

SPECIMEN OF RUSSIAN EMBROIDERY.

clergy; for an examination of the plates in the great Imperial work on the Antiquities of Russia proves that the robes of the ancient Czars were decorated in a style of lavish splendour which could scarcely have been exceeded. It is evident, also, from other works illustrative of Russian Costume, not only that the different races throughout that vast empire indulge, on festivals and state occasions, in a profuse display of embroidery, but that many districts possess a style of ornament peculiar to themselves; doubtless modified from the original Greek type by the circumstances of their affinity to and intercourse with the surrounding tribes. The Oriental element has, no doubt, exerted a favourable influence on Caucasian embroidery; since the constant traffic which passes through the Caucasus, from Persia and Turkey to the manufacturing districts of Russia, and *vice versa*, must have familiarised its inhabitants with Oriental customs, and has very probably tended to maintain a predilection for this luxurious art.

One branch of the art of embroidery, which has long been universally popular in Russia, is that of the embroidery of leather. We learn from M. Erman* that "the inhabitants of the town of Torjok are all engaged in making various articles of Russia leather, which they either embroider with gold and silver, or unite in patterns of different colours. These productions have lately become an article of the Russian export trade. The Russians learnt this art from the Tatars, whom they soon surpassed; and the name 'Kasan boots,' now usually given to the boots and shoes made in Torjok, points to a Tatar origin: for, among the Russians, 'Kasan' was originally the land of the Tatars. The leather used in this manufacture is not prepared at Torjok, but is brought from the capital." Of this variety of Embroidery many admirably executed specimens were contributed to the Exhibition; but as they displayed no very striking beauty or peculiarity of design, we have not considered it necessary to engrave any of them.

* "Travels in Russia, Siberia, &c., by Adolf Erman, translated by W. D. Cooley." 1848.

PLATE 29



J. SLEIGH, DEL.

M. DIGBY WYATT, DIREKT.

F. BEDFORD, LITH.

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