

## The Russian Peasant.

Princess Kropotkin in The Youth's Companion.

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the women make the linen. Every woman may not know how to fix the loom, but nearly all know how to weave. That very necessary Winter garment, the sheepskin-polushobok—is from their own sheep, as is the woollen cloth of which the overcoat is made.

The usual costume for a man consists of a white linen shirt worn over the trousers and belted in about the waist; the trousers are of the same coarse linen, and are worn with the ends tucked into the top boots. But as a rule boots are worn only by the richer peasants, and even among them the old people keep them for Sunday wear. The general footgear is bast (or bark fibre) shoes, the legs being wrapped in a bandage of linen or woollen, according to the season. The shoestrings keep these leg wraps from unfastening, and the trousers are tucked inside them. An overcoat with a girdle, a conical hat, and a pair of warm gloves complete the outfit.

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The Russian peasants are a striking example of restricted needs and self-supply. They buy very few articles of either food or clothing. Rye bread, cabbage soup, potatoes, or a porridge of buckwheat or millet form their usual dinner. On Sunday a dish of milk or eggs may be added. From time to time a sheep or pig is killed, and then there is a little meat. Only the richer families or those who live near the great towns drink tea, the poorer having tea only when they are ill, and the only article of everyday use which they buy is salt.

The clothing is altogether homemade. Each family grows the flax out of which