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THE RUSSIANS IN POLAND.

An Attempt to Force the Russian Language upon Poles.

As to the impression produced by Alexander III.'s first state visit among the Poles, it has evidently been a very favorable one on both sides. writes a correspondent to *The London Times*. The hopes which it is supposed to have raised, however, in Polish society are by no means free from the skepticism which foretells with certainty that if anything is given to Poland it will only be in the sense of further Russification. In all probability the kingdom will sooner or later be endowed with the Russian institutions of the Zemstvo, following the Russian judicial system, which is just now being introduced, and this prospect does not of course please the Polish patriots.

does not, of course, please the Polish patriots.

A good beginning seems to have already been made by the establishment of the "Zemskoi straje," a kind of rural police, supposed to be under the Zemstvo, and considering that there is yet no Zemstvo in Poland, I was rather astonished at Skiernwice to receive the card of the chief of this body. The efforts to Russify the Poles, and especially the rising generation, are as apparent as is still the spirit of passive resistance and dislike of everything Russian. A short time ago, I am told, an educational circular was issued instructing scholars to converse as much as possible in Russian with their parents at home. The correct Russian accent is now indispensable for a child in order to pass satisfactorily in a reasonable time through the educational course. Great attention was paid to this particular by the Emperor in his visits to various schools, and his Majesty afterward complimented the famous and zealous curator, M. Apukhtin, on the purity of accent which had been attained in the dominant tongue. In all the schools visited the Emperor's chief inquiry was, how do the children speak Russian? Most of the Poles, rather than speak Russian, seem to prefer either French or German, which the majority speak fluently. This is especially noticeable in hotels and restaurants. Even the young generation at school are seemingly imbued with the same spirit, if such a fact as this can be taken as any indication, that on asking my way in Russian of a gymnasium youth in the street he immediately answered me in French. Russian, as the official language, is strictly enforced, General Gourko, the Governor-General, setting the example by always using it on every occasion. A certain Count Lubimsky, I am told, was not long ago sent to reside upon his estate for two years for refusing to receive a judicial document in Russian, being unable, as he said, to read in that language.

The enormous work, however, which the Russians still have before them in assimilating or establishing Russian conformity among the Poles is apparent at every turn. The antagonism, indeed, is so observable everywhere—at least, in Warsaw—that one might suppose Mouravieff to have lived only yesterday; and the monument in the Saxe garden to the Poles who are supposed to have fought against their own countrymen to have been erected very much less than thirty or forty years ago. The Poles whom one meets in public places seem never to raise their voices above a whisper, while the Russians appear by contrast to make more noise here than in their own country. There is an air about the Poles of being afraid to speak, and of preferring to listen in general company. An official on whom I had an occasion to call, and who was defending the

measures of precaution, took care to inform me that although he was in the Russian service, he was yet a Pole. At the fortress of Novogeorgifsk, and at Skierniwick I had opportunities of seeing how the few Poles in the police and gendarmerie quarreled with the Russian soldiery over the different interpretation of their instructions. On appearing at the Vistula bridge of the fortress the Poles were for letting me cross it, and the Russians for keeping me back. The Russian sentinels, by some extraordinary power of reasoning peculiar to the Slavonic mind, made out that their orders would permit passengers to go across in carts or wagons, but not on foot, and after a very undignified squabble, in which a gaunt Cossack intermeddled, threatening to use his whip, the guardians of the bridge at last admitted me to ride over with half a dozen others huddled together in a small country wagon.