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**VOLHYNIA** (in Polish *Wolynsk*) a government in West Russia, comprehends the ancient Polish province of that name, which was taken from Poland in 1793 and 1795, and some portions of the ancient palatinate of Kiev. It is one of the few governments of Russia, which have retained the provincial name, and are not called after a town. It lies between 49° 40' and 52° N lat. and 23° 40' and 29° 24' E. long. It is bounded on the north-west by Grodno, on the north-east by Minsk, on the east by Kiev, and on the south by Podolia, and on the west by Galicia and Poland. Its area is 28.300 square miles, divided into twelve circles.

The country is an elevated level extending at the foot of the Carpatian chain. The northern and larger portion has no mountains, but on the northern frontier there are extensive peat moors and morasses, and when there are hills they are clothed with the finest forests, chiefly of pine, though there are some which consist entirely of oaks, beeches and limes. The southern portion is undulating, and has two small mountain-ridges which enter in from Podolia and decline towards the centre of the province. These chains of mountains, or rather hills, for their highest points are not 300 feet above the level of the sea, are covered with forests, and are to be considered as the extreme offsets of the Carpathians on this side. In the southern district they rise to the plateau, called by Eichwald, Awratyn, which he considers as the highest point of Volhynia, to which some give an elevation of 1000 feet. This plateau extends from Awratyn to Bieloserka, (from the north to the south-west) for about one degree; but the breadth is small; its importance however, says Eichwald, may be judged of when we know that it forms the watershed between the Baltic and the Euxine: the rivers, that rise on its northern declivity flow to the Baltic, and those rising on the south declivity to the Euxine; the latter are more considerable, but there is no great river in the government. The largest lakes are in the vicinity of Syak; but even these are of small importance, and rather resemble large ponds, of which are great numbers. There are several mineral-springs, of which however no use is made. The climate resembles that of Southern Germany, and the seasons are the same, only that the winter is rather more severe, and the night frosts protracted to a later period, so that the rivers are every year frozen. Epidemic diseases are rare, and there are no prevalent endemics except the *Plica Polonica*; but a murrain often prevails among the cattle, and swarms of locusts periodically desolate extensive tracts.

**Productions, Agriculture, Manufactures, and Trade.** – Volhynia is one of the most fertile provinces of the Russian empire, and there is perhaps no other which agriculture is so general and so flourishing; ample harvests constantly reward the labour of the farmer; a general failure of the crops scarcely occurs twice or thrice in a century; and partial or local failures have no influence, since, notwithstanding a great consumption for the people, the cattle, and the distilleries, there is still a large annual surplus. But it is not to be inferred that the people are good farmers; they do not manure and till their fields any better than the Poles in general; their farming implements are equally rude, and the only advantage they have over them is perhaps that their cattle are better fed. The rich crops of grain are to be attributed to the fertile soil. In the northern border, where there are many marshes, there are the most luxuriant pastures, in which the grass is so high as almost to hide the

smaller cattle (sheep and goats) that feed in them. Hassel says that in ordinary years the land yields tenfold. Besides rye, barley of several kinds, oats, millets (which thrives especially in the heavy marshlands), the farmers cultivate several species of wheat of the finest quality, which is heavier and more farinaceous than that produced in any other part of Poland (meaning Poland in its ancient extent). The annual produce is about four and in some years five millions of chetwerts: the surplus, after deducting the seed-corn for the following year and that consumed in the province, is seldom much less than a million of chetwerts, and sometimes more. Flax and hemp are grown in great abundance, and here and there rapeseed, tobacco, and pulse, but only for home consumption: linseed, hempseed, and oil are exported. Horticulture is not much attended to; however all the ordinary vegetables are cultivated in the gardens, and in those of the nobles all such kinds of vegetables are cultivated as are produced in Germany. In some parts mustard, saffron, and capsicum are grown; hops are generally cultivated, tobacco in the gardens, and in the fields and meadows the people gather chamomile, creeping panic-grass (*Panicum dactylon*, *Manne de Pologne*) and wild asparagus. Most kinds of fruits would suit the climate, but the better kinds are seen only in the gardens of the nobles: the peasants have apples, pears, cherries, and plums, from which they obtain liqueurs and brandy; but they are of inferior kinds. The forests, especially in the north and north-eastern parts, are very extensive; they are partly of firs, partly of other trees. Great quantities of timber and fire-wood are conveyed to the Dnieper, partly by rafts, partly by land-carriage; the forests also furnish much pitch, tar, charcoal and potash. The wild animals found in them are stags, elks, fallow-deer, wild boars, hares, squirrels, martens, polecats, weasels, beavers, and otters, a few bears, lynxes, and wild-cats, and many wolves and foxes. It is said, that the European bison is still occasionally seen in the north-western forests. Wild berries of various kinds abound, and truffles and mushrooms are commonly met with.

The rich pastures are very favourable to the breeding of cattle. The Volhynian oxen are fine animals, and great numbers are exported. The management of the dairy is not well understood, and the butter and cheese produced are scarcely sufficient. The horse, when proper attention is paid to it, is larger and stronger than the other Polish horses, though of the same breed; the studs of the nobility furnish horses for the heavy cavalry, but the horses of the peasants and poor Jews are in general far inferior. The sheep are of the Polish or German breed, and some rich landowners have introduced merinos with great advantage. The farmer has fewer goats than swine; the poultry is of the ordinary kinds; they have very great numbers of bees, and the honey is celebrated for its good quality. The rivers furnish abundance of fish, and on all estates there are regular carpponds.

The only mineral is bog-iron; there are salpetre, stone for building, and millstones; all which are exported; potter's clay, porcelain clay and limestone.

Though Volhynia is naturally an agricultural country, it is further advanced in many branches of manufacturing industry than any other of the dismembered Polish provinces. Not only do the women in the villages knit, spin, and make coarse linen and woollen cloth, but the number of manufactories, properly so called, which in 1808 was 67, and in 1834 (according to Schnitzler) 211, is now (1843) nearly 300. The principal articles are linen, leather, woollen-cloths, earthenware, porcelain and paper.

Volhynia is not favourable situated for commerce, as it has no large navigable rivers; but the Dnieper is near enough to afford an easy communication with Odessa. The articles exported are the natural productions, which have been already enumerated, and some manufactured goods. The cattel,

horses, honey, and wax find a ready market in Austria and Poland; whither they are conveyed by the Jews, who have the whole trade of the province in their hands. There are great fairs at Dubno and Ostrog.

**The population** consists of – 1. Rusniaks, who are the majority, almost all the peasants being of that branch, which, though evidently Russian, cannot well be comprehended either in the Great or Little Russians. 2. Poles, comprising the nobles and most of the citizens. 3. Jews, of whom are above 40.000. Disseminated among those three nations there are some Great Russians, Germans, Moldavians, Tartars and gypsies. The great majority belong to the Russian-Greek Church, and are under the bishop of Volhynia, who has 1570 churches, including 12 cathedrals, in his diocese; his residence is at Zitomir. The Roman Catholics have a bishop of their own at Luzk, 94 churches, and several convents. The United Greeks have some convents, and the Jews their synagogues. Public education is more general than in many other government of the Russian empire, but the number of schools and scholars cannot be stated with any degree of accuracy.

**The principal towns** are – Schitomir ( in Polish Zitomierz), the capital of the government, situated on the river Teterow. Before it came under the dominion of Russia, it was an insignificant place, with less than 2000 inhabitants. It has now 8500, or, according to some accounts, 11.500, who have a considerable trade in woollen-cloths, linen, silks, calicoes, leather, wax, and honey, and Moldavian and Hungarian wines, with the adjoining provinces. Berdykziew, an ugly ill-built town, is one of the most considerable in the country; it has several churches, and a large fortified Carmelite convent. The population, which we have set down at 9000, is stated in a recent Russian official journal to be now between 30.000 and 40.000, of whom a great proportion are Jews; there are several respectable Christian merchants, who carry on a considerable trade in the productions of the country. Iaslau, with 5000 inhabitants, is built like most ancient Polish towns, but is not so dull; it has four Greek churches and one Roman Catholic church, a monastery, and a synagogue. The inhabitants have some manufactories, six annual fairs, and a brisk trade in the produce and manufactures of the country. Ostrog, on the Wellija, consists of the old and the new towns; it contains an ancient castle, several Greek and Roman Catholic churches, a Basilian convent and school. The inhabitants, of whom many are Jews, carry on a considerable trade; the annual fairs are well attended. Ostrog is celebrated also having very early possessed a Russian press, where the first complete Bible in the Russian language was printed in 1581. Kremenetz (in Polish, *Krzemieniec*) is situated at the foot of a high mountain, on which there is a castle or citadel. It has several Greek churches, a monastery, a school, and 8000 inhabitants. It was besieged and taken by the Mongols in 1240.

(Brockhaus, *Conversations Lexikon*; Schnitzler, *La Russie, la Pologne, et la Finlande*; Hassel, *Das Russische Reich in Europa*; Stein, *Statistisches Lexikon*.)

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