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THE HERETIC. [1]

It is now about three centuries since Richard Chancellor, pilot-major of the fleet which, under the command of Sir Hugh Willoughby, and by the advice of Sebastian Cabot, set out to discover a north-east passage to China, carried his ship, the Edward Bonaventura, into Archangel. The rest of the fleet put into a haven on the coast of Lapland, where all their crews, with the gallant commander, perished miserably of cold and hunger. Chancellor, accompanied by Master George Killingworthe, found his way to Moscow, where he was courteously entertained by the Tsar Iván IV., surnamed the Terrible. On his return to England in 1554, he delivered a friendly letter from the Tsar to King Edward VI., and announced to the people of England "the discovery of Muscovy." The English adventurers where mightily astonished by the state and splendour of the Russian court, and gave a curious account of their intercourse with the tyrant Iván, who treated them with great familiarity and kindness, though he was perhaps the most atrocious monster, not excepting the worst of the Roman emperors, that ever disgraced a throne. The Tsar "called them to his table to receive each a cup from his hand to drinke, and took into his hand Master George Killingworthe's beard, which reached over the table, and pleasantly delivered it to the metropolitan, who seeming to bless it, said in Russ, 'This is God's gift;' as indeed at that time it was not only thicke, broad, and yellow coulered, but in length five foot and two inches of a size."

Chancellor returned the following year to Moscow, and arranged with the Tsar the commercial privileges and immunities of a new company of merchant-adventurers who desired to trade with Muscovy; but in 1556, while on his way home, accompanied by Osep Neped, the first Russian ambassador to the court of England, their ship was wrecked on our own coast, at Pitsligo bay, where Chancellor was drowned, with most of the crew; but Osep Neped, who escaped, was conducted with much pomp to London, and there established on a firmer basis the commercial relations between the two countries, to which Chancellor's discovery had led, and of which he had laid the foundation. The commerce thus begun has continued uninterrupted, to the mutual advantage of both nations, up to this time, and thousands of our countrymen have there gained wealth and distinction, in commerce, in the arts, in science, and in arms.

But of the twenty-seven millions of men, women, and children who people Great Britain and Ireland, how many may be presumed to know any thing of Russian literature, or even to have enquired whether it contains any thing worth knowing? Are there a dozen literary men or women amongst us who could read a Russian romance, or understand a Russian drama? Dr Bowring was regarded as a prodigy of polyglot learning, because he gave us some very imperfect versions of Russian ballads; and we were thankful even for that contribution, from which, we doubt not, many worthy and well-informed people learned for the first time that Russia produced poets as well as potashes. Russia has lately lost a poet of true genius, of whom his countrymen are proud, and no doubt have a right to be proud, for his poetry found its way at once to the heart of the nation: but how few there are amongst us who know any thing of Poushkin, unless it be his untimely and melancholy end?

The generation that has been so prolific of prose fiction in other parts of Europe, has not been barren in Russia. She boasts of men to whom she is grateful for having adorned her young literature

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[1] *The Heretic*. Translated from the Russian of Lajétchnikoff. By T.B. Shaw, B.A. of Cambridge. In three volumes.

with the creations of their genius, or who have made her history attractive with the allurements of faithful fiction, giving life, and flesh, and blood to its dry bones; and yet, gentle reader, learned or fair—or both fair and learned—whether sombre in small clothes, or brilliant in *bas-bleus*—how many could you have named a year ago of those names which are the pride and delight of a great European nation, with which we have had an intimate, friendly, and beneficial intercourse for three consecutive centuries, and whose capital has now for some years been easily accessible in ten days from our own?

Surely it is somewhat strange, that while Russia fills so large a space, not only on the map, but in the politics of the world—while the influence of her active mind, and of her powerful muscle, is felt and acknowledged in Europe, Asia, and America—that we, who come in contact with her diplomatic skill and her intelligence at every turn and in every quarter, should never have thought it worth while to take any note of her literature—of the more attractive movements of her mind.

The history, the ancient mythology, and the early Christian legends of Russia, are full of interest. We there encounter the same energetic and warlike people, who, from roving pirates of the Baltic sea, became the founders of dynasties, and who have furnished much of what is most romantic in the history of Europe. The Danes, who ravaged our coasts, and gave a race of princes to England; the Normans, from whom are descended our line of sovereigns, and many of our noble and ancient families—the Normans, who established themselves in Sicily and the Warrhag, or Varangians, who made their leader, Rurik, a sovereign over the ancient Sclavonic republic of Nóvgorod, and gave their own distinctive appellation of Russ to the people and to the country they conquered, were all men of the same race, the same habits, and the same character. The daring spirit of maritime adventure, the love of war, and the thirst of plunder, which brought their barks to the coasts of Britain and of France, was displayed with even greater boldness in Russia. After the death of Rurik, these pirates of the Baltic, under the regent Oleg, launching their galleys on the Borysthenes, forced the descent of the river against hostile tribes, defeated the armies of Byzantium, exercised their ancient craft on the Black sea and on the Bosphorus, and, entering Constantinople in triumph, extorted tribute and a treaty from the Keisar in his palace.

Then, after a time, came the introduction of the Christian religion and of letters; and the contests which terminated in the triumph of Christianity over the ancient mythology, in which the milder deities of the Pantheon, with their attendant spirits of the woods, the streams, and the household hearth, would seem to have mingled with the fiercer gods of the Valhalla. Then the frequent contests and varying fortunes of the principalities into which the country was divided—the invasions of the Tartar hordes, under the successors of Chenjez Khan, destroying every living thing, and deliberately making a desert of every populous place, that grass might more abound for their horses and their flocks—the long and weary domination of these desolating masters; the gradual relaxation of the iron gripe with which they crushed the country; the pomp and power of the Russian church, even in the worst times of Tartar oppression; the first gathering together of the nation's strength as its spirit revived; the first great effort to cast off the load under which its loins had been breaking for more than two centuries, and the desperate valour with which the Russians fought their first great battle for freedom and their faith, and shook the Tartar supremacy, under the brave and skilful Dimítri, on the banks of the Don—the cautious wisdom and foresight with which he created an aristocracy to support the sovereignty he had made hereditary—the pertinacity with which, in every change of fortune, his successors worked out slowly, and more by superior intelligence than by prowess, the deliverance of their country—the final triumph of this wary policy, under the warlike, but consummately able and dexterous management of Iván the Great—the rapidity and force with which the Muscovite power expanded, when it had worn out and cast off the Tartar fetters that had bound it—the cautious and successful attempts of Iván to take from the first a high place amongst the sovereigns of Europe—the progress in the arts of civilized life which was made in his reign—the accession of weight and authority which the sovereign power received from the prudent and dignified demeanour of his son and successor—the sanguinary tyranny with which Iván IV., in the midst of the most revolting

atrocities and debaucheries, broke down the power of the aristocracy, prostrated the energies of the nation, and paved the way for successive usurpations—the skilful and crafty policy, and the unscrupulous means by which Boris raised himself to the throne, after he had destroyed the last representatives of the direct line of Rurik, which, in all the vicissitudes of Russian fortune, had hitherto held the chief place in the nation—the taint of guilt which poisoned and polluted a mind otherwise powerful, and not without some virtues, and made him at length a suspicious and cruel tyrant, who, having alienated the good-will of the nation, was unable to oppose the pretensions of an impostor, and swallowed poison to escape the tortures of an upbraiding conscience—the successful imposture of the monk who personated the Prince Dimítri, one of the victims of Boris' ambition, and who was slaughtered on the day of his nuptials at the foot of the throne he had so strangely usurped, by an infuriated mob; not because he was known to be an impostor, but because he was accused of a leaning to the Latin church—the season of anarchy that succeeded and led to fresh impostures, and to the Polish domination—the servile submission of the Russian nobility to Sigismund, king of Poland, to whom they sold their country; the revival of patriotic feelings, almost as soon as the sacrifice had been made—the bold and determined opposition of the Russian church to the usurpation of a Latin prince, the persecutions, the hardships, the martyrdom it endured; the ultimate rising of the Muscovite people at its call—the sanguinary conflict in Moscow; the expulsion of the Poles; the election of Michael Romanoff, the first sovereign of his family and of the reigning dynasty—the whole history of the days of Peter, of Catharine, and of Alexander, and even the less prominent reigns of intermediate sovereigns—are full of the interest and the incidents which are usually considered most available to the writers of historical romance.

But such materials abound in the history of every people. Men of genius for the work find them scattered every where—in the peculiarities of personal character developed in the contests of petty tribes or turbulent burghers, as often as in the revolutions of empires. The value of historical, as well as of other fictions, must be measured by the power and the skill it displays, rather than by the magnitude of the events it describes, or the historical importance of the persons it introduces; and therefore no history can well be exhausted for the higher purposes of fiction. Of what historical importance are the stories on which Shakspeare has founded his *Romeo and Juliet*—his *Othello*—his *Hamlet*, or his *Lear*? Does the chief interest or excellence of *Waverley*, or *Ivanhoe*, or *Peveril of the Peak*, or *Redgauntlet*, or *Montrose*, depend on the delineation of historical characters, or the description of historical events? What space do Balfour of Burleigh, or Rob Roy, or Helen Macgregor, fill in history? The fact appears to be, that, even in the purest historical prose fictions, neither the interest nor the excellence generally depend upon the characters or the incidents most prominent in history. A man of genius, who calls up princes and heroes from the dust into which they have crumbled, may delight us with a more admirable representation than our own minds could have furnished of some one whose name we have long known, and of whose personal bearing, and habits, and daily thoughts, we had but a vague and misty idea; and acknowledging the fidelity of the portrait we may adopt it; and then this historical person becomes to us what the imagination of genius, not what history, has made him, and yet the portrait is probably one in which no contemporary could have recognized any resemblance to the original. But the characters of which history has preserved the most full and faithful accounts, whose recorded actions reflect most accurately the frame of their minds, are precisely those which each man has pictured to himself with most precision, and therefore those of which he is least likely to appreciate another man's imaginary portraits. The image in our own minds is disturbed, and we feel something of the disappointment we experience when we find some one of whom we have heard much very different from what we had imagined him to be. The more intimately and generally an historical character is known, the more unfit must it be for the purposes of fiction.

Then again, in fiction, as in real life, our sympathies are more readily awakened, and more strongly moved, by the sufferings or the successes of those with whom we have much in common—of whose life we are, or fancy that we might have been, a part. The figures that we see in history

elevated above the ordinary attributes of man, are magnified as we see them through the mist of our own vague perceptions, and dwindle if we approach too near them. If they are brought down from the lofty pedestal of rank or fame on which they stood, that they may be within reach of the warmest sympathies of men who live upon a lower level, the familiarity to which we are admitted impairs their greatness, on the same principle, that "no man is a hero to his *valet-de-chambre*."

We are inclined to believe that the great attraction of historical prose fiction is not any facility which it affords for the construction of a better story—for we think it affords none—nor any superior interest that attaches to the known and the prominent characters with which it deals, or to the events it describes; but rather the occasion it gives for making us familiar with the everyday life of the age and the country in which the scene is laid. Independent of the merits of the fiction as a work of imagination, we find another source of pleasure; and, if it be written faithfully and with knowledge, of instruction in the vivid light it casts on the characteristics of man's condition, which history does not deign to record. This kind of excellence may give value to a work which is defective in the higher essential qualifications of imaginative writing; as old ballads and tales, which have no other merit, may be valuable illustrations of the manners of their time, so by carefully collecting and concentrating scattered rays, a man possessed of talents for the task may throw a strong light on states of society that were formerly obscure, and thus greatly enhance the pleasure we derive from any higher merits we may find in his story.

M. Lajétchnikoff, in the work before us, appears to have aimed at both these kinds of excellence; and, in the opinion of his countrymen, to have attained to that of which they are the best or the only good judges. Mr Shaw, to whom we are indebted for all we yet know of this department of Russian literature, tells us in his preface that he selected this romance for translation because—

> "It is the work of an author to whom all the critics have adjudged the praise of a perfect acquaintance with the epoch which he has chosen for the scene of his drama. Russian critics, some of whom have reproached M. Lajétchnikoff with certain faults of style, and in particular with innovations on orthography, have all united in conceding to him the merit of great historical accuracy—not only as regards the events and characters of his story, but even in the less important matters of costume, language, &c.
>
> "This degree of accuracy was not accidental: he prepared himself for his work by a careful study of all the ancient documents calculated to throw light upon the period which he desired to recall—a conscientious correctness however, which may be pushed too far; for the original work is disfigured by a great number of obsolete words and expressions, as unintelligible to the modern Russian reader (unless he happened to be an antiquarian) as they would be to an Englishman. These the Translator has, as far as possible, got rid of, and has endeavoured to reduce the explanatory foot-notes—those 'blunder-marks,' as they have been well styled—to as small a number as is consistent with clearness in the text."

M. Lajétchnikoff takes occasion, while referring to some anachronisms which will be found in *The Heretic*, to state, in the following terms, his opinion of the duties of an historical novelist—

> "He must follow rather the poetry of history than its chronology. His business is not to be the slave of dates; he ought to be faithful to the character of the epoch, and of the *dramatis personae* which he has selected for representation. It is not his business to examine every trifle, to count over with servile minuteness every link in the chain of this epoch, or of the life of this character; that is the department of the historian and the biographer. The mission of the historical novelist is to select from them the most brilliant, the most interesting events, which are connected with the chief personage of his story, and to concentrate them into one poetic moment

> of his romance. Is it necessary to say that this moment ought to be pervaded by a leading idea?... Thus I understand the duties of the historical novelist. Whether I have fulfilled them, is quite another question."

We are not quite sure what is here meant by "a leading idea." If it be that some abstract idea is to be developed or illustrated, we can neither subscribe to the canon nor discover the leading idea of this specimen of the author's productions; but we rather suppose that he only means to say that there should be a main stream of interest running through the whole story, to which the others are tributary—and in this sense he has acted on the rule; for the *heretic*, from his birth to his burial, is never lost sight of, and almost the whole action, from the beginning to the end, is either directly or indirectly connected with his fortunes, which preserve their interest throughout, amidst sovereigns and ambassadors, officials and nobles, court intrigues and affairs of state, of love, of war, and of religion. This machinery, though somewhat complicated, is on the whole very skilfully constructed, and moves on smoothly enough without jolting or jarring, without tedious stops or disagreeable interruptions, and without having to turn back every now and then to pick up the passengers it has dropped by the way. The author, however, appears to have assumed—and, writing for Russians, was entitled to assume—that his readers had some previous acquaintance with the history of the country and the times to which his story belongs. His prologue, which has no connexion with the body of the work, but which relates a separate incident that occurred some years after the conclusion of the principal narrative, introduces us to the death-bed of Iván III., at whose court the whole of the subsequent scenes occur; and is calculated from this inversion of time, and the recurrence of similar names, and even of the same persons, to create little confusion in the mind of the reader who is ignorant of Russian history.

> "The epoch chosen by Lajétchnikoff," says his translator, "is the fifteenth century; an age most powerfully interesting in the history of every country, and not less so in that of Russia. It was then that the spirit of enquiry, the thirst for new facts and investigations in religious, political, and physical philosophy, was at once stimulated and gratified by the most important discoveries that man had as yet made, and extended itself far beyond the limits of what was then civilized Europe, and spoke, by the powerful voice of Iván III., even to Russia, plunged as she then was in ignorance and superstition. Rude as are the outlines of this great sovereign's historical portrait, and rough as were the means by which he endeavoured to ameliorate his country, it is impossible to deny him a place among those rulers who have won the name of benefactors to their native land."

When Iván III., then twenty-two years old, mounted the tributary throne of Muscovy in 1462, the power of the Tartars, who for nearly two centuries and a half domineered over Russia, had visibly declined. Tamerlane, at the head of fresh swarms from the deserts of Asia, had stricken the Golden Horde which still held Russia in subjection; and having pursued its sovereign, Ioktamish Khan, into the steppes of Kiptchak and Siberia, turned back almost from the gates of Moscow, to seek a richer plunder in Hindostan. Before the Golden Horde could recover from this blow, it was again attacked, defeated, and plundered, by the khan of the Crimea. Still the supremacy of the Tartar was undisputed at Moscow. The Muscovite prince advanced to the outer door of his palace to receive the ambassador of his master; spread costly furs under his horse's feet; kneeled at his stirrup to hear the khan's orders read; presented a cup of kimmis to the Tartar representative, and licked off the drops that fell upon the mane of his horse.

But during nearly a century and a half, the Muscovite princes had laboured successfully to consolidate their own authority, and to unite the nation against its oppressors. The principle of hereditary succession to the dependent throne had been firmly established in the feelings of the people; the ties of country, kindred, and language, and still more the bonds of common religion,

had united the discordant principalities into which the country was still divided, by a sentiment of nationality and of hatred against the Tartars, which made them capable of combining against their Mahommedan masters.

Iván's first acts were acts of submission. They were perhaps intended to tranquillize the suspicions with which the first movements of a young prince are certain to be regarded by a jealous superior; and this purpose they effectually served. Without courage or talent for war, his powerful and subtle mind sought to accomplish its objects by intellectual superiority and by craft, rather than by force. Warned by the errors of his predecessors, he did not dispute the right of the Tartars to the tribute, but evaded its payment; and yet contrived to preserve the confidence of the khan by bribing his ministers and his family, and by a ready performance of the most humiliating acts of personal submission. His conduct towards all his enemies—that is, towards all his neighbours—was dictated by a similar policy; he admitted their rights, but he took every safe opportunity to disregard them. So far did he carry the semblance of submission, that the Muscovites were for some years disgusted with the slavish spirit of their prince. His lofty ambition was concealed by rare prudence and caution, and sustained by remarkable firmness and pertinacity of purpose. He never took a step in advance from which he was forced to recede. He had the art to combine with many of his enemies against one, and thus overthrew them all in succession. It was by such means that he cast off the Tartar yoke—curbed the power of Poland—humbled that of Lithuania, subdued Nóvgorod, Tver, Pskoff, Kazán, and Viatka—reannexed Veira, Ouglitch, Rezan, and other appanages to the crown, and added nearly twenty thousand square miles with four millions of subjects to his dominions. He framed a code of laws—improved the condition of his army—established a police in every part of his empire—protected and extended commerce—supported the church, but kept it in subjection to himself; but was at all times arbitrary, often unjust and cruel, and throughout his whole life, quite unscrupulous as to the means he employed to compass his ends.

One of the most successful strokes of his policy, was his marriage with Sophia, daughter of the Emperor Paleologos, who had been driven from Constantinople by the Turks. This alliance, which he sought with great assiduity, not only added to the dignity of his government at home, but opened the way for an intercourse on equal terms with the greatest princes of Europe. It was Sophia who dissuaded him from submitting to the degrading ceremonial which had been observed on receiving the Tartar ambassadors at Moscow—and to her he probably owed the feelings of personal dignity which he evinced in the latter part of his reign. It was this alliance that at once placed the sovereigns of Russia at the head of the whole Greek church; whose dignitaries, driven from the stately dome of St Sophia in Byzantium, found shelter in the humbler temple raised by the piety of their predecessors, some ages before, in the wilds of Muscovy, and more than repaid the hospitality they received by diffusing a love of learning amongst a barbarous people. It was by means of the Greeks who followed Sophia, that Iván was enabled to maintain a diplomatic intercourse with the other governments of Europe; it was from her that Russia received her imperial emblem, the double-headed eagle; it was in her train that science, taste, and refinement penetrated to Moscow; it was probably at her instigation that Iván embellished his capital with the beauties of architecture, and encouraged men of science, and amongst others Antonio, "the heretic," and Fioraventi Aristotle, the architect and mechanician, to settle at Moscow.

But it is time we should proceed to the story. The greater part of the first volume is occupied by an account of the family, birth, and youth of the hero. Born of a noble family in Bohemia, he is educated as a physician. This was not the voluntary act of his parents; for what haughty German baron of those times would have permitted his son to degrade himself by engaging in a profession which was then chiefly occupied by the accursed Jews? No, this was a degradation prepared for the house of Ehrenstein, by the undying revenge of a little Italian physician, whom the stalwart baron had pitched a few yards out of his way during a procession at Rome. This part of the history, though not devoid of interest, is hardly within the bounds of a reasonable probability—but it contains some passages of

considerable vigour. The patient lying in wait of the revengeful Italian, and the eagerness with which he presses his advantage, making an act of mercy minister to the gratification of his passion, is not without merit, and will probably have its attractions for those who find pleasure in such conceptions.

The young Antonio is educated by the physician, Antonio Fioraventi of Padua, in ignorance of his birth—is disowned by his father, but cherished by his mother; and grows up an accomplished gentleman, scholar, and leech, of handsome person, captivating manners, and ardent aspirations to extend the limits of science, and to promote the advancement of knowledge and of civilization all over the earth. While these dreams are floating in his mind, a letter on the architect Fioraventi, who had for some time resided in Moscow, to his brother, the Italian physician, requesting him to send some skilful leech to the court of Iván, decides the fate of Antonio.

> "Fioraventi began to look out for a physician who would volunteer into a country so distant and so little known: he never thought of proposing the journey to his pupil; his youth—the idea of a separation—of a barbarous country—all terrified the old man. His imagination was no longer wild—the intellect and the heart alone had influence on him. And what had Antony to hope for there? His destiny was assured by the position of his instructor—his tranquillity was secured by circumstances—he could more readily make a name in Italy. The place of physician at the court of the Muscovite Great Prince would suit a poor adventurer; abundance of such men might be found at that time possessed of talents and learning. But hardly was Aristotle's letter communicated to Antony, than visions began to float in his ardent brain.—'To Muscovy!' cried the voice of destiny—'To Muscovy!' echoed through his soul, like a cry remembered from infancy. That soul, in its fairest dreams, had long pined for a new, distant, unknown land and people: Antony wished to be where the physician's foot had never yet penetrated: perhaps he might discover, by questioning a nature still rude and fresh, powers by which he could retain on earth its short-lived inhabitants; perhaps he might extort from a virgin soil the secret of regeneration, or dig up the fountain of the water of life and death. But he who desired to penetrate deeper into the nature of man, might have remarked other motives in his desire. Did not knightly blood boil in his veins? Did not the spirit of adventure whisper in his heart its hopes and high promises? However this might be, he offered, with delight, to go to Muscovy; and when he received the refusal of his preceptor, he began to entreat, to implore him incessantly to recall it.—'Science calls me thither,' he said, 'do not deprive her of new acquisitions, perhaps of important discoveries. Do not deprive me of glory, my only hope and happiness.' And these entreaties were followed by a new refusal.—'Knowest thou not,' cried Fioraventi angrily, 'that the gates of Muscovy are like the gates of hell—step beyond them, and thou canst never return.' But suddenly, unexpectedly, from some secret motive, he ceased to oppose Antony's desire. With tears he gave him his blessing for the journey.—'Who can tell,' said he, 'that this is not the will of fate? Perhaps, in reality, honour and fame await thee there?'
>
> "At Padua was soon known Antony Ehrenstein's determination to make that distant journey; and no one was surprised at it: there were, indeed, many who envied him.
>
> "In truth, the age in which Antony lived was calculated to attune the mind to the search after the unknown, and to serve as an excuse for his visions. The age of deep profligacy, it was also the age of lofty talents, of bold enterprises, of great discoveries. They dug into the bowels of the earth; they kept up in the laboratory an unextinguished fire; they united and separated elements; they buried themselves living, in the tomb, to discover the philosopher's stone, and they found

> it in the innumerable treasures of chemistry which they bequeathed to posterity. Nicholas Diaz and Vasco de Gama had passed, with one gigantic stride, from one hemisphere to another, and showed that millions of their predecessors were but pigmies. The genius of a third visioned forth a new world, with new oceans—went to it, and brought it to mankind. Gunpowder, the compass, printing, cheap paper, regular armies, the concentration of states and powers, ingenious destruction, and ingenious creation—all were the work of this wondrous age. At this time, also, there began to spread indistinctly about, in Germany and many other countries of Europe, those ideas of reformation, which soon were strengthened, by the persecution of the Western Church, to array themselves in the logical head of Luther, and to flame up in that universal crater, whence the fury, lava, and smoke, were to rush with such tremendous violence on kingdoms and nations. These ideas were then spreading through the multitude, and when resisted, they broke through their dikes, and burst onward with greater violence. The character of Antony, eager, thirsting for novelty, was the expression of his age: he abandoned himself to the dreams of an ardent soul, and only sought whither to carry himself and his accumulations of knowledge.
>
> "Muscovy, wild still, but swelling into vigour, with all her boundless snows and forests, the mystery of her orientalism, was to many a newly-discovered land—a rich mine for human genius. Muscovy, then for the first time beginning to gain mastery over her internal and external foes, then first felt the necessity for real, material civilization."

Antony pays a farewell visit to his mother at the humble tower in Bohemia, where she resided estranged from his father, of whose rank and condition she left him ignorant.

> "If there were a paradise upon earth, Antony would have found it in the whole month which he passed in the Bohemian castle. Oh! he would not have exchanged that poor abode, the wild nature on the banks of the Elbe, the caresses of his mother, whose age he would have cherished with his care and love—no! he would not have exchanged all this for magnificent palaces, for the exertions of proud kinsmen to elevate him at the imperial court, for numberless vassals, whom, if he chose, he might hunt to death with hounds.
>
> "But true to his vow, full of the hope of being useful to his mother, to science, and to humanity, the visionary renounced this paradise: his mother blessed him on his long journey to a distant and unknown land: she feared for him; yet she saw that Muscovy would be to him a land of promise—and how could she oppose his wishes?"

Preceding our hero to Moscow, we are presented to the Great Prince before Antonio's arrival. Ambassadors had come from Tver, and a Lithuanian ambassador and his interpreter had been truly or falsely convicted of an attempt to destroy Iván by poison. The Great Prince's enquiry what punishment is decreed against the felon who reaches at another's life, leads to the following dialogue:—

> "'In the soudébnik it is decreed,' replied Góuseff, 'whoever shall be accused of larceny, robbery, murder, or false accusation, or other like evil act, and the same shall be manifestly guilty, the boyárin shall doom the same unto the pain of death, and the plaintiff shall have his goods; and if any thing remain, the same shall go to the boyárin and the deacon.'...
>
> "'Ay, the lawyers remember themselves—never fear that the boyárin and deacon forget their fees. And what is written in thy book against royal murderers and conspirators?'
>
> "'In our memory such case hath not arisen.'

"'Even so! you lawyers are ever writing leaf after leaf, and never do ye write all; and then the upright judges begin to gloze, to interpret, to take bribes for dark passages. The law ought to be like an open hand without a glove, (the Prince opened his fist;) every simple man ought to see what is in it, and it should not be able to conceal a grain of corn. Short and clear; and, when needful, seizing firmly!... But as it is, they have put a ragged glove on law; and, besides, they close the fist. Ye may guess—odd or even! they can show one or the other, as they like.'

"'Pardon, my Lord Great Prince; lo, what we will add to the soudébnik—the royal murderer and plotter shall not live.'

"'Be it so. Let not him live, who reached at another's life.' (Here he turned to Kourítzin, but remembering that he was always disinclined to severe punishments, he continued, waving his hand,) 'I forgot that a craven[2] croweth not like a cock.' (At these words the deacon's eyes sparkled with satisfaction.) 'Mamón, be this thy care. Tell my judge of Moscow—the court judge—to have the Lithuanian and the interpreter burned alive on the Moskvá—burn them, dost thou hear? that others may not think of such deeds.'

"The dvorétzkoi bowed, and said, stroking his ragged beard—'In a few days will arrive the strangers to build the palace, and the Almayne leech: the Holy Virgin only knoweth whether there be not evil men among them also. Dost thou vouchsafe me to speak what hath come into my mind?'

"'Speak.'

"'Were it not good to show them an example at once, by punishing the criminals before them?'

"The Great Prince, after a moment's thought, replied—'Aristotle answereth for the leech Antony; he is a disciple of his brother's. The artists of the palace—foreigners—are good men, quiet men ... but ... who can tell!... Mamón, put off the execution till after the coming of the Almayne leech; but see that the fetters sleep not on the evil doers!'

"Here he signed to Mamón to go and fulfill his order."

Here is another scene with the Great Prince.

"He stopped, and turned with an air of stern command to Kourítzin.

"The latter had addressed himself to speak—'The ambassadors from Tver ... from the'...

"'From the prince, thou wouldst say,' burst in Iván Vassílievitch: 'I no longer recognize a Prince of Tver. What—I ask thee, what did he promise in the treaty of conditions which his bishop was to negotiate?—the bishop who is with us now.'

"'To dissolve his alliance with the Polish king, Kazimír, and never without thy knowledge to renew his intercourse with him; nor with thine ill-wishers, nor with Russian deserters: to swear, in his own and his children's name, never to yield to Lithuania.'

"'Hast thou still the letter to King Kazimír from our good brother-in-law and ally—him whom thou yet callest the Great Prince of Tver?'

"'I have it, my lord.'

"'What saith it?'

"'The Prince of Tver urgeth the Polish King against the Lord of All Russia.'

[2] A *jeu de mots* impossible to be rendered in English; *Kourítza*, in Russian, is a 'hen.'"—T.B.S.

> "'Now, as God shall judge me, I have right on my side. Go and tell the envoys from Tver, that I will not receive them: I spoke a word of mercy to them—they mocked at it. What do they take me for?... A bundle of rags, which to-day they may trample in the mud, and to-morrow stick up for a scarecrow in their gardens! Or a puppet—to bow down to it to-day, and to-morrow to cast it into the mire, with *Vuiduibái, father vuiduibái*![3] No! they have chosen the wrong man. They may spin their traitorous intrigues with the King of Poland, and hail him their lord; but I will go myself and tell Tver who is her real master. Tease me no more with these traitors!'
>
> "Saying this, the Great Prince grew warmer and warmer, and at length he struck his staff upon the ground so violently that it broke in two.
>
> "'Hold! here is our declaration of war,' he added—'yet one word more: had it bent it would have remained whole.'
>
> "Kourítzin, taking the fatal fragments, went out. The philosopher of those days, looking at them, shook his head and thought—'Even so breaketh the mighty rival of Moscow!'"

The Almayne physician is lodged by order of the Great Prince in one of the three stone houses which Moscow could then boast—the habitation of the voévoda Obrazétz, a fine old warrior, a venerable patriarch, and bigot, such as all Russians then were. To him the presence of the heretic is disgusting; his touch would be pollution; and the whole family is thrown into the utmost consternation by the prospect of having to harbour so foul a guest—a magician, a man who had sold his soul to Satan—above all, a heretic. The voévoda had an only daughter, who, with Oriental caution, was carefully screened from the sight of man, as became a high-born Russian maiden.

> "From her very infancy Providence had stamped her with the seal of the marvellous; when she was born a star had fallen on the house—on her bosom she bore a mark resembling a cross within a heart. When ten years old, she dreamed of palaces and gardens such as eye had never seen on earth, and faces of unspeakable beauty, and voices that sang, and self-moving dulcimers that played, as it were within her heart, so sweetly and so well, that tongue could never describe it; and, when she awoke from those dreams, she felt a light pressure on her feet, and she thought she perceived that something was resting on them with white wings folded; it was very sweet, and yet awful—and in a moment all was gone. Sometimes she would meditate, sometimes she would dream, she knew not what. Often, when prostrate before the image of the Mother of God, she wept; and these tears she hid from the world, like some holy thing sent down to her from on high. She loved all that was marvellous; and therefore she loved the tales, the legends, the popular songs and stories of those days. How greedily did she listen to her nurse! and what marvels did the eloquent old woman unfold, to the young, burning imagination of her foster child! Anastasia, sometimes abandoning herself to poesy, would forget sleep and food; sometimes her dreams concluded the unfinished tale more vividly, more eloquently far."

We must give the pendant to this picture—the portrait of Obrazétz himself, sitting in his easy-chair, listening to a tale of travels in the East.

> "How noble was the aged man, free from stormy passions, finishing the pilgrimage of life! You seemed to behold him in pure white raiment, ready to appear before his heavenly judge. Obrazétz was the chief of the party in years, in grave

[3] "When Vladímir, to convert the Russians to Christianity, caused the image of their idol Peróun to be thrown into the Dniépr, the people of Kíeff are said to have shouted '*vuiduibái, bátioushka, vuiduibái*!'—bátioushka signifies 'father;' but the rest of the exclamation has never been explained, though it has passed into a proverb."—T.B.S.

> majestic dignity, and patriarchal air. Crossing his arms upon his staff, he covered them with his beard, downy as the soft fleece of a lamb; the glow of health, deepened by the cup of strong mead, blushed through the snow-white hair with which his cheeks were thickly clothed; he listened with singular attention and delight to the story-teller. This pleasure was painted on his face, and shone brightly in his eyes; from time to time a smile of good-humoured mockery flitted across his lips, but this was only the innocent offspring of irony which was raised in his good heart by Aphónia's boasting, (for very few story-tellers, you know, are free from this sin.) Reclining his shoulders against the back of his arm-chair, he shut his eyes, and, laying his broad hairy hand upon Andrióusha's head, he softly, gently dallied with the boy's flaxen locks. On his countenance the gratification of curiosity was mingled with affectionate tenderness: he was not dozing, but seemed to be losing himself in sweet reveries. In the old man's visions arose the dear never forgotten son, whom he almost fancied he was caressing. When he opened his eyes, their white lashes still bore traces of the touching society of his unearthly guest; but when he remarked that the tear betraying the secret of his heart had disturbed his companions, and made his daughter anxious, the former expression of pleasure again dawned on his face, and doubled the delighted attention of the whole party."

At length the dreaded guest arrived.

> "Evil days had fallen on Obrazétz and his family. He seemed himself as though he had lost his wife and son a second time. Khabár raged and stormed like a mountain torrent. Anastasia, hearing the horrible stories—is sometimes trembling like an aspen-leaf, and then weeps like a fountain. She dares not even look forth out of the sliding window of her bower. Why did Vassílii Féodorovitch build such a fine house? Why did he build it so near the Great Prince's palace? 'Tis clear, this was a temptation of the Evil One. He wanted, forsooth, to boast of a nonsuch! He had sinned in his pride.... What would become of him, his son and daughter! Better for them had they never been born!... And all this affliction arose from the boyárin being about to receive a German in his house!"

The voévoda gave strict injunctions that none of his family should go to meet the procession; but M. Lajétchnikoff knows that all such orders are unavailing.

> "Curiosity is so strong in human nature, that it can conquer even fear: notwithstanding the orders of the boyárin, all his servants rushed to obtain a glance at the terrible stranger; one at the gate, another through the crevices of the wooden fence, another over it. Khabár, with his arms haughtily a-kimbo, gazed with stern pride from the other gate. Now for the frightful face with mouse's ears, winking owlish eyes streaming with fiendish fire! now for the beak! They beheld a young man, tall, graceful, of noble deportment, overflowing with fresh vigorous life. In his blue eyes shone the light of goodness and benevolence through the moisture called up by the recent spectacle of the execution: the lips, surmounted by a slight soft mustache, bore a good-humoured smile—one of those smiles that it is impossible to feign, and which can only find their source in a heart never troubled by impure passions. Health and frost had united to tinge the cheeks with a light rosy glow; he took off his cap, and his fair curls streamed forth over his broad shoulders. He addressed Mamón in a few words of such Russian as he knew, and in his voice there was something so charming, that even the evil spirit which wandered through the boyárin's heart, sank down to its abyss. This, then, was the horrible stranger, who had harmed Obrazétz and his household! This, then, was he—after all! If this was the

> devil, the fiend must again have put on his original heavenly form. All the attendants, as they looked upon him, became firmly convinced that he had bewitched their eyes.
>
> "'Haste, Nástia![4] look how handsome he is!' cried Andrióusha to the voevóda's daughter, in whose room he was, looking through the sliding window, which he had drawn back. 'After this, believe stupid reports! My father says that he is my brother: oh, how I shall love him! Look, my dear!'
>
> "And the son of Aristotle, affirming and swearing that he was not deceiving his godmother, drew her, trembling and pale, to the window. Making the sign of the cross, with a fluttering heart she ventured to look out—she could not trust her eyes, again she looked out; confusion! a kind of delighted disappointment, a kind of sweet thrill running through her blood, never before experienced, fixed her for some moments to the spot: but when Anastasia recovered herself from these impressions, she felt ashamed and grieved that she had given way to them. She already felt a kind of repentance. The sorcerer has put on a mask, she thought, remembering her father's words: from this moment she became more frequently pensive."

We are conducted to the state prisons of Moscow, and introduced to some of the prisoners whose names have figured in history. We select the following dialogue as a specimen of the author's power to deal with such matters. The prisoner is Márpha, the lady of Novogorod, who, by her courage and her wealth, had laboured to preserve its independence.

> "Here the Great Prince rapped with his staff at a grating; at the knock there looked out an old roman, who was fervently praying on her knees. She was dressed in a much-worn high cap, and in a short veil, poor, but white as new-fallen snow; her silver hair streamed over a threadbare mantle: it was easy to guess that this was no common woman. Her features were very regular, in her dim eyes was expressed intellect, and a kind of stern greatness of soul. She looked proudly and steadily at the Great Prince.
>
> "'For whom wert thou praying, Marphóusha?' asked the sovereign.
>
> "'For whom but for the dead!' she sullenly replied.
>
> "'But for whom in particular, if I may make bold to ask?'
>
> "'Ask concerning that of my child, thou son of a dog—of him who was called thy brother, whom thou murderedst—of Nóvgorod, which thou hast drowned in blood, and covered with ashes!'
>
> "'O, ho, ho!... Thou hast not forgotten thy folly, then—Lady of Nóvgorod the Great.'
>
> "'I was such once, my fair lord!'
>
> "At these words she arose.
>
> "'Wilt thou not think again?'
>
> "'Of what?... I said that I was praying for the dead. Thy Moscow, with all its hovels, can twice a-year be laid in ashes, and twice built up again. The Tartar hath held it two ages in slavery.... It pined, it pined away and yet it remains whole. It hath but changed one bondage for another. But once destroy the queen—Nóvgorod the Great—and Nóvgorod the Great will perish for ever.'
>
> "'How canst thou tell that?'
>
> "'Can ye raise up a city of hewn stone in a hundred years?'
>
> "'I will raise one in a dozen.'

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[4] *Nástia*—the diminutive of Anastasia; Nástenka, the same. Russian caressing names generally end in sia, she, óusha, or óushka—as Vásia, (for Iván;) Andrióusha, (Andrei;) Varpholoméoushka, (Bartholomew.)"—T.B.S.

"'Ay, but this is not in the fairy tale, where 'tis done as soon as said. Call together the Hanse traders whom thou hast driven away.'

"'Ha, hucksteress! thou mournest for the traders more than for Nóvgorod itself.'

"'By my huckstering she grew not poor, but rich.'

"'Let me but jingle a piece of money, and straight will fly the merchants from all corners of the world, greedy for my grosches.'

"'Recall the chief citizens whom thou hast exiled to thy towns.'

"'Cheats, knaves, rebels! they are not worth this!'

"'When was power in the wrong? Where is the water of life that can revive those thou hast slain? Even if thou couldst do all this, liberty, liberty would be no more for Nóvgorod, Iván Vassílievitch; and Nóvgorod will never rise again! It may live on awhile like lighted flax, that neither flameth nor goeth out, even as I live in a dungeon!'

"'It is thine inflexible obstinacy that hath ruined both of ye. I should like to have seen how thou wouldst have acted in my place.'

"'Thou hast done thy work, Great Prince of Moscow, I—mine. Triumph not over me, in my dungeon, at my last hour.'

"Márpha Borétzkaia coughed, and her face grew livid; she applied the end of her veil to her lips, but it was instantly stained with blood, and Iván remarked this, though she endeavoured to conceal it.

"'I am sorry for thee, Márpha,' said the Great Prince in a compassionate tone.

"'Sharp is thy glance.... What! doth it delight thee?... Spread this kerchief over Nóvgorod.... 'Twill be a rich pall!'... she added with a smile.

"'Let me in! let me in!... I cannot bear it.... Let me go in to her!' cried Andrióusha, bursting into tears.

"On the Great Prince's countenance was mingled compassion and vexation. He, however, lifted the latch of the door, and let the son of Aristotle pass in to Borétzkaia.

"Andrea kissed her hand. Borétzkaia uttered not a word; she mournfully shook her head, and her warm tears fell upon the boy's face.

"'Ask him how many years she can live,' said the Great Prince to Aristotle, in a whisper.

"'It is much, much, if she live three months; but, perhaps, 'twill be only till spring,' answered Antony. 'No medicine can save her: that blood is a sure herald of death.'

"This reply was translated to Iván Vassílievitch in as low a tone as possible, that Borétzkaia might not hear it; but she waved her hand, and said calmly—'I knew it long ago'....

"'Hearken, Márpha Isákovna, if thou wilt, I will give thee thy liberty, and send thee into another town.'

"'Another town ... another place ... God hath willed it so, without thee!'

"'I would send thee to Báyjetzkoi-Verkh.'

"''Tis true, that was our country. If I could but die in my native land!'

"'Then God be with thee: there thou mayst say thy prayers, give alms to the churches; I will order thy treasury to be delivered up to thee—and remember not the Great Prince of Moscow in anger.'

"She smiled. Have you ever seen something resembling a smile on the jaws of a human skull?

"'Farewell, we shall never meet again,' said the Great Prince.

"'We shall meet at the judgment-seat of God!' was the last reply of Borétzkaia."

The daughter of Obrazétz loved the heretic, who was long unconscious of the feelings he had inspired, and himself untouched by the mysterious fire that was consuming the heart of the young Anastasia. But his turn, too, had come—he, too, had seen and loved; but she knew not of his love—she hardly knew the nature of her own feelings; sometimes she feared she was under the influence of magic, or imagined that the anxiety she felt for the heretic was a holy desire to turn him from the errors of his faith to save his immortal soul—or, if she knew the truth, she dared not acknowledge it even to her own heart—far less to any human being. To love a heretic was a deadly sin; but to save a soul would be acceptable to God—a holy offering at the footstool of the throne of grace and mercy. This hope would justify any sacrifice. The great Prince was about to march against Tver, and Antonio was to accompany him. Could she permit him to depart without an effort to redeem him from his heresy, or, alas! without a token of her love? She determined to send him the crucifix she wore round her neck—a holy and a sacred thing, which it would have been a deadly sin to part with unless to rescue a soul from perdition—and she sent it. Her brother, too, was to accompany the army, and had besides, on his return, to encounter a judicial combat. The soul of the old warrior Obrazétz was deeply moved by the near approach of his son's departure. One son had died by his side—he might never see Iván more, and his heart yearned to join with him in prayer. "The mercies of God are unaccountable."

"Trusting in them, Obrazétz proceeded to the oratory, whither, by his command, he was followed by Khabár and Anastasia.

"Silently they go, plunged in feelings of awe: they enter the oratory; the solitary window is curtained; in the obscurity, feebly dispelled by the mysterious glimmer of the lamp, through the deep stillness, fitfully broken by the flaring of the taper, they were gazed down upon from every side by the dark images of the Saviour, the Holy Mother of God, and the Holy Saints. From them there seems to breathe a chilly air as of another world: here thou canst not hide thyself from their glances; from every side they follow thee in the slightest movement of thy thoughts and feelings. Their wasted faces, feeble limbs, and withered frames—their flesh macerated by prayer and fasting—the cross, the agony—all here speaks of the victory of will over passions. Themselves an example of purity in body and soul, they demand the same purity from all who enter the oratory, their holy shrine.

"To them Anastasia had recourse in the agitation of her heart; from them she implored aid against the temptations of the Evil One; but help there was none for her, the weak in will, the devoted to the passion which she felt for an unearthly tempter.

Thrice, with crossing and with prayer, did Obrazétz bow before the images; thrice did his son and daughter bow after him. This pious preface finished, the old man chanted the psalm—'Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the Most High.' Thus, even in our own times, among us in Russia, the pious warrior, when going to battle, almost always arms himself with this shield of faith. With deep feeling, Khabár repeated the words after his father. All this prepared Anastasia for something terrible she trembled like a dove which is caught by the storm in the open plain, where there is no shelter for her from the tempest that is ready to burst above her. When they arose from prayer, Obrazétz took from the shrine a small image of St George the Victorious, cast in silver, with a ring for suspending it on the bosom. 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost!' he said, with a solemn voice, holding the image in his left hand, and with his right making three

> signs of the cross—'with this mercy of God I bless thee, my dear and only son, Iván, and I pray that the holy martyr, George, may give thee mastery and victory over thine enemies: keep this treasure even as the apple of thine eye. Put it not off from thee in any wise, unless the Lord willeth that the foe shall take it from thee. I know thee, Ivan, they will not take it from thee living; but they may from thy corse. Keep in mind at every season thy father's blessing.'
>
> "Anastasia turned as white as snow, and trembled in every limb; her bosom felt oppressed as with a heavy stone, a sound as of hammering was in her ears. She seemed to hear all the images, one after another, sternly repeating her father's words. He continued—'It is a great thing, this blessing. He who remembereth it not, or lightly esteemeth it, from him shall the heavenly Father turn away his face, and shall leave him for ever and ever. He shall be cast out from the kingdom of heaven, and his portion shall be in hell. Keep well my solemn word.'
>
> "Every accent of Obrazétz fell upon Anastasia's heart like a drop of molten pitch. She seemed to be summoned before the dreadful judgment-seat of Christ, to hear her father's curse, and her own eternal doom. She could restrain herself no longer, and sobbed bitterly; the light grew dim in her eyes; her feet began to totter. Obrazétz heard her sobs, and interrupted his exhortation. 'Nástia, Nástia! what aileth thee?' he enquired, with lively sympathy, of his daughter, whom he tenderly loved. She had not strength to utter a word, and fell into her brother's arms. Crossing himself, the boyárin put back the image into its former place, and then hastened to sprinkle his child with holy water which always stood ready in the oratory. Anastasia revived, and when she saw herself surrounded by her father and brother, in a dark, narrow, sepulchral place, she uttered a wild cry, and turned her dim eyes around. 'My life, my darling child, my dove! what aileth thee?' cried the father. 'Recollect thyself: thou art in the oratory. 'Tis plain some evil eye hath struck thee. Pray to the Holy Virgin: she, the merciful one, will save thee from danger.'
>
> "The father and son bore her to the image of the Mother of God. Her brother with difficulty raised her arm, and she, all trembling, made the sign of the cross. Deeply, heavily she sighed, applied her ice-cold lips to the image, and then signed to them with her hand that they should carry her out speedily. She fancied that she saw the Holy Virgin shake her head with a reproachful air.
>
> "When they had carried Anastasia to her chamber, she felt better."

Hitherto none had shared her secret thoughts; but the experienced eye of the widow Selínova had detected the nature of her malady, and she longed to know the object of her affection.

> "One day, they were sitting alone together, making lace. A kind of mischievous spirit whispered her to speak of the heretic. Imagine yourself thrown by destiny on a foreign land. All around you are speaking in an unknown tongue; their language appears to you a chaos of wild, strange sounds. Suddenly, amid the crowd, drops a word in your native language. Does not then a thrill run over your whole being? does not your heart leap within you? Or place a Russian peasant at a concert where is displayed all the creative luxury and all the brilliant difficulties of foreign music. The child of nature listens with indifference to the incomprehensible sounds; but suddenly Voróbieva with her nightingale voice trills out—*The cuckóo from out the fírs so dánk hath not cúckooed.* Look what a change comes over the half-asleep listener. Thus it was with Anastasia! Till this moment Selínova had spoken to her in a strange language, had only uttered sounds unintelligible to her; but the instant that she spoke the *native* word, it touched the heart-string, and all the chords of her

being thrilled as if they were about to burst. Anastasia trembled, her hands wandered vaguely over her lace cushion, her face turned deadly pale. She dared not raise her eyes, and replied at random, absently.

"'Ah!' thought Selínova, 'that is the right key: that is the point whence cometh the storm!'

"Both remained silent. At length Anastasia ventured to glance at her visitor, in order to see by the expression of her face, whether she had remarked her confusion. Selínova's eyes were fixed upon her work, on her face there was not even a shade of suspicion. The crafty widow intended little by little, imperceptibly, to win the confidence of the inexperienced girl.

"'And where then is *he* gone?' she asked after a short pause, without naming the person about whom she was enquiring.

"'He is gone with the Great Prince on the campaign,' answered Anastasia blushing; then, after a moment's thought she added—'I suppose thou askedst me about my brother?'

"'No, my dear, our conversation was about Antony the leech. What a pity he is a heretic! You will not easily find such another gallant among our Muscovites. He hath all, both height and beauty: when he looketh, 'tis as though he gave you large pearls; his locks lie on his shoulders like the light of dawn; he is as white and rosy as a young maiden. I wonder whence he had such beauty—whether by the permission of God, or, not naturally, by the influence of the Evil One. I could have looked at him —may it not be a sin to say, I could have gazed at him for ever without being weary!'

"At these praises Anastasia's pale countenance blushed like the dawning that heralds the tempest. 'Thou hast then seen him?' asked the enamoured maiden, in a trembling, dying voice, and breaking off her work.

"'I have seen him more than once. I have not only seen him, but wonder now, my dear—I have visited him in his dwelling!'

"'The maiden shook her head, her eyes were dimmed with the shade of pensiveness; a thrill of jealousy, in spite of herself, darted to her heart. 'What! and didst thou not fear to go to him?' she said—'Is he not a heretic?'

"'If thou knewest it, Nástenka, what wouldst thou not do for love?'

"'Love?' ... exclaimed Anastasia, and her heart bounded violently in her breast.

"'Ah if I were not afraid, I would disclose to thee the secret of my soul.'

"'Speak, I pray thee, speak! Fear not; see! I call the Mother of God to witness, thy words shall die with me.'

"And the maiden, with a quivering hand, signed a large cross.

"'If so, I will confide in thee what I have never disclosed but to God. It is not over one blue sea alone that the mist lieth, and the darksome cloud: it is not over one fair land descendeth the gloomy autumn night; there was a time when my bosom was loaded with a heavy sorrow, my rebellious heart lay drowned in woe and care: I loved thy brother, Iván Vassílievitch. (The maiden's heart was relieved, she breathed more freely.) Thou knowest not, my life, my child, what kind of feeling is that of love, and God grant that thou mayest never know! The dark night cometh, thou canst not close thine eyes: the bright dawn breaketh, thou meetest it with tears, and the day is all weary—O, so weary! There are many men in the fair world, but thou see'st only one, in thy bower, in the street, in the house of God. A stone lieth ever on thy breast, and thou canst not shake it off.'

"Then Selínova wept sincere tears. Her companion listened to her with eager sympathy: the feelings just depicted were her own.

"There was a deep silence. It was broken by the young widow.

"'Nástenka, my life?' she began in a tone of such touching, such lively interest, as called for her reluctant confidence.

"The daughter of Obrazétz glanced at her with eyes full of tears, and shook her head.

"'Confide in me, as I have confided in thee,' continued Selínova, taking her hand and pressing it to her bosom. 'I have lived longer in the world than thou ... believe me, 'twill give thee ease ... 'tis clear from every symptom, my love, what thou ailest.'

"And Anastasia, sobbing, exclaimed at last—'O, my love, my dearest friend, Praskóvia Vladimírovna, take a sharp knife, open my white breast, look what is the matter there!'

"'And wherefore need we take the sharp knife, and wherefore need we open the white breast, or look upon the rebellious heart? Surely, by thy fair face all can tell, my child, how that fair face hath been darkened, how the fresh bloom hath faded, and bright eyes grown dull. After all, 'tis clear thou lovest some wandering falcon, some stranger youth.'

"Anastasia answered not a word; she could not speak for tears; and hid her face in her hands. At last, softened by Selínova's friendly sympathy, and her assurances that she would be easier if she would confide her secret to such a faithful friend, she related her love for the heretic. The episode of the crucifix was omitted in this tale, which finished, of course, with assurances that she was enchanted, bewitched.

"Poor Anastasia!

"Snowdrop! beautiful flower, thou springest up alone in the bosom of thy native valley! And the bright sun arises every day to glass himself in thy morning mirror; and the beaming moon, after a sultry day, hastens to fan thee with her breezy wing, and the angels of God, lulling thee by night, spread over thee a starry canopy, such as king never possessed. Who can tell from what quarter the tempest may bring from afar, from other lands, the seeds of the ivy, and scatter them by thy side, and the ivy arises and twines lovingly around thee, and chokes thee, lovely flower! This is not all: the worm has crawled to thy root, hath fixed its fang therein, and kills ye both, if some kind hand save ye not."

These extracts will enable our readers to judge for themselves of the merits of M. Lajétchnikoff's style as it appears in Mr Shaw's translation. A better selection might have been made, had we not been desirous to avoid any such anticipation of the development of the story as light diminish its interest; but we are inclined to believe that most of our readers will agree with us in thinking, that if M. Lajétchnikoff has succeeded in faithfully illustrating the manners of the age of Iván the Great, he has also shown that he possesses brilliancy of fancy, fervour of thought, and elevation of sentiment, as well as knowledge of the movements of the heart, revealed only to the few who have been initiated into nature's mysteries.

He does not appear to be largely gifted with the power of graphic description, of placing the scenes of nature, or the living figures that people them, vividly before us—he loves rather to indulge, even to excess, mystical or passionate thoughts that are born in his own breast, and to adorn them with garlands woven from the flowers of his fancy; but these flowers are of native growth, the indigenous productions of the Russian soil. His images often sound to our ears homely, sometimes even familiar and mean, but they may be dignified in their native dress. He has no lively perception of the beauties of external nature; his raptures are reserved for the wonders of art, for what the human mind can create or achieve; and, curiously enough, it is architecture that seems to excite in him the greatest enthusiasm. In illustration of this feeling, we must still extract an eloquent discourse on the life of

the artist, which the author puts into the mouth of Fioraventi Aristotle—a passage of much feeling, and, we fear, of too much truth:—

> "Thou knowest not, Antony, what a life is that of an artist! While yet a child, he is agitated by heavy incomprehensible thoughts: to him the sphynx, Genius, hath already proposed its enigmas; in his bosom the Promethean vulture is already perched, and groweth with his growth. His comrades are playing and making merry; they are preparing for their riper years recollections of childhood's days of paradise—childhood, that never can be but once: the time cometh, and he remembereth but the tormenting dreams of that age. Youth is at hand; for others 'tis the time of love, of soft ties, of revelry—the feast of life; for the artist, none of these. Solitary, flying from society, he avoideth the maiden, he avoideth joy; plunging into the loneliness of his soul, he there, with indescribable mourning, with tears of inspiration, on his knees before his Ideal, imploreth her to come down upon earth to his frail dwelling. Days and nights he waiteth, and pineth after unearthly beauty. Woe to him if she doth not visit him, and yet greater woe to him if she doth! The tender frame of youth cannot bear her bridal kiss; union with the gods is fatal to man; and the mortal is annihilated in her embrace. I speak not of the education, of the mechanic preparation. And here at every step the Material enchaineth thee, buildeth up barriers before thee: marketh a formless vein upon thy block of marble, mingling soot with thy carmine, entangling thy imagination in a net of monstrous rules and formulas, commandeth thee to be the slave of the house-painter or of the stone-cutter. And what awaiteth thee, when thou hast come forth victorious from this mechanic school—when thou hast succeeded in throwing off the heavy sum of a thousand unnecessary rules, with which pedantry hath overwhelmed thee—when thou takest as thy guide only those laws which are so plain and simple? ... What awaiteth thee then? Again the Material! Poverty, need, forced labour, appreciators, rivals, that ever-hungry flock which flieth upon thee ready to tear thee in pieces, as soon as it knoweth that thou art a pure possessor of the gift of God. Thy soul burneth to create, but thy carcass demandeth a morsel of bread; inspiration veileth her wing, but the body asketh not only to clothe its nakedness with a decent covering, but fine cloth, silk, velvet, that it may appear before thy judges in a proper dress, without which they will not receive thee, thou and thy productions will die unknown. In order to obtain food, clothes, thou must *work*: a merchant will order from thee a cellar, a warehouse; the signore, stables and dog kennels. Now at last thou hast procured thyself daily bread, a decent habit for thy bones and flesh: inspiration thirsteth for its nourishment, demanding from thy soul images and forms. Thou createst, thou art bringing thy Ideal to fulfilment. How swiftly move the wheels of thy being! Thy existence is tenfold redoubled, thy pulse is beating as when thou breathest the atmosphere of high mountains. Thou spendest in one day whole months of life. How many nights passed without sleep, how many days in ceaseless chain, all filled with agitation! Or rather, there is nor day nor night for thee, nor seasons of the year, as for other men. Thy blood now boileth, then freezeth; the fever of imagination wasteth thee away. Triumph setteth thee on fire, the fear of failure maddeneth thee, tearing thee to pieces, tormenting thee with dread of the judgments of men; then again ariseth the terror of dying with thy task unfinished. Add, too, the inevitable shade of glory, which stalketh ever in thy footsteps, and giveth thee not a moment of repose. This is the period of creation! While creating, thou hast been dwelling at the footstool of God. Crushed by thy contact with the hem of his garment, overwhelmed by inspiration from Him whom the world can scarcely bear, a poor mortal, half alive,

> half dead, thou descendest upon earth, and carriest with thee what thou hast created *there*, in *His* presence! Mortals surround thy production, judging, valuing, discussing it in detail; the patron laudeth the ornaments, the grandeur of the columns, the weight of the work; the distributors of favour gamble away thy honour, or creep like mice under thy plan, and nibble at it in the darkness of night. No, my friend, the life of an artist is the life of a martyr."

We are so much accustomed to see virtue rewarded and vice punished, that we might perhaps have been better pleased to have seen this kind of poetical justice more equitably dispensed; but the cause of virtue is perhaps as effectually served by making it attractive as by making it triumphant, and vice is as much discouraged by making it odious or contemptible as by making it unsuccessful.

It only remains to say a few words of the translator's labours; and although we do not pretend to decide on the fidelity of the version he has given us, or how much his author may have lost or gained in his hands, we cannot but think that we perceive internal evidence of efforts to be faithful, even at the hazard of losing perhaps something of more value in the attempt. However this may be, it is plain that Mr Shaw is himself a vigorous and eloquent writer of his own language, as the extracts we have given may vouch. We feel greatly indebted to him for unlocking to us the stores of Russian fiction, which, if they contain many such works as *The Heretic*, will well repay the labour of a careful examination. There is about every thing Russian an air of orientalism which gives a peculiar character to their dress, their mansions, their manners, their feelings, their expressions, and their prejudices, which will probably long continue to distinguish Russian literature on that of the other nations of Europe, whose steps she has followed, perhaps too implicitly, in her attempts to overtake them in the race of civilization and intellectual improvement.

THRUSH-HUNTING

BY ALEXANDER DUMAS

We have heard of certain cooks, the Udes and Vatels of their day, whose boast it was to manufacture the most sumptuous and luxurious repast out of coarse and apparently insufficient materials. We will take the liberty of comparing M. Dumas with one of these artistical *cuisiniers*, possessing in the highest degree the talent of making much out of little, by the skill with which it is prepared, and the piquant nature of the condiments applied. A successful dramatist, as well as a popular romance-writer, his dialogues have the point and brilliancy, his narrative the vivid terseness, generally observable in novels written by persons accustomed to dramatic composition. Confining himself to no particular line of subject, he rambles through the different departments of light literature in a most agreeable and desultory manner; to-day a tourist, to-morrow a novelist; the next day surprising his public by an excursion into the regions of historical romance, amongst the well-beaten highways and byways of which he still manages to discover an untrodden path, or to embellish a familiar one by the sparkle of his wit and industry of his researches. The majority of his books convey the idea of being written *currente calamo*, and with little trouble to himself; and these have a lightness and brilliancy peculiar to their lively author, which cannot fail to recommend them to all classes of readers. They are like the sketches of a clever artist, who, with a few bright and bold touches, gives an effect to his subject which no labour would enable a less talented painter to achieve. But M. Dumas can produce highly finished pictures as well as brilliant sketches, although for the present it is one of the latter that we are about to introduce to our readers.

Every body knows, or ought to know, that M. Dumas has been in Italy, and found means to make half a dozen highly amusing volumes out of his rambles in a country, perhaps, of all others, the most familiar to the inhabitants of civilized Europe—a country which has been described and re-described *ad nauseam*, by tourists, loungers, and idlers innumerable. On his way to the land of lazzaroni he made a pause at Marseilles to visit his friend Méry, a poet and author of some celebrity; and here he managed to collect materials for a volume which we can recommend to the perusal of the daily increasing class of our countrymen who think that a book, although written in French, may be witty and amusing without being either blasphemous or indecent.

We have reason to believe that many persons who have not visited the south-eastern corner of France, think of it as a "land of the cypress and myrtle;" where troubadours wander amongst orange groves, or tinkle their guitars under the shade of the vine and the fig-tree. There is something in a name, and Provence, if it were only for the sake of its roses, ought, one would think, to be a smiling and beautiful country. And so part of it is; but in this part is assuredly not included the district around its chief city. One hears much of the vineyards and orange groves of the south. We do not profess to care much about vines, except for the sake of what they produce; most of the vineyards we ever saw looked very like plantations of gooseberry bushes, and the best of them were not so graceful or picturesque as a Kentish hop-ground. As to olives, admirable as they undoubtedly are when flanking a sparkling jug of claret, we find little to admire in the stiff, greyish, stunted sort of trees upon which they think proper to grow. But neither vines nor olives are to be found around Marseilles. Nothing but dust; dust on the roads, dust in the fields, dust on every leaf of the parched, unhappy-looking trees that surround the country-houses of the Marseillais. The fruit and vegetables consumed there are brought for miles overland, or by water from places on the coast; flowers are scarce—objecting, probably, to grow in so arid a soil, and in a heat that, for some months of the year, is perfectly African. Game there is little or none; notwithstanding which, there are nowhere to be found more enthusiastic

sportsmen than at Marseilles. It is on this hint M. Dumas speaks. His description of the manner in which the worthy burghers of Marseilles make war upon the volatiles is rather amusing.

"Every Marseillais who aspires to the character of a keen sportsman, has what is termed a *poste à feu*. This is a pit or cave dug in the ground in the vicinity of a couple of pine-trees, and covered over with branches. In addition to the pine-trees, it is usual to have *cimeaux*, long spars of wood, of which two are supported horizontally on the branches of the trees, and a third planted perpendicularly in the ground. These *cimeaux* are intended as a sort of treacherous invitation to the birds to come and rest themselves. So regularly as Sunday morning arrives, the Marseillais Cockney installs himself in his pit, arranges a loophole through which he can see what passes outside, and waits with all imaginable patience. The question that will naturally be asked, is—What does he wait for?

"He waits for a thrush, an ortolan, a beccafico, a robin-redbreast, or any other feathered and diminutive biped. He is not so ambitious as to expect a quail. Partridges he has heard of; of one, at least, a sort of phoenix, reproduced from its own ashes, and seen from time to time before an earthquake, or other great catastrophe. As to the hare, he is well aware that it is a fabulous animal of the unicorn species.

"There is a tradition, however, at Marseilles, that during the last three months of the year, flocks of wild pigeons pass over, on their way from Africa or Kamschatka, or some other distant country. Within the memory of man no one has ever seen one of these flights; but it would nevertheless be deemed heresy to doubt the fact. At this season, therefore, the sportsman provides himself with tame pigeon, which he fastens by a string to the *cimeaux*, in such a manner that the poor bird is obliged to keep perpetually on the wing, not being allowed rope enough to reach a perch. After three or four Sundays passed in this manner, the unfortunate decoy dies of a broken heart."

There is not nearly so much caricature in this picture as our readers may be disposed to think. Whoever has passed a few weeks of the autumn in a French provincial town, must have witnessed and laughed at the very comical proceedings of the *chasseurs*, the high-sounding title assumed by every Frenchman who ever pointed a gun at a cock-sparrow. One sees them going forth in the morning in various picturesque and fanciful costumes, their loins girded with a broad leathern belt, a most capacious game-bag slung over their shoulder, a fowling-piece of murderous aspect balanced on their arm; their heads protected from the October sun by every possible variety of covering, from the Greek skull-cap to the broad-brimmed Spanish sombrero. Away they go, singly, or by twos and threes, accompanied by a whole regiment of dogs, for the most part badly bred, and worse broken curs, which, when they get into the field, go pottering about in a style that would sorely tempt an English sportsman to bestow upon them the contents of both barrels. Towards the close of the day, take a stroll outside the town, and you meet the heroes returning. "Well, what sport?" "*Pas mal, mon cher*. Not so bad," is the reply, in a tone of ill-concealed triumph; and plunging his hand into his game-bag, the chasseur produces—a phthisical snipe, a wood pigeon, an extenuated quail, and perhaps something which you at first take for a deformed blackbird, but which turns out to be a water-hen. As far as our own observations go, we do aver this to be a very handsome average of a French sportsman's day's shooting. If by chance he has knocked down a red-legged partridge, (grey ones are very scarce in France,) his exultation knows no bounds. The day on which such a thing occurs is a red-letter day with him for the rest of his life. He goes home at once and inscribes the circumstance in the family archives.

But this state of things, it will perhaps be urged, may arise from the scarcity of game in France, as probably as from the sportsman's want of skill. True; but the worst is to come. After you have duly admired and examined snipe, pigeon, quail, and water-hen, your friend again rummages in the depths of his *gibecière*, and pulls out—what?—a handful of tomtits and linnets, which he has been picking off every hedge for five miles round. "*Je me suis rabattu sur le petit gibier*," he says, with a grin and a shrug, and walks away, a proud man and a happy, leaving you in admiration of his prowess.

M. Dumas expresses a wish to make the acquaintance of one of these modern Nimrods, and his friend Méry arranges a supper, to which he invites a certain Monsieur Louet, who plays the fourth bass in the orchestra of the Marseilles theatre. The conversation after supper is a good specimen of *persiflage*. After doing ample justice to an excellent repast, during which he had scarcely uttered a word,

"Monsieur Louet threw himself back in his chair and looked at us all, one after the other, as if he had only just become aware of our presence, accompanying his inspection with a smile of the most perfect benevolence; then, heaving a gentle sigh of satisfaction—'Ma foi! I have made a capital supper!' exclaimed he.

"'M. Louet! A cigar?' cried Méry: 'It is good for the digestion.'

"'Thank you, most illustrious poet!' answered M. Louet; 'I never smoke. It was not the fashion in my time. Smoking and boots were introduced by the Cossacks. I always wear shoes, and am faithful to my snuff-box.'

"So saying, M. Louet produced his box, and offered it round. We all refused except Méry, who, wishing to flatter him, attacked his weak side.

"'What delicious snuff, M. Louet! This cannot be the common French snuff?'

"'Indeed it is—only I doctor it in a particular manner. It is a secret I learned from a cardinal when I was at Rome.'

"'Ha! You have been to Rome?' cried I.

"'Yes, sir; I passed twenty years there.'

"'M. Louet,' said Méry, 'since you do not smoke, you ought to tell these gentlemen the story of your thrush-hunt.'

"'I shall be most happy,' replied M. Louet graciously, 'if you think it will amuse the company.'

"'To be sure it will,' cried Méry. 'Gentlemen, you are going to hear the account of one of the most extraordinary hunts that has taken place since the days of Nimrod the mighty hunter. I have heard it told twenty times, and each time with increased pleasure. Another glass of punch, M. Louet. There! Now begin.—We are all impatience.'

"'You are aware, gentlemen,' said M. Louet, 'that every Marseillais is born a sportsman.'

"'Perfectly true,' interrupted Méry 'it is a physiological phenomenon which I have never been able to explain; but it is nevertheless quite true.'

"'Unfortunately,' continued M. Louet, 'or perhaps I should say fortunately, we have neither lions nor tigers in the neighbourhood of Marseilles. On the other hand, we have flights of pigeons.'

"'There!' cried Méry, 'I told you so. They insist upon it.'

"'Certainly,' replied M. Louet, visibly vexed; 'and, whatever you may say to the contrary, the pigeons *do* pass. Besides, did you not lend me the other day a book of Mr Cooper's, the *Pioneers*, in which the fact is authenticated?'

"'Ah, yes! Authenticated in America.'

"'Very well! If they pass over America why should they not pass over Marseilles? The vessels that go from Alexandria and Constantinople to America often pass here.'

"'Very true!' replied Méry, thunderstruck by this last argument. 'I have nothing more to say. M. Louet, your hand. I will never contradict you again on the subject.'

"'Sir, every man has a right to his opinion.'

"'True, but I relinquish mine. Pray go on, M. Louet.'

"'I was saying, then, that instead of lions and tigers we have flights of pigeons.' M. Louet paused a moment to see if Méry would contradict him. Méry nodded his head approvingly.

"'True,' said he, 'they have flights of pigeons.'"

Satisfied by this admission M. Louet resumed.

"'You may easily imagine that at the period of the year when these flights occur, every sportsman is on the alert; and, as I am only occupied in the evening at the theatre, I am fortunately

able to dispose of my mornings as I like. It was in 1810 or '11, I was five-and-thirty years of age; that is to say, gentlemen, rather more active than I am now. I was one morning at my post, as usual, before daybreak. I had tied my decoy pigeon to the *cimeaux*, and he was fluttering about like a mad thing, when I fancied I saw by the light of the stars something perched upon my pine-tree. Unfortunately it was too dark for me to distinguish whether this something were a bat or a bird, so I remained quite quiet, waiting for the sun to rise. At last the sun rose and I saw that it was a bird. I raised my gun gently to my shoulder, and, when I was sure of my aim, I pulled the trigger. Sir, I had omitted to discharge my gun on returning from shooting the evening before. It had been twelve hours loaded, and it hung fire.

"'Nevertheless I saw by the way in which the bird flew that he was touched. I followed him with my eyes till he perched again. Then I looked for my pigeon; but by an extraordinary chance a shot had cut the string which tied him, and he had flown away. Without a decoy I knew very well it was no use remaining at the post, so I resolved to follow up the thrush. I forgot to tell you, gentlemen, that the bird I had fired at was a thrush.

"'Unluckily I had no dog. When one shoots with a decoy, a dog is worse than useless—it is a positive nuisance. I was obliged, therefore, to beat the bushes myself. The thrush had run along the ground, and rose behind me when I thought I still had him in front. At the sound of his wings I turned and fired in a hurry. A shot thrown away, as you may suppose. Nevertheless I saw some feathers fall from him.'

"'You saw some feathers?' cried Méry.

"'Yes, sir. I even found one, which I put in my buttonhole.'

"'In that case,' said Méry, 'the thrush was hit?'

"'That was my opinion at the time. I had not lost sight of him, and I continued the pursuit; but the bird was scared, and this time flew away before I got within range. I fired all the same. There is no saying where a stray shot may go.'

"'A stray shot is not enough for a thrush,' said Méry, shaking his head gravely. 'A thrush is a very hard-lived bird.'

"'Very true, sir; for I am certain my two first shots had wounded him, and yet he made a third flight of nearly half a mile. But I had sworn to have him, and on I went. Impossible to get near him. He led me on, mile after mile, always flying away as soon as I came within fifty or sixty paces. I became furious. If I had caught him I think I should have eaten him alive, and the more so as I was beginning to get very hungry. Fortunately, as I had calculated on remaining out all day, I had my breakfast and dinner in my game-bag, and I eat as I went along.'

"'Pardon me,' said Méry, interrupting M. Louet; 'I have an observation to make. Observe, my dear Dumas, the difference between the habits of the human race in northern and southern climes. In the north the sportsman runs after his game; in the south he waits for it to come to him. In the first case he takes out an empty bag and brings home a full one; in the other he takes it out full and brings it home empty. Pray, go on, my dear M. Louet. I have spoken.' And he recommenced puffing at his cigar.

"'Where was I?' said M. Louet, who had lost the threat of his narrative through this interruption.

"'Speeding over hill and dale in pursuit of your thrush.'

"'True, sir. I cannot describe to you the state of excitement and irritation I was in. I began to think of the bird of Prince Camaralzaman, and to suspect that I, too, might be the victim of some enchantment. I passed Cassis and La Ciotat, and entered the large plain extending from Ligne to St. Cyr. I had been fifteen hours on my feet, and I was half dead with fatigue. I made a vow to Our Lady of La Garde to hang a silver thrush in her chapel, if she would only assist me to catch the living one I was following; but she paid no attention to me. Night was coming on, and in despair I fired my last shot at the accursed bird. I have no doubt he heard the lead whistle, for this time he flew so far that I lost sight of him in the twilight. He had gone in the direction of the village of St. Cyr. Probably he

intended to sleep there, and I resolved to do the same. Fortunately there was to be no performance that night at the Marseilles theatre.'"

The worthy basso goes to the inn at St. Cyr, and relates his troubles to the host, who decides that the object of his pursuit must have halted for the night in a neighbouring piece of brushwood. By daybreak M. Louet is again a-foot, accompanied by the innkeeper's dog, Soliman. They soon get upon the scent of the devoted thrush.

"'Every body knows that a true sporting dog will follow any one who has a gun on his shoulder. "Soliman, Soliman!" cried I; and Soliman came. Sir, the instinct of the dog was remarkable: we had hardly got out of the village when he made a point—such a point, sir!—his tail out as straight as a ramrod. There was the thrush, not ten paces from me. I fired both barrels—Poum! Poum! Powder not worth a rush. I had used all my own the day before, and this was some I had got from my host. The thrush flew away unhurt. But Soliman had kept his eye on him, and went straight to the place where the bird was. Again he made a most beautiful point; but although I looked with all my eyes, I could not see the thrush. I was stooping down in this manner, looking for the creature, when suddenly it flew away, and so fast, that before I got my gun to my shoulder, it was out of reach. Soliman opened his eyes and stared at me; as much as to say, "What is the meaning of all this?" The expression of the dog's face made me feel quit humiliated. I could not help speaking to him. "Never mind," said I, nodding my head, "you will see next time." You would have thought the animal understood me. He again began to hunt about. In less than ten minutes he stopped as if he were cut out of marble. I was determined not to lose this chance; and I went right before the dog's nose. The bird rose literally under my feet; but I was so agitated that I fired my first barrel too soon, and my second too late. The first discharge passed by him like a single ball; the second was too scattered, and he passed between it. It was then that a thing happened to me—one of those things which I should not repeat, but for my attachment to the truth. The dog looked at me for a moment with a sort of smile upon his countenance: then, coming close up to me while I was reloading my gun, he lifted his left hind leg, made water against my gaiter, and then turning round, trotted away in the direction of his master's house. You may easily suppose, that if it had been a man who had thus insulted me, I would have had his life, or he should have had mine. But what could I say, sir, to a dumb beast which God had not gifted with reason?'"

This canine insult only acts as a spur to the indefatigable chasseur, who, dogless as he finds himself, follows up his thrush till he reaches the town of Hyères. Here he loses all trace of the bird, but endeavours to console himself by eating the oranges which grow in the garden of his hotel. Whilst thus engaged, a thrush perches on a tree beside him, and the first glance at the creature's profile satisfied him that it is the same bird whose society he has been rejoicing in the for the last two days. Unfortunately his gun is in the house, of which the thrush seems to be aware, for it continues singing and dressing its feathers on a branch within ten feet of his head. Afraid of losing sight of it, M. Louet waits till the landlord comes to announce supper, and then desires him to bring his gun. But there is a punishment of fine and imprisonment for whoever fires a shot, between sunset and sunrise, within the precincts of the town; and although the enthusiastic sportsman is willing enough to run this risk, the hotel-keeper fears to be taken for an accomplice, and refuses to fetch the gun, threatening to drive away the bird if M. Louet goes for it himself. At last they come to terms. M. Louet sups and sleeps under the tree, the bird roosts on the same; and at the first stroke of the matin bell, mine host appears with the fowling-piece. Our chasseur stretches out his hand to take it, and—the bird flies away.

M. Louet throws down the price of his supper, and scales the garden wall in pursuit. He follows his intended victim the whole of that day, and at last has the mortification of seeing it carried away before his eyes by a hawk. Foot-sore and tired, hungry and thirsty, the unfortunate musician sinks down exhausted by the side of a road. A peasant passes by.

"'My friend,' said I to him, 'is there any town, village, or house in this neighbourhood?'

"'*Gnor si*,' answered he, '*cé la citta di Nizza un miglia avanti*.'

"The thrush had led me into Italy."

At Nice M. Louet is in great tribulation. In the course of his long ramble his money has worked a hole in his pocket, and he discovers that he is penniless just at the moment that he has established himself at the best hotel, and ordered supper for three by way of making up for past privations. He gets out of his difficulties, however, by giving a concert, which produces him a hundred crowns; and he then embarks for Toulon, on board the letter of marque, La Vierge des Sept Douleurs, Captain Garnier.

Once on the water, there is a fine opportunity for a display of French naval heroism, at the expense, of course, of the unfortunate English, to whom M. Dumas bears about the same degree of affection that another dark-complexioned gentleman is said to do to holy water. This is one of M. Dumas's little peculiarities or affectations, it is difficult to say which. Wherever it is possible to bring in England and the English, depreciate them in any way, or turn them into ridicule, M. Dumas invariably does it, and those passages are frequently the most amusing in his books. In the present instance, it is a very harmless piece of faufarronade in which he indulges.

The armed brig in which M. Louet has embarked, falls in which a squadron of English men-of-war. Hearing a great bustle upon deck, our musician goes up to enquire the cause, and finds the captain quietly seated, smoking his pipe. After the usual salutations—

"'M. Louet, have you ever seen a naval combat?' said the captain to me.

"'Never, sir.'

"'Would you like to see one?'

"'Why, captain, to say the truth, there are other things I should better like to see.'

"'I am sorry for it; for it you wished to see one, a real good one, your wish would soon be gratified.'

"'What! captain,' cried I, feeling myself grow pale; 'you do not mean to say we are going to have a naval combat? Ha, ha! I see you are joking, captain.'

"'Joking, eh? Look yonder. What do you see?'

"'I see three very fine vessels.'

"'Count again.'

"'I see more. Four, five, there are six of them.'

"'Can you distinguish what there is on the flag of the nearest one? Here, take the glass.'

"'I cannot make out very well, but I think I see a harp.'

"'Exactly.—The Irish harp. In a few minutes they'll play as a tune on it.'

"'But captain,' said I, 'they are still a long way off, and it appears to me, that by spreading all those sails which are now furled upon your masts and yards, you might manage to escape. In your place I should certainly run away. Excuse me for the suggestion, but it is my opinion as fourth bass of the Marseilles theatre. If I had the honour to be a sailor, I should perhaps think differently.'"

Very sensible advice, too, M. Louet, *we* should have thought at least, considering the odds of six to one. But the fire-eating Frenchman thinks otherwise.

"'If it were a man, instead of a bass, who made me such a proposal,' replied the captain, 'I should have had a word or two to say to him about it. Know, sir, that Captain Garnier *never* runs away! He fights till his vessel is riddled like a sieve, then he allows himself to be boarded, and when his decks are covered with the enemy, he goes into the powder magazine with his pipe in his mouth, shakes out the burning ashes, and sends the English on a voyage of discovery upwards.'

"'And the French?'

"'The French too.'

"'And the passengers?'

"'The passengers likewise.'

"'At that moment, a small white cloud appeared issuing from the side of one of the English ships. This was followed by a dull noise like a heavy blow on the big drum. I saw some splinters fly

from the top of the brig's gunwale, and an artilleryman, who was just then standing on his gun, fell backwards upon me. 'Come, my friend,' said I, 'mind what you are about.' And, as he did not stir, I pushed him. He fell upon the deck. I looked at him with more attention. His head was off.

"My nerves were so affected by this sight, that five minutes later I found myself in the ship's hold, without exactly knowing how I had got there."

Thanks to a storm, the six English men of war manage to escape from the brig, and when M. Louet ventures to re-appear upon deck, he finds himself in the Italian port of Piombino, opposite the island of Elba. He has had enough of the water, and goes on shore, where he bargains with a vetturino to take him to Florence. A young officer of French hussars, and four Italians, are his travelling companions. The former, on learning his name and profession, asks him sundry questions about a certain Mademoiselle Zephyrine, formerly a dancer at the Marseilles theatre, and in whom he seems to take a strong interest.

Bad springs and worse roads render it very difficult to sleep. At last, on the second night of their journey, M. Louet succeeds in getting up a doze, out of which he is roused in a very unpleasant manner. We will give his own account of it.

"'Two pistol-shots, the flash of which almost burned my face, awoke me. They were fired by M. Ernest, (the hussar officer.) We were attacked by banditti.'

"'*Faccia in terra! Faccia in terra!*' I jumped out of the carriage, and as I did so, one of the brigands gave me a blow between the shoulders, that threw me upon my face. My companions were already in that position, with the exception of M. Ernest, who was defending himself desperately. At length he was overpowered and made prisoner.

"My pockets were turned inside out, and my hundred crowns taken away. I had a diamond ring on my finger, which I hoped they would not observe, and I turned the stone inside, heartily wishing, as I did so, that it had the power of Gyges' ring, and could render me invisible. But all was in vain. The robbers soon found it out. When they had taken every thing from us—

"'Is there a musician amongst you?' said he who appeared the chief.

"Nobody answered.

"'Well,' repeated he, 'are you all deaf? I asked if any of you knew how to play on an instrument.'

"'Pardieu!' said a voice, which I recognized as that of the young officer; 'there's M. Louet, who plays the bass.'

"I wished myself a hundred feet under ground.

"'Which is M. Louet?' said the brigand. 'Is it this one?' And, stooping down, he laid hold of the collar of my shooting-jacket, and lifted me on my feet.

"'For Heaven's sake, what do you want with me?' cried I.

"'Nothing to be so frightened about,' was the answer. 'For a week past we have been hunting every where for a musician, without being able to find one. The captain will be delighted to see you.'

"'What!' cried I, 'are you going to take me to the captain?'

"'Certainly we are.'

"'To separate me from my companions?'

"'What can we do with them? *They* are not musicians.'

"'Gentlemen!' cried I, 'for God's sake, help me! do not let me be carried off in this manner.'

"'The gentlemen will have the goodness to remain with their noses in the dust for the space of a quarter of an hour,' said the brigand. 'As to the officer, tie him to a tree,' continued he, to the four men who were holding the hussar. 'In a quarter of an hour the postillion will untie him. Not a minute sooner, if you value your life.'

"The postillion gave a sort of affirmative grunt, and the robbers now moved off in the direction of the mountains. I was led between two of them. After marching for some time, we saw a light in a window, and presently halted at a little inn on a cross-road. The bandits went up stairs, excepting two, who remained with me in the kitchen, and one of whom had appropriated my fowling-piece, and

the other my game-bag. As to my diamond ring and my hundred crowns, they had become perfectly invisible.

"Presently somebody shouted from above, and my guards, taking me by the collar, pushed me up stairs, and into a room on the first floor.

"Seated at a table, upon which was a capital supper and numerous array of bottles, was the captain of the robbers, a fine-looking man of thirty-five or forty years of age. He was dressed exactly like a theatrical robber, in blue velvet, with a red sash and silver buckles. His arm was passed round the waist of a very pretty girl in the costume of a Roman peasant; that is to say, an embroidered boddice, short bright-coloured petticoat, and red stockings. Her feet attracted my attention, they were so beautifully small. On one of her fingers I saw my diamond ring—a circumstance which, as well as the company in which I found her, gave me a very indifferent idea of the young lady's morality.

"'What countryman are you?' asked the captain.

"'I am a Frenchman, your excellency.'

"'So much the better!' cried the young girl.

"I saw with pleasure that, at any rate, I was amongst people who spoke my own language.

"'You are a musician?'

"'I am fourth bass at the Marseilles theatre.'

"'Bring this gentleman's bass,' said the captain to one of his men. 'Now, my little Rina,' said he, turning to his mistress, 'I hope you are ready to dance."

"'I always was,' answered she, 'but how could I without music?'

"'*Non ho trovato l'instrumento*,' said the robber, reappearing at the door.

"'What!' cried the captain in a voice of thunder; 'no instrument?'

"'Captain,' interposed his lieutenant, 'I searched every where, but could not find even the smallest violoncello.'

"'*Bestia*!' cried the captain.

"'Excellency,' I ventured to observe, 'it is not his fault. I had no bass with me.'

"'Very well,' said the captain, 'send off five men immediately to Sienna, Volterra, Grossetto—all over the country. I must have a bass by to-morrow night.'

"I could not help thinking I had seen Mademoiselle Rina's face somewhere before, and I was cudgeling my memory to remember where, when she addressed the captain.

"'Tonino,' said she, 'you have not even asked the poor man if he is hungry.'

"I was touched by this little attention, and, on the captain's invitation, I drew a chair to the table, in fear and trembling I acknowledge; but it was nearly twelve hours since I had eaten any thing, and my hunger was perfectly canine. Mademoiselle Rina herself had the kindness to pass me the dishes and fill my glass; so that I had abundant opportunities of admiring my own ring, which sparkled upon her finger. I began to perceive, however, that I should not be so badly off as I had expected, and that the captain was disposed to treat me well.

"Supper over, I was allowed to retire to a room and a bed that had been prepared for me. I slept fifteen hours without waking. The robbers had the politeness not to disturb me till I awakened of my own accord. Then, however, five of them entered my room, each carrying a bass. I chose the best, and they made firewood of the others.

"When I had made my choice, they told me the captain was waiting dinner for me; and accordingly, on entering the principal room of the inn, I found a table spread for the captain, Mademoiselle Rina, the lieutenant, and myself. There were several other tables for the rest of the banditti. The room was lighted up with at least three hundred wax candles.

"The dinner was a merry one. The robbers were really very good sort of people, and the captain was in an excellent humour. When the feasting was over,

"'You have not forgotten your promise, Rina, I hope?' said he.

"'Certainly not,' was the reply. 'In a quarter of an hour I am ready.'

"So saying, she skipped out of the room.

"'And you, Signor Musico,' said the captain, 'I hope you are going to distinguish yourself.'

"'I will do my best, captain.'

"'If I am satisfied, you shall have back your hundred crowns.'

"'And my diamond ring, captain?'

"'Oh! as to that, no. Besides, you see Rina has got it, and you are too gallant to wish to take it from her.'

"At this moment Mademoiselle Rina made her appearance in the costume of a shepherdess—a boddice of silver, short silk petticoats, and a large Cashmere shawl twisted round her waist. She was really charming in this dress. I seized my bass. I fancied myself in the orchestra at Marseilles.

"'What would you like me to play, Mademoiselle?'

"'Do you know the shawl-dance in the ballet of *Clary*?'

"'Certainly; it is my favourite.'

"I began to play, Rina to dance, and the banditti to applaud. She danced admirably. The more I looked at her, the more convinced I became that I had seen her before.

"She was in the middle of a *pirouette* when the door opened, and the innkeeper entering, whispered something in the captain's ear.

"'*Ove sono*?' said the latter, quietly. 'Where are they?'

"'A San Dalmazio.'

"'No nearer? Then there is no hurry.'

"'What is the matter?' said Rina, executing a magnificent *entrechat*.

"'Nothing. Only those rascally travellers have given the alarm at Florence, and the hussars of the Grand-duchess Eliza are looking for us.'

"'They are too late for the performance,' said Rina, laughing. 'I have finished my dance.'

"It was lucky, for the bow had fallen from my hands at the news I had just heard. Rina made one bound to the door, and then turning, as if she had been on the stage, curtsied to the audience, and kissed her hand to the captain. The applause was deafening; I doubt if she had ever had such a triumph.

"'And now, to arms!' cried the captain. 'Prepare a horse for Rina and another for the musician. *We* will go on foot. The road to Romagna, remember! Stragglers to rejoin at Chianciano.'

"For a few minutes all was bustle and preparation.

"'Here I am,' cried Rina, running in, attired in her Roman peasant's dress.

"'*Usseri, Usseri*!' said the innkeeper.

"'Off with you!' cried the captain, and every one hurried towards the stairs.

"'The devil!' said the captain, turning to me, 'you are forgetting your bass, I think.'

"I took the bass. I would willingly have crept into it. Two horses stood ready saddled at the house door.

"'Well, Monsieur le Musicien,' said Rina, 'do you not help me to get on my horse? You are not very gallant.'

"I held out my arm to assist her, and as I did so she put a small piece of paper into my hand.

"A cold perspiration stood upon my forehead. What could this paper be? Was it a billet-doux? Had I been so unfortunate as to make a conquest, which would render me the rival of the captain? My first impulse was to throw the note away; but on second thoughts I put it in my pocket.

"'*Usseri, Usseri*!' cried the innkeeper again, and a noise like that of a distant galloping was heard. I scrambled on my horse, which two of the robbers took by the bridle; two others led that of Mademoiselle Rina. The captain, with his carbine on his shoulder, ran beside his mistress, the lieutenant accompanied me, and the remainder of the band, consisting of fifteen or eighteen men, brought up the rear. Five or six shots were fired some three hundred yards behind us, and the balls whistled in our ears. 'To the left!' cried the captain, and we threw ourselves into a sort of ravine, at

the bottom of which ran a rapid stream. Here we halted and listened, and heard the hussars gallop furiously past on the high-road.

"'If they keep on at that pace, they'll soon be at Grossetto,' said the captain laughing."

This is the unfortunate musician's first essay in horsemanship, and when, after twelve hours' march across the country, with his bass strapped upon his shoulders, he halts at the inn at Chianciano, he is more dead than alive. He remembers, however, to read Mademoiselle Rina's note. From this, and a few words which she takes an opportunity of saying to him, he finds that she is an opera-dancer named Zephyrine, who had had an engagement a year or two previously at the Marseilles theatre. She had since transferred herself to the Teatro de la Valle at Rome, where the bandit captain, Tonino, happening to witness her performance, became enamoured of her, and laid a plan for carrying her off, which had proved successful. Her lover, however, Ernest, the same officer of hussars who had been M. Louet's travelling companion, is in search of her; and, to assist him in his pursuit, she writes her name, and that of the place they are next going to, upon the window of each inn they stop at. It was for this purpose she had secured M. Louet's diamond ring.

If contrast was Dumas' object in writing this volume, he has certainly been highly successful in carrying out his intention. Most writers would have contented themselves with composing the female portion of the brigands' society, of some dark-browed Italian *contadina*, with flashing eyes and jetty ringlets, a knife in her garter and a mousquetoon in her brawny fist, and a dozen crucifixes and amulets round her neck. At most, one might have expected to meet with some English lady in a green veil, (all English ladies, who travel, wear green veils,) whose carriage had been attacked, and herself carried off on the road from Florence to Rome. But M. Dumas scorns such commonplace *dramatis personae*, and is satisfied with nothing less than transporting a French ballet-dancer into the Appenines, with all her paraphernalia of gauze drapery, tinsel decorations, and opera airs and graces; not forgetting the orchestra, in the person of the luckless bass player. Yet so ingeniously does he dovetail it all together, so probable does he make his improbabilities appear, that we become almost reconciled to the idea of finding Mademoiselle Zephyrine Taglionizing away upon the filthy floor of a mountain *osteria*, and are inclined to be astonished that the spectators should not be provided with bouquets to throw at her upon the conclusion of her performance.

Several days are passed in running from one place to the other, always followed by the hussars, from whom the banditti have some narrow escapes. M. Louet is taken great care of in consideration of his skill as a musician, and he on his part takes all imaginable care of his bass, which he looks upon as a sort of a safeguard. At length they arrive at the castle of Anticoli, a villa which the captain rents from a Roman nobleman, and where he considers himself in perfect safety. Here M. Louet is installed in a magnificent apartment, where he finds linen and clothes, of which he is much in need. His toilet completed, he is conducted to the drawing-room by a livery servant, who bears a strong resemblance to one of his friends the banditti. But we will let him tell his story in his own words.

"There were three persons in the room into which I was ushered; a young lady, a very elegantly dressed man, and a French officer. I thought there must be some mistake, and was walking backwards out of the apartment, when the lady said—

"'My dear M. Louet, where are you going? Do you not mean to dine with us?'

"'Pardon me,' said I, 'I did not recognise you, Mademoiselle.'

"'If you prefer it, you shall be served in your apartment,' said the elegant-looking man.

"'What, captain,' cried I, 'is it you?'

"'M. Louet would not be so unkind as to deprive us of his society,' said the French officer with a polite bow. I turned to thank him for his civility. It was the lieutenant. It put me in mind of the changes in a pantomime.

"'*Al suo commodo*,' said a powdered lackey, opening the folding doors of a magnificent dining-room. The captain offered his hand to Mademoiselle Zephyrine. The lieutenant and I followed.

"'I hope you will be pleased with my cook, my dear M. Louet,' said the captain, waving me to a chair, and seating himself. 'He is a French artist of some talent. I have ordered two or three Provençal dishes on purpose for you.'

"'Pah! with garlic in them!' said the French officer, taking a pinch of perfumed snuff out of a gold box. I began to think I was dreaming.

"'Have you seen the park yet, M. Louet?' asked the captain.

"'Yes, Excellency, from the window of my room.'

"'They say it is full of game. Are you fond of shooting?'

"'I delight in it. Are there any thrushes in the park?'

"'Thrushes! thousands.'

"'Bravo! You may reckon upon me, captain, for a supply of game. That is, if you will order my fowling-piece to be returned to me. I cannot shoot well with any other.

"'Agreed,' said the captain.

"'Tonino,' said Mademoiselle Zephyrine, 'you promised to take me to the theatre to-morrow. I am curious to see the dancer who has replaced me.'

"'There is no performance to-morrow,' replied the captain, 'and I am not sure the carriage is in good condition. But we can take a ride to Tivoli or Subiaco, if you like.'

"'Will you come with us, my dear M. Louet?' said Mademoiselle Zephyrine.

"'Thank you,' replied I; 'I am not accustomed to ride. I would rather have a day's shooting.'

"'I will keep M. Louet company,' said the lieutenant.

"On retiring to my apartment that night, I found my fowling-piece in one corner, my game-bag in another, and my hundred crowns on the chimney-piece. Captain Tonino was a man of his word.

"Whilst I was undressing, the French cook came to know what I would choose for breakfast. 'Count Villaforte,' he said, 'had ordered that I should be served in my room, as I was going out shooting.' The captain, it appeared, had changed his name as well as his dress.

"The next morning I had just dressed and breakfasted, when the lieutenant came to fetch me, and I accompanied him down-stairs. In front of the villa four saddle-horses were being led up and down—one for the captain, one for Mademoiselle Zephyrine, and the two others for servants. The captain put a brace of double-barrelled pistols into his holsters, and the servants did the same. Master and men had a sort of fancy costume, which allowed them to wear a couteau-de-chasse. The captain saw that I remarked all these precautions.

"'The police is shocking in this country, M. Louet,' said he, 'and there are so many bad characters about, that it is well to be armed.'

"Mademoiselle Zephyrine looked charming in her riding-habit and hat.

"'Much pleasure, my dear M. Louet,' said the captain, as he got on his horse. 'Beaumanoir, take care of M. Louet.'

"'The best possible care, count.' replied the lieutenant.

"'The captain and Zephyrine waved their hands, and cantered away, followed by their servants.

"'Pardon me, sir,' said I, approaching the lieutenant; 'I believe it was you whom the count addressed as Beaumanoir.'

"'It was so.'

"'I thought the family of Beaumanoir had been extinct.'

"'Very possible. I revive it, that's all.'

"'You are perfectly at liberty to do so, sir,' replied I. 'I beg pardon for the observation.'

"'Granted, granted, my dear Louet. Would you like a dog, or not?'

"'Sir, I prefer shooting without a dog. The last I had insulted me most cruelly, and I should not like the same thing to occur again.'

"'As you please. Gaetano, untie Romeo.'

"We commenced our sport. In six shots I killed four thrushes, which satisfied me that the one which I had followed from Marseilles had been an enchanted one. Beaumanoir laughed at me.

"'What!' cried he. 'Do you amuse yourself in firing at such game as that?'

"'Sir,' replied I, 'at Marseilles the thrush is a very rare animal. I have seen but one in my life, and it is to that one I owe the advantage of being in your society.'

"Here and there I saw gardeners and gamekeepers whose faces were familiar to me, and who touched their hats as I passed. They looked to me very like my old friends, the robbers, in a new dress; but I had, of late, seen so many extraordinary things, that nothing astonished me any longer.

"The park was very extensive, and enclosed by a high wall, which had light iron gratings placed here and there, to afford a view of the surrounding country. I happened to be standing near one of these gratings, when M. Beaumanoir fired at a pheasant.

"'*Signore*,' said a countryman, who was passing, '*questo castello e il castello d'Anticoli?*'

"'Villager,' I replied, walking towards the grating, 'I do not understand Italian; speak French, and I shall be happy to answer.'

"'What! Is it you, M. Louet?' exclaimed the peasant.

"'Yes, it is,' said I; 'but how do you know my name?'

"'Hush! I am Ernest, the hussar officer, your travelling companion.'

"'M. Ernest! Ah! Mademoiselle Zephyrine will be delighted.'

"'Zephyrine is really here, then?'

"'Certainly she is. A prisoner like myself.'

"'And Count Villaforte?'

"'Is Captain Tonino.'

"'And the castle?'

"'A den of thieves.'

"'That is all I wanted to know. Adieu, my dear Louet. Tell Zephyrine she shall soon hear from me.' So saying, he plunged into the forest.

"'Here, Romeo, here!' cried Mr. Beaumanoir to his dog, who was fetching the bird he had shot. I hastened to him.

"'A beautiful pheasant!' cried I. 'A fine cock!'

"'Yes, yes. Who were you talking to, M. Louet?'

"'To a peasant, who asked me some question, to which I replied, that unfortunately I did not understand Italian.'

"'Hum!' said Beaumanoir, with a suspicious side-glance at me. Then, having loaded his gun, 'We will change places, if you please,' said he. 'There may be some more peasants passing, and, as I understand Italian, I shall be able to answer their questions.'

"'As you like, M. Beaumanoir,' said I.

"The change was effected; but no more peasants appeared.

"When we returned to the house, the captain and Zephyrine had not yet come back from their ride, and I amused myself in my room with my bass, which I found to be an excellent instrument. I resolved, more than ever, not to part with it, but to take it back to France with me, if ever I returned to that country.

"At the hour of dinner, I repaired to the drawing-room, where I found Count Villaforte and Mademoiselle Zephyrine. I had scarcely closed the door, when it was reopened, and the lieutenant put in his head.

"'Captain!' said he, in a hurried voice.

"'Who calls me captain? Here there is no captain, my dear Beaumanoir, but a Count Villaforte.'

"'Captain, it is a serious matter. One moment, I beg.'

"The captain left the room. When the door was shut, and I was sure he could not hear me, I told Zephyrine of my interview with her lover. I had just finished when the captain reappeared.

"'Well,' said Zephyrine, running to meet him. 'What makes you look so blank? Are there bad news?'

"'Not very good ones.'

"'Do they come from a sure source?' asked she with an anxiety which this time was not assumed.

"'From the surest possible. From one of our friends who is employed in the police.'

"'Gracious Heaven! What is going to happen?'

"'We do not know yet, but it appears we have been traced from Chianciano to the Osteria Barberini. They only lost the scent behind Mount Gennaro. My dear Rina, I fear we must give up our visit to the theatre to-morrow.'

"'But not our dinner to-day, captain, I hope,' said I.

"'Here is your answer,' said the captain, as the door opened, and a servant announced that the soup was on the table.

"The captain and lieutenant dined each with a brace of pistols beside his plate, and in the anteroom I saw two men armed with carbines. The repast was a silent one; I did not dine comfortably myself, for I had a sort of feeling that the catastrophe was approaching, and that made me uneasy.

"'You will excuse me for leaving you,' said the captain, when dinner was over; 'but I must go and take measures for our safety. I would advise you not to undress, M. Louet, for we may have to make a sudden move, and it is well to be ready.'

"The lieutenant conducted me to my apartment, and wished me good-night with great politeness. As he left the room, however, I heard that he double-locked the door. I had nothing better to do than to throw myself on my bed, which I did; but for some hours I found it impossible to sleep, on account of the anxieties and unpleasant thoughts that tormented me. At last I fell into a troubled slumber.

"I do not know how long it had lasted, when I was awakened by being roughly shaken.

"'Subito! subito!' cried a voice.

"'What is the matter?' said I, sitting up on the bed.

"'*Non capisco, seguir me*!' cried the bandit.

"'And where am I to *seguir* you?' said I, understanding that he told me to follow him.

"'Avanti! Avanti!'

"'May I take my bass?' I asked.

"The man made sign in the affirmative, so I put my beloved instrument on my back, and told him I was ready to follow him. He led me through several corridors and down a staircase; then, opening a door, we found ourselves in the park. Day was beginning to dawn. After many turnings and windings, we entered a copse or thicket, in the depths of which was the opening of a sort of grotto, where one of the robbers was standing sentry. They pushed me into this grotto. It was very dark, and I was groping about with extended arms, when somebody grasped my hand. I was on the point of crying out; but the hand that held mine was too soft to be that of a brigand.

"'M. Louet!' said a whispering voice, which I at once recognized.

"'What is the meaning of all this, Mademoiselle?' asked I, in the same tone.

"'The meaning is, that they are surrounded by a regiment, and Ernest is at the head of it.'

"'But why are we put into this grotto?'

"'Because it is the most retired place in the whole park, and consequently the one least likely to be discovered. Besides there is a door in it, which communicates probably with some subterraneous passage leading into the open country.'

"Just then we heard a musket shot.

"'Bravo!' cried Zephyrine; 'it is beginning.'

"There was a running fire, then a whole volley.

"'Mademoiselle,' said I, 'it appears to me to be increasing very much.'

"'So much the better,' answered she.

"She was as brave as a lioness, that young girl. For my part I acknowledge I felt very uncomfortable. But it appears I was doomed to witness engagements both by land and sea.

"'The firing is coming nearer,' said Zephyrine.

"'I am afraid so, Mademoiselle,' answered I.

"'On the contrary, you ought to be delighted. It is a sign that the robbers are flying.'

"'I had rather they fled in another direction.'

"There was a loud clamour, and cries as if they were cutting one another's throats, which, in fact, they were. The shouts and cries were mingled with the noise of musketry, the sound of the trumpets, and roll of the drum. There was a strong smell of powder. The fight was evidently going on within a hundred yards of the grotto.

"Suddenly there was a deep sigh, then the noise of a fall, and one of the sentries at the mouth of the cave came rolling to our feet. A random shot had struck him, and as he just fell in, a ray of light which entered the grotto, we were able to see him writhing in the agonies of death. Mademoiselle Zephyrine seized my hands, and I felt that she trembled violently.

"'Oh, M. Louet.' said she, 'it is very horrible to see a man die!'

"At that moment we heard a voice exclaiming—'Stop, cowardly villain! Wait for me!'

"'Ernest!' exclaimed Zephyrine. 'It is the voice of Ernest!'

"As she spoke the captain rushed in, covered with blood.

"'Zephyrine!' cried he, 'Zephyrine, where are you?'

"The sudden change from the light of day to the darkness of the cave, prevented him from seeing us. Zephyrine made me a sign to keep silence. After remaining for a moment as if dazzled, his eyes got accustomed to the darkness. He bounded towards us with the spring of a tiger.

"'Zephyrine, why don't you answer when I call? Come!'

"He seized her arm, and began dragging her towards the door at the back of the grotto.

"'Where are you taking me?' cried the poor girl.

"'Come with me—come along!'

"'Never!' cried she, struggling.

"'What! You won't go with me?'

"'No; why should I? I detest you. You carried me off by force. I won't follow you. Ernest, Ernest, here!'

"'Ernest!' muttered the captain. 'Ha! 'Tis you, then, who betrayed us?'

"'M. Louet!' cried Zephyrine, 'if you are a man, help me!'

"I saw the blade of a poniard glitter. I had no weapon, but I seized my bass by the handle, and, raising it in the air, let it fall with such violence on the captain's skull, that the back of the instrument was smashed in and the bandit's head disappeared in the interior of the bass. Either the violence of the blow, or the novelty of finding his head in a bass, so astonished the captain that he let go his hold of Zephyrine, at the same time uttering a roar like that of a mad bull.

"'Zephyrine! Zephyrine!' cried a voice outside.

"'Ernest!' answered the young girl, darting out of the grotto.

"I followed her, terrified at my own exploit. She was already clasped in the arms of her lover.

"'In there,' cried the young officer to a party of soldiers who just then came up. 'He is in there. Bring him out, dead or alive.'

"They rushed in, but the broken bass was all they found. The captain had escaped by the other door.

"On our way to the house we saw ten or twelve dead bodies. One was lying on the steps leading to the door.

"'Take away this carrion,' said Ernest.

"Two soldiers turned the body over. It was the last of the Beaumanoirs.

"We remained but a few minutes at the house, and then Zephyrine and myself got into a carriage and set off, escorted by M. Ernest and a dozen men. I did not forget to carry off my hundred crowns, my fowling-piece, and game-bag. As to my poor bass, the captain's head had completely spoiled it.

"After an hour's drive, we came in sight of a large city with an enormous dome the middle of it. It was Rome.

"'And did you see the Pope, M. Louet?'

"'At that time he was at Fontainbleau, but I saw him afterwards, and his successor too; for M. Ernest got me an appointment as bass-player at the Teatro de la Valle, and I remained there till the year 1830. When I at last returned to Marseilles, they did not know me again, and for some time refused to give me back my place in the orchestra, under pretence that I was not myself.'

"'And Mademoiselle Zephyrine?'

"'I heard that she married M. Ernest, whose other name I never knew, and that he became a general, and she a very great lady."

"'And Captain Tonino? Did you hear nothing more of him?'

"'Three years afterwards he came to the theatre in disguise; was recognised, arrested, and hung.'

"'And thus it was, sir,' concluded M. Louet, 'that a thrush led me into Italy, and caused me to pass twenty years at Rome.'"

And so ends the thrush-hunt. One word at parting, to qualify any too sweeping commendation we may have bestowed on M. Dumas in the early part of this paper. While we fully exonerate his writings from the charge of grossness, and recognise the absence of those immoral and pernicious tendencies which disfigure the works of many gifted French writers of the day, we would yet gladly see him abstain from the somewhat too Decameronian incidents and narratives with which he occasionally varies his pages. That he is quite independent of such meretricious aids, is rendered evident by his entire avoidance of them in some of his books, which are not on that account a whit the less *piquant*. With this single reservation, we should hail with pleasure the appearance on our side the Channel of a few such sprightly and amusing writers as Alexander Dumas.

HIGH LIFE IN THE LAST CENTURY. [5]

The volumes of which we are about to give fragments and anecdotes, contain a portion of the letters addressed to a man of witty memory, whose existence was passed almost exclusively among men and women of rank; his life, in the most expressive sense of the word, West End; and even in that West End, his chief haunt St James's Street. Parliament and the Clubs divided his day, and often his night. The brilliant roués, the steady gamesters, the borough venders, and the lordly ex-members of ex-cabinets, were the only population of whose living and breathing he suffered himself to have any cognizance. In reverse of Gray's learned mouse, eating its way through the folios of an ancient library—and to whom

"A river or a sea was but a dish of tea,
And a kingdom bread and butter,"

to George Selwyn, the world and all that it inhabits, were concentrated in Charles Fox, William Pitt, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and the circle of men of pleasantry, loose lives, and vivacious temperaments, who, with whatever diminishing lustre, revolved round them.

Of the City of London, Selwyn probably had heard; for though fixed to one spot, he was a man fond of collecting curious knowledge; but nothing short of proof positive can ever convince us that he had passed Temple Bar. He, of course, knew that there were such things on the globe as merchants and traders, because their concerns were occasionally talked of in "the House," where, however, he heard as little as possible about them; for in the debates of the time he took no part but that of a listener, and even then he abridged the difficulty, by generally sleeping through the sitting. He was supposed to be the only rival of Lord North in the happy faculty of falling into a sound slumber at the moment when any of those dreary persons, who chiefly speak on such subjects, was on his legs. St James's, and the talk of St James's, were his business, his pleasures, the exciters of his wit, and the rewarders of his toil. He had applied the art of French cookery to the rude material of the world, and refined and reduced all things into a *sauce piquante*—all its realities were concentrated in essences; and, disdaining the grosser tastes of mankind, he lived upon the *aroma* of high life—an epicure even among epicures; yet not an indolent enjoyer of the luxuries of his condition, but a keen, restless, and eager *student* of pleasurable sensations—an Apicius, polished by the manners, and furnished with the arts of the most self-enjoying condition of mankind, that of an English gentleman of fortune in the 18th century.

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[5] *George Selwyn and his Contemporaries, with Memoirs and Notes*. By T.H. Jesse. 4 vols.

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