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THE HERETIC.



THE HERETIC;
OR,
THE GERMAN STRANGER.

An Historical Romance

OF

THE COURT OF RUSSIA

IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN OF LAJETCHNIKOFF.

BY

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IN THE IMPERIAL LYCEUM OF TSÁRSKOË SELÓ.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

OF all the qualities which a work of fiction must possess, in order to excite and maintain the attention of the reader, the most indispensable is, undoubtedly—Novelty: without this seasoning of novelty, the most solid and nourishing literary fare will be pronounced insipid; with it, even what is unwholesome and pernicious, will go glibly down the throat of the public consumer.

In England, above other countries, is this demand for novelty felt and heard; there literary, like commercial industry, is so active, that the imagination of the supplier—whether author, artist, or cotton-printer—is kept on the rack to

invent new patterns; or, to return to the culinary metaphor with which we began,

“ Omne peractum est,
Et jam defecit, nostrum mare, dum gula sævit;
Retibus adsiduis penitùs scrutante macello
Proxima, nec patitur Tyrrhenum éscere piscem.”

The novelist appears to have exhausted most of the modes of existence, most of the historical epochs, most of the countries, from which any materials for picturesque description, striking costume, or lively play of character, could be extracted: the genius of Scott has conquered almost as much of the romantic, as the creative soul of Shakspeare had before invaded of the dramatic world, leaving no room for inferior writers of fiction—

“ To wear their sapphire crowns,
And wield their little sceptres.”

The East, too, that exhaustless reservoir of the marvellous—that fountain abundant yet mysterious, like “the secret head of Nilus,” whence so many, perhaps all the streams of fiction, ultimately derive, has been, if not drained, yet defiled by the foul urns that have too often of late been dipped into its waters. The Middle Ages

have been, as we have said, occupied by the "Great Magician;" nothing, therefore, was left to reader and writer but to search for novelty—that Saint Graal of our modern chivalry, the chivalry of the pen—in the nooks and shady spaces of private life. Here a new vein was opened, but this, in its turn, was speedily exhausted; and the reader, after descending by a gradual declension from the lords and ladies of the once "fashionable" novel, has now "touched the very base string of humility," and revels in the sordid crimes and squalid miseries of the station-house, the alley, and the pawnbroker's shop.

We have said that, in this hunt after new scenes and new characters, the novelist has penetrated into every country: there is one remarkable exception. While the literature of every land has been laid under contribution, its history ransacked, and its manners daguerreotyped, one nation has apparently almost altogether escaped; and this a nation by no means inferior to many others in the wealth either of recollections of past ages, or the peculiarities of social and political constitution.

How happens it that Russia, an empire so gigantic in extent, and so important a member of the great European family—that Russia, with her reminiscences of two centuries and a half of Tartar dominion, of her long and bloody struggles with the Ottoman and the Pole—whose territories stretch almost from the arctic ice to the equator, and whose half Oriental diadem bears inscribed upon it such names as Peter and Catharine—should have been passed over as incapable of supplying rich materials for fiction and romance?

If the hundred nations which cover so vast a proportion of the globe, from the dwarfish hunter of the Yeniséi to the tawny brigand of the Caucasus, could offer no peculiarities of manners, no wild superstitions, to gratify our ever-craving curiosity; assuredly the fierce domination of the Golden Horde, the plain of Poltáva, the grey Kreml of Mother Moscow, and the golden cupolas of Nóvgorod the Great, might be expected to afford something interesting.

It is, however, no less singular than true, that with the literature and manners of Russia, the English public is still totally unacquainted. Little

has hitherto appeared in the way of translation from the Russian, save a few miserable scraps and extracts, the subjects as ill selected as the versions were feebly executed; some of these, indeed, were not made from the original language, but were manufactured from a wretched French *réchauffée* of an equally worthless German translation.

It is obvious, that the only mode by which we can hope to make the English public really well acquainted with their brethren of the North, is to allow the latter *to speak for themselves*. Of the immense number of travellers whom *ennui* or curiosity sends forth every year from our shores to visit foreign countries, a very small proportion visits Russia; and this, for obvious reasons, consists chiefly of the rich and noble classes of society. A man of fortune, travelling "*en prince*," is not likely to take the trouble of acquiring a new and difficult language, solely for the purpose of studying the manners and feelings of the peasantry—a language, too, which he can dispense with; as for him it is possible to travel from one extremity of the empire to the other without knowing a single word of it.

Besides this, Russian is emphatically the language of the lower classes, between which and the higher ranks a barrier is fixed, more insurmountable than one accustomed to the subdivisions of English society can conceive.

The great distances traversed by such a traveller, generally in a limited time; the prejudices and superstitions of the people; the habit, till of late years, universal among the higher classes, of using the French language as a medium of communication with each other—all this tends to increase the difficulty of a foreigner's attempt to make himself acquainted with the sentiments and character of the Russian *people*.

The literature of this country has often been reproached with its poverty; an accusation certainly true if a comparison be made between Russia and Western Europe, but considerably exaggerated. Comparatively poor it undeniably is: it contains, however, much—both prose and poetry—that would possess novelty and high interest to the British reader.

The indulgent—nay, flattering—reception met with by the Translator in his first attempt to make his countrymen acquainted with the

productions of the Northern Muse, has encouraged him to offer the present work in an English dress.

He was induced to select this romance for several reasons: 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.

As to the dialogue, it has been thought best, in order to preserve that air of antiquity—that precious *æru*go which gives value even to an insignificant coin—to employ that species of half Elizabethan dialect so happily adopted by Scott. It is not, perhaps, chronologically correct, (nor indeed is it so, with some few exceptions, in the works of the Great Romancer,) but it is sufficiently removed from the spoken English of the present day, to assist the reader in carrying back his imagination to a remote period. It is easily intelligible, and free from the air of pedantry with which the use of *real* old English—for instance, of the fifteenth century—would be chargeable.

The mode by which the Translator has essayed to obtain something like a true pronunciation of Russian names and words, will, he

hopes, be found worth explanation. Most of the ordinary errors in this point arise, firstly, from the accent not being indicated, and secondly, from the absurd and capricious manner in which we have adopted the French and German *versions* of the Russian orthography. Thus, for example, the names of Koutoúzoff and Souvóroff—names, one would think, of sufficient note to deserve a true pronunciation—have been transmogrified into Cut-us-off and Suwarrow, and subjected to divers unseemly jests on their appearance when thus metamorphosed.

The French, whom their national self-complacency, and the peculiarity of their pronunciation, render of all nations the worst adapted to be faithful interpreters of sounds, employed, to express the sound of the Russian *v*, not their own *v*, which precisely resembles it, but borrowed from the Germans the letter *w*! Now, *w* is certainly pronounced by the Teutonic nations like our *v*, and is therefore well able to represent to a *German* the Russian letter in question; but, at the same time, the *w* is a consonant, of whose true sound the French have no idea. To add to this

confusion, the English, whose pronunciation of the letter *w* differs from that of all other nations, have retained this *French* version of the *German-Russ!* The consequence is, that a Russian name, pronounced by an English mouth, would often be unintelligible to the very owner of the appellation.

These errors have had the effect of causing what in themselves are sounds neither difficult nor inharmonious, to be regarded as something ludicrously complicated and unpronounceable :

“ The skilful critic justly blames

Hard, tough, crank, guttural, harsh, stiff names.”

In how many ways may we see the word *Voevóda* written ? *Woiwode*, *Waywod*, and *Heaven* knows what besides ! *Boyárin*, the ancient title of nobility in Russian, is occasionally *boyar* or *boyard*—why there should be a *d* at the end of it, a Frenchman alone can tell : perhaps the error arose from some foreigner, ignorant of the language, supposing the plural, which is *boyare*, to be the singular, and thus perpetuating an error in a thousand varied forms.

It is surely time to correct some of these absurdities, trifling indeed in themselves, but to be

deprecated when they serve to discourage the reader, and tend to render a noble and manly language unpopular.

On a former occasion we ventured to sketch out a kind of system for a nearer approach to a true pronunciation of Russian words; and we have found no reason to change the few and simple rules we then gave. We shall repeat them here:—"The vowels, *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *y*, are supposed to be pronounced as in French; the diphthong *ou* as in the word *you*; the *j* always with the French sound.

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

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

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

"We have invariably indicated the syllable on which the stress or accent is to fall."

The epoch chosen by Lajétchnikoff 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 Ioánn 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.

Though we cannot award to him the praise of the warrior, perhaps the very weakness which induced him to choose, as the instruments of his policy, rather the peaceful arts of the diplomatist than the barbarous violence of the sword—perhaps this defect, if defect it be, enabled him

to give a more salutary direction to the infant energies of his country. He was not, it is true—

“ One of those potent madmen, who keep all
Mankind awake, while they by their great deeds
Are drumming hard upon this hollow world,
Only to make a sound to last for ages ! ”

but in silence he prepared for the more lasting, if less brilliant, triumphs of civilization and internal improvement. It was by him that Russia—alternately deluged with blood, poured forth in obscure and fruitless conflicts, and slumbering in sullen exhaustion till its resources were again repaired for fresh struggles with internal and foreign foes—was instructed, that in an imperfectly civilized country is nothing but a fantastic and dangerous meteor. He laid, as far as human sagacity could lay, the foundations of a solid and durable edifice—

“ *Is genus indocile, et dispersum montibus altis,
Composuit, legesque dedit, Latiumque vocari
Maluit.* ”

That this edifice was so speedily to fall in ruins at his death, that the foreign arts he planted, and so sedulously fostered in the snowy soil of the North, were to be withered by the flame of civil war, or to be devoured at the root by the secret

worm of barbarism ; that the code of laws—the *Soudébnik*—which he compiled, was so soon to be substantially if not formally abolished, was certainly more than mere human foresight could have anticipated. The ways of Providence are inscrutable. It can be no reproach to Ioánn's sagacity that he was unable to prophesy that his throne was, after a short interval, to be filled by one of those monsters whose atrocities almost defy the belief of succeeding ages, and which force us to have recourse to the hypothesis of their deeds being rather the symptoms of insanity, than the capricious extravagances of mere human tyranny.

With M. Lajéchnikoff's mode of treating the principal figure in his canvass—the stern yet not unattractive portrait of Ioánn—we think that none of his English readers will be disposed to find fault. The inferior personages in his drama are, for the most part, faithful sketches from the rude likenesses executed by the old chroniclers—those Albert Dürers of history, whose rugged but vigorous strokes often anticipate and surpass the more smooth and elaborate touches of succeeding artists.

Of Aphánasii Nikítin it is necessary to men-

tion that he is no fictitious character : his account of his wanderings over many lands, particularly the East, is still extant, and is a work of extreme interest, not only as being the production of the earliest Russian traveller, and curiously coloured by the peculiarities and prejudices of his age and nation, but as being, in fact, one of the earliest records of a traveller's journey in those remote countries. Some portions of this curious itinerary, M. Lajétchnikoff has not unskilfully interwoven in his romance.

None of our English readers who have visited Moscow will, we think, fail to find some interest in Fioraventi Aristotle, the architect of the cathedral in the Kreml—a work still remaining in a perfect state of preservation ; and remarkable, not only from the thousand associations attached to a building in which so many of the Russian Tsars have been crowned, but also as a specimen of a style of architecture singularly interesting in itself, and the most striking examples of which are only to be found in Constantinople, in Venice, and in Russia.

With these brief remarks we shall conclude our introduction of M. Lajétchnikoff to the British

public, leaving him, like Gines de Pasamonte, to draw up his curtain and set his puppets in motion. We flatter ourselves, that if the eloquence and spirit of his dialogue suffers in the hands of his interpreter, the substance of it has been rendered with fidelity.

The reader will remark in the mottoes prefixed to the chapters, and also frequently occurring in the body of the romance, short passages, sometimes with rhymed terminations, and an apparently irregular metrical arrangement, which he may, perhaps, take for unsuccessful attempts at rhyme. They are, however, the first essay hitherto made to give any idea in English of the tone and structure of the ancient national poetry of the Russian people. However irregular they may seem, they are verses, and are governed by a peculiar system of versification. Of their "metrical canons," it may be worth while to give some notion in this place.

They are not necessarily rhymed; indeed rhyme is, in many cases, held to be a defect. The principal thing necessary to please the Russian ear in this kind of composition, is a regular recurrence of accents. This the Translator has

indicated by a mark placed over the syllable on which the stress is laid in singing; for they are essentially songs, and meant, like all poetry of a very ancient character, to be sung. Dr Bowring, in his "Russian Anthology," has given versions of several specimens of these singular compositions; but without venturing to retain their metrical form—in our opinion, the most curious peculiarity they possess. We hope that our boldness, in attempting to give them both in dress and in substance, will be rewarded with approbation.

The only circumstance to which we think it necessary to call our reader's attention, is the frequent employment, in the dialogue, of phrases which have the sententious form, and frequently the jingle, of proverbs and old saws. As these, repeated from tradition, or invented *extempore*, colour, in a great measure, the ancient language of Russia, and are still very perceptible in the dialogue of the lower classes, the Translator has thought it his duty to retain them, however strange may be their effect to an English eye. They are national and characteristic, and have, at least, the merit of signifying something—an

advantage not always possessed by the “be chesms,” “mashallahs,” and “burnt fathers,” so plentifully strewn over the pages of most modern “Oriental” novels.

THOMAS B. SHAW.

Tsárskoe Seló, August $\frac{19}{31}$ 1843.

THE HERETIC.

THE HERETIC.

PROLOGUE.

“With the blessing of God, rejoice and hail, our good Lord and Son, Great Prince Dmitrii Ivánovitch, of all Russia . . . many years!”—*Words of the Primate at the ceremony of the Coronation of Dmitrii Ivánovitch, grandson of Ioánn III., as Great Prince.*

IT was the 27th of October 1505. As if for the coronation of a Tsar, Moscow was decorated and adorned. The Cathedral of the Assumption, the Church of the Annunciation, the Stone Palace, the Tower Palace, the Kreml with its towers, a multitude of stone churches and houses scattered over the city—all this, just come out of the hands of skilful architects, bore the stamp of freshness and newness, as if it had risen up in one day by an almighty will. In reality, all this had been created in a short time by the genius of Ioánn III. A person who, thirty years back, had left Moscow, poor, insignificant, resembling a large village, sur-

rounded by hamlets, would not have recognized it, had he seen it now; so soon had all Russia arisen at the single manly call of this great genius. Taking the colossal infant under his princely guardianship, he had torn off its swaddling bands, and not by years, but by hours, he reared it to a giant vigour. Nówgorod and Pskoff, which had never veiled their bonnet to mortal man, had yet doffed it to him, and had even brought him the tribute of liberty and gold: the yoke of the Khans had been cast off, and hurled beyond the frontiers of the Russian land; Kazán, though she had taken covert from the mighty hunter, yet had taken covert like the she-wolf that has no earth—her territories had melted away, and were united into one immense appanage; and the ruler who created all this was the first Russian sovereign who realized the idea of a Tsar.

Nevertheless, on the 27th of October 1505, the Moscow which he had thus adorned was preparing for a spectacle not joyful but melancholy. Ioánn, enfeebled in mind and body, lay upon his death-bed. He had forgotten his great exploits; he remembered only his sins, and repented of them.

It was towards the evening-tide. In the churches gleamed the lonely lamps; through the mica and blad-

der panes of the windows glimmered the fires, kindled in their houses by faith or by necessity. But nowhere was it popular love which had lighted them; for the people did not comprehend the services of the great man, and loved him not for his innovations. At one corner of the prison, the Black Izbá,* but later than the other houses, was illumined by a weak and flickering light. On the bladder, which was the substitute for glass in the window, the iron grating, with its spikes, threw a net-like shadow, which was only relieved by a speck, at one moment glittering like a spark, at another emitting a whirling stream of vapour. It was evident that the prisoner had made this opening in the bladder, in order, unperceived by his guards, to look forth upon the light of heaven.

This was part of the prison, and in it even now was pining a youthful captive. He seemed not more than twenty. So young! What early transgression could have brought him here? From his face you would

* *Izbá*—properly a cottage built of logs laid horizontally on one another, but anciently employed, generally, in the sense of “house.” “Black Izbá”—a dwelling of the meanest kind; so called from the absence of a chimney rendering the walls black with smoke.—T. B. S.

not believe in such transgressions; you would not believe that God could have created that fair aspect to deceive. So handsome and so noble, that you would think, never had one evil intention passed over that tranquil brow, never had one passion played in those eyes, filled with love to his neighbour and calm melancholy. And yet by his tall, majestic figure, as he starts from his reverie, and shakes his raven curls, he seems to be born a lord, and not a slave. His hands are white and delicate as a woman's. On the throat of his shirt blazes a button of emerald; in the damp and smoky izbá, on a broad bench against the wall, are a feather-bed with a pillow of damask, and with a silken covering; and by the bedside a coffer of white bone in filigree work. Evidently this is no common prisoner. No common prisoner!—no, he is a crowned prince! . . . and pure in thought and deed as the dwellers of the skies. All his crime is a diadem, which he did not seek, and which was placed on his head by the caprice of his sovereign; in no treason, in no crime had he been accomplice; he was guilty by the guilt of others—by the ambition of two women, the intrigues of courtiers, the anger of his grandfather against others, and not against him. They had des-

tioned him a throne, and they had dragged him to a dungeon. He understood not why they crowned him, and now he understands not why they deprived him of liberty—of the light of heaven—of all that they deny not even to the meanest. For him his nearest kinsman dared not even pray aloud.

This was the grandson of Iván III., the only child of his beloved son—Dmítrii Ivánovitch.

At one time he sat in melancholy musing, resting his elbows on his knees, and losing his fingers in the dark curls of his hair; then he would arise, then lie down. He was restless as though they had given him poison. No one was with him. A solitary taper lighted up his miserable abode. The stillness of the izbá was disturbed only by the drops from the ceiling, or the mice nibbling the crumbs that had fallen from the captive's table. The little light now died away, now flared up again; and in these flashes it seemed as though rows of gigantic spiders crept along the wall. In reality, these were scribblings in various languages, scrawled with charcoal or with a nail. Hardly was it possible to spell out among them—"Matheas," "Marpha, posádnitza of Nóvgorod the Great," "Accursed be" "liebe Mutter, liebe X"; and still several words

more, half obliterated by the damp which had trickled along the wall, or been scratched out by the anger or the ignorance of the guards.

The door of the dungeon softly opened. Dmítrii Ivánovitch started up. "Aphónia, is it thou?" he joyfully enquired; but seeing that he had mistaken for another the person who entered, he exclaimed sadly—"Ah, it is thou, Nebogátii! Why cometh not Aphónia? I am sad, I am lonely, I am devoured by grief, as if a serpent lay at my heart. Didst thou not say that Aphónia would come as soon as they lighted the candles in the houses?"

"Aphánasii Nikítin hath a mind as single as his eye," said the deacon Dmítrii Nebogátii, a kind and good-natured officer, yet strict in the performance of the charge given him by the Great Prince, of guarding his grandson. (We may remark, that at this time he, in consequence of the illness of Dmítrii, the treasurer and groom of the bedchamber, fulfilled their duties. All honour to a prince, even though he be a prisoner!)

"Make thyself easy, Dmítrii Ivánovitch; soon, be sure, will come our orator. Thou wottest thyself he groweth infirm, he see'th not well, and so must grope along the wall; and till he cometh, my dear

child, play, amuse thyself with thy toys. Sit down cozily on thy bed ; I will give thee thy coffer."

And Dmítrii Ivánovitch, a child, though he was more than twenty years old, to escape from the weariness that oppressed him, instantly accepted the proposition of his deacon, sat down with his feet on his bed, took the ivory box upon his knees, and opened it with a key that hung at his girdle. By degrees, one after the other, he drew out into the light a number of precious articles which had been imprisoned in the coffer.

The young prince held up to the fire, now a chain of gold with bears' heads carved on the links, or a girdle of scaly gold, then signet-rings of jacinth or emerald, then crucifixes, collars, bracelets, precious studs : he admired them, threw the collars round his neck, and asked the deacon whether they became him ; took orient pearls and rubies by the handful, let them stream like rain through his fingers, amused himself in playing with them, like an absolute child—and suddenly, hearing a voice in the neighbouring chamber, threw them all back any how into the coffer. His face lighted up.

"'Tis Aphónia !" he cried, giving back the box to the deacon, and descending from the bed.

“Lock it, Dmítrii Ivánovitch,” said Nebogátii firmly; “without that I will not receive it.”

Hastily clinked the key in the coffer; the door opened, and there entered the izbá an old man of low stature, bowed down by the burden of years; the silver of his hair was already becoming golden with age. From the top of his head to the corner of his left eye was deeply gashed a scar, which had thus let fall an eternal curtain before that eye, and therefore the other was fixed in its place, like a precious stone of wondrous water, for it glittered with unusual brilliancy, and seemed to see for itself and for its unfortunate twin brother. No son more affectionately meets a tenderly beloved father, than Dmítrii Ivánovitch met the old man. Joy sparkled in the eyes of the Tsarévitch, and spoke in his every gesture. He took his guest's walking-staff, shook from his dress the powdered snow, embraced him, and seated him in the place of honour on his bed. Nevertheless, the guest was no more than Aphánasii Nikítin, a merchant of Tver, a trader without trade, without money, poor, but rich in knowledge, which he had acquired in an adventurous journey to India, rich in experience and fancies, which he knew how to adorn beside with a sweet and enchanting elo-

quence. He lived on the charity of his friends, and yet was no man's debtor: the rich he paid with his tales, and to the poor he gave them for nothing. He was allowed to visit the Great Prince Dmítrii Ivánovitch, (whom, however, it was forbidden to call Great Prince.) We may judge how delightfully he filled up the dreadful solitude of the youth's imprisonment, and how dear he therefore was to the captive. And what did Dmítrii give him for his labour? Much, very much to a good heart,—his delight, the only pleasure left him in the world—and this reward the Tveritchánin* would not have exchanged for gold. Once the Tsarévitch had desired to present him with one of the precious articles from his ivory box; but the deacon gently reminded the captive, that all the articles in his coffer were his, that he might play with them as much as he pleased, but that he was not at liberty to dispose of them.

The day before Aphánasii Nikítin had begun a tale about the "*Almayne*," surnamed the *Heretic*. To-day, when he had seated himself, he continued

* In Russia, designations of persons from their native country have the termination *in*; as, Anglitchánin, an Englishman; Tveritchánin, a native of Tver.

it. His speech flowed on like the song of the nightingale, which we listen to from the flush of morning till the glow of eve, without shutting our eyes even for a moment. Greedily did the Tsarévitch listen to the story-teller, his cheeks burned, and often tears streamed from his eyes. Far, very far he was borne away from his dungeon, and only from time to time the rude brawling of the guards behind the partition-wall recalled him to bitter reality. In the mean time the deacon Nebogátii's pen was hurriedly scratching along the parchment: the sheets, pasted one to another in a long line, were fast covered with strange hieroglyphics, and wound up into a huge roll. He was writing down from Aphánasii Nikítin's mouth, *A tale touching a certayne Almayne, surnamed the Heretic.*

Suddenly, in the midst of the tale, there rushed into the dungeon the *dvorétzkii* * of the Great Prince. "Iván Vassílievitch is about to render up his soul to God," said he hastily; "he grieveth much about thee, and hath sent for thee. Make haste!"

The prince was convulsively agitated. Over his

* *Dvorétzkii*—a great officer of the palace (*dvorétz*) in the court of the ancient Tsars.

face, which became as white as a sheet, passed some thought; it flashed in his eyes. Oh, this was a thought of paradise! Freedom a crown the people mercy perhaps a block what was there not in that thought? The captive—the child who had just been playing with jewels—arose the Great Prince of all Russia.

Iván was still a sovereign, though on his dying bed; death had not yet locked for ever his lips, and those lips might yet determine on his successor. The thoughts of another life, remorse, an interview with his grandson, whom he had himself of his own free-will crowned Tsar, and whom they had just brought from a dungeon—what force must these thoughts have on the will of the dying man!

They gave the prince his bonnet, and just as he stood, conducted by the deacon and other officers, he hastened to the Great Prince's palace. In the hall he encountered the sobbing of the kinsmen and servants of the Tsar. "It is over!—my grandsire is dead!" thought he, and his heart sank within him, his steps tottered.

The appearance of Dmítrii Ivánovitch in the palace of the Great Prince, interrupted for a time the general lamentation, real and feigned. The un-

expectedness, the novelty of the object, the strange fate of the prince, pity, the thought that he, perhaps, would be the sovereign of Russia in a moment, overwhelmed the minds and hearts of the courtiers. But even at this period there were among the long-beards some wise heads: acute, far-sighted calculations, which we now call politics, were then as now oracles of fate, and though sometimes, as happens even in our own days, they were overthrown by the mighty hand of Providence.

These calculations triumphed over the momentary astonishment; the tears and sobbing began again, and were communicated to the crowd. Only one voice, amidst the expressions of simulated woe, ventured to raise itself above them: "Haste, my lord, our native prince—thou hast been sent for no short time—Iván Vassílievitch is yet alive—the Lord bless thee, and make thee our Great Prince!"

This voice reassured the youth; but when he was about to enter the bed-chamber where the dying man lay, his strength began to fail. The door opened; his feet seemed nailed to the threshold. Iván had only a few minutes left to live. It seemed as if death awaited only the arrival of his grandson, to give him his dismissal. Around his bed stood his

sons, the primate, his favourite boyárins, his kinsmen.

“Hither—to me, Dmítrii—my dear grandson,” said the Great Prince, recognizing him through the mists of death.

Dmítrii Ivánovitch threw himself towards the bed, fell upon his knees, kissed the cold hand of his grandsire, and bedewed it with his tears. The dying man, as if by the power of galvanism, raised himself, laid one hand on his grandson’s head, with the other blessed him, then spoke in a breathless voice: “I have sinned before God and thee Forgive me forgive The Lord and I have crowned thee be my”

The face of Vassílii Ioánnovitch was convulsed with envy and fear. Yet one word more

But death then stood on the side of the strongest, and that word was never pronounced in this world. The Great Prince Iván Vassílievitch yielded up his last breath, applying his cold lips to the forehead of his grandson. His son, who had been earlier designated by him as his heir, immediately entered into all his rights. They tore Dmítrii from the death-bed, led him out of the Great Prince’s palace,

and conducted him back to his dungeon. There, stretched on his bed, was reposing Aphónia in the deep slumber of the just. Having bewailed his woes, the ill-fated Dmítrii lay down beside the old man. Prince and peasant were there equal. The one dreamed that night of royal banquets, and of a glorious crown, glittering like fire, upon his head, and of giving audience to foreign ambassadors, and reviewing vast armies. The other—of the hospitable palm and the rivulet in the deserts of Arabia. The poor man awaked the first, and how was he surprised to find the Tsarévitch by his side! Mournfully he shook his hoary head, and wept, and was about to bless him, when he heard the joyful gallant cry of Dmítrii Ivánovitch as he dreamed—“Warriors! . . . on the Tartars! . . . on Lithuania! . . .”

And immediately awoke the young prince. Long he rubbed his eyes, and gazed around him, and then, falling on Aphónia’s bosom, he melted into tears. “Ah! father, father, I have been dreaming” . . .

His words were strangled by sobs.

Soon all that he had seen and heard in the palace of the Great Prince began to appear to him as a dream. Only when he recalled to his memory that

weary vision, he felt on his forehead the icy seal which had been placed on it by the lips of the dying Tsar.

The winter came: all was as before in the Black Izbá: nothing but the decorations of the scene had changed: the uniform sound of the falling drops was dumb, the bright speck had vanished from the bladder window-pane: instead, a silvery film of frost adhered to the corners of the walls and the crevices of the ceiling, and the bright speck, through which the captive could see the heavens, with their sun and free birds, was veiled with a thick patch. But Aphónia, as of old, visited the dungeon. He had finished his tale of the Almayne, whom they called the Heretic, and the scribe Nebogátii, putting it on paper word for word, had placed the roll in his iron chest—an amusement for his descendants.

Thus passed a little more than three years.

The royal prisoner was no longer in his dungeon, and Aphánasii Nikítin was seen no more within it. Assuredly Dmítirii Ivánovitch had been set at liberty. Yes, the Lord had set him free from all earthly bonds. Thus writes an annalist:—"In the year 1509, on the 14th of February, departed this life the Great Prince Dmítirii Ivánovitch, in prison."

Gerberstein adds:—"It is thought that he was starved—with cold or with hunger—to death, or stifled with smoke."

This prologue requires explanation. Here it is:— In the year 1834, in the government of S——, were put up to auction the estates of one of Catharine's great nobles. A rich old library, in which (as I was assured by credible people) were to be found historical treasures, was sold in detail to any body who chose to bid. Hastening to the spot, I threw myself upon the plunderers, in order, by force of gold, to snatch from them some rarity which they could not appreciate. Vain hope! I was too late. A great part of the library, they told me for my consolation, had come into the possession of a butcher of S——, who was selling the books by the bale, by weight.* I rush to him, and receive for answer, that all the volumes are already sold to different people. "There are the remains," said he, pointing to a heap of bindings and worm-eaten rolls; "look them over, you may find something to your taste."

* A fact! The news of this sacrifice reached even Moscow, and the *bibliomanes* of the capital entreated me to discover whether some historical rarities might not be found at the butcher's.—*Note of the Author.*

With trembling greediness I set to work : I bury myself in dust and scraps of paper. . . . Here is nothing, there as much, further on trash ! Again to the search . . . again I plunged into them. . . . Time flies. The butcher stares, and thinks me crazy. . . . At last (O, my blessings upon his dwelling !) I unroll one worm-eaten MS., pushed aside by the forces of the literary empire to the very corner of the garret. The title is attractive—“ *A Tale tochyng a certayne Almayne, surnamed y^e Heretick.*” I read the text—a treasure ! I turn over the ragged leaves with the caution of a surgical operator. In the heart of the roll is an Italian manuscript ; in it the names are the same as in the Russian MS., with the addition of some new ones, for the greatest part those of foreigners : the hero of the story is the same in both. It was evidently written by a person contemporary and acquainted with him. The relation breathes a remarkable affection for him, and elevated sentiments. In the titlepage are only the words—“ *In memory of my friend Antonio.*” This I managed hastily to glance through in the strange archives of the butcher. I cannot conceal my rapture ; and, in the heat of my joy, I offer the bearded shopkeeper the finest Io that he might pick out of my herd. The

bargain is struck at once: I carry home the roll, trembling for its delicate existence; I turn over the leaves of the Russian MS., as if they were the petals of some rare flower ready to fall. Hardly do I succeed in rescuing from destruction the half of it. The Italian manuscript is in a sounder condition. Out of the two I have composed "The Tale of the Heretic," filling up from history the interstices produced by destructive time.

"A trick of the novelist!" cry, perhaps, some of my fair or gentle readers; "a trick to interest us the more in his production!"

Believe or not, my right worshipful sirs, and you, most dearest of the dear, perhaps most fairest, ladies;—say what you please, that I wrote this preface simply with the aim of presenting you with a picture of Moscow, re-edified and decorated by the great Iván—a picture which could not be introduced in my novel: I cannot refute you. You may say that I have done this, desiring to find a place somewhere for the romantic and interesting character of Dmítrii Ivánovitch, which could not have found room in the first plan of the romance, already occupied by another personage; and in the second, it could find no room either;—you may add, that I, in conse-

quence of this necessity, imagined the discovery of the manuscripts. Say just what you please: I cannot give you ocular demonstration; I am unable to prove on paper the justice of my deductions, and therefore I am innocently guilty—I am ready to undergo your judgment. What is to be done? It is not the first time that tale-tellers are accused of deception. Some one, 'I think, has said,—“If the deception resembles truth, and is liked, then the tale is very good.” This is no subject for the researches of the historical police. Neither do I pretend to justify two or three anachronisms as to years, seasons of the year, or months, committed in filling up the intervals of the manuscripts. They were intentional—this is easy to be seen. To point them out in notes I considered superfluous: it is sufficient to turn to any history of Russia to discover—for instance, that the reduction of Tver took place in autumn, and not in summer; that such and such an event happened in different years; that the punishment of the heretics was at Nóvgorod, and not at Moscow. I leave it to children to seek out the voluntary and involuntary sins. Such anachronisms (remark, not in the customs, in the character of the time) I can never consider as transgressions in the 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 personæ* 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.

CHAPTER I.

IN BOHEMIA.

" O, it swélled ever lúringly
 O'er the méads, the spring rívulet !
 And it bóre away, lúred away,
 The fair báby from its móther's arms.
 She was léft alone, that móther sad,
 On the stéep bank, the dárk-red bank ;
 She will crý aloud, O, so móurnfully !
 O retúrn to me, dárling one !
 O retúrn, my belóved one ! "

Old Song.

Do you know, gentle reader, where the White Mountain is? If you do not, I will tell you: it is in Bohemia, near the frontiers of Saxony. Thither I will now convey you.

There, at no great distance from the mountain, loomed, through the grey twilight of an autumnal evening, a tower on the bank of the Elbe: it was newly washed in a shower which had just cleared

off. From two windows, or rather two narrow slits in the thick wall, glimmered a light, illuminating their small diamond panes, and throwing its dancing flash and shade far along the bosom of the river. 'Twas a wild night! Not a sparklet in the wide heavens—not a single streak of white to harbinger the dawn. The darkness looks immeasurable in its vast gloom—the night seems as though it would have no end. The blast appears to be struggling to force an entrance into the tower, and shrieks like an evil spirit as it wrestles with its time-worn battlements. The yelling of the wind is repeated by the long howl of the wolves in the surrounding thickets. The river, lashed by the blast, seems to bend its current sideways to the bank, and to besiege the foot of the tower, as though eager to batter it with its waves.

Within the tower all is still. Nothing is heard but the plaintive swelling and falling of the wind, fitfully playing with the bars of the window its wild and mournful harmonies. The large chamber is dimly lighted by a pile of wood blazing on the hearth; all around indicates simplicity, not to say poverty. Nothing is visible in the way of decorations but a number of elks' horns and weapons suspended upon the walls. With the head resting upon the back of a tall old

chair, reclines the faded form of an aged woman, whose features, though bearing the livid traces of severe illness, and stamped by the track of sorrow and suffering, prove that in her youth she must have been lovely. Gloomy and painful thoughts from time to time appeared to chase each other across that face, and her soul seemed swelling with tears which hope or patience had retained within their source. The old woman was evidently the mistress of the tower—a tower that had once been a castle. At some distance from her is placed a hoary-headed old man, her retainer, seneschal, castellan; one of those figures which it is impossible to gaze at without becoming better and more benevolent—without feeling yourself elevated nearer to heaven. Where such old men dwell, there, we may be assured, dwells God's blessing. At one moment, seated on a three-legged stool, he struggles with drowsiness, then arises and proceeds to arrange the fire, then listens by the door. In the midst of the deep winter embodied in the faces of these two persons, has bloomed a vernal flower—a maiden of sixteen. By her dress, her place in the recess of the hall, we must take her for a servant. She sits spinning on a low bench, in the full blaze of the fire. On her

pretty face, too, deep anxiety is expressed. At the least noise behind the door, her hands drop the thread, and her eyes turn enquiringly to the portal. Nothing breaks the stillness of the chamber but the low buzzing of the spinning-wheel, and the plaintive howl of the wind, imploring to be let in through the casement.

It is night, but the inhabitants of the poor castle do not sleep! They are evidently expecting some one.

Suddenly there rose the long note of a horn, and that seemed to be struggling with the blast. None heard it but the girl.—“Father,” she said, breaking her thread in her agitation, “Yakoubék is come.”

The retainer arose to his full height. The old woman, raising her head from the back of her chair, lifted to heaven her eyes, which were full of tears. All was expectation in the chamber.

Again the horn sounded, but in a shriller and livelier tone than before; and this time it was plainly heard above the troubled blast. Intense anxiety was expressed on the faces of all. The girl’s bosom seemed to heave.

“Why dost thou not show him a light, Yan?” said the old woman.

“I am stupified with joy, lady baroness,” replied the retainer, hastening to light at the fire the wick of an iron lamp, which the maiden had handed to him in the mean time. But the new-comer, it seemed, was no laggard. The door opened, and there entered the room a young man of twenty, good-looking and active. With a glance of love to the girl, a respectful obeisance to the Baroness Ehrenstein, (such was the name of the lady of the poor castle,) he threw his drenched hat and large wide-topped gloves at the feet of his beloved; and, unslinging the horn from his shoulders, he proceeded to unbuckle the buff-coat which defended his breast.

“Is all well?” enquired the baroness with a trembling voice; and, but for fear of degrading her birth, she would have cast herself on the neck of the messenger.

“God be praised, my gracious lady! God be praised! I bring a thousand salutations from my young master,” replied the new-comer; “but the night is as dark as a wolf’s throat: you ride, and ride, and come full drive against a branch or a stump; and there are swarms of evil spirits in the cross roads of the White Mountain, where a traveller has lately been murdered. They try to get up behind

you on your horse's crupper, and ride with you. One of them almost drove me right into the Elbe."

The old retainer shook his head, intimating that the youth was talking nonsense.

"You should have said an ave to our Lady of Loretto," interrupted the baroness.

"'Twas nought but an ave to our Lady that saved me from a ducking: but for your orders to come back with speed, I would have only accompanied my young master; and but (here he looked lovingly at the girl) for my desire to please you, by bringing you tidings of him, I would have slept at the last village. But rain, rain! it poured by buckets-full."

"Poor Yakoubék! you must be drenched to the skin," said the baroness: "warm yourself at the fire," she was going to continue; but seeing him take from his bosom a neat folded paper, wrapped round with green silk, and sealed with wax, she could only exclaim—"A letter from *him!*"

With trembling hands she seized the missive, and pressed it to her withered bosom; then she gazed at it admiringly, and put it back into her breast.

Why did she not hasten to open the precious letter? Why? Because the baroness could not read.

(Observe, this was at the end of the fifteenth century.)

Yakoubék then, with a joyful face, delivered to his mistress a well-crammed purse, for which he had been feeling all about his dress.

“Such a good young master!” said he, giving up his charge: “he feared more on my account than for the money. Such a kind man! Yet he will not let himself be trampled on. How the knightly blood speaks in him, though he is a le——”

Here Yan could no longer restrain himself; he twitched the speaker so sharply by the sleeve, that he made him bite his tongue. In the mean time, the baroness held the purse, and wept silently as she gazed on it. What a sad tale might have been read in those tears, if any one could have translated them into words! Then, recovering herself, she wiped her eyes, and began to question Yakoubék as to how her son had arrived at Lipetsk; for all her care was about him, what he had done there, how and with whom he had begun his journey.

Yakoubék only awaited these questions to let loose his tongue.

“We went on safe and sound,” he began, “till we came to a pine-forest, as thick and dark as an old

boar's bristles. Some ill-looking rascals showed us the white of their eyes; but we were in force, and could have given them as good as they brought, and we showed them nothing but our horses' tails. Then"

The terrified baroness began to listen more eagerly.

"At a hostelry, a cursed hostess—and the she-cat was young too—gave us some ham, believe me, gracious lady, as rusty as the old helmets in the armoury! My young master could not eat it, and swallowed a morsel of biscuit, washed down with water; but I was fool enough to take a mouthful of the ham, and even now the very recollection makes me"

"Talk sense, Yakoubék," angrily interrupted the old retainer: "if you go on chattering such nonsense, your tale will be longer before it comes to an end than the Danube."

"Let the youth talk as he likes, whatever comes uppermost," said the baroness, to whom the least details about her beloved son were interesting.

"Thank ye, Master Yan!" cried the youth confused, with a bow to the old retainer; "many thanks for correcting a clown. But you lived in the time of the late baron"

At the word "late," a slight quivering passed over the lips of the baroness. "You have lived in great cities; you have seen the Emperor and St Stephen's church, and you are as chary of your words as if they were rose-nobles; but this is the first time since I was born that I have been to Lipetsk—ah, what a town!" Then recollecting himself, he shook his head, and waved his hand as if to drive away a fly. "But I am wasting foolish words, as if they were copper skillings: then, you see, gracious lady," he continued, turning to the old woman, "we got on prosperously; only on the road his honour did nothing but grieve for you, and was perpetually begging and enjoining me: 'Look ye, Yakoubék, serve my mother faithfully and zealously, as if you were her own children: if I get rich, I will not forget you. As to Yan,' he continued, 'I am not afraid about him: the old man, I am convinced, would lay down his life for her, (a tear sparkled on Yan's eyelashes, while a smile passed over his lips;) 'but you are young.' He always said '*you*:' he must have meant . . . hm! if thou wilt let me speak, Master Yan;' . . . then he bowed, looking very tenderly at the girl. Blushing like a crimson poppy, she pretended to be searching

for something, rummaged about, and then quitted the room, as if to look for it.

“ I can guess that riddle,” said the baroness in a kind voice : “ Antony meant Liouboúsha.”

“ My kind young master !” continued the youth ; “ he did not forget me and on the road to Lipetsk, and when he was leaving, he advised me : ‘ Do not forget, Yakoubék. Tell my mother that I promised to marry you. My mother and our good Yan will certainly not refuse me.’ ”

“ I have long ago given you my blessing, my good friends. What says the father ?”

“ I have no son ; you shall be a son to me !” said the old man ; “ only I will not give you my blessing till you have told us all the news of our young lord without any additions about yourself.”

Yakoubék almost leaped for joy : he ventured respectfully to kiss the baroness’s hand ; he kissed Yan on the shoulder, then assuming a grave air, as though he had mounted the cathedra, he continued his account of young Ehrenstein. “ At Lipetsk we were expected—we !—I mean to say his honour we reached the house. Lord ! thought I, does not the king at least live here ! Clap ten such towers as this in a row, they would not make such a

house. If you look up at the chimneys, your hat falls off; if you go in, you lose your way, as if you were in an unknown forest. The rooms were ready. Soon after, the Muscovite ambassador came to my young lord, shook him by the hand, and spoke to him very affably. He said that his sovereign would be very glad to receive his honour, young master, and would raise him to great favour, dignity, and wealth. My master hardly understood a word of what the ambassador said to him: it was all translated by an Italian who had lived in Muscovy. But I did not let slip a word, except now and then a hard one, not like our speech. The ambassador spoke something like Tchekh, (Bohemian.) I thought to myself, perhaps he has learned Tchekh: but no! his servant spoke the same tongue as himself, so, thinks I, that must be Muscovite speech. Says the ambassador to young master: ‘The Tchekhs and Muscovites are the sons of one mother, but have been divided by wars.’ So, thinks I, I could easily turn interpreter”

“Thou forgettest,” interrupted Yan with a smile, “that an interpreter must understand the tongue of the person for whom he is translating. Dost thou see?”

“ To be sure. What a blockhead I am ! For instance, the ox and the sheep want to speak together ; I understand sheep-language, and the sheep understand me : but I don't understand ox-language, and here we stick in the mud.”

The baroness could not help smiling at this illustration.

“ Well, well,” said Yan, “ first finish what you have to say about young master, and then you may go a wool-gathering as much as you please.”

“ Do not frighten yourself, Master Yan. Though I look aside now and then, I still stick to the young baron's skirts.”

“ Thou didst not call him Baron on the road ?” said the old woman with an anxious look. “ That was strongly forbidden.”

“ I will not lie, gracious lady. Once my tongue did make a slip. I inadvertently disobeyed you. The word dropped from my tongue ; but I corrected myself in a twinkling : ‘ Do not think,’ said I to him, ‘ that I call you baron because you are one : I call you so because the Tchekhs and Germans call all their masters baron ; I imitate them from habit. In the same way we call your mother baroness, as we love her.’ No, no ! I am no fool :

when I fall into a scrape, I want no one else to help me out."

"Thanks, Yakoubék! well, what happened to you at Lipetsk?"

"Why, then they brought my young master a heap of skins of animals from the ambassador. Muscovite beasts, such as martens and squirrels—and they piled up a mountain of them in the room. All this was a kind of earnest from the Great Prince, the interpreter said. 'What are we to do with this?' said young master; but, before the words were out of his mouth, the merchants came flocking up like hungry wolves that have sniffed a carrion, and began to chaffer. After all, they laid a heap of gold and silver on the table, and took away the skins. My young master kept only a few; he has sent you a dozen martens, and bestowed a dozen squirrel-skins on me. 'These are for thy bride,' he said, 'for winter clothing.' Then came the driver, who was to take him—a Jew"

"A Jew!" exclaimed the baroness, clasping her hands, and raising her eyes to heaven. "Holy Virgin, shelter him beneath thy merciful protection! Angels of the Lord, drive far from him every evil spirit!"

“ I myself did not much like that an unbelieving Jew should drive my young master ; but, when matters were cleared up, my heart was relieved. The driver hardly looked at him, before he threw himself down and kissed the skirt of his mantle. ‘ Thou art my benefactor, my preserver,’ he said. ‘ Dost thou not remember at Prague, when the schoolboys were setting savage dogs at me? Their fangs were in me ; you threw yourself upon them, you killed them with your dagger, and chastised the boys. I can never forget your benevolence ; when I do, máy the God of Jacob and the God of Abraham forget me ! In Moscow I have powerful friends, men of consequence. Speak but the word ; I am at your service. Dost thou want money ? Say—Zacharias, I want so much, and I will bring it to you. I will walk softly, I will not breathe, that they may not see, may not hear, that you had it from a Jew.’ I understood not his words ; I only saw the Jew beat his breast, and then again begin kissing the skirt of my lord’s mantle : but young master afterwards translated it all to me word for word, that I might relate it to you. ‘ My mother will be less anxious when she hears this,’ he said ; ‘ I believe Zacharias, he will not deceive me. Besides, the ambassador

answered for him : he is well known at Moscow, and all believe him to be an honest man. Through him, too, I can write to my mother.' At last they assembled for the journey : there were a great many going. There were all sorts of workmen," (a slight blush passed over the face of the baroness,) "men who cast things in copper, and those who build stone churches ; I could never tell you all. They took their seats on the carriages. I accompanied my master out of the town. He again repeated his injunctions to serve you faithfully, zealously, as he would serve you himself ; and repeated this a hundred times. At a short distance from the town his carriage stopped. Then he condescended to embrace me. ' Will God let us meet again ?' he said, and wept. His last words were all about you. The carriage went on—he still stood up in front, and long nodded his head, and waved his hand, as though begging me to salute you. I did not stir from my place ; but he went—my dear master—went further and further, till he disappeared. I felt as if my heart would break. I longed to call him back, I longed to kiss his hand once more. He was gone ! Had it not been for you and Lioubousha, with the blessing of God, I would not have remained here."

Yakoubék could not go on: tears prevented him from speaking. The mother sobbed; the retainers wept. One would have thought that all the three had just returned from the funeral of a dear friend. Long, almost all night, did the inhabitants of the poor castle remain awake; long did they talk of the young Ehrenstein. At length the baroness retired to her bed-chamber, ordering Yan to fetch Father Laurence to her in the morning. This was a deacon of the neighbouring Moravian brotherhood; the confidential reader of her correspondence. The morning came, and Father Laurence read to the baroness the following letter from her son:—

“ Dearest Mother,

“ I hasten to inform you that I am safely arrived at Lipetsk. I am well and happy—as happy as a son can be, separated from a mother whom he tenderly loves. Do not accuse me of being visionary. A love for science, for my fellow-creatures, and no less the hope of being useful to you, have induced me to take this step. You yourself have blessed my enterprise, kind, dearest mother!

“ At Lipetsk the Russian ambassador was already awaiting us. He did not disappoint me; but gave

me without delay the considerable sum which you will receive by Yakoubék. It is but for you that I value money—that I may comfort your old age. The favour of the Muscovite king, which his envoy gives me the hope of obtaining, will enable me to be still more useful to you hereafter.

“ With what pleasure did I hear the first sounds of the Muscovite—or, as it is otherwise called—Russian language! With still greater pleasure did I learn that it is related to our own. Already I comprehend a good deal of the conversation of the envoy with whom I am going. I am sorry that I do not understand Tchekkh better. I hope, at my arrival in Moscow, soon to learn to speak Russian; this will make my new acquaintance more disposed to love me. I already like them, as descended from the same race.

“ As to the request which Yakoubék will make to you, grant it for my sake and for his.

“ Prizing your parental blessing above all things, I prepare myself for my long journey; that blessing, with your image, is in my heart. I kiss your hands a thousand times.—Your dutiful son,

“ ANTONY EHRENSTEIN.”

Many times was Father Laurence compelled to read this letter—each time it was bedewed with tears, and pressed to the mother's heart. The first days of separation were killing to her: every where she wandered about the former haunts of her beloved son, figuring to herself that she might meet him. The things that he had left behind him she gazed at with a kind of reverence: it was forbidden for any one to sit down in the chair that Antony had ordinarily used at dinner, or even to move it from its place. This was not permitted even to Father Laurence: a flower plucked by Antony on the last day before his departure was placed, like a holy thing, on the leaf of the manuscript Bible at which he had ceased reading. In his room all was allowed to remain in the same order as when he had left it. Sometimes the aged mother stole thither to sit on the dear wanderer's bed and weep. No complaint to Heaven—no repining: she followed him only with daily and nightly prayers for his health and happiness. But the wanderer was departing ever further and further; yet long he beheld the blue sky of his native land—that sky in which it was so delightful to plunge the soul; the mountains and rocks wildly and fantastically relieved against it; the silver

spangling of the winding Elbe; the spiry poplars standing like sentinels of the shore; the flowery clusters of the wild cherry-trees, which peered boldly in at the windows of his chamber; oftener still he saw, in dream or reverie, the trembling withered hand of his mother stretched above him in benediction.

We know that Antony was the son of the Baroness Ehrenstein. We will say more :—his father was living, rich, powerful, occupying an important office at the court of the Emperor Frederick III.; but at the poor castle, this is a secret known to none but old Yan and the baroness. The other inhabitants of the tower—Antony himself—considered him to be dead. But why so, wherefore, in what capacity, did young Antony go to Russia?

Antony was a physician.

The son of a baron a physician? . . . Strange! wonderful! How reconcile with his profession the pride of the German nobility of that day? To judge what the baron must have felt, we must remember that at this period physicians were for the most part Jews, those outcasts of humanity, those Pariahs of society. In our own time, and not far back, in enlightened countries they have begun to speak of

them as men—they have begun to assign them a fixed station in the civic family ; but how were they looked upon in the fifteenth century, when the Inquisition was established, burning them and the Moors by thousands ? when even Christians were burned, quartered, strangled like dogs, for being Christians according to the theory of Wicliffe and of Huss, and not according to the canon of a Pius or a Sixtus ? The rulers persecuted the Jews with fire, sword, and anathema ; the populace, enraged against them by reports that they stole children and drank their blood on Easter-day, avenged on them one imaginary crime by real ones a hundred-fold greater. They thought God's light, the air of heaven, defiled by their breath, their impure eyes ; and hastened to rob them of God's light, of the air of heaven. Hangmen, armed with pincers and razors, even before the victims reached the place of execution, ripped and tore the skin from their bodies, and then threw them mangled into the fire. The spectators, without waiting till they were consumed, dragged the horrid remnants from the pile, and trailed the tatters of humanity through the streets, bloody and blackened, cursing over them. To pro-

long, if but for a time, their miserable existence, the Jews undertook the most difficult duties: to avoid Scylla, they threw themselves headlong into Charybdis. The profession of leech was then one of the most perilous: we may guess, that a great number of these involuntary physicians deceived many with their involuntary science, or were paid with interest for their cheats and ignorance. Did the patient depart into the other world?—they sent the physician after him. One example will suffice: it is a remarkable one. The leech Pietro Leoni of Spolletto, having exhausted all the resources of his art on the dying Lorenzo de' Medici, gave him as a last experiment a powder of pearls and precious stones. This did no good. Lorenzo the Magnificent started off for ever to that bourne, for which the non-magnificent also must set off. What became of Leoni? The friends of the defunct did not hesitate long: they killed the leech without delay, or, as others say, so tortured him, that he threw himself into a well, to avoid new agonies. How many, then, of these martyrs must have perished obscurely, not deserving the mention of the annalist? After all this, a non-Jew must have possessed great self-denial, and great

devotion to science and humanity, to dedicate himself to the profession of medicine.

Judge, then, what the baron must have felt on seeing his son a leech.

How then, why, wherefore, did this come to pass?

CHAPTER II.

THE REVENGE.

“ . . . If e'er my sleeping foe I found
By Ocean's dread abyss, I swear,
Nor then nor there my foot should spare
To spurn to death the accursed hound.
Unblenching, down into the sea
I'd hurl him in his mortal fear;
And his awakening agony—
I'd mock it with a joyous sneer!
And long his falling crash should be
A sweetest concord to mine ear!”

POUSHKIN.

THEY were laying the foundations of a temple at Rome. . . . That this was a memorable day may be judged, when I say that they were laying the foundations of St Peter's. On this day was fixed the corner-stone, the embryo of that wondrous structure; but half a century was yet to elapse before the genius of Bramante was to complete it. From all directions were crowding Italians and foreigners; many out of curiosity to witness a magnificent spectacle, some from duty, others from love for art, or religious feeling. The ceremony fully

corresponded with the grandeur of its object; the Pope (Nicholas V., the founder of the Vatican library) had not spared his treasures; a crowd of cardinals, dukes, princes, the successor of St Peter in person, with his cortége, a legion of Condottieri, glittering with arms, pennons, oriflammes; flowers, gold, chanting—all this enveloped in steaming incense, as if it marched in clouds, presented a wondrous spectacle. But who could have imagined that a mere trifle had nearly destroyed the grandeur of this procession!

Into the crowd of distinguished foreigners, who surpassed each other in dress and stateliness, following the Pope's train at a short distance, had insinuated itself a little deformed figure of an Italian, habited in a modest cloak. This had the effect of a spot of dirt on the marble of a sculptor, a beggarly patch on a velvet toga, the jarring of a broken string in the midst of an harmonious concert. It seemed as if the abortion had mingled with that brilliant throng on purpose to revenge upon it his own deformity. The splendid young men around him began to whisper among themselves, and to cast sidelong glances at him, and by degrees to jostle him. The dwarf went on in silence. Then they began to

enquire who was this insolent unknown, who had dared to spoil a cortège so carefully prepared; and they learned that he was a physician of Padua. "A leech! certes, a grand personage! Some Jew!" At this moment divers pretty faces looked out of a window; one laughed archly, and another seemed to point with her finger at the train of young men. Was this to be endured? The sidelong glances and grimaces began again; a cross-fire of mockery was poured forth; some trode on the dwarf's toes, others shouldered him: he, as though he was deaf, blind, or senseless, continued to advance. "He stinks of carrion!" said one: "Of barber's soap!" cried another. "I'll shave him with my double-edged razor!" added a third, menacing him with his sabre. "Metal is too noble for such rascaille!" said a stately young German who was next to the Italian; "the baton is good enough for him!" Then the figure clapped its little hand to its side as if to find a dagger, but it had no arms: from its tiny mouth burst forth the word "knecht!" probably because some of the German mercenaries were called lanzknechts. O, you should have seen what an effect this word produced on the young Teuton! A crimson flush

mounted to his face, his lips quivered; with a vigorous hand he seized the little man by the collar, lifted him into the air, and hurled him out of the line of procession. This was done so rapidly, that nothing could be seen but arms and legs struggling for two or three instants in the air. Nought was heard but a whizz, then a fall on the pavement, and then—neither sigh nor motion. “Well done, Baron!” cried the athlete’s companions, closing up the ranks, and laughing inaudibly as though nothing had happened. The unfortunate wretch who had been thrown to the dust with such gigantic force, was the Paduan doctor, Antonio Fioraventi. In that diminutive frame was manifested the highest intellect. All spoke of his learning, of the miracles which he had performed on the sick, of the goodness of his heart, of the disinterestedness of his character. But they knew not the greatness of his soul; for he never had been obliged to struggle with destiny or man. Till then his life had been one uninterrupted success; learning, wealth, glory—all had been given to him, as though in compensation for the injustice of nature; and all this was concealed under the veil of an almost feminine modesty. On seeing him for the first time, it was almost impossible to avoid

laughing at his diminutive, distorted figure; but at every succeeding interview he seemed to grow imperceptibly taller and less ugly in your eyes, so attractive were his intellect and his heart. Travelling in search of opportunity to exercise his humanity and science, he had only just arrived in Rome, and at his first step, as it were, across the threshold of the Eternal City, he made a most unhappy stumble. At the time of the procession, an indistinct but overwhelming impulse had carried him, without the sanction of his will, into the circle of the brilliant foreigners: how severely was he punished for his absence of mind!

When he came to himself all was still and empty around him—only dark phantoms appeared to dance before his eyes; and among them the young German seemed to be trampling on him: his head was so heavy, his thoughts so confused, that he could hardly understand where he was. Re-assembling his ideas, he crawled to his lodging; but the image of his opponent followed him all the way. From this moment, that image never quitted Antonio Fioraventi; had he been a painter, he could at once have put him on canvass, he could have pointed him out among crowds

of people ; he would have known him at the end of a thousand years.

He passed some weeks in a violent fever : in his delirium he saw nothing but the German ; at his recovery, the first object his mind could recall was the hated German. With returning strength grew the desire for revenge ; his endowments, science, his wealth, his connexions, his life—he would have sacrificed all to this feeling. A thousand means, a thousand plans were thought of, by which to avenge his humiliation. Could those thoughts have been fulfilled, from them would have arisen a giant reaching the sky. Antonio began to cherish his life, as we guard the sharp blade of the falchion when we make ready for the battle. To revenge—and then to throw his soul into the talons of the fiend, if it were not granted him to prostrate it before the throne of God ! Thirty years had he fulfilled the commandment of the Lord, “ Love thy neighbour as a brother ”—thirty years had he strained along the path to heaven : and in a moment, Destiny had barred that path from him, and hung him over the abyss of hell. Had fate then the right to say—“ Fall not ! ” There was *One*, whose head had not turned at the

sight of that precipice; but he was not a man, he walked upon the waters as on dry land. Whose fault was it, if a common mortal could not keep from falling?

Thus said, within himself, Antonio Fioraventi; and sharpened in his soul the arms of vengeance. "To work!" said he at last, as soon as he was in a condition to leave the house. His search led him every where—to the court, to the high-road, to the temples and to the villas, to the library and the burial-ground. Often was he seen in secret conference with the doorkeepers, in friendly conversation with the police; high and low—every thing was a good means, provided he could reach his aim. Under the sultry sky, in rain, in storm, he stood at the cross-roads, waiting for his German. Yes! he called him *his*, as though he had bought him for an incalculable price of vengeance. Every quarter, every house, was sifted to the bottom by his enquiries; Rome was stripped naked before him; and when he learned that his foe was no longer in Rome, he left the Eternal City, hurling back on it a curse for his farewell.

His enquiries, however, had not been entirely vain. He obtained a list of all the strangers who

had come to Rome from different courts to be present at the founding of the church. Often did he read it over, and consider the various names contained in it; he learned them by heart—now to one, now to another name, as if by presentiment, did he affix the bloody mark—that mark for which he was ready to stake his own blood; and sometimes he swelled with pleasure, as if, in possessing this list, he was the master of those whose names composed it. What would he not have given for the magic power of calling them to his presence! . . . Oh! then he would have marked one of them with a different kind of blood-stroke!

Three, four years, perhaps even longer, did Antonio Fioraventi wander over Italy, seeking for his enemy; but in vain. It seemed as though, in the course of time, his desire for vengeance either disappeared altogether, or became more reasonable: he devoted himself again entirely to science—to make an important discovery in medicine—to acquire for himself a great name, an European glory;—this was the way he would avenge himself on his insulter. His portrait would be painted; the German would see it, would recognize it. “This,” they would say, “is the portrait of the famous Antonio Fioraventi,

that dwarfish leech whom the huge Teuton had so cruelly outraged." He would throw his glory in his enemy's teeth; this, too, would be a vengeance. O, such a vengeance would be a noble feeling! With faith in his own science, and a thirst for new knowledge, he visited the most famous learned institutions, and at length arrived at Augsburg. Here a report was soon abroad, that he could recall the dying to life, could raise them from the dead. They vaunted particularly his skill in the diseases of women, to which he had principally directed his attention. The physicians of Augsburg, in return for his counsels and secrets, hastened to accord him the chief place among them; they led him to the palace and to the cottage, for even to the latter he never refused to carry his skill and experience.

Once he was called in to the house of the Baron Ehrenstein. The baron, at the age of thirty, handsome, distinguished, and rich, had crowned these advantages by contracting an alliance with a distant relation of King Podibrad—a young lady of ravishing beauty; but it was neither ambition nor the honour of a royal relationship that confirmed this match. Passionate and devoted love had led the bridegroom and the bride to the marriage altar.

Three years had passed, and the married pair, as though but newly betrothed, seemed as if they could neither see nor talk of each other enough, nor exhaust each other's ardent caresses. Three years had thus passed like one unbroken honey-moon. At the beginning of the fourth, the baroness seemed about to offer her husband the first-fruits of their love. Long beforehand they had exhausted all tender cares, all the wonders of luxury, to receive into life and to cherish this spoiled child of fortune. Long beforehand the astrologers, of whom there were numbers at this period, had promised him beauty, fortune, valour, long life—every thing short of immortality. On one side hope, on the other interest and flattery, had woven over the cradle of the infant about to come into the world a canopy so brilliant, that heaven alone, with its innumerable stars, was to be compared with it. To the baron, the hope of becoming a father was superior to all the joys of earth, excepting the happiness of loving his dear and lovely wife, and of being beloved by her; and so the baroness prepared to lie in. All the periods of pregnancy were favourably concluded, and promised a similar result; but when the decisive moment arrived, the reverse occurred. Three days

passed, and every day augmented her sufferings and her danger: we may judge how the baron felt during this time. The most skilful physicians were called in; they employed every means with which they were acquainted, but in vain: they gave her over. The unfortunate lady could no longer support her agony; she wished for death, and begged to see a priest. Ere the holy man arrived, one of the physicians advised Ehrenstein to call in the celebrated Italian Fioraventi, then recently arrived at Augsburg. "If he cannot save her," said the adviser, "she cannot be saved by man. The Italian can almost revive the dead."

The priest was mounting the stairs with the elements; behind him came Antonio Fioraventi: the master of the house advanced to meet him, pale, trembling, with white lips and disheveled hair. It was noon. The sun brightly illuminated the staircase—every object was distinctly seen: the first movement of the baron—the proud, the haughty kinsman of a king—was to throw himself at the feet of the Italian, and to implore him to save his wife. Gold, lands, honours—all were promised to him if he would save her who was dearer than life itself.

Antonio glanced at the master of the house

Great God! Merciful powers! 'Twas he, that terrible, that hated German, who had insulted him so cruelly at Rome. It was impossible to mistake. The man whom he had been tracking so many years—whose blood he had so thirsted for—for vengeance on whom he would have sold himself to Satan—that man was at his feet, in his power. Fioraventi laughed within his soul a laugh of hell: the man who had heard that laugh would have felt his hair bristle up. His hands shook, his lips quivered, his knees sank under him; but he struggled to be calm, and said, with a Satanic smile——“ Well, we will see !”

In these words a whole eternity was condensed.

The baron did not recognize him: how could he, in the midst of such agonizing despair, remember, or form a clear idea of any thing! He saw in him only the preserver of his wife—his guardian angel; and he was ready to bear him in his arms to the chamber of the sufferer.

“ Haste, in the name of God, haste !” cried Ehrenstein, in a tone that would have touched a tiger.

“ Well, we will see !” sternly replied Fioraventi, and at this moment the genius of revenge illumined,

as with a flickering lightning flash, the dark abysses of his soul, and traced out what he was to do.

They proceed: they enter the sufferer's chamber. A half light, cautiously admitted, allowed the physician to distinguish her features, and to perform his duties. How beautiful she was, in spite of her sufferings! His foe was happy in her! so much the better! Still more deep and vast would be his vengeance!

"God be thanked—the priest!" said the baroness in a dying voice.

"No, my love! it is not the priest," softly whispered Ehrenstein consolingly: "do not despair; this is a famous physician who will save you. . . . My presentiment will not deceive me I believe firmly; and do thou, dearest, believe too" . . .

"Ah, learned physician! save me!" faintly uttered the dying lady.

A minute—two—three—five—of deep, gravelike silence! they were counted on the husband's heart by the icy fingers of death. At length Fioraventi went up to him.

"She"

And the physician stopped.

Ehrenstein devoured him with hungry eyes and

ears. His mouth was open, but he uttered no sound. He was panting to say "life" or "death."

"She"

And the physician again stopped. The baron's face became convulsed.

"She shall be saved. I answer for it with my life," said Fioraventi firmly—and the baron looked like some statue about to descend from its pedestal. Ehrenstein was irradiated with life: in silence he took Antonio's hand, in order to press it to his lips. The physician drew it back.

"She shall be saved, and your child also," he whispered; "but with a condition on my part"

"Whatever you can wish," replied the baron.

"Think not that my request will be easy for you."

"I will refuse nothing. Demand my lands, my life, if you will."

"I am an Italian," said the physician; "I trust not to words The matter affects my welfare I must have an oath"

"I swear"

"Stop! I saw a priest there"

"I understand: you desire Let us go!"

They went into the next chamber.

There stood an old man—a servant of God—holding the sacred elements: he was preparing to separate the earthly from the earth, and to give it wings to heaven.—“Holy father,” said the baron solemnly, “be a mediator between me and the living God, whom now I call on to witness my oath.”

The priest, not understanding wherefore, but moved by the deep voice of the baron, raised the cup with the sacraments, and reverently bent his hoary head.

“Now, repeat after me,” interrupted Fioraventi in a trembling voice, as though awe-struck by the sanctity of the solemn rite; “but remember that twenty minutes, and no more, remain for me to save your wife: let them pass; and then blame yourself.” Ehrenstein continued in the same deep, soul-felt tone, but so as not to be heard in his wife’s chamber—“If my Amalia is saved, I swear by Almighty God, and by the most holy body of his only-begotten Son; may I perish in the agonies of hell, and may all my house perish even as a worm, when I depart from my oath.” Then he turned his eyes on the physician, awaiting his dictation. The physician con-

tinued firmly :—“ If a son is born to me, the first-born ”

The baron repeated :—“ If a son is born to me, the first-born ”

“ In a year to give up him, my son, to the Paduan doctor, Antonio Fioraventi ”

The baron stopped A fountain of fire rushed to his heart He gazed at the tempter with all the power of his memory That glance recalled the adventure in Rome he recognized his opponent, and guessed his sentence.

“ Speak, my lord baron : of the twenty minutes some are already gone ”

Ehrenstein continued with quivering lips :—“ In a year to give up him, my son, to the Paduan doctor, Antonio Fioraventi : the same whom I, about five years ago, insulted without reason, and whom I now, before Jesus Christ, who pardoned the sins even of the thief, humbly implore to pardon me.”

“ Pardon ? ha ! No, proud baron ! there is no mercy for you now ! Five years have I waited for this moment Say :—‘ I swear, and I repeat my oath ; to give up my first-born when he is a year old, to the leech Fioraventi,

that he may bring him up to be a physician : wherefore I endow Master Fioraventi with the authority of a father ; and that I will in no way interfere with his education, or in any thing else concerning him. If a daughter is born to me, to give her in marriage to the leech he alone, Fioraventi, is to have the right to absolve me from this oath.' ”

“ No ! I will not utter that ”

“ Save me, I die ! ” was heard from the adjoining chamber. It was the faint voice of the Baroness Ehrenstein.

And the baron, without delay, repeated all Fioraventi's words, one after the other, in a funereal voice, as if he was reading his own death-doom : a cold sweat streamed from his forehead. When he had concluded, he sank senseless into a chair, supported by his faithful attendant Yan and the priest, who had been for some time the agitated witnesses of this dreadful scene. Both hastened to render him assistance.

In the mean time Fioraventi rushed into the bed-chamber. After some minutes, Ehrenstein opened his eyes, and the first sound he heard was the cry of an infant.

All was forgotten.

He went cautiously to the door of the bed-chamber, and applied his ear to it; the lying-in woman was talking in a low voice. . . . She was thanking the physician.

The leech returned, and said:—"My lord baron, I congratulate you on a son."

CHAPTER III.

WAS IT FULFILLED ?

“The secret cause of his anguish
No man knew, but they saw how long and sorely lamenting
Sorrowed the desolate Tsar, as his son's return he awaited :
Rest knew he none by day, by night sleep lulled not his eyelids.
Time rolled aye on his course.” . . .

The Lay of the Tsar Berendéi. . . . *ΔΟΥΚΟΦΡΕΣΚΟΙ!*

THE Baroness Ehrenstein, ignorant of what had passed between her husband and the physician, gave the name of the latter to her infant son, out of gratitude for the leech's services. The little Antony bloomed like a rose; every day he grew more lovely under his mother's eye, cherished by her tender care: and with the child bloomed also the mother. The father was only delighted in appearance; the thought that he had given him up to the physician—that he had sold him, as it were, to Satan—that he would be nothing but a leech, poisoned all his joy; often did the sight of the infant thus devoted

from the cradle to ignominy, force tears from his eyes; but then, fearing that his wife might perceive his sorrow, he would swallow the grief that swelled in his throat. A leech!—Heavens! what would the world—what would his kinsmen say? his friends—above all, his foes—when they learned the destiny of the baron's son? How announce it to his wife? It would kill her. Better had he never been born, ill-fated babe!

“My dear love,” said the baroness one day, filled with rapture, as she held on her knees the lovely infant, “it was not for nothing that the astrologers promised our child such gifts. Admire him: look! what fire, what intelligence, in his eyes! He looks at us as if he understood us. Methinks the stars of greatness are beaming on him. Who knows what high destiny awaits him; even the Bohemian king, Podibrad, was but a simple noble!”

These words tore the father's soul. “My beloved,” he said, “it is sinful for a father or mother to predict the fate of their children. 'Tis a sin of presumption, and offends Providence, which knows better than we do what is best for us.”

“True,” replied the mother, agitated by her presentiments, and perhaps also by the sorrow which

appeared in her husband's words and looks; " True, these predictions may offend the Lord. Let us only pray that he will not take him from us. O! I could not survive my Antony!"

And the mother crossed the infant in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, fearing that her proud wishes might call down on him the anger of Heaven; and she pressed him to her bosom, where her heart was beating like a lately hurried pendulum that is about to return to its regular vibration.

" Why did this son live—this child devoted to sorrow and its parents' shame? What had he to do with the leech's life? Better had the Lord taken him, early, to himself—to the choir of his angels . . . or rather, why did he not take the unhappy father? . . . Thus the oath would not be fulfilled—the mother did not take the oath: mother and son would be happy."

Thus thought the father—the haughty baron. Sometimes the idea arose in his mind of voluntarily breaking the oath: no one knew of its existence but the old priest and Yan: the priest had buried his part of the secret in the walls of some monastery—with the faithful retainer the secret was dead. But, weak-minded as the baron was, he dreaded eternal

torments: the oath was graven in such burning characters in his memory, hell was so vividly painted in his conscience, that he determined on fulfilling the obligation. Some months passed, and still he delayed to disclose to his wife the dreadful secret of his oath; many were his attempts, his struggles, his resolves, but they all concluded by his deferring the explanation. Amalia was again pregnant; this circumstance brought some relief to the agonized soul of the baron. Perhaps she would give him another son! Then the first might be given up a sacrifice to inexorable fate—let *him* be a physician!

A year passed, and as yet the mother knew nothing of the terrible secret. The baron waits one day two Fioraventi appears not to claim his victim. Perhaps he will not come! Weeks pass no tidings of him What if he be dead!

And the baron silently blessed each passing day. Why uselessly agitate the mother? Perhaps Fioraventi had satiated his vengeance on the day of their son's birth; perhaps the generous Fioraventi is satisfied with the tortures of suspense which he has already inflicted on his insulter, and desires no fur-

ther fulfilment of the oath. Noble Fioraventi! May the blessing of God be upon thee!

Spare thy blessings! The Italian is not a child, to play with his feelings as with golden bubbles that vanish in the air.

One day—it was on the same day of the month, at the same hour, that the adventure had happened at Rome—the revenge was calculated)—Yan, with a pallid face, entered his master's chamber. Yan spoke not a word; but the other understood him.

“Here?” he enquired of the domestic, turning as pale as death.

“He ordered me to say that he is here,” replied Yan.

Some days passed, and yet Fioraventi appeared not for his victim. Terrible days! They deprived the baron of several years of life! Oh, that he could conceal from the great nobility, from his kinsmen, his acquaintance, the court, from the lowest of his vassals, that his son was to be given up to a leech, as an apprentice is given to a shoemaker or a carpenter for a certain number of years! These thoughts tormented him yet more than the sacrifice of his child. One day they brought the baron a letter. It was from Fioraventi!

Does it bring mercy or doom ?

He opened it with quivering hands, and breathlessly read :—“ I hear that the baroness is soon about to lie in again. Her confinement will be difficult, I am convinced. I offer my services.”

We may guess that these services were accepted with delight and gratitude. Fioraventi concluded right : the baroness’s labour was difficult ; and again the leech congratulated the baron on the safety of the mother and of a son, Ferdinand ; only adding—“ Now we will share ; one for you, the other for me.” This decision, pronounced with inflexibility, gave the father the sad assurance that the destiny of his eldest son was not changed, and that all that was now left him was to prepare Amalia for it on her recovery. Two months’ respite was given. Ehrenstein only requested that he might be allowed to place the child in some obscure place or village of Italy, where neither the baron nor the physician were known.

All this was granted, even like an alms which a rich man throws to a beggar. Yet one more favour. It was permitted to the father and mother to see their child every three years for a week, or even for a month, to caress him, to tell him he was their son ;

but in the character of poor German nobles of the house of Ehrenstein, under condition, however, of confirming in the boy a love for, and devotion to physic. Yet another condition was exacted: all kinds of aid and presents from his relations were to be decidedly refused. The baron agreed to this, the rather as these conditions secured the secret from publicity, which he dreaded more than any thing.

At this time a fresh calamity fell upon the baron's house.

In spite of all the investigations of reason, there are still some questions relating to the connexion between the internal and external world, which must for ever remain unsolved. In a future world, perhaps, we may receive an explanation of the thousand difficulties which are offered by another state of existence. The law of presentiment is among the number of these questions. Who is there, from the king to the peasant, who has not felt its power, and who, in this chain of human beings, has ever explained its process?

I preface with this reflection what I am about to tell of the presentiment which the baroness felt of her approaching loss. She dreamed that a ravenous wolf snatched her eldest babe from her bosom, and,

throwing the child over his shoulder, bore him away . . . she knew not where. When she awoke, her agitation was so violent that her milk was driven to the head. Fioraventi again saved her life; but he could not obliterate the traces of her dreadful disorder. The baroness lost her beauty; dark stains disfigured her. One misfortune brought on another—the gradual cooling of her husband's love. Inconstant in his nature, his affection fled with the beauty of its object. Up to this time he had loved her ardently; there was no sacrifice which he would not have made to secure her welfare, nay, even her tranquillity; but his heart was like the transforming vase of a juggler—his flame could, in a few hours, change into ice. Thus it now happened. Henceforward, all his cares were concentrated on his younger son. If, after a few months, the choice had been offered to him of losing Ferdinand or his wife, for whose preservation he had given up his son, and would have sacrificed himself, he would now, without hesitation, have consented to lose his wife, though, perhaps, he would not openly have said so.

Such was his character in the affairs of life. To-day, from vanity, he would have bared his breast to the spear point, or set out on a new crusade—to

morrow, he would not stir a pin's length—he would not defile his foot to save a perishing friend. To-day, at the foot of the foe whom yesterday he had vanquished—to-morrow, ready to repeat the scene of the Roman father. To-day, he would seat you in the highest place at his board, overwhelming you with all the names of honour he could drag from the vocabulary of politeness and esteem—to-morrow, at the first nod from a vagabond gipsy, without examination, without reflection, he would let you dance attendance at his castle gate if you had need of him, and receive you with all the baronial hauteur—“welcome, friend.” Such characters are not rare.

At the recovery of the baroness, they prepared to make a pilgrimage to our Lady of Loretto, to show their gratitude for the double preservation of the mother from death. They took with them the elder of the children; the younger they left with a nurse, under the care of a near kinsman. Fioraventi followed them on their journey, but not without precautions: he comprehended the baron's character, and was convinced that he who, out of fear of hell, would fulfill his dreadful oath, would not scruple (according to the temper he might be in) to send him

into the other world; and therefore the physician took care to be accompanied by a number of well-armed dependents. Arriving at a place previously fixed on, the baron, who had left his attendants in the last town, and bringing with him only his wife and Yan, awaited the meeting with the leech. It now only remained for the baron to finish a drama which had become wearisome to him, and to prepare Amalia for a separation from her eldest son. At this moment, slumbering love, or pity and remorse, awakened in him: despair was painted in his face, when he came to his wife with the intelligence of the dreadful sentence. "Thou art ill, my love," said she, terrified by the agitated state in which she saw him.

He confessed that he had long been suffering. Amalia reproached him for concealing his affliction from her: she covered him with her tears and kisses, she consoled him with expressions such as only the fondest and most anxious love could dictate. The baron confessed that his disease was in the soul . . . that it had commenced at the time of their first child's birth. . . . He communicated to her who so passionately loved him the doubts, the fears, the consolations, the anger, the struggle of duty with affection,

the devotion to God ; and when he had exhausted all feelings, amidst the tenderest caresses he proposed to her the alternative of losing her husband for ever, or her child for a time. At length he related his story with regard to Fioraventi ; he described it as a visitation from God ; he reminded her of her sufferings, and preparations for death ; the appearance of the Italian, and the price at which he had saved her—by entering into a dreadful oath, thinking that the rapacious physician wished to extort an extravagant price for his services. By not fulfilling the oath, he would call down on himself the anger of God, the destruction of their son, and of all their race. By fulfilling it, he submitted himself to the will of Providence. Perhaps the Lord had sent them a consoling angel in their second son. The Italian, it might be, would take pity on them, and in time remit his sentence. He had already shown generosity in permitting them to see their child every three years.

All this had been skilfully prepared, and was eloquently urged ; but what arguments can conquer the feelings of a mother, from whom they are about to take her son ? All her soul was centred in the torture of this feeling—she thought of nothing else,

she desired to know nothing else. To retain her son near her, she would have been ready to give up rank, wealth—all; and to become a slave. But the non-fulfilment of the oath would bring dreadful misfortunes on her husband; she decided on the sacrifice.

The mother consented to all: she begged only to be allowed to give up the child herself: she still entertained the hope of obtaining some concession from the cruel Fioraventi. “He is not a tiger, and even a tiger would drop the child from its fangs on beholding the despair of a mother.” She desired first to try to touch the Italian: she would listen to no one, and proceeded herself to the hut where he was waiting. She was stopped at the door. In her humiliation, she waited an hour—two—three. . . . Nothing would bend the Italian. At last they brought her a letter:—“Lady Baroness, my word is immutable. Pray to God that I may soon die; for unless I do, your son will be a physician. One thing only I can grant a mother, from whom I take all her happiness; that is, to permit her to see Antonio in my house, not every three years, as I said to your husband, but every year, under the conditions, however, which are probably known to you. The

infracton of these conditions gives me the right to retract my indulgence. This is my last concession, and my last word. At the appointed time I expect my ward Antonio."

They gave up their child; they parted from him. The mother did not die of grief, for in her heart was the hope of seeing her son in a year; and with hope we do not die. At that moment the physician—the insignificant leech—saw the baroness at his feet. Intellect retained the mastery.

The pair of Ehrensteins returned to Augsburg without their eldest son. He had died, they said, on the journey.

The baron, having quieted his conscience by the performance of his oath, did, in this critical situation, every thing that could be expected from a sensible husband, and gave up Antony, feeling, when he had done so, as if a mountain had been removed from his heart. Imagination gradually seemed to make his present peaceful, and his future bright. Little by little, he began to forget his eldest son: at first he thought of him as of an object to be pitied; then as of an object remote, strange; at last—hateful. In a year the parents were permitted to see Antony. The mother set out, alone, for this inter-

view. Two more years—then three—and the baron's heart had begun to account of his son as of one dead. He centred all his hopes, his love, on his younger child; but the passion that henceforward possessed him was ambition. Employing every artifice to gain each step which could elevate him in the favour of his sovereign, relinquishing for each advance some feudal right, he at length reached one of the highest places at the court of the Emperor Frederick III. He became his favourite by ceasing to be a man: the higher he rose, the further did he spurn away from him the memory of the son whom he had renounced; that memory at last totally vanished from his mind, like an insignificant speck swallowed up by the gloom of night. If ever a thought of Antony entered his mind, it was only how he might remove every suspicion of his shameful existence.

Antony's mother remained the same tender parent as at the first moment of his life; what do I say?—her love grew with his unhappy lot. Of the two children, Antony was in fact her favourite. Ferdinand enjoyed all the rights of birth; he was cherished every day in his mother's bosom, he grew up in all the luxury of parental fondness, the spoiled

child of his father's ostentation. His desires were guessed, that they might be anticipated. This darling of destiny lacked nothing from his very birth; but the other had hardly seen the light before he was exiled from the paternal house, from home, despoiled of all his rights, and was growing up in the hands of a foreigner, a stranger—the foe of his family. The caress which a mother lavished upon him—even the privilege of seeing him—was purchased from that stranger at a heavy price of humiliation. How could she but love, and love the most, this child of misfortune! Fate itself seemed to have determined on sharing the two children between the father and the mother; so complete was the difference between them. Amalia—unhappy—exiled from her husband's heart. . . . Antony—also exiled—also unhappy—his features the features of his mother, his character cast in the same mould as hers. He loved her even more fondly than his guardian. Ferdinand, like the baron, proud, vain, of an unsettled disposition, resembled him also in face: he remarked his father's coldness to, and sometimes coarse treatment of, his mother; and he even dared, in some uncontrollable sallies against her, to show himself the worthy son of his sire, and the inheritor

of all his qualities. He tortured animals, cruelly beat the horse on which he rode, and the domestics who delayed to perform his orders; insulted, in imitation of his father, the court fool and court physician—Master Leon, as he was called—and once set his dogs upon him. He showed no inclination to learn, and was addicted only to athletic sports. How many reasons were there—not to speak of misfortunes—to prefer the eldest son to this!

Years passed on, in the full performance of the promises interchanged by the parents and the instructor of Antony—in the rapture of the periodical meeting and in the tears of the periodical separation, which seemed to the mother's heart an age. But the more she forgot her afflictions in her love for the dear exile, in his attachment to his mother, in the noble qualities of his heart and intellect, the more sedulous grew the baron in inventing new sorrows for her. She was ordered to assure Antony of his father's death; a sentence which announced to her that her son had for ever lost him as a parent: we may judge what the mother must have felt in communicating this false intelligence to her child. Nevertheless she obeyed the will of her lord and master, secretly indulging the hope that time might

change his sentiments. The child who had never known a father's love, received the intelligence of his death as of that of a stranger. Ferdinand attained his twenty-third year : he caught cold, was attacked by a violent fever, and died. This misfortune, sent by Heaven as if to punish the cruel father and husband, overwhelmed him. It seemed as though this loss was likely to recall his love for his eldest son ; but no ! he remained as much estranged from him as before.

In the mean time Antony grew up, and was educated at Padua, under the name of a poor German noble, Ehrenstein. Handsome, clever, easily accessible to all impressions of virtue and enlightenment, exhibiting in all his actions an elevated feeling, and a kind of chivalric adventurousness, he was the delight of Fioraventi. With advancing years, he became enamoured of the science to which his instructor had devoted him ; the young candidate gave himself up to it with all the zeal of an ardent and lofty soul. No avaricious views were those which led him to the altar of science, but love of humanity and thirst for knowledge. But he had one important fault, originating in the character of his own mind, and of the epoch in which he lived. This was an ardent and visionary turn of mind,

irrepressible till gratified.—“That is like my brother Alberto, who is in Muscovy,” said Fioraventi, reproving him for this fault: “he is gone to build a wondrous temple in a savage country, where they know not yet how to burn bricks and make mortar.”—“I envy him,” cried the youth; “he does not crawl, step by step, along the same road as the crowd; he flaps the wing of genius, and soars far above the common race of mortals: and even if he falls, he has at least aspired to heaven. He is consoled by the thought that he has vanquished the Material, and will build for himself a deathless monument, which even our Italy will adore!” These visions, thought Fioraventi, will pass away in time; with the desire of perfecting himself will come experience—and he looked on his pupil with the delight of a father, and with the pride of an instructor. To make him a famous physician—to present him to society a member more useful than a petty baron, perhaps altogether insignificant—to give science new progress, to history a new name,—these were the thoughts and hopes with which he quieted his conscience.

At the age of twenty-five, Antony Ehrenstein completed his medical course at the university of

Padua. Antony a physician—Fioraventi's revenge was satisfied. At this time, he consented to his pupil's desire to travel in Italy. The young physician set off for Milan: there he intended to hear, from the lips of the celebrated Niccola di Montano, those lessons of eloquence and philosophy that were then considered as the only conductors to all science, and which kings themselves condescended to attend. Instead of these lectures, he heard the sound of the lash inflicted on the learned man by his former pupil, the Duke of Milan, Galeazzo Sforza. Instead of the numerous audience of Di Montano, he saw the unwilling victims given over, by the voluptuous and haughty tyrant, to the insults of his courtly slaves and flatterers. He saw them scoffing at humanity, and overwhelming their fellow-creatures with humiliation. At Rome the same depravity—the fagot, the dagger, and the poison at every step. As Antony proceeded on his journey, he saw every where sedition, scantily relieved with the exploits of the select few, and every where the triumph of the ignorant mob and of brute force. How was it possible for a virgin mind, with all its love for what was noble and virtuous, to look with patience on the spectacle of such a world! Filled with indignation, he returned to Padua: the only consolation he brought home with

him was the recollection of his friendship with Lionardo da Vinci, who had become attached to him as to a son. Accident had brought them together: the artist, meeting him, had been so struck with the union of physical and intellectual beauty in his face, that he had endeavoured to attract him to his studio. In more than one figure of a heavenly messenger, on the canvass of Lionardo da Vinci, we may recognise Antony. From this famous painter he learned anatomy. On leaving Italy, he went to see his mother in the poor Bohemian castle, on the bank of the Elbe, which she had bought solely for the interviews with her son, and for his future visits: this, she informed him, was the whole of his family possessions. Here he remained nearly a year, occasionally visiting Prague and its university, then a celebrated one.

Soon after his return to Padua, Fioraventi received a letter from Muscovy, through the Russian envoy then at Venice. This letter was from his brother Rudolph Alberti, surnamed Aristotle, a famous architect, who had been for some time residing at the court of the Muscovite Great Prince, Iván III., Vassílievitch. The artist begged his brother to send a physician to Moscow, where he would be awaited by honours, wealth, and fame.

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 rege-

neration, 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.

Among the family of arts and trades which came at her call, the first were architecture, painting, and the art of founding bells and cannon. In military affairs they began to call in the power of fire-arms in aid of the force of their muscles. The temples

demanded greater magnificence, the princes and boyárinns required greater convenience and security from conflagration. All these wants Iván III., Vassílievitch, fostered and gratified, looking already on Russia with the eye and the intentions of a Tsar. Perhaps the marriage-ring of the last descendant of the Palæologi had strengthened his innate love for the splendour of royal life, if not a passion for art and science. Sophia talked to him of the wondrous palaces and temples of Italy, of the magnificence of the courts of that country ; and in these recitals she pointed out to him the means of realizing those ideas of external grandeur which were already stirring in the sovereign's head and heart. Never could the wants of the Russians in this respect have been better satisfied : into Italy were thronging crowds of learned men, terrified by the Ottoman sword ; Italy, in her turn, hastened to share with other nations the overplus of treasures and endowments brought to her by the descendants of Phidias and Archimedes. Poverty, boldness, and love of the beautiful, brought these treasures hither : architects, founders, painters, sculptors, workers in gold and silver, crowded to Moscow.

“ No one has heard as yet of any distinguished

physician having visited Muscovy; but what good might he not do there! For a physician the task of enlightenment is more easy, more ready, than for any one else: man is always willing to be instructed by his benefactor. The Russian people is young, fresh, consequently ready to receive all that is noble and sublime," thought Antony: "to Moscow, Antony! thither with your ardent soul, your virgin hopes, with your learned experience—thither, to this Columbia of the East!"

The young physician was followed from Padua by the affection of his learned preceptors, by wishes for his success—by the love of all who knew him. He was followed, too, by the regrets of the passionate maidens of Italy: if he had remained, many a white and delicate wrist would have been held out to the young leech, that he might mark in it the beating of the pulses that were quickened by his touch. How many secret consultations were preparing for him! And, in truth, it was not science, it was not the bachelor's diploma, that caused these regrets; ye gods! what science! A pair of blue eyes, full of fire and attractive pensiveness, flaxen curls as soft and waving as a lamb's fleece; the fair complexion of the north, a form magnificently moulded.

What more? And that youthful bashfulness which it is so enchanting to subdue. That the taste of the Italian women is just, is proved by their countrymen. On meeting the German bachelor, the artists fixed on him an eager and admiring look: the eye of Leonardo da Vinci knew well how to appreciate the beautiful. In spite, however, of the seductions of the Italian sirens, the burning challenges of their eyes and lips, the bouquets of flowers and fruits thrown on him, after the custom of the country, from their windows, Antony Ehrenstein carried from Italy a heart free from all passion and every sensual stain.

Fioraventi bade farewell to his pupil with many and bitter tears; accompanying him as far as the Bohemian castle. He supplied him not only with every necessary for his journey, but with every means for presenting himself with brilliancy at the court of the Muscovite sovereign.

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 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?

CHAPTER IV.

THE PLOT.

" Fate's heavy hand hath press'd thee sore,
 And life is anguish to thee ;
 But I have means to end the woe
 That o'er thy head doth lower.
 Thy Maker is thy fellest foe :
 Trust to Asmodeus' power
 With heart and hand I'll guard thy weal,
 Even as friend and brother."

Joukóffskoi—Gromoboi.

" Thus they their compact made for mutual assistance."

Khmaylnitzkoi.

THE Feast of St Hierasimus was come, the 4th of March, the day when first appear the cawing harbingers of bounteous Spring ; but the rooks had not yet arrived, as though Winter, grown proud or lazy, had refused to stir, and yield his reign to his joyous rival. The day was just breaking. At a mill-dam, situated near the pool of Neglínnaia, two horsemen might be seen to meet, apparently two boyárins. They then began to direct their path to

the Kreml, towards the Borovítchi gate. It would appear almost impossible to bring together two beings so unlike each other in point of exterior; nevertheless, a penetrating glance might have detected in each of them a character cast in the same mould, with some of those inconsiderable differences which Nature so lavishly exhibits.

Have you ever seen Petróff in *Robert le Diable*? Of course you have. I have seen him but once in that part; but to this day, whenever I think of him, I fancy I can hear those accents, like echoes from hell—"Yes, *Bertram!*!" and I behold that look from which, as from the storied fascination of the rattlesnake, your mind can hardly free itself—that saffron-coloured countenance, writhen by the trace of passions—and that forest of hair, from which a nest of serpents seems ready to creep forth. Now, clothe that Petróff in the ancient Russian dress, belt him with a silver girdle, in a rich shoubá of fox-skin, and a high cap of soft fur, and you will immediately have before you one of the two persons who were riding along the mill-dam of Neglínnaia. He was mounted on a powerful steed, accoutred with a Circassian saddle, caparisoned with jingling ornaments in arabesque, flowered in silver, and bordered

with fish teeth. The other horseman was a little lean personage, with sunken eyes, a starveling face, and gestures so subdued and timid, that he seemed afraid of so much as disturbing the air; so obsequious and cringing—a real lamb! But though he seemed to creep out stealthily from under his shell into the light of heaven, and peered askance around him from half-opened eyes, yet, believe me, he could mark his victim with a hawk's glance; swiftly would he pounce on it, and rapidly again he would hide himself in his dark, obscene covert. Taking off his cap, which was rather shabby, (this he did, as well as his companion, very frequently, on passing every church, before which the Russian Bertram crossed himself rapidly, while the meek man made the holy sign earnestly, striking his breast the while,)—taking off his cap, he uncovered a head fringed irregularly with ragged tufts of hair. As if to be of a piece with his locks, the edge of his shoubá was so worn that it would have been difficult to determine what animal had supplied the fur of which it was made. A starved jade of a horse, with caparisons suitable to its wretchedness, scrambled and tottered along under him. He was much older than his companion—the latter might be rather more than forty, and

was in the full vigour of life—the former seemed a decrepit old man. The one was a boyárin; the other, a boyárin and dvorétzkoi (major-domo) to the Great Prince. These gentlemen bore names well suited to their nature: the first was called Mamón; the second, Roussálka.*

“Is God still good to thee, Mikháil Yákovlevitch?” asked Mamón.

“Thanks to thy prayers, brother Grigórii Andrévitch,” replied Roussálka; “or else the earth would not bear me with the weight of my sins.”

“The Lord alone is sinless.”

“The Lord in heaven; and add, our lord the Great Prince of all Russia.”

“It seemeth, he hath taken thee back into favour.”

Here Mamón glanced cunningly at his companion. The latter, without the least sign of vexation, replied—“Where there is wrath, there also is mercy: to one he giveth to-day, to another to-morrow; one man sinketh, another swimmeth; all the difficulty is to know how to catch him, kinsman.”

* *Roussálka*—an evil spirit, haunting the sea with comb and mirror, like our mermaid; but occasionally met with also in the forests and rivers, as the “Nekka” of Denmark.—T. B. S.

“ One may catch ; but he slippeth through one’s fingers. What have I and thou gained ? Castles in the air, and the nickname of informers. . . . A rare gain ! Look at the other boyárins. Look no further than Obrazétz ! He hath built himself a fine stone palace, so high that it overlooketh the Kreml.”

“ They say, he meteth out his rose-nobles by bushels. Where is the wonder then ? He scraped it up at Nóvgorod—no offence to his grace ! The Lord keep us from that sin !” (here he crossed himself.) “ War plunder is fair plunder.”

“ ’Tis no sin to break a cursed cow’s horn. The proud Shelónetz, he thinketh no man his mate !”

“ How is it that thy son is no mate for his daughter, in birth and rank, in brains and beauty ?”

Mamón’s eyes gleamed. He had just demanded the voevóda Obrazétz’s daughter in marriage for his son, and received a refusal. There were reports that it was because the mother of this Mamón was a witch, and had been burned.* At Roussálka’s words, he felt as if his cap had been on fire : he

* By Ivan Andréevitch, Prince of Mojáisk.—*Note of the Author.*

pressed it down with a mighty hand, and replied, smiling bitterly—"Thou hast heard it then?"

"I alone, think'st thou?"

"Not thou alone? . . . ay, others . . . many . . . all Moscow!"

"This world is full of reports, good Grigórii Andréévitch."

"What! they laugh! . . . they say, whither would the witch-brood thrust itself? . . . Ha! they prate? Speak, good friend, I pray thee."

"'Twere a sin to hide it. . . . Obrazétz himself vaunteth"

"Vaunteth! accursed hound! But thou, good brother, did'st thou not put in a little word for me?"

"I racked my brain I worked the voe-vóda behind his back. My soul was in the work. I put all my persuasion on my tongue. . . . I said that Obrazétz had sent the svat* to thee, and"

"Sent or not, what care I! Look, brander!"† added Mamón, shaking his fist towards the

* *Svat*—a person who makes for another a proposal of marriage; marriage-broker. This duty was called *svatovstvó*.—T. B. S.

† An officer whose duty it was to brand horses, and collect a tax for the crown, or for monasteries.—*Note of the Author.*

house of the voevóda Obrazétz, “deeply hast thou seared thy brand in my breast; I will tear it off, though it drag a mass of my flesh with it—I will dress it daintily with poison . . . strong poison! . . . I will serve it up on no common dish, but on silver . . . thou shalt eat it, and praise the cook! Thou wilt help, Mikháil Yákovlevitch? Ay, good faith, thou wilt! . . . Feast for feast. He hath feasted thee, too, right well . . . at his house-warming, hath he not?”

It was now Roussálka’s turn. His face was convulsed: he began to twitch his eyelids: it was evident he was touched to the quick. He, however, by a violent effort, remained silent. His companion continued to cast on him a glance of mockery. “And the feast was for all comers! Many a barrel of mead did they roll out of the cellar; many a grave head sank below the table; and they brought round rose-nobles to the guests, in memory of the banquet . . . Wert thou bidden, dvorétzkoi of the Great Prince?”

Nothing could so deeply move the greedy soul of the dvorétzkoi as the being reminded of lost gain. He seemed to be agitated, and answered with a sigh—“What should I have done among the war-

riors of the Shelón! I have never flayed off the skins of captive Nówgorodetzes." (He alluded to the Prince Daníel Dmítrevitch Khólmskoi.) "We have never led a youngster son, a weak child, beneath the crusader's sword. No child-angel can accuse us! We have never torn a child from its mother to slaughter!" (Here he hinted at Obrazétz himself.) "What can we do? We are afraid to kill a chicken! How should we, then, presume to thrust ourselves into the throng of valiant warriors, whose arms, God forgive them! are up to the elbows in blood?"

"No! we will not kill a chicken, whose neck we can twist; but we will bend our bow, and let fly a sharp arrow at the vulture that is soaring on high: . . . 'twill be rare to see him tumble! 'Tis useless to conceal sin: 'tis a mortal feud with both of us: false humility is worse than pride: 'tis but a sheep that will bow its head under the knife. 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,' saith the Scripture: we are but sinful men! In my mind, for one eye should be plucked out two—for one tooth, not one should be left behind—even if it gave thy soul to Satan!"

Roussálka spat, crossed himself, and murmured—"God forgive us!"

“ It is not prayers, but craft, that I expect from my counsellor and friend. Thy head doth not burn nor whirl like mine. Thou shalt stand up for me, I for thee. There are those who will second both of us—we will answer for them—all round, come what may! In other lands, as our travellers say, nobles rein not themselves too hard.”

Roussálka continued, with a fiendish smile—“ I will not hide from thee, good brother! I was telling to our Prince a poor thought of my brain; ’twill be as good to the voevóda as a stroke with a club. Hast thou heard? There cometh from Germany the leech Antony, very skilful in the cure of all manner of diseases: he is now three days’ journey off.”

“ What of that ? ”

“ This, thou hotbrain! Obrazétz hath a new stone palace, finely built, and—thou mayest say—it shall fall upon his head. He hath pulled down his rotten wooden house: he hath nowhere to go. Our fair lord, the Great Prince, in case of any ill event—from which God keep Iván Vassílievitch every hour of his life!—he willeth, I say, that the leech should be lodged near the palace. From thence to Obrazétz’s house is not a stone’s throw. Now

the leech Antony—an unclean Almayne—must”

. . . .

“Must be lodged in the voevóda’s palace!” burst in Mamón with a voice of delight; “will take his best chambers—armoury, hall, and dortour An Almayne will be worse in his house than an unclean spirit! You may smoke him with incense—ye may exorcise him with holy water; but this friend, once placed there by Ioánn Vassilievitch, ye will never conjure out with all your power. The master himself must run.—But is such the Great Prince’s will?”

“I will answer for that, good brother! I will expound unto thee. . . . To-day I speak against thee—to-morrow, thou against me—one against the other. Let us shake the boughs, but not touch the root. I am safe, thou art safe, and our little matters are done. Obrazétz, thou knowest, had a brawl with the Almayne ambassador in the audience-chamber. Ioánn Vassilievitch looked not too lovingly on him then; and the voevóda had fallen into disfavour but that the battle of Shelón was still warm in the prince’s memory And so he is still well with him. But if thou hearkenest with thine ear at the Great Prince’s heart—oh! it boileth,

it seetheth with anger against him ; and he will not be easy till it boil over on the fiery boyárin, until he hath paid him, Almayne for Almayne. We have but to hint”

Mamón reined in his steed, took off his bonnet, and, lowering it, made a profound obeisance, as if acknowledging the other's Satanic superiority.

The latter, smiling in his turn, raised his own cap, and continued—“ We are friends ; we will settle our accounts hereafter, good brother Grigórii Andréévitch.”

“ We have settled them already, if thou wilt confess my services. Let us talk freely. But now thou wert speaking of the matter of the Prince Loukómskii, of his interpreter.”

“ God watch over Ioánn Vassílievitch, and the good Russian land ! The Lithuanian was sent by his King, Kazimir, to take off Ioánn Vassílievitch—a slave informed—the poison was found. What is easier than to take sanctuary in Lithuania, where every man findeth refuge who cometh under the wrath of our good lord !”

“ I put Loukómskii to the question, and the interpreter—they would confess nothing. I sent for some old women—made them lick the poison.

I crammed a good dose of it down the throat of one. I gave some to a dog—neither hag nor hound died.”

“And what next, brother?” asked Roussálka, anxiously.

“Next? when thou madest the trial the same dog burst with one grain of it. I made all fast with a good hempen cord; dost thou mark? Fear not. I will not make thee out a liar, Mikháil Yákovlevitch.”

The dvorétzkoi, in his turn, took off his shabby cap, and, bowing low, ejaculated—“The Lord himself will repay thee!”

“Enough! sin not, Mikháil: we are friends, we will settle our accounts: only help me in Obrazétz’s matter.”

The dvorétzkoi pointed meaningly to the Church of the Saviour, which they were now approaching. The pinnacles of the Great Prince’s palace peered above it. That their plot might not be suspected, they entered, one by the water-gate of the Kreml, the other by the Nikólskoi gate. Their separation was only to last till they reached the Great Prince’s court, whither they were both bound.

To the salutations of the passengers, who knew

that they were powerful men, Mamón replied by slightly raising his cap, while Roussálka answered them by low reverences. Some young soldiers, who had nothing to lose but their heads, shouted after the former the name of "Pickthank," which he left behind him to posterity; for the second, they expressed their contempt only by a slight laugh. It must be confessed that Mamón was peculiarly disliked by the people; because, at the time of the invasion of the Russian territory by the horde of Makhmet, he had disposed the Great Prince to timid measures; and had ever been a whisperer about every thing that took place in private life and in the world. Roussálka knew how to avoid this odium by veiling his actions under an air of virtue and necessity, and found a justification with a generous people in his affected poverty, his universal affability, and Christian meekness: while his haughty and arrogant friend trampled public opinion in the dust, and boasted of his place, which brought him near the person of the Great Prince, and often vaunted of his own power and opportunities for doing harm.

CHAPTER V.

THE SALUTATION.

THE Great Prince was then residing in the wooden palace called the "*Old Place*," beyond the Church of the Annunciation, then recently built. In addition to this, there was still standing the ruinous old palace behind the church of Michael the Archangel (this was still of wood) in the square of *Yarosláff*. All these buildings were about to be taken down, one after the other: the *Golden Palace*, and the *Tower Palace of the Women*, were already completed in the mind's eye of Iván Vassílievitch; and he was only awaiting, to execute his plans, the skilful architects who were shortly to arrive with the German physician. The residence of the Great Princes consisted of a number of chambers, giving off or issuing from a principal building. These were variously designated

according to their object and situation; the "Hall," the "Middle Izbá," the "West Chamber," the "Audience-hall," the "Hall of the Square Pillar," the "Dortour," the "Banqueting-room," the "Store-rooms," and so on. These buildings were all surrounded by corridors or covered galleries, the sides of which were solid, leading to the parish church and to various oratories; the principal of these galleries conducted to the Church of the Annunciation, called for this reason the Great Prince's church. The ruler of the people never began or finished a day without a prayer in the house of God. Even the sick and the women were not excused from this duty; windows were made in their chambers in such a manner, that they could hear divine service, and perform their devotions, within sight of the images of the churches. In the same manner in after times almost every rich man had a church in the courtyard of his house. Many flights of steps, among which the "Red Stairs" were distinguished, by being of stone and by sculptured ornaments, led down into the great square. The "*Waterside Palace*" projected from the front of the private residence. The architecture of these times was simple—even childish: its principal triumphs consisted in some

external decorations. The front, as is generally the case in all the more splendid Russian churches, indicated, by the elevation of its cupolas, that the heart of the worshipper should be raised on high. Glance at the engravings of Indian temples, particularly those of the Zigs, and you will find in them the archetype of the Russian churches. The artists endeavoured in general to surpass each other in the luxuriance of twisted columns and arabesque carvings, in the decoration of the ornamented windows. This carving was so excellent as to resemble the most delicate lace-work : in spite, however, of these adornments, the ancient abode of the Great Princes acquired an air of gloom from the rusty iron gratings which defended the windows, the dim panes of mica fixed in lead, and from the sloping attics losing themselves in the old tomb-like roof, on which time had scattered patches of green and reddish moss. We have said that the palace was situated in the square. Four streets, rather wider than was usual in those days, crowded with churches, chapels, and houses resembling the dwellings of rich farmers in the governments of Nóvgorod and Pskoff—and you have the Court Square ! We must add, that many small houses, in spite of the presence of the palace,

projected irregularly from the line of the street, as if to boast of their owners' liberty. The whole of the *City*, bounded by the wall of the Kreml, resembled an ant-hill of towers and churches, through which some child had traced, in various directions, a number of random paths. Above these paths the roofs of the houses almost met each other, so that a bold and active man—to say nothing of the Devil on Two Sticks—might have made a tolerably long journey upon them. It was from this crowded state of the city it happened, that conflagration had so often devoured the whole of Moscow. But in this old palace, beyond the Church of the Annunciation, dwelt the first Tsar of *All Russia*: here he projected and prepared her future power: hither, alarmed by the signs of that power, the sovereigns of many countries sent their ambassadors to bow before him, and entreat his alliance. On approaching this palace, the Russian courtiers redoubled their prayers to the Almighty, that he might save them from the wrath of their terrible earthly ruler.

The sun, not far above the horizon, was shedding his morning radiance over the earth, yet all the inhabitants of the palace were a-foot, and had begun their daily occupations; the court attendants were

every where busied in their various duties. Their offices had been instituted by Iván, in imitation of the royal households of Europe; but they were designated by Russian titles expressive of their official employments, (titles afterwards unfortunately changed by Peter the First.) The *dvorétzkoi* Roussálka arrayed himself in a fresh dress: he had had time, however, to pay a short visit to Iván's grandson, and to carry him some playthings—to perform various commissions for Sophia the consort of the Great Prince, and Helena the wife of his son, although these princesses were not on good terms with each other: one courtier he had gratified with a caressing word, another with a jest; he was seen every where, he busied himself in every thing. Not contenting himself with the performance of his regular and stated duties, he endeavoured to anticipate the desires and wishes of his sovereign, even for the following day. The *dvorétzkoi's* duties were confined to the Great Prince's court; but he extended their circle, by every means in his power, beyond its limits. On Roussálka were heaped the most difficult and ticklish tasks, not unfrequently the most dangerous and dirty ones: he sometimes volunteered himself to undertake them, as if to

show that, though weak in his exterior, he was yet a giant in craft and intellect. Iván liked such servants, and it was of such a one he said, pointing to him with triumph—"A cur he may be, but he layeth eggs for me!" When he remarked their rascalities, he punished them with an angry word, a stroke of the staff, or a temporary disgrace; but more frequently he shut his eyes to their delinquencies, when they did not injure his person or the state. Holding the staff of the Great Prince, and the second state bonnet, the *dvorétzkoi* was awaiting the sovereign's appearance at the door of the middle *izbá*, which separated the sleeping chamber from the hall of the square pillar, where Roussálka was now in attendance. The naked walls of this chamber were decorated only on the four sides by images* of enormous size, in frames, with curtains of damask, bordered with fringes strung with gold *drobnitzas*, or Hungarian pfennings. In the wide chamber there

* The Greek Church forbids the use of *sculpture* in the representation of sacred personages, the decoration of churches, &c.; employing for this purpose *pictures*, generally in the smooth hard Byzantine style, the whole surface, excepting the face and hands, being encrusted with silver or gold. These, though not strictly works of sculpture, are called in Russian *óbrax* or *ikón*, (the latter is the Greek *εικων*;) a term which the Translator has preferred to render "image."—T. B. S.

was no furniture but an oak table, adorned with delicate carving, and two stools with cushions covered with cloth; beneath each was a footstool, and on the floor was spread a carpet of *Kizilbakh* (Persian manufacture)—an “underfoot,” as it was called by our ancestors. All was as still as in a tomb. Motionless stood Roussálka, his ears and all his thoughts bent upon the door through which the Great Prince was to enter. Suddenly, within the middle *izbá*, was heard a cry, like that of a feeble old man, uttered in a strange hoarse voice—“Tsar Iván Vassílievitch! Tsar Iván!” Then Roussálka smiled craftily, shrugged his shoulders, and nodded his head, as much as to say—“That’s the affair!” then applied his ear to the door. Thus they spoke within—“Ha! ha! ha! this is a trick of thine, *Phomínishna*,”* said a male voice; “Thou madest me go forth against the Tartars, and now I see thy train . . . Thanks, thanks!” A door creaked, and at the same moment a woman’s voice was heard—“It is time! All Russia boweth down to thee in that name; and even the Roman Cæsar calleth thee so.”

* *Phomínishna* is “daughter of *Phomá*”—Thomas: the Great Princess Sophia was the daughter of Thomas, the last of the Palæologi.—T. B. S.

“Tsar Iván! Tsar Iván!” again cried the old-man-like voice.

“Enough!” interrupted the commanding voice of the male speaker; “I have, as it is, many Tsars in my brain! It is not thou that hast moved me. In my heart ’tis time; but in the world it is not come yet. Long have the eyes beheld it; but the teeth could not grasp it All Russia! where is it? Where is that kingdom, mighty, united, commanding; like one body, in which hand and foot do what the head willeth?”

“Thou hast quieted the Tartar, thou hast quelled Nóvgorod, and spread thy power so wide, that thou mayest call thyself the Russian Tsar,” interrupted Sophia Phomínishna.

“Ay, I have spread it wide; and what I have grasped that hold I firm; but here, it is my own people that weigh upon me, and bind me. ’Tis even so with my kinsmen! I am hampered by Yarosláff, Rostóff, Ouglitch, Riazán. The gate of my kingdom is not firmly barred, while Veréia belongeth to another. As I go to my good town of Nóvgorod, I stumble over Tver Look from the window, my love; canst thou not behold from it a foreign principality, a foreign power? Admire the

stone palaces, the noble cathedrals of my capital—our dwelling! Is there any thing like it in foreign lands? Out and alas! I was even ashamed before the Almayne ambassador.”

“Aristotle will build us a splendid temple for the Holy Virgin; we shall soon have artists They shall build a palace—mansions for thy boyárens. Five years—and thou wilt not know Moscow again.”

“First let us root up the hedge and pull down the barrier; and then, if the Lord give me life, will we build us a royal dwelling—then will I be the Tsar of All Russia, not in name alone—then will I say, Verily God hath chosen for this his servant Iván. Yea, I will be a Tsar.”

With these words the door flew open, and the Great Prince entered suddenly into the hall of the pillar, where Roussálka had found time to array his features in the necessary expression of servility.

Iván Vassílievitch was preparing to receive the Bishop of Tver, and a deputation of the chief men of that city, sent on an embassy to him by his brother-in-law, the Great Prince of Tver, Mikháil Bovísovitch. These envoys came from the *younger* brother, who had been deprived of his right of

equality, to offer excuses on the occasion of the seizure of his correspondence with Kazimír, King of Poland. For this reception the Great Prince was dressed in various habiliments, of different names :— in a rich *kaftán* of state, embroidered with figures of men—the wider this garment spread, the more beautiful and magnificent was it considered by our forefathers ;—his black hair fell richly from beneath a *taphía* (close Tartar skull-cap) embroidered with pearls. On his breast hung a golden chain, suspending a large cross of cypress-wood, which contained fragments of a relic ; on the middle finger of his right hand glittered a ring of gold, of filigree work, which, however, owed none of its splendour to the stone set in it, the latter appearing little better than a common pebble ; but this stone Iván Vassílievitch would not have exchanged for gems of the purest water—it was a talisman, a present from his ally and friend, Mengli-Ghiréi, Khan of Krim-Tartary, and which the latter had received from India. Thus, in the words of a chronicler ran the letter of Mengli-Ghiréi, which accompanied this gift :—“ It is known to thee, that in the Indies, in the land called Kerditchén, there is a beast called an *Unicorne*, the horn whereof hath this virtue :—he

who beareth in his hand the horn, be he eating or drinking any thing, and if there be in what he eateth or drinketh any poison, the same shall do unto the man no hurt." For this reason a portion of the horn was set in a ring, and Iván Vassílievitch never took it off, guarding carefully the present of his ally, perhaps in anticipation of an attempt to poison him. The Prince threw a rapid fiery glance from under his black broad eyebrows upon the *dvorétkoi*—a glance which few could bear, and which threw women of a weak constitution into a fainting fit. It seemed to embrace the minister from head to foot, and to read his very soul. On the other hand, the profound, almost religious, reverence with which Roussálka seemed to try to hide himself from that penetrating glance, was followed by the presentation of the staff, and the kissing of the mighty hand. The bonnet Iván Vassílievitch did not take, but intimated, by a nod, that the *dvorétkoi* should place it on one of the stools.—“ Heard'st thou, *dvorétkoi*, with what a lofty title I was greeted by the bird from beyond sea?” asked the Great Prince, clearing up his frowning brow.

In fact, the strange voice which had been heard by the *dvorétkoi* was the cry of a parrot, sent by the

German ambassador to the Great Princess Sophia Phomínishna. The daughter of the Palæologi, endowed by nature with a force of intellect and will which had been denied to her brothers, knew well how trifling a circumstance might suffice to decide her husband to complete the great work ripening in his vigorous mind. She had been the first to refuse openly to remain any longer the vassal of the Tartars. By demanding for her own use the lodging appropriated to the horde, and by this means ejecting them from the Kreml, Sophia had given the Great Prince the idea that their concessions had originated in conscious weakness, and that he might with as much ease expel them altogether from the Russian soil. Now, when Iván, having humbled Kazán, conquered Nóvgorod, and made conditions with the horde, began to meditate the complete liberation of his kingdom from a vassalage which fettered him within, and made him enemies without, Sophia, cunning and ambitious, was endeavouring, by various means, to render easy to him his unjust but unavoidable task ; and for this purpose she had privately taught the foreign bird to salute him with the name of Tsar, which flattered him so much.

“’Tis plain the bird is a prophet, my lord !” said,

the astute courtier, carrying a stool towards the window, and placing a footstool covered with gold beneath the Great Prince's feet, and spreading a carpet over it. All this was performed at a sign from the glance and baton of the sovereign, so rapidly made that the eye could hardly follow their movements. But the *dvorétkoi* lacked not activity. Whence came his dexterity? he was an old feeble man, whose soul seemed departing from his body.

On the covers of the seats were embroidered lions tearing serpents in pieces; and on the brocade footstool the double-headed eagle. This was a new object, and did not escape the Great Prince's observation. His black eyes sparkled with pleasure; for some time he admired the imperial snakes and bird, and before he seated himself on the stool, and placed his foot gently on the footstool, he said, with kindness—"And thou too, old dog, hast been conspiring with *Phomínishna* to please me."

The *dvorétkoi* bowed low, stroking with his hand his ragged, pointed beard.

"O ho!" continued the Great Prince; "'tis easy to prepare imperial paraphernalia—to surround me with woven eagles and brocade lions—to teach popinjays to salute me as I wish—but to be a Tsar in

word and deed is not so easy. Thou knowest well how much it cost me to struggle with my kinsmen. They sat down at a great table in the high places, and began to fall to. But I will not give them spoons, nor pass the wine: and yet there they sit, as if they were growing to their places."

"What are we to do, my lord, if they know not good manners?"

"Rap them on the pate, and away with them from table. Good faith, 'tis time! Let them cry—let them grumble—'He thinketh no shame to flay his kinsmen; he will pay for that in the other world!' No, I shall not have to pay for that. Before I was a brother, an uncle, a kinsman, I was lord of All Russia! When I appear before the awful judgment-seat of Christ, he will assuredly ask me—'Hast thou cared for the Russian land, whereof I made thee lord and father? Didst thou unite, didst thou strengthen that Russia, weak, torn, and riven asunder?' This is what he will ask me, and not whether I drank from the same cup as my brothers and kinsmen; whether I patted them on the head; whether I coaxed them—they, and their kinsmen, and strangers—to suck the blood of Russia."

Iván Vassílievitch stopped, and looked at the dvorétzkoi, as if inviting a reply.

The other understood him, and said with a low reverence:—"Vouchsafe me, my lord, Great Prince—me thy servant, to speak a foolish word."

"Speak a wise one: if thou givest me a foolish one I shall call thee fool."

Another bow: Roussálka accompanied it with the following discourse—"To him who entereth into marriage, the Lord commandeth to leave father and mother, and cleave only to his wife. Into the same state of marriage didst thou enter, Lord of All Russia, when thou receivedst by thy birth, and from the hands of a holy man in the house of God, a blessing on thy reign. Apply this precept to thyself, my lord; more wisely I cannot answer thy speech: I am neither deacon nor clerk."

"Thy clergy is in thy brain, Mikháil: 'tis well!"

As he pronounced these last words, the Great Prince leaned his chin on his arms, which he crossed on the top of his baton, and plunged into a deep reverie. Thus he passed some minutes, during which the *dvorétkoi* dared not even to stir. It cannot be said that during these few minutes the angel of peace was hovering above them: in them the terrible demon of discord arose. During that pause was decided the fate of Tver, once the mighty rival of Moscow.

At length Iván Vassílievitch said—“Summon hither Mamón and my deacons.”

The command was instantly obeyed: the dvorétz-koi returned immediately with his friend, already known to us, and three new faces.

behind the ears alone, there remained, as if for a sample, two or three pair of scattered sandy curls. His face was wasted, but the dimly gleaming eyes yet gave forth the fire of intellect; on his high and cavernous forehead God had plainly stamped the seal of lofty thoughts. He was employed by the Great Prince in diplomatic affairs. Next followed Mamón. Then came the deacon, *Volodímir Elizároff Góuseff*, a man of business, a lawyer, who deserves the memory of posterity for his compilation of the *Soudébnik*, (code of laws.) The remaining person seemed as if he had been taken out of Kourítzin's bosom, so diminutive was he. In the kingdom of the Lilliputians he might perhaps have been made drum-major of the guards—for there he might have been considered a tall man, as he would have been superior to so many; but, among our huge countrymen, he would have hardly reached up to the shoulder of a little rifleman—so completely does every thing depend upon comparison. But one appendage to his person overshadowed the whole man—he almost realized the dwarfs of our nursery stories, of whom they say, they are no bigger than my nail, with a beard just like a horse's tail—a gigantic, a magnificent beard! From it the deacon

was called Borodátii, (Beardie.) You are not, however, to suppose that all his merits were confined to this hairy ornament. No! his name has come down to us coupled with other qualities; for instance, he knew how *to speak*, as the chroniclers have it. These authors he had learned by heart; he had crammed himself with their writings as one loads a cannon, and wrote *finely*, as they called it in those days, or inflatedly, as we should say now, the history of his master's exploits. To him, too, was confided the task of instructing the clergy of the court in sacred singing; as an old historian phrases it—"dyvers manere of melodyous dulcitude;" in a word, he was the human humming-bird of the court. Sweet was his song; he trilled, hardly bending the bough on which he perched, and he feared not the pounce of hawk within his tiny nest. He was too small to attract the bird of prey.

"Well! how goeth the matter of the Lithuanians?" was the Great Prince's stern enquiry to Mamón. By his expression, he was awaiting a bloody answer.

"Both the Prince Loukómskii, and the interpreter Matiphas, have confessed that they tried to poison thee at the command of Kazimír," replied

Mamón firmly. "To make trial, I gave some old women the poison: with one grain of it they swelled up, and a dog burst."

Iván Vassílievitch took off his taphía, crossed himself, and continued with fervour, turning towards the image of the Saviour—"I thank thee, O Lord and Saviour! for that thou hast vouchsafed to keep thy sinful servant from a violent death." Then applying his lips to his ring of *Kerditchén*, he added—"Thanks, too, to Mengli-Ghiréi: but for this, thy gift, it had been easy for the fiend to raise instigations, and to sow them even among kinsmen; now fear we our own kinsman more than a stranger."

"Alas! our good lord and prince, think'st thou that we, thy faithful slaves, would permit that?" cried the *dvorétkoi* and Mamón with one voice.

"The eye of the Lord watcheth over lawful rulers," said Góuseff, "and over thee chiefly, my Lord Great Prince, for the building up and weal of Russia."

The tiny deacon, Borodátii, sang too, his panegyric through the nose; Kourítzin was silent.

Iván Vassílievitch continued, without seeming to hear the assurances of his courtiers: "Good faith—verily, a most mighty, noble, glorious king! Worse than a heretic! A Christian king! He

takest not with force but with poison ! Dare henceforward to bark—to say that I sought a peace from interest, though of my own right I might claim our ancient province of Lithuania But be wary, Mamón; take care that there was no deceit in thine inquest—neither favour nor revenge !”

“ Seven good witnesses, children of boyárin, kissed the cross with me; we have not sinned either before God or before thee, my lord.”

“ ’Tis well But what punishment, Volodímir Elizárovitch, is decreed in thy soudébnik against the felon who reacheth at another’s life ?”

“ 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* 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

* A *jeu de mots* impossible to be rendered in English: *Kourítza*, in Russian, is “a hen.”—T. B. S.

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.

“ By the way, my lord,” said Roussálka, when his friend had departed, “ where willest thou that we lodge the Almayne?”

“As near as possible to my palace, in case of need.”

“Aristotle saith it would be a shame to lodge him in our izbás: but the only stone house in the neighbourhood is the voevóda’s—the house of Vassílii Féodorovitch Obrazétz. Thou thyself commandedst me to remind thee”

The Great Prince divined the meaning of the dvorétzkoi, and laughingly replied—“Well, Mikháil, right well ’twill not be over-pleasing to the boyárin; but still he will not be poisoned by the atmosphere of the Almayne. Let him know from whence cometh the bad weather.”

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."

"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!** No! they have chosen the wrong man. They may spin their traitorous intrigues with the King of Poland, and

* When Vladímir, to convert the Russians to Christianity, caused the image of their idol Peróun to be thrown into the Dniépr, the people of Kieff 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.

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!"

"God hath been merciful to me," continued the Great Prince, growing somewhat calmer: "Rostóff and Yarosláff have renounced their rights: let us strike while the iron is hot. A word is but breath; but what is written with a pen deeds cannot blot out again,* as saith 'my little mannikin no bigger than my nail, with a beard flowing to his waist, just like a horse's tail.'"

* The Russians are exceedingly fond of introducing in their conversation either old saws and proverbs, (which in all countries are generally rhymed,) or extempore sentences, with the jingle and antithesis of such proverbial expressions.—T. B. S.

The gigantic beard almost touched the ground, so low was the bow made by its diminutive owner.

“But thou art not the man, Beardikin, to finish this business; for thee 'twill suffice to dispatch a courier to the voevóda Daniél Khólmskoi, at his estates, with my order to repair to Moscow without delay; and go to Obrazétz, and tell him, my servant, that I do him the grace to place in his house the Almayne leech who cometh hither anon, and command him to give him bread and salt,* and to treat him honourably. There is a heap I have piled on thee!”

“Zeal giveth strength,” replied Borodátii; “mine would enable me to bear a ton of thy commands.”

“Good!—And thou, Elizárovitch, ride thou to Rostóff and Yaroslávl, and bind firmly, with the knots of law, their gentle cession . . . Dost thou understand?”

“I understand, my lord.”

Thus the Great Prince dismissed all his ministers of the household, except the dvorétzkoi. He had honoured Góuseff with the familiar appellation Elizárovitch, because his mission was a difficult one,

* Bread and salt—the emblems of hospitality.”—T. B. S.

to compel, by menaces and caresses, the Princes of Rostóff and Yarosláff to yield up their territories to Iván Vassílievitch; a cession at which they themselves had hinted. Roussálka remained, and looked enquiringly at the Great Prince, as if desiring to let him know that he had something to tell him.

“What wouldst thou?” enquired Iván Vassílievitch.

“Dost thou vouchsafe to let me speak a word that I have long concealed? I thought to bury it in my soul lest it might offend thee, my lord; but the Holy Virgin hath appeared to me thrice in a dream: she urged me, saying, Speak!—speak!”

“Speak, then! To the devil with thy grimaces; time is precious.”

“Is it known to thee, that the Jewish heresy of the sorcerer Zakhárii, hath come over hither from Nóvgorod? that it flourisheth here in Moscow? that many shepherds of souls are tainted with it? many boyárins near thy person are fallen into this heresy? that the chief leader among them is thy deacon Kourítzin, whom thou hast so much honoured with thy favour? Is it known to thee, that they

are leading astray the faithful, and even—(he looked round to listen if any one overheard him, and then added softly) . . . even thy daughter-in-law.”

“ I know,” coolly rejoined Iván Vassílievitch, that they busy themselves with the philosophical sciences—much good may it do them ! Let them alone so long as they neglect not their duty ; but if we listen to old wives’ tales, we cannot boil a pot of *stchi*, let alone rule an empire. As to Kourítzin, I forbid thee, or any one else, to say any evil of him. I can never forget what he hath done for me—my strong alliance with Mengli-Ghiréi, my league with the King of Hungary and the Hospodar of Moldavia—all is his work : and if I be strengthened by these alliances, and can now reach even at Lithuania, for all this I owe an obeisance, yea, a low obeisance, to Kourítzin. Be sure, I will remember good and evil to the brink of the grave, and I know how to repay both the one and the other. Do thou, talebearer as thou art, but a tithe of the good he hath done, and thou shalt know me.”

“ It was from devotion to thy person, my Lord Great Prince, that I spake. I could not hold my peace The Christian people openly murmur-eth against thee”

At these words the eyes of Iván Vassílievitch gleamed with a sullen fire. He started from his seat, clutched with a mighty hand Roussálka's throat, and shaking him, shouted, breathless with rage:—
“People? where is it? Show it to me—let me hear it murmur, and I will throttle it as I do thee! Where is this people? Speak! Whence cometh it? There is on earth a Russian monarchy, and all this, by God's blessing, lieth in me—in me alone! Dost thou hear, rogue? Go, proclaim this every where in the markets, in the churches, in every ward, in every hundred. Let it be cried and if the voice of man be too weak, let it be clanged out by the bells, thundered forth by the cannon.” (He hurled the *dvorétkoi* from him, and began to stride up and down the *izbá* with long steps.) “In good faith, a Christian people! Is it not the same that crouched for two hundred years at the Tartar's foot, and bowed down to his wooden blocks; that kissed the hand of Nóvgorod, of Pskoff, of Lithuania; that cowered in the dust before any stranger that but lifted a stick over it! I was the first to sober it from its foul, drunken fit. I set it on its feet, and said—

‘Stand up, come to thyself; thou art a Russian!’
And this scum dareth to murmur against its lord!
If I leave this people now, what would become of
it! It would rot like a worm, beneath the foot of
the first valiant passer-by! Go, proclaim my
favour to Kourítzin, to my faithful servant
say that I bestow on him a kaftán of gold
dost thou hear? from off my own shoulders.
And say it so that this fair ‘people’ of thine may
know it Now, out of my sight, base pick-
thank!”

The dvorétzkoi threw himself at his sovereign’s
feet—“Mercy, my lord and father; my sins blinded
me!” he cried. “Abate thy wrath, and I will do thee
a service—thou wilt be pleased. . . . The Prince
of Veréia is sick to death. A kinsman of mine
came on purpose with these tidings. . . . Hasten,
my lord, to send a courier before he render up his
soul to God.”

This intelligence went direct to the Great Prince’s
heart. He was thunderstruck. The son of the Prince
of Veréia was living in exile in Lithuania. It was
necessary for the imperial founder to lose no time
in seizing his territories, lest he might be anticipated

in doing so by an enemy. "Sick," he added, changing countenance; "to death! saidst thou?"

"My kinsman saith that he cannot recover."

"Ay, Mikháil, thou canst do me a service. I will never forget it. Thy brain is no dull one I know not how it came to go astray but now The Evil One, 'tis plain, had entangled thee in old women's gossip In truth, 'tis for the first time and haply, 'twas not without some design. Rise Thou art sure thou hast spoken to none of the prince's sickness?"

"As God see'th me, to none. Bury me alive in the earth if I have whispered it to any! I know it, and thou, my lord, and my kinsman; and him I assured that he would draw both me and himself into a noose if he uttered it."

"Then thou, my good Mikháil," (the Great Prince patted him on the head as a master caresses a clever pupil,) "speed thee now, this very instant, secretly to Veréia We will say that thou art sick. Ride haste, post haste, kill a dozen horses if thou wilt, only find the Prince Mikháil Andréévitch alive What thou wilt, find him but alive! Flatter him, caress him, cant to him; if needful, frighten him and bring me, post-haste, a

buxom letter, giving the Great Prince of Moscow his territory—all, without remainder for ever—by reason of his son's disobedience."

And guilty was that unhappy son, who had married the niece of Sophia Phomínishna, daughter of Andrew Palæologos, but only of having accepted from Sophia some rich jewels, which had belonged to Iván's first wife; a present which the Great Prince had demanded back. These jewels were only needed by the Great Prince as a ground of quarrel. The young prince had purchased them dearly by the loss to Russia of Veréia, Yaroslávetz, and Báýlo-Ozéro.

"Wait not for instructions," continued Iván Vassílievitch. "Thou shalt have a hundred roubles—dost thou hear? a hundred roubles and my thanks."

As he said this, he trembled with eagerness.

A hundred roubles were dancing before the eyes of the greedy dvorétkoi; but they did not deprive him of his habitual cunning. "And what if he stretch out his legs before I come?" he asked.

"He must not, he cannot . . . dost thou mark me? If he doth, come not back to me."

"I can make a dead man sign."

Here Roussálka finished his phrase with a gesture.

With the promise of a hundred roubles and favour, he was dispatched to Veréia. And the late threatening storm—it had all passed away How, then, had he committed the blunder of making his inopportune complaints? Was it a blunder? No, this was an artful commencement of his attack. It was expedient for him to support the members of Zakárii's sect—they had bribed him. For the attainment of this object, it was far the most feasible course to speak against them, and take the side of their opponents—that is, of the populace. In this manner he could represent the people to the sovereign, jealous of his power, as a second power, which dared to oppose itself to him, though only by words. As he had calculated, so it turned out. The Great Prince was indignant against those who had dared to censure him. In case of personal danger, Roussálka had, *in petto*, the news of the Prince of Veréia's illness. And thus, on all points, he had played a winning game: from the sectarians he had received large presents; from Iván Vassílievitch a hundred roubles—a considerable sum at that time and, above all, an augmentation of the Great Prince's favour. As to the kick, that was a thing he cared not about.

CHAPTER VII.

THE INHABITANTS OF THE STONE PALACE.

O, the cóurt of the Tsar stands on séven versts,
 Stands on séven versts—on eight pillars tall.
 In the mídst of the court, i' the mídst of the square,
 There be thrée towers fáir,
 Thrée towers fáir, golden pínnacled :
 In the first tówer shineth a gólden sun,
 In the next tówer shineth a gléaming moon,
 In the third tówer shine starlets númerless.

IN the centre of the *city**—namely, on the very spot where, even in our own memory, stood the stone cannon-yard, and which in its turn has been taken down—was situated the magnificent house of the Muscovite voevóda, the boyárin Vassílii Féodorovitch Símskoi, surnamed *Obrazétz*. His mansion skirted on one side the small square, the centre of which was occupied by the church of St Nicholas-

* The "city," in Moscow, is a comparatively small space near the Kreml, now occupied by the *góstinnoi dvor*, or bazar.

of-the-Flax, at the turning below Konstantino-Yelenóffskaia Street, and on the other it abutted on the wall of the Kreml. The house being constructed of stone by the skill of foreign artists, and called by them a *palace* (palazzo,) the Russians of that epoch adopted the name of *palátii* (palace,) to designate a house of stone. At that time there existed but two of these—that of Obrazétz, and that of the mayor of Moscow.

It was chiefly the palace of the voevóda that the crowd went to admire. For some weeks it was besieged by them. And how could they but wonder?—Children, whether in units, or as a crowd of units, love toys; and Obrazétz's house was a great stone toy, such as had never been seen in Russia. Not only were the walls as extensive as some streets in Moscow, but wondrous subtleties of art were carved on it wherever you looked, as if by the hand of a magician. The windows were small, and seemed, as it were by stealth, to pierce the walls, as though fearful of hurting the owner's eyes by too much light. Above and below each window were seen the palm branches which were strewed under the feet of Christ on Palm Sunday, and the bunches of grapes with which Noah made himself drunk. Thus the specta-

tors expounded the external decorations of the house. All this was carved in stone, and displayed a wondrous skill. All the projections were decorated with yellow paint, and the hollows between them with light blue. 'Twas marvellously beautiful! The roof, of German iron, beaten out as thin as the leaf upon the tree, glittered like fire. Look into the court, and there are fresh wonders! Two flights of steps, descending on either side, seem to embrace the court-yard. These are covered by a kind of canopy, bordered with an architrave supported on twisted columns, such as are not to be seen even in the Great Prince's palace. A turret is fixed above along the roof, either by the skill of man or the power of the fiend, and hangs in the air like a swallow's nest: below it is attached, somehow or other, a winding staircase. On three sides of the tower are windows, glazed with little round panes of glass, (no small wonder in those days :) when the sun shines on it, it looks like a lantern with a multitude of candles lighted in it. Look out of the window towards the Kreml, you will see the cannon-yard, the Red Square, the shops, Várskaia Street, and the Spass-v-Tchegásakh beyond the Yaóuza. Look from the middle window, you will behold the Great Street running

along the bank of the Moskvá, the river with all its windings, from the Símonoff monastery to Vorobéi-Seló, and the whole of the city beyond the Moskvá, just as in a picture. Closer to you, along the town hill, extend izbás, one beyond the other, stretching to Konstantino-Yelenóffskaia Street, and you can look into their courts as if into your own. Nearer yet, below you, lies the apple-garden, in which you can almost count every leaf. From the third window, the beautiful side of the city, from the Great Prince's palace to the Tainínskia gate, was painted, with all its churches, as if on the canvass. But, above all, you should see the mew in the court! The architect has raised on it a spire with a golden ball, that flashes in the sky.

Long was this considered to be the work of the Evil One; its owner, the voevóda, a companion in arms of Daníel Dmítirii Khólmskoi at the siege of Nóvgorod, and next to that celebrated leader in military renown, was assuredly no coward: this surname of Obrazétz (pattern or model) was given to him from his always fighting in the van of his troops; but when about to remove into his new house, a shudder came over his heart: he would rather have stricken battle, one against ten, with German men-

at-arms, or Tartars, or volunteers of Nóvgorod, than face the evil spirit even in a single form. It is true, for his tranquillity and that of his family, every means had been employed to expel the unclean spirit that must have entered a house constructed by foreigners and infidel heretics. They had burned incense to such a degree that you could hardly breathe, had sung masses, and had sprinkled with Epiphany-water* every part of the house, habitable or not. They had fixed in all the passages, and over every door and gate, copper crosses with holy images upon them, and chiefly with the effigy of St Nikíta, who drives away the devil with his staff. In this way they hoped to secure their dwelling also from the future incursions of the unclean one: they held the house-warming feast on the day of St Simeon the year-bringer, that is, on the first of September, which was considered new-year's day. They did not, however, forget the Chief *Master* of the house,

* It is pretty well known, that one of the most peculiar and striking ceremonies of the Russian church is the solemn blessing of the waters on the day of the Epiphany. A portion of the water so consecrated is preserved in every house for the whole year, and is supposed to possess very great virtues: in particular it is held, when drunk or sprinkled, to be an antidote to the effects of magic and the evil eye.—T. B. S.

the Domestic Genius, who is still called by this name in the villages. Without him, they say, the house cannot stand. The oldest woman in the family went to the hearth of the former dwelling, took some lighted coals in a potsherd from the stove, —inviting, as she did so, *Somebody* to come out, and then rolled up the fire in a cloth; the gate was opened, *Obrazétz* with all his household came to meet the old woman with “bread and salt,” bowed first slightly, then again, a third time, and then a fourth, very low; shook his hoary head, and invited *Somebody* into the new house, in the following words —“Grandsire, we beseech thee, come with us to a new abode.” Then the door of the house was opened, the old woman released *Somebody* from the cloth into the new stove, placed there also the lighted coals, (not forgetting a supply of fuel for the mystic fire:) the bread and salt is set on the great table, the guests assemble, and the house-warming begins. The domestic Penates being thus installed, what is there to fear! they must only take care not to offend the house-spirit. The *Master* was once, and but once offended: he took a dislike to a black charger which the boyárin had lately bought. Once he scared him all night long, rode him like a hundred hell-cats,

tore out the hair of his mane, and kept blowing into his ears and nostrils. They soon guessed that the *Master* was displeased; to quiet him, they sold the horse, and kept no more black ones. They also hung up a bear's head in the stable, to prevent any houseless spirit from fighting with the *Master*, and gaining any advantage over him. At length the house-spirit was appeased, and the inmates of the Stone Palace enjoyed all the benefits of his paternal care.

Yes, Russia was then filled with *enchantment*. A host of prejudices and superstitions, survivors of the infancy of the world—the mythic age, spirits and genii, flying in multitudinous swarms from India and the far north, formed alliance with our giants and jesters; princesses, princes, knights of the west, brought hither in the wallets of Italian artists: all these peopled at that epoch houses, forests, and air, and rendered our Russia a kind of poetic world, a creation of enchantment. Spirits greeted the newborn infant at its entrance into life, rocked it in the cradle, wandered with the child as he gathered flowers in the meadow, splashed him as he paddled in the streamlet, hallooed to him in the woods, and led him to the labyrinth where our earthly Theseuses

were to vanquish the foul Minotaur, the demon of the wood,* by turning their coat inside out,* or by charms purchased of an old woman, our Russian Medea. Spirits were throned in the eyes. The Evil Eyes, whose glance alone could bring misfortune, fell like shooting-stars on the woman who yielded herself up to soft midnight reverie; troubled the wicked in their graves, and came forth in the form of the evil-doer from the tomb, to scare the midnight passenger, if good Christians had not remembered to drive a stout stake through the coffin. All unusual accidents, all ill-luck and violent passions, were the work of spirits.

In an atmosphere thus breathing enchantment, lived the family of *Obrazétz*, composing that household which we are about to visit.

Read through the chronicles of this period, and you will more than once encounter the name of *Obrazétz* among the warriors who fought against *Nóvgorod*, the Lithuanians, and the Tartars. Look upon *Vassílii Féodorovitch* when sixty years had strewn

* To avert the evil consequences attendant upon the meeting with the *Laysovík*, the Russian wood-demon, it was necessary to turn the shóuba inside out. The same superstition is found in Scotland and England.—T. B. S.

his head with snow, and you will say that glance, sparkling with fire, must have fallen upon the enemy like the ire of the eagle; that giant arm, waving the falchion, must have levelled ranks of dead before it; that broad and grizzled chest, that Herculean stature, were created to be a bulwark of war. Having paid to his country his tribute of service as a warrior, for which he was rewarded with the dignity of boyárin, a rank then very rarely conferred, he paid a second tribute, as a courtier, to the Great Prince, by erecting, to gratify him, a stone palace. Here he lived quietly, hitherto undisturbed by Iván, beloved by his friends, respected by the people, a kind father, a stern but benevolent master; here he hoped to devote the last years of life to calm retirement, and to prepare himself for eternity by the practice of religion and charity. Raised above the crowd by rank and wealth, he was, however, by no means exempt from its prejudices; he loved his neighbour according to the law of Christ, but under that title he included his countrymen alone: whatever was not Russian, was with him on the level of a dog: the Italians—or *foreigners* as they were called at that time—he suffered in his house, and honoured with his society, because they had built, or were preparing to build,

churches to God; the Bolognese architect, Albert Fioraventi, otherwise called Aristotle, he respected as an engineer, as the future builder of the Cathedral of the Assumption, and still more as the father of a child who had been christened after the Russian rite. But the Germans, the unbelieving Germans, he abhorred with all the strength of a soul—fierce indeed, but not malicious. This sentiment in him, finding its source in popular prejudice, was still further strengthened by a particular event; he could never pardon the Germans for the death of a beloved son, who had been killed before his eyes. This son had but recently completed his sixteenth year, the ceremony of the *postríga** had only just been performed on him, when his father had enticed him from his mother's side to the war against the Livonians. How he had admired his warrior-beauty, shadowed by the plumed helm, his youthful fire and bravery, which gave the promise of his one day becoming a renowned chief! and this beauty, this pride, this hope, was

* *Postríga*, cutting the hair; a religious ceremony equivalent to the assumption of the "virile gown" (also accompanied by cutting the hair) among the Romans: it was performed at the age of sixteen, after which the boy was supposed fit for war, &c.—
T. B. S.

mown down in an instant by the steel of a foul heretic. Years passed on; but ever in the old man's dreams rose the image of his beauteous stripling, as, streaming with blood, he raised from the dust his head, clouded with the shadow of death, crossed himself, and threw on the father a look . . . a farewell look. Then the enemy's horses had trampled him under their hoofs. O! the father would never forget that look—to his last gasp he would remember it. Never would he forget the mother's cry, calling on him to render account what he had done with her darling child. She had not long survived her bereavement. Henceforth *Obrazétz* revenged this loss upon all the Germans, by a hatred which for them could know no pity. As to the slayer of his son, he had not broken his mace of arms on his head—no, he had made him prisoner, bound him to his horse's tail, and galloped through the forest, dragging him over stock and stone, till he had left nothing of his foe but bloody tatters to feast the wolves. He concealed not his detestation of the Germans, even in the Great Prince's presence. On one occasion, in the very audience-chamber, he had called the Knight *Poppel*, the German ambassador, a foul heretic. It was with difficulty that they appeased

the wrath of Iván Vassílievitch ; the Great Prince, who insisted that all should respect those whom he deigned to honour, and should dislike whatever he did not love, retained in his mind the memory of this insult, notwithstanding the great services of *Obrazétz*.

The voevóda had still a son, Iván Khabár-Sím-skoi—(Remark, that in those times, children frequently did not bear the name of their father, or, when they did, bore an additional designation. These surnames were given either by the Great Prince, or by the people, for some exploit or some bad action, and generally indicated some bodily or mental quality)—Ivan Khabár, then about twenty-two or twenty-three years old, tall, black-browed, black-eyed, handsome ; in a word, the model of a young Russian gallant. He had, on more than one occasion, shown his courage before the enemy ; he had accompanied the volunteers of *Sourój* against *Viátka*, and against the *Mórdvui-na Lejákh* ; he wasted his valour in brawls with his countrymen, in night forays, in the life of a hot-headed scapegrace —“ Ho, Iván, thy pate is not over firm upon thy shoulders !” his father would often say. “ ’Twill last long enough for me, father !” was his answer.

Often did the sire shut his eyes to his son's pranks, in the hope that his boiling, vehement spirit would subside, and, like a torrent swelled by rain, return in due time to its banks: the bounds fixed by God, thought he, no man can pass; thou canst not out-ride thy destiny. The young steed, though he may have a spice of the devil in him, will yet be a des-trier; the jade—even when a colt—is nothing but a jade.

But the old man's best consolation and hope, the treasure which he was never weary of gazing on, was his daughter Anastasia. The fame of her loveliness had spread all through Moscow, far beyond the walls of her parental dwelling, the lofty enclosure and the bolted gates. The female connoisseurs in beauty could find no fault in her, except that she was somewhat too slight and flexible, like a young birch-tree. Aristotle, who in his time had beheld many Italian, German, and Hungarian beauties, and who enjoyed frequent opportunities of seeing Anastasia—the artist Aristotle used to affirm, that he had never encountered any thing so lovely. “The Signorina Anastasia,” he would say, “though, by her fair complexion, evidently a child of the snowy North, by the splendour of her dark eyes, by the voluptuous

languor which is shed around her form, is exactly like one of my own countrywomen. Were I a painter, I would take her to personify the glowing Aurora when about to plunge into the embrace of her burning bridegroom." The artist always stopped to gaze on her with singular rapture. Iván the Young, the Great Prince's eldest son by his first wife, one day ran unexpectedly into Obrazétz's garden, in sportive pursuit of Khabár-Símskoi, for whom he had a great regard, and finding there his friend's sister, stood before her like one in a dream, like a man thunderstruck. He had entertained the intention of espousing her; but his ambitious father, who sought in the marriages of his children, unions, not of affection, but of policy, forced him to the altar with Helena, daughter of Stephen, hospodar of Moldavia, (converted to our faith as Voevóda of Vallachia, whence the bride was called Helena, Voloshanka of Vallachia.) The old women who know every thing, are sure of every thing—the witches discovered that the young Prince had exactly at that time begun to pine and languish; he never ceased to cherish the closest attachment to Khabár, in which perhaps another feeling was concealed.

Anastasia was altogether, in body and soul,

something wonderful. 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.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TALE-TELLER AND THE MESSENGER.

WE have already said that the Feast of St Hierasimus was come. It was noon. Vassilii Féodorovitch Obrazétz, having been reposing, according to the Russian custom, after dinner, was about to wash his face, which was heated with sleep. This was done, without the assistance of a servant, in a copper hand-basin, the present of the famous Aristotle; the utensil was fixed above a tub, as clean and bright as if it had just left the carpenter's hands—a wondrous gift! Touch but a handle at the bottom, and water gushes forth as from a fountain. Then he took a towel bordered with fine lace, the work of Anastasia, which was hanging on a nail ready for the hand of its owner. A horn comb, dipped in *quass* mixed with honey, was passed through the hoary

locks of his hair, rendering them smooth and flat. Whether this operation was well done or not, he could not ascertain himself; for in those times a mirror had been seen by few. Aristotle had indeed given a fragment of looking-glass to Anastasia; but when the inmates of the Stone Palace looked into it, and—defend us from the foul fiend!—turning their faces toward it, they saw the Evil One reflected in their eyes, and mocking at them, they threw away the enchanted mirror, without saying any thing about it to the foreigner. Having arranged his hair, the old man put on a summer dress, and went into a chamber which he called his armoury. This was an apartment of tolerable size. On the walls, which were decorated with glazed bricks, were suspended steel caps of coarse workmanship; breastplates, some inlaid with silver, and others common; iron ones, stained with rust in bloody spots; kanjiars (a weapon of the sword or dagger species, rather smaller than the former, and larger than the latter,) some of which, by their delicate carvings in gold and other ornaments, were evidently of Eastern origin; spears and pikes; the *shesto-péor*,* the ensign of the rank of

* *Shesto-péor* (literally, "six-feather")—a weapon, and at the same time the ensign of command, of the voevóda or general,

voevóda, similar to the modern marshal's baton; and several iron shields with square flutings. In the angle of one corner hung the image of St George the Victorious; at a short distance from the wall were two benches covered with drapery of cloth, and between them an oak table, exquisitely clean, with carved feet and drawers; on this stood the great mazer-cup, and the silver measure, with the accompanying silver ladle. Before the table, in the *place of honour*, all resplendent with arabesques, was placed a magnificent chair of honour, shaped like those arm-chairs that fold up, the invention and masterpiece of some foreigner.

Obrazétz filled up the measure with foaming amber-mead, and had hardly drained it, when the knock of a stranger resounded on the door-post of the outer gate. The bark of the house-dog was heard; it was evident, from the master's face, that the person who arrived was an expected guest. This was speedily proved; two visitors entered unannounced. One was an old man of short stature, similar to the marshal's baton of our days. It resembled the *masse-d'armes* of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, being an iron staff, with a knob at the end, armed with prongs of iron. Many of these instruments, some richly gilded and inlaid, are preserved in the armoury of Moscow.—T. B. S.

already beginning to bend beneath the weight of years; dark locks were still mingled sparingly with his silver hair; from the top of his head to the corner of his left eye, was trenched a deep gash . . . but you have already recognized, I daresay, the tale-teller and traveller, Aphánasii Nikítin. Let us only remark, that he now appeared ten years younger than when we saw him in the prison of Dmítrii Ivánovitch, though there was to elapse between this present period and that, a space of more than twenty years. It is necessary to add, that his face now bore recent traces of a tropical sun, acquired during his late journey to India; and that this strong sunburnt brown tint gave him, at the end of winter, an expression unusual in a Russian. I know not whether I remarked in my first tale about him, that goodness of heart was painted vividly in his countenance. The other visitor was a lad under fourteen, handsome and lively. In his large blue eyes, you might plainly see that intellect was always awake in this favourite of Providence. He held up his head with a kind of noble dignity and self-reliance. The curls of his fair hair had reluctantly submitted to the scissors; they were cut round in the Russian fashion, but nevertheless they obstinately twined,

and formed a sort of coronal of ringlets on his head. Both the old man and the boy wore the Russian habit; but the clothes of the former were poor, while those of his young companion were of fine German cloth, and trimmed with sable. Notwithstanding this apparent inequality in their condition, the latter yielded precedence to the former, whenever he had an opportunity of showing respect. Both, on entering the apartment, made three signs of the cross before the image, pronouncing the words—"Lord, have mercy!" and then bowed to the master of the house, with the salutation—"God give you health!" The elder stopped and left his staff near the door.

"Welcome, Andrióusha!" said Vassílii Féodoro-vitch, seating himself with luxurious deliberation on his chair, which creaked under his portly weight, and kissing the top of the boy's head; then turning to the old man, he continued—"Right welcome, Aphónia; sit down in the best place; honour be given every where to the tale-teller and traveller. Entertain us now with an account of the way they make war in the Indies, ollopervódiger."

In employing this barbarous word, *Obrazétz* meant to jest with the tale-teller, who was fond of

introducing into his stories strange-sounding phrases, which he called Hindostanee.

“The veteran voevóda is like an old falcon, which, though no longer able to fly after its prey, yet struggleth towards it, and flappeth its wings. Be it related as thou wilt, boyárin ; thy words are commandments. We will not throw thy bread and salt into the dirt,” replied the old man, seating himself cautiously on the bench ; “but I must beware lest I dirty the cover, my lord ; methinks, ’tis fine cloth from over-sea.”

“If thou dost, we will put on another ; and we have plenty. Now, how fareth thy father ?” added Obrazétz, holding the boy between his knees, and laying his hand on his shoulder.

“He is ever sad ; Iván Vassílievitch will not give him enough ground for the cathedral.”

“I suppose, then, he would take in the whole city ?”

“Nay, he who would build a temple to the Creator of the World ought not to lack space,” replied the youth proudly.

“I love Andréi for his wise speech !” cried the boyárin with affection. “But it is of no use to waste time in vain. Run to thy godmother, and

bring her hither, to hear the tales of the traveller Aphánasii Nikítin."

And Andréi, the son of the architect Aristotle, flew to fulfill the boyárin's bidding. From the chamber, which for the present we shall call the armoury, folding-doors of iron, capable of being closed with a bolt, but now open, led to a dark corridor, from whence a flight of steps, with a balustrade, ascended to the apartment of Anastasia. On the other side, from the boyárin's back chambers in the right wing of the house, another staircase wound up to the same room, and both met in the well-warmed upper hall which divided Anastasia's chamber from her nurse's room.

Andréi, on reaching this antechamber, knocked at a door covered with felt, and making his voice as harsh and at the same time as plaintive as he could, sang—

" Little children frank and free,
 Ope the gate now hostile;
 'Tis your mother, come and see!
 Mother bringing milk for ye." *

An agreeable voice was heard from within—

* A verse of the Russian nursery-tale, answering to our " Little Red Riding-hood." It is, of course, the wolf's request for admittance.

“How thou scaredst me, little wolf . . . what wouldst thou?”

The ambassador then explained the object of his mission; the click of the latch was heard, and Anastasia appeared, carrying a little cushion for working lace. Delight was painted on her beautiful countenance. “Welcome, my dove!” she said, kissing her godson on the forehead. He took the cushion from her, and both, like a pair of birds, flew to the armoury. “How fareth it with thee, father?” asked Anastasia, bowing low to the traveller, as she hastened to place herself, with her work, close to him on the bench. Her godson seated himself on a stool at the feet of *Obrazétz*.

“With the help of your prayers, we creep along reasonably well at a foot’s pace,” replied *Aphánasii Nikítin*; “and dost thou still roll, as of old, my round pearl, in thy father’s palm? Are ye seated, lordings, and ready to hear once more the wanderings of a sinful traveller over three seas, blue and wavy? The first sea, keep in mind, the sea of *Derbénd*, or the Caspian ocean; second sea, the Indian, or the ocean of Hindostan; the third, the Black sea, the ocean of *Stamboul*.”

These seas were the *Tveritchánin*’s “*cheval de*

bataille; they served sometimes as a keynote, sometimes as a prelude, to his tales.

“We are seated,” said Obrazétz; and all was attention.

How charmingly these four figures were grouped! 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 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 Andri-

óusha'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. Picturesque, too, was the story-teller—the Polyphemus—that wonder amid the ignorance of his countrymen—driven by the spirit of knowledge from the cradle of the Volga to the source of the Ganges—from the trader's shop under the wall of the Church of the Saviour, to the temple where they bowed down before the golden bull; and who knew not that he had achieved an exploit which might have given him a glorious name in a civilized country? He recounted his adventures, sometimes with the simplicity, sometimes with the slyness, of a child: O, and he

surely must be among the number of those whom our Lord loved to fondle; and of whom he said, "hinder them not to come unto me!" The daughter of Obrazétz, too, a young, lovely creature, who had excited a feeling of admiration in the artist, who was learned in the beautiful—herself ignorant the while that she was so fair, innocent, inexperienced, yet full of life swelling to burst its bounds. See how her hands, quitting the unfinished flower, are lifted and held up in the attitude of wonder! She is all attention; she accompanies the traveller step by step along the banks of the Ganges; her face seems to burn with the sun of India; her eyes, following her imagination, appear to devour the distant space. The boy, too, brought from the orange groves of Ausonia, from the gondola rocking to the harmonious love-song on the waves of the Adriatic, to the snow-wreaths of Muscovy, to find there a new country with new faith and customs, with what pleasure does he abandon himself to the caresses of Obrazétz—though they, he knows, belong not to him! With what attention he listens to the traveller's tale! No childish allurements, no gift or play, so fascinating at his age, could tear him from the society of his elders. Already, to a degree far be-

yond his years, did he sympathize with all that is good, great, and glorious; like a young steed at the trumpet-note, he seems ready to dash into the strife against injustice and violence. How warm is this domestic picture! With what a chiaroscuro of household happiness, of quiet, innocent habits, is it illuminated! It is like some patriarchal family lighted up by the lamp burning before the image of the heavenly babe.

We have said that all was attention; but we must explain how the following prelude introduced the actual story:—

When his hearers were all seated, Aphánasii Nikítin asked the daughter of Obrazétz whether she remembered what he had formerly told her.

“God keep me from forgetting!” cried Anastasia—“Thou recountest so well, grandfather, that all seemed real before my eyes. If thou wilt, I will repeat it again, in brief. Thou departedst from thy native city, Tver; from the golden dome of our Holy Saviour, protected by him—from the Great Prince Mikháil Boríssovitch, and from the Archbishop Gennádius. Then didst thou float down the Volga, and receivedst, at Kaliázin, the benediction of the Abbot Makárii. At Níjnii-Nóvgorod thou

awaitedst the Tartar ambassador, who was returning to his own land from our Great Prince Iván with falcons: there thou wert joined by certain of our Russes, who were minded, like thee, to go forth into distant lands, and with them thou descendedst the rest of the Volga. On a certain river ye were fallen upon by Tartars; and between you and them arose a bloody skirmish; and many of your company laid their heads in the dust. Here they gashed thee, poor man, on the forehead and eye! It is not in vain that I love not these Tartars, even as though my heart boded ill from them even to myself."

"To me there is no nation more foul than the Almaynes!" burst in the boyárin, who never missed an opportunity of expressing his hatred to them.

Anastasia continued—"The sea of Derbénd, thou saidst, grandfather, is bottomless. When the mermaids are sporting in it, and combing the waves with their silver combs, you fly over it like a white-winged swan; but when they lie at the bottom warily, and take hold of the ship, then stand you still in one place, as though you were chained there. Neither doth breeze blow nor wave wash. By day the heaven blazeth above thee, and the sea beneath thee; by night the Lord stringeth the sky with stars, like

golden coins, and the mermaids strew the waters with like stars; but when they are angered they begin to rock the ship, and lift it up, up, up!—so high, that thou thinkest thou canst reach the stars, and then plunge it to the bottom, and dash it to chips against a rock, unless ye hasten to repeat, ‘Lord, have mercy upon us!’ At the mere thought, my heart sinketh within me: yet should I love to glide over that sea, like a grey duck or a snow-white swan.”

“Ah! thou art my sweet-voiced swallow, my fluttering bird!” interrupted the traveller; “I could almost think thou hadst flown with me over the sea. ’Tis true, much woe and sorrow have I borne; I, a sinful servant of God. ’Tis well said in the adage, Desire is stronger than force. I was no bigger than Andréi Aristotle, ere I had travelled all over the principality of Tver. There, as soon as summer came, I went with the pilgrims wherever they wandered, or joined a train of waggons with merchandise; when I grew up, there was no end to my projects: to go far, far away, to the borders of the world—to behold, with my own eyes, all that is done on God’s earth: what beasts, birds, men, live in different countries—all this I longed to behold; even as if—God forgive

me!—some spirit possessed me, and commanded me to wander; and even now—now that I am peacefully sitting in holy Russia, in the white stone palace—safe and warm, on cushions of cloth, with a boyárin, a giver of bread and salt, (hospitable,) and drinking his sweet mead—shall I confess it, my gracious patrons?—even now my heart yearns to wander far away, o'er thrice nine lands, and thrice ten distant kingdoms. I have been to the rising of the sun, and now I am pining to behold his setting: sickness hath prevented me. . . . But let us return to my poor wanderings beyond three seas—the blue, ollopervódiger, and the first sea.” . . .

The impatient Anastasia interrupted his recital. “We remember, grandfather, we remember thou hast suffered much woe and sorrow: those of thy company who had any thing to do in Russia, returned to Russia; but he that had nothing to draw him home, went whither his eyes led him. Thou wentest to Bakóu, where there blazeth out of the ground an inextinguishable fire—Lord, lord, how wonderfully is thy world made! And then thou passedst Easter-day at Gourmóuz, where the sun scorseth a man like boiling oil: at last thou didst arrive in the chief city of the great Sultan of the Indies: in that land there

be apes, with the hands and feet and wit of man; only they speak not as we do: these apes live in the forest, and they have an ape prince. If any man offend them, they complain to their prince: they fall upon a town, pull down the houses, and kill the people. There is also in that land the bird *houck-ouck*; it flieth at night, and crieth *gouk, gouk*, and when it percheth on a house, there a man will die. If any man try to kill the bird, fire cometh out of its mouth."

On a sudden, at these words, was heard *touk, touk*, as if a bird was tapping with its beak, and then the croak of a raven. The girl stopped short in her tale; all except *Andrióusha* looked at each other and crossed themselves, ejaculating—"The strength of the cross be with us! O Lord, save us from evil!"

The gay face of the boy, and his reputation for tricks, soon dissipated their fear: when they recovered themselves, *Aphánasii Nikítin*, coughing, took up the tale where the *boyárin's* daughter had left off.—"The land of Hindostan is right populous and right glorious," he began

"Thou hast again wandered from the point of how they make war in the Indies," interrupted the

voevóda, desirous that a relation of military affairs should lead his mind away from the gloomy impression produced by the cry of the raven.

“ In a moment, my good lord, I will bring my tale to that. Now, the first sea, the sea of Derbénd ”

“ The Caspian ocean, ollopervódiger,” broke in Andrióusha, laughing. “ We know all that, grandfather, long ago.”

The voevóda shook his finger at the boy. Anastasia reminded the traveller where he had left off, and he continued as follows :—

“ The Soldan is carried in a golden litter : above it is a velvet canopy with a golden top, and over all blazeth a ruby as large as a hen’s egg. Before the Soldan are led about twenty horses harnessed to golden sledges. Behind him, three hundred men on horseback, five hundred on foot, and trumpeters, and players on the dulcimer, harpers and fifers, ten of each. But when he rideth out for pleasure with his mother and his wife, he hath with him ten thousand horsemen and fifty thousand footmen, three hundred elephants, caparisoned in gilded trappings, with castles fixed thereon ; and in each castle six men-at-arms, with cannon and arquebuses. On the great elephants ride twelve men, and

on each are two standards. To their tusks are tied great swords, a quintal in weight, and to their trunks great iron clubs. Between the ears of the elephant sitteth a man-at-arms with an iron crook to guide the elephant withal. Before him go trumpeters and dancers by the hundred; and three hundred common horses, harnessed to golden sledges. Behind these are a hundred apes and a hundred concubines. The Soldan himself is habited in a robe all covered with rubies, a turban with a great diamond thereon; in the sunshine it dazzleth the eyes, even as the lightning. He weareth a quiver adorned with jacinths, and three swords all damasked with gold. His saddle is of gold, and his stirrups of gold—all is gold. Behind him goeth a royal elephant, all trapped in brocade, and bearing in his mouth an iron chain, to beat down horses and men who approach too near the Soldan. In the Soldan's palace there be seven gates, and at each gate stand a hundred guards, and a hundred kafir scribes; whosoever goeth in or goeth out, they write him down. And his palace is right wonderful, being all carved work and gold, and sculptured even to the top, wonderful to be seen. Their *Bout-khans* (Temples of Buddh) are without doors, and look towards the east; the *Bout* is carved

in black stone, right great, having a tail spreading over him. He holdeth up his right hand, stretching it forth like *Oustenian* (Justinian,) the Tsar of Tsargrad (Emperor of Constantinople :) in his left hand he beareth a spear, and there is no clothing on his body ; his visage and back are like those of an ape. Before the Bout standeth a bull, very huge, carved of black stone, and all gilded ; his horns are bound with brass ; around his neck hang three hundred little bells, and the hoofs thereof are shod with brass. They kiss his hoof, and scatter flowers over him. Within the Bout-khan they ride on bulls. The Indians call the bull father, and the cow mother. Their *anamaz* (prostrations and prayers) are made toward the East : they lift up both their hands, and place them on the crown of their head, then they bow to the earth, and prostrate themselves on the ground. This is their worship. The Indians eat not any manner of flesh ; neither oxen, nor sheep, nor fish, nor swine. When they eat any thing, they hide themselves from heretics, lest any one should look into their drinking-vessel or their food ; and, if a heretic looketh at any thing, they will not use it for food. When they eat, they cover themselves with a cloth, lest they be seen of any man.

When they sit down to meat, they wash their hands and feet, and rinse their mouths; and, if any man die among them, they burn him, and sprinkle his ashes on the water"

Long, long tales told the one-eyed traveller about the manners and customs of the Hindoos, and at last he came to the manner of making war in the Indies. Then was heard suddenly the sound of the iron ring which announced the arrival of a stranger, breaking the thread of the story. This was followed by the clatter of a horse's hoofs, and immediately after by the bustle of domestics in the court-yard and the hall. Khabár-Símskoi rushed into the armoury, and was about to speak, but was interrupted by his father—"Art thou preparing to turn heretic, Iván, that thou comest into a room without crossing thy brow, or saluting the good people! Would a bow make thy head fall off?"

The son of Obrazétz blushed, and hastened to make three signs of the cross before the image, and a bow to the traveller and Andréi: then, standing in a respectful attitude, he said—"The matter call-eth for haste Here is the deacon Borodátii from Iván Vassílievitch."

"Since when hath hot-brain begun to fear the

Tsar's deacons? Hast thou been falling into some scrape?"

"If I had, I would not bend for mercy even to the Great Prince."

"With such thoughts as these, 'twill not be long ere thou fallest under the axe."

"Then would I bow my head: 'twould only be to my mother, the damp earth: but now evil hath fallen, not on me but on our house. The deacon is come with an order from our lord, and hath told me"

The boyárin did not allow his son to finish:—
"Let him tell me himself . . . 'tis clear, 'Long beard, short wit.' Order the slaves to receive the messenger of our lord, and go thyself to meet him with honour." While the father and son were talking, Anastasia, her godson, and the tale-teller, had disappeared from the armoury. The boyárin, having put on a better dress than that in which he was, returned to receive the deacon. The latter did not keep him waiting long. First loomed into sight the gigantic beard, and then the man humming-bird, introduced by Khabár himself with ceremonious respect.

"Our lord Great Prince, ruler of All Russia,

Iván Vassílievitch," said, or to speak more properly, sang, through the nose, our little deacon—"hath dispatched from his august presence me, his unworthy slave, to announce to thee, boyárin, that there cometh hither from Almayne the leech Antony—very skilful in the cure of all diseases: he is now but three days' journey from Moscow; and therefore our mighty lord hath vouchsafed that this leech, in case of any evil hap from which may God may the angels and archangels fan from him with their wings, even as where-upon the which"

The orator was confused, and lost the thread of his speech; but after a moment's reflection, he continued, in a firm voice—"Our great lord had vouchsafed that this Almayne leech, Antony, should remain near his high person; and therefore he hath granted to thee, boyárin, of his grace, to receive the Almayne into thy palace as an inmate, and to choose the best chamber and hall therein"

You ought to have seen the expression of the boyárin's face on hearing this command. He turned pale, his lips quivered. A German—a foul German! a heretic! a Latiner!* one of his son's murderers!

* The ancient Greek Church held in great abhorrence the Latins, or Roman Catholics.—T. B. S.

—to dwell under his roof—to profane the purity of his house! to shame his old age! . . . but what was to be done? He *must* receive the abhorred inmate, even with bread and salt—with compelled honour. Such was the Great Prince's will. Obrazétz, had he even been ignorant that Iván Vassilievitch loved to bend whatever resisted him, and had never found a spirit so iron as not to yield and fashion itself at his pleasure, even then he would not have dared to disobey. The name of the sovereign, second only to that of God, was respected by him as in the olden times, according to the precepts of his forefathers.

“I, and all of mine, are God's and the Tsar's,” replied the boyárin, restraining his feelings: “choose in my poor house whatever chambers please ye.”

“Only not my sister's,” cried Khabár; “the man that looketh within it shall not live.”

“Peace!” sternly exclaimed the boyárin: “‘the egg teacheth not the fowl.’” Then, turning to the deacon, he added, “fulfill the order of our good lord.”

The selection was soon made—the choice had been previously arranged by Roussálka. The quarter towards the Kreml, containing the hall, the armoury, and a corner chamber adjoining it, was

fixed upon for the leech's lodging. After this, custom required that the messenger of the sovereign should be entertained. The cups began to go round; but this time the sweetmeats tasted like physic to the boyárin. He could not drown his mortification. The tiny deacon, who assuredly was only fit to drink out of thimbles, fell down, like a drowned fly, at the tenth goblet.

Rest there, little creature, till a happy awaking!

The voevóda departed to his own apartments, (which we shall henceforward call the master's quarter,) and left orders with his son to put the deacon to bed, and conduct him home with honour when he should be sober again. Such was then the law of hospitality, even if the guest were worse than a Tartar* in the eyes of his entertainer. But the hot-brain, Khabár—determined otherwise.

“Wait!” he said, looking at the dead-drunk deacon: “Wait awhile, thou ill-omened raven! I will clip thy wings so that thou shalt never fly to us again with thine evil tidings!”

* “Worse than a Tartar,” a proverbial expression of dislike, easily traceable to the hatred inspired by the Tartar yoke. Thus the Frenchman used to call his creditors, “ses Anglais.”—
T. B. S.

And Khabár borrowed from his sister's nurse some strong swaddling-bands and a sheet; wrapped up the deacon, and swaddled him like a baby. His gigantic beard was carefully combed, and spread out in all its proud magnificence. When this was done, the gentle, courteous, wizzened phiz of the little man, seemed to be lighted up with a smile. No, that smile Khabár would not have lost for the most precious gifts—to have enjoyed it, he was willing to lie a whole month in the *Black Izbá*, (prison.) He took his baby in his arms, and went out of the courtyard. Hardly had they thrown eyes on the swaddled up infant with the tremendous beard, when the passengers before, behind—merchants, workmen—all rushed towards him, and formed a merry tumultuous procession. Shouting, giggling ha ha's, filled the air—'twas a real festival of Momus! The mob grew and grew, and at last dammed up the street; those only who were tolerably near to the chief actor in the farce, could understand what they saw: but the further off any man was, the more extravagant were the reports that reached him. One cried—“A child hath been born with a beard a fathom long!” another—“A bearded star hath fallen on the earth!” a third—“They have found a monster,

a living head with a beard!" It would require a volume to relate all the wonderful things they said about the beard. The old people saw in it the end of the world, and the coming of Antichrist; the young were delighted to laugh at something that had never been seen before. They shoved each other, they fought, they paid money, only to have a look at the beard. Then there mingled in the crowd the constables; their threats, their sticks, even the name of the Great Prince—all was useless. The huge procession went on, further and further, and only stopped at the deacon Borodátii's izbá. The poor little man had been able to become sober, but could not come quite to himself on account of the noise and rabblement which surrounded him, nor form a distinct idea of what was being done with him. For some time his servants refused to let in their master, and it was not till convinced by the sound of his voice, and by his beard, that they admitted him, and received him carefully in their arms.

The report of this prank soon reached even the Great Prince's palace. While the jest, imagined by the audacious Khabár, was going forward, what terror filled his father's house, as soon as the news

was spread that a German was to live among its inmates! Still further was this terror increased, by stories which flowed in on all sides about the dreaded stranger. Some affirmed, that he belonged to the Jewish heresy: others, that he was brought to Russia by a brother Hebrew. Some added, that he was a sorcerer, who could give life or death by herbs and dead men's bones; that he could predict men's destiny with the blood of infants or a human skull; that he drew people to him with a hook made of the claws of the Evil One. What other horrors were not said about him! And his face! that could not be human! Certainly, it must be a horrid one with a beak, with owl's ears! What a person to have in the house! . . . 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 Vassíli 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!

They, however, thought over every thing that could prevent the infidel spirit from coming in contact with the orthodox one. Again began the holy-water sprinkling; again the incense-burning to such a degree, that one could hardly distinguish objects through its dim grey veil. Again the praying with prostration to the earth, for protection against the incursions of the fiend. Then a copper cross was fixed on the lodging of the expected stranger, with as much noise and howling as if it were the last nail in a good man's coffin. This was not enough: the unclean mouth of a heretic, could it, should it touch the vessels out of which ate true believers—good Christians, who had been baptized! Was it a reasonable thing? They bought new pewter vessels, ladles, bottles, drinking-cups—all that was necessary for the German's table. These were never to be carried into the orthodox quarter: and at his departure were to be burned all together. They

divided the court-yard with a lofty fence, and made separate doors into the heretic's division. To wait upon the leech Antony, they selected a lad under twenty; and for their choice of him, in particular, there was an important reason. He was without kith or kin—an orphan.

This circumstance would rather have induced our ancestors to take care of him. No, this was not the reason why they chose him as the victim—as if to be devoured by the “*Serpent of the Mountains* ;” * he was “half-christened ;” (he had never been known to possess any other name.) At the moment of his baptism a terrible storm had arisen; and the holy mystery had never been completed. This had been repeated to him from his infancy. What religion he professed he knew not himself, and therefore he never went to church. It was as if he had been purposely prepared to be the heretic's servant.

* A terrible dragon or serpent, in the Russian fairy tales, which keeps watch over the “*Living Water*.”—T. B. S.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ARRIVAL AND RECEPTION.

“It is not to be supposed that the roads in those days, (*i.e.*, in the fifteenth century,) resembled the present *Chaussée* from Moscow to Petersburg.”—*POLEVÓI—The Oath at the Tomb of our Lord.*

ON the Smolénsk road, about seven versts from Moscow, several sledges were ploughing their way through the snow-wreaths. These vehicles were of great—nay, extreme length, with hoods made of hoops covered with canvass, similar to those carriages which the Jews still employ in their journeys from Poland into Russia. The horses were tall, not of Russian blood, and appeared still taller from the huge collars, decorated with crescents, stars, and balls of copper, with which they were equipped. These ornaments gave notice of their approach by the tinkling sound of the metal. On the front seats of the sledges sate the drivers—for the most part Jews. It seems, as I have already said, that at this

epoch there was no gainful employment which the sons of Judah did not adopt. They wielded, with a master's hand, the whip or the caduceus; they laboured, with equal dexterity, with tongue or brain: the sword alone was refused them. To Russia, in particular, notwithstanding the hatred and detestation with which they were regarded—to Pskoff, Nówgorod, and Moscow, thronged Hebrews, as cloth-merchants, *izvoztchiks*, (drivers of hired carriages,) interpreters, and agents. If they succeeded, they returned home from Russia loaded with rich sables: If they failed—they left their heads here.

In the van of the procession, from between a ragged fox-skin cap and a greasy sheepskin gown there projected, like a vane, a sharp-pointed beard, fluttering in the wind, and covered with the downy whiteness of frost. Eyes, grey as those of the owl, gleaming from below brows powdered with rime, seemed to outrun the jaded horses, and peer inquisitively afar. Arriving at Poklónnaia Gorá, the Hebrew jumped hastily from his seat. In front of him a prospect of some dozen versts was spread out, illuminated by a splendid winter day. He strained his eyes, then stretched them again, stopped his horses, went up to the hood of the sledge, and

knocked upon it with his whip; saying, in a voice as triumphant and full of delight as if he were announcing the discovery of an inhabited island in a shoreless ocean:—"Kucke, kucke, geschwind, herr! (look, look, make haste, sir!) There is Moscow"

"Moscow?" asked some one from under the hood, in a voice of equal delight, but tremulous; and immediately was thrust out a head covered with a fur cap: there looked out a young man's face, handsome and ruddy with the frost. "Moscow?" he repeated, lowering his voice, "Where is it?" . . .

"There, on the hill in the forest," replied the Hebrew: but remarking that his fellow-traveller's face assumed a strong expression of disappointment, he added, in a perplexed tone—"Why, you are hard to please, master; you wished, perhaps, for Jerusalem Why did you not live in de time of Solomon den? But, perhaps, you wanted Kro-léftz, Lipetsk, or someting more!"

"Ay, by thy description, honest Zakharia, something like them," replied the young traveller ironically; and then he began to gaze intently on the distance. He was still looking for Moscow, the capital of the Great Prince, with its glittering

palaces, its splendid temples with gilded cupolas, gold-pointed spires piercing the heavens; and he saw before him, scattered along the snow-covered side of a hill, a disorderly crowd of huts, half enclosed in a broken wall, half stretching out beyond it. He saw all this embosomed in a black bristling forest, from which here and there peeped out the low stone churches of monasteries. The river, which added in summer-time so much beauty to the town, was now locked up in ice, and could hardly be distinguished winding along its snowy banks. It is true, Moscow was surrounded by numerous villages, outskirts, and suburbs; separated from it sometimes by fields, sometimes by woods, and here and there connected by long lines of houses. It is true, that had all these outskirts, suburbs, and villages been united by the imagination of the spectator into one whole, the city might well have excited his astonishment by its enormous size, as the future metropolis of Russia. But the first impression was made; and, to the eyes of our travellers, Moscow was confined to that limited space which, to the present day, though in the midst of the town, retains the name of the *city*. Perhaps at this moment Antony was thinking of the odorous atmosphere of Italy, its palaces and

temples, beneath the vault of a glowing heaven, the tall pyramid-like poplars, and the vine-tendrils of his native land—perhaps he was thinking of Fioraventi's words: "*He that entereth that gate never shall return*"—He was thinking of his mother's tears—and he mournfully bent down his head.

From this reverie he was aroused by voices shouting around him—"Moscow! Moscow! Signor Antonio," and his sledge was encircled by five or six men of various ages dressed in winter habits. Schoolboys returning home for the holidays, greet not with greater joy the spire of their native village.

"But what a miserable hole of a town!" said one of them.

"An encampment of savages!" cried another.

"Look! and their houses are builded like tents," chimed in a third: "the first poor beginning of architecture."

"We will set all that to rights. 'Tis not for nothing that they have invited us hither. We will build palaces, mansions, temples. We will gird the town with a noble wall. We will raise fortifications; we will fill them with cannon. Oh! in a dozen years they shall not know Moscow again"

"But what is our Fioraventi Aristotle about? for

we see nought but piles of brick on the mountain and below it."

"He is making ready for work" exclaimed one of the travellers, sarcastically twirling his mustache.

"He hath been thinking about it ten years; in the eleventh he will make up his mind"

"'Tis because he worketh for eternity, not for to-day," interrupted Antony with a generous anger. "Which of you helped him to straighten the Campanile of Cento? Ye stood gaping by when he was moving Del Tempio la Magione.* Grow up to his size first, and then measure yourselves with him. But now beware with one glance of genius he will crush you."

"I love Antonio for that," cried one of the crowd, a man of middle age, who had till now preserved a contemptuous silence. "I love Antonio! He is a true paladin, the defender of justice and honour Comrade, give me thy hand!" he added with feeling, stretching out his own to Ehrenstein. Thou hast said a good word for one who is a countryman of mine, and a great artist."

* The Campanile of Sta Maria, in Bologna.

Those who had commenced the boasting conversation were silent, abashed by their companion's words. Probably they dared not begin an altercation, out of respect for his age or endowments; and they bore Antony's reproach in silence, because they might some time or other need his assistance: besides this, his chivalrous soul, they knew, would submit to no hard language. He who had given him his hand in sign of friendship was the future builder of the Carved Palace.* The other travellers were masons, stone-cutters, and founders in metal.

And so they began to approach Moscow.

The first disagreeable impression of disappointed expectation being past, Antony consoled himself. Was it for lifeless edifices that he had come to a distant land? Was it curiosity that had attracted him thither? No! It was love for humanity, for science, for glory—it was this that pointed out to him the road to Muscovy: a weak man implored the aid of a stronger man—the stronger flew at his call: “to whom much is given, of him much will be required,” said Christ himself. The light enjoyed by him, it was his duty to share with others as long

* Aleviz.—*Note of the Author.*

as he owed any thing to humanity. It might be, great toils awaited him; but without toil there can be no great achievement.

His imagination, aroused by these consolatory reflections, presented to him a panorama of Moscow, arrayed in far less gloomy colours. He brought thither the spring with all its enchanting life. He bade the river flow once more between its banks. He lighted up the outskirts with gardens, and breathed perfumes over them. He sent a breeze to play with airy fingers on the strings of the dark pine forest, and drew from it wild wondrous harmonies. He peopled the whole with piety, innocence, love, and patriarchal simplicity; and Moscow appeared before him renovated by the poetry of heart and imagination.

In this mood of mind the travellers arrived at the village of Dorogomílova. The ragged boys who were playing with snowballs in the streets, greeted them with various shouts and cries. They yelled out: "Jews! Dogs! They crucified Christ."—Others: "Tatáre boyáre, boyáre Tatáre!" *

* Even in the present day, in the villages of the province of Tver, the traveller is often greeted—a relic, probably, of the former sovereigns of the country, the Tartars.—*Note of the Author.*

“What cry these boys?” enquired Antony of his driver, who understood the Russian language.

“Vhat cry dey?” replied the Jew: “in de Sherman tongue dat is—‘hail, dear shtrangers!’”

And immediately upon this the boys saluted the dear strangers with a volley of snowballs. Then began to stream out of the houses, clotted, tangled beards of various colours, sheepskin caps, *lápti*,* sheepskin coats all covered with patches, horned headgears, and faces, the expression of which was far from favourable to the travellers. It is true, now and then glanced out a hazel eye from under the dark brow of a pretty girl, able to lead a saint into temptation—a smile on cherry lips, parted to show a row of pearly teeth; there appeared, too, tall stalwart young men, such as Napoleon would have been enraptured to enrol in his legion: but even among these, hatred of foreigners showed itself in looks and insulting words. It was not to see the travellers, however, that they came thronging out of their houses: no, they were streaming towards Moscow, as if to see some spectacle for which they feared to be too late.—“Make haste, accursed heretics!” they

* Shoes of plaited birch-bark, still worn by the peasants.—
T. B. S.

cried to the strangers; "at last the rulers have had the sense to roast ye make haste, and there will be room for you too!"

The Hebrew augured ill from these threats: knowing, however, that to exhibit fear would be to expose the whole party to imminent danger, he answered in a steady voice—"Evil may come to others, but good will be to us; we are carrying church-builders to the Great Prince."

"'Tis rarely done of Iván Vassílievitch, our lord: he perilleth his soul by consorting with Jews and heretics!" cried one of the crowd.

"He pulleth down the church of the Most Holy Mother of God, and in the place thereof he buildeth palaces and houses for his boyárins, and for his dog-whippers and maketh gardens," added another. "'Tis a curse on the country, and nothing else."

"Ay, and a holy place, where stood the house of the Lord, is now not even fenced in; and the dogs—God keep us!—can run on it."

"That is the cause of the fires in Moscow."

"And the terrible apparitions in the heavens."

Such was the language of the Russian people at this epoch, discontented with innovations and con-

tact with foreigners. But they spoke thus when they knew that their speech would not reach the Great Prince, who loved not to be crossed, or to have his doings found fault with. They murmured behind his back; but in Moscow itself the boyárin and people never dared to give utterance to their dissatisfaction. Antony, who did not understand the speech of the inhabitants of these suburbs, could only guess, by the malignity expressed in their faces, by the ferocious glances cast at the strangers, that here, at least, dwelt none of the mild children of the patriarchal ages.

The road led through the forest which girded the city. Wooden crosses in considerable numbers, sometimes by the roadside, sometimes in the recesses of the wood, awakened in the travellers thoughts of Russian piety: thoughts which would have given place to a feeling of terror, had they known that these crosses marked the burial-place of unfortunate persons who had perished by knife or halter. Not only in remote times, but even down to the end of the eighteenth century, the forests surrounding Moscow concealed bands of robbers, and murders were not unfrequent.

The bridge over the river Moskvá, built on beams,

quivered under the sledges of the travellers, as if it had been elastic. Advancing a little further, beyond the village of Tchortolíno (now the Pretchístenka,) they entered the suburb of Zaneglínnye; but here nothing indicated the capital of Muscovy. Miserable huts, poor huts made of boards slightly nailed together, here and there hovels hastily erected on the ashes of a recent conflagration, churches and bell-towers in great numbers, but all of wood and very poor, with huge sheds round them, such as we see even now in the villages of the steppes. The people, too, generally dressed in naked sheepskin *shóubas*, uncovered with cloth,* the multitudes of the halt, the lame, beggars, and idiots, surrounding the churches, and in the cross-roads—all this was no very exhilarating prospect to our travellers.

They had hardly reached the Kóutchkoff rampart, which leads from the Strayténskii monastery, along the river Moskvá, beyond the Great Street (*Velíkaia Oulitza*,) when they beheld a column of smoke ascending into the air, growing thicker and thicker as it was reinforced with fresh wreaths of vapour, till at

* *Shóuba*, a kind of long fur-coat, with the hair inside: the *shóuba* of the peasant is of sheepskin, and without any covering of cloth. - T. B. S.

last it seemed a gigantic pillar, decorated with the fantastical ornaments of some order which never existed, and appeared to support the sky. The artists, for some moments, admired this strange phenomenon, to which the ardent imagination of the south gave a kind of creative existence, and in fancy represented it on paper. Antony, however, regarded it with a kind of melancholy presentiment, though agreeing with his companions that a conflagration could not be the cause of this phenomenon.

At their arrival in the Great Street, they were met by a number of officers sent by the Great Prince, with an interpreter, to congratulate the travellers on their safe arrival, and to conduct them to the houses prepared for them; but, instead of taking them along the Great Street, the officers commanded the drivers to descend to the river—alleging the impossibility of passing through the street, which they said was choked up with the ruins of houses in consequence of the late fire.

Before they got down to the river, the travellers had observed that the column of smoke arose from a pile lighted on the stream itself. Was it some festival—a relict of the times of idolatry? Was it a dance round a fire? Perhaps it was some inconsol-

able widow, who was about to burn herself in the Indian fashion. . . . The mob is shouting, laughing, clapping its hands—it is clear some sport is preparing.

Close to the pile itself the sledges stopped; the crowd rendering it impossible to pass further. A strange spectacle awaited the new-comers!

The blazing pile was about fourteen feet in width. On the other side of the fire were heard shouts of triumph and delight. A throng of people were approaching it, dragging along some large object. What could it be—a bell? But as soon as its two-legged team stepped aside, the spectators beheld a cage, grated with thick iron wire, and within it two men. One was a youth, the other appeared aged. The despair in their eyes—their prayers—the blazing pile—the iron cage—the delight of the mob O, it was doubtless an execution that was about to take place! The cage was pushed along on rollers—right into the blazing pile! The flame, stifled for a moment by the heavy weight, belched forth volumes of smoke—the bottom of the cage began to writhe, and soon crackled in the heat. A groan was heard. The hearts of the travellers were frozen with horror; their hair bristled on their

heads. Antony and his comrades implored the officers to remove them from this agonizing scene; they were answered, that, as an example to others, a punishment was being inflicted on villanous, godless traitors, Lithuanians, the Prince Iván Loukómskii and his interpreter Matiphas, who had attempted to poison the Great Prince, the Lord of All Russia, Iván Vassílievitch. Antony began, through the interpreter, to urge his request with warmth. No answer was returned.

“By Almighty God,” cried the sufferers, bowing to the people; “by our God and yours, we swear—we are innocent! O Lord! thou see’st that we are guiltless; and thou knowest who have accused us before the Great Prince. . . . Mamón, Roussálka—ye shall answer in the other world! . . . Unhappy strangers, why have ye come hither? Beware . . . In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and” . . .

The smoke enwrapped them in its volumes, and stifled the words on the lips of the wretched men.

“Ha, ha! they bellow!” cried the spectators.

The bridge over the river Moskvá, in sight of which this horrid scene took place, was creaking under the crowd. The balustrade yielded and

swayed beneath the pressure. In vain did the old men and people of experience warn the foolhardy spectators; the only reply was the voice of Russian fatalism—"We cannot die twice, and once we must." And immediately after this the balustrade crashed in sunder, and carried with it dozens of people on the ice of the Moskvá. Many were fatally injured.

By this time the fire had begun to burst freely forth from under the cage, and many branched tongues of flame began to lick its sides. A fiery fountain spouted from the bottom. Two dark figures could be distinguished through the blaze. They embraced each other fell and in a short time nothing remained of them but ashes, which the wind bore into the bystanders' eyes. The iron cage grew redhot—along its crimson bars ran here and there bright sparks, which snapped like fire-works.

CHAPTER X.

THE NEWSMONGER.

“ Who art thou ?

—All sciences, all arts, this fertile brain adorn, sir;
 An universal genius I think that I was born, sir.
 I'm every where at home ; *par tout*, sir, I have been ;
 My tongue can plump a purse that's sometimes rather lean ;
 Though times be often hard, I scramble as I can,
 Sometimes, perchance, a rogue, sometimes an honest man.”

KHMAYLNITZKOI.

“ HE is come ; he is come ! ” resounded through the mansion of Obrazétz, and every living being in it, excepting Khabár, pale, panting, trembling, first uttered a sigh of terror, and then began to bustle about. They tried to move—their feet tottered ; they tried to give orders, or to transmit them to one another—their lips produced only an inarticulate sound. Recovering themselves at length, they opened the gate :—What ! not yet he—the terrific stranger ! It was the servants of the Great Prince, with *bread and salt* from Iván Vassílievitch. They carried on dishes pairs of fowls, geese, turkeys, pork, baked

meats, a keg of foreign wine, and—it is impossible to give a list of all they brought, which seemed enough to feast at least a dozen. They also led along a horse, richly caparisoned, a present to the leech. At the head of this procession was the boyárin Mamón, who had begged permission to conduct it, as this duty would give him an opportunity of oppressing the heart of Obrazétz by his hateful presence. When the voevóda learned the arrival of his detested foe under his roof, he gave orders to his domestics not to go to meet the procession; his son, in particular, he had strongly forbidden to enter into any quarrel with his enemy; the rather, as Khabár had lately been excused, under his father's responsibility, from an imprisonment, incurred by his pranks. The hissing sound, indicative of the arrival of a sledge, was heard at the gate; the procession got in motion, and drew up in the court-yard in two lines, in order to receive the stranger. He leaped swiftly from the sledge, thanked Zacharias for driving him, and offered him money, but the Jew refused it, only saying: "I pray thee remember, if thou hast need of any thing, I am thy servant while I live."

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 owlsh 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 alarmed *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* ! * 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

* *Nástia*—the diminutive of *Anastasia* ; *Nástenka*, the same. Russian caressing names generally end in *sia*, *sha*, *óusha*, or *óushka*—as *Vásia*, (for *Ivan*;) *Andrióusha*, (*Andrei*;) *Varpholoméóushka*, (*Bartholomew*.)—T. B. S.

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.

At length the traveller succeeded in disembarassing himself of the ceremony of reception; having generously rewarded the servants of the Tsar. His liberality forbade him to remain in any one's debt, even though his circumstances frequently opposed the dictates of his heart. He was left alone, and shut himself up in his chamber. Here he offered to the Creator the sacrifice of a reasonable creature; but even this was turned to his disadvantage. They gossiped that he was imploring the Evil Spirit to release him from the holy influences of his new habitation.

He cast a glance round the rooms; one (the corner one) had windows towards the street and the wall of the Kreml. The other, formerly the armoury, looked into the court-yard. His new abode seemed convenient and agreeable enough.

In a few moments some one knocked at the door,

and announced himself as Bartholoméw, interpreter to the great Lord and Tsesar, Iván Vassílievitch, to report the execution of a commission he had received from Antony. The doors were opened to him.

There entered a man of forty, or rather more; as in Borodátii's case it was the beard that had the pre-eminence, in this man it was the nose—a wonder of a nose! It was narrow at the bridge, but spread out towards the nostrils like a funnel, and was speckled all over with purple pimples. His little lips, affectedly pinched and protruded forwards, wore the expression of preparing to play on the flute; they appeared, under the hair of the chestnut beard and mustache They appeared the deuce take it! I have lost the comparison; it has slipped from my memory into an abyss—'tis gone, and I cannot catch it again. Ladies and gentlemen, you must make a new one for yourselves. The interpreter's little eyes expressed any thing but indifference to the feminine sex; and, but for the forty years, and something more, for the frequent pranks and visits to the cellar, which had decorated his forehead with divers significant hieroglyphics, and left bald patches on his pate—but for the pimples on his nose, and but for one of his legs, which loved sub-

ordination, and always waited till the other stepped out—but for all these little circumstances, I say, you would have thought Master Interpreter a very charming man. At least he considered himself as such. This confidence in his own personal endowments he used to support by tales of his achievements. At Lipetsk, he said, a certain maiden had drowned herself for love of him; and then there was the wife of the master of a printing-house—a beauty in the full sense of the word—with whom he was on the point of running away, like the bull with Europa. They were pursued and separated. The husbands of the whole town had united in a conspiracy, and threatened his life: *in consequence* of this, added Bartholomew, he had been compelled to pass the Rubicon, and to fly to Moscow. Here he learned the Russian language, and began to perform the duties of translator of *German papers*, and interpreter of German conferences.

Throwing open the skirts of a lynx-skin *shóuba*, Bartholomew exhibited his robe of reddish-yellow damask with gilded buttons. It is true his leg obstinately persisted in its trick of stumbling, but he soon conquered it, put himself into a majestic attitude, and informed Antony that Aristotle was

not at home. At the invitation of his host he seated himself on a bench. As a juggler spins from his mouth hundreds of yards of coloured riband, so he began to spin out, with no interruption, his motley tales.

“Make use of me entirely,” he said. “You have so enchanted me, in a moment, as I may say, that I I now, truly, had I been a woman, I should have been over head and ears in love with you. I am sure you would not have been cruel. For see now, prithee there is a kind of indescribable sympathy between us is it not so?”

“O, exactly so!” replied Antony smiling.

“In consequence of this feeling—use me as you will. If you want any thing of the Great Prince, one word—but one word O, the Great Prince is most gracious to me! Here, for instance, be so good as to look at this shóuba”

“I see.”

“And what a shóuba it is! You are a foreigner; you assuredly do not know the price of these things. This is lynx—lynx, most honourable sir—very little inferior to sable; and sable the Roman Cæsar himself values as a most precious gift. It can only be

compared to the soft glossy locks of a woman. And this silken stuff which covers it is soft, warm, elastic as woman's darling little knee And these buttons! Is it not true they glitter like her bright eyes? All this is the gift of the Great Prince for my poor services. What a great man that is! If you knew what a master he is—how many new ranks he has created!—ranks that never existed before. And he has ranged each in its place. I will tell you, (here he began to count on his fingers.) First, boyárin; second, vovóda; third, okólnitchii;* grand dvorétzkoi (remark, there are also deputies,) translator, and so forth; treasurer, seal-bearer, deacon, officer of the bed-chamber, of the wardrobe, falconer, equerry, huntsman, steward, officer of the tent, and a vast number of other ranks. You will certainly obtain one of the first."

"You do me honour! Not, however, I hope, that of officer of the bed-chamber."

"And what pay all these get from the treasury! We eat our bellyful, drink as much mead as we can, amuse ourselves just as we like; we are as happy as

* *Okólnitchii*, the second rank of nobles in ancient Russia.—
T. B. S.

the day is long: a noble master! 'Tis a pity, though, that he should stick to his wife alone. Ah, what a garland of beauties I would have culled him! (He applied three fingers to his lips, with a smack, as if they tasted very sweet.) 'Tis true, I came to Muscovy because I expected to find the East here a real East! You understand me?"

"And you were probably mistaken?" interrupted Antony, blushing like a young maiden. "I have heard that they shut up the women here, and that there are no conquests for a man, whatever be his powers of fascination."

"Oh, do not think that!" exclaimed the translator with a conceited smile. "Hem! we have had opportunities But one must be discreet in these affairs. The customs themselves are not so rigid as they say abroad. In the first place, at the feasts, the hostess, at the command of her husband, always regales the guests. She is obliged to kiss them. Then glances are intoxicating. Mead strong, husband absent in another city for business, war, or commerce—not only a Paris, but such as I, simple as I stand here, raise violent flames in ladies' hearts. A woman, you know, is always a woman. The secrecy of love is but an additional charm to her"

“But the maidens of this country—*they* surely have no opportunity of meeting men?”

“Not openly; but they can always find means for secret interviews. They go to dance the round* in the gardens; there be fences in the gardens; in the fences there be chinks, through which one may converse, and even snatch a kiss. A speechless converse from a chamber-window—a good-natured nurse—a porter devoted to your interest—a quiet house-dog—and the very wicket itself stills its creaking as if to aid love. Among us—that is, among you in Germany—the castles are stronger than the bowers in this country, and the guards are more faithful than the servants here; and yet even there Cupid plays his tricks. Trust me, most honourable sir, his empire is ever strongest where they keep the women under bolt and bar. The Russian songs prove this better than any thing else. I must tell you that I am collecting them, and have already written a whole volume of preface to them. I must confess, by the way, that in reading it over, I was astonished how I could write so finely; and I could have wept with delight over my offspring. But I

* *Khorovódui*, a kind of game (from the Greek *χóρος*;) consisting of dancing in a ring, and singing.—T. B. S.

was speaking of the songs. You will chiefly find in them—now, bad neighbours who remark the lovers' secret interviews, and tell the father and mother; in another song, the wife wishes to *get rid of* her old husband; in another, she complains of infidelity; in a third, she leaves father and mother for some young scapegrace; every where you find woman's love ready for all sacrifices—every where the jollity and bravery of man. Do you require living examples?"

"O, you have given me examples enough!"

"Nay, allow me; I will but hint You see, we too are enlightened—we know a secret or so Yonder, not far off, lives the widow Selínova.* You see the next house, at the bend of the Konstantíno-Yelenóffskaia street. The little widow is mad with love for the son of your host."

"What, that tall, proud-looking youth, who was standing at the other gate of my entertainer's house?"

"Yes, that handsome young man—at least, I should call him handsome, if his height did not spoil him."

* Russian surnames are declined as substantives: hence the same family name, when borne by a man, has a masculine; and by a woman, a feminine termination. Thus, Selínova, the wife of Selínoff.—T. B. S.

Antony smiled; but fearing to offend his companion, he became as attentive as before. The interpreter continued—"If discretion did not command me to lay my finger on my lips, I could give you much information about the pranks of this place. We know a thing or two We have admission to the boyárin's houses: we see their wives and daughters: but first I must beg you to remark, that before you can expect favours from either the one or the other, you must go over to their religion."

"In that case I shall never enjoy their good-will," said Ehrenstein. "How did you"

"I confess I took the Greek faith here. This is an indispensable condition, if you wish the Russians to love you. If you do not give way in this you will be called a heretic, a Latiner, a heathen, though you be the best Christian in the world. They will fly from you, abhor you, just as in India they do the Pariahs. Where India is, I wish I may die if I can inform you; but the Russian traveller, Aphánasii Nikítin, hath told me all about it. I shall have the honour to present him to you. There, you must know, there are a class of people called Pariahs, who from generation to generation are despised, insulted, and persecuted by all, so that it is a pollu-

tion even to touch them. They avoid them as if they were lepers. Now, here foreigners are just the same. Nothing but the all-powerful protection of the Great Prince preserves them from danger. On the other hand, foreigners who adopt our faith, are held in great honour and affection by the Russians."

Antony was about to interrupt him, by asking more detailed information respecting the condition of foreigners in Russia; but the printer would not stop, and went on printing his gossip at the rate of a steam-press—"But I have digressed, methinks, from my subject: let us return to the pretty women. This, I confess, is my weak point, my heel of Achilles. I was talking of the widow Selínova: her friend, her lover—call it as you will—is not over faithful to her. The rogue has lately made acquaintance with—whom do you think? . . . with the Greek girl Haidée; and Haidée—who is she, think ye?—Neither more nor less than the mistress of Andreas Palæologos, the Greek Emperor and despot of the Morea—the Great Prince's brother-in-law. You see into whose nest the young Russian has crept! . . . Here, you may think a man must often feel whether his head is on his shoulders. I must tell you, by the way, that the Russians ever

like to wade in the deepest waters. We Germans are still calculating and considering how to leap over a ditch, when the Russian is either on the other side, or has broken his neck. Haidée, as I was saying, is a Greek; but I did not tell you how handsome she is. Where the deuce are such beauties born? (Bartholoméw's eyes glistened and danced even more than usual.) You would think—God forgive me!—that the devil had cast her in some diabolical mould or other, and infused in her black eyes some of his own infernal flames. She torments your very soul, and follows you in your very dreams. Beautiful! a wonder of beauty! But I know a Muscovite girl prettier even than Haidée; worth ten of the Greek. And where do you think she dwells? Here, in this very house—in the bower over your head. She is the daughter of your host—why, most illustrious sir, she has stars instead of eyes!—cheeks like the glowing dawn, and lips . . . lips”—(here the speaker stopped short, snapped his fingers, seized his funnel of a nose; but could find no fit comparison for the maiden's lips, waved his hand, and went on with his description.) “Her dark-brown silken tresses are luxuriant enough, I swear, to chain you; and her little feet—they are

a mere mouthful. Hark ! do you hear them ? tuk, tuk, they go, above you there . . . there she is, touching the floor with her little feet . . . Hark ! how enchanting !”

With a deep sigh Bartholoméw sent up a kiss towards the ceiling from his projecting lips.

“ But how is she named ?” enquired Antony, with a smile.

“ Anastasia — if you want any thing tenderer, Nástenka.”

“ What, and have you made a conquest here, too ?”

“ O, ’twould be a sacrilege to think of such a thing ! She is as far above me as the sun. No tongue can wag to say any thing evil of her. She is as proud and haughty as a queen. The heart of Iván the Young, destined her a share of his throne : but fate willed otherwise.”

The door opened, and the appearance of a new face interrupted the talk of the Cytherean tale-teller, whose gossip was not without interest to Ehrenstein. “ Fioraventi Aristotle *himself* !” said the interpreter, hastily rising from his seat.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ARTIST.

“ They were poets, and their fictions were so sublime, that they fell down trembling before their own creations.”—N. NADEJDIN,

“ ANTONIO, dear Antonio! adopted son of my brother, what gods have brought thee hither?” cried the artist, embracing the traveller.

This was a tall man of middle age, whose black flowing locks were already tinged with hoar: on the lofty forehead, that throne of intellect, might be seen a deep hollow—the trace left by the finger of God when it rested, in the middle of his creative thought, on the brow of his anointed. Goodness shone forth in every feature—“ Hadst thou a good journey, art thou well, contented with thy abode? dost thou need any thing?” These questions, one crowding on the other, were the outpouring of an ardent

and loving soul; and they rushed forth so rapidly, that Antony could not find time to answer them—
“How many years it is since I saw thee! thou wert not much taller than my . . . Andrea,” he added, turning to his son, who hitherto had been standing in silence at the door, remarking with delight, and an enthusiasm above his years, the pleasing scene of his father’s interview with the stranger; his blue, intellectual eyes sparkled with the undescribable sympathy which attracted him towards Ehrenstein—
—“Andrea,” continued the artist, “why standest thou as if thou wert nailed there? Why dost thou not embrace our Antonio? He, too, is my son; thou wilt be his younger brother.”

And the boy threw himself, with no childish feelings, into the arms of him who had been named his brother: Antony received him in his embrace, and kissed his forehead—
“Thou wilt love me, dear Andrea, wilt thou not?”

“I love thee already, Antonio.”

In the mean time Aristotle gave a hint to Bartholoméw (who was of inferior rank to himself) to leave them to themselves; the presence of a stranger seemed like a sacrilege and obstacle to their union.

This hint was obeyed without hesitation, and with such rapidity and address, that Ehrenstein did not remark how he had slipped out. On this occasion the interpreter's short leg, which usually beat crotchets, executed semiquavers, as though afraid of delaying its master.

“Here is a letter from my second father,” said Antony, delivering it to the architect; “in the rapture of your affectionate caresses, I had almost forgotten to give it to you.”

The letter was as follows—“Herewith is the son of my heart. Replace me for Antonio, my dear brother. I should have simply said—I send him to thee without preface; but so strange is his position in the world, his existence is so extraordinary, that I ought, in placing him under thy wing, to explain what I desire thee to do on this occasion. The child of fate—an ardent dreamer, too, like thyself—in a remote and uncivilized country, the very name of which hath but lately reached us; by these rights he, more than others, may claim thine aid and powerful protection. Thou lovest me; thou hast a strong sympathy with all that is noble, and assuredly thou wilt love my Antonio. I will not praise his intellect: I formed it myself. I will not praise to thee

the elevation of his mind : thou thyself wilt perceive it. His heart is pure : guard, O my brother ! that shrine, in which the angels may mirror themselves. I fear only one thing—his soul is so inflamed with dreams of sublimity and virtue, that he forgetteth to take care of his own interest, and the advantages of life. Is it for me to say to thee, try to cool his vehement ardour—to thee, who art thyself so ardent with all the enthusiastic projects of youth ? Remember, my dear brother, that my revenge hath robbed him of illustrious birth, of rank, of wealth. God only knoweth what I have taken from him, and what I have given him in exchange ; and make up for him the loss by thy love, which is very, very dear to Antonio—dearer than thou canst imagine.

“ Here is the key to this enigma :—

“ When I took away Antonio, then an infant of a year old, my triumph was the triumph of the tiger which hath seized his victim from among the band of hunters who are chasing him. I swore I would make my ward a leech, and then proclaim him as the Baron Ehrenstein. Till I had fulfilled my vow, every thing seemed to conspire to aid its execution ; my heart overflowing with revenge, the love of the mother, the coldness of the father. But when my

Antonio became, in theory and practice, a physician, my heart, vanquished by the noble qualities of his mind, by my love for him, rejected the thought of a public revenge, such as I had determined to brand the proud baron withal. ‘Who gave thee the right,’ cried a secret voice, ‘to punish the innocent for the guilty? is it for thee to do this, O man? With what price, with what labour, didst thou buy this being? The father might, perhaps, belong to thee by the right of vengeance; but what hath the son ever done to thee? Dost thou mean to create a destiny of thine own?’ Yielding to this secret voice, I confined my vengeance to writing to the baron. ‘Your son is a leech. Would you have him with you?’ I sent my letter by a trusty messenger, and—I confess to thee—I trembled lest the baron should come to reason, lest conscience and nature should speak stronger than pride; and lest he should take my Antonio from me, lest he should destroy all the happiness of the boy’s life. O, then he would have repaid me vengeance for vengeance! But I was soon restored to tranquillity. I found a being, created in the likeness and by the will of God, and bearing the name of Christian, who wouldst thou believe it? my tongue cannot force itself

to utter I found a father who renounced his child! And he renounced him, why? Because this son—though he might cease to be a leech, yet *had been* one. We behold the b̄aron in every thing I think I see him now I see that miserable lordling, kneeling before me, weeping and imploring me not to take away his son, a year-old morsel of baronial flesh. Heartless wretch! In his place I would have fulfilled the oath I had made to the Italian physician; but I would have given up my son dead, or to the dead! Now, when this son's mind is enlightened by religion and science, when he is made, in fact, better than he could have become in his father's house, amidst the servility of menials and the pride of a father—now I offer him this treasure, a treasure of which a prince of the empire might well be proud—and the baron orders me to be informed, through a trusty servant, that he has no son. This, he adds, is notorious to the emperor, the court, the clergy, and—if it become necessary to countervail my calumny—he relies on their protection. As a cruel proof that he deprives Antonio of all rights on his heart, his name, his family rank, he has adopted Poppel, the son of his deceased sister; he was brought up in his house,

along with his second son Ferdinand. The Emperor, pitying him for having no children, has seconded his wishes and confirmed his choice. As a sign of his favour, he hath raised the adopted son to the rank of knight. Thus the baron hath bound himself, even for the future. It is impossible for him to retract, after the emperor has given his word. 'If ever I attempt,' he commandeth them to tell me, 'to make known that he has a son a physician, he will take measures to shut up that son in some place, where the prisoner assuredly will never more be heard of.'

"The time has been, when, strong in body and mind, I would have resisted the proud baron and unfeeling father; but now I am on the brink of the grave—revenge hath yielded to attachment for my pupil. Assured also that Antonio, if informed of his birth, would not desire to be unwillingly recognized as a son and heir, I even rejoice that I have, by this trial of the father, cleared my own conscience, fulfilled the wishes of the mother, and obtained, as it were, my Antonio a second time. We all return to the circle of our former hopes, duties, and intentions.

"We were still discussing our future plans, when

I received from thee a letter begging me to find thee a physician for the court of Muscovy. When informed of the contents of this letter, Antonio offered himself, with enthusiasm, for the proposed employment. Having other views for him, however, I at first gave him a decided refusal: but I received an answer from the baron, and after that an anonymous letter, informing me, that unless my pupil's name were changed, he might expect imprisonment. To induce Antonio to consent to a change of name, I could never hope, from the innate pride and firmness of his character; and I thought it, too, unworthy both of himself and me, to so much as propose such a thing. The baron's death might still undo the knot of destiny; in the mean time the thought that a monastery, a prison, a dungeon might be my ward's lot, terrified me. Thou knowest how easily this may be done in Italy in our times, when lives, even more important, are bought for a piece of gold. Besides, I had received from credible persons information of the designs menacing Antonio's liberty. This danger changed all my plans; I gave him my blessing, and he set out on his distant journey. Age, feebleness, the weight of my sins, have made me so weak, I love him so much, that I am ready to con-

sent even to part from him for ever, if by so doing I can secure him so good a position as thou promisest in Muscovy. At the first letter I receive from thee, and with Antonio's consent, I intend to send thither all I possess, and end my days in a monastery. Already half of my life hath been one heavy, dreadful sin—revenge. It is time to think of eternity.

“How happy is Antonio in his dreams! A child of destiny, he is unconscious of how much is done for him—of how we labour for him. He knoweth nothing of his father's rank and wealth, or that that monster hath renounced him. Happy ignorance! Long may he remain in it! He dwells in paradise—he hath not eaten the forbidden fruit. It is our duty to keep him in this delightful enchantment.

“This, then, my beloved brother, is the cause wherefore I send thee the son of my heart; confiding to thee, with him, his hopes, his perils, and his fate. Remember I am his debtor in every thing, body and soul, here and hereafter.”

While Aristotle was reading his brother's letter, the young physician was conversing at the table with Andrióusha, encircling with one arm the boy's

slender, graceful form. Notwithstanding the difference of age, there established itself between them, from that moment, a strong and solid friendship.

“Come, both of ye, my children, come to my heart!” said the architect, with tears in his eyes, when he had read through the letter; pressing both of them to his bosom.

Then again began questions and tales about the life of young Ehrenstein, his education, his visit to the Eternal City, the hopes that had attracted him to Russia. The artist at one moment paid these recitals the tribute of his tears; at another, burning with love to the beautiful, he would press with rapture the hand of the physician. Then again he shook his head, as though not quite assured of the fulfilment of the young man’s lofty hopes; but these fears, these doubts, were momentary. The flame that glowed in Ehrenstein’s bosom soon communicated to the breast of Aristotle; and the artist, forgetting bitter experience, joined his own visions to the visions of the stranger, built with him temples to science, to the love of humanity, to every thing beautiful, and promised Antony to aid him in all. With sincere delight did Andrióusha listen to their conversation, and gazed with a kind of pride, now at

his father, now at the dear German, as he called Ehrenstein. On the other hand, Ehrenstein, charmed with his intellectual appearance, reading in the boy's eyes a ready reply to the questioning of his own heart, enjoyed the thought, that in him he should really find a brother. And Aristotle rejoiced, like a happy father, reading the same hope in the language of their eyes, which so clearly expressed their attraction towards each other, and in the caresses which they shared.

“Thou hadst but a bad reception,” said Aristotle; “the execution of the Lithuanians”

“Oh! I had long forgotten in your company every thing painful. But thou remindest me of the execution; and those unhappy wretches seem to flit before my eyes. What cruelty!”

“Gently, young man! The lightning of heaven sometimes consumeth, sometimes reduceth villages to ashes: yet doth it clear the air for a good harvest. Shalt thou, therefore, murmur against Heaven! Partial evil is nothing, when it saveth the whole. I cannot tell thee accurately; but I think that the execution of the Lithuanians was necessary, not alone for the safety of Iván. Doth it not weaken the intrigues of Lithuania, Russia's dangerous rival? The

Great Prince's suspicions are not without foundation. In the first place, weakness is ever suspicious; and Iván hath not yet had time to strengthen himself so far as not to fear for the stability of the edifice he hath founded. In the second place, the neighbours of Russia have begun to grow jealous, and seriously so, of her growing power: nor are there any means, secret or open, permitted or forbidden, of which they will not make use in order to crush her in the person of her sovereign. Here, then, is clearly the motive for severe measures, and the assurance of their justice: here punishment taketh place openly, without any concealment. Sometimes Iván doth indeed play a dark game but how can we find a difficulty in excusing these crooked and secret measures, when we behold in their consequences the good of his empire! 'What cruelty!' sayst thou, looking at the execution of the Lithuanians; but canst thou more easily find excuse for what hath been, and is still, done in our own Italy? The fire and the iron cage—are these worse than the horrors and the cruelties, disgraceful to humanity, which thou must have too often beheld in the petty principalities of Ausonia? Look at what is going on in Spain! There they

have established what they call the Inquisition; which, on the information of a hireling spy, draggeth victims to the stake, and burneth them to death, by quick or slow fire! I am no defender of cruelty in any case; but if in enlightened countries they give no breathing-time to the bloody axe, surely it is excusable in Muscovy to”

“I am ready to yield to thy proof,” said the leech; “particularly after what I have, alas! beheld at Milan and at Rome. Permit me, however, to remark, thou defendest the customs of this country as warmly as if Muscovy were thy native land”

A slight blush flitted across the face of Fioraventi Aristotle. He seemed to be preparing to make some confession; but not liking that his son should hear it, he sent him to enquire about the health of the Signorina Anastasia—“She is so good and kind,” said Alberto; “she loveth thee so well.”

The boy immediately comprehended that his presence interfered with the freedom of the conversation, and hastened to tear himself from the embrace of his new brother, nodding affectionately as he did so.—“Dost thou know, Antonio,” he cried, stopping at the door: “they told the signorina, to whom I

am now going, that thou hadst horns, and a frightful face.”

“ Really ! ” said Antony, blushing ; “ endeavour then to undeceive her.”

“ I have already managed to do that. I will tell thee some day all about it.”

With these words the arch boy darted from the chamber.

“ Thou art, perhaps, astonished,” said Aristotle, “ that my Andrea is no stranger in the house here. I will add, that the signorina’s bed-chamber, even the master’s oratory, are never closed to him. To a foreigner !—a Latiner !—you will say, having already had an opportunity of observing the dislike felt by all Russians towards a foreigner. No ! my son, though the son of an Italian—of a zealous Catholic—is no foreigner in Muscovy. He is a real Russian, and hath taken the faith of Russia ; and this by my own desire, without compulsion of any power whatever.”

“ I thought that the printer Bartholoméw ”

The young man did not finish his phrase : Aristotle interrupted him—“ That is, thou thoughtest that he alone was capable of this. Without being ashamed, I say, I have done the same with my son. Thou

Thou hast seen my Andrea. Thou hast understood this child—this treasure—this pledge of a wife—of such a wife! If thou but knewest Fioraventi is his father. Fioraventi is as proud of him as of one of his best works. Ay, *one* of the best! for there is another which—I am ashamed to confess to thee—is dearer to me than all. I am vain, selfish, ready for my own name, for my own glory, to sacrifice God knoweth what! In one word, thou wilt know me better—I am a madman But in my senseless love for myself I have not forgotten my son—I have considered his welfare. I will not conceal it from thee, my friend; Muscovy must be my grave. This is the law of destiny. I am necessary to the Tsar: engineer, brickmaker, founder, mason, architect—I am all for him; and there is no force that can drag me from this country, no magic which can enable me to return to my own, until men arise capable of replacing me: and they God knoweth when they will appear The Great Prince overwhelmeth me with favour; payeth me with treasure, with caresses, with kindnesses. His most distinguished generals, the highest signori, dare not approach him unannounced; but this I can do at any time. The glance at which all tremble, hath

never once been turned on me in wrath. But this same Great Prince, this friend and patron, hath entwined me in such a net of iron, that I can never burst through it. My every step, my every action, is known to him. As I know my fate, I determine to dedicate to him my life, my powers. Perhaps I myself oppose not this inevitable destiny: perhaps I myself have sought it. Let Muscovy, then, be my tomb; at least I will erect over it a monument that enlightened nations shall some day, perhaps, come to admire. Into this creation I have thrown all my soul: my knowledge, my country, my life, my immortality. But my son!—that beloved pledge bequeathed to me by my wife! my son—whom I myself so fondly love I have thought for him too. The Great Prince, to reward my services, hath sworn not to desert my child when I shall be no more. He caresseth him even now, as he caresseth not his own children. I wish Andrea Aristotle to be a general”

“Why not an architect like thyself?”

“Why? why . . . Here, even here, thou must behold a selfish madness I wish there to be but one Fioraventi an artist in the world. Yes, yes! thou wilt know me better, young man: yes, yes!”

'tis not youth alone that burneth with fiery dreams. Beneath these white ashes, too, (he pointed to his white hair,) there is hid an unextinguishable volcano But let me return to my son. The penetrating eyes of Iván read my soul; and Iván calleth my Andrea his general—converses with him about military affairs, lights up the desire for military glory in his young heart, and strongly enjoineeth his own sons, for the sake of their father's soul, never to forget their father's voevóda. 'Tis well, methought. I shall die—and he will be rich by the favour of the Russian Tsars. But with what eyes, with what feelings will the heretic be regarded at the court of some future Great Prince, by the boyárins, priests, and people! At present I am protected from their hatred and contempt by the name of church-builder; for the present, I, and other persons of different faith, am shielded by the formidable will of Iván, before which every thing gives way—man and destiny. But rulers with this union of mighty intellect and will, are born but once in a century: who can answer for the future? Besides, I wish the future rulers to love my Andrea of their own free-will I wish every Russian—every rank—to surround him with respect as a native, as a countryman. Then

he will be able to aim high I did not long hesitate. Andrea took the Russian faith. His godfather was Iván the Young. He will be a father to my son when I am no more."

"Pardon me for my thoughtless reproach. I would have done the same for a beloved being, so dear to my heart. But now for another question. Do not attribute it to idle curiosity in a young man, whose whole title to thy indulgence consisteth in being thy brother's pupil. Take this question only as a sign of my love for the beautiful. Tell me in what great monument of architecture, here in Muscovy, thou intendest to hand down thy name to future ages?"

The artist's face was again flushed with a glow of modesty. He pressed with enthusiasm the physician's hand ; and with quivering lips which proved the agitation of his soul, he answered:—"Ay ! thou wilt understand me, young man. Thy journey to a foreign land, almost on the borders of humanity, undertaken without views of interest, is already a proof of a noble soul. My aim, too, is the realization of an idea elevated and sublime (at least I think so Of this in any case I am assured) to thee I can disclose my heart, my projects.

I will relate to thee my toils and my hopes; I will tell thee how I dread to die without doing something worthy of immortality, and by what means I wish to purchase a name on earth. Favour me with the indulgence which my weaknesses implore from thy generosity.

“Thou knowest,” continued Aristotle, “that I have made myself some reputation in Italy.”

“The monuments of art which thou hast left in that country will never let it die, even though thou wert to produce nothing more.”

“No, my friend; these efforts, rather bold than inspired, may have given me a humble niche in the chronicles of art. Experiments are not exploits: for triumphs it is that I am now preparing myself. While living in Italy, there dimly arose in my soul an ideal which was destined to be realized, under possible earthly proportions, afterwards here in Moscow. Even then the idea gave me no rest: following the brilliant meteor, and without power to execute my project, I yielded to the burden of an intolerable anguish: and was this surprising? I—a weak man, a creature of nothing—desired to build a worthy temple to God—the mighty God—the Creator of the universe! All that I undertook to express in lines,

colours, forms, corporeal methods, seemed to me immeasurably small, beside this ideal—the offspring of my diviner part. Anguish, torture insupportable ! I called to my aid dead and living nations : interrogated every age, I evoked the past and the present—hundreds of generations : that each might contribute its mite towards the building of a temple to God. Then unfolded themselves at my call the Parthenon, the Colosseum, the Alhambra, St Sophia, troops of myths in stone descended from their pedestals : the pyramids of Egypt tottered to their foundations, and stood around me, like secular oaks around an emmet, hardly visible to the eye. ‘What temple wouldst thou build to God, when we are but the tombs of men ; yet even on these tombs toiled centuries and millions of hands ?’ seemed to ask these giants of the ancient world ; and my imagination died away within me at the question. And then, when at my call arose cities and nations ; when each of them offered me one letter of my divine poem—I could not even compose these letters of various lands into one harmonious word : is it strange ? Each letter was an inspiration ; they all resounded in my soul like a wondrous myriad-chorus of angels, accompanied by a tempest from all the

ends of the world. My head grew giddy ; my heart fainted within me. I fell sick They were even about to shut me up with madmen : perhaps it would have been just. Long I remained in a feeble condition. Restored at length by the physician's aid, and my love for my son, I returned to my senses ; and the first voice of reason commanded me to fly from Italy, where methought the very air inflamed the imagination to madness. The Turkish Sultan invited me, through the Doge Marcelli, to Constantinople. ' What noble or sublime works,' said I to myself, ' can I execute for a people the enemy of Christ ; a people to whom is promised, in a future world, nothing but a refined sensuality ? Is it fountains and baths ? Is it seraglios ? Seraglios ! baths ! when the foundations of a temple to the living God were already laid in my heart ! ' I spurned the Sultan's gold. Then followed another invitation. This was from the sovereign of this country, and was accompanied by a proposition to build a temple to the most holy Mother of God. With pleasure what do I say ? with rapture I accepted this new proposal ; and here I am. Here, my friend, I think to realize the ideal which for so many years hath been rising up dimly in my soul.

At last I have united it with possibility—with the powers of one generation—with the will and resources of one sovereign. I am now putting it on paper. When I have finished it, thou shalt see it, and tell me whither it be worthy of its destination. Then I shall submit it to the judgment of Iván, Sophia, and the Primate. But what toils, what struggles hath it not cost me—what will it not yet cost me, ere I can bring my idea to completion? What have I not even now to fear from the decision of the secular and ecclesiastical powers, well-disposed it may be towards my work, but little acquainted with what is beautiful in art! Ay, if thou but knewest how dearly is bought each step that leads me to my aim; through what petty cares and trivial materialities I have to clear my path towards that object! I say it not boastingly; but a man must possess my iron will, my burning passion for art, not to be repulsed by such obstacles. I will but give thee some examples of these obstacles.—Invited hither for the construction of the church of Our Lady, I found the art of building in its most essential part—that of the mere materials in the rudest infancy. Before I could build, I was obliged to teach them to destroy. The old Church

of the Assumption, which had partially yielded to the Russian builders, in other parts held together firmly, in spite of the efforts of a thousand hands, labouring to throw it down. When I taught them the mechanism of the battering-ram, they considered me a magician. They knew not how to make bricks. How much time did I not employ in teaching them this art! With my own hands I tempered the clay, I made the moulds; I showed them the method of burning. They knew not how to make mortar, and this, too, I myself showed them."

"Bricks, mortar? When God himself was reflected in thy soul! Heavy is the struggle between the Ideal and the Material! I should have sunk beneath it."

"Heavy it was, 'tis true; but I sank not. Oh! I had strength enough for other heavy trials too. There arose a war with Nóvgorod. Iván selected me from among his architects for his engineer. He required me to build bridges for the passage of his army over rivers; I built him bridges. He wanted me to cast cannon-balls; I cast them. He expressed a wish that I should direct the artillery; I performed his wish. He desired to coin

money; I coined him money. In a word, I transformed myself into whatever Iván wished me to be. Think not that I did all this out of love or devotion to the Tsar. I love him—I am devoted to him, as a man grateful for his favour; but it was another feeling, it was another motive that directed my actions. I made myself the slave of his will—his day-labourer—in order to win his favour and confidence; for his favour and confidence were necessary for the fulfilment of my idea. The temple I wish to erect is of gigantic dimensions. I want for it about half the height of the Kreml, hundreds of thousands of hands, piles of gold—the price of terrible, almost blood-stained labours. I am buying from my master almost every yard of ground—each hundred hands, each handful of silver. And till now—shall I confess it to thee, my friend?—I have had nothing but toil, nothing but struggle; and not an approaching glimpse of success. I am still very far from my object. All I have made my own is the hope of one day attaining it. Who can tell? Perhaps bitter reality, necessity, ignorance, will kill my achievement in the embryo. Perhaps death will reach me ere I can complete it”

Here the artist sighed heavily, and tears filled his

eyes. Antony pressed his hand with sympathy and equal love for what was noble, though with different views; and hastened to relieve his friend's heart by those tender consolations of which the artist stood so much in need.

CHAPTER XII.

RUSSIAN GALLANTS.

ON the third day Aristotle came to the young physician, in order to carry him to be presented to the Great Prince.

“The Tsar is enraptured at thy arrival, and is burning with impatience to see thee,” said the artist; “and in order the better to please our sovereign, who loveth to surround himself with the splendour of the court he hath created, do thou—his court physician—appear before him in thy best attire. I have commanded them to saddle thy steed; for I must tell thee, that here it is accounted shameful for distinguished persons to go on foot. Our horses will enable us to snatch an hour to glance, as we go, at the city, which is passing away. I say so, because the future Moscow is about to rise from the ashes of the present.”

In a few minutes Ehrenstein had completed his

full-dress toilette, and was already mounted on a fiery steed, accompanied by Aristotle and an officer, also on horseback. How handsome he was in his German costume! How well-contrasted was the black velvet of his fur-edged doublet with the fairness of his face, and the bright streaming curls with the bonnet of violet velvet, overshadowed by a plume of waving feathers! The modesty of his profession and of his character did not permit him to lavish on his dress the gold with which his instructor had generously supplied him; and therefore it glittered, sparingly but tastefully, only in the buckle of his cap, the clasp of his mantle, and the girdle which supported the poniard at his side. To try the paces of his steed, he made two or three turns round the court-yard; how gracefully he sat his horse—how masterly he guided him! Nor was this wonderful. In his education neither the art of horsemanship nor that of wielding the sword had been neglected: because, said his instructor, all this is indispensable to a physician. They call thee to a patient—they send thee the first horse that cometh to hand; thou must ride to the help of thy fellow-creature through storm and tempest, and along bad roads. Thy life is endangered; they have insulted thy honour, thy

dignity as a man. Learn how to defend the one and the other. Learn how to wipe out thy humiliation in the insulter's blood. From all this it may be seen that any princess might have chosen our young leech as one of her pages or paladins.

All was empty in the boyárin's court-yard when they rode out of it. This time no one dared to look at the heretic, even through the chinks of the wooden fence, because he had been busy all night long with the evil ones. Thus they interpreted his having worked before cock-crow, putting in order his traveling medicine-chest. He would not allow himself to go to rest, till he had prepared himself to perform his duty at the first call of a sufferer. And thus their ignorance had explained his midnight labour. The loneliness of his dwelling, the master of which had obstinately refused to see him, in spite of his courteous messages, struck him with painful surprise. "Thou art come to a land whose people is yet in a state of ignorance," said Aristotle to him consolingly: "wonder not if it shun every thing that is new to it. Wait. All will be changed by patience, time, indulgence, the toys and rod of the school-master-Tsar, if it be needful, an' the child be too froward. Besides, when thou comest to know these

savages better, thou wilt find in them many noble qualities—thou wilt love them, and thou too wilt acquire their love. Thou wilt see that much of what is excellent hath remained among them from the mixture of their national manners with the Teutonic customs: though the Tartar yoke hath destroyed many of their good qualities.”

“I will still dream of their love,” said Ehrenstein, “till I am quite disenchanted.”

At this moment Aristotle threw a quick penetrating glance at Anastasia’s chamber. “What!” he interrupted, smiling, “it was not for nothing that the reputation of being a sorcerer preceded thee hither?”

“I do not understand thee.”

“Thus it is. My old eyes have just received a proof of thy magic. Thou sawest not, but I saw right well, one of our Muscovite beauties, and, indeed, the fairest among them, venturing to gaze on thee from the window of her bower, with greedy curiosity, though they had painted thee to her as a monster with horns and hoofs.”

“Where is she, where?” cried Antony blushing.

“Where is she? . . . rather ask, where is the lightning when it hath just flashed. I only caught

a sparkling glance of the black Italian eyes, and I fear we shall have a storm. Hath she so soon forgot her father's stern commandment ? Mischief is near at hand. Solitude, a handsome youth in such close neighbourhood a maiden's heart O, Signora Anastasia! I fear for thee. No, I should fear for thee, I ought to have said, were I not confident in my young friend."

Antony pressed his hand, as if to thank him for his good opinion of him; and when they had ridden out of the gate, the novelty of the objects which surrounded him, distracted his thoughts from the Signorina Anastasia. It must not, however, be concealed, that she had excited in him a mysterious interest, like that raised by the heroine of some romance of chivalry, hidden in an enchanted castle.

Passing out of the Flóroffskii gate, and crossing one of the three wooden bridges over the ditch, which runs parallel with the stone wall extending from the pool of Neglinnaia to the river Moskvá, they came out upon the Red Square. The range of sheds called the Cannon-Arsenal; rows of wooden booths or shops, capable of being taken down and set up again in a few hours, like a camp; the stone

house of the mayor of Moscow, Khóvrin; a multitude of wooden churches worthy of the appellation of chapels—such was the Red Square! Further on, all is the same as what the traveller has already seen in the suburbs; but all these poor temples were blazing with tapers, lighted by religious zeal. At the windows of the houses there was not a human face to be seen: perhaps, here and there, the thin curtain was stealthily stirred, and from behind it there might have glanced an arm of satin, or flashed a magic eye. In the streets our cavaliers were greeted at one time with slavish servility, at another with coarse insolence. The passenger either bowed almost to the ground, or, as the proverb hath it, “whistled after you so shrilly, that the blood seemed to freeze in your veins.” Amongst these the gallant of the city, fair and ruddy, bustled by, with cap on one side, waist tightly pinched in by his girdle, ready “to take you on fang or fist,” seeming able to lay down his life for his brother, his comrade, his sweetheart or his country, his Tsar or his religion. These shades of Russian character, or the effects of foreign influence, Aristotle endeavoured to explain to his companion. They were frequently met by strangers—Tartars, Jews, Italians—the cement with which Iván was hastily fixing his edifice.

“Thou hast hitherto seen nought but huts and chapels,” said Aristotle, as much ashamed of the meanness of the Russian capital as if it had been his native city. “Thou wilt see the humble palace of the Great Prince, and thou wilt ask—‘Where then is Moscow?’ This is my answer—Moscow, the splendid capital of Iván, exists as yet only in his heart and thoughts. But what he thinks is as sure to be fulfilled as the decrees of fate. I will add, too, Moscow existeth in the artists whom thou broughtest with thee, and in those who arrived before thee. Ere a dozen years be passed it shall be created, and thou thyself shalt wonder at the metamorphosis. Thou see’st how many foreigners we meet—these are all materials for the future grandeur and magnificence of Moscow. Look, what an extent of houses and churches are pulled down beyond the wall of the Kreml, and imagine how strong, how invincible must be the will of a ruler, who hath dared to lay the hammer of destruction on so much that was ancient, so much that was holy. And what murmurs were excited by this innovation! The ignorant crowd looketh not at future advantages. Disturb but its present welfare, even for its own good, and it is discontented. I will tell thee what I propose to do in my plan. Yonder, next to thy lodging, will be

erected the gate of Flora and Laura, and above it will soar a magnificent spire. Thence will stretch a noble wall, girdling the middle of the city, and decorating it with its beautiful towers. The stone house of thy host, and this other here, the dwelling of the Mayor of Moscow, are but the first-born of a great family, which will not delay to come into the world. The architects who came with thee, are entrusted with the erection of a splendid mansion for the reception of ambassadors, and of a palace for the Great Prince. Add to this a multitude of noble stone churches, which are to be built, and the Cathedral of the Annunciation of the Mother of God, committed to my care. Thou see'st the enormous piles of materials which crowd the Kreml and choke it up; and thou mayest calculate what can be constructed out of them. This is only the half of what I am preparing for the cathedral. From these piles the genius of Italy is to erect an eternal monument to itself, or a trophy of Art's defeat by the Material. Woe to me if the victory fall to the latter!"

"Far from thee be the gloomy thought. Never be hope extinguished in thy soul, and may it ever light thee to thy future creation!"

“Ay, away with the gloomy thought! Thou see'st these huts in hundreds, these churches in dozens; they will come done at one word from Iván Ah, my friend, 'twill be a temple, a real temple to the Mother of God! Future generations, as they enter it, shall pronounce with veneration the name of Fioraventi Aristotle Yes, Antonio, I shall survive in it.”

“The man who can speak so ardently of the future, contemning worldly honour and advantage, must produce something worthy of immortality!” replied Antony with enthusiasm.

Long they continued to discourse about the splendid church—about the commanding site from which it would overlook the whole city; and in this colloquy they rode up the hill by Spásana-bórou, from whence they could obtain a view over the whole Zane-glínnaia. Here the glance of the young man was fixed by two specks which darted from opposite sides of the Pool of Neglínnaia. He at last distinguished that these were two boys. They encountered in the midst of the frozen pool, and instantly began a battle with their fists. In a few minutes there extended along each bank a line.

“Ah, there will be some sport!” cried Aristotle.

“ Presently thou shalt see a specimen of our Russian gallants.”

“ What is this ? ” enquired Ehrenstein.

“ A party struggle,” answered the artist smiling. “ Our Guelfs and Ghibellines. Thou sawest two boys begin the combat: now these two sparks, thrown by a powerful hand, no sooner come in collision, than you may expect a conflagration. Ride we nearer to the place of action.”

And they hastened along the bank of the pool, by the side of the Kreml.

Both lines, consisting of children, were charging rank against rank with tremendous cries, and engaged in a pugilistic battle. The war-cry on one side was, *Zaneglínniie*; on the other, *Goródskiie* (town boys.) Behind them were incessantly formed fresh lines, each composed of taller and stronger lads than the preceding rank; and at length appeared chosen champions. The engagement grew general. They fought in crowds, in lines, hand to hand. The battle was hot. “ Warmer than ever in the memory of man,” said the old folks. The spectators, for the most part people of middle or advanced age, composed a black ring on the banks of the pool. From amongst them arose praises of the victors, or re-

proaches of the conquered. One deserved the wreath of laurel, another the whip. Incessantly were heard cries, "Our side hath it!" "Brave fellows!" or "Cowards, cravens, pock-puddings!" Only those who were grievously hurt, who had fought away all their strength, or the youngest, yielding their place to older or stronger combatants, left the ranks of the *mêlée*. Many were seen to be crippled for life, but not one groan was heard. Even their relations, as they led them away from the conflict, neither complained, nor exhibited any violent grief. They only abused them as cowards, or praised them as brave fellows. When they had recovered from their hurts, they placed themselves in the ranks of the spectators; and, with them, took a lively interest in their party, with shouts of praise or insult.

The young physician, through Aristotle, offered his services to those who were hurt. Instead of answering, the fathers placed themselves between their children and the leech, and plainly refused his aid. They would rather see them deformed for life. Assuredly, too, when they reached home, they mixed *Thursday's salt* and coals in water, wherewith to sprinkle their child, on whom had glanced the evil eye of a heretic.

At length the ranks of the *mêlée* began to grow thinner; the voices to grow still; but it would even now have been difficult to decide which party had won. All at once there thundered along the banks of the pool unanimous shouts of "Mamón!" "Sím-skoi-Khabár!" and the crowd, as if enchanted, lowered their hands and separated. A deep, a death-like silence ensued.

"What fine fellows!" said Antony; "if I mistake not, the face of one of them is known to me."

"No wonder. It is the son of thy host: he is called by the people, *Khabár!* which meaneth, *winner, gainer.* Seldom happeneth it that his side winneth not in the fist fight; whence he hath gained his title. To-day they have chosen him a new opponent, and apparently a formidable one. Look! what a powerful, active athlete. Their fathers are enemies; the sons are now antagonists. But here, in the ring, where they meet for single combat, they must throw aside all enmity, all unfriendly feeling towards each other. I must explain further, that their blows may only be aimed at that part of the body between the throat and the girdle. Woe to him whose hand touches the face of his opponent! This, in its way, is a chivalrous sport: even here generosity is the device of the combatants."

In reality, hardly had the *fighters* marked out a ring beyond which they were not to pass, when the combatants took off their caps and bowed low on the four sides. Mamón could distinguish among thousands the flashing eye of his father: he saw nothing else, and heard on the Neglínaia side a deep murmur of praise, uttered by his friends. Símskoi-Khabár beheld his sire's calm, approving glance; the town-side was as silent as a wall of stone. The son of Obrazétz glanced up at the hill of the Kreml, towards Spásana-bórou There, in a lofty bower, he beheld an open window, and a crimson veil floating within it. He knew well whose hand had displayed that signal, and he gaily advanced to his antagonist.

The young men met, and kissed each other. An ominous silence! the thousands feared to breathe—to remove their eyes even for an instant from the spectacle. Then the rivals measured each other with their eyes They prepared for the encounter. A confident smile gleamed on Khabár's lips, while those of Mamón seemed to quiver with a kind of convulsion.

“Poor Mamón! I will wager a hundred to one that the son of Obrazétz will win,” said Ehrenstein, warming more and more. “Each motion of his,

even now, is as a well-poised sword and a firm shield. O, that I might cross my good blade with that active gallant !”

“ Gently, young leech !” replied Aristotle ; “ thy blood speaketh in vain. Thou hast forgotten that it is thy business to heal wounds, not to give them. To put thy mind at rest, I will add, here fighting with arms is only permitted in trial of battle.”

A loud laugh from the people interrupted his explanation. It accompanied the fall of Mamón's son, who had lost his balance while planting a violent blow on his opponent ; which the latter had dexterously parried. Símskoi did not hesitate a moment, but offering his arm, he raised him from the ground. Sullenly and abashed arose young Mamón, without so much as thanking his generous rival. On this occasion he showed himself the worthy son of his father. But the people did not suffer this ingratitude : on every side arose shouts of disapprobation. “ Foul, foul ! Bow ; thy head will not fall off ! Bow ! bow !” And young Mamón was compelled to bend his head. Then recommenced the battle. The glances of each combatant kept wakeful watch—followed each slightest intention—the faintest shade of will. A hardly perceptible movement of the hand,

a bend of shoulder, head, or knee, is a triumph or a defeat. Their thought in an instant divining a feint or even an intention, calculates the results, profits by them, parries a blow, or prepares against a fall. Pass but this instant, and victory is your antagonist's. Suddenly is heard a dull blow; it is echoed by the heart of every spectātor; and young Mamón falls like a tree, hewn through at the root. Blood spouts from his mouth. Shouts of joy resound on the town side. The murmur of the mill-wheels repeated, as it were, the cry of victory. The conqueror was overwhelmed by compliments—the beaten man surrounded by his kinsmen and friends, who bore him half-dead home.

Aristotle rode up to the voevóda Obrazétz.—“What wouldst thou have done,” he asked him, “if thy son had not raised his antagonist?”

“What? I would have renounced him!” replied the voevóda; and seeing his guest, he hastily turned his horse and galloped away.

“A strange man, that host of thine!” said Aristotle to his companion. “He feareth the devil, like a child frightened by its nurse's tale. He hateth those of other religions, and counteth them worse than any unclean animal. His enemy on the field of bat-

tle he will unpityingly slaughter; and yet his honour, his generosity, are extraordinary. With his own hands he would slay a soldier for plundering a prisoner; and he is ready to slay his own son if he do any thing which he counteth base."

"It seemeth I am fated to know his worth only through others," said Antony with some pique. "If, however, my respected friend could but bring us together"

"Time—time—and patience," replied the artist.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TRIAL.

THEY entered the palace of the Great Prince. At this moment the dvorétzkoi, with low reverences, was conducting to the door a Jew, who appeared to have just come out of the interior chambers. The artist and the leech were met by several courtiers.

“Thou assuredly desirest to know something of the faces that surround the Great Prince,” said Aristotle to his young companion; “as they make their appearance; and according to their degree of distinction, I will satisfy thy curiosity. This man here, who is conducting the Jew”

“The Russians shun even Christians that are not of their faith, and yet doth their lord associate with a Jew?” interrupted Antony: “that is right strange!”

“To him every instrument is welcome that can be useful,” replied the artist; “but this Jew is the

confidential agent of the celebrated Hebrew of Kaffa, Khózi-Kokós, who procured Iván the alliance of the Khan of the Crimea; and through that neither more nor less than the security of Russia. And that slender, short, old man, who is conducting him, is the Signor Castellano of the Great Prince—Roussálka, a crafty fox, such as there be few. Is it necessary to the sovereign to reach any object by a somewhat foul path, some object useful to himself and to the empire—he maketh of his castellan a bridge; and over that, without so much as dirtying his feet, he goeth to what he would. In the mean time, Roussálka is bemudded from head to heel. Not long ago he cooked up a masterly dish of policy; he arrested death itself by the bedside of the Prince of Veréia, until he had time to make a will in favour of Iván; and this will—no trifle, ye must think—gave Iván the towns of Yaroslávetz, Veréia, Biáylo-ózero, which lay in his dominions like a mote in the eye. Ask not with what instruments the operation was performed; suffice it to say, the mote was removed from Russia. That—is the boyárin Mamón. Thou hast already seen him. They could not have given him a more appropriate name. Beware of that serpent, I should have said,

had he lurked beneath the rose. The little creature next him is the deacon Borodátii, the historian of the Great Prince's campaigns. His writings are as luxuriant as the curls of his head—his eloquence as lengthy as his beard. His heart is that of a dove—or, to speak more correctly, that of a roasted apple. A day or two ago, the son of thy host played him an unlucky trick; instead of conducting him home with ceremony and honour, after a drinking-bout with *Obrazétz* and himself, *Khabár* swaddled him up, and made him the sport of the people. The Great Prince espoused with warmth the part of his deacon; but to the latter peace and quietness are meat and drink, so he determined at all costs to finish the matter peacefully. The good creature did not hesitate, but gave the Great Prince a description of the wonderful adventures of the beardie mannikin. *Iván* laughed, and at the prayer of the deacon, who assured him that they had not insulted him, but only laughed at him, pardoned *Obrazétz's* son. This proceeding touched *Símskoi*: he made a humble apology to the person he had outraged. It is a pity *Kourítzin* is not here: he burneth to make acquaintance with thee. He is *Iván's* right hand—a wise and honest diplomatist. To the pursuit of abstract

science and secret knowledge, he hath consecrated some hours—all that were left him from state affairs. But—the Signor Castellano is returning from the inner apartments, probably to call us to the Great Prince's presence."

As he spoke, Roussálka approached and informed them that the Lord Great Prince, Iván Vassilievitch, commanded them to "behold his imperial eyes."

They entered a chamber of moderate size. Iván Vassilievitch, robed in a splendid habit, was seated on an ivory chair, on which the skilful and delicate chisel of Grecian art had represented various events of sacred and profane history. Up to this throne was an ascent of three steps, carpeted with *cramoisy* damask. At the sides stood two boyárins, and next to one of them a stool, on which was placed a silver basin and ewer, together with a fine towel, delicately bordered with lace. Over the chair hung the portrait of a woman of exquisite beauty. This picture—or, as our ancestors called it, this *Tsarévna*, drawn in a frame—had been sent to Moscow by Pope Paul II., at the time when a marriage was proposed between the Great Prince and the daughter of Palæologos. On two of the walls were fixed oaken

cupboards for plate, &c., inlaid with gold; in which, through glass doors, might be seen silver cups, destined, it would seem, for the use of giants. Add to this two stoves with *lejánkas** of Dutch tiles, decorated with flowers and griffins—a most precious piece of furniture in those days. On a table between two windows was perched a green parrot in a pretty cage—languidly drooping its beak.

When Aristotle, who on this occasion served as interpreter, presented the physician, Iván Vassílievitch fixed a penetrating glance on the stranger—partially rose up from his chair, and extended his hand to the physician, which the latter kissed, kneeling on one knee. Immediately after the Great Prince had been thus polluted by heretic lips, they presented the ewer and basin; but the Prince, by a slight gesture, indicated to the boyárin whose duty it was to perform this service, that his office was not needed.

“O, but how young he is!” said Iván to Aristotle: “he hath no beard.”

* The stove—that universal appendage to a Russian room—is used as a bed by the peasants. It is therefore constructed in the cottages with a kind of broad platform, about a yard and a half above the floor, on which the peasant spreads his *shóuba*, and sleeps; this is called a *lejánka*, a lying-down place.—T. B. S.

“In wisdom and learning he hath outstripped his years,” replied the artist.

“Right! with you, in warm countries, men ripen sooner than with us. Ay, there came an ambassador from the Roman king—the knight Nicholas Poppel. He was even younger than this.”

Then he questioned the physician as to whether he was satisfied with the provisions that had been sent him—whether he wanted for any thing; and, when Antony satisfied him on his own account, he began a conversation with him about the state of Italy, the Pope, the political relations of those governments, and the opinion which they had of Russia. His sensible questions, and occasionally sensible answers, formed a singular contrast with the coarse forms of his age, his character, and country. Satisfied with Ehrenstein’s replies, he more than once repeated to Aristotle, with evident delight—“Thou art right: he is of the youngest; but he is early wise.” At length he turned the conversation to Antony’s methods of cure.

“How dost thou discover what aileth a man?” he enquired, turning to the physician.

“By what the pulse of the arm of itself informeth us, and by the appearance of the tongue,” replied Ehrenstein.

“Of that we will make instant trial,” said Iván Vassilievitch, and gave command that all the courtiers should immediately hasten to the chamber of audience.

They all entered, one after the other, pale, trembling, expecting something terrible from the suddenness of the order. They were commanded to stand in a single line, to open their mouths, and to hold out their hands. Even here was preserved the order of precedence, which had been shortly before introduced, and was strictly enforced. At this inspectorial parade, it was droll to behold the terror painted on their long faces: they could not have been in a less fright, if they had been preparing to undergo an operation. It was hardly possible to refrain from laughing at the singular collection of grimaces offered by the poor patients, as they protruded their tongues and held out their hands. One, with tears in his eyes, lolled forth his tongue, like a calf which they are preparing to slaughter: that of another trembled, like the fork of a serpent: a third opened his mouth wide, like a jaded horse when it yawns. The physician himself laughed in spite of all he could do. When the unfortunate wretches were informed that there was to be an inspection into the state of their health, in many of them the thought of being en-

chanted by the German sorcerer, acted so violently as to throw them into a fever: others hardly escaped a different disorder. They muttered all the prayers they knew: some, notwithstanding the glance of Iván was fixed upon them with all its electric terror, were forced by despair to cry aloud—"Lord, have mercy upon us!" "Lord, let thy servant depart in peace!" Antony made an inspection of each; to each, through the medium of Aristotle, he put the questions enjoined by his science; and he broke the chains of each in turn, with the sentence—that he was well, and in need of no medicine whatever. "The nightingale ceased its song, but still they listened on;" that is to say, the leech left off his examination, but all the patients continued to hold out their tongues and extend their shaking fists. The sovereign was obliged to order that both the one member and the other should be restored to its ordinary position. What sprinklings of holy water—what exorcisms awaited them at home! Terror long held these suffering worthies in its claws; but stronger than all it agitated Borodátii and—who would have thought it?—Mamón. For this reason, Antony wished to make some sport with them, and particularly with Mamón, for whom he felt an aversion.

“One hath no bile at all,” he said; “the other too much. In time, this superabundance and this deficiency may cause them a serious illness.”

“And is there no remedy for this?” asked Iván Vassílievitch.

“Yea, my lord; by transfusing the blood of one into the veins of the other,” answered Antony.

Mamón’s lips turned white, and trembled; the tiny deacon’s beard absolutely jumped.

“Jest not with the prince,” said Aristotle to his young friend: “would it be wonderful if he should desire to make trial of this horrible method on his boyárins?”

“But,” continued the leech, “the remedy which I have hinted at demandeth great caution, and is therefore perilous. In his last illness, Pope Innocent VIII. desired to have recourse to it. The experiment was first tried on three boys of ten years old; but as the trial did not at all succeed, and the boys died, the holy father would not consent to submit to it. All that can be done, therefore, is for the person who hath a superabundance of bile to be as quiet and tranquil as possible; and for him who hath a deficiency, to stir his blood by more frequent exercise.”

The Great Prince seemed much pleased with the knowledge and explanations of the physician: for which reason he gave an order to Mamón that all inhabitants of Moscow afflicted with any disease, should without delay present themselves to the court leech, or send for him to show him their tongue and hold out their hand. For the disobedient, a penalty was added.

“To business! I have in my house a patient,” said Iván Vassílievitch: “canst thou cure him?”

He rose from his chair and approached the parrot. The winged flutterer was really sick: a film was on his tongue. Iván Vassílievitch showed him to the physician, adding, that Phomínishna was very fond of him.

Antony blushed, and was hesitating whether to refuse to perform the fantastical desire of the Great Prince; but induced by a look from Aristotle, and by the thought, that to a woman—a weak, tender creature—her pet is very dear, he replied—“We must see his tongue too.”

“Nóvgorod and the Horde we have managed,” said the Great Prince; “but here what are we to do? The bird is not large; but we cannot make him do what doth not please him. Perhaps he will obey the Great Princess, whom he loveth much.”

“Love is ever stronger than power!” exclaimed Antony, inspired by the nobleness of his character, and his wish to commence the part of a friend to humanity, and counsellor to the Tsar, which his dreams had painted in such brilliant colours.

It might be thought, judging by the character of Iván, that the artist did not venture to translate this apophthegm of the incautious young man: but, on the contrary, he interpreted it exactly to the prince. Aristotle, on this occasion, well understood the Great Prince as posterity knew him, when it reproached Vassílii Ivánovitch with being unlike his father in this respect—viz. that the latter “*loved to meet with opposition, and favoured those who contradicted him.*” We must remark, however, that he loved opposition in words, but not in deeds.

“Is it so, fair youth?” cried the Great Prince laughing; “look ye; the parrot, though more reasonable than other birds, is yet, notwithstanding, caged; which proveth that he is not completely reasonable. ’Tis you, Germans, who imprisoned him. As for me, love and gentleness are excellent where all are children of one united, harmonious family, so reasonable that they understand the will of the father. ‘He desireth of us peace and order,’ they say, ‘for our own good;’ but what wilt thou say,

good youth, if, in the parent's absence, the prodigal children depart from their sire's house—if each, at his own pleasure, fenceth off a portion of their common inheritance—if they will neither hear nor obey their mother—if they even rage against her who gave them food and drink? The father's house is on fire—no man cometh to extinguish it; robbers come and plunder it—the children laugh. The sire cometh—how is he to curb them, unite them, bring them to order? By gentleness, think ye? The mother had tried that already No! by wisdom and power, by strength of soul. But when the father hath brought back the children to obedience, and they feel their fault—will not love then bring back peace on every side? It may be so: but we have not yet come to that, nor shall we soon come to it. Is it not true, Aristotle? Thou knowest our people better.”

Aristotle, pleased with the wise words of the Great Prince, confirmed his assertions, like a master who is well contented by the answers of a clever pupil at an examination. As if for a demonstration of his argument, the Sovereign seized the parrot by the head, and skilfully held it, while the bird submitted to the magic terror of his eye. The film was successfully removed by the leech.

The cure of the parrot, and the examination of the courtiers, did not conclude the trial of the physician. The Great Prince commanded him and Aristotle to wait in the middle izbá. Half an hour had not elapsed ere he came out to them in a shóuba and bonnet, and with a wave of his staff invited them to follow him.

At the Red Stairs was standing a *taphan* (a covered winter sledge,) to which were harnessed two *sanniks* (so they called horses in their winter caparison.) The pads were of velvet, the rings and plates on the pads and bridles were gilded. All this had been sent from Lithuania. The horses were driven by a postilion, riding on one of them. When Iván Vassílievitch was helped into the *taphan*, which might be recognized as the Great Prince's by the double-headed eagle fixed on the front, some of the guards rode before it, crying—"Make way, make way!" Six of the soldiers rode at the sides, guarding every moment the equipage from overbalancing, and supporting it with their bodies at any steep declivity; even a small inclination was dangerous, as the horses were harnessed to the carriage only by traces, and without a pole, (remark that the pole was considered by our ancestors as an accursed thing.) A number of boyárins rode behind, among whom were the

artist and the physician. They went at a foot's pace; the moment that the loud cry—"Make way, make way!" was heard, all who were passing in the street took off their caps and prostrated themselves on the ground.

"This slavish custom," said Aristotle to his young comrade, "was brought hither, with many similar ones, from the Tartars. Their domination corroded this country, as it were, with a strong rust; and the Russians will be long ere they wipe it off. Thus, the conquered—even in spite of themselves—acquire the character of the conquerors, notwithstanding the hatred they feel towards them."

"Happy is the conquered," replied Ehrenstein, "if his new master stand upon a higher step of civilization than himself. Woe to him if he fall under the rule of such as a Tartar! What cannot force do?"

"'Tis a pity that even what is good, even enlightenment, can only be infused into a rude people by a wise violence and an inflexible will; for this mass is indispensable a vigorous ruler, like him who is now riding before us. I counsel thee, my friend, to act for the good of humanity in this country no otherwise than through this powerful conductor."

“ Ay, thou and I have made a noble beginning of our achievements,” interrupted Antony, in a tone of irony; “ thou, preparing to erect a wondrous temple to the Mother of God, burnest bricks and mixest mortar; and I, though not, like thee, endowed with divine gifts, yet arriving here from a distant country to cast my mite into the treasury of science, I I cure parrots’ tongues, and feel the pulses of a crowd of courtly slaves ! Truly the beginning doth not promise much.”

“ Antonio—Antonio ! Is it thou that speakest thus But two days here—thy work not yet begun, and already thy young blood rebelleth against reason : the least inconvenience driveth thee far from thy noble aim. Is it thus men go to the combat for a crown of victory ! What wouldst thou have said, hadst thou been in my place ? Have I been deceived in thee ? Be that as it may, I recognize no more in thee than that firm soul that was but lately ready to battle with Destiny itself ! ”

“ I confess my fault, my noble friend ! I confess it. My mind still requireth support ; my education is not yet finished. O, be thou my guide, my preceptor ! Pardon my thoughtless words, and attribute them to the new impressions of these two days.

The execution of the Lithuanians—my host's causeless hatred—the estrangement of almost all the Muscovites, when I loved them beforehand so warmly—the parrot—the courtiers—the servility—all this hath turned my head.”

“ I warned thee that thou wouldst find thyself amidst an infant people, that thou wouldst be near the ruler of this people—a man great in many respects, but still belonging to his country and epoch; and even now—I will tell thee beforehand—we are riding to the prison. I am sure he wisheth to show thee his distinguished captives. This time, thou must pardon him as a ruler who desireth to show triumphantly how he hath succeeded, by force of his own mind, in binding with chains the terrible foes who so long kept Russia in discord and alarm. He is a Hercules, but still an infant Hercules. He rejoiceth that even in his cradle he hath strangled serpents; and he delighteth in exhibiting them dead or dying. I will add, remember the time in which we live, the country in which we are Remember the head of our own church, Paul II., who presided in person at the torture: remember Sixtus IV., Stephen of Moldavia, called his son, who made cripples of his prisoners: Galeazzo Sforza,

. . . . I will say no more. These examples are enough to pacify thy displeasure at the spectacle which awaiteth thee."

Aristotle had scarcely time to say this, when the *tapkan* entered the Court of the Prisons. The railings, bristling with spikes, rendered unnecessary any further defence of this place. The guards leaped from their horses, and the gloomy hold was opened in an instant. At the foot of the steps leading to the prison, they assisted the Great Prince to descend from the *tapkan*; the sentinels were all in motion. They consisted of guards who had *kissed the cross* as a pledge of the faithful performance of their duty. At the sight of the Great Prince they grasped their battle-axes, drew themselves up, took off their caps, and made a low obeisance. In the hall the penetrating glance of Iván seemed to mark every thing at once. Further on, when he entered the narrow passages, his eyes gleamed with a savage joy; he felt like the master of a *menagerie*, who is proud to show to worthy visitors the fierce animals he has caught and keeps in cages; and, indeed, the cells in which the prisoners were confined, resembled nothing so much as filthy dens.

"Aristotle," said the Great Prince, "explain to

our court leech what fowl are sitting in these coops; and let him examine them, to see how long they will live. The Tartars, thou wottest, I must in any case keep for the future. It may chance we may have to frighten others with them. And the woman, thou knowest, is even now ‘a sheep for the devil.’”

. . . .

This plain explanation, translated by Aristotle to Antony, promised the latter an opportunity of beginning the labours of benevolence, for which he had been preparing himself as he travelled to Moscow. In the first apartment they found a whole family of Tartars. Men and women—mothers and children—husbands and wives—all were piled pell-mell, some on benches, others on the ground. The filth and stench were insupportable. Their pale livid faces, their downcast haggard look, described their miserable condition more eloquently than words.

“Wouldst thou believe it,” said Aristotle, “that yonder lean wretch with saffron eyes, who hath just arisen before the Great Prince, was the Tsar of Kazán, Aleghám? His kingdom, not long since, was formidable to Russia—a few months past, a Muscovite general took him prisoner, and placed another Tsar on his throne. Admire here the

vicissitudes of human destiny. Not long ago he ruled a mighty kingdom, and now he hath not where to lay his head. To the ancestors of these Tartars the Russian princes paid homage—from them they begged permission to reign, they held their stirrup, they paid tribute to them. But now O, surely, kings ought to come hither to learn humility! But such is the blindness of man—thou see'st with what triumph the Great Prince beholdeth his prisoner. His liberation cannot be—ought not to be thought of. The entreaties of the Princes of Shibai and Nogai, his kinsmen, have had no success. There have been many discussions on this subject with Iván, in which they sent one another *heavy compliments* and *light gifts*. But the only gainer in this intercourse was Iván. He discovered the weakness of the Tartar princes, and perhaps found among them enemies to themselves. I know no ruler who so well knoweth how to take advantage of circumstances: I said that Aleghám's liberation was a thing not to be thought of; but, from what Iván himself hath hinted, I think we may endeavour to better his condition."

Conforming himself to this hint, the young physician said—"If the Great Prince desire that his

royal prisoner should live, he must transfer him with his family to a better and more spacious habitation, and give him the opportunity of breathing fresh air. If this be not done, I cannot answer for his life lasting more than a few weeks."

Iván Vassílievitch became thoughtful — "Ay, this man is still necessary to me," he continued half aloud; and ordered Mamón, who understood the Tartar language, as did many Russians in those days, to inform Aleghám that he would immediately send him with his two wives to Vológda, and his mother, brothers, and sisters, to Kargopól, on the Biáylo-Ozero. "There," added he, "he may walk about as he pleaseth. I will allow him for his subsistence a pittance of two *altines* * a-day."

When this was interpreted to Aleghám, the Tsar of Kazán threw himself at the feet of the Great Prince: his example was followed by all his family, except one of his wives. She was about to catch him by his robe, to restrain him from this slavish expression of gratitude, and cried out with indignation—"What wouldst thou do, Tsar of Kazán!" But Aleghám was already at Iván's feet, and the

* Russian money was anciently counted by "*altines*;" each *altine* contained three *kopéks*.—T. B. S.

Tsarina threw upon her husband a glance of profound contempt.

This woman afterwards became the wife of Tsar Makhmet Amín: she remembered the humiliation of her first husband, and succeeded in exciting her second against Iván.

A new apartment—Again remarkable prisoners—again Tartars—again proofs of Iván's wisdom and firmness, by which he had tranquillized the East. Shut up here were two brothers; one a hoary-headed old man, the other of an age bordering on that of his companion. Seated side by side, with their hands twined round each other's neck, they were gazing one another in the face. In that they beheld their country, their heaven, their kinsmen, and their friends—all that was most precious—that was lost to them for ever. In this attitude the Great Prince found them. Confused, they untwined their embrace, and remained seated.

“Thou wouldst have guessed that these two are brothers, even if I had not informed thee,” said Aristotle; “scions of that mighty power which wellnigh overwhelmed Russia, and was thus diverted from Europe. In fact, these are the brothers of Mengli-Ghiréi, Khan of the Crimea, and best friend

and ally of Iván. They are Nordooúlat and Aídár."

"Friend—ally?" enquired Antony with astonishment; "how reconcile that with their imprisonment?"

"I will tell thee more. Nordooúlat, the grey-haired man, who is gazing so bitterly at the Great Prince, served him in the war against the *Great* or *Golden* Horde, and its Tsar Akhmet—a war in which was decided the question, whether Russia was or was not to be the slave of the East; whether a new deluge of barbarians was to pour into Europe; but"

Here was heard the imploring voice of Andrióusha, Aristotle's son. Without being remarked, he had suddenly made his way to the side of the Great Prince, who was caressingly stroking his head.

"Make me a present, Iván Vassílievitch, of these two poor old men," said Andrióusha, fondling the stern ruler.

The Great Prince laughed, and asked the boy what he would do with the prisoners.

"I will give them their liberty, that they may bless thy name," replied Andrióusha.

"I grant it. Give these two their freedom," said

Iván Vassilievitch, turning to Mamón; “and send them to Vológda. Appoint them there an ample maintenance. This I do for the sake of my son’s godson.”

The intelligent boy took care to beg nothing more.

The artist and the physician thought that the Great Prince had decided on this generous conduct in consequence of overhearing their conversation, and subdued by the eloquent sorrow of Nordooúlat, once his faithful servant. Aristotle, however, was not surprised when the Great Prince took him aside, and added in a low voice—

“It was opportunely that Andrióusha spoke for them: the Khan of the Golden Horde entreateth me, through his ambassador, to send Nordooúlat to him. Methinks thou must have met of late an accursed Hebrew at my palace. That same Hebrew hath filched from the Khan’s ambassador a letter to Nordooúlat, and hath succeeded in replacing it unperceived. Even without a written letter, I should have straightway guessed their cunning plots. My friend Mengli-Ghiréi wellnigh got himself into the wolf’s mouth—Coward! he feared the threats of the Golden Horde, and sent to implore me to

liberate his brother, with whom he meaneth to reign conjointly. But I will show him he is wrong; and he himself will hereafter be glad at what I have done. The King of Poland inviteth Aidár; Nordooúlat is clever; Aidár is not, but dangerous notwithstanding. My foes have plotted craftily: in open daylight they would set a trap in sight of the fox. I will show them my tail: What! are we fools? We can count five on our fingers In Mengli-Ghiréi I have a faithful friend, and he will do as I would have him. They desire me to put in his place a man more fierce and clever; I shall have them safer at Vológda, where they can receive no more letters, and will never behold the Tartar's crafty face; but still I will keep my word to Andrióusha—at Vológda they shall be free."

These words, when translated to Antony, satisfactorily explained the Tsar's object in keeping in prison the brothers of Mengli-Ghiréi, the friend and ally of Iván, and found in the young man's heart an excuse for his tortuous policy.

A new apartment.

Here the Great Prince rapped with his staff at a grating; at the knock there looked out an old woman, 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."

"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 ye 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.

Thoughtfully departed the Great Prince from the dungeon; thoughtful, without looking round him, he passed softly by the abodes of the other prisoners; and when he felt the fresh air blowing on him, he crossed himself, bowing towards a neighbouring church, and ejaculated—“Wilt thou then judge thy servant Iván, and not the Prince of Moscow!”

At this moment, from the steps in front of the Black Izbá, there opened before the artist a view of the spot on which was to be built the Cathedral of the Annunciation: he grew thoughtful—his heart and soul flew thither.

“Hark thee, Aristotle,” said the Great Prince to him, laying his hand on the Italian’s shoulder: “thou

must prepare more of these railings. At night I mean to close up the streets with them from drunken and evil-disposed people.”

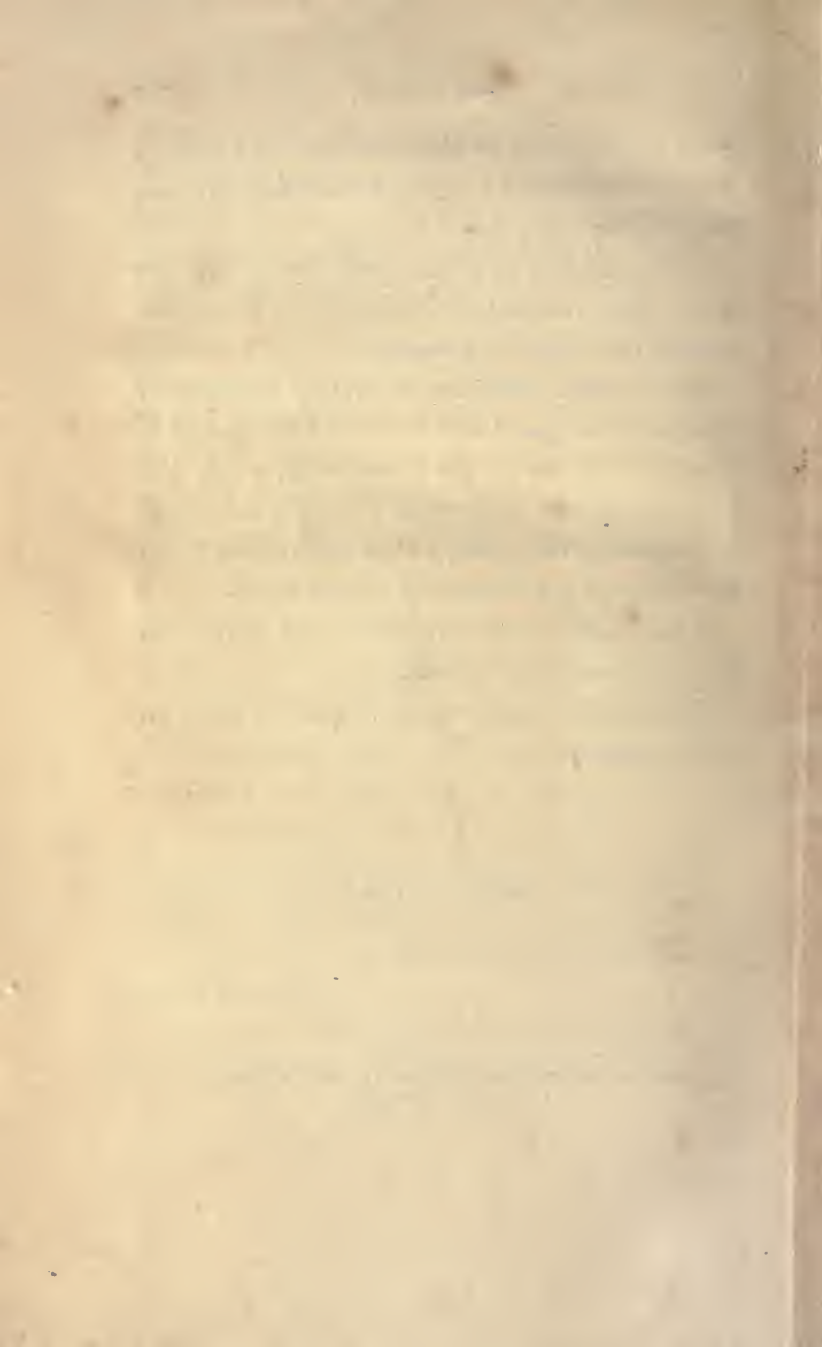
The artist fell, as it were from heaven into the mud. He turned red, then pale, glanced at his companion, and—said not a word.

On the road he related to Antony the story of Márpha of Nóvgorod, and how with her had died in Russia the vigour of the commonalty, which had been brought from Germany to Nóvgorod and Pskoff by the commercial spirit; but he said nothing about the subject of the Great Prince’s last words.

“Iván doth not always chant such a dirge of mercy?” remarked the leech.

By their side Andrióusha gaily pranced along on a fiery steed.

END OF VOL. I.







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Lazhechnikov, Ivan Ivanovich
The heretic

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