day?'
So, girding at his lot, he cries Alack! Alack!
And calls for Death. Death is not far away,
He's just behind your back.
A moment's span
And there he stands and asks: 'Why did you call, old man?'
Seeing his towering form and threatening face,
The poor man scarce could say, still catching for his breath,
'I called you - not to make you angry, Death;
Please help me to put back my bundle in its place!'
And so we see
From this short fable,
Though life is full of misery
To die is still more miserable.

Krylov, 1807.[1]

What attitudes did the Russian peasant have towards his life and the conditions under which he lived? Was he happy or unhappy, did he consider his life burdensome, and what were his personal qualities? Most observers commented on the peasant's outward expressions, though few came close

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1. N.A. Krylov, Krylov's Fables, Translated into English Verse, with a preface, by Bernard Pares. (London, Jonathan Cape, 1926), pp. 151-2.

enough to the peasants to study them in detail as individuals. Nevertheless, these outward expressions recorded by travellers provide significant information so long as the traveller himself was sufficiently observant to interpret what he saw.

Several Western commentators thought that the Russian peasants were generally unhappy, servile people. Travelling from Siberia, where serfdom did not exist and the peasants seemed independent and self-respectful, Michie found the Great Russian serfs to be haggard, abject and degraded in comparison, because of their poverty and the fact that they were serfs.[2] The "Englishwoman" found no animation among the peasants - even their songs were sad, she observed.[3] Bunbury, visiting estates and villages near Moscow, found the people cheerless and apathetic, especially the women.[4] And as seen in Chapter VII, Custine, Maxwell and Harrison noticed that even on their holidays the peasants were quiet and sombre. Harrison felt that this was in accordance with the grave character of the Russian people generally, who rarely gave vent to enthusiastic outbreaks of feeling.[5] But most of the other observers who commented on the sadness of the peasants felt that this was due to their enslaved condition.

Venables provides an interesting example of a traveller's interpretation of the peasant's feelings. As mentioned in Chapter VII, while on an estate near Tver he went to a fete where the peasants sang, danced and scrambled for ginger-bread men. The first impression produced by the merriment of the peasants might be that they were happy. But Venables believed that this was not necessarily so - surely it was a melancholy and degrading spectacle to see bearded men scrambling for ginger-bread and delighting in the sports of children. These people, said Venables, were undoubtedly not oppressed, for they had a kind master and all the necessities of life. Though they were probably contented with their lot, said Venables, the chains of slavery were on their minds (perhaps this is infering too much), and the peasants acted as they were treated: like grown-up children. "With little in the world to hope or fear, since to rise is out of the question, and to sink impossible, and with a natural, easy and cheerful disposition, they sing, and dance, and play liked children on a holiday,

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2. p. 320.
3. p. 237.
4. II, 96-101.
5. pp. 90-91.

with a light-hearted merriment which is not happiness." The peasant may continue to laugh and dance in his fetters, continued Venables, while there is sufficient food, clothing and shelter for him, but an awful revolt could occur when these things fail and the peasant realizes the misery of his condition.[6] Another intelligent observer, Murchison, takes exception to this passage - in his experience the peasants certainly appeared happy at their fetes.[7] But what Venables is suggesting is that the peasants are in a situation where their happiness is fragile and even hollow, and also dependent on present conditions and restrictions. Should these things alter it might quickly be found that the peasants were not in fact satisfied but merely patiently accepting a situation which, as yet, seemed impossible to change.

The "Englishwoman" had similar feelings to Venables. The peasants seemed happy and hard-working she said, but in fact were oppressed, for if they refused to work a fearful vengeance was likely. Again she felt that the peasants were accepting what seemed to be to them immutable conditions. She too felt that the peasants were like children at carnivals: they were as much pleased with a ride on a wooden horse, a whirligig, a swing or down an ice hill as a party of schoolchildren would be.[8]

Harrison found peasants falling on their knees when their landlord arrived at the villages, and most reverent towards their master and his lady.[9] In Lithuania Stephens found people stopping their carts and bowing to him when his coach came past. They stood with caps in hands until the coach was out of sight.[10] Kohl characterised the serfs of Little Russia as more obsequious than those of Great Russia.

> The serf in Great Russia calls his lord "father", treats him with a respectful familiarity, and stands to him in something of a patriarchal relation. He is generally well informed of the family affairs of his lord, takes a lively interest in them, and will not hesitate to volunteer good advice when he thinks it called for. [This is a little too optimistic.] In Little Russia on the contrary, the serf neither loves his lord nor troubles about his concerns. The most romantic attachment is often shown in Great Russia by the serfs to their lords; in Little Russia, the murder of a lord by his serfs is but no means

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6. pp. 45-8.
7. p. 351.
8. pp. 134-5, 214.
9. p. 86.
10. II, 197.

> an unheard of occurrence. Nevertheless, the serf of Little Russia is much more humble and submissive in his outward deportment, endeavouring, apparently, by an obsequious demeanour, to atone for the total absence of real affection.[11]

Not many travellers ventured to say that the peasants were really happy with their lot. Haxthausen said that towards the Tsar the peasant entertained a childlike fear and veneration but that this did not descend to slavishness. And, although they did not like fixed rules or organization, the peasants respected their masters and starosti[12] (with their more arbitrary rule). Harrison said that the people were happy and singing while working for themselves, but not when working for their landlords.[13] Carr, noticing that serfs in the factory were merely punished for disobedience, tried persuasion and the giving of small rewards to encourage the peasants. He found that this worked quite well[14] - it was thus not necessary to oppress the peasants to obtain their obedience.

Thus, on the whole, travellers found the peasants serious in demeanour, patiently accepting their hard lot but not especially happy with their existence. Only Rigby, trying to refute Jesse's doleful picture, suggested that the peasants were really gay and happy. Rigby was quite conservative however, believing that only a slow grant of liberties could be good for the peasants,[15] so her picture might have been coloured by this belief.

What did the travellers think of the peasant's character? Here the argument is more two-sided, opinions conflicting considerably. Custine said that although the peasants were degraded by their legal and social position, "ils ont de l'esprit quelquefois de la fièrtié; mais ce qui domine dans leur caractère et dans la conduite de leur vie entière, c'est la ruse." However he excused the peasants, saying: "Personne n'a le droit de leur reprocher cette conséquence trop naturelle de leur situation. Ce peuple toujours en garde contre des maîtres dont il éprouve a chaque instant le mauvais foi effronté, compense a force de finèsse le manque de probité des seigneurs envers leurs serfs."[16] And Custine often reiterated

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11. p. 519 footnote.
12. II, 230, 232.
13. p. 112.
14. p. 54.
15. Quarterly Review, pp. 381, 388.
16. I, 297.

that all the Slav peasants were thieves.[17]

Anderson found the peasants on Count Pomerin's estate stolid and apathetic. Though they took off their caps to their master they showed no feelings except perhaps cunning and distrust.[18] The "Englishwoman" also condemned the peasants but like Custine excused them because of their position. "The four besetting sins of the Russian serfs are their propensity for lying, their deceitful cunning, their want of honesty, and their frequent intoxication. But undoubtedly their state of slavery, their half civilized condition, and the demoralizing effects of their government have mainly contributed to these grave defects."[19] Even Le Play, who seldom found anything objectionable about the peasants, said that the family at Tachli had a certain inclination towards intemperance, dissimulation, deceit and even fraud in business transactions. However he also said that the peasants here who had been given obroks did not become avaricious as a result.[20] The principle vice of the peasants at Eractour was also lack of honesty in business. Intemperance was less pronounced than it had been, said Le Play, but still endangered the well-being of several families. The principal qualities of the population, he said, were love of family life, respect for paternal authority, resignation to misfortune and suffering, and serenity in the presence of death. Le Play said that the family he studied on the Oka had the advantages of sobriety and foresight, and it was this which had allowed the substitution of obrok for barshchina in this locality.[21] However thrift was not a characteristic of the peasants near Orenburg[22] nor those on the Oka.[23] Some of the peasants at Eractour did have some money to hide, it seems. Many of the old people buried it in the forest, but these places were often uncovered by neighbours who spied upon the hoarders, hoping to steal their money. Le Play's family kept its money at home in a box locked with a key called a soundouk.[24] Haxthausen said that the Russians generally were

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17. e.g. IV, 92.
18. p. 108.
19. p. 168.
20. II, 52.
21. II, 183, 198.
22. II, 68.
23. II, 207.
24. II, 227.

not careful with money.[25]

Venables said that the Russian peasant generally was rude and ignorant, but that he was naturally very shrewd and ready to give aid. He had a genius for imitation. Though he was inclined to pilfer, open robbery and violence was rare.[26] The "Englishwoman" described the peasant as naturally clever and goodhearted but said that not until they were given their freedom would great men rise from these people.[27] Kohl felt the peasants to be friendly and sincere[28] while Hill was impressed by the peasant's piety, loyalty, fidelity, hospitality and good humour. It seems that they were also somewhat uninhibited, for Hill found peasant girls swimming, and on the river bank, who were quite naked;[29] Maxwell said they would come out of their bathrooms without clothing to roll in the snow;[30] and the "Englishwoman" found children running about wearing little clothing.[31] Rigby said that the peasants were loyal, courteous, pious, intelligent and shrewd[32] while Smith stated that the peasant was neither cowed nor abject in appearance, but even dignified. He was not a boor but good tempered and uncomplaining. He learnt easily and was good at imitation; he was also hospitable, amiable and gentle, being fond of children, animals and flowers.[33] Carr also affirmed that the peasants were kind to animals; he rarely saw them harm an animal or a bird, and they built boxes on poles for birds to nest in.[34]

Several travellers were able to speak of the Russian peasant's hospitality from personal experience. Cochrane, on his pedestrian journey, recorded that several peasants found him most interesting and shared their meals, fires and dwellings with him. None of the peasants wanted money

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25. II, 232.

26. pp. 317-8.

27. p. 160.

28. p. 63.

29. I, 4, 134.

30. p. 63.

31. p. 28.

32. Quarterly Review, p. 388.

33. pp. 175-7.

34. p. 41.

for the food, he said.[35] Pinkerton said that in the interior of Russia the stranger was welcome in every hut, the inmates of which would kindly offer part of their frugal fare to the visitor. However, they rarely accepted compensation for this. Pinkerton said that he himself had often experienced this kind of hospitality in his travels through the provinces.[36] Hansteen was invited into a peasant hut where he was offered tea, coffee, milk, qvass and bread. Overnight he slept in the hut.[37] Other travellers also stayed the night in peasant huts. Harrison, travelling in the rain from Moscow, accepted the invitation of a peasant woman to shelter under her roof. He was given black bread, milk, eggs and wild strawberries to eat and the woman insisted on giving him some hard boiled eggs to eat on the road.[38] After leaving Tver, Venables had to cross a river - peasants helped to put the carriage on the bridge. Venables affirmed that the Russian peasant gave aid with ready good will.[39] Haxthausen attested to "the great readiness and frankness with which the Russian peasants explained the minutest details of their domestic affairs," even to a foreigner like himself. But it was only like this with the Great Russians he said, less so with the Little Russians.[40]

It is evident then that the Russian peasant often accepted his miserable position with quiet suffering which occasionally flared into revolt. Travellers do not recall seeing many really happy peasants. Several however, attested to the natural goodheartedness of these rustics, their shrewdness and their hospitality. But the peasants were also accused of being cunning, thieving and servile, though some commentators excused them, saying that their hard lot was the cause of these weaknesses.

What comments did Westerners have to make on the education of the Russian peasant? The future United States President, James Buchanan, reckoned that the serfs were "ignorant and barbarous" and said that "no-one can be here for a whole month without being fully convinced that these

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35. I, 67, 93.

36. p. 295.

37. p. 34.

38. p. 74.

39. pp. 72-3.

40. II, 208-209.

people are wholly unfit to take any share in the Government, and it is doubtless the policy of the Emperor and nobles to keep them in a state of ignorance."[41] Carr said that frequently when he proffered a silver coin to pay for some chickens, none of the peasants knew its value, so that he had to return the fowl and re-pocket the coin.[42] Thus ignorance related not only to an ability to read and write but also to comprehend practical, worldly matters. The "Englishwoman" believed that ninety per cent of the peasants did not know their own age.[43]

It appears that some landlords did try to educate their peasants. Thus on the estate on the Volga, Harrison stated that at one time the mistress had tried to introduce schools, although the peasants themselves were not very keen. However, some learnt and in turn taught others. But since the first year the master's family had not visited their estate, except briefly, for ten years. So now education had been given over to the priest who in return had the children reap his corn in summer.[44] Sometimes the education was farcical. Once the "Englishwoman" went to a school of which "M. S---," a gentleman of Tver province boasted that he had established on his estate. "M. S---" possessed 4,000 souls, so the lady expected a crowd of merry boys all busily learning the alphabet. But all she found was six or eight boys in a small room looking dully over some heavy books. One of these was a Latin catalogue of the names of plants with the Russian pronunciation and translation opposite. The boy, who was repeating these without interest, was to be the gardener on the estate. Every one of the eight youths was being taught to serve the master's interests - for example to be an apothecary or a steward. Those destined to be mere field labourers were not thought fit to teach.[45]

On the estate near Orenburg, Le Play found that the children were given no instruction save for religious lessons by the priest.[46] And on Oka, he said that the people were little inclined to give education to the children believing that to do so would enfeeble paternal authority and

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41. p. 219.
42. p. 24.
43. p. 255.
44. pp. 123-5.
45. p. 255.
46. II, 63.

compromise the traditional regime on which the social system rested. (Perhaps Le Play here is speaking on behalf of the peasants however.) But thanks to the zeal of several members of the clergy, he continued, primary instruction was beginning to make some progress without its utility being very apparent. The children were also given religious instruction by the priest, it seems.[47]

Haxthausen said that there were few schools on private estates as many landowners were opposed to them on principle; some proprietors such as Mr. Karnovitch however, had established them "with much difficulty, but with the best results."[48] In the serf village of Velikoye Selo near Yaroslav, Haxthausen found a school conducted by the peasants themselves.[49] In Northern Russia (Vologda province) the crown peasants were also interested in education, spending money to have their sons taught by the village priest during winter. Thus there were many more peasants here who could read and write than elsewhere. Furthermore the Old Believers were widespread here, and these people could often read and write, though only in Old Slavonic. At the same time, the Ministry of Crown Domains had now ordered the setting up of schools in this district to be conducted by a clergyman. The instruction was to consist of reading, writing, religion and arithmetic.[50]

In another crown village in Northern Russia Haxthausen found a school where a priest, paid by the government, gave three hours of instruction a day (to boys only). There was also a School of Industry here where twelve to eighteen of the better peasant boys learnt various trades. These boys were supported by the state.[51] And two miles from Vologda, Haxthausen found a model farm run by peasants who had been trained by the government in St. Petersburg beforehand.[52] Maxwell said that he also visited an Imperial model farm near St. Petersburg. Here were educated two hundred peasants aged between sixteen and twenty, there being a number from each

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47. II, 184, 206.
48. II, 225.
49. I, 114.
50. I, 196 and footnote.
51. I, 220-21.
52. I, 187.

(of several) province(s). Fifty peasants graduated each year. According to the school's German Director, some of the peasants turned out well but others were indifferent and even unteachable.[53]

Education was thus not an important part of the Russian peasant's life. While many children were given religious instruction few learned to read or write. The few existing schools were for boys only; girls were not thought worthwhile educating. A few proprietors set up schools but most opposed the idea. Sometimes, especially in the North, the peasants themselves ran a school or sent their children to be educated by the local priest. Occasionally the government set up schools for the state peasants; it also ran model farms to improve their agricultural techniques.

Because of their lack of education, the peasants had little conception of a world outside their own or even circumstances different from their own. Thus Venables said that the Russian peasant was too unenlightened to appreciate the real blessings of liberty, though he would readily comprehend the advantage of not having to labour for three days a week for his master.[54] Smith agreed that the peasant would find it difficult to understand emancipation, though her reasons for believing this were that the people lived well and were well looked after by their lords. If they had to depend on themselves, as for example, in time of scarcity or illness, they would be lost. The peasants, she believed, cherished their old traditions and their present situation, and thus would oppose emancipation.[55] This argument seems open to doubt: it is probable that most peasants did not "cherish" their present situation - as seen above they merely accepted it, knowing of little better.

Ritchie also believed that the peasants would oppose emancipation, though when he wrote this he believed that as in the Baltic provinces, this would be without land. For the peasant had no notion of abstract liberty - all he wanted was the land he lived from.[56] Anderson came to a similar conclusion. One peasant near Pereslaf told him that with emancipation the peasants would be able to do as they liked and be freed from obrok.

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53. pp. 116-117.

54. p. 322.

55. pp. 184-5.

56. p. 245.

This peasant's notion of liberty and political rights amounted to this and no more, said Anderson.[57] Another peasant told Anderson that with the emancipation he planned to stop working and perhaps take up begging - this would be easier.[58]

The Russian peasant cared nothing for the outside world, said Carr, merely trusting in their lord.[59] While this was true of many peasants, with the coming of emancipation and the effects of the Crimean War, some of them began to realize that their conditions could change and that there was a world outside Russia where things were different. Of the Western observers only Anderson (above) and Eldridge gave examples of this however. With the Crimean War affecting the lives of even peasants in Southern Russia, Eldridge said that some of these people now felt that some change was coming in their situation.[60] However, he said that the peasants had very curious notions about the rest of the world, regarding foreign countries as so many provinces belonging to the Tsar.[61] Finally, when speaking with an intelligent peasant, Eldridge found that this peasant could not understand how the English upper classes could exist without serfdom, or how they could obtain soldiers using a different system to that used in Russia. When Eldridge told this peasant about the conditions of the English soldier the peasant wondered that every man was not one. This peasant understood the concept of law alike for rich and poor, Eldridge said, and believed that this was what the Tzar wanted. But there would be no change until the "oppressors" (probably Eldridge's word) were swept away. However this peasant did feel that some sort of great change was in the air, said Eldridge.[62]

Thus Western observers felt that the Russian peasant knew very little about things other than his agriculture, his own village and his own way of life. These peasants who had heard of emancipation were probably more concerned about what would happen to the land and how hard they would have

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57. p. 21.

58. p. 173.

59. p. 57.

60. "Sufferings", p. 258.

61. "Life", p. 279.

62. "Life", p. 280.

to work rather than whether they would be equal in rights and before the law to other classes of the empire. If this was their attitude to emancipation, what did Western observers say of the peasants' reactions to smaller and more immediate reforms, such as those carried out by the government or their landlords? Did the peasants realize the advantages of changes and approve them or were they more content to continue in old ways to which they were accustomed?

From the accounts of European travellers, it appears that the Russian peasants were singularly conservative in their ways and opposed to many of the infrequent attempts by their overseers to improve their agriculture or way of life. Bremner said that all Russians, and especially the peasants, were obstinate concerning new methods. "He [the peasant] will submit to any burden his master chooses to impose on him, but he must be allowed to carry it in his own way."[63] Smith also said that the peasant was obstinate in his customs and habits (and would therefore oppose the emancipation). The Russian serf of the interior was very difficult to deal with where matters of reform were concerned. He had a solid aversion to change and wanted to be left alone to carry on his life as he saw fit, Smith said.[64] However, Oliphant felt that the very institution of serfdom was important in stifling change because the serf was indifferent as the land was not his anyway.[65]

Haxthausen recorded that the reforming landlord Mr. Karnovitch had had to contend with "the obstinacy and folly of his people, with their blind attachment to old customs and habits, and hatred to all innovations." However he had overcome all this and "attained a state of husbandry on his estate which I have not seen excelled in all Russia." Mr. Karnovitch had even established one family on their own farmstead with 34acres of land. This family had been educated for the purpose by the landlord. The experiment, according to Haxthausen, had proved completely successful.[66]

Near Voronezh Lyall passed a village with newly constructed stone or

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63. II, 331.

64. pp. 175, 186-7.

65. p. 73.

66. I, 99, 104.

plastered houses, each with three windows. This had been effected by an improving landlord said Lyall. However, at present the peasants looked quite inconsistent walking among the dwellings, and it would be years before they were taught to make proper use of them, Lyall believed.[67] Harrison stated that attempts by some proprietors to introduce brick houses had not been very successful among the peasants who had strong prejudices in favour of the old, combustible wooden ones which they thought were warmer. Indeed, on the estate where Harrison stayed on the Volga, the peasants refused to move into new stone houses built for them by the proprietor - they regarded them as godless dwellings opposed to the customs of their ancestors. Harrison affirmed that the Russian serf tenaciously refused innovation or improvement.[68] On this estate the peasants regarded very suspiciously machinery introduced to save manpower. Nor were they keen on schools established by their mistress.[69] Carr said that the peasants on the estate where he worked did not have butter and cheese, only because they did not want to learn how to make it. And as described in Chapter V, when Carr tried to show some peasants a more efficient method of weaving they found every excuse for refusing his aid including the fact that their fathers did not do it so.[70]

The conservatism of the peasantry sometimes even manifested itself in household affairs. As recorded above (Chapter V), many peasants strongly opposed the introduction of potatoes, regarding them as sinful. Le Play said that concerning religion, family relations, solemnities, recreations and even medical practices, the women, more than the men, were attached to custom. However they had a greater tendency to innovation where matters of clothing and food were concerned. For example, at Tachli, the women and children were quite fond of carrots and turnips, evidently a novelty in these regions. While he ceded to the desires of his daughters-in-law and his own daughter, the head of the family scornfully rejected any idea that he himself should partake of this dietary innovation, feeling that it was an example of the fickleness of women, and disregarding the possibility that these vegetables might be a healthful addition to the diet.[71]

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67. Travels, II, 308.

68. pp. 56, 100.

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70. pp. 55, 59.

71. II, 54.

From the experiences of foreign observers then, it is evident that if changes directed from above were to be effectual, the peasants, probably by means of education, would have to undergo a change in attitude towards reform as such. At present they were certainly quite suspicious of anything new, even if this meant less work or a more comfortable life. As will be seen below, some of the peasant's conservatism and ignorance derived from his blind faith in his religion.

Religion is usually considered to have been an important part of the life of the Russian peasantry. According to Western European observers, how far was this true, and how sincere were the peasants in practising their religion? Le Play was quite interested in this aspect of peasant life. The family near Orenburg, he said, fulfilled all its religious tasks exactly. However this was more the consequence of an "instinctive" faith than from a reasoned development of religious sentiment. Although religion did not shield the peasants from such vices as intemperance and deceit, it did inspire in them a stoical resignation to physical and moral suffering, Le Play said. It also contributed in maintaining in the children great respect and deference toward their parents. It also inspired calmness in the face of death.[72]

The peasants here kept their fasts with extreme rigour, Le Play said. At these times, cereals, butter, milk, eggs, fish and peas were the main foods. There were 116 such fast days per year (see calendar, Chapter VII). The peasants had to pay out certain sums to the clergy for candles, bread and collections for church services; for the holding of services for death anniversaries, baptisms and marriages. Some payment was made in kind, especially at Easter. There was also a yearly amount to be paid to the priest for his upkeep. This family also granted a small amount of produce to contribute to the upkeep of some old people without families who were subsidised by the landlord.[73]

Concerning the family on the Oka, Le Play stated that they practised all the rites of the Orthodox Church, in default of ardent zeal, with all the exactitude that the law imposed. There were plenty of icons, and again days of fast were observed faithfully. However, the people did not

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72. II, 52.

73. II, 71, 76, 94-5.

show great fervour in their church devotions, and religious education was very neglected here, said Le Play. Le Play does not list devotional expenses here though he mentions that the family now and then gave flour to ex-soldiers without families and to travellers and pilgrims passing through the village of Eractour.[74]

Eldridge, in Southern Russia, commented that the serfs had very limited ideas concerning religion. They observed fasts very strictly but stuffed themselves afterwards. They were blindly attached to their religion, he said.[75] Haxthausen also observed that because the Little Russians were very pious, sects had made no headway here.[76] Pinkerton, himself a cleric, again stressed that the peasants kept their fasts with great strictness.[77] And Carr stated that he never saw any Russian who did not begin and end his meals without saying grace.[78]

Haxthausen observed that usually when he went into a priest's house he found it dirty, and he added that the priests' wives and children were vulgar. However, on Karnovitch's estate he visited one priest in a village, whose house was neat, clean and comfortable. This priest's father had also been the priest of this village. This present priest, a dignified and educated man, was beloved and revered by the whole commune said Haxthausen. The priest also ran a school where he taught reading, writing and arithmetic.[79] Later on, Haxthausen stated that the Russian, despite assertions to the contrary, had the greatest veneration for the office of the clergy. However, he admitted that the majority of the older priests were very rude, uneducated and selfish, and it was natural that these men were not respected. Nevertheless, there had been a great change in the last fifteen years he believed, the younger clergy being better educated and more zealous.[80]

While many villages had only one priest, Kohl found that in Southern

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74. II, 183-4, 206.

75. "Life", 278-9.

76. I, 415.

77. p. 71.

78. p. 10.

79. I, 138-9.

80. II, 220.

Russia large villages might have twenty or thirty of them, living amongst the peasantry, and largely in the same style of life.[81] And when Hansteen stayed at a priest's house near the Oka River, he observed that the house was very poor and that the priest's wife and daughter looked like dirty peasants.[82] Perhaps the poverty of the priests reflects the fact that they had no secure source of income, relying merely on the generosity of the peasants and the landowners. Thus, Carr explained, at certain times of the year the priests would go round to all their parishoners by way of "begging". In the villages produce was often donated rather than money. This was entirely voluntary, but all the peasants seemed quite ready to give, said Carr. Once a year also, said Carr, the priests went around the village to bless and sprinkle water on everything - the people, the produce and the cattle buildings. Prayers would be given for the prosperity of the landlord, the preservation of property from fire and other accidents, and the bountiful increase of cattle, produce and so on.[83]

Most villages in Russia seem to have possessed churches (though Hill believed that the smaller ones did not - see Chapter VI). Haxthausen noticed the increase in the number of stone churches in northern villages.[84] Harrison said that some proprietors had erected both winter and summer churches.[85] Sanrey stated that the churches in small villages were of simple wooden construction, but those in the large ones owned by important landlords were large and byzantine in style.[86]

Despite the apparent importance of religion, superstition was still prevalent amongst the peasantry. This was so especially in relation to fires. Carr said that the Russians were fatalists; they did not try to quench fires but merely performed prayers and ceremonies while watching the fire and repeating the maxim that "God knows best".[87] The "Englishwoman" reported that once, when a house was burning, the men ran out to the field, stopped, and then began beckoning and making violent gestures. They believed

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81. p. 522.

82. p. 52.

83. pp. 67. 69.

84. I, 83-4.

85. p. 102.

86. p. 841.

87. p. 65.

that this would change the wind and save their own cottages from the flames.[88] Henderson, stopping at a burnt out village of the "Priestless Sect", was told that it had been burnt down by the "will of God". Henderson continued,

> The same superstitious idea, relative to the efficacy of milk in quenching fires that have been kindled by lightning, prevails here, as in some parts of Germany; the consequence of which is, that, owing to the smallness of the quantity of that liquid which it is possible to procure, compared with the exigency of the case, it not unfrequently happens that when it is resorted to, instead of a plentiful supply of water, whole villages are consumed, and the inhabitants reduced to the circumstances of the greatest misery.[89]

Finally, Hamm recorded that annually a terrible pestilence decimated the herds of cattle on the Southern steppes. The peasants were very superstitious about this and had a strange sort of ceremony to exorcise the evil spirit. Once this had been done, nothing else was attempted to stop the plague which, of course, continued unabated.[90]

From the reports of Westerners then, religion, while important in the life of the peasantry, and carried out with exactitude, was practised in a rather blind manner as one of the many duties imposed on the peasant. Priests were often little above the peasants in life-style and consequently were often not greatly respected. And religious education was not carried out well enough to remove superstitiousness from the mind of the peasant.

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88. pp. 161-2.

89. p. 34.

90. p. 69.

CHAPTER IX - SPECIAL GROUPS.

There were various types of peasants in Russia who differed in a significant way from others. The first of these groups were the crown or state peasants. In 1858 state peasants outnumbered serfs, there being 25.8 million state peasants and 22.8 million serfs. State peasants had not always outnumbered serfs however, as the following table shows:

SERFS AND STATE PEASANTS, 1722-1859.[1]

Number and Date of Censuses	Number of Peasants of Nobility	Number of State Peasants	Total Population
1st 1722	3,200,000	2,200,000	14,000,000
5th 1796	9,789,680	7,276,170	36,000,000
6th 1812	10,416,813	7,550,814	41,000,000
8th 1835	10,872,229	10,550,000	60,000,000
9th 1851	10,708,856	12,000,000	69,000,000
10th 1859	10,696,136	12,800,000	74,000,000

From the above table it is evident that the percentage of serfs in the population has slowly declined. This however is to quite some extent attributable to the transfer of serfs to the state peasantry. This happened when serfs fled or migrated to Siberia and other borderlands, or when the government acquired private estates either by escheatment and purchase, or by seizure due to illegal activities of landlords.

The ratio of state peasants to serfs varied greatly from province to province. The provinces in the north-east and south-west had the heaviest concentrations of state peasants while serfs formed over half the population in the western provinces and those surrounding Moscow. In eleven provinces state peasants formed over fifty percent of the population (up to 81.7% in Viatka) while in four they made up less than 10% of the total population.[2]

Many of the descriptions in Chapters IV to VIII involve state peasants, either because the observer made no distinction or, more often, the distinction was irrelevent in describing the situation of the Russian peasantry generally. However some travellers made definite comparisons

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1. James Mavor, An Economic History of Russia (2 Vols, 2nd edition, London, 1925), Vol. I, p. 418.

2. Blum, p. 477 footnote.

between state peasants and serfs, or referred specifically to the condition of the former as opposed to the latter. These are certainly worth considering.

Travellers frequently commented that state peasants lived in better conditions than serfs. In Northern Russia for example, Haxthausen noticed several prosperous state villages, with larger houses than usual and separate summer and winter quarters. Comparing two villages near Vologda, Haxthausen said that the people in the crown village of Simonkeyeva had twenty acres arable and meadow land per soul whereas in the privately owned village of Kubensk, the average was less than six acres per soul. Nevertheless the people of Kubensk seemed better off to Haxthausen.[3]

Murchison also referred to the crown peasants of Northern Russia. He criticized Venables and Bremner, neither of whom, he said, had seen a very large part of European Russia, and who had formed their opinions from observations in districts where the great mass of the peasantry were serfs of individual proprietors. In the Northern provinces of Olonetz, Archangel and Vologda, whither Bremner and Venables had not ventured, the traveller could find a different and very superior class of peasants, said Murchison. These were crown peasants, who owed allegiance only to the Emperor. According to Murchison these people were well-lodged, well-warmed and seemed to enjoy their existence.[4]

While this criticism is quite relevant to many writers it must be noted that Venables did remark that although most Russian villages were dirty and cheerless looking, the crown villages often had pretty wooden houses.[5] The "Englishwoman" who like Murchison had travelled in the North, also noted that the peasants in crown villages were much more comfortably housed and at ease than those in the villages of private landowners.[6] In Southern Russia Jesse found that villages belonging to crown peasants were again in much better order than those belonging to nobles. When he went into some of these houses he found an air of ease and well-being which he had never seen in those of the peasants of private proprietors.[7] Even

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3. I, 178, 185-7.
4. pp. 349-50.
5. p. 30.
6. p. 23.
7. p. 36

around the Baltic where Ritchie found that most villages were wretched, when he chanced on a clean, uniform one, he found out that it belonged to the crown.[8]

Only Moor contradicted this impression that the crown peasants were generally better off. Having surveyed a privately-owned village, he walked to one owned by the government. Here, he said, as in most government villages, the peasants were not as well off as in private villages. Moor said that he found this hard to understand considering that these villagers did not do any unpaid labout as did the serfs. However, the landlord with whom Moor was staying, was on the local emancipation committee, and thus possibly more liberal than others. Or, Moor may have been told by his host that crown peasants were worse off, and observing one village where this was true, believed him. Finally the peasants of this particular crown village told Moor that they had been robbed by government officials a few years previously.[9]

Carr said that he had spoken with both crown peasants and serfs in different parts of the country and found that the people always preferred to belong to the crown rather than being privately owned.[10] Harrison too spoke with state peasants and believed that they were happier than the serfs.[11] Haxthausen said that the toiling burlaki were nearly always peasants of the nobles, rarely those of the crown. Haxthausen said that the crown peasants, all having to pay an equal amount of obrok, and not interfered with as to the type of work they did, chose only those callings involving good profits and the least possible hard work.[12] And in Little Russia he commented that the crown peasants were lazier than the serfs.[13] Finally, he found begging in crown villages on the Volga - but this was forbidden on private estates.[14]

It appears then, that while state peasants might sometimes have been subject to rapacious government officials, in general they lived in more

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8. pp. 41-2.
9. p. 30.
10. p. 55.
11. p. 105.
12. I, 245.
13. I, 401.
14. I, 141.

comfortable quarters, were better off, and perhaps did not work as hard as the serfs. Furthermore, two travellers found that the peasants themselves preferred to belong to the crown, which is surely significant evidence to suggest that the crown peasant enjoyed a better life than his serf counterpart.

Another type of peasant in Russia was the freeholder, or odnodvortzi. There were nearly two million of these in the 1850's. Strictly speaking, the odnodvortzi were the descendants of the minor Muscovite servitors, but by Emancipation they had lost most of the privileges which distinguished them from other peasants, save that they were not owned by either the nobility or the state. Apart from these however, there were other freemen who had been freed by their landlords or had bought their freedom. Like other peasants these freemen and freeholders paid the poll tax. Most of the freeholders lived in the Central provinces of Kursk, Tambov, Orel and Varonezk.[15]

Only Haxthausen made specific reference to this small group of peasants. He said that the odnodvortzi lived on detached farms, owned their land and were not associated with a commune. Haxthausen said that some of them even owned serfs. Others of them hired peasants from neighbouring estates to assist them in their agricultural work; for if the crown peasants were lazy, the odnodvortzi were the laziest of all, said Haxthausen.[16]

Haxthausen also made remarks about other free peasants he encountered in his travels. In Yaraslov province he found a village of 82 males with 23 farms. These peasants had purchased their freedom for 50,000 roubles. At present they held their farms separately, but, Haxthausen said, they found this so inconvenient that from the next revision they planned to divide the land in the usual communal way.[17] And in a village on the Volga near Saratov, Haxthausen saw a village which was offered for sale after its landlord had gone bankrupt. The peasants here bought the village themselves and thus their own freedom. They continued to hold the land communally however.[18] Anderson's peasants of the "Little Village" (Chapter

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15. Blum, pp. 428-9, Pushkarev, p. 73.

16. I, 371, 373, 402.

17. I, 98.

18. I, 348-9.

VI), whose village was clean, neat and prosperous, while the peasants themselves were cheerful, were also freemen having paid for their freedom a few years earlier.[19] Finally, the peasants of the Far North Haxthausen spoke of, under the Polovnik law, were also freemen (see Chapter IV).

No other travellers studied here said anything of significance about free peasants. This reflects the fact that there were few people in this class compared to the total population, and that travellers had probably heard little about them. Nevertheless, being independent, the freeman or freeholder was no doubt in a better position than serfs or state peasants who had to work for others as well as themselves.

Some European travellers found quite wealthy people among the peasantry. Haxthausen in Voronina village in Vologda province found a polovnik farmer who was quite well-to-do, having made a fortune of 100,000 rubles from speculation in corn and other commodities. He hired workers, owned his land as well as much livestock. There were other farms in the district which also provided a good standard of living for their owners.[20]

Haxthausen said that when he passed through the Sheremetief village there were "entire streets of splendid houses". Some of this nobleman's peasants themselves owned estates with serfs in Sheremietief's name, and were able to pay 80,000 to 100,000 roubles for their freedom.[21] Harrison found serfs in one of the villages on his trip between Moscow and Nijni-Novgarod, who had become rich through being engaged in trade.[22] And on the estate on the Volga the landlord told Harrison that one of his serfs had paid him 33,000 roubles for his freedom.[23]

If there were some quite wealthy peasants, there were also some who were more miserable than the serfs labouring in their master's fields. These were the house serfs or dvorovye liudi. They lived in the houses of the noblemen either on the estate or in the capitals serving their master's every whim. In 1861 there were about 1.5 million serfs in this position (seven percent of the serf population).[24]

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19. pp. 200-202.

20. I, 206-208.

21. I, 369.

22. p. 87.

23. p. 108.

24. Pushkarev, p. 17.

Le Play listed the duties of the household serfs on the estate near Orenburg. There were shepherds, artisans, village administrators, vodka-distillers, men who ran the seignorial stores; and finally the domestics attached to the proprietor's house. There was a sharp division between the dvorovye liudi and the serfs who worked on the land. The lord did not allow the sons of servants to marry peasant girls as this would mean losing a valuable member of the (presumably domestic) community. Le Play also said that a peasant would not accept as a daughter-in-law a house serf, for fear of introducing undesirable customs.[25] But Le Play does not state the grounds for this assumption. And landlords did send house serfs to marry village girls according to the "Englishwoman" (see Chapter IV).

Eldridge said that on most large estates in Southern Russia about twenty percent of the entire population of serfs were domestic servants, bailiffs or overseers, as well as shepherds, carpenters, joiners, store-keepers, distillers or tradesmen. There were even tailors and book binders. But there were none of these if the master was absentee (probably for this reason Le Play made no mention of such people on the estate on the Oka where the landlord was absentee). While the artisans and tradesmen lived well, the house serfs did not. They were punished with rods by the police when it seemed they had done anything wrong. The master merely calls the police said Eldridge, and no enquiry is made as to the reason for punishment if a rouble is given to the law enforcer. Often punishment was meted out by mistake, said Eldridge. Servants often conducted themselves badly on purpose hoping to be sent back to the village. Though they were ill-treated, the servants themselves were thieves and quite indolent, Eldridge concluded.[26] When Anderson and his wife stayed on Count Pomerin's estate they were given a separate house and servants. Anderson said that these people were lazy, thieving and absolutely refused to do anything but their appointed task - indeed they slept most of the time.[27]

Haxthausen said that in Mr. Bunin's house (Tambov province) the menservants slept in the hall or in the anteroom. There were also a few female servants but these were never seen by the foreigner.[28] On a nearby

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25. II, 50, 53.
26. "Life", pp. 274-6.
27. p. 149.
28. I, 375.

estate Haxthausen found carpets in every room woven by female servants and peasant women under the direction of the mistress of the house.[29]

Kohl said that the house serfs in St. Petersburg had to find their own bread and kvass and for the most part had to live off leftovers from the lord's table. Most of them were not supplied with other clothes than those they had worn as peasants. In their bast shoes and sheepskins they formed a remarkable contrast to the palaces in which they served their lords, said Kohl. They slept on kitchen stoves, on chairs, or on the floor. They were found in all country houses of the interior and in many houses of St. Petersburg and Moscow, especially the poorer ones. Many were taken straight from the fields to perform the more menial household duties; provided with boots and better kaftans, and used for a time in the kitchen or stable, and then sent back to the fields. But the serfs were more indolent than paid servants, so these were hired if the nobleman could afford it.[30] Jesse knew of a nobleman who had had his serf taught music - this man always played piano at his master's quadrille parties in the country, but in St. Petersburg he was demoted to a footman.[31]

The domestic serf's life then was often more miserable than even that of the serf on barshchina, for he was more directly subject to his master's arbitrary will. His job was usually a menial one and he might be poorly provided for. However these domestics do not seem to have been of very good character, being lazy and thieving, but this must certainly to some extent have been due to their oppressed condition.

In criticising serf domestics, Anderson excluded Old Believers, whom he said made good, honest servants.[32] Haxthausen also said that these Starovertzi were generally much more simple, moral and sober than other Russian peasants. They were also better educated, though usually they knew only Old Slavonic.[33] In the government of Kharkov, said Haxthausen, the Starovertzi considered potatoes sinful to eat and said that cholera was the punishment for their introduction.[34] Of the other travellers the

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29. I, 377.
30. pp. 81-2.
31. p. 302.
32. p. 149.
33. I, 262.
34. I, 409-410.

only notes made about these people were by Harrison, who said that at a festival the peasants of the old faith refused to eat with the rest.[35]

Sometimes differences between peasants in European Russia were reflections of regional and ethnic differences. Thus the peasants of the Blatic provinces, although free of serfdom, were worse off than many Russian serfs, partly because of the poor nature of the country, but also because in the process of emancipation they lost their land and the protective aid of the seigneur. Kohl said that the peasants' lack of land rights meant that a proprietor could rid himself of people he disliked but could still find many ways of keeping peasants if he wished to do so.[36] Kolbe said that from observation of conditions before and after emancipation in this region he had found no improvement in the conditions of the peasantry here.[37]

Haxthausen said that the people of White Russia were generally badly off too. He emphasised that these people were religious, obedient and full of respect for authority. They did not wear sheepskins like other Russian peasants. Their food consisted almost entirely of buckwheat, groats, bad bread and honey. They ate little animal food. They were subject to heavy corvées which were often paid in vodka.[38]

Several Western observers remarked on the difference between the Great and Little Russians. Kohl felt that the latter were less respectful (though more obsequious) toward their landlords (see Chapter VIII), and Haxthausen felt that they were lazier than the Great Russians.[39] He also noticed that even near Saratov, far away from their homeland, these people retained their national peculiarities.[40] Many travellers commented on their cleaner houses. Henderson said that the Little Russians were more disposed to cultivate the comforts of life than the Great Russians, that their manners were simpler, their morals less corrupt, and that the people were also more intelligent.[41] Bremner said that music was very popular in

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35. p. 91.
36. p. 392.
37. p. 105.
38. I, 68.
39. I, 401-402.
40. I, 352-4.
41. p. 169.

Little Russia.[42]

Haxthausen found that the Little Russians' marriage and burial ceremonies differed from those in the rest of Russia. He also said that the Little Russians were an imaginative and practical people who had many popular songs, tales and legends. They sometimes practised witchcraft. They sang more and danced differently from their Great Russian brothers. In general they were musical and artistic, Haxthausen concluded.[43]

Some of the Cossacks of Southern Russia lived as peasants, often leading a similar way of life to the Little Russians. Few travellers say anything about this however. Haxthausen found twelve villages near Lipetsk, in Tambov province, inhabited by Cossacks. These people owned their land and paid only the poll tax. They called themselves odnodvortzi, but in fact divided the land communally. But like the odnodvortzi the Cossacks of Russia were personally free said Haxthausen.[44] In the Little Russian village described by Kohl (see Chapter VI) there lived a large group of Cossacks as well as serfs and even petty nobles. The Cossacks' leader, the ataman, it seems, settled disputes in the village.[45]

National, regional and status differences then, all affected the lives of Russian peasants. However, few Western observers, except for Haxthausen and perhaps Kohl, made much comment on this fact. This thesis has been on the Russian peasant generally and what European travellers saw of him. However further study of the differences between different types of peasants in terms of nationality, region and status, taken from the accounts of travellers, and where possible Russians, should prove an interesting and profitable field of investigation.

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42. II, 351.

43. I, 413-15.

44. I, 371.

45. pp. 522-6.

PART THREE.

CHAPTER X - CONCLUSION.

The aim of this study has been to set forth and evaluate the accounts of Western observers in Russia, 1820-61, in terms of their efficacy as primary source material concerning the Russian peasant in this period. Part Two of this thesis described what the observers saw of the peasant - his obligations, his work and his way of life. The topic to be reviewed in this chapter is the extent to which these accounts are useful as primary sources, both in terms of adequacy and reliability.

As was pointed out in Chapter I, the fact that there are few Russian accounts of the peasantry 1820-61 already gives these works by foreign observers a special importance. It is imperative that anyone writing in detail on peasant life in this period should refer to the accounts of Western observers to gain a complete picture. Some of the better-known works such as Haxthausen and Custine are frequently quoted, but even important accounts such as those of Le Play, Kohl, Venables and Bremner are often overlooked. No doubt this is sometimes because many of these books contain much irrelevant information and are often not indexed to allow easy reference to particular subjects. Ignorance of the existence of some of these works, or at least their contents, has probably also contributed to the little use made of them. Certainly there is not such a large amount of information on the peasant in pre-Emancipation Russia that these accounts by European travellers can be discounted as of little significance. This writer hopes that the exposition of traveller's accounts of the peasant, set forth in the various chapters of Part Two of this study, will contribute to a wider knowledge and use of this type of information.

Obviously, from the amount of material gleaned from these books and used in this thesis, the accounts of Western observers in Russia during the period 1820-61, certainly do provide significant information, gained from observation at first hand, which can be used as primary source material. Taken together these works contain a wide range of information on the peasantry, though few of them do so individually. Haxthausen does treat most subjects somewhere in his two volumes, as does Le Play, though this author concentrates almost exclusively on two families. Most of the other authors merely comment on their travels, what they saw along the

roadside and in peasant villages they passed by or perhaps visited while on an estate. Those who stayed on estates, such as Harrison, Venables, Anderson and others, often provide the most interesting information, being able to observe the peasants closely over a period of time. However, observant travellers such as Bremner also make pertinent comments while journeying from town to town over the countryside.

As stated above, taken together, these sources provide a great deal of material on a wide range of topics. There is some information on the peasant's relations with the state, army and landlords, although there is little on the state peasants' dealing with officials set over them. There is some material on the commune, though most of this is given by Haxthausen, and to a lesser extent Le Play. There is a great deal on the peasant's agriculture (many of the writers had some understanding of agricultural practices it seems), and a reasonable amount of material on his industries at home and work outside the village. Concerning villages and houses there are abundant descriptions, though only a few travellers adequately described the interior of the peasant dwellings. Concerning way of life there is insufficient material. Enough information is given to provide a fair picture of the food and clothing of the peasantry, but daily routine, family life and life crises receive little attention - the reasons for this are outlined below. Similarly, the attitudes of the peasants to their lives and possible changes are little discussed. Nor is there much information on peasant education, but here the reason lies in the fact that this was minimal rather than that commentators were unobservant. Many travellers noticed the outward forms of peasant religion such as the churches and icons, but few delved into the significance of religion in the life of the peasant (Le Play must be excepted here).

Although the fact that they were non-Russians gave the Western observers a certain impartiality lacking in natives of the country, this fact hampered some of their efforts to obtain information. That most of the travellers could not speak or even understand Russian was a great handicap in studying a group such as the peasantry whose members almost never knew any language but Russian. This accounts for several of the omissions in Western European accounts of the peasant. Thus there is little information on what the peasants thought of their position and possible reforms concerning themselves. The travellers almost never

referred to peasant culture and folkways; their life crises such as birth, marriage and death; and their daily routine. Considering its importance in peasant life there is unfortunately little material on the Commune. However a knowledge of these matters was not completely dependent on an understanding of Russian. Le Play, who said most about the peasant's way of life in his own society, did not seem to know Russian. He probably obtained some of his data from French-speaking landlords, though perhaps his co-worker knew some Russian. Haxthausen, who had much to say about the Commune, relied on interpreters. It is interesting to note that every one of the European observers studied here who spoke Russian stayed in the country for about ten years - namely Anderson, Eldridge, Harrison, Henderson, Pinkerton and perhaps Kolbe.

To gain a knowledge of the peasant way of life would also have necessitated being close to these people for a period of time. Significantly, the commentator who said most about the peasant's daily life, Le Play, spent some time among peasants in two villages in European Russia. Indeed, as a rule, the best accounts of the peasantry generally, came from those observers who at least visited or better still for a time resided on estates. (The fact that there was really nowhere to stay with state peasants probably helps to explain why the information on them is meagre.) Thus Venables, Harrison and Carr (as well as Le Play), all provide information on a wide variety of topics after observing peasants living their day-to-day lives. Haxthausen and Eldridge both made use of briefer visits to villages and estates to provide considerable data on the peasant.

Some European observers in Russia, however, merely travelled between cities, paying but superficial attention to the countryside that swam before their eyes, occasionally jotting down an interesting sight or two. Many of these tourists provide little significant information and are therefore not of much use as primary sources, though some such as Thompson and Wilson can be used to contribute one or two points. Only the more observant and detailed authors in this category have been used extensively in this study. Bremner is an example here. He travelled from St. Petersburg to Odessa in the relatively short period of one autumn. However, he was especially interested in the peasant and the countryside through which he passed. Thus, although he did not visit any estates or talk to peasants, he set down and commented on a great deal of what he saw, if not in

profundity, at least with an observant eye. Yet Smith, who spent six years in Russia and at least some time on an estate, contributes much less to our knowledge of the peasantry than does Bremner or such writers as Oliphant, Pinkerton and Ritchie.

A possible objection to the use of some of the travellers' accounts is that a certain amount of the information is purely personal anecdote, and that this is not particularly useful as historical source material. Taking anecdotes in isolation this might be true, but when there are many different accounts, which together can give a fairly adequate picture of the events or affairs concerned, anecdotal material becomes useful in completing the picture.

The accounts by Western Europeans can be criticized in that there is little attention paid to distinctions between different types of peasants, mainly state peasants and serfs. Some writers are careful to distinguish here - notably Haxthausen and Eldridge - but most drew little distinction and probably barely realized any significance in this. Indeed, often this distinction was not essential, as in many ways both groups lived under similar conditions, but the drawing of a distinction could often have helped to explain why some peasants lived under better conditions than others. And of course it would have enabled more definite distinctions to be drawn between state peasants and serfs in modern accounts. However, it is likely that the European observers studied here much more frequently described the serfs, as they often referred to landlords, their estates and houses, visited noblemen with serfs, and rarely mentioned government officials or state peasants specifically.

Other groups of peasants rarely mentioned are freeholders and freemen, as well as Old Believers and other sects. Possibly this was because the travellers rarely saw these groups, though ignorance of the position of a group of peasants seen from the road or even closer quarters was no doubt also a factor.

Thus, despite the failure to deal with certain topics and make distinctions between different types of peasants, travellers' accounts certainly provide much interesting and useful data on the peasant. Apart from adequacy then, how do these works measure up in terms of reliability as primary source material? To answer this question it is most important

to obtain as much information as possible about the writers concerned (see Chapter III). This is especially true where the evidence under review deals with political and social questions such as the status of the peasantry, their treatment and their enserfed position. For these topics easily lead to polemical treatises rather than factual accounts of observations made. This is a problem with some of the sources used here. Most commentators had some defined attitude to the condition of the Russian peasantry and serfdom. A few, such as Rigby and Smith, believed that the peasant's position was not especially disadvantageous and change, if any, should be slow. Both these writers tend to give their accounts accordingly - glossing over evils and emphasizing what they considered were the good points of serfdom. Thus Rigby describes a filthy Estonian hut (see Chapter VI) without any appearance of disgust or criticism. On the other hand there are observers such as Henningsen who are quite Russophobic and reflect this throughout their writings, while many others, such as Jesse and Kolbe, strongly opposed serfdom and hence painted pictures of unrelieved gloom. However, most of the authors of the other accounts studied here, though opposed to serfdom and criticizing the conditions under which the peasant lived, seem to have been interested in obtaining and presenting an accurate portrayal of Russia and the peasant. Concerning the peasantry this is partly because of the novelty of seeing and describing people living under serfdom and state ownership. Thus if a traveller noticed some peasants who were happy or living under favourable conditions it was quite likely that he would comment on this as well as more gloomy circumstances. Even Custine seems to forget his prejudices here, merely describing thepeasants and their huts as they appear, though occasionally castigating the nobility in the process. As observed in Chapter III, writers such as Kohl and Pinkerton expressed no opinion concerning serfdom and state ownership of peasants, merely describing events and conditions as they occurred.

The two most important works used here, Haxthausen and Le Play, had similar attitudes concerning Russia and serfdom. Both these authors were conservatives who certainly felt that any sudden change in the position of the peasant would be unwise. It is important to consider whether this attitude influenced their observations.

As stated in Chapter III, the problem with Haxthausen is not so much

that he may have biased his findings to support his beliefs, but that he may have omitted references to the harsher aspects of peasant life. These omissions may have been less the result of Haxthausen's conservatism than the fact that he was travelling under the auspices of the Russian government. As it is, most of Haxthausen's descriptions of the peasants seem authentic, but unfortunately they are nearly always of peasants living under relatively favourable conditions - for example the crown peasants of Northern Russia or serfs living on the estates of reforming landlords. While these descriptions are most important because of their uniqueness and the author's comprehension of what he was observing, Haxthausen's account must be offset by other less favourable ones if a balanced view is to be obtained.

Biases in favour of a well-ordered, patriarchal society are more evident in Le Play's work than in Haxthausen's. In the first place, Le Play was especially interested in patriarchal societies and families and studied the two families in Russia from this aspect. This does not affect the detailed information which he gives concerning the family's budget, possessions and work, but it does affect his explanation of social relationships within the peasant family and villages as well as vis-a-vis the seigneur. For example, did the members of the family always submit so readily to patriarchal authority as Le Play wishes one to believe? On the other hand it must be said in Le Play's favour that he does mention some family dissension such as that between daughters-in-law; and he also described the break-up of one large family. And it is possible that much of what Le Play said about his two families was true in their cases. One must remember however, that these were only two, relatively well-tO-do families, possibly suggested to Le Play by their proprietors, and that it is therefore dangerous to generalize from their conditions to those of other serfs living in Russia. Rather, they must be regarded as two particular peasant families, the information about whom forms an important segment of evidence concerning the Russian peasantry.

Of the foreign observers of the Russian peasant then, most had some ideas for, or more often against, the position of the peasant in Russia, but it is unlikely that they were often dishonest about what they saw. Rather, it is necessary to peruse these works with an eye for omissions or slanting of explanations for a given set of observations. Unfortunately

it is often difficult to test the particular statements of one observer against those of another, as these people travelled over many different areas at different times between 1820 and 1861. It is possible however to compare observations of a more general nature, such as whether crown peasants were better off that serfs, or how the peasants reacted to conscription for the army. The material presented by foreign observers can therefore be used in both of two ways: firstly, using individual statements and observations, to build up a picture of peasant life in Russia; and secondly, where possible, to test the validity of this material by comparing different statements and observations with each other. Both these methods were used in Part Two of this thesis.

Concerning the question of reliability, apart from the effects of prejudices and biases, did these foreign observers, many of whom knew little about Russia before they visited that country, understand and then set down precisely what they saw? Was it possible for the government or landlords to mislead these people, forcing them to erroneous conclusions? Or were the travellers observant enough to discern the truth behind any misleading facades? Most of the writers dealt with here were opposed to serfdom and were happy to find fault with the system or commiserate with the peasantry. Those commentators who stayed on estates were usually not afraid afterwards to point out unfavourable aspects of serfdom. Some observers however, such as Jesse and Henningsen, went too far in criticizing the position of the Russian peasant, failing to observe that some peasants were relatively well-off - perhaps more so than those in other countries. On the other hand, some of the writers were convinced, possibly by their landlord hosts or by seeing a few cases of peasants living under fortunate conditions, that the peasants were generally happy and lived well. Smith, Rigby, Moor and perhaps Murchison fall into this category. Perhaps so too did Haxthausen, though, as stated above, he may have been trying to please his official hosts. Le Play certainly was not critical enough of what he saw, sometimes taking his two families as examples of all Russian peasant families, or accepting uncritically statements made to him by the seigneur or his officials.

The information set out in Part Two of this thesis has been considered in the light of prejudices and accuracy of observation. Where statements were clearly erroneous they have not been included. Where material has

been questionable it has been included if it served to add to the information on the peasantry, though its questionable nature has been indicated and, if possible, the piece of information concerned has been compared to other more reliable statements. This technique would have to be followed whenever foreign observers' accounts of the peasantry were used as primary sources.

What value then can be placed on the accounts of European observers of the Russian peasantry 1820-61? In the first instance they are important as primary sources on the peasantry in this period. They are first-hand accounts from observers who, with certain qualifications, were relatively reliable and accurate. As primary sources these works have additional value in that they provide information on a topic seldom covered by Russians in this period. Finally, as shown in this thesis, the accounts of Western observers contain a great quantity of interesting and useful information on the largest social class in the Russian Empire in the nineteenth century, the peasantry.

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Table of serfs belonging to private proprietors in 1858.
(From A. de Rieber, "On the Origin and Numerical Development of Serfdom in the Russian Empire," Quarterly Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, XXXII, September, 1861, pp. 423-27)

APPENDIX.

Table of serfs belonging to private proprietors in 1858.
(from A. de Buschen, "On the Origin and Numerical Development of Serfdom in the Russian Empire," Quarterly Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, XXIV, (September, 1861), pp. 323-27).

1 Governments or Divisions.	2 Serfs attached to the Land.	3 Domestic Serfs.	4 Temporary Serfs.	5 Serfs belonging to Institutions.	6 Serfs attached to Manufactories and Mines.	7 Total of Serfs.	8 Number of Proprietors of Serfs.	9 Average Number of Serfs to each Proprietor.	10 General Population.	11 Percentage of Serfs.
Archangel	—	20	—	—	—	20	3	6·66	274,951	0·007
Astrasan	11,848	579	—	—	—	12,427	86	144	477,492	2·60
Bessarabia	4,922	5,923	—	—	—	10,844	271	40	919,107	1·17
Vilna	368,154	19,305	14,071	1,019	—	402,549	2,096	192	876,116	45·95
Vitebsk	429,692	11,903	3,403	1,235	—	446,233	1,571	284	781,741	57·08
Vladimir	662,541	25,881	—	3,508	7,607	692,532	2,659	263	1,207,808	57·91
Vologda	207,539	7,613	—	1,126	1,499	217,777	1,264	172	951,593	22·89
Volhynia	686,911	416	176,690	144	—	864,161	2,341	369	1,528,328	56·54
Voronesh	451,579	65,767	—	420	2,480	520,246	2,632	197	1,950,859	26·94
Viatka	35,446	1,612	—	—	19,115	56,173	106	530	2,123,904	2·64
Grodna	335,963	13,207	3,988	8,144	—	361,302	1,605	225	881,881	40·97
Don Kosacks	281,109	5,047	—	—	—	286,156	2,911	98	896,870	31·91
Ekatherinoslav	277,235	50,295	—	—	—	328,530	2,448	134	1,042,681	31·51
Kasan	196,908	15,943	—	—	1,567	214,418	907	236	1,543,344	31·89
Kalouga	556,032	29,665	—	85	36,834	622,616	2,440	255	1,007,471	61·80
Kieff	1,080,421	7,303	33,338	—	—	1,121,062	1,554	721	1,944,331	57·66
Kowño	332,469	14,605	17,572	—	—	364,646	1,547	236	988,267	36·90
Kostroma	485,431	31,751	—	—	498	617,683	3,261	188	1,075,988	57·41
Kourek	563,311	136,499	—	2,964	21,815	724,589	5,475	132	1,811,972	39·99
Minsk	546,802	14,434	36,658	1,266	—	599,160	1,967	304	986,471	60·74
Mohilieff	556,297	15,183	—	789	—	572,269	2,165	264	884,640	64·69
Moscow	585,911	28,721	—	2,133	4,547	621,312	2,439	254	1,599,808	38·84
Nijni-Novgorod	711,883	18,600	—	—	12,310	742,793	1,411	526	1,239,606	58·97
Novgorod	392,940	26,915	—	207	—	420,062	4,261	98	975,201	43·07
Olonetz	10,483	773	—	205	—	11,461	219	52	287,354	3·99
Orenburg	125,175	12,244	—	—	99,555	236,974	895	265*	2,007,075	11·81
Orel	620,720	87,358	—	1,247	14,703	724,028	3,823	189	1,532,031	47·26
Penza	507,314	38,127	—	29	3,960	549,730	2,029	271	1,188,555	46·25
Perm	367,288	14,152	—	—	277,717	659,157	68	9,693†	2,046,572	32·21
Podolia	968,026	6,306	65,968	751	—	1,041,051	1,554	670	1,748,466	59·54

* Excluding col. 6, only 153.
† Excluding col. 6, only 5,500.

1 Governments or Divisions.	2 Serfs attached to the Land.	3 Domestic Serfs.	4 Temporary Serfs.	5 Serfs belonging to Institutions.	6 Serfs attached to Manufactories and Mines.	7 Total of Serfs.	8 Number of Proprietors of Serfs.	9 Average Number of Serfs to each Proprietor.	10 General Population.	11 Percentage of Serfs.
Poltawa	595,760	85,851	—	61	—	681,672	7,322	93	1,819,110	37·47
Pskoff	360,639	19,526	—	—	—	380,162	1,952	194	706,162	53·81
Riasan	722,225	69,239	—	131	14,800	806,395	5,215	154	1,427,269	56·50
Samara	213,253	20,667	—	83	1,050	234,453	887	264	1,530,059	15·32
St. Petersburg	239,748	12,966	2,636	4,161	781	260,292	1,569	165	1,083,091	24·03
Saratoff	613,445	44,106	—	8	—	657,553	2,592	254	1,636,135	40·19
Simbirsk	416,873	25,582	—	29	528	443,012	1,625	273	1,140,573	38·83
Smolensk	709,506	49,011	—	1,518	1,149	761,187	5,308	143	1,102,076	69·07
Stavropol	13,739	1,733	—	—	—	15,472	130	119	640,739	2·41
Tauria (Crimea)	35,642	5,396	—	25	—	41,063	396	111	687,343	5·97
Tamboff	665,533	79,474	—	62	16,638	761,707	3,265	233	1,910,454	39·87
Tver	713,675	41,423	—	—	—	755,168	3,507	215	1,491,127	50·63
Toula	736,221	66,063	—	3,223	2,636	808,143	3,864	209	1,172,249	68·94
Kharkoff	379,795	91,247	—	123	—	471,165	3,265	144	1,582,571	29·77
Kherson	260,760	60,490	—	—	—	321,250	2,688	119	1,027,459	31·27
Tschernigoff	500,000	53,022	—	—	—	553,622	4,445	124	1,471,866	37·61
Yaroslaw	523,266	28,226	—	5,863	173	557,528	2,810	199	976,866	57·07
Yénisseïsk	151	115	—	—	—	266	5	53	303,266	0·09
Trans-Baikalia	—	11	—	—	—	11	2	6	352,870	0·001
Irkutsk	—	13	—	—	488	501	2	250*	310,930	0·16
Tobolsk	2,384	616	—	—	149	3,149	68	46	1,021,266	0·31
Tomsk	266	138	—	—	—	404	27	15	701,001	0·06
Yakoutsk	—	7	—	—	—	7	2	3·50	222,533	0·003
Littoral of the Pacific	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21,860	—
Total	20,158,231	1,467,378	354,324	40,554	542,599	22,563,086	106,897	211†	61,139,480	36·89

* Excluding col. 6, only 6.
† Excluding cols. 5, 6, and taking but cols. 2, 3, 4 (serfs of the gentry), this per cent. would be only 1:100 (males paying ta

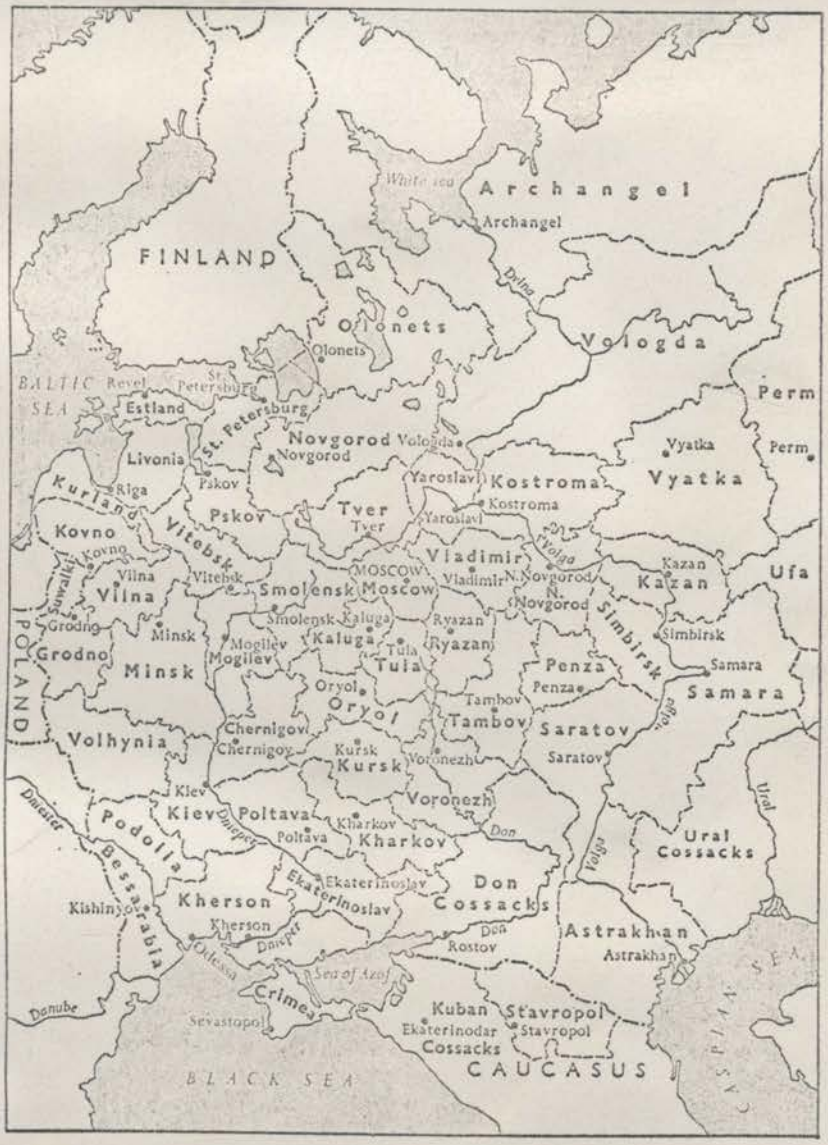
EUROPEAN RUSSIA IN THE 1850'S

REGIONS

1. FAR NORTH: Archangel, Vologda
2. LAKE: Olonets, St. Petersburg, Novgorod, Pskov
3. BALTIC: Estland, Lifland, Courland
4. CENTRAL INDUSTRIAL: Moscow, Tver, Iaroslav, Kostroma, Nizhnii Novgorod, Vladimir
5. CENTRAL AGRICULTURAL: Riazan, Tula, Kaluga, Orel, Kursk, Voronezh, Tambov, Penza
6. URAL: Viatka, Perm, Orenburg
7. LOWER VOLGA: Kazan, Simbirsk, Samara, Saratov, Astrakhan
8. LITTLE RUSSIA: Kharkov, Poltava, Chernigov
9. NEW RUSSIA: Ekaterinoslav, Tauride, Kherson, Bessarabia
10. SOUTHWEST: Kiev, Volynia, Podolia
11. WHITE RUSSIA: Smolensk, Vitebsk, Mogilev, Minsk
12. LITHUANIA: Kovno, Vilna, Grodno

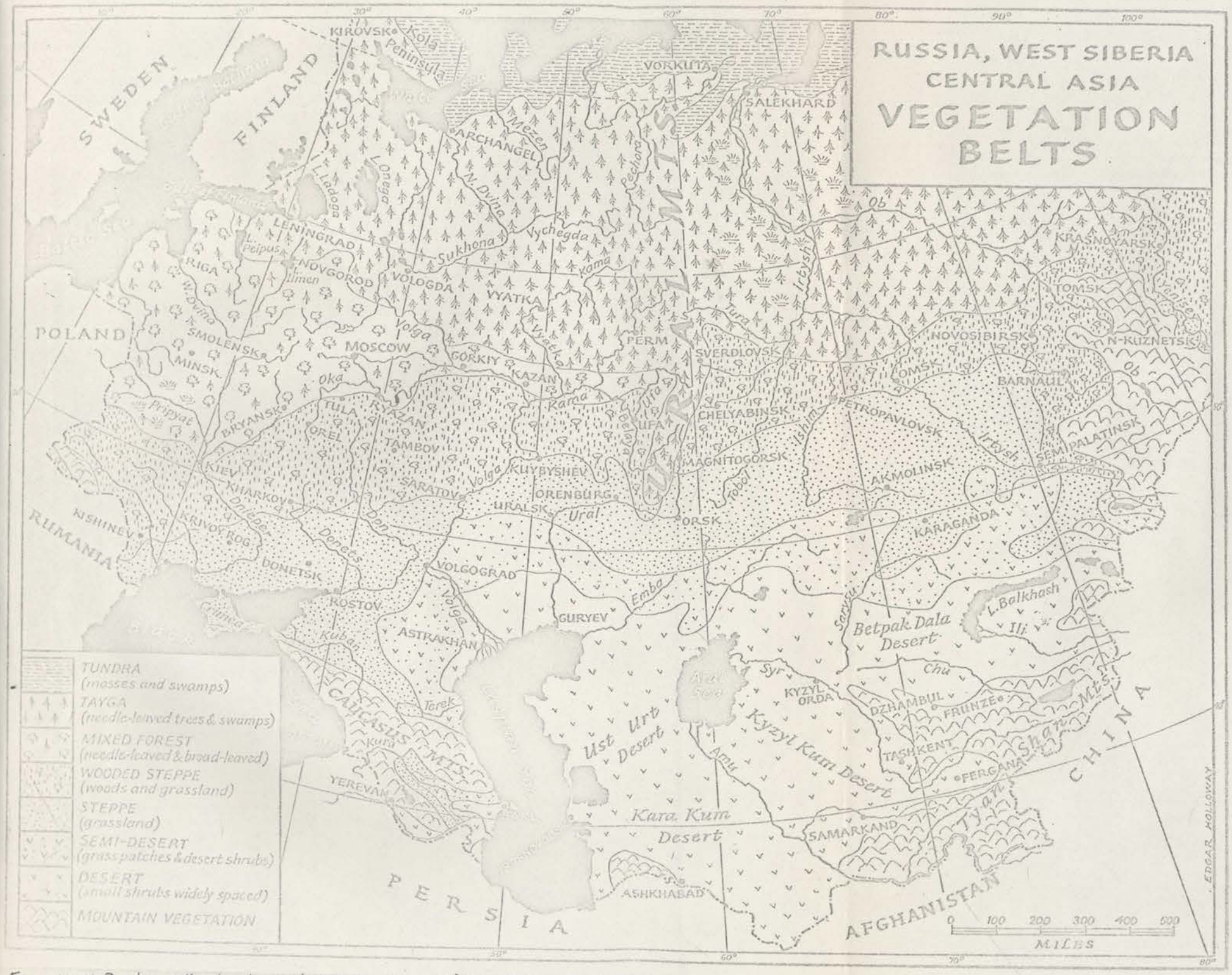
From J. Blum, Lord and Peasant in Russia from the Ninth to the Nineteenth Century, (Princeton, 1961) p. 393

THE PROVINCES AND TOWNS OF EUROPEAN RUSSIA.



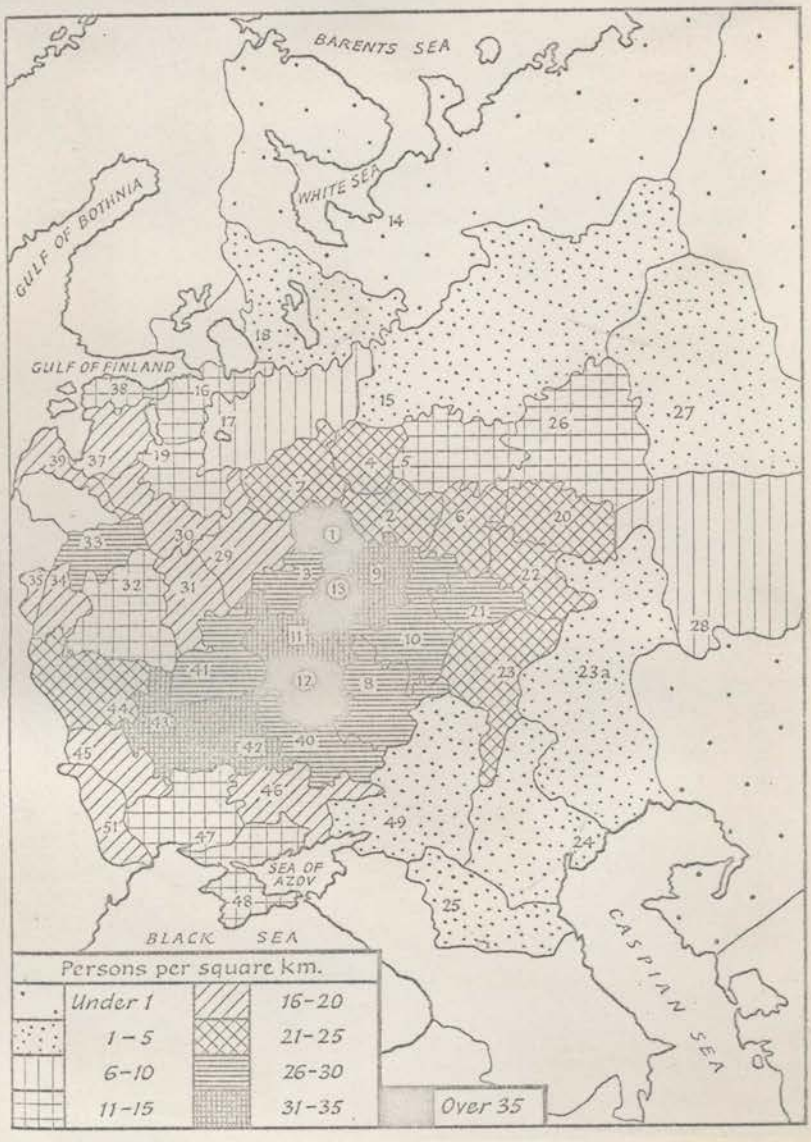
MAP 1. The provinces of European Russia

From H. Seton-Watson, The Russian Empire, 1801-1917, (Oxford, 1967), p. 769.



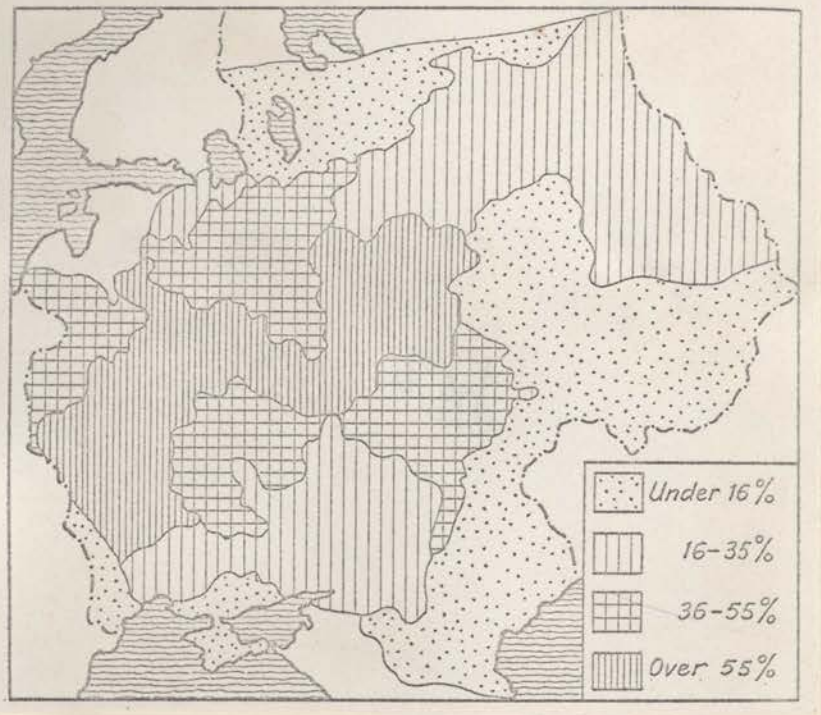
From W. H. Parker, An Historical Geography of Russia (London, 1968), endpaper.

POPULATION DENSITY OF EUROPEAN RUSSIA IN 1857.



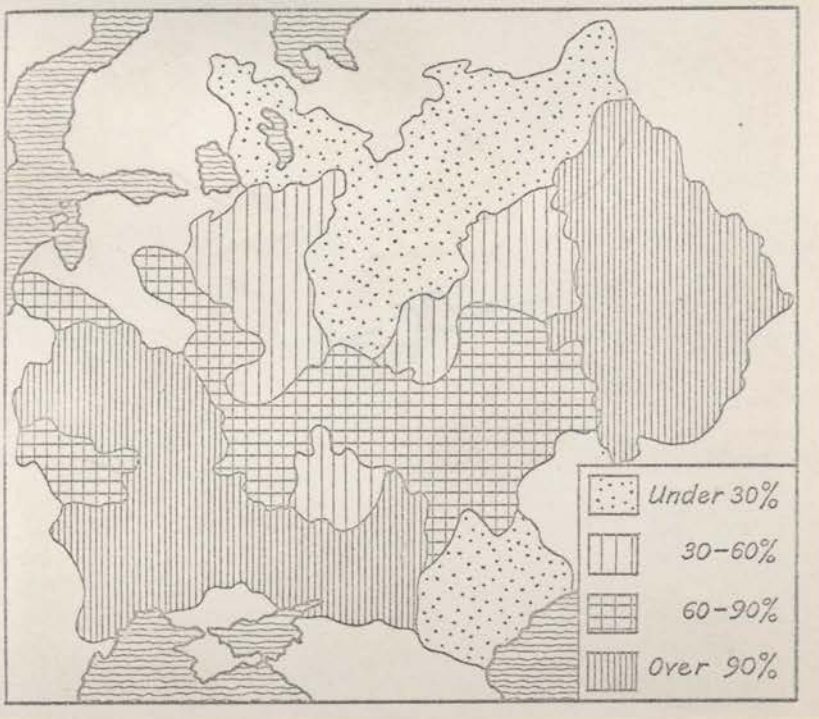
From Parker, p.259.

PERCENTAGE OF SERFS, 1858



From Parker, p.234.

PERCENTAGE OF SERFS ON BARSHCHINA IN 1860



From Parker, p.235.