defeating the Turks at Senova, near Schipka, and capturing 36,000 men and 90 guns. Dressed with care in white uniform and mounted on a white horse, and always in the thickest of the fray, be was known and adored by his soldiers as the " White General." He returned to Turkestan after the war, and in 1880 and 1881 further distinguished himself in retrieving the disasters inflicted by the Tekke Turkomans, captured Geok-Tepe, and, after much slaughter, reduced the Akhal-Teke country to submission. He was advancing on Askabad and Kalat i-Nadiri when he was disavowed and recalled. He was given the com­mand at Minsk. In the last years of his short life he engaged actively in politics, and made speeches in Paris and in Moscow in the beginning of 1882 in favour of a militant Panslavism, predicting a desperate strife between Teuton and Slav. He was at once recalled to St Petersburg. He was staying at a Moscow hotel, on his way from Minsk to his estate close by, when he died suddenly of heart disease on the 7th of July 1882.

SKOPTSI (Russian *skopels,* a eunuch), a secret religious sect of Russia. It is an offshoot of the sect known as the “ People of God ” or *Khlysti* (see Russia: *Religion).* It was in 1771 in the government of Orel that the Skoptsi were first discovered by the authorities. A peasant, Andrei Ivanov, was convicted of having persuaded thirteen other peasants to mutilate themselves. His assistant was another peasant, known as Selivanov. A legal investigation followed. Ivanov was knouted and sent to Siberia: Selivanov fled, but was arrested in 1775. Skoptsism, however, increased, and Selivanov escaped from Siberia and proclaimed himself the Son of God incarnate in the person of Peter III. Peter had been popular among the *Raskolniki* (schismatics, or dissidents) because he granted them liberty of conscience, and among the peasants because when pillaging the convents he divided their lands among the labourers. Selivanov claimed the title “ God of Gods and King of Kings,” and announced his accomplishment of the salvation of believers through a self-inflicted mutilation. For eighteen years he lived in St Petersburg, in the house of one of his disciples, receiving double homage as Christ and tsar. In 1797 he was rearrested by order of Paul I. and imprisoned in a madhouse. Under Alexander I. Selivanov regained his liberty, but in 1820 was again shut up, this time in a monastery at Sùzdal, where he died in 1832 in his hundredth year. Skoptsism was, however, not exterminated, and grave scandals constantly arose. The most remarkable feature of this extraordinary sect has always been the type of people who joined it. Nobles, military and naval officers, civil servants, priests and merchants were to be found in its ranks, and so rapidly did the numbers increase that 515 men and 240 women were transported to Siberia between 1847 and 1866 without seriously threatening its existence. In 1872 many trials of Skoptsi took place all over Russia. In 1874 the sect numbered at least 5444, including 1465 women. Of these 703 men and 160 women had mutilated themselves. Repres­sive measures proving useless, an unsuccessful attempt was made to kill the sect by ridicule: Skoptsi were dressed up in women’s clothes and paraded with fools’ caps on through the villages. In 1876 130 Skoptsi were sentenced in a batch to transportation. To escape prosecution some of the sect have emigrated, generally to Rumania, where they are known as Lipovans. But though the law is strict—every eunuch being compelled to register—Skoptsism still continues to hold its own in Russia.

As their title indicates, the main feature of the sect is sexual mutilation. This they call their “ baptism of fire.” Of this there are two kinds, the “lesser’’and “greater seal ” *fi.e.* partial and complete mutilation). In this the Skoptsi maintain that they are fulfilling Christ’s counsel of perfection in Matt. xix. 12 and xviii. 8, 9. A terrible operation with similar purpose is sometimes performed on the women. The earliest records of such female mutilations date from 1815. Usually the breasts only are amputated. The Skoptsi do not absolutely condemn marriage, and some are allowed to have one child, those at Bucharest two, before being fully admitted. They are not pessimists, desiring the end of the species, but aim rather at the perfection of the individual. Their religious ceremonies include hymn-singing, addresses and frenzied dancing ending in ecstasy, like that of the *Khlysti* and the Mussulman dancing der­vishes. Strict oaths of secrecy are demanded from all members, who form a kind of mutual-aid association. Meetings are held late **at** night in cellars, and last till dawn. At these the men wear long, wide, white shirts of a peculiar cut with a girdle and large white trousers. Women also dress in white. Either all present wear white stockings or are barefoot. They call themselves “ White Doves.” They have a kind of eucharist, at which pieces of bread consecrated by being placed for a while on the monument erected at Schlusselberg to Selivanov are given the communicants.. The society has not always been content with proselytism. Bribes and violence have been often used. Children are bought from poor parents and brought up in the faith. The Skoptsi are millenarians, and look for a Messiah who will establish an empire of the saints, *i.e.* the pure. But the Messiah, they believe, will not come till the Skoptsi number 144,000 (Rev. xiv. I, 4), and all their efforts are directed to reaching this total. The Skoptsi’s favourite trade is that of money-changer, and on ’Change in St Petersburg there was for long a bench known as the “ Skoptsi’s bench.” Of late years there is said to have been a tendency on the. part of many Skoptsi to consider their creed fulfilled by chaste living merely.

See Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, *The Empire of the Tsars* (Eng. trans., 1896), vol. iii. ; E. Pelikan, *Geschichtlich-medizinische Untersuchungen über das Skopzentum in Russland* (Giessen, 1876); K. K. Grass, *Die geheime heilige Schrift der Skopzen* (Leipzig, 1904) and *Die russischen Sekten* (Leipzig, 1907, &c.).

**SKOWHEGAN,** a township and the county-seat of Somerset county, Maine, U.S.A., on the Kennebec river, about 39 m. N. of Augusta. Pop. (1890) 5068, (1900) 5180, of whom 4266 were inhabitants of Skowhegan village; (1910) 5341. Skowhegan is the terminus of a branch of the Maine Central railway. The township covers an area of about 50 sq. m., and has a public library, a fine court house and Coburn Park. The farms of the township are devoted largely to dairying. Paper and pulp, wooden-ware, woollen and worsted goods, &c., are manufactured. Skowhegan was settled as a part of Canaan about 1770. In 1814 the township of Bloomfield was erected out of the southern portion of Canaan. In 1823 a second township was erected out of what then remained; this was called Milburn at first, but in 1836 the former Indian name, Skowhegan, said to mean "spearing ” or “ watching place,” was adopted. Bloomfield was annexed to Skowhegan in 1861. The village of Skowhegan was incorporated about 1856.

**SKRAM, PEDER** (c. 1500-1581), Danish senator and naval hero, born between 1491 and 1503, at his father’s estate at Urup near Horsens in Jutland. He first saw service in the Swedish war of Christian II. at the battle of Brannkyrka, 1518, and at the battle of Upsala two years later he saved the life of the Danish standard-bearer. For his services in this war he was rewarded with an estate in Norway, where he settled for a time with his young consort Elsebe Krabbe. During “ Grevens Fejde,” or “ the Count’s War,” Skram, whose reputa­tion as a sailor was already established, was sent by the Danish government to assist Gustavus Vasa, then in alliance with Christian III. against the partisans of Christian II., to organize the untried Swedish fleet; and Skram seems, for the point is still obscure, to have shared the chief command with the Swedish Admiral Måns Some. Skram greatly hampered the movements of the Hanseatic fleets who fought on the side of Christian II., captured a whole Lübeck squadron off Svendborg, and prevented the revictualling of Copenhagen by Lübeck. But the incurable suspicion of Gustavus I. minimized the successes of the allied fleets throughout 1535. Skram’s services were richly rewarded by Christian III., who knighted him at his coronation, made him a senator and endowed him with ample estates. The broad- shouldered, yellow-haired admiral was an out-and-out patriot and greatly contributed as a senator to the victory of the Danish party over the German in the councils of Christian III. In 1555, feeling too infirm to go to sea, he resigned his post of admiral; but when the Scandinavian Seven Years’ War broke out seven years later, and the new king, Frederick II., offered Skram the chief command, the old hero did not hesitate a moment. With a large fleet he put to sea in August 1562 and compelled the Swedish admiral, after a successful engagement off the coast of Gotland, to take refuge behind the Skerries. This, however, was his sole achievement, and he was superseded at the end of the year by Herluf Trolle. Skram now retired from active service, but was twice (1565-1568) unsuccessfully besieged by the Swedes in his castle of Laholm, which he and his