

Brave Russian Heroines of the Japanese War

Heroines of Manchuria Face Death in Awful Forms to Aid the Sick and the Wounded.

But the Cossack and the Cossack's conduct in war what they may, his countrywomen who marched at his side to give battle to Japan have been heroines.

The days of the Amazons are not yet past, nor is the story of a Joan of Arc, who rides her horse to battle beside her brother warriors, wholly in the chronicles of bygone centuries, nor is the era of mysterious masquerades on the part of daring young women limited to the times of graceful and sexy Shakespearean heroines who wooed and won their beloved in masculine duds and hose.

Of these picturesque and soul stirring facts the secret history of the Russian side of the present war which is yet to be told, reveals to the public the witness. While the exploits of camp and battlefield that have reached the outer world of peace have nearly all dealt with the deeds of the soldiers, in blouse and belt, side by side with the men, martial achievements and warrior-like sufferings worthy an army of Amazons were undertaken and undergone by the valiant young women who assumed the noble tasks of binding the wounded and of allaying their pains; and if these tasks are generally less perilous, they nevertheless often require equally magnificent courage.

Wins Cross of St. George.

Of the many examples of womanly devotion which merit record in the annals of posterity, is that of the ambulance guard, Mile, Yakovenko Yakolev, injured while caring for the wounded in the thick of battle, she was the first woman to be decorated with the rare distinction of the brave, the military cross of St. George.

A young woman of the world, scarcely 22 years old, charming and brimming with love of life, she waited not a moment at the commencement of hostilities to offer her services in Manchuria and to adopt the rule life of the camp. There this frail creature fulfilled her mission in the midst of the bloody fray under showers of bullets, never dreaming of repose; and it was to this zeal that she owed the injury which cost her her terrible mutilation, the loss of a leg.

Leg Shattered by Shell.

It was during the memorable engagement at Liaoyang one morning of October, 1904. The ambulance with which Mile, Yakovenko Yakolev was connected camped in the neighborhood of the town of Liaoyang, whence the wounded were being taken to a train. Suddenly the ambulance came to a halt, Gen. Kouropatkin in person and ordered every one to leave as soon as possible with the sick, because the Japanese were approaching.

Two hours after the bombardment of Liaoyang began and soon the projectiles were raining on the spot just vacated by the ambulance. The transportation of the last wounded was hastily achieved and only a few articles belonging to the ambulance remained.

In company with a physician Mile, Yakovenko betook herself to the train in order to superintend the baggage. At this instant the fire from the Japanese redoubled in violence and a storm of bullets struck the railway station. A panic arose among the Chinese and Russians who were engaged with the sick, and all precipitated themselves in a mad flight for the wagons.

HELENE SMOLKO WOUNDED AT SHA HO



MILE YAKOVENKO

FRONT PHOTOGRAPH



With a fire of decision in her gentle glance, she replied to those who questioned her as to her plans for the future: "When my wound shall have healed they will give me an artificial leg and I will go to Manchuria."

Woman Rides with Wild Raiders.

To a parallel pinnacle of valor rises the devotion of another young woman, who is remarkable above all for the rarity of her experiences. She is unique in the role she assumed during the present war. She is Helene Smolko, a young woman known in the Russian army under her masculine name and disguise as Michael Nikolayevich, and who for a long time succeeded in disguising her feminine sex.

It was as a Cossack, accustomed to reconnoitering expeditions and she was attached, by the personal recommendation of Gen. Kouropatkin, to the staff of Gen. Ievnoy, the famous body of soldiers which had been previously commanded by Count Keller, who was killed by a Japanese bomb.

The mysterious success of this young woman in entering the regular army contrary to all rule and precedent is explained by the fact that by virtue of her masculine education she had received, and her acquaintance with the local tongue, she had, at the age of 18, entered the service of the frontier guards as interpreter.

During the campaign with China she fell ill, but her martial nature did not permit her to bow long to disease, and soon incited her to seek more stirring activities.

Heroic Girl Idol of Cossacks.

The opportunity presented itself when war was declared. She was engaged as interpreter with the Cossacks commanded by the chief of the squadron, Vechinsky. Once on the ground and passing before the eyes of her comrades as an exceedingly young Cossack volunteer, Michael Nikolayevich soon took a leading part in the life of the soldiery. The young woman showed such courage, such endurance, that her comrades in arms, who took her for a man, held her in high esteem. She was presented to Gen. Bennenkampf, who enrolled her in his division of Cossacks without examination. It was thus that ever since she has been able to wear the real Cossack uniform and to participate as a soldier in a number of battles.

It was during one of the numerous engagements of Chiao-tai November that Helene Smolko was wounded. Carried to the hospital at Mukden she was cared for until the moment of the evacuation of that place by the Russians. Assurance is given that her injuries did not impede her life and that the Odyssey of the feminine Cossack is not yet ended.

"Seeing the projectiles falling mainly on my right," said Mile, Yakovenko, "I turned to the left to find my own wagon. I was worn out with fatigue and walked slowly. All of a sudden I heard a violent noise behind me and I fell in a faint. When I came to I noticed the line of wagons and my ears rang with confused din. 'I have my consciousness again,' I said to myself, 'and I will try to rise.' Impossible! I tried again, and after several attempts I succeeded in supporting myself on my arms. I then saw that my right leg was doubled over itself and that all about me flowed blood. At this moment I heard behind me the voice of the physician who had accompanied me. He also was wounded, but less severely. In response to his calls the men came to me, raised me, and carried me. It was then that I felt an atrocious and indescribable pain. My right leg hung loose and gave me agony. Finally I was stretched out in an ambulance wagon and soon the train started, for we were in danger every moment of being surrounded by the Japanese. My companions, who pressed about me, could scarcely recognize me. My face was as black as charcoal and I was all covered with earth. It was a shell that had wounded me in both legs and hurt my head."

Determined to Return to Front.

During the journey and at Mukden the valiant young woman received but slight attention—little, in fact, before she reached Tieling, and it was only at the hospital at Harbin that there was finally time taken to extract from her leg the numerous projectiles which had penetrated there. Gangrene by this time had threatened to invade the right leg and it was at last decided to amputate it as far as the knee.

Immediately upon her recovery she was decorated with the order of St. George, which was placed upon her bosom as a testimony to her heroic devotion. And if in the flush of the springtime of her life which had dawned to happiness she at first wept over her frightful bodily mutilation, her valorous soul nevertheless remained intact throughout; her wound had not healed ere she dreamed of returning to the sufferers and resuming her care of their hurts.

FROM NEAR AND FAR.



SPRINKLING STREETS.

TO CALL CROWDS.

DIFFICULT.

IN 1809.

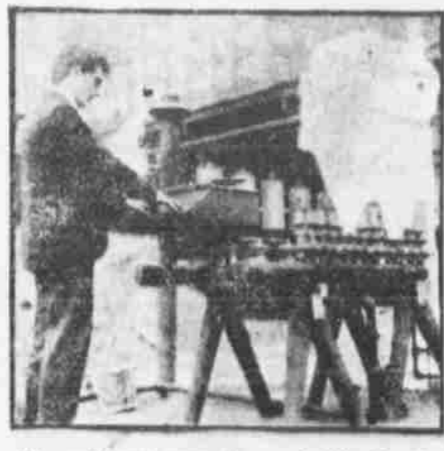
DOWN 66 STEPS.

HAMMER WOMAN CAN USE.

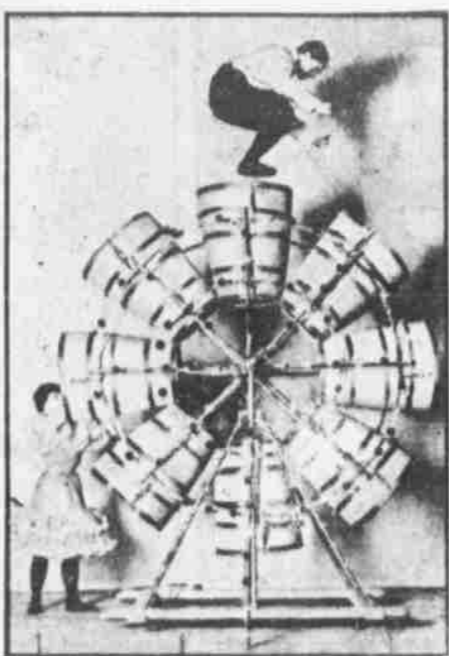
HORSE SHOE TRICK.



The picture shows the strange result of the influence of western ideas of progress on the stationary orientals.



The calliope is upon the roof of the floating theater which piles upon the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. When the theater is drawn up to the wharf the calliope soon calls the crowd together upon the river banks.



The phenomenal jumper, Hartley, performs at the Winter garden, Berlin, one of the most difficult and dangerous feats yet attempted by an acrobat. He jumps from one barrel into another as the barrels rotate.



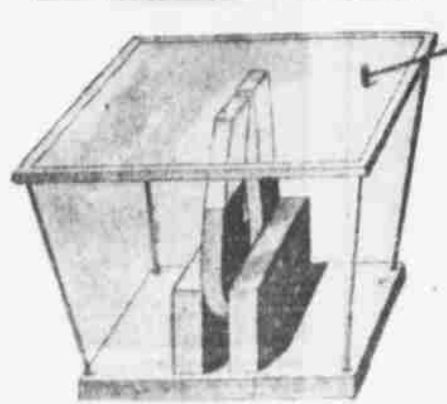
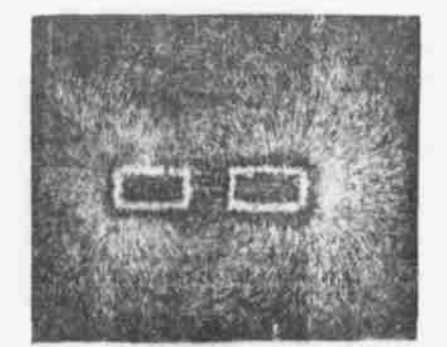
From a fashion plate showing the style of that day.



A sensational incident occurred recently at St. Heliers, Jersey, when a horse harnessed in a cart bolted down sixty-six steps which are shown above. Little or no damage happened to either animal or vehicle.



The pneumatic hammer is one of the new inventions and in operation it drives nails without smashing the finger. It is declared to be a boon for women, for with it they can drive nails straight and thus prevent the modern woman from rising to the standard of the masculine sex even in this respect.



Prep a horse shoe magnet up between the upright posts, which should be tacked to the bottom of a box, then put a postboard over on the box and scatter steel filings over it. They will form in circles while whirling from one magnet to the other.

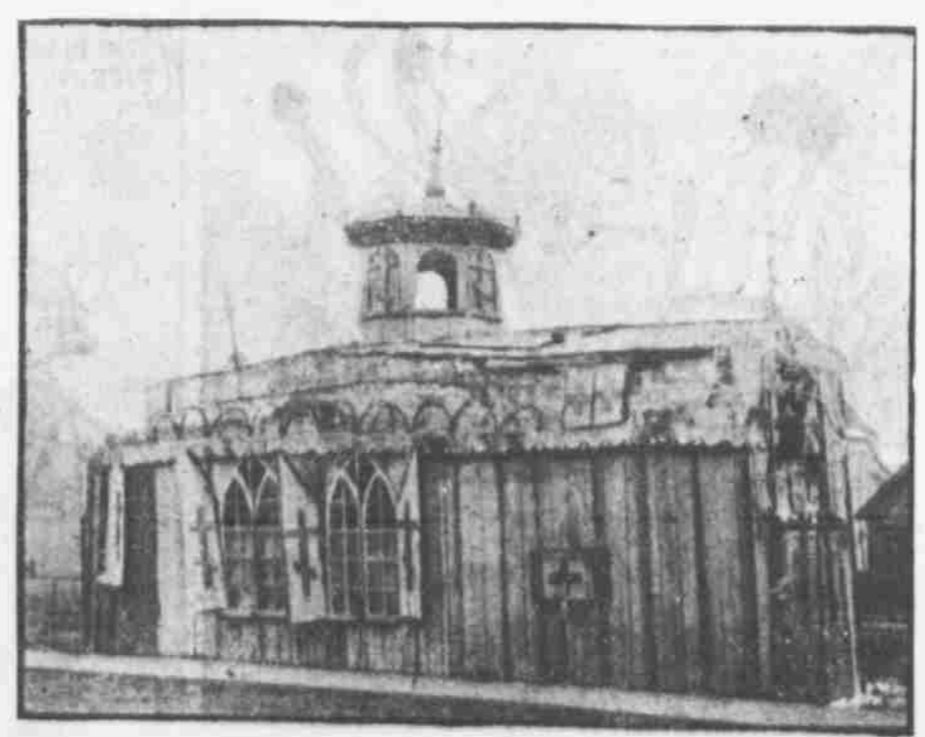


A boat towed by a captive balloon has been a curious feature at Atlantic City recently.



Where is the hunter?

CATHEDRAL BUILT BY ARCHBISHOP'S OWN HANDS.

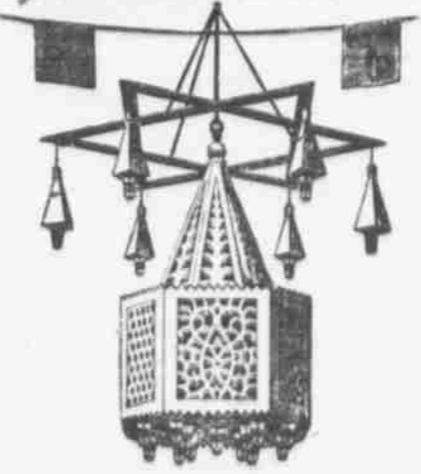


In Winnipeg is a queer looking cathedral, built by an archbishop, unaided, after his own designs and with his own hands. This archbishop, Serafin by name, is shepherd of 20,000 souls of the Greek Orthodox independent church, of which he ultimately became archbishop. Out of old tin and iron and bits of wood he built his cathedral, only to have it torn down by Jewish boys. Nothing daunted, he started again, paying for necessities with his own money, painfully with toll worn fingers working away at his fearful and wonderful construction.



The funerals were grand spectacles. The pallbearers were dressed in Franciscan habit, a relic of old Catholic times.

EGYPTIAN LANTERN.



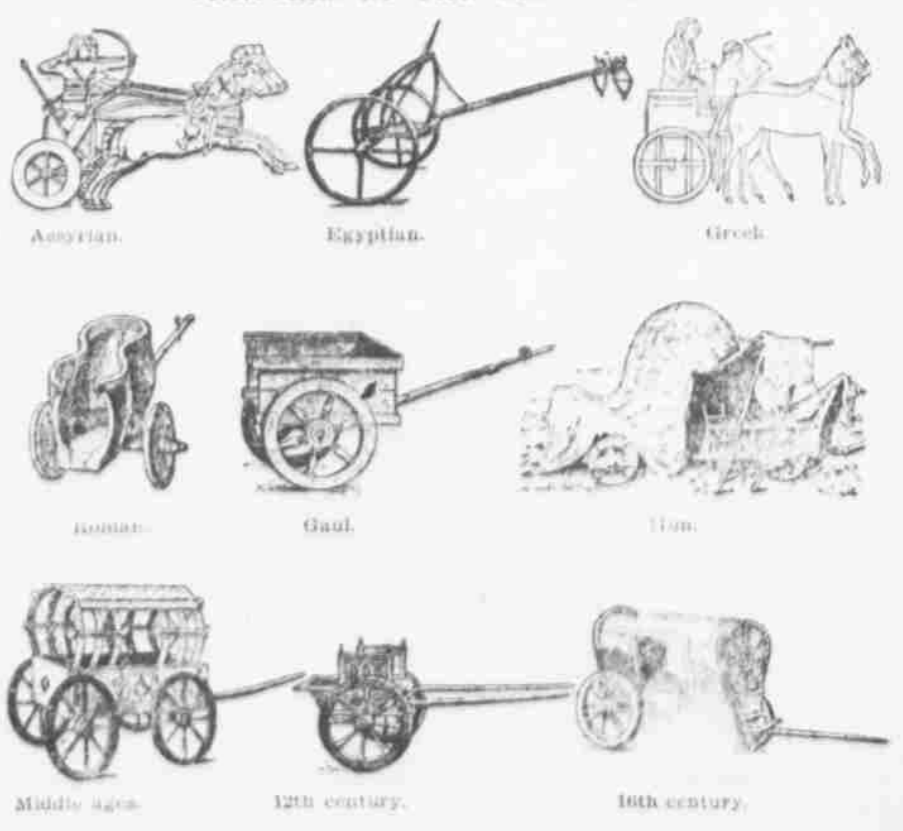
Lanterns, such as these, were used by ancient Egyptians to hang across streets during wedding festivities.

ANCIENT TREPANNING.



The shaded lines radiating from it indicate the beveled furrow cut with alex instruments to relieve the central part. The furrow afterwards straightened, showing that the patient survived the operation some years.

VEHICLES OF THE OLDEN DAYS.



Ancient, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Gaul, Iran, Middle Ages, 12th century, 16th century.