

AN OPEN QUESTION.

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THE altar in the Church of our Saviour at Kiev was brilliantly illuminated. Before the image of the Virgin Mother, selected as the guardian of young wives, burned a great candle, and lesser lights twinkled before the other icons.

At the foot of the altar knelt the bride and groom, and behind them stood their relatives in a half-circle. Back of these again the body of the church was crowded with wedding guests, for the bride was the daughter of a high official; and, besides, she had a story; not a very long story, nor a dark one—only that the man kneeling beside her was not her first love.

Rumor whispers that the bride's first love vows have been rudely broken by her father's orders, and the living question in the church is, "Has rumor been correct?"

slender, and her light hair curled in a soft mass over her head, and played hide-and-seek about her dainty ears and the nape of her shapely neck. She stood blushing under the white tulle veil, which covered her from head to foot. As for the groom, the church was alive with whispers.

"He is insignificant-looking."

"He is clever."

HORSE-WINDLASS USED FOR HAULING IN THE SEINE.

events promise no blessings for the future. It is true that they are only referred to sympathetically in the bridal presence, but outside—the long faces, the shaking heads, bear witness to the general sentiment. The vexed question of the day remains unsettled. The bride had said *no* boldly, but the Holy Mother and the saints, what have they said? The discussion still waxes warm over the tea glasses.



VIEW OF THE FLOAT, SHOWING THE DRAWING IN OF THE SEINE.