TCHERNOMORSK, a government of Caucasia, Russia, consisting of a narrow strip of land between the main Caucasus chain and the Black Sea, formerly inhabited by the Adyghe mountaineers of Caucasus. This strip, pro­tected by the mountains from the cold winds of the north, is in respect of climate one of the most favoured parts of the Black Sea littoral. Owing to extensive emigrations of its inhabitants to Turkey since the Russian conquest of 1864, it is very thinly peopled, the population numbering but 25,980, mostly Russians, on an area of 2824 square miles. The steep slopes of the Caucasus, whose summits range from 2000 to 10,000 feet, are furrowed by narrow gorges, and bear a luxuriant vegetation. The wild vine— a relic of former gardens—grows freely in the forests, which are almost impassable on account of the underwood and decaying trees. The moistness of the atmosphere contri­butes to the spread of the Caucasian fever, which is char­acteristic of the littoral. Notwithstanding the proximity of the mountains to the sea, a road is now being con­structed along the coast,—for military reasons.

Agriculture is carried on, but only in the south,—gardening and the culture of the vine and tobacco being the chief occupations besides fishing and hunting. Some manufactures are rising up at Novorossiysk (3330 inhabitants) and Anapa (5350), the two prin­cipal towns, which also have some foreign trade. The region is a separate province under a military governor residing at Novo­rossiysk, where a new harbour is being constructed.

TCHISTOPOL, a district town of Russia, in the govern­ment of Kazan, 90 miles to the south-east of that town, on the left bank of the Kama. Before 1781 it was a mere village (Tchistoye Pole), founded by runaway serfs ; at present it is extending rapidly and becoming an industrial town, with flour-mills, distilleries, and a few cotton-mills. The merchants carry on a brisk trade in corn brought in from the fertile tracts of Ufa, and shipped down the Kama ; manufactured wares are imported. The popula­tion in 1883 was 18,200.

TCHITA, capital of Transbaikalia, Eastern Siberia, stands 585 miles east of Irkutsk, on the Tchita river, half a mile above its junction with the Ingoda. It was founded in 1851 ; and military considerations led to the selection of this very small village to be the capital of Transbaikalia. Steamers on the Amur and Shilka do not penetrate so far as the upper Ingoda ; they usually stay at Sryetensk, 320 miles distant. But the military supplies sent every year from Transbaikalia to the Amur region usually start from Tchita,—the forest-covered hills on the banks of the Ingoda supplying material for the construction of the barges (from 100 to 200 in number) on which these sup­plies are carried as soon as the melting of the snows in the mountains temporarily raises the water in the river to a sufficient height. Tchita is built of wood, with unpaved streets and wide open spaces. The dryness of the Buriat steppe close by prevents snow from accumulating to any depth, even when the cold is extreme; the merchandise accordingly which is forwarded from Irkutsk to the Nertchinsk district is brought to Tchita on carts, and is there loaded on sledges for the continuation of the journey down the frozen rivers. The population of Tchita in 1883 was 12,600. The inhabitants support themselves by agriculture, by trade in furs, cattle, hides, and tallow, which are bought from the Buriats, and in all kind of manufactured wares imported from Russia and Western Siberia.

TEA. This important food auxiliary, now in daily use as a beverage by probably one-half of the population of the world, is prepared from the leaves of one or more plants belonging to the natural order *Ternströmiaceæ.* The order includes the well-known ornamental genus of shrubs *Camellia,* to which indeed the tea-plants are so closely allied that by many systematic writers they are included in the same genus. The tea-plants have been cultivated in China for at least a thousand years.

As is commonly the case with plants which have been long under cultivation, there is much doubt as to specific distinctions among the varieties of tea. Under the name of *Thea sinensis,* Linnæus originally described tea as a single species ; but with fuller knowledge of the Chinese plants he established two species, *Thea Bohea* and *Thea viridis,* and it was assumed that the former was the source of black teas, while *Thea viridis* was held to yield the green varieties. In 1843, however, Mr Robert Fortune found that, although the two varieties of the plant exist in different parts of China, black and green tea are made indifferently from the leaves of the same plant. The tea­plant is cultivated in China as an evergreen shrub, which grows to a height of from 3 to 5 feet. The stem is bushy, with numerous and very leafy branches ; the leaves are alternate, large elliptical, obtusely serrated, veined, and placed on short channelled foot-stalks. The calyx is small, smooth, and divided into five obtuse sepals. The flowers are white, axillary, and slightly fragrant,—often two or three together on separate pedicels. The corolla has from five to nine petals, cohering at the base. The filaments are short, numerous, and inserted at the base of the corolla ; the anthers are large and yellow, the style trifid, and the capsules three-celled and three-seeded.

The *viridis* varieties are hardier, and possess larger and brighter green leaves than belong to the *Bohea* variety. No strictly wild tea-plants have been discovered in China, but an indigenous tea-tree *(Thea assamica)* is found in Assam, which botanists now incline to regard as the parent species of all cultivated varieties. It differs in many respects from the Chinese plants. The indigenous Assam tea-plant is a tree attaining a height of from 15 to 20 feet, growing in the midst of dense moist jungle and in shady sheltered situations. Its leaves vary considerably in size, form, and venation, being usually smooth, thick, and leathery, lanceolate, ovate lanceolate, or oblong lanceo­late. They are variously dotted with pellucid cells con­taining essential oil, and the number of such cells shown by the leaf is held to be an indication of the quality of tea it will yield. The leaf of the Chinese plant never exceeds 4 inches in length, while that of the Assam tree reaches