Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

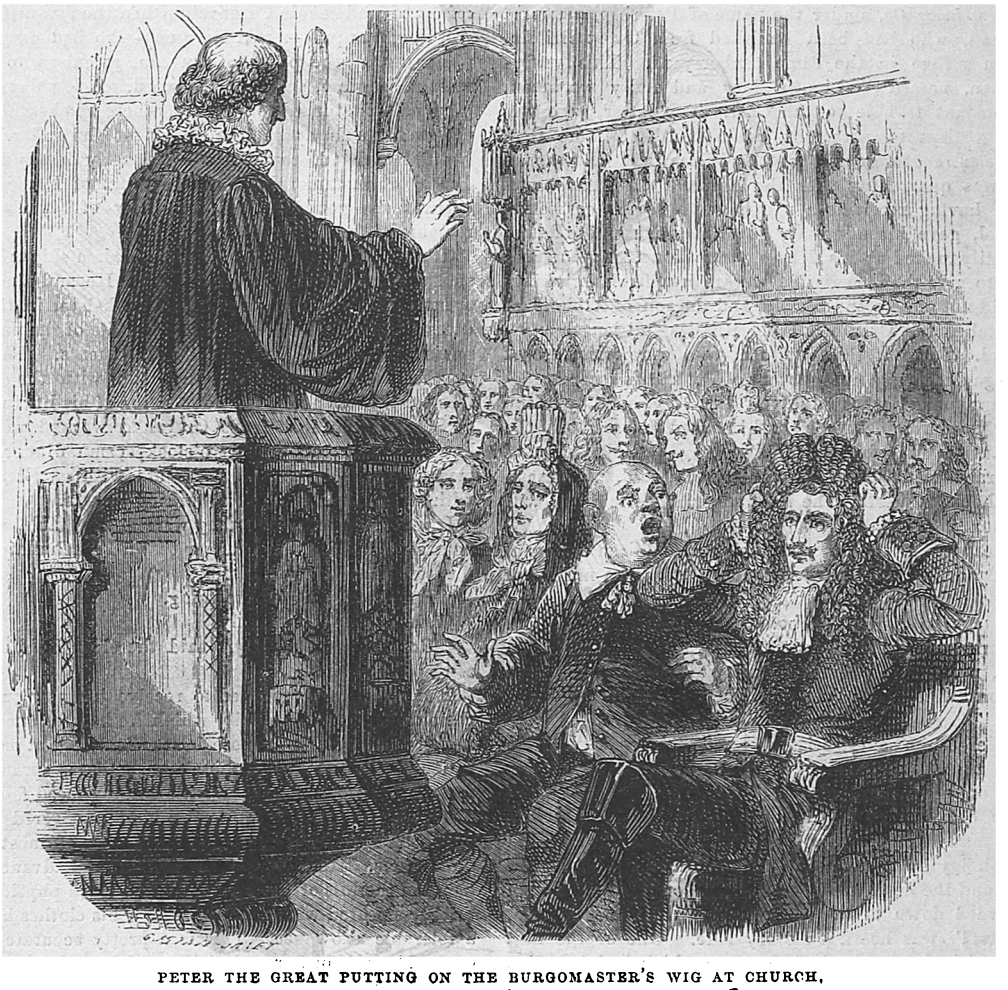
JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

PETER THE GREAT.

Even the smallest incident in the life of a man so deservedly renowned as Peter the Great, by whose indefatigable exertions his country was raised from a state of semi-barbarism to one of comparative civilisation, cannot fail to interest the friends of human progress. We, therefore, here present to our readers a few anecdotes, illustrative of the character and mode of life of this remarkable man, and derived from the most authentic sources.

In a manuscript, presented by Sir Hans Sloane to the British Museum, is an interesting account of the incident which first gave rise to the organisation of a Russian navy. One day, looking among some old stores, Peter discovered a small English sloop with its sailing tackle in a very neglected state; on making inquiries concerning it, he found that his father, Alexis, had imported the vessel many years before, with the design of having the art of navigation taught to his subjects. But his plan not having been carried out, the vessel had been forgotten until the Czar Peter again brought it to light. His interest was aroused; he eagerly asked for explanations as to the uses of the mast and sails, and could not rest until arrangements had been made for refitting it. At length the Dutch pilot, whom Alexis had engaged to manage the sloop, was brought out of his obscurity, and the delighted Czar soon saw the vessel floating before the breeze. He went on board, and profiting by the instructions of his Dutch pilot, soon became an expert seaman. From this time Peter took such an interest in maritime affairs, that when the first foreign vessel arrived in Russia, in the year 1708, the Czar, dressed in a sailor's jacket, and accompanied by the lords of his suite, similarly attired, went to meet her in a boat, and piloted her from Cronstadt to St. Petersburg. The skipper and the pilot were received with great pomp by Prince Menzikoff, the governor of the town; and the skipper must have been not a little surprised, when he recognised in his pilot the Czar Peter, who thus brought commerce to the shores of his empire.

On the Czar's second journey to Batavia, in the year 1716, he arrived one Sunday morning at Dantzic, and found, to his surprise, that the gates of the city were about to be closed. He entered, and went to his inn, meeting scarcely any one on his way. Surprised at finding the streets so deserted, in so populous a city, he inquired of his host the cause. He then learnt that it was the time of divine service, and that when the people were at church the gates of the city were always closed. Peter did not wish to lose this opportunity of seeing the manner in which divine worship was conducted in Dantzic; he, therefore, begged the host to take him to the church. The burgomaster in office was there, with his family; and, to judge from appearances, the news of the Czar's arrival had reached him. When Peter appeared, the magistrate, meeting him at the door, led the way to the bench of the burgomasters, which was rather more elevated than the rest. The Czar seated himself with bare head, and, having made a sign to the burgomaster to sit beside him, listened with the greatest attention to the preacher, without raising his eyes from the ground; whilst those of the assembly were fixed upon the prince. Some time afterwards, feeling his head cold, he



PETER THE GREAT PUTTING ON THE BURGOMASTER'S WIG AT CHURCH.

silently took the burgomaster's wig and put it on; and Peter the Great, sitting in the wig of ceremony beside the astonished burgomaster, listened undisturbed to the end of the discourse, when he restored what he had borrowed, thanking the good citizen by an inclination of the head. This little scene was quite natural to the Russian monarch; but one may imagine how singular it would appear to the inhabitants of Dantzic. After the service, the burgomaster deputed some of his sub-delegates to compliment the Czar; and one of the Muscovite lords told them that his majesty was much pleased with what he had seen. He added, that the removal of the burgomaster's wig was a trifle at which he must not be astonished, that the emperor never paid any attention to those little things, and that as he had not much hair it was his custom, whenever his head felt cold in church, to take Prince Menzikoff's wig, or that of any other lord within reach.

Whilst Peter was working as a carpenter at Saardam, in the strictest *incognito*, under the name of Peterbas, a certain Englishman, who had been banished from Great Britain, had taken refuge in the same timber-yard. This unfortunate man, named Wilson, a lazy and noisy workman, was a constant trouble to the Czar. The latter, who was not of a patient temperament, made him feel, more than once, the strength of his fist. Wilson was not aware that he was quarrelling with the Emperor of Russia, and one day, having received a rather more severe correction than usual, gave his adversary some new cause of offence; Peter hastily tucked up his sleeves, threw down his apron, and prepared to give the incorrigible workman a fresh thrashing. But he did not understand boxing, and the son of Albion had soon stretched the Czar of all the Russias full-length upon the ground. Some of the workmen, who were witnesses of this strange duel, were not ignorant of Peterbas's secret.

"Unhappy man! what have you done?" cried they to the victor; "you have just struck and knocked down Peter, the Czar of Russia. Fly for your life."

Peter, raising himself with a quiet look, said, phlegmatically, without manifesting the least anger at his fall, "I will learn to box."

Some years afterwards, meeting this same Wilson on one of his journeys to England, he was touched with the misery of the poor fellow. Wilson endeavoured to conceal himself from the eye of a prince whom he had formerly beaten. Peter, however, recognised and went up to him.

"Well, my friend," said he, "why did you not become a boxer? that would have been much better than being a bad carpenter."

He rendered him some assistance, and took care secretly to grant him a pension. "One must," added he, smiling, "pay tribute to one's conquerors."

On the occasion of Peter's second journey to Holland, which he made, accompanied by his consort, he was received with much joy by the people of Saardam, his former companions; and the news of his arrival no sooner got wind than they crowded down to the quay, and "Welkom, welkom, Pieter Bass!" was heard on every side. One of the first places he visited was the little cottage which had been his habitation at the time he was learning the art of ship-building, about nineteen years before, and to which the name of the Prince's House had been given. It is still preserved. On this visit to the scene of his former labours, he and the Czarina took up their abode at the house of a shipwright, named Kalf, who had been the first to carry on commerce with Russia. A son of Kalf had just returned from France, which country the emperor had a great desire to visit. Peter and his wife listened with pleasure to the adventures of the young man, which it may not be out of place to relate here.

Kalf said to his son one day, "My boy, lay aside your working apron and sailor's jacket; you must learn the French language; nothing is more necessary to our business, which increases from day to day. Become a Frenchman then, my son; be gay, witty, and gallant; spare nothing to become so; visit and associate with the nobles of the court; be lavish of your gold; eclipse counts and dukes in the richness of your costume. The carpenter of Saardam will pay for it!" exclaimed the rich Kalf, ending with a hoarse laugh.

Arrived at Paris, young Kalf became the Comte Duveau; at least it was by that title that his friends and numerous servants addressed him. This was not, after all, absolutely changing his name; because, in all the northern languages, *kalf* is synonymous with the French word *veau*. Young Duveau supped at the court, and played cards at the house of the Duchess of Berri. He often met with counts without earldoms, knights without orders, and abbés without abbeys; for there was then at Paris a mania for false titles, which the government tolerated. Though young Kalf, with his great riches, sometimes fell a dupe to swindlers, yet when once his letters of introduction caused him to fall in with any of the true nobility, few strangers received a kinder welcome. Besides having the honour of being frequently in the company of the princesses and the daughter of the Regent, he was at all the *soirées* of Madame de Carnavalet, then the favourite of Philip. A young marquis—a real marquis—who had partaken of the pleasures and the purse of Duveau, promised to pay him a visit at Saardam, and kept his word. A few days afterwards young Kalf returned to Holland, where he cheerfully resumed the workman's apron, the jacket of the sailor, etc.; and, hatchet in hand, conducted as formerly his father's works. His short metamorphosis at the court of France could not corrupt the goodness and simplicity of his character—he remained a true Dutchman.

The simple mode of life of the Saardam shipwright exactly suited the taste of the great Czar. He and the two Kalfs spent the whole morning in the workshop, in their sailor's dress; while Catherine, who was the life of the party, accompanied them, and distributed refreshments. They worked, laughed, and chatted cordially, and with the most jovial humour; it was an amusing repetition of his life in the cottage of Saardam, in which the Czar had worked with his own hands. Then, about two o'clock, came dinner, at which meal Peter and the two Kalfs ate with excellent appetite, without having doffed their working jackets.

It was a summer day; they were still at table, when it was announced to Kalf the younger that a French marquis desired the honour of being admitted.

"Bah!" cried Peter, frowning.

Catherine smiled slightly.

"Prepare yourself, boy," said the elder Kalf, slapping his son upon the shoulder.

The young man promised to receive his new guest with all the old-fashioned simplicity which he had resumed. He had not time to put his purpose into effect. All at once a figure, ridiculous as one of Molière's marquises, sprang into the room. Picture to yourself a little chubby-faced fellow, decked out with ribbons from top to toe, his face covered with beauty spots, and wearing on his head a wig of most incredible dimensions. He carried himself erect, and advanced with his hand on the hilt of his sword. His absurd physiognomy was thickly smeared with snuff, of which his clothes had received a tolerable allowance. This is a pretty accurate description of the Marquis of Bernardini (for such was the name by which he was announced), who, somewhat inebriated, approached the table, spread for the frugal repast, thus disturbing the perfect good humour of the four companions.

"Good day, old fellow!" murmured he to the elder Kalf, chucking him under the chin. "Ha! a sailor!" added he, at the sight of his jacket. "Can I believe my eyes? The brilliant Count Duveau, my pupil in Parisian grace, a sailor also! What would be said at court, if he were to be seen in such accoutrements? A sailor! a sailor! Madame de Carnavalet would faint at the very sight. And this great dark man, who gazes at me with so threatening an air, a sailor! What a trio of companions for this little brunette! Ha! she is a *vivandière!*"

Catherine, always careful to please the Czar, had retained her working dress.

Peter, who had at first been amused at this scene, had commanded, by a sign, that the tipsy marquis should not be

interrupted; but at last, tired of so much impertinence, he sent the bold fellow, with one kick, to the other end of the apartment. Young Kalf assisted his friend to rise, and dragged him away.

"What have you done, you idiot?" said he, sharply. "Do you know that it is Peter the Great to whom you have been speaking? And how have you behaved before this remarkable man? What sort of respect have you paid to his majesty, Marquis of Bernardini?"

"Ah! that is Peter I.!" cried the marquis; "he is a great man, or I do not know who is. I believe that we are fated to offend him. My uncle Bernard lent money to his rival Charles XII., and I have just been speaking unbecomingly to him. Curse my fate! But who on earth would recognise Peter, the conqueror of the Swedes, in the garb of a carpenter?"

"And you must put on the garb of a Dutch sailor to-morrow, marquis, if you wish to make amends for your foolishness and find favour with the Czar. In the meantime come to bed, for you must want sleep."

"Well, farewell! It shall be as you desire, my dear Duveau. To-morrow, then, the carpenter's jacket; I am ready to exchange my fashionable attire for your hatchet, since your ship-building business brings you in so large an income; whilst, without my uncle Bernard, and without your purse during your stay in France, I should not have been able to play at *lansquenet* at the last entertainment of the Regent."

The young fop was not devoid of sense; the next day he was up betimes, and, at the levee of the Czar and Czarina, might have been taken for an old sailor employed in the cottage of Saardam, who was desirous of paying his respects to the empress, since her arrival in Holland. The disguise could not have been more complete; but Peter soon recognised the little marquis of the previous day.

"These French are a comical people," said he; "I have not yet visited them, and they already amuse me."

The pretended old Saardam sailor, after having obtained an audience of the illustrious pair, thus expressed himself:

"Pardon, lady, the Dutch eccentricities of an old mariner, if he has taken not a little rum and strong liquor, in order more worthily to celebrate the arrival of his old lord and master, Peterbas."

Peter again smiled; indeed, he could not long remain angry with a toper, at least, if he were not his brother-in-law. Who does not know how to compassionate the failings from which he has himself suffered?

Bernardini, profiting by the instructions of his friend Kalf, had tattooed his two arms, so as to recall to the mind of Catherine three wounds, which the Czar had formerly given himself in the cottage at Saardam.

"Only look," said she to her husband, in a tone of gentle reproach; these are exactly like those bad cuts you accidentally gave yourself with your hatchet."

The great man was sensible of the ingenious imitation of the wounds of the carpenter Peterbas.

"Judge from that, madam," pursued the marquis, "if I am not justified in getting a little drunk to celebrate the return of one, to whom I am so devotedly attached that the slightest wound inflicted upon his person is repeated upon mine."

Old Kalf was astounded; his son secretly applauded the inexhaustible resources of French wit; and Catherine became pale and red alternately with embarrassment and pleasure: but Peter was touched.

"That is right, marquis," cried he; "it is thus people ought to repair their faults. Come to my arms, the wounds upon which you have imitated so exactly!"

Peter overwhelmed the marquis with questions respecting the reign of Louis XIV., which had just come to a close, and the commencement of the regency, young Kalf acting as interpreter.

The day after his last conversation with the marquis, Peter determined to start for France.

"Pray allow me, sire," said his new friend, "to introduce you to my uncle Bernard, and deign to accept me as your cicerone, if you have pardoned my first prank."

Catherine extended her hand, and the Czar, slapping him upon the shoulder, said:

"There is good in you, my French friend, and, if your compatriots resemble you, you must be a charming nation—amusing, witty, and expeditious. I sometimes wish that I could keep pace with you; but I am afraid that during the regency you will progress too rapidly."

The penetrating eye of the Czar already foresaw the French revolution.

Peter went to Paris, but this time without Catherine, the inseparable companion of his travels. His simple tastes made him refuse the honours of the Louvre, where the state apartments had been prepared for him. He took up his abode at the other end of the town, in the Hotel of Lesdiguière, Rue de la Cerisaie, near the Arsenal, the dwelling of the minister Sully, whom the illustrious traveller held in as much esteem as Richelieu. Here it was that the Regent came to welcome the Czar to France.

The following evening Peter accompanied the Regent to the theatre, where a bad tragedy, by Mdlle. Bernard, the niece of Fontenelle, was performed. The death of the sons of Brutus was the subject. The Czar listened with the greatest attention to the interpreters, who translated the piece to him; but, so great was the desire to catch a glimpse of the conqueror of Charles XII., that there was a continual noise round the box.

"M. le Duc," said the Czar, impatiently, to Philip, "what is the reason of this noise? So, people do not come here to hear the pieces which are played?"

"Sire, that is the last thing of which they are thinking; nothing is spoken of but the event of the day; at this moment you occupy their whole attention."

"Singular people," said the Czar; "they instruct and amuse me at the same time."

Meanwhile, the noise at the door of the box increased, so that Peter had the greatest difficulty in listening to the tragedy. A short thin young man, of a swarthy complexion and shrill voice, was especially remarkable from the extraordinary brilliancy of his sallies. A large group of young men, by whom he was surrounded, paid more attention to his sayings than to the play. Next to the Czar, he was the principal object of interest; the Regent himself was less thought of than this little man, who was then the prince of the youth of France.

"Messieurs, messieurs," cried he, exerting all the strength of his small voice, "secure for yourselves a double pleasure. Do not lose this opportunity of beholding the hero of the North, and do not allow my criticisms on this bad tragedy, which they say is a posthumous work of Fontenelle, to pass unnoticed."

Saying these words, the little man gesticulated so vehemently, that he nearly lost his equilibrium. His laugh was sardonic, and his eye sparkled with wit and humour.

The Regent had recognised his voice.

"Sire," said he, turning towards the Czar, "I will introduce to you one of our rising poets, one of our literary celebrities; he writes tragedies, is composing an epic poem, and is compiling a history of the great monarchs of the century. He will not forget yours," added Philip, bowing towards his majesty. "But, in spite of these various works, this Proteus lets fly, every now and then, little satires, full of spleen, which oblige us, in spite of all our indulgence, to place him in the Bastile."

"And you do right, M. le Duc," replied the Czar, quickly; "the representative of the king of France ought to be respected. But introduce me to this eccentric person, who creates such an excitement."

"Willingly, sire; he has been burning with the desire to be introduced to your highness, since the commencement of the play."

The Regent put his head out of the box, and said aloud:

"I say, Master Arouet" (our readers may remember that

this was the original name of Voltaire,) "if you promise to be good, you may come and salute the Emperor of all the Russias."

The duke had scarcely finished his sentence, before the young man rushed into the box, and saluted his Muscovite majesty, whom he seemed to devour with his flashing eyes. He appeared to be studying one whose history he was one day to write.

"Young man," said the Czar, "will you accompany me to Russia, and draw up the history of my travels and expeditions? Ten thousand roubles for my historiographer. Do you accept my offer?"

"I would ask nothing better, sire; but I must first devote myself to my country. I am now composing a 'Life of Louis le Grand;' and I have in contemplation a poem in honour of Henri le Grand. You see mine is the case of all great men, and those of my country especially. Pardon me, sire, if I refuse your proposal."

PETER THE GREAT IN THE FAMILY OF THE KALFS—THE MARQUIS OF BERNARDINI.

"You are right; I cannot fail to approve your patriotism."

The third act was about to commence.

"My dear Arouet," said Philip of Orleans to the young poet, "salute his majesty, and thank him for having made such honourable offers to you; be always wise and prudent, and rely upon my protection. Go!"

"A thousand thanks, my lord; no one shows more kindness towards poor Arouet than you. But do not trouble yourself again to provide a lodging for me."

And the young Arouet retired, saluting the two princes in the most respectful manner. The Regent could not help laughing at his last sally, which recalled to his mind the rhymer's compulsory sojourn in the dungeon of the Bastile.

"That is our most promising writer," said he to the Czar.

In spite of the visit of young Arouet, Peter had not forgotten the tragedy. The sons of Brutus seemed to him worthy of death.

"What!" said he to himself, "conspire against a father who wished to change the vicious organisation of his country?"

Peter naturally took a deep interest in this tragedy, because there was so great a similarity between his own position and that of the Roman consul.

In the mean time, the French marquis, who had returned to France with Peter, had gone to visit his uncle, Samuel Bernard. This rich financier was excessively flattered by the honour which his nephew had received from the Czar of all the Russias. He paid his debts, permitted him to contract fresh ones, and, as he passionately loved celebrity, said—

"I will give you one, two, or even three hundred louis an evening, marquis, for your gaming expenses, if you can persuade the monarch to come and dine at my country house of Sceaux before his departure."

"Many thanks, uncle; you shall have the pleasure of entertaining the Czar; and you can now accommodate me with a bill for 600 louis for present expenditure."

And Samuel Bernard counted out the 600 louis to the gambling and penniless marquis, who could not now dispose of the purse of young Kalf.

When he informed Peter of his uncle's wish, "Well,' replied the prince, "this is what I have long desired. The sight of your uncle, my dear Bernardini, being to me equivalent to the discovery of a mine of gold in one of my poor provinces; for Russia is poor, very poor; and since the rich Bernard has lent money to the Swedes, my enemies, when they were in a very critical situation, I hope that, in the name of the Regent, he will render me the same service. I will go to-morrow to dine at Sceaux."

Samuel Bernard received the Czar with much respect. Peter was accompanied by the Princes Kourakin and Dolgorouki, the Ambassador Tolstoy, the Vice-Chancellor, Baron Scaffirof, etc. etc. The Marquis Bernardini was present at dinner, and entertained the guests with his witty speeches. His was not the wit of Arouet, but it was very tolerable for

the banquet of a farmer of the revenue, whose whole genius was displayed in counting money into his strong coffer. They amused themselves over the dessert by talking about the fictitious money invented *in extremis* by Baron Gortz, minister of the King of Sweden.

"Do you think," said Peter to Samuel Bernard, "that my brother Charles can extricate himself from his difficulties by such means?"

The banker demonstrated to him the utter absurdity of the device. Then, after having quickly concluded a pecuniary transaction with the Czar:

"Will the conqueror of our ally, Charles XII.," added he, "permit me to offer the little odd money of our transaction to the gentlemen of his suite?"

THE REGENT'S OPERA BOX—VOLTAIRE PRESENTED TO PETER THE GREAT.

Peter made a sign in the affirmative, and each of the company was presented with a beautiful china saucer filled with pieces of gold. As they hesitated to receive the present:

"Take it, gentlemen, take it," said Peter, with a smile; "this money is worth more than that of Baron Gortz! You, Mateof," continued he, addressing himself to his old London ambassador, who was one of the company, "can, with that money, discharge your English debts, and then you will be no longer liable to arrest."

Thus it was that Peter profited by every circumstance to give a moral lesson to his subjects. To return to the anecdote of Samuel Bernard; we are assured that he placed in each saucer the sum of 3,000 French louis, in pistoles newly struck, and bearing the effigy of the young king, Louis XV.

In the year 1698, King William despatched two ships of war and a yacht, under the command of Admiral Mitchell, to convey the emperor and his suite to England. On his arrival, he requested to be treated as a private gentleman; and a large house was engaged for him at the end of York-buildings, where it is said that the Marquis of Carmarthen and he spent their evenings in drinking "hot pepper and brandy." One of the Czar's greatest failings was his love of intoxicating drinks.

The greater part of his time was spent either in the dockyards or upon the water, in a sailing-yacht or rowing-boat. He and several of his suite often worked a small decked-boat belonging to the dockyard, the Czar being the helmsman. In the evening, they frequently resorted to a public-house in Great Tower-street, to smoke their pipes and drink beer and brandy.

Peter had a great dislike to a crowd, and, being invited to a grand ball at St. James's, he begged that he might be placed in a small room, from which he could watch the proceedings without being observed. Lord Dartmouth relates, that "he had a great dislike to being looked at, but had a mind to see the king in Parliament; in order to which he was placed in a gutter upon the housetop, to peep in at the window; where he made so ridiculous a figure, that neither king nor people could forbear laughing, which obliged him to retire sooner than he intended."

It is said that the uncouth Czar of Russia was a great favourite with King William, whom he frequently visited, and consulted upon important subjects. His portrait, which the king engaged Sir Godfrey Kneller to paint, may now be seen at Windsor.