If English grammar were treated in this way, it would give the student just notions not only of the structure of his own language, but also of language generally, and a solid foundation would be laid for historical and comparative philology. The ordinary grammars, which ignore many of the most characteristic features entirely, and subordinate others to purely exceptional ones, not only give the student an entirely erroneous idea of the structure of English, but also train him to habits of erroneous and superficial observation, the evil results of which are seen every day both in scientific philology and in the practical acquisition of foreign languages.

X.—THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE AND ITS DIALECTS. By W. R. MORFILL, Esq.

IN the following sketch I propose making some observations on the Russian language and its various dialects; their peculiar characteristics will be discussed, the area over which they are spoken examined, and brief criticisms will be introduced of some of the principal authors who have used them. I must remark at the outset that it will be the first attempt ever made by an Englishman to write a philological account of this neglected family of languages. Of two works which have treated of the subject in the English language, the valuable little manual published in America by Theresa von Jacobi, who afterwards became the wife of Professor Robinson, aimed rather at a popular exposition, and is now out of date. The few remarks introduced by Professor Max Müller in his "Languages of the Seat of War" are necessarily of the briefest possible kind.

Let us begin then with the Great Russian—the official and literary language of the Empire—spoken extensively throughout its length and breadth by the educated classes; necessarily therefore the dominant idiom. The number of Great Russians, according to Schafarik, amounts to 35,000,000. They inhabit the governments of Moscow, Petersburg, Novgorod, Vologda, Pskov, Tver, Yaroslav,

Kostroma, Vladimir, Nizhni Novgorod, Smolensk, Kaluga, Tula, Riazan, Penza, Simbirsk, Orel, Kursk, Voronezh, Tambov, Saratov, and parts of the governments of Orenburg, Viatka, Perm, and Kazan. In the northern provinces the Great Russian comes into contact with the Finnish dialects (as in the governments of St. Petersburg and Novgorod): in the western with the Little and White Russian dialects: on the east it is broken by the various languages of the Mordvinians, Tcheremissians, Tchuvashians, and other Ugro-Finnish tribes: and on the south it is met again by the Little Russian, the language of almost all Southern Russia and of the Cossacks, except where a Tatar idiom prevails.

The Great Russian may now be said to stand at the head of the Slavonic family of languages—a family which in many respects shows a greater likeness to the original Aryan parent tongue (by whatever name we are to call it) than its Teutonic and other sisters. As much has been written (very incorrectly) on the subject of the foreign elements incorporated into Russian, a few words may be permitted on the subject.¹

Of Finnish there are hardly any traces, except in the provincial dialects of Olonetz and Souzdal and a few others, but these words have had no influence upon the written language. With reference to Tatarisms, we must in the first place remember that for upwards of two centuries (1237–1462) Russia groaned under the yoke of the Mongolians, and it is therefore only natural to expect that we shall find some traces of their dominion. The Asiatic garb worn in Muscovy till the days of Peter the Great, the curious custom of the *pravezhe*, or public flagellation of defaulting debtors,—an institution not without its wholesome influence,—the seclusion of women, and perhaps the use of the knout, may be traced to the presence of these truculent invaders; but when we turn to the actual Tatar words in

¹ Thus in a little book, pleasantly written, and entitled "*Histoire de la Littérature Contemporaine en Russie*," par C. Courrière, Paris, 1875, we are told that it is "*mélangé de finnois, de tatar et de slave*" (p. 19).

the language, we find them very few. Scherzl, in his *Comparative Grammar of the Slavonic and other kindred languages* (Сравнительная Грамматика Славянскихъ и другихъ родственныхъ Языковъ), Kharkov, 1871, vol. i. p. 95, speaks as follows: "In the purity of its vocabulary, in its structure and syntax, the Russian language has preserved the Slavonic type better than the other members of the family. The Tatar words which have entered into it are limited to a small number of expressions of objects relating to clothes, precious stones, and articles of every-day use," etc. He then gives a list of thirty-one words, from which I will select the following as occurring most frequently:—ямщикъ 'a postilion,' чемоданъ 'a trunk,' туманъ 'a mist,' чупрунъ 'a forelock,' караулъ 'a sentry,' кинжалъ 'a dagger,' башмакъ 'a shoe,' колпакъ 'a hat,' буларъ 'steel,' чубукъ 'a pipe,' etc.

So much then for the nonsense we hear talked, frequently by men who ought to know better, about Russian being a mixture of Tatar and Slavonian. Scherzl is no doubt right when he claims for this language that it is the purest of all the sisters. Polish, for example, has always been greatly under foreign influences. The taste is constantly offended by the most palpable Germanisms thrust rudely upon the language; during the whole of the seventeenth century the pedants and Jesuitic schoolmasters with which the country teemed were introducing Latin words with Polish terminations, and this mischievous practice was at its height in the days of Sobieski. In the eighteenth century the language suffered more than any other from the Gallomania then rampant throughout Europe, and the manners of Versailles were imitated by this barbarous and only half-varnished aristocracy of slave-holders. If we turn to the Bulgarian and Servian, we find them full of Turkish words, as might reasonably be expected; since the former still groan under the Ottoman yoke, and the latter have only so recently emancipated themselves. Slovenish, Čech, and Lusatian-Wendish show the most unmistakable signs of their German neighbours. Some naval expressions have crept into Russian from Dutch and English—the

mind of the reader will at once be carried back to Peter the Great's labours at Zaandam and Deptford.

A few remarks may be made on the alphabet employed by the Russians: these are the celebrated Cyrillic letters, so called because said to have been invented by Cyril about 860 A.D. Of these, twenty-four are Greek, and the rest borrowed from Hebrew, Persian, and Armenian. The alphabet is admirably adapted to express the sounds of the Slavonic tongues, with the exception of the so-called præiotized vowels, viz. those that have a *j* or *i* sound preceding them. It is used with modifications by the Bulgarians and Servians, but the Slovenes, Poles, Bohemians, and Lusatian-Wends employ the Latin alphabet, and are in consequence compelled to make use of combinations of letters and diacritical points, which give their writing an uncouth appearance.

Besides this, there is another alphabet, called the Glagolitic, which is now only used by the Dalmatian Slaves. The origin of it is wrapped in obscurity, and it was for a long time mythically attributed to St. Jerome. Dobrowsky, the great Bohemian scholar, assigned it to a period so late as the thirteenth century. Kopitar, by the discovery of a MS. belonging to Count Cloz of Trent, consisting of versions of some of the sermons of St. Chrysostom in the Glagolitic character, raised its antiquity to at least the tenth century.¹

The question, however, still remains unsettled, and many of the supporters of the antiquity of the Glagolitic base their opinion upon the supposed fact that the alphabet is partly formed upon Wendish Runes. The whole subject of Wendish Runes is still in the most chaotic condition; we know from the remarks of the Monk Chabre that the Slaves had some kind of writing before the introduction of the Cyrillic letters.² Runes were found inscribed upon

¹ See Kopitar's *Glagolita Clozianus*, Vindobonæ, 1836.

² *Mnichů Chrabrů o Pismenech Slovanských*. Vydal Pavel Josef Šafařík. Prague, 1861.

the idols dug up at Merseburg and in other places,¹ but no one has yet been able to reduce them to any system or explain them, and in the theories of Wotanski² and others they have been perverted to very strange purposes.

It is clear, as Schleicher says, that the alphabets are not independent: one has certainly been moulded upon the other. He leans to the view that the Glagolitic, which he rightly calls a monstrous invention, is the later. Of these characters there are two forms: the Illyrian and the Bulgarian. Peter the Great, as is well known, made some modifications of the Cyrillic alphabet: he ejected some letters which appeared to be useless, and gave a clearer cut form to the others. It is somewhat curious that the first modern Russian Grammar was printed at Oxford in 1696: it was written in Latin by Henry Ludolf, nephew of the more celebrated author of the History of Ethiopia.

THE SYSTEM OF RUSSIAN SOUNDS (LAUTLEHRE).

1. *Vowels*.—The vowels of the Russian language are as follows: a, e, и (i), o, y.

a generally has the sound of the English *a* in *far*; after the hissing consonants (ж, ч, ш, щ) in the middle of a word, when not accented, it takes the sound of *e* in *met*. In the termination *aro* of the genitive of adjectives, it has the sound of *o*.

e, at the beginning of words and syllables takes the sound of *ya* (as in *yea*). Hence the Russians make use of the letter э to express the sound of the pure *e*, and this character is very serviceable in the transliteration of foreign words. When it is accented, it takes the sound of *yo*, as ледъ 'ice,' pronounced *lyot*.

и, at the beginning of the various inflexions of the pronoun of the third person (имъ, ихъ, ими), and after the semi-vowel ь, takes the sound of *yi* (as in English *ye*). Before vowels и is always written i, and also in the word миръ 'the world,' to distinguish it from мѣръ 'peace.'

¹ See Obecny stan nauki o runach słowian'skich in Roczniki Towarzystwa Przyjaciół Nauk. Posen, 1860.

² Schrift-Denkmale der Slawen vor Christi Geburt, von T. Wotanski, 1850.

o, when unaccented, takes the sound of *a*, as морской, pronounced *mar'skoi*.

This rule is observed very accurately by those who speak the Moscow dialect, but not by those from other parts of the Empire, as I have myself frequently noticed. It is a characteristic of the White-Russian dialect, of which I shall speak more at large presently, to represent the unaccented o always as a in their orthography, thus срапана = сропана, каро = коро, etc.

y does not vary in its sound, which corresponds to the English *oo* in *moor* or the French *ou* in *doux*.

ы has a very peculiar sound, viz. that of a thick guttural *e*. It is expressed in Polish by the letter *y*, but is not found in the other Slavonic tongues.

я, when accented, has the sound of *ya*, but if not accented, is pronounced like *ye* at the beginning of words and syllables, and *e* after a consonant.

ю has the sound of *you*, as in the English personal pronoun.

ѣ has the sound of *ya* at the beginning of a word, but after a consonant it = *a* or *e* (French).

The semi-vowel ь has no other effect than to give a strong sound to the consonant that precedes it. Thus the consonants б, в, д, ж, з, become п, ф, т, ш, с. ь causes the consonant that goes before to have sometimes a liquid sound, thus cranь, pronounced *stan'*, like *gn* in French; брать 'to take,' almost like *bratch* (cf. the Polish).

2. The Russian consonants are thus arranged by Scherzl (vol. i. p. 569):

Gutturals к, г, х, which are softened in ч, ж, ш.

The consonant к, when placed before б, г, д, ж, з, takes the sound of г, as къ дому = *gdomu*, also гдѣ (old Slavonic кѣде), cf. Čech *kde*; before к, т, ч, it takes the sound of х as кто 'who,' pronounced *khto*.

г, in its ordinary use, has the sound of the English *g*. In the words боръ, бгаръ, моръ, it has a guttural sound (something, says Scherzl, between *h* and *ch*): before gutturals it is always *ch*, as керкѣ, pronounced *kochki*.

х, represents the German *ch*—perhaps, however, not quite so strong.

Dentals т, д. These two sounds are sometimes confused.

Labials, б, п, в, do not require any especial notice.

Liquids л, р, м, н.

The only one of these requiring notice is the л (*l*), which has a thick sound, and is expressed in Polish by ł. The pronunciation of this is very peculiar, and cannot be expressed in writing (see Ellis on Early English Pronunciation, Part I. p. 6). I have also noticed that it varies considerably in different parts of the Russian Empire, some persons making it almost = *w*, thus сладкий 'sweet,' becomes in pronunciation *swatki*. This will help us to understand why in Little-Russian the strong л frequently becomes в or y, thus долго becomes довго, всталъ устану, умывалъ умываю.

Sibilants с, ш, з, ж, ц.

Upon these the following remarks may be made:—The letter с is in some instances (as in English) pronounced like *s*; ж is the French *j*, the English *s* in *pleasure*.

Palatal ч = English *ch* as in *church*.

ш is not a simple sound; but consists of two consonants amalgamated: ш × ч or с × ч. We get something like the pronunciation of the word in such an expression as 'smasht china.'

ф only occurs in words of foreign origin or in onomatopœic words; thus we have фалшивый = Lat. *falsus*, фонарь 'lantern,' Modern Greek φεγγάρι.

Let us now examine the various parts of speech in Russian. We are struck at the outset with the absence of the article, a peculiarity which it shares in common with all the Slavonic tongues, with the exception of the Bulgarian. This little cultivated member of the family appends the article at the end, like the Albanian and Scandinavian languages. The influence of German has caused an article to be sometimes used in Slovenish, and perhaps with more persistence in the Lusatian Wendish.

The *Noun*.—There are three genders in Russian, and there is no need of making any particular remark upon

them, as they exhibit no special features. The declensions are also three, according to the best classification in such grammars as Reiff's,¹ but older writers made four.² The cases are very perfect. Besides the ordinary ones, there are the instrumental, which designates the means or cause (as *чѣмъ онъ забавляется? книгою*, 'With what does he amuse himself? With a book'); and the prepositive or prepositional case, so called because always used with certain prepositions, which need not be recapitulated here. Thus, *въ чѣмъ ты находишь удовольствіе? въ книгѣ*, 'In what do you find pleasure? In a book.'

Augmentatives and diminutives are even more copious than in Italian: the latter are used to express every shade of tenderness, and are largely employed in the popular songs. The dual has entirely disappeared from the modern Russian, but it existed in the Old Church Language, which Leskien and others call Old-Bulgarian. In the same way, though modern Polish has only kept it in a few words, it was in full use in the earlier stages of the language. All these Slavonic sisters are in fact wonderfully alike even at the present time, and show a much greater similarity in their archaic forms: thus the old law in the Polish language in the time of Casimir IV. in 1449, exhibits some Slavonic words which were afterwards supplanted by others derived from Latin. We might say of them:—

————— "facies non omnibus una

Nec diversa tamen, qualem decet esse sororum."

The *Adjective* is fully declined in gender, number, and case, and, besides its regular form, assumes an apocopated one, which is used when the adjective is employed as a predicate. This is very convenient when the copula is omitted, which is frequently the case in Russian, as in Greek and Latin.

The *comparative* degree calls for no particular remark, but the *superlative* is frequently defective. Sometimes it

¹ English-Russian Grammar, by C. P. Reiff. Carlsruhe, 1853.

² As, for instance, the well-known Grammar of Charpentier, published at St. Petersburg upwards of a century ago.

is expressed by putting the word *самый* as *самый лучший*, 'the best,' but also by using the particle *най*, found in many of the other Slavonic tongues.

The *Numerals*.—A few peculiarities may be noticed here: some of them are considered as substantives, e.g. *сорокъ* 'forty,' *сто* 'a hundred,' *девяносто* 'ninety,' *тысяча*, 'a thousand;' we may compare the English, 'a hundred men,' 'a thousand soldiers.' The numerals *два* 'two,' *три* 'three,' *четыре* 'four,' and others, require the noun to which they belong to be put in the genitive singular, as we are told in the old grammars, but these are simply the remains of the old Slavonic dual; thus we must say *три человека* 'three men.' Cf. with this the Polish, in the older form of which language we meet with traces of a dual.¹ There are several other irregularities connected with the numerals, but they are too tedious to recapitulate here.

The *Pronouns* exhibit, as might be expected, the closest affinities with those of the other Indo-European languages. *аъ* of the old Slavonic has been changed in modern Russian into *я* 'I,' and the dual has been altogether lost. The reflexive *ся* (cf. Latin *se*) is found appended to neuter and middle verbs.

The *Verb*.—Of the verb the tenses are only three, the present, the preterite, and the future. This seeming poverty, however, is amply compensated by the so-called aspects of the verbs, which may thus be classified:—

(1). The imperfect, subdivided into (a) the definite, (b) the indefinite. "The imperfect," says Reiff, "indicates that the action is being, has been, or will be performed, without intimating whether it is or will be finished."

(2). The perfect aspect, which indicates that the action has

¹ This seems to be the only possible theory which can explain the anomaly. It is accepted by Vostokov, and indorsed by Miklosich in his admirable *Comparative Grammar of the Slavonic Languages*, vol. iv. p. 38—"Die erklärung dieser erscheinung ist in der annahme zu suchen, syna sei ein wahrer dual nom. während ruki, nogi, lica als plur. nom. aufzufassen seien, wobei einzuräumen ist, dass bei der formellen gleichheit des sing. gen. und des dual nom. im masc. in den meisten fällen sich allmählich der sing. gen. an die stelle des dual nom. gedrängt hat." In the hands of such competent authorities I must leave this *verratissima quæstio*.

been, or will be entirely finished.¹ This is again subdivided into (a) the perfect aspect of duration, and (b) the perfect aspect of unity, which indicates that the action has been, or will be performed only once, and has lasted only a moment.

(3). The iterative aspect, which indicates that the action has been performed repeatedly. The classical student will of course be at once reminded of the Latin form in *-ito*. Besides these modifications we have the prepositional verbs, viz. those to which a preposition has been added. By these the meanings of the aspects are materially changed, and the most delicate modifications of sense introduced. It may be remarked that the same luxury of verbal forms exists also in Polish.

The moods in Russian are only three, viz. the indicative, the imperative, and the infinitive. The subjunctive is expressed by the preterite of the indicative, with the particle *бы*.

It is only fair to say that we never meet with all the aspects in one and the same verb. A complete knowledge of their use forms one of the most difficult subjects in the study of Russian grammar. Of the other parts of speech no particular discussion is requisite.

I now turn to a few general remarks upon Russian literature, and shall divide it into two periods.

1st. The Early Period, from the origin of the *bylini* or legendary poems to the time of Peter the Great.

The Russians, like the rest of the Slavonic peoples, are exceedingly rich in national songs, many (as one may judge from the heathen allusions found in them) going back to a very remote period of antiquity. For a long time, and especially during the period of French influence, these productions were neglected as unworthy of the serious attention of scholars. In the last twenty years, however, they have been assiduously collected by such indefatigable antiquaries as Bezsonov, Kirievski, Ribnikov, Hilferding, and others. An admirable survey of their labours will be found in Mr. W.

¹ In the explanation I have here chiefly followed Reiff, who has translated from Gretch and Vostokov.

R. Ralston's "Songs of the Russian People," which was the first work to make Englishmen acquainted with these treasures.¹ To this period belong the legendary heroes (богатыры) of Russian history, who are divided by scholars into two classes, the Earlier and Later. The Earlier exhibit traces of superhuman powers: to this class belong the giants Sviatogor, Volga-Buslaevitch, Mikoula Selianovitch, and others. The Later are heroes of a more earthly type, but still distinguishing themselves by wonderful acts of prowess, something in the style of the legendary paladins in the stories of western Europe. Perhaps the most celebrated of these is Ilya Murometz (of Murom), who is represented as fighting with the robber Solovei (Соловей-разбойникъ) and with the Pagan idolator (Поганый Идолище). The following points of view have occurred to me while reading the Russian bylini.

(a). The language in which they have been handed down, with the exception of here and there an archaism, is modern. This fact, however, cannot be justly supposed to derogate from their antiquity, as they have unquestionably been modified by the various itinerant minstrels who have preserved them. Those familiar with the ballad literature of the western nations will at once recollect many similar cases.

(b). Little, if any, rhythmical skill is exhibited in the poems: the lines vary in length, and have only a kind of swinging cadence to make them poetry at all.

(c). There is no air of coarseness or barbarity about the heroes described; on the contrary, they are more distinguished for gentleness of disposition; but to apply the epithet "knights" to them, as some authors have done, conveys a false impression, and suggests a higher civilization than they can claim.

(d). There is a great repetition and sameness about the poems, not merely in the introduction of ornamental epithets and conventional expressions, such as "the thick wood," "the broad flat plain," but frequently in the case of complete lines.

¹ Cf. also *la Russie Épique* par Alfred Rambaud. Paris, 1876.

The bylini have been divided by Russian scholars into four great classes.

1. That of the Earlier Heroes.
2. The Cycle of Vladímir.
3. The Cycle of Novgorod.
4. The Royal or Moscow Cycle.

With the introduction of Christianity into Russia there necessarily came Byzantine influence, and the corrupt civilization of Constantinople was not likely to infuse much vigour into a young nation. The great centre of the new cultivation was Kiev, still regarded by the Russians as a sacred city.

The series of Russian chronicles which now made their appearance, and extend in an almost unbroken line to the days of Alexis Mikhailovitch, the father of Peter the Great, began with Nestor, a monk of the Pestcherski Cloister at Kiev, who was born about A.D. 1056 and died about 1116. Nestor shows himself everywhere intimately acquainted with the Byzantine historians. Most of these chronicles, however, are anonymous. Two breaks occur in the chain, one in the time of Vasilii, the son of Dmitri, and the second in the days of Ivan the Terrible: it is supposed that the chroniclers were put to death. A good edition of these productions will be found in *Полное собрание русских летописей* ("Complete Collection of Russian Chronicles"), published at St. Petersburg in 1846.

As these works are written for the most part in the Old or Ecclesiastical Slavonic, they do not come legitimately into the scope of the present sketch, and I must therefore omit any further discussion of them, passing over at the same time the address of Vladímir Monomakh and the celebrated "Song on the Expedition of Igor" (*Слово о полку Игоревѣ*), by some considered to date as early as the twelfth century: by others to be a modern forgery. The original manuscript of this curious production is said to have been lost at the burning of Moscow in 1812. It would be impossible to discuss its authenticity in a brief sketch like the present: thus much I will say, that it appears to be open to very grave doubts, and many of the objections urged

against it by Senkovski and others seem unanswerable. Its bombastic and melodramatic phraseology reminds one of some of the most turgid passages in Ossian.

During the subjugation of Russia under the Mongols for upwards of two centuries, the voice of the nation was silent, and literature only cultivated by the monks in their cells; but with the establishment of the autocracy under Ivan III., at the close of the fifteenth century, a new era dawned upon the unfortunate country. Byzantium was still the source of Russian civilization, and this influence was by no means diminished by the taking of that city by the Turks. A multitude of learned Greeks fled to Russia. The Monk Maximus resided there thirty-eight years, having been invited to put in order the libraries of the Muscovite Princes, and he did much to stimulate the prosecution of learning in the country.

In the reign of Ivan IV. (1534-1584), who has earned the title of the "Terrible," great material progress was made by the Russians. Italian architects were invited into the country, and many foreign artisans introduced. The printing press was set up, and let us remember that in this respect Russia was quite as early as Scotland. It was in 1581 that the first complete Slavonic Bible was printed at Ostrog in Volhynia, at that time subject to Poland. A copy of this rare book is preserved in the British Museum, and actually came from the library of Ivan himself. It was brought from Russia by the celebrated Sir Jerome Horsey. On the fly-leaf is the following memorandum in Horsey's own hand—"This Bibell in the Slavonian tonge had owt of the Emperor's librari."

From the death of Ivan (1584) till the election of Michael Románov, 1613, was a period of political tumult for Russia. The usurper Boris Godunov (1598-1605) showed himself to be a man of considerable intelligence, and did much to encourage education in Russia. Among other things, we are told that he sent several young men to be educated in England, but his reign ended in blood, and a vigorous sovereign did not appear till Alexis (1645-1676), who may

be said to have commenced the great reform, which was carried to such a pitch of development by his son Peter. The press became more active: embassies were sent to foreign powers, and many foreigners entered the Russian service, especially Germans and Scotchmen. The writers in Russian are still few, and among them ought to find honourable mention Simeon Polotzki (1628-1680), tutor to the Tzar Feodor, son of Alexis, and author of many religious works, and Koshikin or Kotoshikin, whose sketch of Russia, for a long time lying in manuscript in the Library of Upsala, in Sweden, was edited by the learned historian Soloviev in 1840.

The *second* period of Russian literature commences with the reforms introduced by Peter the Great: the country was now entirely under Western influence, and followed the changes of other literatures: thus this period may be subdivided into (a) pseudo-classical influence, (b) that of the so-called romantic school.

With Lomonósov begins the pseudo-classical period. He was born near Arkhangel, the son of a poor fisherman, but having read all the books he could lay hands upon there, resolved to make his way to Moscow. This he effected upon a waggon laden with fish. He was afterwards sent, at the expense of the Government, to complete his studies in Germany. The writings of Lomonósov are most multifarious; indeed, upon almost every conceivable topic, especially Natural Science, in which he was more successful than in poetry. He did much to improve the language, to reduce it to rules, and to regulate the style of verse and prose. Perhaps few people at present read his turgid odes in praise of Anne and Elizabeth; but if we find them too fulsome, we must remember that they are not worse than the odes of Boileau in honour of Louis XIV.

The reign of Catherine (1762-1796) saw hosts of bards, but they were merely court poets, for, as may naturally be imagined, it was hardly possible for any popular literature to exist in Russia. These wits were more or less supported by the Empress and her immediate *entourage*, to whom their florid productions were ordinarily addressed.

It would be a mere waste of time to recapitulate here the Kheraskovs, Ozerovs, Sumarókovs *et id genus omne*. Russia was now to pass entirely from her ancient Byzantine culture, such as it was, into the pseudo-classical, as taught by the Henriade, and others of the rhyming productions—poetry they cannot be called—of Voltaire.

The remarks of Oustrialov¹ are essentially just. “In the age of Catherine polite literature flourished greatly: her age was the age of glory, the true sister of poetry. There then appeared a multitude of poets, and but few of them in the eyes of their contemporaries did not stand in the rank of universal geniuses: we had our Homers, our Pindars, Anacreons, Horaces, and Sophocles, for the most part mediocre verse-makers; but in some instances there were authors with conspicuous gifts, Bogdanóvitch, Khemnitz, Von Visin, Dmitriev; finally, there was a poet truly great, worthy to be the representative of his brilliant epoch, Derzhávin.” This last-mentioned author has really considerable merit; his “Ode to God” has found its way into our books of extracts from the verbose and inaccurate translation of Sir John Bowring. In Derzhávin the Russian language shows much strength and flexibility; perhaps, however, we get a little tired of the endless perfections of Felitza—the name under which he celebrates the Empress Catherine.

In Denis Ivánovitch von Visin, born at Moscow, but, as his name would show, of German extraction, Russia saw a writer of genuine national comedy. His two plays, the *Brigadier* and the *Minor* (Недоросль), have much original talent: no such vigorous representations of national character appeared again on the stage till “The Misfortune of being too Clever” (Горе от ума) of Griboiedov and the *Revisor* of Gogol.

In Nicholas Karámzin appeared the first Russian historian. Of his poems but little need be said, for they are now almost forgotten: his tales, in which the sentimentalism of Sterne and the “Sorrows of Young Werther” found a Slavonic echo, have also sunk into partial oblivion. His

¹ “Russian History,” vol. ii. p. 272.

"History of the Russian Empire," however, is a work of the most laborious research, and is quoted with respect by all Slavonic scholars. Unfortunately it only extends to the election of Michael Románov. It must be added that the work was more or less "inspired" from high quarters, and most of the sheets are said to have been read to the Emperor Alexander before publication. This was the first regular attempt at compiling Russian history, for the production of Tatistchev was a mere *ébauche*, and written in a very careless style. Karámlin's work seems but little known in this country, but translations have appeared in French and German. He was followed by the indefatigable Nicholas Polevoi, who left hardly any species of literature untouched. His "History of the Russian People" did not, however, add to his reputation. In later times both these authors have been eclipsed by such writers as Soloviev and Kostomarov. A new and more critical school of Russian historians has sprung up, but some of the latest speculations of Professor Ilovaiski show a certain amount of wildness. For the early history of the Slavonic peoples, the great work is still Schafarik's "Slavonic Antiquities," first published in the Čech language, and more familiar to scholars in the west of Europe in its German version. In this admirable book the settlements of the early Slaves are carefully traced.

With the age of Alexander I. begins the introduction of the so-called Romantic School, which was headed by Zhukovski (1783-1852), who was rather a fluent translator than an original poet; he has given us excellent versions of Schiller, Goethe, Moore, and Byron, and has enriched the literature of his country better in this way than by his own productions. Few languages have greater powers in the hands of an able translator than the Russian; hence they have long since familiarized themselves with the masterpieces of other countries. Thus excellent translations of Shakspeare, Byron, Buckle, Mill, Macaulay, and hosts of English writers, exist; for it is a fact very gratifying to us that the Russians, during the last thirty or forty years, have

shown a great passion for our literature. The modern school of novelists—Gogol, Tourghéniev, Pisemsky, Gontcharov, and others—is formed, not upon Balzac and Alexandre Dumas, but upon Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot. Before leaving the subject of translations, mention must be made of that of Homer by Gneditch, formerly one of the assistants in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg. This version is very spirited and accurate: the hexameter metre is preserved, and the compound epithets rendered in a manner which shows the resources of the Russian language.

If, however, only a translator was found in Zhukovski, in the next literary planet which “swam into their ken” the Russians were destined to find their greatest poet—I mean Alexander Pushkin. Never had their language appeared to wear such grace as in the young author’s “*Ruslan and Liudmila*,” a charming tale of the early Russian half-mythical period, in which the influence of Byron was visible, but an influence which had never seduced the poet into being a mere copyist. The same may be said of “*The Prisoner of the Caucasus*” (Кавказскій Плѣнникъ), in which Pushkin had an opportunity of describing the romantic scenery of that wild country, which was then new ground, and which he afterwards visited while accompanying the military expedition of Paskevitch. In the “*Fountain of Baktchi-Serai*,” he chose an episode in the history of the Khans of the Crimea, the detention of a lovely Polish captive in that palace, the ruins of which are still a conspicuous object to travellers. “*The Gypsies*” is a wild Oriental tale of passion and vengeance. The poet, who had been spending some time amid the steppes of Bessarabia, has left us some wonderful pictures of the wandering tribes and their savage life. Most Russians consider the “*Evgenii Oniegin*” of Pushkin to be his best effort. It is a powerfully written love-story, full of clever sketches of modern life, interspersed with satire and pathos.

One more work of Pushkin’s and I have done. With the eye of a true artist he perceived how excellently adapted to the stage was the story of Boris Godunov,—the Macbeth of

Russia. He accordingly produced a spirited play on the Shaksperian model. Since his time the historical drama, based entirely upon the English, has been very successfully cultivated. A fine trilogy has been composed by Count A. Tolstoi (whose premature death Russia has recently had to deplore) on the three subjects, "The Death of Ivan the Terrible" (1866), "The Tzar Fedor" (1868), and the "Tzar Boris" (1869). Other authors have followed in the same direction, and the Russians may boast of the existence of a national drama. I shall have occasion to speak of some of their comedies presently. Pushkin was killed in a duel in 1837, under very painful circumstances. I have had at St. Petersburg many interesting details of the poet from persons who were acquainted with him.

The Russian fabulists, whose name is legion, demand some mention, although this is a species of literature which seems to belong to a nation's infancy. Khemnitzer, Dmitriev, Ivanov, and many others have attempted this style of poetry, but the palm has been borne away by the celebrated Ivan Krilov (1768-1844). Many of his short pithy sentences have become proverbs among the Russian people, like the couplets of Lafontaine among the French, and Butler's Hudibras among ourselves. His sketches are most thoroughly Russian.

In Koltzov, the true voice of the people, which had before only expressed itself in the national ballads, was heard. The life of this sensitive and warm-hearted man of genius was clouded by poverty and suffering. He has, however, been fortunate in his biographer, the well-known Russian critic, Belinski. He was born at Vorónezh, chief town of the government of that name, in 1809. His youth was chiefly spent in driving cattle about the steppes. At the age of sixteen Koltzov first began to compose poetry; but he could not shape his exuberant fancies according to the strict rules of Russian prosody. At a small bookshop at Vorónezh he purchased the works of Lomonósov, Derzhávin, and Bogdanóvitch, and thereby became master of the more artificial portion of his craft. Being assisted by the son of

a country gentleman named Stankévitch, he was enabled to publish a small volume of poems at Moscow, which immediately created a *furor*, and the shepherd-poet (поэт-пастух), as he was called, became the lion of the chief salons of the two capitals, where he was generously welcomed by Pushkin, Zhukovski, Viazemski, and others. It is gratifying to observe that, amid all these trying changes, Koltzov, as we are told of Burns, preserved his native modesty and self-respect. His life, however, was embittered by a disappointment in love, and the impossibility of emancipating himself from the gross associations and drudgery of his lowly calling. Death came to the rescue at last: he died of consumption on the 19th of October, 1842. The poems of Koltzov are written for the most part in unrhymed verse; the sharp, well-defined accent in Russian amply satisfying the ear, as in German. His poetical taste had been nurtured by the popular lays of his country. He has caught their colouring as truly as Burns did that of the Scottish minstrelsy. Koltzov is unquestionably the most *national* poet Russia has produced: his works, however, are all comprised in a thin octavo, which, even including the essay of Belinski, extends but little over 200 pages.

Since the death of Pushkin, Lérmontov alone has appeared to dispute the poetical crown with him. The short life of this author (1812–1842), brief as our own Shelley's, ended in the same way as Pushkin's—in a duel provoked by himself. Many of his lyrics are exquisite, and have become standard poems in Russia. In the piece entitled “Song about the Tzar Ivan Vasilievitch, the young Opritchnik, and the bold merchant Kalashnikov,” Lérmontov has imitated the old Russian national legends with great skill. It is to be regretted that such a bitter scoffing Mephistopheles-like irony runs through all his poems: before thirty he seems to have found life “all vanity.” Pushkin is also tinged with the same feeling, and it has been echoed by Nekrasov and Polezhaev. There is something altogether overpowering in the verses by the latter entitled “Condemned” (Осужденный).

In Gogol, who died in 1852, the Russians had to lament the loss of a keen and vigorous satirist. With a happy humour, reminding us of Dickens in his best moods, he has sketched all classes of society in the "Dead Souls" (Мертвые Души), perhaps the cleverest of all Russian novels; although in power of delineating character Mr. Tourghéniev, of whom I shall presently speak, follows close upon his heels.

No one has reproduced the scenery and habits of Little Russia, of which he was a native, more vigorously than Gogol, whether in the pictures of country life in his "Old-fashioned Household" (if we may translate in so free a manner the title *Старосельские Помѣщики*), or in the wilder sketches of the struggles which took place between the Poles and Cossacks in "Tarass Boulba." Clever as is the latter piece, the manners are too savage, and the descriptions too revolting, to recommend it to the Western reader.

Gogol was also the author of a brilliant comedy, "The Revisor," in which he lashes the Russian bureaucracy. This very witty production is one of the best of the kind in Russia, and may be compared with the *Горе от ума* of Griboedov, and the *Minor* (Недоросль) of Von Visin, to which I have previously alluded. Whether, however, these comedies, witty as they are, could be made palatable to an English reader unacquainted with the various phases of Russian life, is doubtful. He would perhaps grow weary of the constant sarcasms upon peculating *tchinóvniks* and the somewhat dull virtues of amiable and oppressed peasants.

To enumerate the various Russian novelists in a short sketch like this would be an impossibility. Their name is legion, and, as I have said before, they have taken the English as their models.

Ivan Tourghéniev does not need an introduction to the English public: his reputation is European, many of his works have been translated into French and German, and some even into our own language. He first made a name by his "Memoirs of a Sportsman" (Записки Охотника), full of vigorous pictures of the life and habits of the peasants. He has since produced many works of great excellence, in which

he has photographed, as it were, the various phenomena of Russian society, and produced many characters, which, among his own countrymen, have become typical.

In the subject of Slavonic philology, the Russians only occupy a secondary place, for as yet they have not produced a Schleicher, a Dobrowsky, or a Schafarik. Still, they have done some genuine and honourable work. The cultivation of these studies has of course been recent, and dates from the overthrow of the monstrous incubus of Gallicism. It was not till the beginning of this century that they realized that their past language and traditions were worth studying. The impulse may with accuracy be said to date from the time of Karamzin, whose history, previously alluded to, may indeed contain many faults, but was written in an elegant, almost fascinating style, and with great erudition. The notes teem with proofs of the most wide and varied reading. Soon afterwards, literary and antiquarian societies began to be formed in Russia, and foremost among the investigators of history must be mentioned Pogodin, Kostomarov, and Soloviev. The second of these authors writes in a very iconoclastic spirit, and handles severely many of the most pleasing legends of Russian history. Soloviev is still publishing his very voluminous history, which promises, when completed, to be rather a quarry of materials for future authors than anything else. Professor Plovaiski has been recently astonishing his fellow-countrymen by some very heterodox opinions on the origin of the Russians, whom, in spite of the exhaustive labours of Schafarik, he affects still to derive from the Roxolani. The subject is now being ventilated in the columns of the magazine, "Old and New Russia" (Древняя и Новая Россія), which was commenced last year, and promises to be a very great success. To me, I must confess, the views of Schafarik still appear unshaken. Oustrialov, although in his "History of Russia" his descriptions seem pale and colourless, yet in other works he has made some very important contributions to the literature of his country. His most celebrated production is his "History of Peter the Great," important because it was

written with the help of many documents which had remained up to the time unpublished. The whole history of the unfortunate Alexis was narrated even in the minutest details, and the circumstances of his unhappy fate made clear.

Vostokov, a Russianized German, his original name having been Osteneck, edited the Ostromir Codex, the earliest MS. of the Palæo or Ecclesiastical Slavonic language. It is supposed to have been written in the year 1056, for the use of Ostromir, posadnik of Novgorod, who was related to the Grand-Duke Iziaslav. The edition of Vostokov was a very valuable contribution to Slavonic philology. A grammar of the language was added; but the labours of Miklosich and Schleicher have superseded his efforts. Biliarski has published a valuable work on the copy of the Gospels upon which the Kings of France were accustomed to take the oath at their coronation at Rheims before the Revolution. The book was magnificently bound in a cover of plates of gold, ornamented with precious stones. When, in 1717, Peter the Great visited Rheims, it was exhibited to him among the other curiosities of the place, and he recognized it to be written in some Slavonic language. In 1789 an Englishman, Thomas Ford Hill, having been shown some Glagolitic MSS. in the Imperial Library at Vienna, at once declared that they were in the same characters as the mysterious book at Rheims. The matter would soon have been sifted, as the curiosity of Slavonic scholars had begun to be excited, when the Revolution broke out in all its fury. The wonderful book disappeared, carried off, no doubt, on account of its precious exterior. Nor could any trace of it be found, and its loss was naturally deplored by Slavonic scholars, as they readily imagined it might have contained leaves of the highest antiquity and of priceless value.

But how came the book in France? According to some conjectures it had been removed thither in 1204, when Constantinople was captured: Dobrowsky thought it was presented by Helen, a queen of Serbia; both these views, however, were mere suppositions.¹

¹ Kopitar Glag. Cloz., xi.

The eminent savants, Sylvestre de Sacy and Kopitar, made all possible search for it, but to no purpose. How it ultimately turned up I am not able to state. But it was recognized by the Slavonic scholar Stroiev, of course stripped of its gorgeous environment.¹ In 1852 a very handsome edition was published at Paris, each plate of the manuscript being carefully reproduced, engraved on copper. The book was found by Paplonski to consist of two parts. 1st, Cyrillian in a Serbo-Russian dialect, written, according to the epilogue, by St. Procopius, at Prague, in 1032, and *therefore, if this date be correct, older than the Ostromir Gospels*; but the statement was no doubt added by a later hand, and is mythical. 2nd, Glagolitic of Čech origin, and dating no further back than 1325. Extracts from this interesting volume are given by Chodzko in his *Grammaire Paléoslave* (Paris, 1869).

In the *Slavische Bibliothek* (edited by Miklosich) Kopitar thinks that the volume was purchased by Charles IV., under the impression that it was really written by St. Procopius; about 1451 it seems to have got to Constantinople, and was purchased there by a French Cardinal, who presented it to the Cathedral at Rheims. The theory of Jerebtzov that it was taken to France by Anne, daughter of Yaroslav who married Henry I., is groundless.

Here also must be mentioned Sreznevski, a writer on the old Slavonic language, of deservedly high repute, and Hilferding, whose premature death was a great loss to Russian literature. His works on the history of the Polabes—the old Slavonic tribe on the Elbe—and on the Indo-European affinities of the Slavonic languages, are exceedingly valuable. The old customs of their race have been explored by Afanasiev, Kastorski, Kotliarevski, Snegirev, and Tereschenko, but it must be frankly confessed that the subject of Slavonic mythology remains up to the present time a chaos. Many works have appeared, in various languages, but the Slavonic pantheon has never

¹ See Gretch, *Путевыя письма изъ Англіи. Германіи и Франціи*. С. П. Б., 1839, vol. ii. p. 161.

been satisfactorily arranged. The work of Hanuš¹ is full of wild speculations: perhaps the best is Schwenke's. I have already alluded to the Russian legendary tales and poems and their characteristics. During the period of Catherine and French influence, these productions were treated with profound contempt. Attention appears to have been first called to them by Prince Tzertelév, who published in 1819 a small collection relating to Vladímir and his Round Table at Kiev. These were chiefly Malo-Russian, and I shall therefore allude more at length to them in my remarks on that dialect or language. Since this time large collections have appeared, of which the most celebrated are those edited by Kirievski and Ribnikov (of the songs), and the tales (*skazki*) by Afanasiev, Sakharov, and Erlenvein. Valuable works have been written on the characteristics of this early national literature by Buslaev (*Historical Sketches*) and Orest Miller (*Historical Survey of Russian Literature*).

The Servians had already been introduced to Western notice by Vuk Stephanovitch Karadschitch, in his "National Songs of Servia," and the Bulgarians by the admirable collection published in 1861 by the Brothers Miladinov, at Agram, under the patronage of Bishop Strossmayer. These unfortunate men were afterwards murdered in a Turkish prison, under peculiarly brutal circumstances. Their labours have since been supplemented by Messrs. Verkovitch and Dozon. All the Slavonic races have their ballads, but the families just mentioned are the richest.

Leaving now the subject of Russian literature, properly so called, we come to the Malo, or Little Russian. It will be observed that I have confined my notes on Russian dialects to the Little, White and Red Russian (with an allusion to a special dialect spoken in the Bukovina). There are however others, but the materials for the study of them are wanting. Some attention is paid to them by Dahl in his copious Dictionary, and we occasionally find meagre vocabularies, but they have never been scientifically in-

¹ Wissenschaft des Slavischen Mythus. Lemberg, 1842.

vestigated. Karamzin, in a note to the first volume of his history, speaks of the dialects of Souzdal and Novgorod. Some specimens of these were given in the "Comparative Vocabularies" published at St. Petersburg in 1787. Karamzin tells us that there are many curious words in the dialect of Souzdal: thus God is *Stod*; father, *khrutin*; sister, *mindra*; wife, *eltona*; maiden, *shiktora*. A short time ago a collection of popular tales from the Government of Olonetz was published. Little Russian is the language of the Cossacks, spoken on the Bug, Don and Dnieper, the Euxine, and the Sea of Azov. It prevails also in the Governments of Poltava, Kharkov, Tchernigov, Kiev, Volhynia, Podolia, etc. Scherzl says that it is heard from the town of Sandecz (near Krakow) to the Caucasian mountains. In fact, this dialect, almost reaching to the dignity of an independent language, is very widely spread. According to the tables published by Schafarik, there are upwards of ten millions of Malo-Russians subject to the Tzar, and to these must be added 2,774,000 under the government of Austria, of whom the majority are settled in the Province of Galicia (where the aristocracy alone are Polish), and some are to be found in Hungary, where they occupy several comitats. The Austrian and Hungarian Russniaks, as they are called by their German neighbours, are sometimes styled Red Russians, but their language is substantially the same as the Malo-Russian. Polish influences are to be perceived, as may readily be imagined, for the Poles were masters of these territories for two centuries. The orthography differs considerably from that of Great Russian. Thus *i* is put for the Russian *ѣ*, and *r* becomes in the Malo-Russian pronunciation *h*. The thick *ѣ*, Polish *ѣ*, goes into *в* or *у*, thus *добро* = *долго*, *писау* = *писавъ*. The sound of the Little Russian *и* is a middle sound between *ы* and *и*. In most monosyllables the Russian *о* becomes *и* in Little Russian. Thus *пи́д* = *по́дъ*, and the Russian *у* is frequently changed into *в* and *vice versa*: *вми́раю* = *уми́раю*. The consonants offer nothing particular to call for a remark. I may note, however, that *ѣ* is frequently pronounced like *хв*.

The orthography of the Little Russian appears to be by no means fixed. Each author pursues his own method. The semivowels *ь* and *ъ* are omitted by some as useless. The works which issue from the press of Lemberg have a different spelling from those published at Kiev, and in the books printed in Galicia a new letter has been invented for *r* when it takes the sound of *h*. An extraordinary system of spelling was attempted in the *Ужнор рідного поля* ("Gleanings of a Native Field"), published by Koutzii at Moscow in 1857.

As the Cossacks are so mixed up with the Little Russians, a few words may be added concerning them. The derivation of the name has been very much disputed. The most probable suggestion is that it is of Turkish origin, and signifies a robber. A very pleasant account of these people will be found in Clarke's "Travels," a work which is not without its attractions, although upwards of half a century has elapsed since its publication. At that time the Cossacks preserved many more of their old customs than they do now.

The Cossacks were originally divided into two branches, those of the Don, who became subject to Russia in the sixteenth century, and those of the Dnieper, called the Zaporogian Cossacks (*i.e.* those dwelling beyond the cataracts, *porogi*), who submitted to Alexis Mikhailovitch in the days of the celebrated Bogdan Khmelnitzki. The military republics founded by these hardy soldiers, which necessitated the severest discipline, are well known. The Malo-Russian dialect or language is exceedingly rich in *skazki* (national tales) and in songs. Peculiar to them is the *douma*, a kind of narrative poem, in which the metre is ordinarily very irregular, but a sort of rhythm is preserved by the recurrence of accented syllables. The *douma* of the Little Russians corresponds to the *bylina* of the Great Russians. In 1819 Prince Tzerteleff gave to the world a small volume of these under the title, "Attempt at a Collection of Ancient Songs of Little Russia."¹ Others followed, edited by Shpigotzki and

¹ Опыт собранія старинныхъ Малороссійскихъ пѣсень.

Sreznevski, and in 1834 there appeared at Moscow an octavo volume by Mikhail Maksimovitch, in which a very interesting anthology of these curious productions was put forth, with explanations both historical and philological. These works, however, are being thrown into the shade by the elaborate edition now in course of publication by Messrs. Antonovitch and Dragomanov,¹ in which the poems are chronologically arranged, and all requisite explanations given. The parallel ballads in the literatures of other countries are frequently added. On the national legends valuable works have been published by Koulish and Rondtchenko.

Many of the Malo-Russian philologers, among others Koulish, are anxious to claim a higher position for their native idiom, taking their stand on the fact that Kiev, in Little Russia, was the ancient capital of Slavonic civilization in the good days of Vladimir and his heroes of the epic cycle; they vindicate for this dialect the right to be styled *the Russian* properly so called. With them the Great Russian was only accidentally protruded from the fact that in the collision of the various Slavonic princes—one of the dreariest chapters in the national annals—Moscow came by mere luck to the front as the capital of the country. With this opinion Miklosich agrees, and his decision must carry great weight, as being that of the most eminent Slavonic scholar of our day. Prof. Bodenstedt, the genial translator of Pushkin; who has admirably rendered many of the Little Russian songs into German, thus pronounces an opinion upon them—"In no country has the tree of popular poetry borne such lordly fruits, nowhere has the spirit of the people exhibited itself in so vigorous and truthful a way as among the Little Russians. What a charming air of sadness, what deep true human feeling do these songs express, which the Cossack sings in a foreign country! What a tenderness, coupled with manly strength, breathes throughout his love-songs!" As might naturally be expected, most Malo-Russian authors

¹ Историческія Пѣсни Малорусскаго Народа-Кіевъ, 1874.

of eminence have preferred using the Great Russian, notably Gogol, who, however, is very fond of introducing provincial expressions, which require a glossary. Grebenko, however, and Kvetka, composed novels in their native idiom, and a celebrated writer of romances is still alive who uses the pseudonym of Netchoui.

The foundation of the Malo-Russian cultivated literature was laid by the travestie of the Eneid by Kotliarevski, which enjoys great popularity among his countrymen. A truly national poet appeared in Taras Shevtchenko, born a serf in the Government of Kiev, at the village of Kirilovka. He has himself described the vicissitudes of his early life. This highly interesting autobiography is printed in the Lemberg edition of the poet's works, and the new and complete one just issued at Prague, with details of Shevtchenko contributed by personal friends, among others Kostomarov and Tourgheniev. It also forms the basis of a sketch of the poet's life appended to the translation of a few of his pieces by Obrist.¹ Besides poetry, the young serf devoted himself to art with considerable success. His childhood was spent in poverty and misery, but his genius was awakened by the tales of the early days of the Ukraine, which he heard from an old monk. How faithfully the poet has reproduced these interesting traditions will be readily acknowledged by any one familiar with his writings, breathing all the spirit of that romantic part of Russia. Shortly before his death, at St. Petersburg, he composed some pathetic lines in which he expressed his desire to be buried in his beloved Ukraine. The poet's wishes were faithfully carried out by his admirers. Near the city of Kanev, not far from Kiev, a huge tumulus has been erected in his honour, which not long ago was characterized by a writer in one of the Polish journals as the Mecca of the South Russian Revolutionists. Many of the poems of Shevtchenko celebrate the early history of the Ukraine—the national heroes Ivan Pidkova, Nalivaiko, Doroshenko, and others. In the piece entitled

¹ See Taras Szewczenko, ein kleinrussischer Dichter, etc. J. George Obrist, Czernowitz, 1870.

Haidamak,¹ a fearful story is told. We have some terribly graphic pictures of the battles between the Cossacks and their Polish persecutors, especially when the former rose against the Jews and Roman Catholics. The account of Gonta is positively sickening, especially where we read of his murder of upwards of 1000 Jewish and Roman Catholic children at Human in 1770.

The reader will, no doubt, grow weary of these atrocities, but some compensation will be made by the fire and vigour of the lyrics of Shevtchenko, who was certainly a true poet. Professor E. Partizki, of Lemberg, has commenced an elaborate critique on his writings, of which a portion has appeared. Shevtchenko died in 1861. The native bards of the Ukraine are by no means extinct: in 1874 appeared an account of the minstrel Ostap Veresai, and further details have since been given in "Old and New Russia." A good insight into the Little Russian literature was given by the Reading Book (Руска Читанка) of Alexander Barvinski, published at Lemberg in 1870. The first volume is devoted to oral literature, and gives extracts from the most celebrated songs, legends and tales. In the second specimens are inserted, among others, of the writings of Kotliarevski, Kvetka, Gribenko, and Shevtchenko. In the third we are introduced (in the company of many others of minor note) to Marko Vovtchok (a pseudonym of Madame Eugenia Markovitch, whose tales descriptive of peasant life have enjoyed very great popularity) and Jouri Fedkovitch, who employs a dialect of Bukovina—another melancholy sign of the folly of the Slaves in eternally cultivating dialects. Fedkovitch, like Shevtchenko, sprang from a peasant family, and served as a soldier in the Austrian army during the war with the French under Napoleon III. Naturally, we find his poems filled with descriptions of life in the camp.

A collection of songs of Bukovina was published at Kiev last year by A. Lonatchevski. The Slavonians are becoming thoroughly awake to their treasures of popular poetry.

¹ Signifies *robber*.

It is to be regretted that no good dictionary of this South-Russian language has made its appearance as yet, although there has been some talk of one. Till one is compiled, Western scholars will with difficulty be able to enjoy the copious stores of popular songs and legends which these dialects possess. The evil is partly remedied by the White-Russian Dictionary of Nosovitch, and a small German Ruthenisch Dictionary, published by Professor Emilian Partizki (*Deutsch-Ruthenisches Handwörterbuch*, Lemberg, 1867). An excellent grammar has been written by Dr. Michael Osadza, a pupil of the celebrated Slavist Miklosich, which leaves nothing to desire.

A few words must be said about the third Russian dialect, that which is called White Russian, spoken in parts of Lithuania and Volhynia, especially in the governments of Mohilev, Minsk, and part of Vilno. It is of course full of Polish words and phrases, and was the official language for a long time of Lithuania, the Lithuanian never having risen in dignity above a peasant's tongue; in the White Russian all the historical monuments and the laws of that people are written. Scherzl, in his *Comparative Slavonic Grammar*, has commented upon the few peculiarities of this dialect. Among other characteristics we may mention that the White Russian uses a for o, *e.g.* *срапапа* = *срoпoнa*, r (as in Little Russian) is pronounced *h*: the gutturals are softened before *ѣ*, *e.g.* *на пыѣ*. Its variations from the Red or Little Russian are trivial and unimportant, and are practically ignored by Koulisch. In White Russian Smotrycki wrote his *Syntagma* or *Grammar of the Ecclesiastical Slavonic*, published at Polock in 1619, the first ever printed.

The dictionary of Nosovitch, previously mentioned, was issued in 1870. His statement of the materials from which his lexicon was compiled will give but too evident proofs of the meagre nature of the literature of this branch of the Slavonic family. They are as follows:—(1) Oral national literature taken down from the mouths of the peasantry: songs, proverbs, traditions, tales, etc. (2) Collections of words gathered in the Governments of Mohilev, Pinsk and

Grodno, and some of the provinces bordering on the Vistula. (3) Materials (very meagre) of the White Russian dialect and literature printed in the Reports of the Imperial Academy of Arts, in works published by the Moscow Society of the Lovers of Literature, in the Ethnographical Collection of the Russian Imperial Geographical Society, and the Collections of Chechet and Zenkevitch. Some White Russian songs have been edited by Bezsonov, but I have not seen his book.

I have thus endeavoured to trace the area over which Russian and its dialects are spoken. It will be seen that it is in all respects a vigorous and well-developed language, and I think we may safely prophesy a long future for it. In riches it need not yield the palm to any of its European sisters, and as it relies upon itself, and does not incorporate foreign elements, it may continue to be one of the most independent of modern languages. In the West its progress may be checked, but in the East it is gaining on the Finnish and Tartar tribes, and will no doubt become the language of all Siberia. The dialects will in process of time become absorbed into the dominant tongue; and Russian will thus be the property of about fifty millions. The prospects of such a language can only be paralleled by those of England and Germany.

XI.—TRADITIONAL RELICS OF THE CORNISH LANGUAGE IN MOUNTS BAY IN 1875. By H. JENNER, Esq.

In this paper I shall not attempt to discuss the question how far Old Cornish words are still used in conversation by the people of West Cornwall. Such words are undoubtedly used; but they are not known to be Cornish by those that use them, and cannot be said to belong to a tradition of a former language, except in the sense of their having been handed down therefrom. The words with which I have now to deal are not used in conversation, but