

THE SONGS
OF THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE,

AS ILLUSTRATIVE OF SLAVONIC MYTHOLOGY
AND RUSSIAN SOCIAL LIFE.

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SECOND EDITION.

London:
ELLIS & GREEN,
83, KING STREET, COVENT GARDEN.
1872.

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PREFACE.

WHEN the present volume was originally planned it was intended to contain an account of Russian folklore in general—of the stories, legends, riddles, proverbs, and epic as well as lyric poems, which oral tradition has preserved among the Russian peasantry. But I soon found that the subject was one which, if treated at all in detail, would require more time and space than I had expected. So I thought it best to restrict myself for the present to a part of it only, leaving the rest to be described afterwards. In this first instalment of the work, therefore, I have dealt chiefly, though not exclusively, with the lyric poetry of the peasantry; the next will be mainly devoted to their Popular Tales and their Metrical Romances.

In order to render intelligible the songs I have quoted, it has been necessary to give some slight account of the religious ideas attributed to the ancient

Slavonians and the superstitions current among their descendants, as well as of some of the manners and customs of the Russian peasantry, especially with regard to marriages and funerals. But my book can make no pretence to any thing like a satisfactory grappling with the difficult problems—mythological, ethnological, philological, historical—suggested by the study of Slavonic antiquities. Perhaps the best excuse I can offer for my shortcomings with respect to those questions is this. A great part of the ground over which I have hastily skimmed has been explored by a scholar who is far better qualified for the task than I am. And so to Mr. Morfill's forthcoming work on "The Slaves" I refer, at all events for a time, all who wish for fuller information on the subject.

In the translations contained in the present volume I have attempted to give, in every case, as literal a version of the original as possible. My rule has been to translate the songs into prose, line for line and word for word, and this rule has scarcely ever been broken. Only here and there, in the introductory chapter and in that on Marriage, I have been sometimes almost unconsciously led into following, to some slight extent, the rhythmical flow of the Russian. Rhyme, as my readers are probably aware, very rarely

appears in any but modern Russian Songs, and upon recent poetry I have not touched.

For inconsistency in the use of accents I have only this excuse to offer. On my "copy" I had marked every accented syllable, but typographical difficulties prevented me from carrying out my original idea. After having begun to print, however, I found that certain words were specially liable to be mispronounced, so I inserted a few marks here and there, where they seemed to be most needed, in order to show on which syllable the accent ought to fall.

With respect to the authorities I have consulted, it may be as well to say a few words. My chief aim has been to render available to such students of mythology and folk-lore as may happen not to read Russian, some part, at least, of the evidence bearing upon those subjects which has been collected in Russia, but which has not been hitherto rendered into generally intelligible speech, and therefore I have not thought it necessary to make more than occasional reference to books written in, or translated into, the languages of Western Europe¹. Of the

¹ A long list of books in various languages on Slavonic Antiquities is given by Dr. I. J. Hanusch. See *Die Wissenschaft des slawischen Mythos*, pp. 48—71. A number of Russian Songs have been faithfully translated by P. Von Goetze, under the title of *Stimmen des russischen Volks in Liedern*. Stuttgart, 1828. A

Russian authorities on which I have principally relied a full list will be given at the end of the book. The Songs contained in the present volume have been taken, for the most part, from the rich collections made by Sakharof and Shein; the descriptions of popular manners and customs have been mainly borrowed from the valuable works of Snegiref and Tereshchenko; the greater part of the chapter on Funeral Songs I have extracted from the erudite treatise by Kotlyarevsky, "On the Funeral Rites of the Heathen Slavonians;" and for the arrangement and much of the contents of the chapter on Mythic and Ritual Songs I am indebted to Orest Miller's "Historical Survey of Russian Literature."

But it is to Alexander Nikolaevich Afanasief, whose recent and premature death cannot sufficiently be deplored, that I am under the deepest obligations. His great work, "On the Poetic Views of the Old Slavonians about Nature" is a rich storehouse to which I have had constant recourse in the present volume; on his excellent collections of Russian Popular Tales and Legends the next volume will be based; and from his writings in general I have derived frequent assistance while studying the *Bulinae*,

few occur also in the collection entitled *Balalaika. Eine Sammlung slawischer Lieder von W. von Waldbrühl. Leipzig, 1848.*

or Metrical Romances—with respect to which the special books of reference are the collections of Ruibnikof and Kiryeevsky², and the critical works of Buslaef, Bezsonof, Maikof, Orest Miller, Schiefner, Stasof, and many others. There is one other Russian scholar to whom I wish to render hearty acknowledgments for aid constantly received. Were it not for the great dictionary “of the living Russian language” by Vladimir Dahl, a foreigner would be hopelessly bewildered when trying to make his way through the difficult field of Russian folk-lore.

Finally, let me offer cordial thanks for the assistance personally tendered to me by many Russian friends, as well upon other occasions as on those of my visits to Russia in 1868 and 1870. To them I dedicate my book, trusting that, imperfect as it is, they will recognize in it such traces of honest work as may render them lenient towards its sins both of omission and of commission.

January, 1872.

² A new collection of *builinas* is now in the press, containing the poems written down from the dictation of the Olonets “rhapsodists” by the editor, A. F. Hilferding. They will not be arranged according to their subjects, nor chronologically; but they will be grouped in relation to their reciters—all the poems dictated by each rhapsodist being kept together.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

A WORK has recently been published, to which, had I seen it before my book went to press, I should have made frequent reference—Professor Bernhard Schmidt's *Das Volksleben der Neugriechen und das hellenische Alterthum*. The similarity between the folk-lore of the modern Greeks, as described in it,² and that of the Russians, is most striking—so much so, that it seems to point to something more than a common origin ages ago. Professor Schmidt utterly repudiates Fallmerayer's doctrine with respect to the preponderance of the Slavonic element in the population of modern Greece, and he will not allow that Slavonic myths have at all seriously affected those of Hellenic descent. However this may be, many of the customs and songs which I have quoted

² And in the works of Wachsmuth, Ulrichs, Passow, Kind, Fauriel, Firmenich-Richartz, and many others, of most of which an account is given in the "Notes on the ballads, tales, and classical superstitions of the modern Greeks," contained in chapters 21 and 22—26 of the Rev. H. F. Tozer's "Researches in the Highlands of Turkey."

in the present book offer a singular resemblance to those of the modern Greeks, one which is often far closer than that which can be traced between them and the rest of their kin in other lands. It may be worth while in this Preface to mention a few of the details in which Slavonic and Hellenic folk-life and folk-lore seem most alike.

The Russian Khorovod—the circling dance to song often of a serious or even sad nature, which Kavelin traces back to heathen rites performed in circle around an idol—appears to be closely akin to the dances which in Greece still retain much of their old religious character. The Russian *Kaliki*, or blind psalm-singers, and the reciters of the *builinas*, find their exact counterpart in Greece. Such ideas as are held by the Slavonians about the demoniacal character of mid-day, and which are common to many countries, exercise special influence on the Greeks. The Slavonic nymphs—Rusalkas, Vilas, Mavkas etc.—bear a much closer resemblance to the *Neraiides* of modern Greece than they do to their sisters in other European lands. A similar resemblance is to be found between the Greek Lamia and the Russian Baba Yaga. The ideas about vampires are identical among the Greeks and Slavonians, the name for a vampire being one of the very few words

of Slavonic origin in modern Greek. The ceremonies, also, attendant on the building of a new house are almost the same, whether the builders be Greeks or Slavonians. The three Baba Yagas of Russian Storyland are very like the three *Moirais* who in Greece have succeeded to the old Fates. And the Slavonic folk-beliefs with respect to the life beyond the grave, like as they are to those held in Latin, Teutonic, and Celtic lands, yet still more closely resemble those of the modern Greeks.

Since the Preface to the first edition was printed I have read Professor Hilferding's most interesting account (in the March number of the *Vyestnik Evropeu*) of his recent expedition to the home of the "Rhapsodists" described by Ruibnikof. I have, for the present, availed myself in a few instances only of his criticisms, but they will be of the utmost value to me when I am dealing with the "metrical romances" in detail.

It may be as well to observe that, throughout the following chapters, I have generally confined myself to stating, without criticizing, the opinions held by the Russian Mythologists whom I have quoted.

April, 1872.

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APPENDIX A.

The following are the Russian books to which I am principally indebted. In alluding to them in the foot-notes to the present volume I have frequently given only the initials of their titles, just as I have often represented the words *Deutsche Mythologie* by the letters *D. M.*

AFANASIEF. *Poeticheskiya Vozmryeniya Slavyan na Prirodu.* [Poetic Views of the Slavonians about Nature.] 3 vols. Moscow, 1865-69. 8vo.

———— *Narodnuiya Russkiya Skazki.* [Popular Russian Tales.] Third edition. 8 Pts. Moscow, 1863. 8vo.

BEZSONOF. *Kalyeki Perekhozhie.* [Wandering Psalm-singers. A collection of their songs.] 6 pts. Moscow. 1860-62. 8vo.

BUSLAEF. *Istoricheskie Ocherki, etc.* [Historical Sketches of National Literature and Art.] 2 vols. St. Petersburg, 1861. fol.

———— *O Vliyanii Khristianstva na Slavyansky Yazuk.* [On the Influence of Christianity on Slavonic Language.] Moscow, 1848. 8vo.

DAHL. *Poslovitsi Russkago Naroda.* [Proverbs of the Russian People.] Moscow, 1862. fol.

ERLENBEIN. *Narodnuiya Skazki.* [Popular Tales collected by village Schoolmasters.] Moscow, 1863. 8vo.

KASTORSKY. *Nachertanie Slovanskoi Mythologii.* [Outline of Slavonic Mythology.] St. Petersburg, 1841. 8vo.

KAVELIN. *Sochineniya.* [Collected works.] 4 vols. Moscow, 1859.

KHUDYAKOF. *Velikorusskiya Skazki.* [Great-Russian Popular Tales.] 3 pts. Moscow, 1860-62.

- KIRYEEVSKY.** *Pyesti sobrannuiya P. V. Kiryeevskim, etc.* [Songs collected by P. V. Kiryeevsky. Edited by P. A. Bezonof and others.] Second edition. Parts 1—8. Moscow, 1868, etc. 8vo.
- KOTLYAREVSKY.** *O Pogrobal'nuikh Obuichayakh Yasnicheskikh Slavyan.* [On the Funeral Customs of the heathen Slavonians.] Moscow, 1868. 8vo.
- МАЙКОВ.** *O Builinakh Vladimirova Trikla.* [On the Builinas of the Vladimir Cycle.] St. Petersburg, 1863. 8vo.
- *Velikorusskiya Zaklinaniya.* [Great-Russian Spells.] St. Petersburg, 1869. 8vo.
- OREST MILLER.** *Opuit Istoricheskago Obzryeniya Russkoi Slovesnosti.* [Attempt at an Historical Survey of Russian Literature Part 1. Section 1. Second edition.] St. Petersburg, 1866. 8vo.
- *Khristomatiya, etc.* [Chrestomathy, appended to the "Attempt, etc."] Part 1. Section 1. Second edition. St. Petersburg, 1866. 8vo.
- *Ilya Muromets.* [Ilya of Murom and the Heroes of Kief.] St. Petersburg, 1869. Royal 8vo.
- RUIBNIKOF.** *Pyesti sobrannuiya P. N. Ruibnikovim.* [Songs collected by P. N. Ruibnikof. Edited by P. A. Bezonof, etc.] 4 vols. Moscow, 1861-67. 8vo.
- САХАРОВ.** *Skazaniya Russkago Naroda.* [Utterances of the Russian People. Third edition.] 2 vols.¹ St. Petersburg, 1841. Royal 8vo.
- *Pyesti Russkago Naroda.* [Songs of the Russian People]. 5 vols. St. Petersburg, 1838-39. 12mo.
- SCHOEPPING** (or Shepping). *Mithsi Slavyanskago Yasnichestva.* [Myths of Slavonic Heathendom.] Moscow, 1849. 8vo.
- *Russkaya Narodnost', etc.* [Russian Nationality in its Superstitions, Rites, and Popular Stories.] Moscow, 1862. 8vo.
- ШЕЧЕПКИН.** *Ob Istochnikakh i formakh Russkago Baenosloviya.* [On the Sources and Forms of Russian Mythology.] 2 pts. Moscow, 1859-61.

¹ I possess, unfortunately, only the first volume. The second I have never even so much as seen, so rare has the book become.

- SHEIN. *Russkiya Narodniya Pyesni*. [Russian Popular Songs, collected and arranged by P. V. Shein.] Vol. I. Moscow, 1870. Royal 8vo.
- SNEGIREF. *Russkie Prostonarodnie Prazdniki, etc.* [Russian Popular Festivals and Superstitious Rites.] 4 vols. Moscow, 1837-39. 8vo.
- SNEGIREF. *Russkie v svoikh Poslovitsakh*. [The Russians in their Proverbs.] 4 vols. Moscow, 1832. 12mo.
- SOLOVIEF. *Istoriya Rossii*. [History of Russia.*] Fourth edition. Moscow, 1856, etc. 8vo.
- TERESHCHENKO. *Buit Russkago Naroda*. [Manners and Customs of the Russian People.] 7 vols. St. Petersburg, 1848. 8vo.²

* In progress; only about twenty-one volumes have as yet been published.

² Students who wish to compare the folk-songs of the Russians with those of the other Slavonic peoples will find the following books of great service. To avoid typographical difficulties I have translated their titles:—

- KOLBERG. "Songs of the Polish People." Warsaw, 1857. 8vo.
- WOJCICKI. "Songs of the White-Croatians, Masures, etc." 2 vols. Warsaw, 1836. 8vo.
- KARAJIC. "Servian Popular Songs." 5 vols. Vienna, 1841-65. 8vo.
- SUSIL. "Moravian Popular Songs." Brunn, 1860. 8vo.
- HAUPT AND SCHMALEE. "Folk-Songs of the Wends in Upper and Lower Lusatia" [in Wendish and German.] Grimma, 1841-43. 4to.
- ZEGOTA PAULI. "Songs of the Ruthenians in Galicia." 2 vols. Lwow, 1839-40. 12mo.

APPENDIX B.

A few words about the measures of the songs may be considered useful. The following specimens are given by Sakharof in his *Pyesni Russkago Naroda*¹.

The Khorovod Songs are as follows:—

(1) \bar{A} $\bar{m}y$ \bar{A} $\bar{m}ui$ But we	$\bar{p}r\bar{o}so$ $\bar{p}r\bar{o}so$ millet	$\bar{s}y\bar{a}l\bar{i}$. $\bar{s}y\bar{e}y\bar{a}l\bar{i}$. have sown.
(2) $\bar{z}ap\bar{l}et\bar{i}$ $\bar{z}ap\bar{l}et\bar{i}$ Become woven	$\bar{s}y\ \bar{p}l\bar{e}t\bar{e}n\bar{y}$ $\bar{s}y\ \bar{p}l\bar{e}t\bar{e}n'$ fence	$\bar{z}ap\bar{l}et\bar{i}y\bar{a}$. $\bar{z}ap\bar{l}et\bar{i}y\bar{a}$. become woven.
(3) $\bar{A}y\ \bar{v}o\ \bar{p}ol\bar{y}$ $\bar{A}y\ \bar{v}o\ \bar{p}ol\bar{y}$ $\bar{A}y\ \bar{v}o\ \bar{p}ol\bar{y}e$ $\bar{A}y\ \bar{v}o\ \bar{p}ol\bar{y}e$ Ah, afield, Ah, afield,	 	$\bar{A}y\ \bar{v}o\ \bar{p}ol\bar{y}$. $\bar{L}ip\bar{i}n\bar{y}ka$. $\bar{A}y\ \bar{v}o\ \bar{p}ol\bar{y}e$. $\bar{L}ip\bar{i}n'ka$. Ah, afield. Lindenling.

The "Dance Songs" are usually in one of the following metres;—

(1) $\bar{v}o\ \bar{p}ol\bar{y}\ \bar{b}e$ $\bar{v}o\ \bar{p}ol\bar{y}e\ \bar{b}e$ Afield, a	$\bar{p}e\bar{s}a\ \bar{s}t\bar{o}$ $\bar{r}e\bar{z}a\ \bar{s}t\bar{o}$ birch-tree	$\bar{s}t\bar{o}d$. $\bar{y}a\bar{s}t\bar{o}d$. stood.
--	--	--

¹ II. 51—52.

(2) По́йду̃ мла́да̃ Poýdũ mládã I will go, the young one		по́ Дуна́ю̃. pó Dunáyũ. by the Danube.
(3) Ахъ, у́тушка̃ Akh, utushkã Ah, duckie		лу́говая̃. lúgovayã. meadowy.
(4) Ка́къ у́ насъ̃ Kak ū nas̃ How with us		во́ садо́чку̃. vó sadochkũ. in the gardenling.

Of the Svyatki songs, sung at Christmas, Sakharof gives the following specimens in his *Skazaniya Russkago Naroda*¹, the work to which such frequent reference has already been made:—

(1) Щу́ка̃ шла̃ Она́ хвостъ̃ Какъ на щу̃		изъ́ Нова́ воло́кла̃ къ́ чешу́й̃		горо́да̃. изъ́ Бѣлоозера̃. ка́ серебра́ная̃.
Shchukã shlã Ōnã khvost̃ Kak̃ nã shchũ		iz̃ Novã voloklã kyẽ cheshuỹ		gorodã. iz̃ Byeloozerã. kã serebranayã.
A Pike came She [her] tail How on the Pike		out of trailed [are] scales		Novogorod. from Byeloozero. silvery.

¹ L. iii. 10.

(2)	Растворю̄	я̄	квашо̄н	кӯ	на̄	доуишкѣ̄.
	Rastvorjū	yā	kvashon̄	kū	nā	donuishkyē.
	I knead		the dough			on the <i>donuishka</i> .

(3)	Ахъ ты сѣй мати, мучи цу, пеки пироги ;
	Къ тебѣ бу—дутъ го сти неча яныме :
	Къ тебѣ бу дутъ въ лаптяхъ ко мнѣ въ сапогахъ,
	Akh tui syey mati, muchi tsu, peki pirogi :
	K tebye bu—dut go sti nechā yannuie :
	K tebye bu dut v laptyakh ko mnye v sapogakh.

Ah [do] thou sift | mother, flour, | bake | pies:
 To thee will be guests | not | expected:
 To thee will be | in lapti | to me in boots.

(4)	И я золото	хорошо,	хорошо,
	Чисто серебро	хорошо,	хорошо.
	Ӣ yā zoloto	khoronyu,	khoronyu.
	Chisto serebro	khoronyu,	khoronyu.
	And I gold	bury,	bury,
	Pure silver	bury,	bury.

(5)	Жемчужина	окатная,
	До чего тебѣ	докатится?
	Zhemchuzhina	okatnaya.
	Do chego tebye	Dokatitsiya?
	O Pearl	round [and able to roll.]
	Whither to thee	to roll thyself.

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LONDON:
GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.