

PETER THE GREAT

VOL. I.

LONDON: PRINTED BY  
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW STREET SQUARE  
AND PARLIAMENT STREET

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# PETER THE GREAT

EMPEROR OF RUSSIA

*A STUDY OF HISTORICAL BIOGRAPHY*

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.



LONDON

SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE, & RIVINGTON

CROWN BUILDINGS, 188 FLEET STREET

1884

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## PREFACE.

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WHAT is said in the following volumes is founded on the diligent—and I hope the impartial—study of original documents in the archives of various countries, of the Russian collections of laws and state papers, of the memoirs and accounts of Peter's contemporaries, of the works of Russian historians, and of most of the important books written on the subject by foreigners.

My views of portions of the history of the times under consideration differ in some respects from those generally entertained. I have not thought it necessary to emphasize them by attempting to refute the views of others, or by disproving anecdotes and stories in such common circulation as to have become almost legendary. I have told the story of Peter's life and reign as I understand it, and I hope that my readers will believe that there is good evidence for every statement that I make.

The books consulted are very many, and it has been impossible to cite them all. As continual references to authorities which are chiefly Russian would appeal to very few of my readers, I have thought it best to avoid them, and have mentioned only my chief authorities at the end of the chapters. Historical students and those conversant with the literature of the period will in this way readily find whence I have taken my facts.

For the convenience of the reader, I have avoided as far as possible the use of purely Russian words and titles, and where the English forms of proper names are not used, an accentual mark has been placed to facilitate pronunciation.

As circumstances have compelled me to live in five different countries since I began this work, often away from public libraries, and with only my own books and my notes to rely upon, I must ask pardon for many deficiencies and slips.

I owe especial thanks for their kind criticism and assistance to Professor Bestúzhef-Riumin of the University of St. Petersburg, and Professor Brückner of the University of Dorpat, whose works I have had frequent occasion to cite, and which often put me on the track of authorities that I might otherwise have overlooked; and more particularly to Professor Claes Annerstedt of the University of Upsala, who has been of great aid in procuring rare Swedish books for me.

The portrait of Peter the Great is engraved after that by Carl de Moor, painted at the Hague in 1717, which was the picture most liked by Peter himself, and preferred for engravings. It was for many years supposed to be lost, but I discovered it at Amsterdam in the possession of a private family, where it had come by inheritance from the painter Liotard, to whom it had been sent by the artist himself.

EUGENE SCHUYLER.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES, ATHENS:

*Thanksgiving Day, November 29, 1883.*

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