VARIOUS

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Содержание

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AMMALÁT BEK

A TRUE TALE OF THE CAUCASUS

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN OF MARLÍNSKI. BY THOMAS B. SHAW, B.A. OF CAMBRIDGE, ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE IMPERIAL LYCEUM OF TSARSKOË SELO.

THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

The English mania for travelling, which supplies our continental neighbours with such abundant matter for wonderment and witticism, is of no very recent date. Now more than ever, perhaps, does this passion seem to possess us:

> "——tenet insanabile multos
> *Terrarum* κακοηθες, et ægro in corde senescit:"

when the press groans with "Tours," "Trips," "Hand-books," "Journeys," "Visits."

In spite of this, it is as notorious as unaccountable, that England knows very little, or at least very little correctly, of the social condition, manners, and literature of one of the most powerful among her continental sisters.

The friendly relations between Great Britain and Russia, established in the reign of Edward V., have subsisted without interruption since that epoch, so auspicious to both nations: the bond of amity, first knit by Chancellor in 1554, has never since been relaxed: the two nations have advanced, each at its own pace, and by its own paths, towards the sublime goal of improvement and civilization—have stood shoulder to shoulder in the battle for the weal and liberty of mankind.

It is, nevertheless, as strange as true, that the land of Alfred

and Elizabeth is yet but imperfectly acquainted with the country of Peter and of Catharine. The cause of this ignorance is assuredly not to be found in any indifference or want of curiosity on the part of English travellers. There is no lack of pilgrims annually leaving the bank of Thames,

> "With cockle hat and staff,
> With gourd and sandal shoon;"

armed duly with note-book and "patent Mordan," directing their wandering steps to the shores of Ingria, or the gilded cupolas of Moscow. But a very short residence in the empire of the Tsar will suffice to convince a foreigner how defective, and often how false, is the information given by travellers respecting the social and national character of the Russians. These abundant and singular misrepresentations are not, of course, voluntary; and it may not be useless to point out their principal sources.

The chief of these is, without doubt, the difficulty and novelty of the language, and the unfortunate facility of travelling over the beaten track—from St Petersburg to Moscow, and from Moscow, perhaps, to Nijny Nóvgorod, without any acquaintance with that language. The foreigner may enjoy, during a visit of the usual duration, the hospitality for which the higher classes are so justly celebrated; but his association with the nobility will be found an absolute obstacle to the making even a trifling progress in the Russian language; which, though now regaining a degree

of attention from the elevated classes,[1] too long denied to it by those with whom their native tongue *was* an unfashionable one —he would have no occasion at all to speak, and not even very frequent opportunities of hearing.

But even in those rare cases where the stranger united to a determination to study the noble and interesting language of the country, an intention of remaining here long enough to learn it, he was often discouraged by the belief, that the literature was too poor to repay his time and labour. Besides, the Russian language has so little relation to the other European tongues—it stands so much alone, and throws so little direct light upon any of them, that another obstacle was thrown into his way.

The acquisition of any one of that great family of languages, all derived, more or less remotely, from the Latin, which extends over the whole south and west of Europe, cannot fail to cast a strong light upon the other cognate dialects; as the knowledge of any one of the Oriental tongues facilitates, nay almost confers, a mastery over the thousand others, which are less languages of distinct type than dialects of the same speech, offshoots from the same stock.

Add to this, the extraordinary errors and omissions which abound in every disquisition hitherto published in French, English, and German periodicals with regard to Russian

[1] There is, strictly speaking, no middle class in Russia; the "bourgeoisie," or merchants, it is true, may seem to form an exception to this remark, but into their circles the traveller would find it, from many reasons, difficult, and even impossible, to enter.

literature, and deform those wretched rags of translation which are all that has been hitherto done towards the reproduction, in our own language, of the literature of Russia. These versions were made by persons utterly unacquainted with the country, the manners, and the people, or made after the Russian had been distilled through the alembic of a previous French or German translation.

Poetry naturally forces its way into the notice of a foreign nation sooner than prose; but it is, nevertheless, rather singular than honourable to the literary enterprise of England, that the present is the first attempt to introduce to the British public any work of Russian Prose Fiction whatever, with any thing like a reasonable selection of subject and character, at least *directly* from the original language.

The two volumes of Translations published by Bowring, under the title of "Russian Anthology," and consisting chiefly of short lyric pieces, would appear at first sight an exception to that indifference to the productions of Russian genius of which we have accused the English public; and the popularity of that collection would be an additional encouragement to the hope, that our charge may be, if not ill-founded, at least exaggerated.

We are willing to believe, that the degree—if we are rightly informed, no slight one—of interest with which these volumes were welcomed in England, was sufficient to blind their readers to the extreme incompetency with which the translations they contained were executed.

It is always painful to find fault—more painful to criticise with severity—the work of a person whose motive was the same as that which actuates the present publication; but when the gross unfaithfulness[2] exhibited in the versions in question tends to give a false and disparaging idea of the value and the tone of Russian poetry, we may be excused for our apparent uncourteousness in thus pointing out their defects.

It will not, we trust, be considered out of place to give our readers a brief sketch of the history of the Russian literature; the origin, growth, and fortunes of which are marked by much that is peculiar. In doing this we shall content ourselves with noting, as briefly as possible, the events which preceded and accompanied the birth of letters in Russia, and the evolution of a literature not elaborated by the slow and imperceptible action of time, but

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[2] In making so grave a charge, proof will naturally be required of us. Though we might fill many pages with instances of the two great sins of the translator, commission and omission, the *poco piu* and *poco meno*, we will content ourselves with taking, *ad aperturam libri*, an example. At page 55 of the Second Part of Bowring's Russian Anthology, will be found a short lyric piece of Dmítrieff, entitled "To Chloe." It consists of five stanzas, each of four very short lines. Of these five stanzas, three have a totally different meaning in the English from their signification in the Russian, and of the remaining two, one contains an idea which the reader will look for in vain in the original. This carelessness is the less excusable, as the verses in question present nothing in style, subject, or diction, which could offer the smallest difficulty to a translator. Judging this to be no unfair test, (the piece in question was taken at random,) it will not be necessary to dilate upon minor defects, painfully perceptible through Bowring's versions; as, for instance, a frequent disregard of the Russian metres —sins against *costume*, as, for example, the making a hussar (a *Russian* hussar) swear by his *beard*, &c. &c. &c.

bursting, like the armed Pallas, suddenly into light.

In performing this task, we shall confine our attention solely to the department of Prose Fiction, looking forward meanwhile with anxiety, though not without hope, to a future opportunity of discussing more fully the intellectual annals of Russia.

In the year of redemption 863, two Greeks of Thessalonika, Cyril[3] and Methodius, sent by Michael, Emperor of the East, conferred the precious boon of alphabetic writing upon Kostisláff, Sviatopólk, and Kótsel, then chiefs of the Moravians.

The characters they introduced were naturally those of the Greek alphabet, to which they were obliged, in order to represent certain sounds which do not occur in the Greek language,[4] to add a number of other signs borrowed from the Hebrew, the Armenian, and the Coptic. So closely, indeed, did this alphabet, called the Cyrillian, follow the Greek characters, that the use of the aspirates was retained without any necessity.

These characters (with the exception of a few which are omitted in the Russian) varied surprisingly little in their form,[5]

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[3] Cyril was the ecclesiastical or claustral name of this important personage, his real name was Constantine.

[4] For instance, the *j*, (pronounced as the French *j*), *ts, sh, shtsh, tch, ui, yä*. As the characters representing these sounds are not to be found in the "case" of an English compositor, we cannot enter into their Oriental origin.

[5] Not to speak of the capitals, the γ, δ, ζ, κ, λ, μ, ο, π, ρ, ς, φ, χ, θ, have undergone hardly the most trifling change in form; ψ, ξ, ω, though they do not occur in the Russian, are found in the Slavonic alphabet. The Russian pronunciation of their letter B, which agrees with that of the modern Greeks, is V, there being another character for the *sound* B.

and perhaps without any change whatever in their vocal value, compose the modern alphabet of the Russian language; an examination of which would go far, in our opinion, to settle the long agitated question respecting the ancient pronunciation of the classic languages, particularly as Cyril and his brother adapted the Greek alphabet to a language totally foreign from, and unconnected with, any dialect of Greek.

In this, as in all other languages, the translation of the Bible is the first monument and model of literature. This version was made by Cyril immediately after the composition of the alphabet. The language spoken at Thessalonika was the Servian: but from the immense number of purely Greek words which occur in the translation, as well as from the fact of the version being a strictly literal one, it is probable that the Scriptures were not translated into any specific spoken dialect at all; but that a kind of *mezzo-termine* was selected—or rather formed—for the purpose. What we have advanced derives a still stronger degree of probability from the circumstance, that the Slavonic Bible follows the Greek *construction*. This Bible, with slight changes and corrections produced by three or four revisions made at different periods, is that still employed by the Russian Church; and the present spoken language of the country differs so widely from it, that the Slavonian of the Bible forms a separate branch of education to the priests and to the upper classes—who are instructed in this *dead* language, precisely as an Italian must study Latin in order to read the Bible.

Above the sterile and uninteresting desert of early Russian history, towers, like the gigantic Sphynx of Ghizeh over the sand of the Thebaid, one colossal figure—that of Vladímir Sviatoslávitch; the first to surmount the bloody splendour of the Great Prince's bonnet[6] with the mildly-radiant Cross of Christ.

From the conversion to Christianity of Vladímir and his subjects—passing over the wild and rapacious dominion of the Tartar hordes, which lasted for about 250 years—we may consider two languages, essentially distinct, to have been employed in Russia till the end of the 17th century—the one the written or learned, the other the spoken language.

The former was the Slavonian into which the Holy Scriptures were translated: and this remained the learned or official language for a long period. In this—or in an imitation of this, effected with various degrees of success—were compiled the different collections of Monkish annals which form the treasury whence future historians were to select their materials from among the valuable, but confused accumulations of facts; in this the solemn acts of Government, treaties, codes, &c., were composed; and the few writings which cannot be comprised under the above classes[7] were naturally compiled in the language,

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[6] The crown was not worn by the ancient Russian sovereigns, or "Grand Princes," as they were called; the insignia of these potentates was a close skull-cap, called in Russian shápka, bonnet; many of which are preserved in the regalia of Moscow. This bonnet is generally surrounded by the most precious furs, and gorgeously decorated with gems.

[7] For instance, sermons, descriptions, voyages and travels, &c. Two of the last-

emphatically that of the Church and of learning.

The sceptre of the wild Tartar Khans was not, as may be imagined, much allied to the pen; the hordes of fierce and greedy savages which overran, like the locusts of the Apocalypse, for two centuries and a half the fertile plains of central and southern Russia, contented themselves with exacting tribute from a nation which they despised probably too much to feel any desire of interfering with its language; and the dominion of the Tartars produced hardly any perceptible effect upon the Russian tongue.[8]

It is to the reign of Alexéi Mikháilovitch, who united Little Russia to Muscovy, that we must look for the germ of the modern literature of the country: the language had begun to feel the influence of the Little Russian, tinctured by the effects of Polish civilization, and the spirit of classicism which so long distinguished the Sarmatian literature.

The impulse given to this union, of so momentous an import to the future fortunes of the empire, at the beginning of the year 1654, would possibly have brought forth in course of time a literature in Russia such as we now find it, had not the extraordinary reign, and still more extraordinary character, of Peter the Great interposed certain disturbing—if, indeed, they

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mentioned species of works are very curious from their antiquity. The Pilgrimage to Jerusalem of Daniel, prior of a convent, at the commencement of the 12th century; and the Memoirs of a Journey to India by Athanase Nikítin, merchant of Tver, made about 1470.

[8] The only traces left on the *language* by the Tartar domination are a few words, chiefly expressing articles of dress.

may not be called in some measure impeding—forces. That giant hand which broke down the long impregnable dike which had hitherto separated Russia from the rest of Europe, and admitted the arts, the learning, and the civilization of the West to rush in with so impetuous a flood, fertilizing as it came, but also destroying and sweeping away something that was valuable, much that was national—that hand was unavoidably too heavy and too strong to nurse the infant seedling of literature; and the command and example of Peter perhaps rather favoured the imitation of what was good in other languages, than the production of originality in his own.

This opinion, bold and perhaps rash as it may appear to Russians, seems to derive some support, as well as illustration, from the immense number of foreign words which make the Russian of Peter's time

> "A Babylonish dialect;"

the mania for every thing foreign having overwhelmed the language with an infinity of terms rudely torn, not skilfully adapted, from every tongue; terms which might have been—have, indeed, since been—translated into words of Russian form and origin. A review of the literary progress made at this time will, we think, go far to establish our proposition; it will exhibit a very large proportion of translations, but very few original productions.

From this period begins the more immediate object of the present note: we shall briefly trace the rise and fortunes of the

present, or vernacular Russian literature; confining our attention, as we have proposed, to the Prose Fiction, and contenting ourselves with noting, cursorily, the principal authors in this kind, living and dead.

At the time of Peter the Great, there may be said to have existed (it will be convenient to keep in mind) three languages —the Slavonic, to which we have already alluded; the Russian; and the dialect of Little Russia.

The fact, that the learned are not yet agreed upon the exact epoch from which to date the origin of the modern Russian literature, will probably raise a smile on the reader's lip; but the difficulty of establishing this important starting-point will become apparent when he reflects upon the circumstance, that the literature is—as we have stated—divisible into two distinct and widely differing regions. It will be sufficiently accurate to date the origin of the modern Russian literature at about a century back from the present time; and to consider Lomonósoff as its founder. Mikháil Vassílievitch Lomonósoff, born in 1711, is the author who may with justice be regarded as the Chaucer or the Boccacio of the North: a man of immense and varied accomplishments, distinguished in almost every department of literature, and in many of the walks of science. An orator and a poet, he adorned the language whose principles he had fixed as a grammarian.

He was the first to write in the spoken language of his country, and, in conjunction with his two contemporaries, Soumarókoff

and Kheráskoff, he laid the foundations of the Russian literature.

Of the other two names we have mentioned as entitled to share the reverence due from every Russian to the fathers of his country's letters, it will be sufficient to remark, that Soumarókoff was the first to introduce tragedy and opera, and Kheráskoff, the author of two epic poems which we omit to particularize, as not coming within our present scope, wrote a work entitled "Cadmus and Harmonia," which may be considered as the first romance. It is a narrative and metaphysical work, which we should class as a "prose poem;" the style being considerably elevated above the tone of the "Musa pedestris."

The name of Emín comes next in historical, though not literary, importance: though the greater part of his productions consists of translations, particularly of those shorter pieces of prose fiction called by the Italians "novelle," he was the author of a few original pieces, now but little read; his style bears the marks, like that of Kheráskoff, of heaviness, stiffness, and want of finish.

The reputation of Karamzín is too widely spread throughout Europe to render necessary more than a passing remark as to the additions made by him to the literature of his country in the department of fiction: he commenced a romance, of which he only lived to finish a few of the first chapters.

Naréjniy was the first to paint the real life of Russia—or rather of the South or Little Russia: in his works there is a good deal of vivacity, but as they are deformed by defects both in style

and taste, his reputation has become almost extinct. We cannot quit this division of our subject, which refers to romantic fiction anterior to the appearance of the regular historical novel, without mentioning the names of two, among a considerable number of authors, distinguished as having produced short narratives or tales, embodying some historical event—Polevói and Bestónjeff—the latter of whom wrote, under the name of Marlínski, a very large number of tales, which have acquired a high and deserved reputation.

It is with Zagóskin that we may regard the regular historical novel—viewing that species of composition as exemplified in the works of Scott—as having commenced.

With reference to the present state of romance in Russia, the field is so extensive as to render impossible, in this place, more than a cursory allusion to the principal authors and their best-known works: in doing which, we shall attend more exclusively to those productions of which the subject or treatment is purely national.

One of the most popular and prolific writers of fiction is Zagóskin, whose historical romance "Yoúriy Milosláffskiy," met with great and permanent success. The epoch of this story is in 1612, a most interesting crisis in the Russian history, when the valour of Mínin enabled his countrymen to shake off the hated yoke of Poland. His other work, "Roslavleóff," is less interesting: the period is 1812. We may also mention his "Iskonsítel"—"the Tempter"—a fantastic story, in which an imaginary being is

represented as mingling with and influencing the affairs of real life.

Of Boulgárin, we may mention, besides his "Ivan Vuíjgin," a romance in the manner of "Gil Blas," the scenery and characters of which are entirely Russian, two historical novels of considerable importance. "The False Dimítri," and "Mazeppa,"—the hero of the latter being *a real person*, and not, as most readers are aware, a fictitious character invented by Byron.

Next comes the name of Lajétchnikoff, whose "Last Page" possesses a reputation, we believe, tolerably extensive throughout Europe. The action passes during the war between Charles XII. and Peter the Great, and Catharine plays a chief part in it, as servant of the pastor Glück, becoming empress at the conclusion. The "House of Ice," by the same writer, is perhaps more generally known than the preceding work. The last-named romance depicts with great spirit the struggle between the Russian and foreign parties in the reign of Anna Ivánovna. But perhaps the most remarkable work of Lajétchnikoff is the romance entitled "Bassourmán," the scene of which is laid under Iván III., surnamed the Great.[9] Another Polevói (Nikolái) produced a work of great merit:—"The Oath at the Tomb of Our

[9] The non-Russian reader must be cautioned not to confuse Iván III. (surnamed Velíkiy, or the Great) with Ivan IV., the Cruel, the latter of whom is to foreigners the most prominent figure in the Russian history. Iván III. mounted the throne in 1462, and his terrible namesake in 1534; the reign of Vassíliy Ivánovitch intervening between these two memorable epochs.

Lord," a very faithful picture of the first half of the fifteenth century, and singular from the circumstance that love plays no part in the drama. Besides this, we owe to Polevói a wild story entitled "Abbaddon." Veltman produced, under the title of "Kostshéi the Deathless," a historical study of the manners of the twelfth century, possessing considerable merit. It would be unjust to omit the name of a lady, the Countess Shíshkin, who produced the historical novel "Mikháil Vassílievitch Skópin-Shúisky," which obtained great popularity.

The picturesque career of Lomonósoff gave materials for a romantic biography of that poet, the work of Xenophónt Polevói, resembling, in its mixture of truth and fiction, the "Wahrheit und Dichtung" of Goethe.

Among the considerable number of romances already mentioned, those exhibiting scenes of private life and domestic interest have not been neglected. Kaláshnikoff wrote "The Merchant Jáloboff's Daughter," and the "Kamtchadálka," both describing the scenery and manners of Siberia; the former painting various parts of that wild and interesting country, the latter confined more particularly to the Peninsula of Kamtchátka. Besides Gógol, whose easy and prolific pen has presented us with so many humorous sketches of provincial life, we cannot pass over Begitchéff, whose "Khólmsky Family" possesses much interest; but the delineations of Gógol depend so much for their effect upon delicate shades of manner, &c., that it is not probable they can ever be effectively reproduced in another language.

Mentioning Peróffsky, whose "Monastírka" gives a picture of Russian interior life, we pass to Gretch, an author of some European reputation. His "Trip to Germany" describes, with singular piquancy, the manners of a very curious race—the Germans of St Petersburg; and "Tchérnaia Jénstchina," "the Black Woman," presents a picture of Russian society, which was welcomed with great eagerness by the public.

The object of these pages being to invite the attention of British readers to a very rich field, in a literature hitherto most unaccountably neglected by the English public, the present would not be a fit occasion to enter with any minuteness into the history of Russian letters, or to give, in fact, more than a passing allusion to its chief features; the translator hopes that he will be excused for the meagreness of the present notice.

He will be abundantly repaid for his exertions, by the discovery of any increasing desire on the part of his countrymen to become more accurately acquainted with the character of a nation, worthy, he is convinced, of a very high degree of respect and admiration. How could that acquaintance be so delightfully, or so effectually made, as by the interchange of literature? The great works of English genius are read, studied, and admired, throughout the vast empire of Russia; the language of England is rapidly and steadily extending, and justice, no less than policy, demands, that many absurd misapprehensions respecting the social and domestic character, no less than the history, of Russia, should be dispelled by truth.

The translator, in conclusion, trusts that it will not be superfluous to specify one or two of the reasons which induced him to select the present romance, as the first-fruit of his attempt to naturalize in England the literature of Russia.

It is considered as a very good specimen of the author's style; the facts and characters are all strictly true;[10] besides this, the author passed many years in the Caucasus, and made full use of the opportunities he thus enjoyed of becoming familiar with the language, manners, and scenery of a region on which the attention of the English public has long been turned with peculiar interest.

The picturesqueness as well as the fidelity of his description will, it is hoped, secure for the tale a favourable reception with a public always "*novitatis avida*," and whose appetite, now somewhat palled with the "Bismillahs" and "Mashallahs" of the ordinary oriental novels, may find some piquancy in a new variety of Mahomedan life—that of the Caucasian Tartars.

The Russian language possessing many characters and some

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[10] The translator recently met in society a Russian officer, who had served with distinction in the country which forms the scene of "Ammalát Bek." This gentleman had intimately known Marlínski, and bore witness to the perfect accuracy of his delineations, as well of the external features of nature as of the characters of his *dramatis personæ*. The officer alluded to had served some time in the very regiment commanded by the unfortunate Verkhóffsky. Our fair readers may be interested to learn, that Seltanetta still lives, and yet bears traces of her former beauty. She married the Shamkhál, and now resides in feudal magnificence at Tarki, where she exercises great sway, which she employs in favour of the Russian interest, to which she is devoted.

few sounds for which there is no exact equivalent in English, we beg to say a word upon the method adopted on the present occasion so to represent the Russian orthography, as to avoid the shocking barbarisms of such combinations as *zh*, &c. &c., and to secure, at the same time, an approach to the correct pronunciation. Throughout these pages the vowels *a, e, i, o, y*, are supposed to be pronounced as in French, the diphthong *ou* as in the word *you*, the *j* always with the French sound.

With respect to the combinations of consonants employed, *kh* has the gutteral sound of the *ch* in the Scottish word *loch*, and *gh* is like a rather rough or coarse aspirate.

The simple *g* is invariably to be uttered hard, as in *gun* or *gall*.

To avoid the possibility of errors, the combination *tch*, though not a very soft one to the eye, represents a Russian sound for which there is no character in English. It is, of course, uttered as in the word *watch*.

As a great deal of the apparent discord of Russian words, as pronounced by foreigners, arises from ignorance of the place of the accent, we have added a sign over every polysyllable word, indicating the part on which the stress is to be laid.

The few preceding rules will, the translator hopes, enable his countrymen to *attack* the pronunciation of the Russian names without the ancient dread inspired by terrific and complicated clusters of consonants; and will perhaps prove to them that the language is both an easy and a melodious one.

St Petersburg, November 10, 1842.

CHAPTER I

"Be slow to offend—swift to revenge!"
Inscription on a dagger of Daghestán.

It was Djoumá.[11] Not far from Bouináki, a considerable village of Northern Daghestán, the young Tartars were assembled for their national exercise called "djigítering;" that is, the horse-race accompanied by various trials of boldness and strength. Bouináki is situated upon two ledges of the precipitous rocks of the mountain: on the left of the road leading from Derbend to Tarki, rises, soaring above the town, the crest of Caucasus, feathered with wood; on the right, the shore, sinking imperceptibly, spreads itself out into meadows, on which the Caspian Sea pours its eternal murmur, like the voice of human multitudes.

A vernal day was fading into evening, and all the inhabitants, attracted rather by the coolness of the breeze than by any feeling of curiosity, had quitted their sáklas,[12] and assembled in crowds on both sides of the road. The women, without veils, and with coloured kerchiefs rolled like turbans round their heads, clad in the long chemise,[13] confined by the short arkhaloúkh, and wide

[11] Djoumá answers to our Sabbath. The days of the Mahomedan week are as follows: Shambi, Saturday; Ikhshambá, Sunday; Doushambá, Monday; Seshambá, Tuesday; Tchershambá, Wednesday; Pkhanshambá, Thursday; Djoumá, Friday.

[12] Sákla, a Circassian hut.

[13] A species of garment, resembling a frock-coat with an upright collar, reaching to

touméns,[14] sat in rows, while strings of children sported before them. The men, assembled in little groups, stood, or rested on their knees;[15] others, in twos or threes, walked slowly round, smoking tobacco in little wooden pipes: a cheerful buzz arose, and ever and anon resounded the clattering of hoofs, and the cry "katch, katch!" (make way!) from the horsemen preparing for the race.

Nature, in Daghestán, is most lovely in the month of May. Millions of roses poured their blushes over the crags; their odour was streaming in the air; the nightingale was not silent in the green twilight of the wood, almond-trees, all silvered with their flowers, arose like the cupolas of a pagoda, and resembled, with their lofty branches twined with leaves, the minarets of some Mussulman mosque. Broad-breasted oaks, like sturdy old warriors, rose here and there, while poplars and chenart-trees, assembled in groups and surrounded by underwood, looked like children ready to wander away to the mountains, to escape the summer heats. Sportive flocks of sheep—their fleeces speckled with rose-colour; buffaloes wallowing in the mud of the fountains, or for hours together lazily butting each other with their horns; here and there on the mountains noble steeds, which

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the knees, fixed in front by hooks and eyes, worn by both sexes.

[14] The trowsers of the *women*: those worn by the men, though alike in form, are called shalwárs. It is an offence to tell a man that he wears the toumán; being equivalent to a charge of effeminacy; and *vice versâ*.

[15] It is the ordinary manner of the Asiatics to sit in this manner in public, or in the presence of a superior.

moved (their manes floating on the breeze) with a haughty trot along the hills—such is the frame that encloses the picture of every Mussulman village. On this Djoumá, the neighbourhood of Bouináki was more than usually animated. The sun poured his floods of gold on the dark walls of the flat-roofed sáklas, clothing them with fantastic shadows, and adding beauty to their forms. In the distance, crawling along the mountain, the creaking arbas[16] flitted among the grave-stones of a little burial-ground ... past them, before them, flew a horseman, raising the dust along the road ... the mountain crest and the boundless sea gave grandeur to this picture, and all nature breathed a glow of life.

"He comes, he comes!" was murmured through the crowd; all was in motion. The horsemen, who till now had been chattering with their acquaintance on foot, or disorderedly riding about the meadow, now leaped upon their steeds, and dashed forward to meet the cavalcade which was descending to the plain: it was Ammalát Bek, the nephew of the Shamkhál[17] of Tarki, with his suite. He was habited in a black Persian cloak, edged with gold-lace, the hanging sleeves thrown back over his shoulders. A Turkish shawl was wound round his arkhaloúkh, which was made of flowered silk. Red shalwárs were lost in his yellow high-heeled riding-boots. His gun, dagger, and pistol, glittered with gold and

[16] A kind of rude cart with two wheels.

[17] The first Shamkháls were the kinsmen and representatives of the Khalifs of Damascus: the last Shamkhál died on his return from Russia, and with him finished this useless rank. His son, Suleiman Pacha, possessed his property as a private individual.

silver arabesque work. The hilt of his sabre was enriched with gems. The Prince of Tarki was a tall, well-made youth, of frank countenance; black curls streamed behind his ears from under his cap—a slight mustache shaded his upper lip—his eyes glittered with a proud courtesy. He rode a bright bay steed, which fretted under his hand like a whirlwind. Contrary to custom, the horse's caparison was not the round Persian housing, embroidered all over with silk, but the light Circassian saddle, ornamented with silver on a black ground; and the stirrups were of the black steel of Kharamán, inlaid with gold. Twenty noúkers[18] on spirited horses, and dressed in cloaks glittering with lace, their caps cocked jauntily, and leaning affectedly on one side, pranced and sidled after him. The people respectfully stood up before their Bek, and bowed, pressing their right hand upon their right knee. A murmur of whispered approbation followed the young chief as he passed among the women. Arrived at the southern extremity of the ground, Ammalát stopped. The chief people, the old men leaning upon their sticks, and the elders of Bouináki, stood round in a circle to catch a kind word from the Bek; but Ammalát did not pay them any particular attention, and with cold politeness replied in monosyllables to the flatteries and obeisances of his inferiors. He waved his hand; this was the signal to commence the race.

Twenty of the most fiery horsemen dashed forward, without

[18] The attendants of a Tartar noble, equivalent to the "henchman" of the ancient Highlanders. The noúker waits behind his lord at table, cuts up and presents the food.

the slightest order or regularity, galloping onward and back again, placing themselves in all kinds of attitudes, and alternately passing each other. At one moment they jostled one another from the course, and at the same time held in their horses, then again they let them go at full gallop over the plain. After this, they each took slender sticks, called djigidís, and darted them as they rode, either in the charge or the pursuit, and again seizing them as they flew, or picking them up from the earth. Several tumbled from their saddles under the strong blows; and then resounded the loud laugh of the spectators, while loud applauses greeted the conqueror; sometimes the horses stumbled, and the riders were thrown over their heads, hurled off by a double force from the shortness of their stirrups. Then commenced the shooting. Ammalát Bek had remained a little apart, looking on with apparent pleasure. His noúkers, one after the other, had joined the crowd of djigíterers, so that, at last, only two were left by his side. For some time he was immovable, and followed with an indifferent gaze the imitation of an Asiatic combat; but by degrees his interest grew stronger. At first he watched the cavaliers with great attention, then he began to encourage them by his voice and gestures, he rose higher in his stirrups, and at last the warrior-blood boiled in his veins, when his favourite noúker could not hit a cap which he had thrown down before him. He snatched his gun from his attendants, and dashed forward like an arrow, winding among the sporters. "Make way—make way!" was heard around, and all, dispersing like a rain-cloud on either

side, gave place to Ammalát Bek.

At the distance of a verst[19] stood ten poles with caps hanging on them. Ammalát rode straight up to them, waved his gun round his head, and turned close round the pole; as he turned he stood up in his stirrups, turned back—bang!—the cap tumbled to the ground; without checking his speed he reloaded, the reins hanging on his horse's neck—knocked off another, then a third—and so on the whole ten. A murmur of applause arose on all sides; but Ammalát, without stopping, threw his gun into the hands of one of his noúkers, pulled out a pistol from his belt, and with the ball struck the shoe from the hind foot of his horse; the shoe flew off, and fell far behind him; he then again took his gun from his noúker, and ordered him to gallop on before him. Quicker than thought both darted forward. When half-way round the course, the noúker drew from his pocket a rouble, and threw it up in the air. Ammalát raised himself in the saddle, without waiting till it fell; but at the very instant his horse stumbled with all his four legs together, and striking the dust with his nostrils, rolled prostrate. All uttered a cry of terror; but the dexterous horseman, standing up in the stirrups, without losing his seat, or even leaning forward, as if he had been aware that he was going to fall, fired rapidly, and hitting the rouble with his ball, hurled it far among the people. The crowd shouted with delight—"Igeed, igeed! (bravo!) Alla valla-ha!" But Ammalát Bek, modestly retiring, dismounted from his steed, and throwing

[19] 3500 English feet—three quarters of a mile.

the reins to his djilladár, (groom,) ordered him immediately to have the horse shod. The race and the shooting was continued.

At this moment there rode up to Ammalát his emdjék,[20] Saphir-Ali, the son of one of the poor beks of Bouináki, a young man of an agreeable exterior, and simple, cheerful character. He had grown up with Ammalát, and therefore treated him with great familiarity. He leaped from his horse, and nodding his head, exclaimed—"Noúker Mémet Rasoúl has knocked up the old cropped[21] stallion, in trying to leap him over a ditch seven paces wide." "And did he leap it?" cried Ammalát impatiently. "Bring him instantly to me!" He went to meet the horse—and without putting his foot in the stirrup, leaped into the saddle, and galloped to the bed of a mountain-torrent. As he galloped, he pressed the horse with his knee, but the wearied animal, not trusting to his strength, bolted aside on the very brink, and Ammalát was obliged to make another turn. The second time, the steed, stimulated by the whip, reared up on his hind-legs in order to leap the ditch, but he hesitated, grew restive, and resisted with his fore-feet. Ammalát grew angry. In vain did Saphir-Ali entreat him not to force the horse, which had lost in many a combat and journey the elasticity of his limbs. Ammalát would not listen to any thing; but urging him with a cry, and striking him with his

[20] Foster-brother; from the word "emdjek"—suckling. Among the tribes of the Caucasus, this relationship is held more sacred than that of nature. Every man would willingly die for his emdjek.

[21] This is a celebrated race of Persian horses, called Teke.

drawn sabre for the third time, he galloped him at the ravine; and when, for the third time, the old horse stopped short in his stride, not daring to leap, he struck him so violently on the head with the hilt of his sabre, that he fell lifeless on the earth.

"This is the reward of faithful service!" said Saphir-Ali, compassionately, as he gazed on the lifeless steed.

"This is the reward of disobedience!" replied Ammalát, with flashing eyes.

Seeing the anger of the Bek, all were silent. The horsemen, however, continued their djigítering.

And suddenly was heard the thunder of Russian drums, and the bayonets of Russian soldiers glittered as they wound over the hill. It was a company of the Kourínsky regiment of infantry, sent from a detachment which had been dispatched to Akoúsh, then in a state of revolt, under Sheikh Ali Khan, the banished chief of Derbend. This company had been protecting a convoy of supplies from Derbend, whither it was returning by the mountain road. The commander of the company, Captain ——, and one officer with him, rode in front. Before they had reached the race-course, the retreat was beaten, and the company halted, throwing aside their havresacks and piling their muskets, but without lighting a fire.

The arrival of a Russian detachment could have been no novelty to the inhabitants of Daghestán in the year 1819; and even yet, it must be confessed, it is an event that gives them no pleasure. Superstition made them look on the Russians as

eternal enemies—enemies, however, vigorous and able; and they determined, therefore, not to injure them but in secret, by concealing their hatred under a mask of amity. A buzz spread among the people on the appearance of the Russians: the women returned by winding paths to the village, not forgetting, however, to gaze secretly at the strangers. The men, on the contrary, threw fierce glances at them over their shoulders, and began to assemble in groups, discussing how they might best get rid of them, and relieve themselves from the podvód[22], and so on. A multitude of loungers and boys, however, surrounded the Russians as they reposed upon the grass. Some of the Kekkhoúds (starosts[23]) and Tehaoúshes (desiátniks[24]) appointed by the Russian Government, hastily advancing to the Captain, pulled off their caps, after the usual salutation, "Khot ghialdi!" (welcome!) and "Yakshimoúsen, tazamoúsen, sen-ne-ma-moúsen," (I greet you,) arrived at the inevitable question at a meeting of Asiatics, "What news?"—"Na khaber?"

"The only news with me is, that my horse has cast a shoe, and the poor devil is dead lame," answered the Captain in pretty good Tartar: "and here is, just *ápropos*, a blacksmith!" he continued, turning to a broad-shouldered Tartar, who was filing the fresh-shod hoof of Ammalát's horse. "Kounák! (my friend,)—shoe my horse—the shoes are ready—'tis but the clink of a hammer, and

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[22] The being obliged to transport provisions.

[23] The chief of a village.

[24] The subordinates of the atarost.

'tis done in a moment!"

The blacksmith turned sulkily towards the Captain a face tanned by his forge and by the sun, looked from the corners of his eyes at his questioner, stroked the thick mustache which overshadowed a beard long unrazored, and which might for its bristles have done honour to any boar; flattened his arákshin (bonnet) on his head, and coolly continued putting away his tools in their bag.

"Do you understand me, son of a wolf race?" said the Captain.

"I understand you well," answered the blacksmith,—"you want your horse shod."

"And I should advise you to shoe him," replied the Captain, observing on the part of the Tartar a desire to jest.

"To-day is a holiday: I will not work."

"I will pay you what you like for your work; but I tell you that, whether you like it or not, you must do what I want."

"The will of Allah is above ours; and he does not permit us to work on Djoumá. We sin enough for gain on common days, so on a holiday I do not wish to buy coals with silver."[25]

"But were you not at work just now, obstinate blockhead? Is not one horse the same as another? Besides, mine is a real Mussulman—look at the mark[26]—the blood of Karabákh."

"All horses are alike; but not so those who ride them:

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[25] Go to the devil.

[26] The Asiatics mark their horses by burning them on their haunch with a hot iron. This peculiar mark, the στιγμα or κοτπα of the Greeks is called "távro."

Ammalát Bek is my aga (lord.)"

"That is, if you had taken it into your head to refuse him, he would have had your ears cropped; but you will not work for me, in the hope that I would not dare to do the same. Very well, my friend! I certainly will not crop your ears, but be assured that I will warm that orthodox back of yours with two hundred pretty stinging nogaikas (lashes with a whip) if you won't leave off your nonsense—do you hear?"

"I hear—and I answer as I did before: I will not shoe the horse—for I am a good Mussulman."

"And I will make you shoe him, because I am a good soldier. As you have worked at the will of your Bek, you shall work for the need of a Russian officer—without this I cannot proceed. Corporals, forward!"

In the mean time a circle of gazers had been extending round the obstinate blacksmith, like a ring made in the water by casting a stone into it. Some in the crowd were disputing the best places, hardly knowing what they were running to see; and at last more cries were heard: "It is not fair—it cannot be: to-day is a holiday: to-day it is a sin to work!" Some of the boldest, trusting to their numbers, pulled their caps over their eyes, and felt at the hilts of their daggers, pressing close up to the Captain, and crying "Don't shoe him, Alékper! Do nothing for him: here's news, my masters! What new prophets for us are these unwashed Russians?" The Captain was a brave man, and thoroughly understood the Asiatics. "Away, ye rascals!" he cried

in a rage, laying his hand on the butt of his pistol. "Be silent, or the first that dares to let an insult pass his teeth, shall have them closed with a leaden seal!"

This threat, enforced by the bayonets of some of the soldiers, succeeded immediately: they who were timid took to their heels —the bolder held their tongues. Even the orthodox blacksmith, seeing that the affair was becoming serious, looked round on all sides, and muttered "Nedjelaim?" (What can I do?) tucked up his sleeves, pulled out from his bag the hammer and pincers, and began to shoe the Russian's horse, grumbling between his teeth, "*Vala billa beetmi eddeem*, (I will not do it, by God!)" It must be remarked that all this took place out of Ammalát's presence. He had hardly looked at the Russians, when, in order to avoid a disagreeable rencontre, he mounted the horse which had just been shod, and galloped off to Bouináki, where his house was situated.

While this was taking place at one end of the exercising ground, a horseman rode up to the front of the reposing soldiers. He was of middling stature, but of athletic frame, and was clothed in a shirt of linked mail, his head protected by a helmet, and in full warlike equipment, and followed by five noúkers. By their dusty dress, and the foam which covered their horses, it might be seen that they had ridden far and fast. The first horseman, fixing his eye on the soldiers, advanced slowly along the piles of muskets, upsetting the two pyramids of fire-arms. The noúkers, following the steps of their master, far from turning

aside, coolly rode over the scattered weapons. The sentry, who had challenged them while they were yet at some distance, and warned them not to approach, seized the bit of the steed bestridden by the mail-coated horseman, while the rest of the soldiers, enraged at such an insult from a Mussulman, assailed the party with abuse. "Hold hard! Who are you?" was the challenge and question of the sentinel. "Thou must be a raw recruit if thou knowest not Sultan Akhmet Khan of Avár,"[27] coolly answered the man in mail, shaking off the hand of the sentry from his reins. "I think last year I left the Russians a keepsake at Báshli. Translate that for him," he said to one of his noúkers. The Aváretz repeated his words in pretty intelligible Russian.

"'Tis Akhmet Khan! Akhmet Khan!" shouted the soldiers. "Seize him! hold him fast! down with him! pay him for the affair of Báshli[28]—the villains cut our wounded to pieces."

"Away, brute!" cried Sultan Akhmet Khan to the soldier who had again seized the bridle of his horse—"I am a Russian general."

"A Russian traitor!" roared a multitude of voices; "bring him to the Captain: drag him to Derbend, to Colonel Verkhóffsky."

"'Tis only to hell I would go with such guides!" said Akhmet,

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[27] The brother of Hassan Khan Djemontái, who became Khan of Avár by marrying the Khan's widow and heiress.

[28] The Russian detachment, consisting on this occasion of 3000 men, was surrounded by 60,000. These were, Ouizmi Karakaidákhsky, the Aváretzes, Akoushínetzes, the Boulinétzes of the Koi-Soú, and others. The Russians fought their way out by night, but with considerable loss.

with a contemptuous smile, and making his horse rear, he turned him to the right and left; then, with a blow of the nogaik,[29] he made him leap into the air, and disappeared. The noúkers kept their eye on the movements of their chief, and uttering their warcry, followed his steps, and overthrowing several of the soldiers, cleared a way for themselves into the road. After galloping off to a distance of scarce a hundred paces, the Khan rode away at a slow walk, with an expression of the greatest *sang-froid*, not deigning to look back, and coolly playing with his bridle. The crowd of Tartars assembled round the blacksmith attracted his attention. "What are you quarrelling about, friends?" asked Akhmet Khan of the nearest, reining in his horse.

In sign of respect and reverence, they all applied their hands to their foreheads when they saw the Khan. The timid or peaceably disposed among them, dreading the consequences, either from the Russians or the Khan, to which this rencontre might expose them, exhibited much discomfiture at the question; but the idle, the ruffian, and the desperate—for all beheld with hatred the Russian domination—crowded turbulently round him with delight. They hurriedly told him what was the matter.

"And you stand, like buffaloes, stupidly looking on, while they force your brother to work like a brute under the yoke!" exclaimed the Khan, gloomily, to the bystanders; "while they laugh in your face at your customs, and trample your faith under

[29] The whip of a Kazak.

their feet! and ye whine like old women, instead of revenging yourselves like men! Cowards! cowards!"

"What can we do?" cried a multitude of voices together; "the Russians have cannon—they have bayonets!"

"And ye, have ye not guns? have ye not daggers? It is not the Russians that are brave, but ye that are cowards! Shame of Mussulmans! The sword of Daghestán trembles before the Russian whip. Ye are afraid of the roll of the cannon; but ye fear not the reproach of cowardice. The fermán of a Russian prístav[30] is holier to you than a chapter of the Koran. Siberia frightens you more than hell. Did your forefathers act, did your forefathers think thus? They counted not their enemies, they calculated not. Outnumbered or not, they met them, bravely fought them, and gloriously died! And what fear ye? Have the Russians ribs of iron? Have their cannon no breach? Is it not by the tail that you seize the scorpion?" This address stirred the crowd. The Tartar vanity was touched to the quick. "What do we care for them? Why do we let them lord it over us here?" was heard around. "Let us liberate the blacksmith from his work—let us liberate him!" they roared, as they narrowed their circle round the Russian soldiers, amidst whom Alékper was shoeing the captain's horse. The confusion increased. Satisfied with the tumult he had created, Sultan Akhmet Khan, not wishing to mix himself up in an insignificant brawl, rode out of the crowd, leaving two noúkers to keep alive the violent spirit among the

[30] A superintendent.

Tartars, while, accompanied by the remainder, he rode rapidly to the ootakh[31] of Ammalát.

"Mayest thou be victorious," said Sultan Akhmet Khan to Ammalát Bek, who received him at the threshold. This ordinary salutation, in the Circassian language, was pronounced with so marked an emphasis, that Ammalát as he kissed him, asked, "Is that a jest or a prophecy, my fair guest?"

"That depends on thee," replied the Sultan. "It is upon the right heir of the Shamkhalát[32] that it depends to draw the sword from the scabbard."

"To sheath it no more, Khan? An unenviable destiny. Methinks it is better to reign in Bouináki, than for an empty title to be obliged to hide in the mountains like a jackal."

"To bound from the mountains like a lion, Ammalát; and to repose, after your glorious toils, in the palace of your ancestors."

"To repose? Is it not better not to be awakened at all?

"Would you behold but in a dream what you ought to possess in reality? The Russians are giving you the poppy, and will lull you with tales, while another plucks the golden flowers of the

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[31] The house, in Tartar, is "ev;" "outakh," mansion; and "sarái," edifice in general; "haram-khanéh," the women's apartments. For palace they employ the word "igarát." The Russians confound all these meanings in the word "sákla," which, in the Circassian language, is house.

[32] The father of Ammalát was the eldest of the family, and consequently the true heir to the Shamkhalát. But the Russians, having conquered Daghestán, not trusting to the good intentions of this chief, gave the power to the younger brother.

garden."[33]

"What can I do with my force?"

"Force—that is in thy soul, Ammalát!... Despise dangers and they bend before you.... Dost thou hear that?" added Sultan Akhmet Khan, as the sound of firing reached them from the town. "It is the voice of victory!"

Saphir-Ali rushed into the chamber with an agitated face.

"Bouináki is in revolt," he hurriedly began; "a crowd of rioters has overpowered the detachment, and they have begun to fire from the rocks."[34]

"Rascals!" cried Ammalát, as he threw his gun over his shoulder. "How dared they to rise without me! Run, Saphir-Ali, threaten them with my name; kill the first who disobeys."

"I have done all I could to restrain them," said Saphir-Ali, "but none would listen to me, for the noúkers of Sultan Akhmet Khan were urging them on, saying that he had ordered them to slay the Russians."

"Indeed! did my noúkers say that?" asked the Khan.

"They did not say so much, but they set the example," said Saphir-Ali.

"In that case they have done well," replied Sultan Akhmet Khan: "this is brave!"

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[33] A *jeu-de-mots* which the Asiatics admire much; "kizil-gulliár" means simply roses, but the Khan alludes to "kizíl," ducats.

[34] The Tartars, like the North American Indians, always, if possible, shelter themselves behind rocks and enclosures, &c., when engaged in battle.

"What hast thou done, Khan!" cried Ammalát, angrily.

"What you might have done long ago!"

"How can I justify myself to the Russians?"

"With lead and steel.... The firing is begun.... Fate works for you ... the sword is drawn ... let us go seek the Russians!"

"They are here!" cried the Captain, who, followed by two men, had broken through the disorderly ranks of the Tartars, and dashed into the house of their chief. Confounded by the unexpected outbreak in which he was certain to be considered a party, Ammalát saluted his enraged guest—"Come in peace!" he said to him in Tartar.

"I care not whether I come in peace or no," answered the Captain, "but I find no peaceful reception in Bouináki. Thy Tartars, Ammalát, have dared to fire upon a soldier of mine, of yours, a subject of our Tsar."

"In very deed, 'twas absurd to fire on a Russian," said the Khan, contemptuously stretching himself on the cushions of the divan, "when they might have cut his throat."

"Here is the cause of all the mischief, Ammalát!" said the Captain, angrily, pointing to the Khan; "but for this insolent rebel not a trigger would have been pulled in Bouináki! But you have done well, Ammalát Bek, to invite Russians as friends, and to receive their foe as a guest, to shelter him as a comrade, to honour him as a friend! Ammalát Bek, this man is named in the order of the commander-in-chief; give him up."

"Captain," answered Ammalát, "with us a guest is sacred. To

give him up would be a sin upon my soul, an ineffaceable shame upon my head; respect my entreaty; respect our customs."

"I will tell you, in your turn—respect the Russian laws. Remember your duty. You have sworn allegiance to the Tsar, and your oath obliges you not to spare your own brother if he is a criminal."

"Rather would I give up my brother than my guest, Sir Captain! It is not for you to judge my promises and obligations. My tribunal is Allah and the padishah! In the field, let fortune take care of the Khan; but within my threshold, beneath my roof, I am bound to be his protector, and I will be!"

"And you shall be answerable for this traitor!"

The Khan had lain in haughty silence during this dispute, breathing the smoke from his pipe: but at the word "traitor," his blood was fired, he started up, and rushed indignantly to the Captain.

"Traitor, say you?" he cried. "Say rather, that I refused to betray him to whom I was bound by promise. The Russian padishah gave me rank, the sardar[35] caressed me—and I was faithful so long as they demanded of me nothing impossible or humiliating. But, all of a sudden, they wished me to admit troops into Avár—to permit fortresses to be built there; and what name should I have deserved, if I had sold the blood and sweat of the Aváretzes, my brethren! If I had attempted this, think ye that I could have done it? A thousand free daggers, a thousand unhired

[35] The commander-in-chief.

bullets, would have flown to the heart of the betrayer. The very rocks would have fallen on the son who could betray his father. I refused the friendship of the Russians; but I was not their enemy —and what was the reward of my just intentions, my honest counsels? I was deeply, personally insulted by the letter of one of your generals, whom I had warned. That insolence cost him dear at Báshli ... I shed a river of blood for some few drops of insulting ink, and that river divides us for ever."

"That blood cries for vengeance!" replied the enraged Captain. "Thou shalt not escape it, robber!"

"Nor thou from me!" shouted the infuriated Khan, plunging his dagger into the body of the Captain, as he lifted his hand to seize him by the collar. Severely wounded, the officer fell groaning on the carpet.

"Thou hast undone me!" cried Ammalát, wringing his hands. "He is a Russian, and my guest!"

"There are insults which a roof cannot cover," sullenly replied the Khan. "The die is cast: it is no time to hesitate. Shut your gate, call your people, and let us attack the enemy."

"An hour ago I had no enemy ... there are no means now for repulsing them ... I have neither powder nor ball ... The people are dispersed."

"They have fled!" cried Saphir-Ali in despair. "The Russians are advancing at full march over the hill. They are close at hand!"

"If so, go with me, Ammalát!" said the Khan. "I rode to Tchetchná yesterday, to raise the revolt along the line ... What

will be the end, God knows; but there is bread in the mountains. Do you consent?"

"Let us go!" ... replied Ammalát, resolvedly.... "When our only safety is in flight, it is no time for disputes and reproaches."

"Ho! horses, and six noúkers with me!"

"And am I to go with you?" said Saphir-Ali, with tears in his eyes—"with you for weal or woe!"

"No, my good Saphir-Ali, no. Remain you here to govern the household, that our people and the strangers may not seize every thing. Give my greeting to my wife, and take her to my father-in-law, the Shamkhál. Forget me not, and farewell!"

They had barely time to escape at full gallop by one gate, when the Russians dashed in at the other.

CHAPTER II

The vernal noon was shining upon the peaks of Caucasus, and the loud voices of the moollahs had called the inhabitants of Tchetchná to prayer. By degrees they came forth from the mosques, and though invisible to each other from the towers on which they stood, their solitary voices, after awaking for a moment the echoes of the hills, sank to stillness in the silent air.

The moollah, Hadji Suleiman, a Turkish devotee, one of those missionaries annually sent into the mountains by the Divan of Stamboul, to spread and strengthen the faith, and to increase the detestation felt by the inhabitants for the Russians, was reposing on the roof of the mosque, having performed the usual call, ablution, and prayer. He had not been long installed as moollah of Igáli, a village of Tchetchná; and plunged in a deep contemplation of his hoary beard, and the circling smoke-wreaths that rose from his pipe, he gazed from time to time with a curious interest on the mountains, and on the defiles which lay towards the north, right before his eyes. On the left arose the precipitous ridges dividing Tchetchná from Avár, and beyond them glittered the snows of Caucasus; sáklas scattered disorderly along the ridges half-way up the mountain, and narrow paths led to these fortresses built by nature, and employed by the hill-robbers to defend their liberty, or secure their plunder. All was still in the village and the surrounding hills; there was

not a human being to be seen on the roads or streets; flocks of sheep were reposing in the shade of the cliffs; the buffaloes were crowded in the muddy swamps near the springs, with only their muzzles protruded from the marsh. Nought save the hum of the insects—nought save the monotonous chirp of the grasshoppers indicated life amid the breathless silence of the mountains; and Hadji Suleiman, stretched under the cupola, was intensely enjoying the stillness and repose of nature, so congenial to the lazy immobility of the Turkish character. Indolently he turned his eyes, whose fire was extinguished, and which no longer reflected the light of the sun, and at length they fell upon two horsemen, slowly climbing the opposite side of the declivity.

"Néphtali!" cried our Moollah, turning towards a neighbouring sákla, at the gate of which stood a saddled horse. And then a handsome Tchetchenetz, with short cut beard, and shaggy cap covering half his face, ran out into the street. "I see two horsemen," continued the Moollah; "they are riding round the village!"

"Most likely Jews or Armenians," answered Néphtali. "They do not choose to hire a guide, and will break their necks in the winding road. The wild-goats, and our boldest riders, would not plunge into these recesses without precaution."

"No, brother Néphtali; I have been twice to Mecca, and have seen plenty of Jews and Armenians every where. But these riders look not like Hebrew chafferers, unless, indeed, they exchange steel for gold in the mountain road. They have no bales of

merchandise. Look at them yourself from above; your eyes are surer than mine; mine have had their day, and done their work. There was a time when I could count the buttons on a Russian soldier's coat a verst off, and my rifle never missed an infidel; but now I could not distinguish a ram of my own afar."

By this time Néphtali was at the side of the Moollah, and was examining the travellers with an eagle glance.

"The noonday is hot, and the road rugged," said Suleiman; "invite the travellers to refresh themselves and their horses: perhaps they have news: besides, the Koran commands us to show hospitality."

"With us in the mountains, and before the Koran, never did a stranger leave a village hungry or sad; never did he depart without tchourek,[36] without blessing, without a guide; but these people are suspicious: why do they avoid honest men, and pass our village by by-roads, and with danger to their life?"

"It seems that they are your countrymen," said Suleiman, shading his eyes with his hand: "their dress is Tchetchná. Perhaps they are returning from a plundering exhibition, to which your father went with a hundred of his neighbours; or perhaps they are brothers, going to revenge blood for blood."

"No, Suleiman, that is not like us. Could a mountaineer's heart refrain from coming to see his countrymen—to boast of his exploits against the Russians, and to show his booty? These are neither avengers of blood nor Abreks—their faces are not

[36] A kind of dried bread.

covered by the báshlik; besides, dress is deceptive. Who can tell that those are not Russian deserters! The other day a Kázak, who had murdered his master, fled from Goumbet-Aoúl with his horse and arms.... The devil is strong!"

"He is strong in them in whom the faith is weak, Néphtali;—yet, if I mistake not, the hinder horseman has hair flowing from under his cap."

"May I be pounded to dust, but it is so! It is either a Russian, or, what is worse, a Tartar Shageed.[37] Stop a moment, my friend; I will comb your zilflárs for you! In half-an-hour I will return, Suleiman, either with them,—or one of us three shall feed the mountain berkoots (eagles.)"

Néphtali rushed down the stairs, threw the gun on his shoulders, leapt into his saddle and dashed down the hill, caring neither for furrow nor stone. Only the dust arose, and the pebbles streamed down after the bold horseman."

"Alla akbér!" gravely exclaimed Suleiman, and lit his pipe.

Néphtali soon came up with the strangers. Their horses were covered with foam, and the sweat-drops rained from them on the narrow path by which they were climbing the mountain. The first was clothed in a shirt of mail, the other in the Circassian dress: except that he wore a Persian sabre instead of a sháshka,[38]

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[37] The mountaineers are bad Mussulmans, the Sooni sect is predominant; but the Daghestánetzes are in general Shageeds, as the Persians. The sects hate each other with all their heart.

[38] The Circassian sabre.

suspended by a laced girdle. His left arm was covered with blood, bound up with a handkerchief, and supported by the sword-knot. The faces of both were concealed. For some time he rode behind them along the slippery path, which overhung a precipice; but at the first open space he galloped by them, and turned his horse round. "Salám aleikom!" said he, opposing their passage along the rugged and half-built road among the rocks, as he made ready his arms. The foremost horseman suddenly wrapped his boúrka[39] round his face, so as to leave visible only his knit brows: "Aleikom Salám!" answered he, cocking his gun, and fixing himself in the saddle.

"God give you a good journey!" said Néphtali. repeating the usual salutation, and preparing, at the first hostile movement, to shoot the stranger.

"God give you enough of sense not to interrupt the traveller," replied his antagonist, impatiently: "What would you with us, Kounák?"[40]

"I offer you rest, and a brother's repast, barley and stalls for your horses. My threshold flourishes by hospitality: the blessing of the stranger increaseth the flock, and giveth sharpness to the sword of the master. Fix not the seal of reproach on our whole village. Let them not say, 'They have seen travellers in the heat of noon, and have not refreshed them nor sheltered them.'"

"We thank you for your kindness; but we are not wont to take

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[39] A rough cloak, used as a protection in bad weather.

[40] Friend, comrade.

forced hospitality; and haste is even more necessary for us than rest."

"You ride to your death without a guide."

"Guide!" exclaimed the traveller; "I know every step of the Caucasus. I have been where your serpents climb not, your tigers cannot mount, your eagles cannot fly. Make way, comrade: thy threshold is not on God's high-road, and I have no time to prate with thee."

"I will not yield a step, till I know who and whence you are!"

"Insolent scoundrel, out of my way, or thy mother shall beg thy bones from the jackall and the wind! Thank your luck, Néphtali, that thy father and I have eaten one another's salt; and often have ridden by his side in the battle. Unworthy son! thou art rambling about the roads, and ready to attack the peaceable travellers, while thy father's corse lies rotting on the fields of Russia, and the wives of the Kazáks are selling his arms in the bazar. Néphtali, thy father was slain yesterday beyond the Térek. Dost thou know me now?"

"Sultan Akhmet Khan!" cried the Tchetchenetz, struck by the piercing look and by the terrible news. His voice was stifled, and he fell forward on his horse's neck in inexpressible grief.

"Yes, I am Sultan Akhmet Khan! but grave this in your memory, Néphtali—that if you say to any one, 'I have seen the Khan of Avár,' my vengeance will live from generation to generation."

The strangers passed on, the Khan in silence, plunged, as

it seemed, in painful recollections; Ammalát (for it was he) in gloomy thought. The dress of both bore witness to recent fighting; their mustaches were singed by the priming, and splashes of blood had dried upon their faces; but the proud look of the first seemed to defy to the combat fate and chance; a gloomy smile, of hate mingled with scorn, contracted his lip. On the other hand, on the features of Ammalát exhaustion was painted. He could hardly turn his languid eyes; and from time to time a groan escaped him, caused by the pain of his wounded arm. The uneasy pace of the Tartar horse, unaccustomed to the mountain roads, renewed the torment of his wound. He was the first to break the silence.

"Why have you refused the offer of these good people? We might have stopped an hour or two to repose, and at dewfall we could have proceeded."

"You think so, because you feel like a young man, dear Ammalát: you are used to rule your Tartars like slaves, and you fancy that you can conduct yourself with the same ease among the free mountaineers. The hand of fate weighs heavily upon us; —we are defeated and flying. Hundreds of brave mountaineers —your noúkers and my own—have fallen in fight with the Russians; and the Tchetchenetz has seen turned to flight the face of Sultan Akhmet Khan, which they are wont to behold the star of victory! To accept the beggar's repast, perhaps to hear reproaches for the death of fathers and sons, carried away by me in this rash expedition—'twould be to lose their confidence for

ever. Time will pass, tears will dry up; the thirst of vengeance will take place of grief for the dead; and then again Sultan Akhmet will be seen the prophet of plunder and of blood. Then again the battle-signal shall echo through the mountains, and I shall once more lead flying bands of avengers into the Russian limits. If I go now, in the moment of defeat, the Tchetchenetz will judge that Allah giveth and taketh away victory. They may offend me by rash words, and with me an offence is ineffaceable; and the revenge of a personal offence would obstruct the road that leads me to the Russians. Why, then, provoke a quarrel with a brave people—and destroy the idol of glory on which they are wont to gaze with rapture? Never does man appear so mean as in weakness, when every one can measure his strength with him fearlessly: besides, you need a skilful leech, and nowhere will you find a better than at my house. To-morrow we shall be at home; have patience until then."

With a gesture of gratitude Ammalát Bek placed his hand upon his heart and forehead: he perfectly felt the truth of the Khan's words, but exhaustion for many hours had been overwhelming him. Avoiding the villages, they passed the night among the rocks, eating a handful of millet boiled in honey, without the mountaineers seldom set out on a journey. Crossing the Koi-Soú by the bridge near the Asheért, quitting its northern branch, and leaving behind them Andéh, and the country of the Boulinétzes of the Koi-Soú, and the naked chain of Salataóu. A rude path lay before them, winding among forests and cliffs

terrible to body and soul; and they began to climb the last chain which separated them on the north from Khounzákh or Avár, the capital of the Khans. The forest, and then the underwood, had gradually disappeared from the naked flint of the mountain, on which cloud and tempest could hardly wander. To reach the summit, our travellers were compelled to ride alternately to the right and to the left, so precipitous was the ascent of the rocks. The experienced steed of the Khan stepped cautiously and surely from stone to stone, feeling his way with his hoofs, and when they slipped, gliding on his haunches down the declivities: while the ardent fiery horse of Ammalát, trained in the hills of Daghestán, fretted, curveted, and slipped. Deprived of his customary grooming, he could not support a two days' flight under the intense cold and burning sunshine of the mountains, travelling among sharp rocks, and nourished only by the scanty herbage of the crevices. He snorted heavily as he climbed higher and higher; the sweat streamed from his poitrel; his large nostrils were dry and parched, and foam boiled from his bit. "Allah berekét!" exclaimed Ammalát, as he reached the crest from which there opened before him a view of Avár: but at the very moment his exhausted horse fell under him; the blood spouted from his open mouth, and his last breath burst the saddle-girth.

The Khan assisted the Bek to extricate himself from the stirrups; but observed with alarm that his efforts had displaced the bandage on Ammalát's wounded arm, and that the blood was soaking through it afresh. The young man, it seemed, was

insensible to pain; tears were rolling down his face upon the dead horse. So one drop fills not, but overflows the cup. "Thou wilt never more bear me like down upon the wind," he said, "nor hear behind thee from the dust-cloud of the race, the shouts, unpleasing to the rival, the acclamations of the people: in the blaze of battle no more shalt thou carry me from the iron rain of the Russian cannon. With thee I gained the fame of a warrior—why should I survive, or it, or thee?" He bent his face upon his knee, and remained silent a long time, while the Khan carefully bound up his wounded arm: at length Ammalát raised his head: "Leave me!" he cried, resolutely: "leave, Sultan Akhmet Khan, a wretch to his fate! The way is long, and I am exhausted. By remaining with me, you will perish in vain. See! the eagle soars around us; he knows that my heart will soon quiver beneath his talons, and I thank God! Better find an airy grave in the maw of a bird of prey, than leave my corse beneath a Christian foot. Farewell, linger not."

"For shame, Ammalát! you trip against a straw....! What the great harm? You are wounded, and your horse is dead. Your wound will soon healed, and we will find you a better horse! Allah sendeth not misfortunes alone. In the flower of your age, and the full vigour of your faculties, it is a sin to despair. Mount my horse, I will lead him by the bridle, and by night we shall be at home. Time is precious!"

"For me, time is no more, Sultan Ahkmet Khan ... I thank you heartily for your brotherly care, but I cannot take advantage

of it ... you yourself cannot support a march on foot after such fatigue. I repeat ... leave me to my fate. Here, on these inaccessible heights, I will die free and contented ... And what is there to recall me to life! My parents lie under the earth, my wife is blind, my uncle and father-in-law the Shamkhál are cowering at Tarki before the Russians ... the Giaour is revelling in my native land, in my inheritance; and I myself an a wanderer from my home, a runaway from battle. I neither can, nor ought to live."

"You ought *not* to talk such nonsense, dear Ammalát:—and nothing but fever can excuse you. We are created that we may live longer than our fathers. For wives, if one has not teazed you enough, we will find you three more. If you love not the Shamkhál, yet love your own inheritance—you ought to live, if but for that; since to a dead man power is useless, and victory impossible. Revenge on the Russians is a holy duty: live, if but for that. That we are beaten, is no novelty for a warrior; to-day luck is theirs, to-morrow it falls to us. Allah gives fortune; but a man creates his own glory, not by fortune, but by firmness. Take courage, my friend Ammalát.... You are wounded and weak; I am strong from habit, and not fatigued by flight. Mount! and we may yet live to beat the Russians."

The colour returned to Ammalát's face ... "Yes, I will live for revenge!" he cried: "for revenge both secret and open. Believe me, Sultan Akhmet Khan, it is only for this that I accept your generosity! Henceforth I am yours; I swear by the graves of my fathers.... I am yours! Guide my steps, direct the strokes of my

arm; and if ever, drowned in softness, I forget my oath, remind me of this moment, of this mountain peak: Ammalát Bek will awake, and his dagger will be lightning!"

The Khan embraced him, as he lifted the excited youth into the saddle. "Now I behold in you the pure blood of the Emírs!" said he: "the burning blood of their children, which flows in our veins like the sulphur in the entrails of the rocks, which, ever and anon inflaming, shakes and topples down the crags." Steadying with one hand the wounded man in the saddle, the Khan began cautiously to descend the rugged croft. Occasionally the stones fell rattling from under their feet, or the horse slid downward over the smooth granite, so that they were well pleased to reach the mossy slopes. By degrees, creeping plants began to appear, spreading their green sheets; and, waving from the crevices like fans, they hung down in long ringlets like ribbons or flags. At length they reached a thick wood of nut-trees; then came the oak, the wild cherry, and, lower still, the tchinár,[41] and the tchindár. The variety, the wealth of vegetation, and the majestic silence of the umbrageous forest, produced a kind of involuntary adoration of the wild strength of nature. Ever and anon, from the midnight darkness of the boughs, there dawned, like the morning, glimpses of meadows, covered with a fragrant carpet of flowers untrodden by the foot of man. The pathway at one time lost itself in the depth of the thicket; at another, crept forth upon the edge of the rock, below which gleamed and

[41] Tchinár, the palmated-leaved plane.

murmured a rivulet, now foaming over the stones, then again slumbering on its rocky bed, under the shade of the barberry and the eglantine. Pheasants, sparkling with their rainbow tails, flitted from shrub to shrub; flights of wild pigeons flew over the crags, sometimes in an horizontal troop, sometimes like a column, rising to the sky; and sunset flooded all with its airy purple, and light mists began to rise from the narrow gorges: every thing breathed the freshness of evening. Our travellers were now near the village of Aki, and separated only by a hill from Khounzákh. A low crest alone divided them from that village, when the report of a gun resounded from the mountain, and, like an ominous signal, was repeated by the echoes of the cliffs. The travellers halted irresolute: the echoes by degrees sank into stillness. "Our hunters!" cried Sultan Akhmet Khan, wiping the sweat from his face: "they expect me not, and think not to meet me here! Many tears of joy, and many of sorrow, do I bear to Khounzákh!" Unfeigned sorrow was expressed in the face of Akhmet Khan. Vividly does every soft and every savage sentiment play on the features of the Asiatic.

Another report soon interrupted his meditation; then another, and another. Shot answered shot, and at length thickened into a warm fire. "'Tis the Russians!" cried Ammalát, drawing his sabre. He pressed his horse with the stirrup, as though he would have leaped over the ridge at a single bound; but in a moment his strength failed him, and the blade fell ringing on the ground, as his arm dropped heavily by his side. "Khan!" said he,

dismounting, "go to the succour of your people; your face will be worth more to them than a hundred warriors."

The Khan heard him not; he was listening intently for the flight of the balls, as if he would distinguish those of the Russian from the Avárian. "Have they, besides the agility of the goat, stolen the wings of the eagle of Kazbéc? Can they have reached our inaccessible fastnesses?" said he, leaning to the saddle, with his foot already in the stirrup. "Farewell, Ammalát!" he cried at length, listening to the firing, which now grew hotter: "I go to perish on the ruins I have made, after striking like a thunderbolt!" At this moment a bullet whistled by, and fell at his feet. Bending down and picking it up, his face was lighted with a smile. He quietly took his foot from the stirrup, and turning to Ammalát, "Mount!" said he, "you shall presently find with your own eyes an answer to this riddle. The Russian bullets are of lead; but this is copper[42]—an Aváretz, my dear countryman. Besides, it comes from the south, where the Russians cannot be."

They ascended to the summit of the crest, and before their view opened two villages, situated on the opposite sides of a deep ravine; from behind them came the firing. The inhabitants sheltering themselves behind rocks and hedges, were firing at each other. Between them the women were incessantly running, sobbing and weeping when any combatant, approaching the edge of the ravine, fell wounded. They carried stones, and, regardless

[42] Having no lead, the Aváretzes use balls of copper, as they possess small mines of that metal.

of the whistling of the balls, fearlessly piled them up, so as to make a kind of defence. Cries of joy arose from one side or the other, as a wounded adversary was carried from the field; a groan of sorrow ascended in the air when one of their kinsmen or comrades was hit. Ammalát gazed at the combat for some time with surprise, a combat in which there was a great deal more noise than execution. At length he turned an enquiring eye upon the Khan.

"With us these are everyday affairs!" he answered, delightedly marking each report. "Such skirmishes cherish among us a warlike spirit and warlike habits. With you, private quarrels end in a few blows of the dagger; among us they become the common business of whole villages, and any trifle is enough to occasion them. Probably they are fighting about some cow that has been stolen. With us it is no disgrace to steal in another village—the shame is, to be found out. Admire the coolness of our women; the balls are whizzing about like gnats, yet they pay no attention to them! Worthy wives and mothers of brave men! To be sure, there would be eternal disgrace to him who could wound a woman, yet no man can answer for a ball. A sharp eye may aim it; but blind chance carries it to the mark. But darkness is falling from heaven, and dividing these enemies for a moment. Let us hasten to my kinsmen."

Nothing but the experience of the Khan could have saved our travellers from frequent falls in the precipitous descent to the river Ouzén. Ammalát could see scarcely any thing before him;

the double veil of night and weakness enveloped his eyes; his head turned: he beheld, as it were in a dream, when they again mounted an eminence, the gate and watch-tower of the Khan's house. With an uncertain foot he dismounted in a courtyard, surrounded by shouting noúkers and attendants; and he had hardly stepped over the grated threshold when his breath failed him—a deadly paleness poured its snow over the wounded man's face; and the young Bek, exhausted by loss of blood, fatigued by travel, hunger, and anguish of soul, fell senseless on the embroidered carpets.

POEMS AND BALLADS OF SCHILLER

No. VI.
THE LAY OF THE BELL

"Vivos voco—Mortuous plango—Fulgura frango."

Fast, in its prison-walls of earth,
Awaits the mould of bakèd clay.
Up, comrades, up, and aid the birth—
THE BELL that shall be born to-day!
And wearily now,
With the sweat of the brow,
Shall the work win its grace in the master's eye,
But the blessing that hallows must come from high.

And well an earnest word beseems
The work the earnest hand prepares;
Its load more light the labour deems,
When sweet discourse the labour shares.
So let us ponder—nor in vain—
What strength has wrought when labour wills;

For who would not the fool disdain
Who ne'er can feel what he fulfills?
And well it stamps our Human Race,
And hence the gift TO UNDERSTAND,
When in the musing heart we trace
Whate'er we fashion with the hand.

From the fir the fagot take,
Keep it, heap it hard and dry,
That the gather'd flame may break
Through the furnace, wroth and high.
Smolt the copper within—
Quick—the brass with the tin,
That the glutinous fluid that feeds the Bell
May flow in the right course glib and well.

What now these mines so deeply shroud,
What Force with Fire is moulding thus,
Shall from yon steeple, oft and loud,
Speak, witnessing of us!
It shall, in later days unfailing,
Rouse many an ear to rapt emotion;
Its solemn voice with Sorrow wailing,
Or choral chiming to Devotion.
Whatever sound in man's deep breast
Fate wakens, through his winding track,
Shall strike that metal-crownèd crest,

Which rings the moral answer back.

See the silvery bubbles spring!
Good! the mass is melting now!
Let the salts we duly bring
Purge the flood, and speed the flow.
From the dross and the scum,
Pure, the fusion must come;
For perfect and pure we the metal must keep,
That its voice may be perfect, and pure, and deep.
That voice, with merry music rife,
The cherish'd child shall welcome in;
What time the rosy dreams of life,
In the first slumber's arms begin.
As yet in Time's dark womb unwarning,
Repose the days, or foul or fair;
And watchful o'er that golden morning,
The Mother-Love's untiring care!

And swift the years like arrows fly—
No more with girls content to play,
Bounds the proud Boy upon his way,
Storms through loud life's tumultuous pleasures,
With pilgrim staff the wide world measures;
And, wearied with the wish to roam,
Again seeks, stranger-like, the Father-Home.
And, lo, as some sweet vision breaks

Out from its native morning skies,
With rosy shame on downcast cheeks,
The Virgin stands before his eyes.
A nameless longing seizes him!
From all his wild companions flown;
Tears, strange till then, his eyes bedim;
He wanders all alone.
Blushing, he glides where'er she move;
Her greeting can transport him;
To every mead to deck his love,
The happy wild flowers court him!
Sweet Hope—and tender Longing—ye
The growth of Life's first Age of Gold;
When the heart, swelling, seems to see
The gates of heaven unfold!
O Love, the beautiful and brief! O prime,
Glory, and verdure, of life's summer time!

Browning o'er the pipes are simmering,
Dip this fairy rod within;
If like glass the surface glimmering,
Then the casting may begin.
Brisk, brisk to the rest—
Quick!—the fusion to test;
And welcome, my merry men, welcome the sign,
If the ductile and brittle united combine.

For still where the strong is betrothed to the weak,
And the stern in sweet marriage is blent with the meek,
Rings the concord harmonious, both tender and strong:
So be it with thee, if for ever united,
The heart to the heart flows in one, love-delighted;
Illusion is brief, but Repentance is long.

Lovely, thither are they bringing,
With her virgin wreath, the Bride!
To the love-feast clearly ringing,
Tolls the church-bell far and wide!
With that sweetest holyday,
Must the May of Life depart;
With the cestus loosed—away
Flies ILLUSION from the heart!
Yet Love lingers lonely,
When Passion is mute,
And the blossoms may only
Give way to the fruit.

The Husband must enter
The hostile life,
With struggle and strife,
To plant or to watch,
To snare or to snatch,
To pray and importune,
Must wager and venture

And hunt down his fortune!
Then flows in a current the gear and the gain,
And the garners are fill'd with the gold of the grain,
Now a yard to the court, now a wing to the centre!
Within sits Another,
The thrifty Housewife;
The mild one, the mother—
Her home is her life.
In its circle she rules,
And the daughters she schools,
And she cautions the boys,
With a bustling command,
And a diligent hand
Employ'd she employs;
Gives order to store,
And the much makes the more;
Locks the chest and the wardrobe, with lavender smelling,
And the hum of the spindle goes quick through the dwelling;
And she hoards in the presses, well polish'd and full,
The snow of the linen, the shine of the wool;
Blends the sweet with the good, and from care and endeavour
Rests never!
Blithe the Master (where the while
From his roof he sees them smile)
Eyes the lands, and counts the gain;
There, the beams projecting far,
And the laden store-house are,
And the granaries bow'd beneath
The blessings of the golden grain;

There, in undulating motion,
Wave the corn-fields like an ocean.
Proud the boast the proud lips breathe:—
"My house is built upon a rock,
And sees unmoved the stormy shock
Of waves that fret below!"
What chain so strong, what girth so great,
To bind the giant form of Fate?—
Swift are the steps of Woe.

Now the casting may begin;
See the breach indented there:
Ere we run the fusion in,
Halt—and speed the pious prayer!
Pull the bung out—
See around and about
What vapour, what vapour—God help us!—has risen?—
Ha! the flame like a torrent leaps forth from its prison!

What, friend, is like the might of fire
When man can watch and wield the ire?
Whate'er we shape or work, we owe
Still to that heaven-descended glow.
But dread the heaven-descended glow,
When from their chain its wild wings go,
When, where it listeth, wide and wild
Sweeps the free Nature's free-born Child!

When the Frantic One fleets,
While no force can withstand,
Through the populous streets
Whirling ghastly the brand;
For the Element hates
What Man's labour creates,
And the work of his hand!
Impartially out from the cloud,
Or the curse or the blessing may fall!
Benignantly out from the cloud
Come the dews, the revivers of all!
Avengingly our from the cloud
Come the levin, the bolt, and the ball!
Hark—a wail from the steeple!—aloud
The bell shrills its voice to the crowd!
Look—look—red as blood
All on high!
It is not the daylight that fills with its flood
The sky!
What a clamour awaking
Roars up through the street,
What a hell-vapour breaking
Rolls on through the street,
And higher and higher
Aloft moves the Column of Fire!
Through the vistas and rows
Like a whirlwind it goes,
And the air like the steam from a furnace glows.
Beams are crackling—posts are shrinking—

Walls are sinking—windows clinking—
Children crying—
Mothers flying—
And the beast (the black ruin yet smouldering under)
Yells the howl of its pain and its ghastly wonder!
Hurry and skurry—away—away,
And the face of the night is as clear as day!
As the links in a chain,
Again and again
Flies the bucket from hand to hand;
High in arches up rushing
The engines are gushing,
And the flood, as a beast on the prey that it hounds,
With a road on the breast of the element bounds.
To the grain and the fruits,
Through the rafters and beams,
Through the barns and the garners it crackles and streams!
As if they would rend up the earth from its roots,
Rush the flames to the sky
Giant-high;
And at length,
Wearied out and despairing, man bows to their strength!
With an idle gaze sees their wrath consume,
And submits to his doom!
Desolate
The place, and dread
For storms the barren bed.
In the deserted gaps that casements were,
Looks forth despair;

And, where the roof hath been,
Peer the pale clouds within!

One look
Upon the grave
Of all that Fortune gave
The loiterer took—
Then grasps his staff. Whate'er the fire bereft,
One blessing, sweeter than all else, is left—
The faces that he loves! He counts them o'er—
And, see—not one dear look is missing from *that* store!

Now clasp'd the bell within the clay—
The mould the mingled metals fill—
Oh, may it, sparkling into day,
Reward the labour and the skill!
Alas! should it fail,
For the mould may be frail—
And still with our hope must be mingled the fear—
And, even now, while we speak, the mishap may be near!

To the dark womb of sacred earth
This labour of our hands is given,
As seeds that wait the second birth,
And turn to blessings watch'd by heaven!
Ah seeds, how dearer far than they

We bury in the dismal tomb,
Where Hope and Sorrow bend to pray
That suns beyond the realm of day
May warm them into bloom!

From the steeple
Tolls the bell,
Deep and heavy,
The death-knell!
Measured and solemn, guiding up the road
A wearied wanderer to the last abode.
It is that worship'd wife—
It is that faithful mother![43]
Whom the dark Prince of Shadows leads benighted,
From that dear arm where oft she hung delighted.
Far from those blithe companions, born
Of her, and blooming in their morn;
On whom, when couch'd, her heart above
So often look'd the Mother-Love!

Ah! rent the sweet Home's union-band,
And never, never more to come—
She dwells within the shadowy land,
Who was the Mother of that Home!
How oft they miss that tender guide,

[43] The translation adheres to the original, in forsaking the rhyme in these lines and some others.

The care—the watch—the face—the MOTHER—
And where she sate the babes beside,
Sits with unloving looks—ANOTHER!

While the mass is cooling now,
Let the labour yield to leisure,
As the bird upon the bough,
Loose the travail to the pleasure.
When the soft stars awaken,
Each task be forsaken!
And the vesper-bell lulling the earth into peace,
If the master still toil, chimes the workman's release!

Gleesome and gay,
On the welcoming way,
Through the wood glides the wanderer home!
And the eye and ear are meeting,
Now, the slow sheep homeward bleating—
Now, the wonted shelter near,
Lowing the lusty-fronted steer;
Creaking now the heavy wain,
Reels with the happy harvest grain.
Which with many-coloured leaves,
Glitters the garland on the sheaves;
And the mower and the maid
Bound to the dance beneath the shade!
Desert street, and quiet mart;—

Silence is in the city's heart;
Round the taper burning cheerly,
Gather the groups HOME loves so dearly;
And the gate the town before
Heavily swings with sullen roar!

Though darkness is spreading
O'er earth—the Upright
And the Honest, undreading,
Look safe on the night.
Which the evil man watching in awe,
For the Eye of the Night is the Law!
Bliss-dower'd: O daughter of the skies,
Hail, holy ORDER, whose employ
Blends like to like in light and joy—
Builder of Cities, who of old
Call'd the wild man from waste and wold.
And in his hut thy presence stealing,
Roused each familiar household feeling;
And, best of all the happy ties,
The centre of the social band,—
The Instinct of the Fatherland!

United thus—each helping each,
Brisk work the countless hands for ever;
For nought its power to strength can teach,
Like Emulation and Endeavour!

Thus link'd the master with the man,
Each in his rights can each revere,
And while they march in freedom's van,
Scorn the lewd rout that dogs the rear!
To freemen labour is renown!
Who works—gives blessings and commands;
Kings glory in the orb and crown—
Be ours the glory of our hands.

Long in these walls—long may we greet
Your footfalls, Peace and concord sweet!
Distant the day, Oh! distant far,
When the rude hordes of trampling War
Shall scare the silent vale;
And where,
Now the sweet heaven when day doth leave
The air;
Limns its soft rose-hues on the veil of Eve;
Shall the fierce war-brand tossing in the gale,
From town and hamlet shake the horrent glare!

Now, its destined task fulfill'd,
Asunder break the prison-mould;
Let the goodly Bell we build,
Eye and heart alike behold.
The hammer down heave,
Till the cover it cleave.

For the Bell to rise up to the freedom of day,
Destruction must seize on the shape of the clay.

To break the mould, the master may,
If skilled the hand and ripe the hour;
But woe, when on its fiery way
The metal seeks itself to pour.
Frantic and blind, with thunder-knell,
Exploding from its shattered home,
And glaring forth, as from a hell,
Behold the red Destruction come!
When rages strength that has no reason,
There breaks the mould before the season;
When numbers burst what bound before,
Woe to the State that thrives no more!
Yea, woe, when in the City's heart,
The latent spark to flame is blown;
And Millions from their silence start,
To claim, without a guide, their own!
Discordant howls the warning Bell,
Proclaiming discord wide and far,
And, born but things of peace to tell,
Becomes the ghastliest voice of war:
"Freedom! Equality!"—to blood,
Rush the roused people at the sound!
Through street, hall, palace, roars the flood,
And banded murder closes round!
The hyæna-shapes, that women were!

Jest with the horrors they survey;
They hound—they rend—they mangle there—
As panthers with their prey!
Nought rests to hallow—burst the ties
Of life's sublime and reverent awe;
Before the Vice the Virtue flies,
And Universal Crime is Law!
Man fears the lion's kingly tread;
Man fears the tiger's fangs of terror;
And still the dreadliest of the dread,
Is Man himself in error!
No torch, though lit from Heaven, illumes
The Blind!—Why place it in his hand?
It lights not him—it but consumes
The City and the Land!

Rejoice and laud the prospering skies!
The kernel bursts its husk—behold
From the dull clay the metal rise,
Clear shining, as a star of gold!
Neck and lip, but as one beam,
It laughs like a sun-beam.
And even the scutcheon, clear graven, shall tell
That the art of a master has fashion'd the Bell!

Come in—come in
My merry men—we'll form a ring

The new-born labour christening;
And "CONCORD" we will name her!—
To union may her heart-felt call
In brother-love attune us all!
May she the destined glory win
For which the master sought to frame her—
Aloft—(all earth's existence under,)
In blue-pavilion'd heaven afar
To dwell—the Neighbour of the Thunder,
The Borderer of the Star!
Be hers above a voice to raise
Like those bright hosts in yonder sphere,
Who, while they move, their Maker praise,
And lead around the wreathèd year!
To solemn and eternal things
We dedicate her lips sublime!—
To fan—as hourly on she swings
The silent plumes of Time!—
No pulse—no heart—no feeling hers!
She lends the warning voice to Fate;
And still companions, while she stirs,
The changes of the Human State!
So may she teach us, as her tone
But now so mighty, melts away—
That earth no life which earth has known
From the Last Silence can delay!

Slowly now the cords upheave her!

From her earth-grave soars the Bell;
Mid the airs of Heaven we leave her
In the Music-Realm to dwell!
Up—upwards—yet raise—
She has risen—she sways.
Fair Bell to our city bode joy and increase,
And oh, may thy first sound be hallow'd to—PEACE![44]

[44] Written in the time of French war.

VOTIVE TABLETS

What the God taught me—what, through life, my friend
And aid hath been,
With pious hand, and grateful, I suspend
The temple walls within.

THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL

Foster the Good, and thou shalt tend the Flower
Already sown on earth;—
Foster the Beautiful, and every hour
Thou call'st new flowers to birth!

TO ——

Give me that which thou know'st—I'll receive and attend;—
But thou giv'st me *thyself*—pri'thee spare me, my friend.

GENIUS

That which hath been can INTELLECT declare,
What Nature built—it imitates or gilds—
And REASON builds o'er Nature—but in air—
Genius alone in Nature—Nature builds.

CORRECTNESS—(Free translation.)

The calm correctness where no fault we see
Attests Art's loftiest—or its least degree;
Alike the smoothness of the surface shows
The Pool's dull stagnor—the great Sea's repose!

THE IMITATOR

Good out of good—*that* art is known to all—
But Genius from the bad the good can call—
Thou, mimic, not from leading strings escaped,
Work'st but the matter that's already shaped!
The already shaped a nobler hand awaits—
All matter asks a spirit that creates.

THE MASTER

The herd of Scribes by what they tell us
Show all in which their wits excel us;
But the true Master we behold
In what his art leaves—just untold!

TO THE MYSTIC

That is the real mystery which around
All life, is found;—
Which still before all eyes for aye has been,
Nor eye hath seen!

ASTRONOMICAL WORKS

All measureless, all infinite in awe,
Heaven to great souls is given—
And yet the sprite of littleness can draw
Down to its inch—the Heaven!

THE DIVISION OF RANKS

Yes, there's a patent of nobility
Above the meanness of our common state;
With what they *do* the vulgar natures buy
Its titles—and with what they *are*, the great!

THEOPHANY

When draw the Prosperous near me, I forget
The gods of heaven; but where
Sorrow and suffering in my sight are set,
The gods, I feel, are there!

THE CHIEF END OF MAN

What the chief end of Man?—Behold yon tree,
And let it teach thee, Friend!
Will what that will-less yearns for;—and for thee
Is compass'd Man's chief end!

ULYSSES

To gain his home all oceans he explored—
Here Scylla frown'd—and there Charybdis roar'd;
Horror on sea—and horror on the land—
In hell's dark boat he sought the spectre land,
Till borne—a slumberer—to his native spot
He woke—and sorrowing, knew his country not!

JOVE TO HERCULES

'Twas not my nectar made thy strength divine,
But 'twas thy strength which made my nectar thine!

THE SOWER

See, full of hope, thou trustest to the earth
The golden seed, and waitest till the spring
Summons the buried to a happier birth;
But in Time's furrow duly scattering,
Think'st thou, how deeds by wisdom sown may be,
Silently ripen'd for Eternity?

THE MERCHANT

Where sails the ship?—It leads the Tyrian forth
For the rich amber of the liberal North.
Be kind ye seas—winds lend your gentlest wing,
May in each creek, sweet wells restoring spring!—
To you, ye gods, belong the Merchant!—o'er
The waves, his sails the wide world's goods explore;
And, all the while, wherever waft the gales,
The wide world's good sails with him as he sails!

COLUMBUS

Steer on, bold Sailor—Wit may mock thy soul that sees the land,
And hopeless at the helm may drop the weak and weary hand,
YET EVER—EVER TO THE WEST, for there the coast must lie,
And dim it dawns and glimmering dawns before thy reason's eye;
Yea, trust the guiding God—and go along the floating grave,
Though hid till now—yet now, behold the New World o'er the wave!
With Genius Nature ever stands in solemn union still,
And ever what the One foretels the Other shall fulfil.

THE ANTIQUE TO THE NORTHERN WANDERER

And o'er the river hast thou past, and o'er the mighty sea,
And o'er the Alps, the dizzy bridge hath borne thy steps to me;
To look all near upon the bloom my deathless beauty knows,
And, face to face, to front the pomp whose fame through ages goes—
Gaze on, and touch my relics now! At last thou standest here,
But art thou nearer now to me—or I to thee more near?

THE ANTIQUE AT PARIS

What the Grecian arts created,
May the victor Gaul, elated,
Bear with banners to his strand.[45]
In museums many a row,
May the conquering showman show
To his startled Fatherland!

Mute to him, they crowd the halls,
Ever on their pedestals
Lifeless stand they!—He alone
Who alone, the Muses seeing,
Clasps—can warm them into being;
The Muses to the Vandal—stone!

[45] To the shore of the Seine.

THE POETRY OF LIFE

"Who would himself with shadows entertain,
Or gild his life with lights that shine in vain,
Or nurse false hopes that do but cheat the true?
Though with my dream my heaven should be resign'd—
Though the free-pinion'd soul that now can dwell
In the large empire of the Possible,
This work-day life with iron chains may bind,
Yet thus the mastery o'er ourselves we find,
And solemn duty to our acts decreed,
Meets us thus tutor'd in the hour of need,
With a more sober and submissive mind!
How front Necessity—yet bid thy youth
Shun the mild rule of life's calm sovereign, Truth."

So speak'st thou, friend, how stronger far than I;
As from Experience—that sure port serene—
Thou look'st; and straight, a coldness wraps the sky,
The summer glory withers from the scene,
Scared by the solemn spell; behold them fly,
The godlike images that seem'd so fair!
Silent the playful Muse—the rosy Hours
Halt in their dance; and the May-breathing flowers
Pall from the sister-Graces' waving hair.
Sweet-mouth'd Apollo breaks his golden lyre,

Hermes, the wand with many a marvel rife;—
The veil, rose-woven by the young Desire
With dreams, drops from the hueless cheeks of Life.
The world seems what it *is*—A Grave! and Love
Casts down the bondage wound his eyes above,
And *sees*!—He sees but images of clay
Where he dream'd gods; and sighs—and glides away.
The youngness of the Beautiful grows old,
And on thy lips the bride's sweet kiss seems cold;
And in the crowd of joys—upon thy throne
Thou sitt'st in state, and harden'st into stone.

CALEB STUKELY

PART XII.
THE PARSONAGE

It was not without misgiving that I knocked modestly at the door of Mr Jehu Tomkins. For himself, there was no solidity in his moral composition, nothing to grapple or rely upon. He was a small weak man of no character at all, and but for his powerful wife and active partner, would have become the smallest of unknown quantities in the respectable parish that contained him. Upon his own weak shoulders he could not have sustained the burden of an establishment, and must inevitably have dwindled into the lightest of light porters, or the most aged of errand-boys. Nothing could have saved him from the operation of a law, as powerful and certain as that of gravitation, in virtue of which the soft and empty-headed of this world walk to the wall, and resign, without a murmur, their places to their betters. As for the deaconess, I have said already that the fact of her being a lady, and the possessor of a heart, constituted the only ground of hope that I could have in reference to her. This I felt to be insecure enough when I held the knocker in my hand, and remembered all at once the many little tales that I had heard, every one of

which went far to prove that ladies may be ladies without the generous weakness of their sex,—and carry hearts about with them as easily as they carry bags.

My first application was unsuccessful. The deacon was not at home. "Mr Tomkins and his lady had gone *to hear* the Reverend Doctor Whitefroth,"—a northern and eccentric light, now blazing for a time in the metropolis. It is a curious fact, and worthy to be recorded, that Mr Tomkins, and Mr Buster, and every non-conformist whom I had hitherto encountered, never professed to visit the house of prayer with any other object than that of *hearing*. It was never by any accident to worship or to pray. What, in truth was the vast but lowly looking building, into which hundreds crowded with the dapper deacon at their head, sabbath after sabbath—what but a temple sacred to vanity and excitement, eloquence and perspiration! Which one individual, taken at random from the concourse, was not ready to declare that his business there that day was "to hear the dear good man," and nothing else? If you could lay bare—as, thank Heaven, you cannot—your fellow-creature's heart, whither would you behold stealing away the adoration that, in such a place, in such a time, is due to one alone—whither, if not to Mr Clayton? But let this pass.

I paid a second visit to my friend, and gained admittance. It was about half-past eight o'clock in the evening, and the shop had been closed some twenty minutes before. I was ushered into a well-furnished room behind the shop, where sat the firm—Mrs

Jehu and the junior partner. The latter looked into his lady's face, perceived a smile upon it, and then—but not till then, he offered me his hand, and welcomed me with much apparent warmth. This ceremony over, Mr Tomkins grew fidgety and uneasy, and betrayed a great anxiety to get up a conversation which he had not heart enough to set a going. Mrs Tomkins, a woman of the world, evinced no anxiety at all, sat smiling, and in peace. I perceived immediately that I must state at once the object of my visit, and I proceeded to the task.

"Mrs Tomkins," I commenced.

"Sir?" said that lady, and then a postman's knock brought us to a stop, and Jehu skipped across the room to listen at the door.

"That's him, my dear Jemima," exclaimed the linen-draper, "I know his knock," and then he skipped as quickly to his chair again.

The door of the apartment was opened by a servant girl, who entered the room alone and approached her mistress with a card. Mrs Tomkins looked at it through her eye-glass, said "she was most happy," and the servant then retired. The card was placed upon the table near me, and, as I believe, for my inspection. I took it up, and read the following words, "*Mr Stanislaus Levisohn*." They were engraven in the centre of the paper, and were surrounded by a circle of rays, which in its turn was enveloped in a circle of clouds. In the very corner of the card, and in very small characters, the words "*general merchant*" were written.

There was a noise of shoe-cleaning outside the door for about five minutes, then the door was opened again by the domestic, and a remarkable gentleman walked very slowly in. He was a tall individual, with small cunning eyes, black eye-brows, and a beard. He was rather shabbily attired, and not washed with care. He had thick boorish hands, and he smelt unpleasantly of tobacco smoke; an affected grin at variance with every feature, was planted on his face, and sickened an unprejudiced observer at the very first gaze. His mode of uttering English betrayed him for a foreigner. He was a native of Poland. Before uttering a syllable, the interesting stranger walked to a corner of the room, turned himself to the wall, and muttered a few undistinguishable words. He then bowed lowly to the company, and took a chair, grinning all the while.

"Is that a Polish move?" asked Mr Tomkins.

"It vos de coshtom mit de anshent tribes, my tear sare, vor alles tings, to recommend de family to de protection of de hevins. Vy not now mit all goot Christians?"

"Why not indeed?" added Mrs Tomkins. "May I offer you a glass of raisin wine?"

"Tank you. For de shtomack's sake—yase."

A glass was poured out. It was but decent to offer me another. I paid my compliments to the hostess and the gentlemen, and was about to drink it off, when the enlightened foreigner called upon me in a loud voice to desist.

"Shtay, mein young friend—ve are not de heathen and de

cannibal. It is our privilege to live in de Christian society mit de Christian lady. Ve most ask blessing—always—never forget—you excuse—vait tree minutes."

It was not for me to protest against so pious a movement, albeit it presented itself somewhat inopportunely and out of place. Mr Levisohn covered his face with one hand, and murmured a few words. The last only reached me. It was "Amen," and this was rather heaved up in a sigh, than articulately expressed.

"Do you like the wine?" asked Jehu, as if he thought it superfine.

"Yase, I like moch—especially de sherry and de port."

Jehu smiled, but made no reply.

Mrs Tomkins supposed that port and sherry were favourite beverages in Poland, but, for her part, she had found that nothing agreed so well with British stomachs as the native wines.

"Ah! my lady," said the Pole, "ve can give up very moch so long ve got British religions."

"Very true, indeed," answered Mrs Tomkins. "Pray, Mr Levisohn, what may be your opinion of the lost sheep? Do you think they will come into the fold during our time?"

Before the gentleman replies, it may be proper to state on his behalf, that he had never given his questioner any reason to suppose that he was better informed on such mysterious subjects than herself. The history of his introduction into the family of the linen-draper is very short. He had been for some years connected with Mr Tomkins in the way of business, having

supplied that gentleman with all the genuine foreign, but certainly English, perfumery, that was retailed with considerable profit in his over-nice and pious establishment. Mrs Tomkins, no less zealous in the cause of the church than that of her own shop, at length, and all on a sudden, resolved to set about his conversion, and to present him to the chapel as a brand plucked with her own hand from the burning. As a preliminary step, he was invited to supper, and treated with peculiar respect. The matter was gently touched upon, but discussion postponed until another occasion. Mr Levisohn being very shrewd, very needy, and enjoying no particular principles of morality and religion, perceived immediately the object of his hostess, met her more than half-way in her Christian purposes, and accepted her numerous invitations to tea and supper with the most affectionate readiness. Within two months he was received into the bosom of the church, and became as celebrated for the depth and intensity of his belief as for the earnestness and promptitude with which he attended the meetings of the brethren, particularly those in which eating and drinking did not constitute the least important part of the proceedings. Being a foreigner, he was listened to with the deepest attention, very often indeed to his serious annoyance, for his ignorance was awful, and his assurance, great as it was, not always sufficient to get him clear of his difficulties. His foreign accent, however, worked wonders for him, and whenever too hard pressed, afforded him a secure and happy retreat. An unmeaning grin, and "*me not pronounce*," had saved him from

precipices, down which an Englishman, *cæteris paribus*, must unquestionably have been dashed.

"Vill dey come?" said Mr Levisohn, in answer to the question. "Yase, certainly, if dey like, I tink."

"Ah, sir, I fear you are a latitudinarian," said the lady.

"I hope Hevin, my dear lady, vill forgive me for dat, and all my wickedness. I am a shinner, I shtink!"

I looked at the converted gentleman, at the same moment that Mrs Jehu assured him that it would be a great thing if they were all as satisfied of their condition as he might be. "Your strong convictions of your worthlessness is alone a proof," she added, "of your accepted state."

"My lady," continued the humble Stanislaus, "I am rotten, I am a tief, a blackguard, a swindler, a pickpocket, a housebreak, a sticker mit de knife. I vish somebody would call me names all de day long, because I forget sometime dat I am de nashty vurm of de creation. I tink I hire a boy to call me names, and make me not forget. Oh, my lady, I always remember those fine words you sing—

> 'If I could read my title clear
> To manshions in de shkies,
> I say farevell to every fear,
> And vipe my veeping eyes.'"

"That is so conscientious of you. Pray, my dear sir, is there an Establishment in Poland? or have you Independent churches?"

"Ah, my dear lady, we have noting at all!"

"Is it possible?"

"Yase, it is possible—it is true."

"Who could have thought it! What! nothing?"

"Noting at all, my lady. Do not ask me again, I pray you. It is frightful to a goot Christian to talk dese tings."

"What is your opinion of the Arminian doctrine, Mr Stanislaus?"

"Do you mean de doctrine?" enquired Stanislaus, slowly, as though he found some difficulty in answering the question.

"Yes, my dear sir."

"I tink," said the gentleman, after some delay, "it vould he very goot if were not for someting."

"Dear me!" cried Mrs Jehu, "that is so exactly my opinion!"

"Den dere is noting more to be said about dat," continued Stanislaus, interrupting her; "and I hope you vill not ask dese deep questions, my dear lady, vich are not at all proper to be answered, and vich put me into de low spirits. Shall ve sing a hymn?"

"By all means," exclaimed the hostess, who immediately made preparations for the ceremony. Hymn-books were introduced, and the servant-maid ordered up, and then a quartet was performed by Mr Levisohn, Mrs Tomkins, her husband, and Betsy. The subject of the song was the courtship of Isaac. Two verses only have remained in my memory, and the manner in which they were given out by the fervent Stanislaus will never be

forgotten. They ran thus:—

"Ven Abraham's servant to procure
A vife for Isaac vent,
He met Rebekah, tould his vish,
Her parents gave conshent.

'Shtay,' Satan, my old master, cries,
'Or force shall thee detain.'
'Hinder me not, I vill be gone,
I vish to break my chain.'"

This being concluded, Mr Tomkins asked Mr Levisohn what he had to say in the business line, to which Mr Levisohn replied, "Someting very goot, but should he not vait until after soppare?" whereupon Mr Tomkins gave his lady a significant leer, and the latter retired, evidently to prepare the much desired repast. Then did little Jehu turn confidentially to Stanislaus, and ask him when he meant to deliver that ere *conac* that he had promised him so long ago.

"Ven Providence, my tear dikkon, paremits—I expect a case of goots at de cushtom-house every day; but my friend vot examins de marchandis, and vot saves me de duties ven I makes it all right mit him, is vary ill, I am sorry for to say, and ve most vait, mit Christian patience, my dear sare, till he get well. You see dat?"

"Oh, yes; that's clear enough. Well, Stanny, I only hope that fellow won't die. I don't think you'd find it so easy to make it *all right* with any other chap; that's all!"

"I hope he vill not die. Ve mosht pray dat he live, my dear dikkon. I tink it vill be vell if der goot Mr Clayton pray mit der church for him. You shall speak for him."

"Well, what have you done about the *Eau de Cologne*?" continued Jehu Tomkins. "Have you nailed the fellow?"

"It vos specially about dis matter dat I vish to see you, my dear sare. I persvade der man to sell ten cases. He be very nearly vot you call in der mess. He valk into de Gazette next week. He shtarve now. I pity him. De ten cases cost him ten pounds. I give fifty shilling—two pound ten. He buy meat for de childs, and is tankful. I take ten shillings for my trouble. Der Christian satisfied mit vary little."

"Any good bills in the market, Stanny?"

Stanislaus Levisohn winked.

"Ho—you don't say so," said the deacon. "Have you got 'em with you?"

"After soppare, my dear sare," answered Stanislaus, who looked at me, and winked again significantly at Jehu.

Mrs Tomkins returned, accompanied by the vocal Betsy. The cloth was spread, and real silver forks, and fine cut tumblers, and blue plates with scripture patterns, speedily appeared. Then came a dish of fried sausages and parsley—then baked potatoes—then lamb chops. Then we all sat round the table, and then,

against all order and propriety, Mrs Jehu grossly and publicly insulted her husband at his own board, by calling upon the enlightened foreigner to ask a blessing upon the meal.

The company sat down; but scarcely were we seated before Stanislaus resumed.

"I tank you, my tear goot Mrs Tomkins for dat shop mit der brown, ven it comes to my turn to be sarved. It look just der ting."

Mrs Jehu served her guest immediately.

"I vill take a sossage, tear lady, also, if you please."

"And a baked potato?"

"And a baked potato? Yase."

He was served.

"I beg your pardon, Christian lady, have you got, perhaps, der littel pickel-chesnut and der crimson cabbage?"

"Mr Tomkins, go down-stairs and get the pickles," said the mistress of the house, and Tomkins vanished like a mouse on tiptoe.

Before he could return, Stanislaus had eaten more than half his chop, and discovered that, after all, "it was *not* just the ting." Mrs Jehu entreated him to try another. He declined at first; but at length suffered himself to be persuaded. Four chops had graced the dish originally; the remaining two were divided equally between the lady and myself. I begged that my share might be left for the worthy host, but receiving a recommendation from his wife "not to mind *him*," I said no more, but kept Mr Stanislaus Levisohn in countenance.

"I hope you'll find it to your liking, Mr Stukely," said our hostess.

"Mishter vat?" exclaimed the foreigner, looking quickly up. "I tink I"——

"What is the matter, my dear sir?" enquired the lady of the house.

"Noting, my tear friend, I tought der young gentleman vos a poor unconverted sinner dat I met a long time ago. Dat is all. Ve talk of someting else."

Has the reader forgotten the dark-visaged individual, who at the examination of my lamented father before the Commissioners of Bankruptcy made his appearance in company with Mr Levy and the ready Ikey? Him I mean of the vivid imagination, who swore to facts which were no facts at all, and whom an unpoetic jury sentenced to vile imprisonment for wilful perjury? *There he sat*, transformed into a Pole, bearded and whiskered, and the hair of his head close clipped, but in every other regard the same as when the constable invited him to forsake a too prosaic and ungrateful world: and had Mr Levisohn been wise and guarded, the discovery would never have been made by me; for we had met but once before, then only for a short half hour, and under agitating circumstances. But my curiosity and attention once roused by his exclamation, it was impossible to mistake my man. I fixed my eye upon him, and the harder he pulled at his chop, and the more he attempted to evade my gaze, the more satisfied was I that a villain and an impostor was

seated amongst us. Thinking, absurdly enough, to do my host and hostess a lasting service, I determined without delay to unmask the pretended saint, and to secure his victims from the designs he purposed.

"Mr Levisohn," I said immediately, "you have told the truth —we have met before."

"Nevare, my tear friend, you mistake; nevare in my life, upon my vurd."

"Mrs Tomkins," I continued, rising, "I should not be worthy of your hospitality if I did not at once make known to you the character of that man. He is a convicted criminal. I have myself known him to be guilty of the grossest practices." Mr Levisohn dropped his chop, turned his greasy face up, and then looked round the room, and endeavoured to appear unconcerned, innocent, and amazed all at once. At this moment Jehu entered the room with the pickles, and the face of the deaconess grew fearfully stern.

"Were you ever in the Court of Bankruptcy, Mr Levisohn?" I continued.

"I have never been out of London, my good sare. You labour under de mistake.—I excuse you. Ah!" he cried our suddenly, as if a new idea had struck him very hard; "I see now vot it is. I explain. You take me for somebody else."

"I do not, sir. I accuse you publicly of having committed perjury of the most shameless kind, and I can prove you guilty of the charge. Do you know a person of the name of Levy?"

Mr Stanislaus looked to the ceiling after the manner of individuals who desire, or who do not desire, as the case may be, to call a subject to remembrance. "No," he answered, after a long pause; "certainly not. I never hear dat name."

"Beware of him, Mrs Tomkins," I continued, "he is an impostor, a disgrace to mankind, and to the faith which he professes."

"What do you mean by that, you impertinent young man?" said Mrs Tomkins, her blood rising to her face, herself rising from her chair. "I should have thought that a man who had been so recently expelled from his church would have had more decency. A pretty person you must be, to bring a charge of this kind against so good a creature as that."

"No, do not say dat," interposted Stanny; "I am not goot. I am a brute beast."

"Mr Tomkins," continued the lady, "I don't know what object that person has in disturbing the peace of our family, or why he comes here at all to-night. He is a mischief-making, hardened young man, or he would never have come to what he has. Well, I'm sure—What will Satan put into his head next!"

"I would vish you be not angry. Der young gentleman is, I dare say, vary goot at heart. He is labouring under de deloosions."

"Mr Levisohn, pardon me, I am not. Proofs exist, and I can bring them to convict you."

"Do you hear that, Mr Tomkins. Were you ever insulted so before? Are you master in your own house?"

"What shall I do?" said Jehu, trembling with excitement at the door.

"Do! What! Give him his hat, turn him out."

"Oh, my dear goot Christian friends," said Mr Levisohn, imploringly; "de booels of der Christian growls ven he shees dese sights; vot is de goot of to fight? It is shtoopid. Let me be der peacemaker. Der yong man has been drink, perhaps. I forgive him from te bottom of my heart. If ve quarrel ve fight. If ve fight ve lose every ting.

> 'So Samson, ven his hair vos lost,
> Met the Philistines to his cost,
> Shook his vain limbs in shad shurprise,
> Made feeble fight, and lost his eyes.'"

"Mr Tomkins," I exclaimed, "I court inquiry, I can obtain proofs."

"We want none of your proofs, you backslider," cried the deaconess.

"Madam, you"——

"Get out of the house, ambassador of Satan! Mr Tomkins, will you tell him instantly to go?"

"Go!" squealed Tomkins from the door, not advancing an inch.

I seized my hat, and left the table.

"You will be sorry for this, sir," said I; "and you, madam"——

"Don't talk to me, you bad man. If you don't go this minute

I'll spring the rattle and have up the watchmen."

I did not attempt to say another word. I left the room, and hurried from the house. I had hardly shut the street door before it was violently opened again, and the head of Mr Levisohn made itself apparent.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.