AN ACCOUNT OF THE TEXT OF THE NOVGOROD CHRONICLE BY PROFESSOR A. A. SHAKHMATOV, ST. PETERSBURG UNIVERSITY.

Chronicle-writing at Novgorod began very early, certainly by the eleventh century, for the chronicle of Nestor (the monk of Kiev), called *Povest vremennykh let* (Annals of Contemporary Years), which appeared in 1110, contains a number of items from the Novgorod Chronicle. Thus we read, in Nestor, that in 1063 the Volkhov flowed backwards for six days foreboding disaster, and four years later Novgorod was burned by the Prince Vseslav of Polovtsk. It is clear that this information could only have reached the Pechersk monastery in Kiev, where the *Annals of Contemporary Years* were composed, through the channel of a Novgorod chronicle. The latter was probably composed and kept in the Bishop’s Palace or “Court,” a fact to which the following data point: In 1136 and 1137, the entries were made by Kirik, one of the clergy of St. Sophia, well known in the history of early Russian literature, and the author of several works, including one of exceptional interest on chronology. Again, the entries in the Chronicle from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries largely relate to the *Vladyka* or Archbishop of Novgorod and the affairs of the See.

Several considerations, mostly founded on the text of the Novgorod Chronicle in the *Synodal* and other transcripts, point to the fact that in 1167 the archiepiscopal chronicle was rearranged as an historical compilation on a larger scale. The foundation for this was formed by the incorporation in it of the text of the Kiev *Annals of Contemporary Years*, to which were added under their respective dates all the annual entries of events made in Novgorod. This rearrangement was probably made by order of Ilya (Elias), first Archbishop of Novgorod. In its original form this rearrangement of the archiepiscopal chronicle has not survived; but we can gain some idea of it, first, from the later historical compilations, which were no longer of local, but of general, Russian character and scope, and comprised the Novgorod Chronicle among their other component parts, and secondly, from the oldest existing transcript of the Novgorod Chronicle itself, viz. the *Synodal Transcript* here translated. The *Synodal Transcript* had, as its foundation, an historical compilation made by a priest of the Novgorod Church of St. James, one Herman Voyata. The compiler speaks of himself in the entry for A.D. 1144, saying that in that year he was appointed priest; 1

1 So-called because in the possession of the Synodal Library at Moscow.
under the year 1188 we read of the death of Herman Voyata, forty-five years priest of St. James. 1 Herman Voyata prepared for his church a copy of the compilation of Archbishop Elias, which was, however, very much abbreviated up to the beginning of the twelfth century; in this copy remarkable items of news were sometimes omitted, e.g. the consecration of St. Sophia in 1050, and the misadventures of Bishop Luka in 1055 and 1058.

The entry concerning the death of Herman Voyata suggests that his compilation was continued at St. James’s after his death. This conclusion is strengthened by the mention of the sacristan Timothy as transcriber, or compiler, of the chronicle (in 1230), and a happy conjecture has identified this person with Timothy, sacristan of the Church of St. James, who in 1262 transcribed an existing liturgical work. But the chronicle of St. James was probably not carried on independently: it was most likely a compilation of chronicles founded on the archiepiscopal chronicle, added to from time to time.

The archiepiscopal chronicle was carried on uninterruptedly, being as it were a continuation of the compilation of chronicles made in 1167. A new rearrangement of the archiepiscopal chronicle, undertaken probably on the initiative of Archbishop Basil, a learned and enlightened man, took place c. 1330-5. This rearrangement was founded on the compilation of chronicles made at the Church of St. James; possibly because a few years previously the compilation of chronicles made in the year 1167 had, at the demand of the Metropolitan, been dispatched to Vladimir (on the Klyazma). About the year 1310, the Metropolitan Peter planned a pan-Russian compilation of chronicles, in which the chronicle-writing of all Russia should be concentrated, and the local annals be brought together. This plan is connected with the efforts of the Metropolitan to conserve the unity of the Russian metropolitan province, a unity threatened by serious danger, especially since the beginning of the fourteenth century, when the Metropolitan, abandoning Kiev, which had been devastated by the Tartars, migrated to Vladimir. For this plan, then, the local chronicles must be collected in Vladimir; hence the Novgorod archiepiscopal compilation of 1167 was transferred thither. The Metropolitan’s pan-Russian compilation of chronicles has only survived in a later rearrangement (of the fifteenth century), and, to a certain extent, in the so-called Laurentievski (“Laurentian”) transcript of 1377, which borrowed from it

1 See Nov. Chron., 1144, 1188.
the part covering the period 1240-1305. The appearance in Novgorod of a copy of this pan-Russian compilation (or of certain parts of it) suggested the creation of a Novgorod compilation of chronicles. Its foundation, I repeat, was formed by the compilation of chronicles of the Church of St. James; it was amplified both by data from the Novgorod archiepiscopal chronicle, by annual entries from it, and also by loans from the pan-Russian compilation. Among these are the capture of Kiev by the sons of Oleg and the Polovtsi in 1203; the crusading capture of Constantinople in 1204; the fratricide of Knyaz Gleb of Ryazan in 1218; the battle on the river Kalka in 1224; the conquest of Suzdal by the Tartars in 1238.

The Novgorod compilation of chronicles of Archbishop Basil was brought down to the year 1329. This compilation has not come down to us in the original. But the Synodal transcript, which we possess, is an almost contemporary copy, made, as is believed, for the monastery of St. George, near Novgorod. This copy was amplified by entries under the years 1331-3, 1337, 1345 and 1352. It has not come down to us in its entirety, for it lacks the beginning (to A.D. 1016). Judging by the total number of sheets, 128 are missing. These probably contained the text of the Annals of Contemporary Years in a redaction similar to those which have survived (the Ipatevskvi and Hlebnikovski transcripts), for it is just this redaction of the Annals of Contemporary Years that was followed by the historical compilation of Archbishop Elias, which formed the foundation of the historical compilation of the Church of St. James.

The historical compilation of Archbishop Basil underwent fresh rearrangement about 1420-30. It was now considerably enlarged by annual entries made uninterruptedly at the Archbishop's Court. But for some reason that beginning of the compilation which was the result of the labours of Herman Voyata (who in his turn had abbreviated his model, viz., the compilation of Archbishop Elias) came to be considered unsatisfactory. No transcript of the Annals of Contemporary Years was to be found in Novgorod, but on the other hand, a transcript, incomplete it is true, of the still older Kiev historical compilation, the immediate predecessor of the Annals of Contemporary Years, was discovered. This incomplete work ends abruptly in 1074, midway in its account of the death of Theodosius, igumen or abbot of the Pechersk monastery at Kiev (the complete work probably went down to 1093); besides this the sheets recording events from 1016 to 1052 were lost. From the
year 1075 onwards the composer of the new compilation, called the *Sophia Chronicle*, had to follow the compilation of Archbishop Basil. The *Sophia Chronicle* was probably composed at the instance of Archbishop Euthymius, by one of the clergy of St. Sophia in Novgorod called Matvei (Matthew) Mikhailov Kusov.

In the middle of the fifteenth century, a fresh rearrangement of the pan-Russian historical compilation was made at Moscow, probably at the Court of the Metropolitan. Its basis was the pan-Russian compilation of 1423, which largely repeated that of the Metropolitan Peter, and to it were added the *Kiev Chronicle* and the *Sophia Chronicle* of Novgorod. This Moscow compilation has not survived, but it gave rise to existing reproductions (e.g., the so-called *First Sophia Chronicle* and *Fourth Novgorod Chronicle*, published in vols. IV-VI of the *Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles*). In the fifties of the fifteenth century a fresh rearrangement of the *Sophia Chronicle* was made at Novgorod. The text of this compilation follows both the fourteenth-century compilation of Archbishop Basil, and the Moscow compilation of the mid fifteenth century. This rearrangement of the *Sophia Chronicle*, which in all its manuscripts reaches down to 1443, has been preserved in (a) the so-called *Commission Transcript* (belonging to the Imperial Archæographical Commission); (b) the *Academy Transcript* (belonging to the Imperial Academy of Sciences); and the *Tolstoi Transcript* (belonging to the Imperial Public Library). From their resemblance to Archbishop Basil's compilation there is a close connexion between these MSS. and the *Synodal Transcript*. In editing the *Synodal Transcript* recourse can be had to the *Commission, Academy, and Tolstoi Transcripts* as auxiliary transcripts offering different readings. The last edition of the *Synodal Transcript* was issued by the Archæographical Commission (*The Novgorod Chronicle According to the Synodal Parchment Transcript*, St. Petersburg, 1888). The text of the *Commission Transcript* of the fifteenth century is, on pp. 1-82, 84-117, provided with different readings and additions from the *Academy and Tolstoi Transcripts*. On pages 83-4 (beginning with the words "but you are carpenters") and in various passages between page 84 and page 117, we have the text of the *Synodal Transcript*, while the readings of the *Commission, Academy and Tolstoi Transcripts* are given as variants.

In the Russian edition of 1888, the difference between the source is marked by printing the *Synodal* text from the beginning of the line, and the *Commission* text at a distance of four letters from the
beginning of the line. From page 117 (A.D. 1075) down to page 329 (with some slight intervals) the Synodal text appears again, while the Commission, Academy and Tolstoi variants are given in footnotes. On pages 330–428 (A.D. 1333–1446) we have the Commission text afresh till 1443 (p. 423) provided with Academy and Tolstoi variants (at 1441 the Academy breaks off). The addenda to this edition (pp. 431–90) contain a series of supplementary articles from the Commission Transcript which are not strictly part of the chronicle (lists of princes, bishops, posadniks, and also juridical matter).

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For Bibliographical Note see end of this volume.