

If we had been allowed to keep at one liquor we might possibly have survived; but the mixture of port and beer, and sherry and claret, and Guinness's stout and vodka, backwards and forwards, first one and then the other, was fatal!

After we had eaten and drunk and talked for some hours, the other officers went off, and the colonel said to us, "I don't know quite where you will sleep. There is a sofa for one of you; the other two had better sleep on the floor." This we proceeded to do, and so passed our first night in Russian territory. The colonel had spoken of his Cossack hospitality being rough but cordial. It was both.

On the following day we started for the larger station of Novo-kievsk, fifteen miles distant, and situated on the coast. It turned out to be but a small place with a garrison of a battalion of infantry, a battery of artillery, and about a hundred mounted Cossacks. There were very few buildings besides the barracks. The roadways were unmetalled, and the whole place had a dreary, uncared-for appearance. We could discover no Russian hotel or inn of any description, and had to put up at a