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ELIZABETH;

OR THE

EXILES OF SIBERIA.

N 104



ELIZABETH;

OR THE

EXILES OF SIBERIA,

A Tale, founded upon Facts.

FROM THE FRENCH OF
Mad. COTTIN.

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THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

The anecdote upon which this history is founded, is taken from truth: no imagination could form actions so heroic, sentiments so noble; the heart alone could inspire them.

The daughter who conceived the glorious design of delivering a father from exile, and carried it into execution, in defiance of all its various obstacles, really existed, nay, exists still: should my tale possess any attraction, to this fact I shall be indebted for it.

I have heard authors accused of representing virtue in too high a perfection: far am I from meaning

PREFACE.

to allude to myself, who possess not the abilities requisite to attain this brilliant if fanciful talent; but I do not conceive that any author can be endowed with eloquence sufficient to add a charm to the beauties of virtue. Virtue is in itself so far superior to all that can be said of it, that it might indeed appear impossible, could it be represented in its true light; the difficulty of this is what I have experienced in writing Elizabeth.

The real heroine is much above mine, and has gone through much more. In bestowing a guide upon Elizabeth, in terminating her journey at Moscow, I have taken away greatly both from her fatigue and danger; consequently
from

PREFACE.

from her merit; but as many know not what a child, at once dutiful, affectionate, and enterprising, is capable of performing in the service of a parent, had I related the whole truth, my tale might have been accused of improbability; and a recital of long fatigues, which had not power to exhaust the courage of a heroine of eighteen, might, however, have wearied the attention of my readers.

I must add that though the scene of the principal anecdote of this story is so far removed as Siberia, I have not extended my researches to so distant a spot for traits of filial piety, and still less for those of maternal tenderness.

ELIZABETH;

OR THE

EXILES OF SIBERIA.

THE town of Tobolskow, the capital of Siberia, is situated on the banks of the Irtish; it is bounded on the north by vast forests extending to the Frozen Ocean: this immense space of eleven hundred verstes is interspersed with rocky mountains, covered with perpetual snows; with barren plains, whose frozen sands have never received the impression of a human footstep, and immense rivers,

rivers, whose icy streams have never watered a meadow, nor opened to the sun-beam the beauties of a flower. On advancing farther towards the pole, not any of those noble productions of nature, whose lofty branches afford shelter to the weary traveller, are to be seen; brambles, heaths, and dwarf birches are the only ornaments of this desolate spot; farther still even these disappear; morasses, covered with green moss, offer themselves to the view, as the last effort of expiring nature, and beyond every trace of vegetation is lost; but here, amidst the horrors of eternal winter, nature exhibits some of her most majestic spectacles;—the aurora borealis, surrounding the horizon like a resplendent arch, emits columns of moving light, and frequently offers sights to these hyperborean regions, the wonders

ders of which are unknown to the inhabitants of the southern hemisphere. To the south of Tobolskow extends the tract of country called Ischim; plains, strewed with repositories of the dead, and divided by lakes of unwholesome water, separate it from the Kirguis, a wandering and idolatrous people. On the left it is bounded by the Irtysh, which, after numerous windings, is lost on the frontiers of China, and on the right by the Tobol. The banks of this river are barren, and consist chiefly of fragments of rocks, irregularly heaped, and surmounted by a few straggling firs: at their foot, in an angle of the Tobol, is the seignory of Saimka; its distance from Tobolskow is about six hundred verstes; situated in the extremest boundary of the circle, in the midst of a desert, its environs are gloomy as the som-

bre light that illumines them, and dreary as their climate.

Ischim is, nevertheless, entitled the Italy of Siberia, for it has its summer, a term of nearly four months; but the winter is rigorous to an excess. The north winds, which blow incessantly during that period, are so severe and penetrating, that from the month of September Tobolskow is paved with ice; a heavy snow falls upon the earth, and disappears no more until the end of May. But, from the time that it begins to dissolve, the celerity with which the trees shoot forth their leaves, and the fields display their verdure, is almost incredible; nature does not require more than three days to bring her plants to perfection; the blossoms of the birch exhale an odoriferous scent, and the wild flowers of the fields enamel

enamel the ground; flocks of wild fowl of various kinds, from the north, play upon the surface of the lakes; the white stork plunges among the rushes of the solitary marsh to build her nest, which she industriously plats with reeds; and the flying squirrel in the woods, cutting the air with his bushy tail, hops from tree to tree, and nibbles the buds of the pines and the tender foliage of the birch-trees. Thus for the natives of these cold regions there is a season of pleasure, but for the unhappy exiles who inhabit it there is none.

The greater number of these unfortunate sufferers reside in the villages situated on the borders of the river from Tobolskow to the boundary of Ischim; others are dispersed in cabins about the country. The state provides for some; but many are

abandoned to the scanty subsistence they can procure from the chace during the winter season, and all are objects of general compassion in the country they inhabit. Two or three verses from Saimka, in the centre of a marshy forest, upon the border of a deep circular lake, surrounded with black poplars, was the residence of one of these banished families; it consisted of three persons—A man about five and forty, his wife, and a young and beautiful daughter.

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Secluded in the desert, this family held no communication with any one; the father went alone to the chace; but neither had he, his wife, or daughter, been ever seen at Saimka. Except one poor Tartar peasant, who waited on them, no human being had admission to their dwelling. The Governor of Tobolskow only
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was informed of their birth, their country, and the cause of their banishment; the secret he had not even confided to the lieutenant of his jurisdiction, who was established at Saimka. In committing the exiles to his care, he had only given orders that they might be provided with a commodious lodging, a garden, food and raiment, accompanied with a strict charge to hinder them from any communications whatever, and particularly to intercept any letter they might attempt to convey to the court of Russia.

So much consideration, united to so much mystery and such strict precaution, raised a suspicion that the simple name of Peter Springer as well as one more illustrious, concealed misfortunes of no common nature, the result, perhaps, of some
great

great crime, or possibly caused by some cruel injustice.

But every endeavour to discover the secret having been ineffectual, curiosity was soon extinguished, and all interest in the fate of the new exiles died with it; they were never seen, and were soon forgotten: if, in pursuit of the chace, some straggler, penetrating into the forest, reached the lake, and enquired the name of the inhabitants of the hut upon its borders; that "they were unfortunate exiles," was the only answer he could obtain; and, on quitting the spot, a secret prayer that the Almighty might one day restore them to their country, was the tribute of compassion he bestowed. Peter Springer had built his little habitation himself; it was of the wood of fir-trees, thatched

thatched with straw; masses of rocks defended it from the rude blasts of the north wind and from the inundations of the lake. These rocks were of a soft peaking granite, which, in their exfoliation, reflected the rays of the sun; in the early days of spring, mushrooms sprung from their crevices; some of a pale pink, others of a saffron color, or of a greyish blue, like those of the lake Baikal; and in those cavities in which the hurricanes had thrown up the earth, shoots of pines and service trees buried their roots and raised their tender branches.

On the southern side of the lake, the forest consisted only of underwood, thinly spread, which left open to the view, the extensive plains beyond, covered with burying places and monuments of the dead; many had been pillaged, and the bones

bones were scattered over the ground: remains of a nation that had been consigned to eternal oblivion, had not the jewels and gold buried with its people in the bowels of the earth, revealed to avarice its existence.

West of this great plain, a little wooden chapel had been erected by the Christians; on this side, the tombs had been respected, under the cross which adorned it; the honored memorial of every virtue: men had not dared to profane the ashes of the dead. In these plains or steppes, (the name they bear in Siberia) Peter Springer, during the long and severe winter of this northern climate, spent his days in hunting: he killed pelks which feed on the leaves of the willow and poplar; sometimes caught martens, and more frequently ermines, which are
very

very numerous in that spot; with the money he obtained for their fur, he procured from Tobolskow different articles which might contribute to the comfort of his wife, or the education of his daughter. The long winter evenings were dedicated to the instruction of the young Elizabeth; seated between her parents, she read aloud some passage of history, while Springer called her attention to those parts which could elevate her mind, and Phedora, her mother, to all those which could render it tender and compassionate: one pointed out to her the beauties of heroism and glory, the other all the charms of piety and benevolence: her father reminded her of the dignity and sublimity of virtue, her mother of the support and consolation it affords; the first taught how highly to revere, the latter

ter how carefully to cherish it. From these combined instructions Elizabeth acquired a disposition equally heroic and gentle, uniting the courage and energy of Springer to the angelic mildness of Phedora; she was at once ardent and enterprising as the exalted ideas of honor she had imbibed could render her, docile and submissive as the votary of love.

As soon as the snow began to melt, and a slight shade of verdure appeared upon the earth, the whole family was employed in the culture of their garden; Springer turned up the ground, while Elizabeth sowed the seeds prepared by the hand of Phedora. The little enclosure was surrounded by hedge-rows of alder, of white cornel, and a species of birch, much esteemed in Siberia, as its blossom is the only one that yields a fragrant scent.

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At the southern side of his plantation, Springer had built a sort of green-house, in which he cultivated, with particular care, certain flowers foreign to the climate; when they came to perfection, he would gather them, and pressing them to his lips, ornament the brow of his daughter, saying, "Elizabeth, adorn thyself with the flowers of thy native country, their fate resembles thine; like thee they flourish in a foreign land. Oh! may thy end be more fortunate than theirs!"

Except during these moments of emotion, he was always calm and silent upon the subject of his misfortunes. For hours together he would continue buried in the deepest thought, seated in the same spot, his eyes fixed upon the same object. The caresses of his wife could not alleviate his grief, and the sight of his daughter seem-

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ed even to encrease it. He would sometimes take her in his arms, and pressing her to his bosom, exclaim, presenting her to her mother "Take her, Phedora; take thy child; her fate and thine rend my heart: Ah! why wouldst thou follow me? Hadst thou abandoned me to my own sufferings, hadst thou not insisted upon partaking of them, it seems to me that even in this desert I could have been content, knowing thee and my child to live happy and respected in our native land." The gentle Phedora wept for his distress; her looks, her words, her actions, all bore testimony to the tender, the sincere affection which attached her to her husband. She could have known no happiness separated from him; nor did she regret so forcibly their exile from their country, their fall from grandeur, when she reflected that

that high dignities, places of trust and danger, might have detained him at a distance from her: in exile he never quitted her; and therefore she could have almost rejoiced in banishment, but for the grief she endured at seeing the affliction of her soul's best beloved.

Although Phedora had passed the first season of youth, she was still beautiful; devoted to her Creator, her husband and her child, time could not efface the charms that innocence and virtue had imprinted on her countenance. She seemed to have been born for love in its greatest purity; and if such were her destiny, it had been fulfilled. Attentive to the most trifling wishes of her husband, she watched his looks to discover what could contribute to his comfort or pleasure, that she might execute his wish before he had expressed

pressed it. She prepared their repasts herself. Order, neatness, and comfort reigned in their little abode; the largest apartment it contained served as a sleeping room for herself and Springer; it was warmed by a stove; the walls were decorated with the drawings and work of Phedora and her daughter, and the windows were glazed—an unusual luxury in this country, and which they owed to the profit Springer derived from the chase. Two small rooms composed the rest of the hut; one was occupied by Elizabeth, in the other, where the garden and kitchen utensils were kept, slept their only attendant.

Their days were spent in domestic occupations, in making different articles of clothing out of the skins of the rein-deer, dyeing them with a preparation from the
bark

bark of the birch, or lining them with thick furs; but when Sunday arrived, Phedora secretly lamented being debarred from attending divine service, and spent great part of the day in prayer. Prostrate before the God of all consolation, she invoked him in behalf of the objects of her tenderness; and if her devotion daily increased, one of the principal causes was, that her ideas and her expressions became more eloquent and better adapted to bestow that consolation her husband so much required, in proportion as her soul became elevated by devotion.

The young Elizabeth knew no other country than that desolate one, which, from the age of four years, she had inhabited: in that she discovered beauties which nature bestows even upon those spots she has most neglected; and innocence finds pleasure every where; she

amused herself with climbing the rocks which bordered the lake, in search of the eggs of white vultures, who build their nests there during summer. Sometimes she caught wood-pigeons to fill a little aviary, and at others angled for the corrasines, which move in shoals, their purple shells, which lie against one another, appearing through the water like a sheet of fire covered with liquid silver. It never occurred to the happy days of her childhood that there could be a lot more blessed than her own. Her health was established by the keen air she breathed; and in her light figure were united agility and strength; while on her countenance, which was the emblem of innocence and peace, each day seemed to disclose to her fond parents some new charms. Thus, far removed from the busy world and from mankind, did this lovely

lovely maiden improve in beauty for the eyes only of her parents, to charm no heart but theirs: like the flower of the desert which blooms before the sun, and arrays itself in not less brilliant colors, because it is destined to shine only in the presence of that luminary to which it owes its existence.

The most fervent affections are those which are concentrated in few objects: thus Elizabeth, who knew no one besides her parents, (consequently could love no one but them,) loved them with a fervor that scarcely admitted of comparison; they were the protectors of her childhood, the partakers of her amusements, her only society; she knew nothing but what they had taught her; to them was she indebted for her talents, her knowledge, her studies, her recreations, and every thing; and feeling that without them

them she could do nothing, enjoy nothing, she delighted in a dependence that was felt only through the medium of the benefits resulting from it. When reason and reflection, however, succeeded to the carelessness of childhood, Elizabeth observed the tears of her mother, and perceived that her father was unhappy. She often entreated to be told the cause, but could obtain no other answer than that they regretted their country; but with the name of that country or the rank they held in it, they had never trusted her, fearing to excite a vain regret by informing her of the elevated rank from which they had been precipitated into banishment. From the time that Elizabeth discovered the affliction of her parents, her thoughts no longer flowed in the same train, and the whole tenor of her life was changed. The innocent amusements she had so
 much

much enjoyed, lost all their attractions; her aviary was neglected; her plants were forgotten: when she went down to the lake, it was no longer to cast the bait, or to navigate her little canoe, but to meditate profoundly upon a scheme which had become the sole occupation of her mind. Sometimes seated upon the point of a rock, her eyes fixed upon the waters of the lake, she reflected upon the griefs of her parents and on the means of alleviating them. They wept for their country; Elizabeth knew not where this country was, but that they were not happy out of it was sufficient; all her thoughts were directed to devise some plan for restoring them to it. She would then raise her eyes to Heaven to implore assistance, and would remain buried in a reverie so profound, that the snow, falling in large flakes, and beaten with violence against
 her

her by the wind, could not disturb it; but if her parents called, in an instant, she would descend lightly from the tops of the rocks to receive the lessons of her father, or to assist her mother in her domestic avocations. But with them or alone, whether engaged in reading or occupied with her needle, one only idea pursued her; one project held constant possession of her mind; this project she kept profoundly secret, resolved not to reveal it till the moment of her departure should arrive.

Yes: she determined to tear herself from the embraces of her parents—to go alone, on foot, to Petersburg, and to implore pardon for her father; such was the bold design which had presented itself to her imagination, such was the daring enterprize, the dangers of which could not daunt the heroic courage of a young and
timid

timed female. She beheld in their strongest light, many of the impediments she must overcome, but her confidence in God, and the ardor of her wishes, encouraged her, and she felt convinced that she could surmount them all. As her scheme, however, began to unfold itself, and she reflected upon the means of carrying it into execution, her ignorance could not fail to alarm her; she had never been beyond the forest she inhabited; how then could she find her way to Petersburg? how travel through countries inhabited by people who spoke a language unknown by her. She must live upon charity; to submit to this, she recalled to her aid those precepts of humility her mother had carefully inculcated; but her father had so often spoken of the inflexibility of mankind, that she dreaded a dependence
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ance upon their compassion. Elizabeth was too well acquainted with the tenderness of her parents, to indulge the hope that they would facilitate her journey. It was not to them she could in this instance have recourse. To whom then could she apply in a desert where she lived separated from the rest of the world? to whom address herself in a dwelling, the entrance to which was forbidden to every human being? Still she did not despair; the remembrance of an accident to which her father had nearly fallen a victim, had engraven upon her mind that there is no place so desolate in which Providence cannot hear the prayers of the unfortunate, and send them help.

Some years back Springer had been delivered from imminent peril, upon one of the high rocks which form a boundary
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to the Tobol, by the intrepidity of a young stranger. This youth was the son of M. de Smoloff, the Governor of Tobolskow; he came every winter to the plains of Ischim to hunt elks and martens, and sometimes bears, which haunt in great numbers the environs of Saimka. In this dangerous chace, he had met Springer, and had been the means of saving his life. From that day, the name of Smoloff had never been mentioned in the abode of the exiles but with reverence and gratitude; Elizabeth and her mother felt the most lively regret at not knowing their benefactor, that they might offer him their acknowledgements and benedictions; daily they offered them to heaven for him; and indulged the hope, at each return of the hunting season, that chance might lead him to their hut; but they
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hoped in vain; its entrance had been forbid to him, as to all, and he lamented not the restriction, as he was yet ignorant of the treasure this humble habitation contained.

Nevertheless, since Elizabeth had felt the difficulty in leaving the desert, without some human aid, her thoughts had often rested upon young Smoloff. Such a protector would have dissipated all her terrors, and might have vanquished all the obstacles that opposed her; who better calculated than he to give all the information she required respecting her journey from Saimka to Petersburg, to instruct her in the surest method of getting her petition delivered to the Emperor? and should her flight irritate the governor of Tobolskow, who more likely than a son to soften his resentment, move his com-
passion,

passion, and save her parents from being made responsible for the transgression of their child?

Thus did she reflect on all the advantages which might result from such a support; and as winter approached, she formed a resolution not to let the hunting season pass away without taking some measures to inform herself whether young Smoloff were in the country, and if so, of seeking an opportunity of seeing and speaking to him.

Springer had been so much affected by the terror of his wife and daughter at the recital of the danger he had incurred, that he had promised never again to engage in the bear-hunt, nor to extend his walks beyond the plain but in pursuit of squirrels or ermines. Notwithstanding this promise, Phedora could not

see him depart for a distance without terror, and till his return she continued in a state of agitation and anxiety, as if his absence had been the presage of some calamity.

A heavy snow, congealed into a solid mass by a frost which had raised the thermometer above thirty degrees, covered the earth, when on a fine morning of the month of December, Springer took his piece, and prepared for the chase. Before his departure he embraced his wife and daughter; and promised to return before the close of day; but the hour had passed, night approached, and Springer came not. Since the adventure which threatened his life, this was the first time he had failed in the strictest punctuality, and the terror of Phedora knew no bounds: Elizabeth, while she partook of it, sought every means to tranquillize

tranquillize her; she would have flown to seek and succour her father, but she had not resolution to leave her mother in the agony in which she beheld her. At length, however, the delicate and fearful Phedora, who had never been beyond the banks of the lake, roused to exertion by the violence of her alarm, resolved to accompany her daughter, and, could she find her husband, to incur any danger in offering him assistance. They went together through the underwood of the forest, towards the plain; the air was severe in the extreme; the firs appeared like trees of ice; their branches were hid under a thick covering of hoar frost; a mist obscured the horizon; night's near approach gave to each object a still gloomier shade, and the ground, smooth as a mirror, refused to support the steps

of the trembling Phedora. Elizabeth, reared in this climate and accustomed to brave the extremest severity of weather, assisted her mother and led her on. Thus a tree transplanted from its native soil, languishes in a foreign land, while the young suckling that springs from its root habituated to the new climate, acquires strength, flourishes, and in a few years sustains the branches of the trunk that nourished it, protecting by its shade the tree to which it is indebted for existence. Before Phedora could reach the plain, her strength totally failed; "My dear mother, rest here," said Elizabeth, "and let me go alone to the edge of the forest; if we stay longer, the darkness of the night will prevent me from distinguishing my father in the plain." Phedora supported herself against a fir, while her daughter hastened

ened forward; in a few seconds she attained the plain; some of the monuments with which it is interspersed are very high; Elizabeth, standing upon one of them, her eyes dimmed with tears, gazed around in vain for her father; all was still and lonely; the obscurity of night began to render the search useless; terror almost suspended her faculties, when the report of a gun restored her hopes. She had never heard this sound but from the hand of her father, and to her, it appeared a certain sign that he was near; she rushed towards the spot from whence the noise proceeded, and behind a pile of rocks, discovered a man in a bending posture, apparently seeking something on the ground. "My father, my father, is it you?" she exclaimed; he turned hastily; it was not Springer; his countenance

countenance was youthful, and his air noble; at the sight of Elizabeth, he stood amazed. "Oh! it is not my father," resumed she with anguish, "but perhaps you have seen him on the plain? Oh! can you tell me where to find him?"—"I know nothing of your father," answered the stranger; "but surely, you ought not to be here alone, at this unseasonable hour; you run great hazard, and should not venture."—"Oh!" interrupted she, "I fear nothing but losing my father." As she spoke, she raised her eyes to heaven; their expression revealed at once firmness in affliction, dignity united with softness; they expressed the feelings of her soul, and seemed to foretell her future destiny. The stranger had never seen, his imagination had never painted a vision like Elizabeth; he almost believed himself

himself in a dream. When the first emotions of surprise had subsided, he enquired the name of her father; "Peter Springer," she replied.—"How!" he exclaimed, "you are the daughter of the exile residing in the cabin on the lake side! be comforted; I have seen your father; it is not an hour since he left me; he was to make a circuit, but must be at home ere this."

Elizabeth listened no longer, but flew towards the spot where she had left her mother, and called her with the voice of joy, that the sound might re-animate her, before she could explain its cause; but Phedora was gone; the terrified Elizabeth made the forest resound with the names of her parents: a well-known voice answered her from the lake-side; she redoubled her speed, arrived at the hut, and

and found her father and mother at the door, their arms held forth to receive her; mutual embraces were followed by mutual explanations, each of them had returned home by a different road, but all were now united and happy. Not till then did Elizabeth perceive that the stranger had followed her; Springer immediately recognised him, and said with profound regret, "M. de Smoloff, it is very late; but alas! you know I am not permitted to offer you an asylum here even for a single night."—"M. de Smoloff!" exclaimed Elizabeth and her mother, "our deliverer! is it indeed he whom we behold?" They fell at his feet; and while Phedora, unable to express her acknowledgements, bathed them with her tears, Elizabeth addressed him thus: "M. de Smoloff, three years have now elapsed,
since

since you saved my father's life, during that period, not a day has passed, in which our fervent prayers have not been offered up to the Almighty to beseech him to reward and bless you."—"Your prayers then have been heard;" answered Smoloff with the most lively emotion, "since he has deigned to guide my footsteps to this blessed abode; the little good I did, deserved not such a reward."

It was now night, profound darkness enveloped the forest; a return to Saimka at this hour would not be unattended by danger, and Springer knew not how to refuse the rights of hospitality to his deliverer; but he had pledged his honor to the Governor of Tobolskow not to receive any one under his roof, and to fail in his word solemnly given was a dreadful alternative. He proposed therefore to the
youth

youth to accompany him to Saimka. "I will take a torch," said he; "I am well acquainted with every turn of the forest, and all those places we must avoid, and fear not to conduct you safely." The terrified Phedora rushed forward to prevent him; and Smoloff addressing him respectfully, "Permit me, sir," said he, "to solicit a shelter in your hut till break of day; I know what are my father's injunctions, and the motives which compel him to shew you so much severity; but I am certain that he would allow me on this occasion to release you from your promise, and I will engage to return shortly to thank you in his name, for the asylum you will have granted me." Springer conquered his scruples; he took the young man by the hand, conducted him into his cabin, and placing him near the stove, seated

seated himself by his side, while Phedora and her daughter prepared their repast.

Elizabeth was dressed, according to the costume of the peasants of Tartary, in trowsers made of the skin of the reindeer, and a short petticoat of crimson stuff, looped up; while her hair, falling in graceful ringlets, reached almost to the ground; a close vest, buttoned on the side, displayed to advantage the elegance of her form, and her sleeves, turned back above the elbow, discovered her beautiful shaped arm; the simplicity of her dress seemed to enhance the mild dignity of her manners, and all her gestures were accompanied with a grace, which did not escape the observation of Smoloff, who, as he watched her, experienced an emotion he had never felt before. Elizabeth beheld him with equal delight, but it

was a delight pure as her mind, founded on the gratitude she owed him, and on the hope of his assistance she had so long indulged. That Power who dives into the inmost recesses of the heart, beheld not in that of Elizabeth a single thought which had not for its object the happiness of her parents; for to them it was devoted, to the exclusion of every other earthly attachment. During the collation, young Smoloff informed his companions that he had been three days at Saimka, and had been informed there that a great number of ravenous wolves infested the neighbourhood, and it was in contemplation to commence a general chase, in the course of a few days, for the purpose of destroying them; at this intelligence Phedora changed color. "I hope," said she, addressing her husband, "I hope you will not join in this dangerous diversion,

diversion; Oh! do not expose your life, the greatest of my blessings."---"Alas, Phedora, what is it you say?" exclaimed Springer, with a sensation of grief he could not repress. "Of what value is my life? Were I gone, would it be any longer your destiny to remain in this desolate place? Do you not know what would restore liberty to yourself and to your child? Do you not know—" Phedora interrupted him with an exclamation expressive of the anguish of her soul; Elizabeth rose from her seat, and approaching her father, took one of his hands; "My father," said she, "you know that, reared in this forest, I am ignorant of every other country; with you, my mother and I are happy; in losing you, our happiness would be lost. I answer for her, as for myself, without
you

you, we could not be happy in any situation of the globe; no, not even in that country you so much regret."---"You hear her, M. de Smoloff," said Springer; "and you think these words should bring me comfort; on the contrary, they plunge the poniard of grief still deeper in my bosom; that virtue, which should be my delight, creates new pangs when I reflect that it must lie buried in this desert, a sacrifice to me; my Elizabeth will never be known, never meet with the admiration, the love so justly her due." His daughter hastily interrupted him; "Oh my father! placed between my mother and you, can you tell me I am not loved?" Springer, unable to moderate his affliction, continued thus---"Never wilt thou enjoy that happiness I receive from thee; never wilt thou hear the voice of a be-
loved

loved child addressing thee in angelic words of consolation; thy life will be spent without a companion, without any of the tender, the endearing ties of life, like a bird wandering in a desert. Innocent victim! thou knowest not the blessings which are debarred thee; but I, who no longer possess the power of bestowing them upon thee, I know and feel, how deeply feel, their value!" during this scene, young Smoloff had in vain endeavoured to repress his tears; they had fallen more than once; he had attempted to speak, but his voice refused utterance; at last, after a pause of some minutes, "Sir," said he, "from the melancholy office my father holds, you must be well aware I am not a stranger to the sight of distress; often have I travelled through the different districts under his extensive jurisdiction.

tion. What lamentations have I heard! what solitary wretchedness have I witnessed! In the deserts of the dreary Berisow, I have seen men who possessed not in the wide world a single friend, who never received a caress, nor heard the soothing language of consolation; isolated, separated from all mankind, they were not merely banished, their misery admitted of no alleviation."—"And when Heaven has spared thee thy child," interrupted Phedora, addressing her husband in an accent of tender reproach, "shouldst thou complain so bitterly? Had she been taken from thee, what wouldst thou have done?" Springer shuddered at the idea; he seized his daughter's hand, and, pressing it to his heart with that of his wife, he said, regarding them both tenderly, "Ah! Heaven be my witness how
strongly

strongly I feel that I am not bereft of all.

As soon as the morning dawned, young Smoloff took leave of the exiles; Elizabeth saw him depart with regret, for she was impatient to reveal her project to him, and to implore his assistance: not a moment's opportunity had presented itself for her to speak to him in private: her parents had never quitted the apartment, and she could not address him unobserved in their presence; she hoped, however, should she see him often, to be more fortunate; and therefore, as he took leave, said, in the most anxious manner, "Will you not come again, M. de Smoloff? Ah! promise me, that this is not to be the last time I am to see the deliverer of my father." Springer was surpris'd at this address, but still more at the manner
with

with which it was pronounced, and felt a secret uneasiness. He reflected upon the orders of the Governor, with a resolution not to disobey them a second time. Smoloff replied to Elizabeth's request, that he was certain of obtaining from his father an exception in his favor, and should go that very day to solicit it. "But, Sir," said he to Springer, "when I am asking this favor for myself, can I not say any thing from you? Is there any thing you wish for?"—"No, Sir," answered Springer, with unusual gravity, "nothing."—His guest looked down dejectedly; then addressing himself to Phedora, repeated his question in nearly the same terms. "Sir," she replied, "I should be glad if he would allow me and my daughter to go to Saimka, on Sundays, to hear mass." Smoloff undertook to obtain this permission,

permission, and departed, with the benedictions of the whole family, and the secret wishes of Elizabeth for his speedy return. During his walk back to Saimka, Smoloff thought only of her. His imagination had been forcibly struck at her first appearance in the desert; his heart had been deeply interested in the scene which he had witnessed afterwards between her and her parents, he recalled to his memory every word she had uttered; her looks, her manner; and his mind dwelt particularly upon the last words he had heard her utter. Without this last address, a sort of respect, approaching to veneration, would perhaps have deterred him from presuming to love her; but the eagerness with which Elizabeth had expressed a desire of seeing him again, the tender sentiment by which

her

her request had been accompanied, could not fail to excite a suspicion in his mind that she had been actuated by feelings similar to his own. His youthful imagination dwelt upon the thought, and persuaded him that no common chance had brought about the adventure of the preceding evening, and that a mutual sympathy existed now between them; he was impatient to read, in the innocent heart of Elizabeth, a confirmation of all his hopes. How far was he from imagining the sentiments he was destined, on a future day, to discover there!

Since Smoloff's visit to the hut, Springer's melancholy seemed to have increased. He reflected upon the generosity, the intrepidity, the gentleness of character this young man appeared to possess; and it was ever present to his mind

mind, that such was the companion he would have chosen for his daughter; but her situation interdicted the thought; and far from being desirous of seeing Smoloff again, he dreaded his return; for it would have been a far more insupportable affliction than any he had yet experienced to see his child pining under the grief of hopeless love.

One evening, plunged in deep dejection, his head supported by his hand, while his elbow rested on his knee, he breathed a heavy sigh; Phedora's needle fell from her hand, and, fixing her eyes upon her husband, with an expression of the most heartfelt commiseration, she implored Heaven to inspire her with some argument that might banish vain regret, and pour the balm of consolation into his wounded soul. Elizabeth observed them

them both from a further corner of the apartment, and felt a secret joy as she reflected that a day might possibly come when she should be able to restore them to happiness. She doubted not that Smoloff would encourage and facilitate her enterprize; a secret instinct assured her that he would be moved by it, and would assist her; but she feared the refusal of her parents, and particularly that of her mother.

Nevertheless, to depart without their knowledge, would be repugnant to her feelings, nay, would be impossible, as she knew not the name of their country, nor the nature of the offence for which she was to supplicate forgiveness: it was necessary then to discover to them her intention, and the present seemed to be a fit moment for the disclosure. She bent
a knee

a knee to the ground, to implore aid from the Almighty, and that he would incline her parents to grant her suit; then approaching her father, she stood behind him, leaning upon the back of the chair on which he was seated, and remained silent for some moments, in the hope that he would perceive and speak to her, but he continued in the same dejected attitude, and she broke the silence thus: "My father, will you permit me to ask you a question?" He raised his head, and made a sign that she might proceed. "When M. de Smoloff asked you, the other day, if you wished for any thing, you answered, no: is it true, that there is nothing you wish for?"—"Nothing that he could procure me."—"And who then could grant your wish?"—"The hand of justice."—"My father, where
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is it to be found?"—"In Heaven, my child; but if you mean upon earth,—no where." As Springer ceased speaking, a deeper gloom overcast his brow, and he resumed his melancholy position. After a short pause, Elizabeth again broke silence thus. "Father, mother," said she, in a tone of animation; "hear me; I have this day compleated my seventeenth year; this was the day on which I received from you a being which will be valuable indeed in my estimation, if to you I am allowed to devote it: to you whom my soul reveres and cherishes, as the living images of my Creator. From the time of my birth, not a day has passed away, unmarked by your benefits unendeared by tokens of your love; hitherto, the only return in my power to make has been gratitude and tenderness; but what

what avails gratitude, if it be not shewn? what avails tenderness, if I cannot prove it?—Oh! my beloved parents, pardon the temerity of your child; once in her life she would do for you, what, from the hour of her birth, you have so unceasingly done for her. Condescend then to entrust her with the secret of your misfortunes."—"My child, what wouldst thou ask?" interrupted her father.—"That you would inform me of as much as it is needful for me to know, to be able to prove the tenderness I feel: Heaven bear testimony to the motive which induces me to make this request." As she uttered these last words, she fell on her knees before her father, and raised her eyes towards him, with a look of the most moving supplication. An expression so noble shone through the tears that in-

undated her countenance, and the heroism of her soul reflected an air so angelic over the humility of her attitude, that a suspicion of her intention instantaneously darted across the mind of Springer. Unable to shed a tear, or breath a sigh, he remained silent, motionless, struck with a sort of awe, like that which the presence of an angel might have inspired: no circumstance attending his misfortunes had ever had power to move his soul to such a degree as the words Elizabeth had uttered; and his firm spirit, unbroken by adversity, was subdued by the voice of his child, and attempted in vain to strive against the emotions that overpowered it.

While Springer continued silent, Elizabeth remained upon her knees before him; her mother approached to raise her: seated

seated behind her daughter, Phedora had not seen the motion or the look, which had revealed her secret to her father, and was still far from imagining the trial her tenderness was threatened with. "Why," said she, "why do you hesitate to confide in your child the history of our misfortunes? Is it her youth that deters you? Can you fear that the soul of our Elizabeth will suffer itself to be weakly depressed by the knowledge of our reverse of fortune?"

"No," replied the father, looking steadfastly on his daughter, "no, it is not weakness I apprehend from her." From these words, with the look which accompanied them, Elizabeth doubted not that her father had understood her: she pressed his hand in silence, that he alone might

comprehend her meaning; for she knew the heart of her mother, and was glad to retard the moment in which it must be afflicted. "Oh, Heaven!" exclaimed Springer, "pardon me that I have dared to repine: I knew the blessings of which I was deprived, but knew not those thou hadst in store for me. Elizabeth, in this one happy day, thou hast made amends for twelve years of suffering."—"My father," she replied, "say not again there is no real happiness on earth, when the child of such a parent can be blessed with hearing words like these. But, speak---tell me, I conjure you, your name, that of your country, and the cause of your unhappiness?"—"Unhappiness! I am unhappy no longer: my country is wherever I can live with my daughter: the name in which I place
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my greatest glory, that of the father of Elizabeth."—"Oh, my child!" interrupted Phedora, "I did not think the tenderness I bore thee could admit of increase; but thou hast afforded consolation to thy father." At these words Springer's firmness was entirely subdued: he burst into tears, and, pressing his wife and daughter to his heart, repeated, in a voice broken with sobs, "Pardon, O Most High, pardon an ingrate, who presumed to murmur at thy decrees, and withhold the chastisements his temerity has deserved." When these violent emotions had subsided, Springer said to his daughter, "My child, I give you my word that I will inform you of every particular you wish to know: but you must wait some days: I cannot speak of my
suffer-

sufferings at the moment you have taught me to forget them."

The gentle Elizabeth ventured not to press him further, determining to wait with deference till he should feel inclined to give the information he had promised; but she waited for that moment in vain; Springer appeared to dread it, and to avoid her; he had guessed her intention; and though no language could express the gratitude and admiration of this fond parent, his tenderness would not allow him to grant the consent he knew she would entreat; nor did he consider himself endued with a right to refuse it. This was indeed the only resource from which he might hope to be re-established in his rights, and to replace Elizabeth in the rank to which she was born: but when he reflected upon the
fatigues

fatigues she must undergo, the dangers she must incur, the idea was insupportable. Willingly would he have sacrificed his own life to re-establish his family and to behold his country once again, but to risk that of his daughter was a trial to which he felt his courage was not equal.

The silence of her father taught Elizabeth the conduct she should pursue: she was certain that he had penetrated into her design, and had been more deeply affected by it than she had ever seen him; but had it met his approbation, would he with so much precaution have avoided speaking to her upon the subject? Indeed, when she considered her scheme it seemed so impracticable, that she feared her parents would only regard it as the effusion of filial enthusiasm. In order
then

then to place this project in a point of view more favourable to its execution, she must represent it divested of some of the greater obstacles by which it was opposed, and to this end must solicit the advice and assistance of Smoloff: with a determination, therefore, to maintain a silence upon the subject, and not to disclose the secret entirely to her parents till she had conversed with him, she waited impatiently for his return.

Elizabeth foresaw that one of the strongest reasons that would withhold her parents' consent would be the difficulty of undertaking to travel eight hundred miles on foot in the severest climate of the earth. To lessen this difficulty as much as possible, and to prepare herself for hardship and fatigue, she exercised her strength daily in the plains of Ichim.

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Whether the snow, drifted by the wind, beat against her with a violence that opposed her passage, or a thick mist concealed almost the path before her, she relinquished not her resolution, sometimes in contradiction even to the wishes of her parents, accustoming herself by degrees to endure the inclemency of weather and their disapprobation.

Siberia is subject to sudden storms: frequently during the winter season, when the sky appears the most serene, dreadful hurricanes arise instantaneously, and obscure the atmosphere. They are impelled from the opposite sides of the horizon, and when they meet, the strongest trees in vain oppose their violence: in vain the pliant birch bends to the ground; its flexible branches with their trembling leaves are broken and thrown down: the
snow

snow rolls from the tops of the mountains, carrying with it enormous masses of ice, which break against the points of the rocks: they break in their turn; and the wind, carrying away the fragments, together with those of the falling huts, in which the trembling animals have in vain sought refuge, raises them high in the air, and, dashing them back to the earth, sows the ground with the ruins of nature.

One morning in the month of January Elizabeth was overtaken by one of these terrible storms; she was in the plain near the little chapel; and as soon as the sudden obscurity of the sky presaged the approaching tempest, sought shelter under its venerable roof: the furious wind soon attacked this feeble edifice, and, shaking it to its foundation, threatened every

every instant to level it with the ground. Elizabeth, bending before the alter, felt no fear: the storm she had heard destroying all around her, created no sensation in her breast but that of a reverential awe, caused by a natural reflection on the Omnipotent Being from whose hand it came. As her life might be serviceable to her parents, she felt a confidence that Heaven would, for their sake, watch over and guard it, till she had delivered them from suffering. This sentiment, approaching almost to superstition, created by the fervor of her filial piety, inspired Elizabeth with a tranquillity so perfect, that in the midst of warring elements, with the thunderbolts of Heaven falling around her, she yielded calmly to the heaviness which oppressed her, and, lying down at the foot

of the altar, before which she had been offering up her prayers, fell into a slumber, secure and peaceful as that of innocence reposing on the bosom of a father.

On this very day, Smoloff returned from Tobolskow; on arriving at Saimka, his first care was to repair to the habitation of the exiles. He brought the permission Phedora had solicited; her daughter and herself were at liberty to attend divine service at Saimka every Sunday; but so far from extending this indulgence to Springer, the orders of the court regarding him were more strict than ever; and in allowing young Smoloff to see him once more, the Governor of Tobolskow had consulted his feelings rather than his duty: but this visit was to be the last; of this his father had ex-
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acted a solemn promise. Smoloff was grieved to the soul at so much severity; but as he drew near the dwelling of Elizabeth, his melancholy dispersed; he thought less of the pain of taking leave under the cruel restriction imposed upon him than of the delight he should experience in seeing her again.

In the first ardent pursuit that occupies the youthful mind, the enjoyment of the present felicity is so animated, so complete, that it obliterates all idea of futurity, and engrosses the soul so entirely, that no room is left for the anticipation of future distress; happiness is a sensation too delightful in youth to admit of a thought upon the instability of its duration. But when upon entering the cabin Smoloff looked around for Elizabeth in vain, and reflected that he might not be

able to prolong his visit till her return, his disappointment was too apparent to escape the most superficial observation. In vain did Phedora address him in the most affecting terms of gratitude, blessing the hand which had re-opened for her the house of God, as well as preserved the life of her beloved. In vain did Springer call him the protector, the comforter of the afflicted; he appeared nearly insensible to their discourse, and in the little he spoke, the name of Elizabeth every instant escaped his lips. His evident embarrassment partly betrayed the situation of his heart, and the disclosure rendered him dearer to that of Phedora; the love of which her daughter was the object, could not fail to flatter her pride, the indulgence of which yields the highest gratification, the pride of a mother.

Springer,

Springer, less open to this tender weakness, and fearing only that his daughter would discover those sentiments which might disturb her peace, reminded Smoloff of the obedience due to his father, with the hope of putting an end to a visit which, by divers pretences, Smoloff sought to prolong. It was at this period that the storm arose; the parents trembled for the safety of their child. "Elizabeth! Oh, Elizabeth! What will become of my Elizabeth?" exclaimed the agonized mother. Springer took his stick in silence, and went to seek his daughter; Smoloff rushed after him: the tempest raged with the most terrific violence on every side; the trees were torn up by the roots, and an attempt to cross the forest was attended by the most imminent danger. Springer remonstrated

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with Smoloff, and endeavoured to deter him from following, but in vain; Smoloff saw all the danger, but rejoiced that an opportunity should offer for him to encounter such for the sake of Elizabeth: he would give a proof of an affection he would have scarcely dared to declare to its object.

They were now in the middle of the forest. "On which side shall we turn?" asked Smoloff.—"Towards the plain," Springer replied; "she walks there every day, and has probably taken shelter in the chapel." They said no more; their anxiety was equal; stooping to shelter their heads from the blows of the broken boughs, and of the fragments of rock which the wind scattered about, they walked forward as fast as the snow, which beat in their faces, would permit.

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On gaining the plain, the danger with which they had been menaced from the falling of the trees ceased; but in this exposed situation, they were sometimes driven backwards, and at others thrown down by the violence of the tempest. At last they reached the little chapel, in which they hoped Elizabeth had taken refuge; but when they beheld this dangerous shelter, the walls of which consisted only of slightly joined planks, that seemed ready every instant to fall, and become a pile of ruins, they began to shudder at the idea that she might be within them. Animated with renewed ardour, Smoloff leaves Springer some steps behind—he enters first; he sees—Is it a dream?—he sees Elizabeth, not terrified, pale, and trembling, but in a peaceful sleep before the altar. Struck with

with unutterable surprise, he stops, points out to Springer the cause of his amazement, and both, impelled by similar sentiments of veneration, fall on their knees by the side of the angel sleeping under the special protection of heaven. The father bent over his child, while Smoloff, casting down his eyes, retired some steps, not presuming to approach too near to such supreme innocence.

Elizabeth awoke, beheld her father, and, throwing herself into his arms, exclaimed, "Ah! I knew thou watchedst over me." Springer pressed her to his heart with indescribable emotion. "My child," said he, "into what agonies hast thou thrown thy mother and me!" — "Oh, my father! pardon me for causing those tears," answered Elizabeth, "and let us hasten to relieve the terrors
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of my mother." In rising she perceived Smoloff, "Ah!" said she, in gentle accents of pleasure and surprise; "all my protectors have then been watching over me: Heaven, my father, and you." With extreme difficulty did her delighted lover repress the emotions of his heart.

Springer resumed. "My dear child," said he, "thou talkest of rejoining thy mother, but dost thou know whether it will be possible? whether thou wilt be able to resist the violence of a tempest that M. de Smoloff and I seem to have escaped from but by a miracle." — "I will try," answered she; "my strength is greater than you think; and I rejoice in an opportunity which enables me to shew you how much it is capable of performing when the consolation of my mother calls forth its exertion."

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As she spake unwonted courage beamed in her eyes; and Springer perceived that her enterprise was far from being relinquished; she walked between her father and Smoloff, who supported her together, and sheltered her head with their wide mantles. How much did Smoloff rejoice in that boisterous wind which obliged Elizabeth to trust to him for support! He thought not of his own life, which he would gladly have exposed a thousand times to prolong those moments; he feared not even for that of Elizabeth, which, in the extasy that possessed him, he would have defied the elements combined to hinder him from preserving.

The sky now began to resume its serenity, the clouds dispersed, and the wind ceased by degrees; Springer recovered his spirits, but those of Smoloff were depressed;

pressed; Elizabeth withdrew her arm, and chose to walk on unassisted, for she was desirous of braving, before her father, the remainder of the storm; she was proud of her strength, and eager to display before him a proof of it; with the hope of convincing him that it would not fail when she should undertake to obtain his pardon, were it necessary to go to the remotest extremity of the earth to seek it.

Phedora received them with transports of joy and tenderness, blessing Heaven that had restored them to her; she comforted her daughter, who grieved for the tears she had caused, dried her dripping garments, and, taking off her fur bonnet, smoothed her long hair. For these maternal cares, so tender though trivial, which Elizabeth received daily from the hands

hands of her mother, her affectionate heart became each day more grateful; young Smoloff was affected at witnessing them; and felt that in becoming the husband of Elizabeth, it would be a happiness scarcely inferior to become the son of the amiable Phedora.

The storm was now entirely subsided, and night began to spread its dark shade over the cloudless sky. Springer pressed the hand of his guest, and, with a mixed sensation of sorrow and tenderness, reminded him it was time to depart. Elizabeth then learned, for the first time, that he was come to take a farewell.—The color forsook her cheeks at the intelligence, and her embarrassment was visible. “What,” said she to him, “shall I see you no more then?”—“Oh, yes!” replied he eagerly, “as long as you in-
habit

habit these deserts, and I am free, I shall stay at Saimka, I shall see you at church whenever you come, and I shall see you on the plain, upon the banks of the lake, wherever this happiness is allowed me.” He stopped suddenly, astonished himself at his feelings, and at what he had uttered: but Elizabeth did not understand him: in all he had said she only remarked the certainty of their meeting again, and that she should be able to consult him upon her enterprise. Comforted by these hopes, she took leave of him with less regret.

When Sunday arrived, Elizabeth and her mother prepared to depart early for Saimka. Springer bade them adieu with a degree of regret. This was the first time since his exile that he had remained alone in the hut; but he concealed this
H sensation,

ensation, and blessed them with composure, recommending them to the protection of the Supreme Being they were going to invoke. The weather was fine; the young peasant served them as a guide through the forest of Saimka; its distance appeared short. On entering the church every eye was turned towards them; but theirs were reverently cast down, while their hearts were fixed upon God alone. They advanced to the altar, and, bending before it, offered up their supplications for the same object; and if those of Elizabeth were more comprehensive than Phedora's, the Beneficent Being who beheld their intentions heard them with equal indulgence.

During the time the ceremony lasted Elizabeth did not throw back her veil; her thoughts were so entirely engrossed by

by her Creator and her parents, that they did not extend even to him from whom she hoped for protection. The assemblage of voices which chaunted the sacred hymns made an impression upon her senses approaching to extasy; her imagination painted the heavens opening, and the Almighty himself presenting an angel to conduct her on her journey. This imaginary vision lasted as long as the music; when that ceased, she raised her head, and the first object that presented itself was young Smoloff, leaning against one of the pillars, at a little distance, with his eyes fixed intently upon her; he appeared to her to be the angel God had presented, the guardian angel who was to assist her in the deliverance of her father. Her eyes beamed confidence and gratitude; Smoloff was moved by

their expression; it seemed to be in unison with what passed in his mind; for he also felt grateful for the happiness he enjoyed in seeing her, and in believing himself beloved.

As they left the church, he offered Phedora to conduct her to the entrance of the forest in his sledge: she consented with pleasure, as it would be a means of rejoining sooner her beloved Springer; but this arrangement was a source of mortification to Elizabeth; she had flattered herself that, in the course of a walk, some opportunity would have occurred of speaking to Smoloff in private; in a carriage she knew it would be impossible: and, could she speak before her mother, who, yet in perfect ignorance of her design, would, on its first disclosure, reject it with terror, and forbid him to afford her

her any assistance? Again, then must she lose the chance of opening her scheme to him, from whom alone she looked for help, and let an opportunity pass that had appeared so favorable, and might be perhaps the last. Her mind was agitated and perplexed; the sledge had already passed the border of the forest; Smoloff had declared he could not go beyond it; but, wanting resolution to leave Elizabeth, he went on till they reached the banks of the lake; they stopped; Phedora descended first, and, taking his hand, said, "Will you not sometimes walk this way?" Elizabeth, who followed her mother, whispered, in a hurried voice—"No, not this way, but in the little chapel on the plain, to-morrow." Thus did she appoint a meeting, without thinking of the appearance it might bear to

Smoloff; she fancied that she had spoken only of her father; and on seeing in his countenance that her request had been heard, and would be granted, hers brightened with joy. While Phedora and her daughter walked - towards their dwelling, Smoloff returned alone across the forest, plunged in a reverie of the most delightful nature. After what he had heard, how could he doubt that Elizabeth loved him? And with the knowledge he had of her, how could this certainly fail to create the most lively emotions of joy? He had never beheld beauty to equal hers; he had lately seen her in the presence of her Maker, the image of piety and innocence; he had seen repeated proofs of the tenderness of her heart, in her conduct towards her parents;

parents; how indeed could a heart so tender, fail of being moved to love the man to whom a father's life was owing? Ingenuous and candid as the pupil of nature, educated far from mankind, how should she have acquired the art of concealing her sentiments? He only wondered that she should wish to see him unknown to her parents; but he easily pardoned an indiscretion which he dared to attribute to excess of love.

It was not with the embarrassment attending a hazardous enterprise, but with all the security of unsuspecting innocence, that Elizabeth repaired, on the following morning, to the chapel. Her steps were lighter and her pace swifter than usual; this was the first movement she had made towards the liberation of her father. The sun shone with splendor on the snowy plains,

plains, and thousands of icicles, hanging suspended from the branches, reflected its bright image in various forms of beauty and grandeur; but this lustre, so brilliant and clear, was less pure, less noble, than the soul of Elizabeth. She entered the chapel; Smoloff was not there; this delay disturbed her; a slight gloom overspread her countenance. It was not caused by disappointed vanity, nor even by neglected love; no passion, no foible, had at that moment a vacancy in her heart to occupy; but she dreaded some accident or unforeseen circumstance might prevent the arrival of him she so anxiously expected. With fervency she implored the Almighty not to prolong the perplexity she had for such a length of time endured. During her supplication Smoloff came; he was astonished to find her

her there before him, who had hastened with all the impatience of love.

The passions of the human heart are raised in the search of their gratification, but Elizabeth afforded a proof this day that virtue, in the performance of its duty, is swifter still.

On seeing Smoloff, she raised her hands to heaven; then turning towards him with a graceful and expressive motion, "Ah, M. de Smoloff!" said she, "how impatiently have I waited for you!" These words, the expression of her countenance, the preciseness with which she had kept the rendezvous, all confirmed in Smoloff the belief that he was beloved; he was on the point of declaring all the fervor by which that love was returned, but had not time to answer. "Listen to me," said she; "I have sought this oppor-

opportunity of seeing you, M. de Smoloff, that I might implore your assistance in an attempt to restore liberty to my father. Will you promise me your aid and counsel?" These few words confounded all the ideas of happiness Smoloff had formed. Distressed, embarrassed, he perceived his error; but it did not lessen the love he bore Elizabeth. He knelt; she imagined before God; but it was to her this mark of veneration was paid, and swore to perform the promise she required.

She resumed her discourse thus; "Since the dawn of reason enlightened my soul, my parents have been the sole objects of my thoughts; their love my greatest blessing; their happiness my only wish. They are miserable. Heaven calls me to their relief, and has led you to this spot

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to help me in fulfilling my destiny. My design is to go to Petersburg, to solicit the pardon of my father." Smoloff made a sign of astonishment, expressive of the idea he conceived of the impossibility of the undertaking; but she hastily continued: "I cannot tell you how long this design has held possession of my mind; it seems to me that I received it with my existence; it is the first that I remember, and has never quitted me; in my sleeping, as in my waking moments, it pursues me; it is that idea that has always occupied me when with you; that which has brought me hither; that which has inspired me with courage to dread neither fatigue, nor poverty, nor opposition, nor death. You see, M. de Smoloff, that it would be in vain to re-

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monstrate with me ; a resolution like this is not to be shaken."

All the flattering hopes of her lover had, during this address, completely vanished, but he felt an admiration, far beyond the powers of description ; such heroism in one of Elizabeth's age and sex was so greatly above any thing he had ever imagined, that his tears, which flowed unrestrained, were caused by a sensation scarcely less delightful than the transports of requited love. "Happy," said he, "happy, far beyond desert, do I esteem myself, in being thus your chosen guide and counsellor ; but you know not the various obstacles"—"Two only have discouraged me," interrupted she ; "and perhaps no one could remove them so effectually as you."—"Speak," said he, impatiently to obey. "What is there

there you could ask which would not be less than I would perform?"—"The obstacles are these," answered Elizabeth ; "I am a stranger to the road, and my flight might injure my father ; this last weighs upon my mind infinitely more than any other ; on you then I rely for instructions on every thing that regards my journey—the towns I am to pass through, the houses on the hospitality of which I may depend for relief, and on the surest method of getting my petition presented to the Emperor ; but, above all, you must promise me that your father will not punish mine for the offence of his child." Smoloff pledged his word on this. "But, Elizabeth," added he, "Do you know to what excess the Emperor is prepossessed against your father ? Do you know that he regards him as his

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most enveterate enemy?"—"I am ignorant," she replied, "of what crime they accuse him; I know not even his real name, nor that of his country; but I am convinced of his innocence."—"How," said Smoloff; "You know not the rank your father held, nor the name by which you must speak of him?"—"Neither," answered she.—"Astounding!" he exclaimed; "Not one suggestion of pride, of ambition, in an enterprize to which your whole soul is devoted? you know not the honours you would regain: you think only of your parents. But what is grandeur of birth to a soul like thine? What to the sentiments which inspire it, is the lofty name of..."—"Hold! interrupted she; the secret you are going to reveal, belongs to my father, and from
him

him only I must learn it."—"True," replied Smoloff, in a tone of enthusiastic admiration, "There is no principle of honour, no point of delicacy which is not an inmate in thy soul."—Elizabeth resumed the conversation to ask when he would give her the information necessary for her expedition. "I must take time to consider it," answered he; "but, Elizabeth do you think that it is possible for you to traverse the 3,500 verstes which divide Ischim from the province of Ingria, alone on foot, and moneyless!"—"Ah!" exclaimed Elizabeth, he who sends me to the succour of my parents will not abandon me." After a short pause Smoloff resumed: "It is impossible, at least," said he, "to think of such an undertaking till the long days of summer; now it would indeed be impracticable; even the
fledges

sledges will be stopped, and the marshy forests of Siberia would infallibly swallow up the traveller who should be rash enough to attempt to cross them; I will see you again in a few days, Elizabeth; then will I inform you of my real opinion concerning this project, which has affected me so much, I feel at present incapable of forming a discriminate judgment upon it. I will return to Tobolsk, and consult my father...he is the best of men; there would be much more misery in this district, if he were not placed over it; a noble action delights his soul; he cannot however assist you; duty forbids it; but I pledge you my honour, that, so far from punishing your father for having given existence to a daughter so virtuous, it would be his greatest glory to call you his: Elizabeth! pardon me

me; my heart declares itself in defiance of opposition; I know that yours can now hold no other sentiment than the glorious one that has so long ingrossed it, and expect not a return; but should there come a day wherein your parents, happy and secure in their native land, no longer require your exertions, remember that in this desert, Smoloff saw you, loved you, and would have preferred a life of obscurity and poverty with Elizabeth in exile, to all the glory that the world could offer."—He would have said more, but tears interrupted his utterance; he was amazed at the extraordinary emotion which agitated him; till then he had never felt such weakness, but till then he had never loved. Elizabeth was embarrassed; the idea of any but filial love was to her so new, that she scarcely comprehended

hended it; it might have appeared less strange, had her heart been free to receive it; had her parents been happy, Smoloff might have been loved; he may still be loved, should that event, at a future period, happen: but while they are in affliction, she will remain constant to her primitive passion, and to contain two, the human heart, comprehensive as it is, is not formed.

Elizabeth had never lived in society; she was a stranger to its customs and its rules; nevertheless, a sort of decorum, the attendant of virtue, taught her, that, after a declaration of love, she ought not to remain alone with the man who had presumed to make it; she was for preparing therefore to leave the chapel, when Smoloff, who saw her design, said, "Elizabeth, have I offended you? I call to wit-
ness.

ness him who sees the inmost recesses of the heart, that in mine there is not less of respect than love; he knows, that, were you to command it, I would die in silence: how then, Elizabeth, can I have offended you?"—"You have not offended me," answered she gently; "but I came here only to speak to you in behalf of my parents; now that I have done, I have nothing else to say, and am going to rejoin them."—"Well, return then to thy duty; in associating me with it, thou hadst rendered me worthy of thee, and far from ever wishing in the most secret thought, to turn thee from its paths, I will devote my time solely to thy service, in helping thee to fulfil it.

He then promised to give her, on the following Sunday, at Saimka, all the instructions and observations which might
be

be useful in the execution of her enterprise, and they parted.

When the Sunday arrived, Elizabeth accompanied her mother joyfully to Saimka; she was anxious to see Smoloff again, and receive the information which might accelerate her departure; but, the ceremony ended, and Smoloff appeared not; Elizabeth was uneasy. While her mother still continued praying, she enquired of an old woman, if M. de Smoloff was in the church; the answer she received dismayed her: no; he had departed two days since for Tobolskow. The object of her most ardent wishes seemed thus to fly always before her, at the moment she thought herself on the point of obtaining it. A thousand different terrors presented themselves to her imagination: since Smoloff had left Saimka, without remembering his promise, who could engage that

that he would remember it at Tobolskow? And, if he did, how could he perform it? These thoughts pursued her all day, and at night, oppressed by the chagrin of a disappointment, (which weighed more heavily, as there was no one to whom she could communicate it, on the contrary, all her energy had been exerted to conceal it from the observation of her parents;) she retired early to her little apartment, to indulge, unconstrained, the grief which overwhelmed her.

As soon as she quitted the room, Phe-dora, addressing her husband, said, "I must disclose to you the solicitude which disturbs my peace. Have you not marked the change in our Elizabeth? In our society she is absent: the name of Smoloff makes her color? his absence makes her unhappy. This morning, in the church

church, her eyes wandered on all sides, and I heard her ask if Smoloff were at Saimka; she became pale as death when informed that he was departed for Tobolskow. Oh, Stanislaus! I remember, in those days which preceded my union with thee, it was thus I changed color when thy name was pronounced: it was thus my eyes sought thee in every place, and filled with tears when the search was vain. Alas! these are symptoms of no transient attachment. How can I observe them in my child without dread? she is not destined to be happy, like her mother."

"Happy!" exclaimed Springer, with a sensation of poignant regret. "Happy in a desert and in exile!"—"Yes, in a desert, in exile, in every place, blessed with the society of him I love."

She

She pressed his hand to her lips: returning soon, however, to the first subject of her discourse, she said, "I fear my Elizabeth loves young Smoloff; and, charming as she is, he will only behold in her the daughter of a poor exile; he will scorn her affection; and my child, my only child, will die with grief at seeing her love disdained." Tears suppressed her utterance, and the presence of Stanislaus, which had removed every affliction of her own, could not console her for that of her daughter.

Stanislaus reflected for a few moments, then answered, "Phedora, my beloved, be comforted: I have likewise studied our Elizabeth. Perhaps I have seen further than you into what passes in her soul. Another idea, and not that of Smoloff, engrosses it entirely: yes, I am certain of it.

it. I am certain also, that if we were to offer her to Smoloff, he would not contemn the gift, even in this desert; and this sentiment will render him deserving of her, if ever—Yes, it will be so: Elizabeth will not always live secluded in this desert; her virtue will not always remain buried in obscurity; she was not born to be unhappy, it is impossible; so much goodness upon earth announces justice from heaven, and, sooner or later, it will be shewn.”

This was the first time since his banishment that Stanislaus appeared not to despair: from this circumstance Phedora augured the most pleasing presages, and, reassured by his words, lay down composedly to rest.

For two months Elizabeth went every Sunday to Saimka, with the hope of seeing

ing Smoloff, but in vain; he appeared not; and at last she was informed that he had left Tobolskow. All her hopes then vanished; she no longer doubted but that Smoloff had entirely forgotten her, and frequently shed tears of the bitterest sorrow at the thought, but for which the most punctilious dignity could not have reproached her. They were not a tribute to unregarded love.

It was now towards the end of April; the snow began to melt, and a verdant shade to diffuse itself over the sandy banks of the lake; the white blossoms of the thorn thickly covered its boughs, resembling flakes of new fallen snow, while the blue-budded campanella, the downy moth-wort, and the iris, whose pointed leaves rise perpendicularly, enamelled the ground around its roots; the black-birds

descended in flocks on the naked trees, and were the first to interrupt the mournful silence of winter. Already, upon the banks of the river, and sometimes on its surface, sported the beautiful mallard of Persia, of a bright flame colour, with a tufted head and ebony beak, who utters the most piercing cries when aimed at by the gunner, although his aim misses; and woodcocks of various species, some black with yellow beaks, others speckled with feathery rings round their necks, ran swiftly on the marshy grounds, or hid themselves among the rushes. Every symptom, in fine, announced an early spring; and Elizabeth, foreseeing all she should lose, if she suffered a year so favourable for her expedition to pass by, formed the desperate resolution of undertaking

taking it unaided, trusting for its success to Heaven and her own firmness.

One morning, Stanislaus was employed in digging his garden; seated at a little distance, Elizabeth regarded him in silence; he had not yet confided to her the secret of his misfortunes; it was a confidence she no longer sought; a kind of delicate pride had arisen in her soul, which made her desirous of remaining in ignorance of the rank her parents held till the moment of her departure; and to defer her request of knowing what they had lost, till she could answer, "I go to solicit that pardon which will restore all." Until now she had depended upon the promises of Smoloff, and on them had founded reasonable hopes of success; but when those failed, her sanguine imagination suggested others upon

which she resolved to speak. Before she ventured to begin she repassed in her mind all the objections that would be advanced, all the obstacles that would be represented in opposition to her scheme: that they were important was certain; Smoloff had told her so, and she was well convinced that the tenderness of her parents would even exaggerate them.—

What answer could be made to their remonstrances, their entreaties, their commands? When they should tell her that the blessing of revisiting their country would not be worth the terror they should suffer during the temporary loss of their child? She forgot that her father was near; and, bursting into tears, fell upon her knees to implore from Heaven that eloquence which could prevail against their arguments.

Stanislaus,

Stanislaus, who heard her sobs, turned hastily, and, running to her, raised her from the ground, saying, “Elizabeth, what is the matter? What has happened to thee? If thou art afflicted, weep at least on the bosom of thy father.”—
“Oh, my father!” she replied, “detain me no longer here; you know my wish; O grant it: I feel that Heaven itself calls me.”

She was interrupted by the young peasant, their attendant, who, running towards them, cried, “M. de Smoloff—M. de Smoloff is here.”

Elizabeth uttered a scream of joy; she took her father’s hand, and, pressing it to her heart, exclaimed, “It is so; the Omnipotent himself calls me; he has sent him who will assist me, who will remove every obstacle. O my father! thy

daughter yet will break the chain that holds thee prisoner."

Without waiting for an answer, she flew to see Smoloff; in her way she met her mother, whom she seized by the arm, and, embracing her, cried, "Come with me; he is returned: M. de Smoloff is returned."

They entered the cabin, and found a man apparently about fifty years of age, in a military dress, accompanied by several officers. The mother and daughter amazed, started back. "This is M. de Smoloff," said the young Tartar. At these words all the hopes that had arisen in Elizabeth were a second time destroyed—her color fled; her eyes were filled with tears; Phedora, shocked at the excess of her emotion, placed herself before her, to conceal it from general observation.

on. Happy would the afflicted mother have esteemed herself, if, by the sacrifice of her life, her daughter could have been released from the fatal passion which she no longer doubted held possession of her soul.

The Governor of Tobolskow dismissed his suite, and, turning to Stanislaus, said, "Sir, since the court of Russia has deemed it prudent to condemn you to banishment, this is the first time I have visited this distant spot; and it is a duty now pleasing to me, since it affords me the opportunity of testifying to an exile so illustrious, how sincerely I feel for his misfortunes, and how deeply I regret that duty forbids me to offer the assistance and protection I would so gladly bestow."—"I expect nothing from men, sir," answered Stanislaus coldly: "I wish not for their com-

commiseration, hope nothing from their justice; and since my misfortunes have placed me at a distance from them, I shall pass my days contented in this desert."—

"Oh, Sir!" interrupted the governor with emotion, "for a man like you, to live an exile from his country, is a destiny to be lamented!"—"There is one, Sir, more lamentable still," replied Stanislaus, "to die an exile." He said no more; for, had he added another word, he might have shed a tear, and the illustrious sufferer would not betray a symptom of weakness. Elizabeth, concealed behind her mother, observed with timidity, if the air and countenance of the governor announced a character which would encourage her to disclose her secret to him. Thus the fearful dove, before it ventures to leave the nest, watches from
among

among the leaves, if the appearance of the sky promises a serene day.

The governor remarked and knew her; his son had often spoken of her; and the portrait he had drawn could resemble none but Elizabeth. "Madam," said he, addressing himself to her, "my son has mentioned you to me; you have made an impression upon his mind time never will efface."—"Did he tell you, Sir, that she is indebted to him for the life of a father?" hastily interrupted Phedora.

"No Madam," answered the governor "but he told me how ready she was to devote hers to that father and to you."—"She is," said Springer; "and her tenderness is the only blessing we have now left, the only one of which mankind has not been able to deprive us." The
governor

governor turned aside to conceal his emotion: after a pause, addressing himself to Elizabeth, "Madam," resumed he, "it is two months since my son, then at Saimki, received an order from the Emperor to set off immediately to rejoin the army, then re-embodied in Livonia; he was obliged to obey without delay; before his departure, he conjured me to convey a letter to you; but it was impossible; I could not, without the most imminent danger, send a messenger with it; I could only deliver it myself, and now his commission shall be executed." Elizabeth, blushing, took the letter which he presented to her; the governor observing the surprise of Stanislaus and Phedora, exclaimed, "Blessed are the parents from whom a daughter conceals such secrets only." He then recalled

recalled his attendants, and in their presence said to Stanislaus, "Sir, the commands of my sovereign still exist against allowing you to receive any one here; nevertheless, if any poor missionaries, who, I am informed, must cross these deserts, in their return from the frontiers of China, should come to your dwelling, to beg a night's hospitality, you are permitted to grant it to them."

After the governor had taken leave, Elizabeth still kept her eyes fixed upon the letter she held in her hand, not daring to open it. "My child," said Stanislaus, "if you are waiting for permission from your mother and me to read your letter, you have it." With a trembling hand, Elizabeth then broke the seal; and as she read the contents, made frequent exclamations of gratitude and joy.

When

When she had finished it, throwing herself into the arms of her parents, "The moment is arrived," she said; "every circumstance contributes to favor my enterprize; Heaven approves and blesses my intention: Oh, my parents! will you not likewise bless it?" Stanislaus shuddered at the words she uttered; he knew the intention to which she alluded; but Phedora, who had not an idea of it, exclaimed, "Elizabeth, what means this mystery? what does that paper contain?" she made a motion, as if to take it; her daughter presumed to detain it: "Oh, my mother; pardon me," she said; "I tremble to speak before you; you have not yet guessed what I would say, and the idea of your terror disheartens me; it is now the only remaining impediment; I know not how to obviate it.... Oh! permit

mit me to explain myself now before my father only, you are not prepared as he is...." — "No, my child," interrupted Stanislaus, "do not separate us, do not that, which exile and misfortune has never yet compassed; come to my heart, my Phedora, and if thy courage fail thee at the words thou art to hear, may mine sustain thy drooping spirits." Phedora, terrified, dismayed, seeing herself menaced by some dreadful calamity, but knowing not from whence the stroke was to come, answered in a tone of alarm, "Stanislaus, what meanest thou? Have I not endured with fortitude every reverse of fortune? nor will that fortitude forsake me now," added she, pressing to her heart her husband and her child; "between you it will sustain me against the worst that fate can do...." Elizabeth attempted to answer;

her mother would not hear her: "My child," exclaimed she with anguish, "ask my life, but do not ask me to consent to our separation." These words proved that she had penetrated into the secret; the pain of telling it to her then was spared; but to induce her to consent, seemed an undertaking so arduous, that the sanguine hopes of Elizabeth were daunted. Bathed in tears, trembling at the sight of her mother's agitation, Elizabeth, in broken accents, uttered only these words: "Oh, my mother! if for the happiness of my father, I asked of you some days only?"—"Oh, no! not one," exclaimed her mother in an agony; "what happiness could be worth such a price? No, not one day: oh heaven! do not permit her to ask me." These words entirely subdued the courage of Elizabeth;

Elizabeth; unable to utter what could, to such an excess, afflict her mother, she presented the letter she had received from the governor of Tobolskow to her father, and made a sign to him to read it. He took it, and in a faltering voice read aloud the following lines, written by young Smoloff at Tobolskow, dated two months back.

"The greatest concern I experience on leaving Saimka, Elizabeth, proceeds from the impossibility of informing you that an indispensable obligation forces me to an absence from you; I can neither see you, write to you, nor send you the information you have asked of me, without acting in opposition to the commands of my father, without endangering his safety; perhaps, even to this excess might I have failed in my duty

had it not been for the example you have shewn me; but after I had so lately learnt from you, how much is due to a parent, I could not expose the life of mine. To you, however, I will confess that my duty was not like yours, performed with delight; I returned to Tobolsk, with a broken heart. My father informed me that a mandate from the Emperor must transport me a thousand miles from hence, and that it must be obeyed immediately. I depart, Elizabeth, and you know not what I suffer. Ah! I do not ask of heaven that you should ever know my feelings: that Elizabeth should know unhappiness, would be a derogation from its justice.

“I have opened my heart to my father; I have made you known to him, and his tears have flowed at the recital of your project;

project; I believe he will visit the district of Ischim this year, and that it will be expressly to see you; in the interim, he will, if it be possible, convey to you this letter. I depart with greater tranquillity, Elizabeth, since I leave you under the protection of my father; but, do not, I conjure you, do not think of setting out on your expedition until my return; I expect that it will be in less than a year; I will be your conductor, your guard, to Petersburg, and will present you to the Emperor; do not fear that I will address you again on the subject of my love; no, I will be but as a friend, a brother: and if I serve you with all the fervor of passion, I swear never to address you but in a language pure as innocence, as that of angels, or yourself.”

A little lower, the following superscription was written by the hand of the governor.

“ No, Elizabeth, it is not my son that must conduct you; I doubt not his honor, but yours must be placed beyond the reach of suspicion. When, at the Court of Russia, you exhibit instances of a virtue too heroic not to be crowned with success, the breath of envy must not whisper, that you were conducted thither by a lover, and tarnish thus the noblest trait of filial piety the world can boast of. In your present situation, there are no protectors worthy to guide your innocence, but Heaven and your father; your father cannot follow you, but Heaven will not forsake you; religion will *give* you her aid; and if you abandon *him* to her guidance, will inspire you

you to act rightly. You know to whom I have allowed the entrance of your dwelling. In entrusting you with these directions, I render you the depositary of my fate: were this letter to be made public; were it to be known that I had favoured your departure, my ruin would be the inevitable result: but I have no fear; I know in whom I confide, and what may be expected from the heroism and honor of a daughter willing to sacrifice her life for a father.”

As he finished the letter, Stanislaus's voice became firmer and more animated; he gloried in the virtues of his daughter, and in the admiration they excited: but the tender mother thought only of losing her; pale, motionless, unable to weep, she regarded her child in silence, and raised her eyes to heaven. Elizabeth
threw

threw herself on her knees before them both. "Oh, my parents," said she, "allow me to speak to you in this posture. In an humble attitude should the greatest of all blessings be solicited. I presume to aspire to that of restoring you to liberty, to happiness, to your country; for more than a year this has been the object of my fondest hopes; the season for it approaches, and you would forbid me to attempt it. If there is a blessing greater than that which I intreat, refuse me this, I will consent; but if there is not—" Agitated, trembling, the accents she would utter died unfinished on her lips, and by looks and motions of the most earnest supplication only could she finish her prayer. Stanislaus laid his hand upon his daughter's head without speaking; her mother exclaimed,

"Alone,

"Alone, on foot, without help! Oh, no, I cannot! I cannot!"—"My mother," answered Elizabeth eagerly, "do not, I beseech you do not oppose my wish; you would not if you knew how long I have indulged it, and all the consolation I have derived from it. As soon as my reason allowed me to comprehend the cause of your unhappiness, I resolved to dedicate my life to the removal of it. Blessed was the day on which I conceived the design of liberating my father! Blessed the hope which supported me when I saw you weep! How long ago, witness of your silent sorrow, the affliction would have overwhelmed me, had I not reflected "It is I who may restore what they lament the loss of." If you deprive me of this hope, in which all my thoughts centre, I shall no longer at-
tach

teach a value to my existence, and my days will linger away in despondence. Oh! pardon me for grieving you. No, if by your wish I am detained here, I shall not die, since my death would be an additional source of affliction to you; but permit me to live happy. Tell me not that my enterprize is impracticable. My heart answers that it is not; it will supply strength to sustain me when I go to claim justice, and eloquence to obtain my demand; nothing will daunt me; neither sufferings, nor contempt; neither the dazzling splendour of a court, nor the awful brow of majesty; nothing but your refusal."—"Cease, Elizabeth, oh, cease!" interrupted Stanislaus; "my ideas are confused; my soul till now never sunk before a noble action, till now had never heard of virtue too heroic for
its

its strength to bear. I did not think myself weak; Oh, my child! you now teach me that I am: No, I cannot consent." Encouraged by his refusal, Phe-dora, taking her daughter's hands between hers, said, "Hear me, Elizabeth; if thy father betrays weakness, thou mayest well excuse it in thy mother; pardon her that she has not resolution to give thee permission to display thy virtue. Strange! that a mother must ask her child to be less excellent; but thy mother asks it only, she does not command; possessed of such greatness of soul as thou art, thou oughtst to receive no command but from the dictates of thine own virtue."—"My mother," replied Elizabeth, "thine shall ever be held sacred; if thou desirest me to remain here, I hope I shall have resolution
enough

enough to obey without repining; but let me hope that my scheme will receive thy assent: it is not the result of a moment's enthusiasm, but of the reflection of many years; it is established upon solid reason, as well as upon tenderness. Does there exist any other means of rescuing my father from exile? During the twelve years that he has languished here, what friend has undertaken his justification? And were there one who dared to do it, would he dare to say as much as I should? Would he be instigated by motives similar to mine?—Oh, no; let me indulge the thought that Heaven has reserved for your child only, the blessing of restoring you to happiness, and do not oppose the glorious undertaking which Heaven has deigned to charge her with. Tell me, what is it you consider

der so alarming in the enterprize? Is it my temporary absence? Have I not often heard you lament that that exile forbids you the hope of bestowing me in marriage? and would not a husband have separated me from you entirely? Is it danger? there exists none; the winters of this climate have enured me to the utmost severity of the weather, and the exercise I have taken on these plains to the fatigue of long travelling. Are you alarmed on account of my youth? it will be my support; the weak meet with general assistance: or, do you fear my inexperience? I shall not be alone; do you remember the words of the governor's letter? he permits the poor missionary to take shelter under our roof, but to give me a guide and a protector. You see, every danger, every obstacle

is removed; nothing is wanting, but your consent and your benediction.”

“And for thy food thou must beg,” exclaimed Stanislaus in a tone of poignant distress. “The ancestors of thy mother, who formerly reigned in these territories; mine who were seated on the throne of Poland, will look down and see the heirs of their name begging her daily bread in that Russia, which has made of their kingdoms provinces to her empire.”—“If such is the royal blood that flows in my veins,” replied Elizabeth, in accents of modest surprise, “if I am a descendant of monarchs, and that two diadems have graced the brows of my forefathers, I hope to prove myself worthy both of them and you, and never to dishonour the illustrious name they have transmitted to me; but poverty will not dishonour it.

Why

Why should not the daughter of the Seids,* and of Sobieski, have recourse to the charity of her fellow creatures? How many great men, precipitated from the height of human grandeur, have implored it for themselves! happier than they I shall implore it only in the service of my father.”

The noble firmness of this young heroine, the pious arrogance which sparkled in her eyes at the thought of the humiliation over which she should triumph for her fathers' sake, gave to her discourse an animation and with it an authority that Stanislaus was unable to resist; he felt that he had not a right to prevent his daughter from displaying her heroic virtue; that he should be

* Noble Tartars, who were descended from the ancient princes of Siberia.

culpable in detaining her in the obscurity of a desert. "Oh, my beloved!" he cried, tenderly pressing the hand of his Phedora, "shall we condemn her to end her days here unknown? Shall we deprive her of the prospect of being the happy mother of children resembling herself? Take courage, my Phedora; this will be the only possible means of restoring her to a world of which she will be the ornament; let us grant her the permission she solicits." At this moment, the feelings of the mother triumphed over those of the wife; and for the first time, Phedora presumed to resist the most sacred of human authorities: "No, never, never will I grant this permission; even you, Stanislaus, will intreat in vain; I shall have courage to resist. What! shall I expose the life of my child? shall

I consent

I consent to see my Elizabeth depart, to hear on some future day that she had perished with cold and famine in a frightful desert, and live to deplore her loss? Can such a request be made to a mother? Oh, Stanislaus! Is it possible that there is a sacrifice I cannot make to thee, and a grief in which all thy endeavours to console me would be vain!" She ceased to speak; her tears no longer flowed; the anguish of her mind was unutterable. Stanislaus, unable to endure the sight of her distress, cried, "My child, if your mother cannot consent, you must not go."—"No, my mother, if thou desirest it, I will stay," said Elizabeth, embracing her with the utmost tenderness; "never will I disobey thee; but perhaps the Almighty will obtain from thee, what thou hast refused even

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to my father; join with me in intreaties, my mother; let us ask of him the conduct we must pursue: it is his wisdom that must enlighten, his support that must sustain us; from him proceeds all truth, and from him only can we learn submission to his decrees.

While Phedora prayed, tears again came to her relief: that piety which calms and softens human affliction, and possesses itself of the heart to chase thence the agonies of sorrow; that piety which ever prescribes a duty, without pointing out its recompence, and never fails to pour the balm of consolation into the souls of those who humbly invoke it, touched that of Phedora. The approbation of men can obtain from the ambitious character which places all its happiness in glory, a sacrifice of the tenderest affections,

affections, but religion alone can obtain such a sacrifice from hearts like that of Phedora, whose happiness centered solely in those she loved.

On the following day, Stanislaus, being alone with his daughter, gave her a narration of his misfortunes; he informed her of the dreadful wars which had afflicted the kingdom of Poland, and in what manner that unfortunate nation had been at last subverted.—“My only crime, my child,” said he, “was too strong an attachment to my country to endure the sight of its servitude. The blood of some of its greatest monarchs flowed in my veins; its throne might have fallen to my lot, and my services and my life were due to the country from which all my glory was derived. I defended it as I ought; at the head of a handful

handful of noble Poles, I fought to the last extremity against the three great powers which combined to destroy it: and, when overpowered by the numbers of our enemies, we were forced to yield under the walls of Varsovia, in sight of that great city, delivered up to flames and pillage; though forced to submit to tyranny, at the bottom of my heart I resisted still. Ashamed to remain in my country, which was no longer in the possession of my countrymen, I sought arms, I sought allies to assist me in restoring to Poland its existence and its name. Vain effort! ineffectual attempt! each day rivetted faster those chains my feeble endeavours had not power to break. The lands of my ancestors lay in that part of my country which was under the dominion of Russia: I lived upon them with Phedora, and
should

should have lived with felicity unequalled, but that the yoke of the stranger weighed upon my mind. My open murmurs, and still more the numbers of malcontents who resorted to my house, disturbed an arbitrary and suspicious monarch. One morning I was torn from the arms of my wife, from thine, my child, from my home: thou wert then only four years old, and thy tears flowed not for thy own misfortunes, but because thou beheldest those of thy mother. I was dragged to the prisons of Petersburg; Phedora followed me; the permission of burying herself there with me was the only grace she could obtain. We lived nearly a year in those dreadful dungeons, deprived of air, nearly of the light of heaven, but not of hope. I could not persuade myself but that a just monarch
would

would forgive a private citizen for having endeavoured to maintain the rights of his country, and that he would trust to the promise I gave of future submission. I judged mankind too favorably: I was condemned unheard, and banished for life to the desarts of Siberia. My faithful companion would not abandon me; and in accompanying me she seemed to follow the dictates of her heart, rather than those of her duty; yes, had I been condemned to linger out existence in the frightful darkness of the terrific Beresow, or amidst the undisturbed solitudes of the lake Baikal, or of Kamptschatka, she would not have forsaken me. There is no corner of the earth, no cave, no den, into which my Phedora would not have flaid with me without repining: to her goodness, to her piety, to her generous sacrifice,

sacrifice, I shall ever believe I am indebted for my milder doom. Oh, my child! all the solace of my life I owe to her, and for the unhappiness of hers she must accuse me."—"Unhappiness, my father!" said Elizabeth; "when you have loved her so tenderly, so constantly?" In these words Stanislaus recognised the heart of Phedora, and perceived that Elizabeth, like her mother, could live contented in banishment with the man she loved. "My child," resumed he, returning young Smoloff's letter, which he had kept from the preceding evening, "if I one day owe to your zeal and courage the restoration of that rank and wealth which I no longer desire but to replace you in the bosom of prosperity, this letter will remind you of our benefactor; your heart, Elizabeth, is grateful, and the alliance

alliance of virtue can never disgrace the blood of royalty." Elizabeth colored as she received the letter from her father; and, placing it in her bosom, answered, "The remembrance of him who pitied, who loved and served you, shall ever be cherished by me."

For some days, the departure of Elizabeth was not mentioned; her mother had not yet consented; but in the melancholy of her air, in the deep dejection of her countenance, were visible that the solicited consent was in her heart, and that all hope from resistance had forsaken her.

One Sunday evening, the family was assembled in prayer, when a gentle tapping at the door disturbed them; Stanislaus opened it, and a venerable stranger presented himself: Phedora started up, exclaiming,

exclaiming, "Oh heaven! this is he who has been announced to us, he who comes to deprive me of my child." She hid her face, bathed in tears, with her hands; her piety even could not induce her to welcome the servant of God. The missionary entered: a long white beard descended to his breast, he was bent more by long labours, than by age; the hardships of his life had worn his body, and strengthened his soul; there was an expression of sorrow in his countenance, as of a man who had suffered much, but likewise something consolatory, as of a man who feels that he has not suffered in vain: the whole of his appearance inspired the beholder with veneration.

"Sir," said he, addressing himself to Stanislaus, "I enter your dwelling with a joyful heart, the blessing of God is upon

upon its roof, for it contains a treasure more precious than gold and pearls; I come to solicit a night's lodging." Elizabeth hastened to fetch him a seat. "Young maiden," said he to her, "you have early trod the paths of virtue, and in the spring time of human life, have left us far behind." He was preparing to seat himself, when the looks of Phedora arrested his attention, and addressing himself to her, "Why do you weep?" said he; "is not your child favored from the Most High? Heaven itself conducts her steps, and you should consider yourself blest far beyond the common lot of parents; if you grieve so bitterly, because the call of virtue separates your child from you for a short time, what must become of those mothers who see their offspring torn from them by the ways

ways of vice, and lost for an eternity?" — "Oh, father! if I am to see her no more!" exclaimed the afflicted mother. — "You would see her again," he answered with animation, "in that celestial paradise which will be her inheritance; but you will see her again on earth; the difficulties of her undertaking are great and various, but the all-powerful Being will protect her: he tempers the wind to the clothing of the lamb."

Phedora bowed her head in token of resignation. Stanislaus had not yet spoken; his heart was oppressed; he could not utter a word; Elizabeth herself, who had never before felt her courage relax, began to experience sensations of weakness; the animated hope of rendering service to her parents had hitherto absorbed every idea of the grief of leaving them;

them; but now, when that moment was arrived, that she could say to herself, "Tomorrow I shall not hear the voice of my father, I shall not receive the fond caresses of my mother; perhaps a year may pass away, ere such happiness be mine again," she felt that the whole world, that all it could offer, would make her no amends; her eyes became dim, her whole frame was agitated, and she sunk weeping upon the bosom of her father. Ah, fearful orphan! if already thou holdest forth thy arms to thy protector, and on the first approach of thy undertaking bendest to the ground as a vine without support, where wilt thou find that courage requisite to traverse nearly half the globe without guide or assistant?

Before they retired to rest, the missionary partook of a collation. Freedom
and

minister

and hospitality presided at the board, but gaiety was banished, and it was only by the utmost effort that each of the family suppressed their tears. The good religious regarded them with tender concern; in the course of his long travels he had witnessed much affliction, and the art of bestowing consolation had been the principal study of his life; for different kinds of sorrow, he pursued different methods; for every situation, for every character, he had words of comfort; nor seldom failed to afford relief; he knew that if it be possible to withdraw the mind from the contemplation of its own sorrows, by presenting the image of some calamity still greater than the one lamented, the tears that are shed through pity, will soften the agony of woe. Thus by reciting the long history

of his crosses and of the distresses he had seen, he, by degrees, attracted the attention of his companions, moved them with compassion for the sufferings of their fellow creatures, and led them to reflect that their own lot had been mild, compared with that of many. What had not this venerable old man seen? What could he not relate? Who for sixty years, at the distance of two thousand miles from his country, in a foreign climate, in the midst of persecutions, had labored incessantly at the conversion of savages whom he entitled brethren, and who were, not unfrequently, his most inveterate persecutors? He had, at the court of Pekin, excited astonishment by the extent of his learning, and still more by his rigid virtue; he had assembled together tribes of wandering savages, and taught

taught them the principles of agriculture. Thus barren wastes changed into fertile lands, savages become mild and humane, families, to whom the fond titles of father, husband, and of son were no longer unknown, and hearts raised to Heaven in tributes of thanksgiving; for all those blessings, were the result of the pious labours of one man. These people condemned not the missions of piety; they presumed not to say that the religion which dictates them is severe and arbitrary; and still further were they from affirming that men who practice that religion with such excess of fervor, are useless and ambitious. But why not pronounce them to be ambitious? In devoting their lives to the service of their fellow creatures, do they not aspire to the highest of rewards?

Do

Do they not seek to please their Maker, to gain Heaven? None of the most celebrated conquerors of the earth ever raised their aspiring thoughts so high; they were satisfied with the esteem of men and with a temporal crown.

The good father then informed his hosts, that, recalled by his superior, he was now returning to Spain, his native country. On his road thither, he was to pass through Russia, Germany, and France; but he seemed to think little of the journey; the man who had travelled through vast deserts, which yielded no shelter from the inclemency of weather but a den, no pillow to rest the weary head but what a stone afforded, with no food but a little flour of rice moistened with water, might well consider himself at the period of his labors on
approaching

approaching to civilized nations; and Father Paul fancied himself in his country, when he found himself among a Christian people. He repeated accounts of dreadful sufferings he had endured, and of difficulties which he had overcome, when, after passing the wall of China, he had entered into the extensive territories of the Tartars. He recounted that, at the entrance of the vast deserts of Suongoria, which appertain to China, and serve it as a boundary on the side of Siberia, he had discovered a country abounding in rich and valuable skins, and through this commodity able to maintain an extensive commerce with European nations; but no traces of their industry had reached that distant spot; no merchant had dared to carry his gold, or attempt a lucrative traffic, where the missionary had
ventured

ventured to plant the cross, and had distributed blessings: true it is that charity will stimulate to enterprizes, from which even avarice recedes.

A bed was prepared for Father Paul, in the little chamber belonging to the Tartar peasant, who slept, wrapped up in a bear skin, near the stove. As soon as day began to dawn, Elizabeth rose; she approached softly to Father Paul's door; and hearing that he was already risen, she asked permission to enter and converse with him in private: she had not dared to speak to him before her parents; and to express her wish that they might set out the following morning on their journey. She related to him the history of her life; a simple but affecting story, which consisted chiefly of anecdotes of mutual tenderness between her
 parents

parents and herself. In the long recital of her doubts and hopes, she had occasion more than once to pronounce the name of Smoloff; but it seemed as if this name occurred only to heighten the picture of her innocence, and to shew that it was not wholly through the absence of temptation, she had preserved so entire the purity of her heart. Father Paul was deeply affected at the narration; he had made the tour of the globe, and seen almost all that it contained; but a heart like that Elizabeth discovered was new to him.

Stanislaus and Phedora knew not that it was their daughter's intention to leave them on the morrow; but when they embraced her in the morning, they felt that sensation of involuntary terror which all animated beings experience on the
 eve

eve of the storm that threatens them. Whenever Elizabeth moved, Phedora followed her with her eyes, and often seized her suddenly by the arm, without daring to ask her the question that hovered on her lips; but speaking continually of employments she had for her on the following day, and giving orders for different works to be done several days hence. Thus did she endeavor to reassure herself by her own words; but her heart was not at ease, and the silence of her daughter spoke most feelingly to it of her departure. During dinner, she said to her, "Elizabeth, if the weather is fine to-morrow, you shall go in your little canoe with your father, to fish in the lake." Her daughter looked at her in silence, while the tears involuntarily fell from her eyes. Stanislaus, agitated by
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the same anxiety as Phedora, addressed himself to her hastily: "My child," said he, "did you hear your mother's desire? you are to come with me to-morrow." Elizabeth reclined her head upon her father's shoulder, saying, in a whisper, "To-morrow you must console my mother."—Stanislaus changed color; it was enough for Phedora; she asked no more; she was certain the departure of her child had been mentioned; it was a subject she wished not to hear, for the moment that it was spoken of before her must be that of giving her consent, and she indulged the hope, that till it was granted, her daughter would not dare to go. Stanislaus collected all his firmness, for he saw that on the morrow he must sustain the loss of his child, and the sight of his wife's anguish. He knew

not whether he could survive the sacrifice he was going to make; a sacrifice to which he never could have submitted, but from the excess of love he bore his daughter; and, concealing his emotion, he received the intelligence with composure, and feigned content, in order to bestow upon his Elizabeth the only recompence worthy of her virtue.

How many secret emotions, how many afflicting unobserved sensations, agitated the minds of parents and child on this day of trial! Sometimes, they exchanged the most tender caresses, at others sat in mute anguish. The missionary sought to rouse their spirits, by reciting all the histories in the sacred writings, in which Providence rewarded in a special manner the sacrifices of filial piety and paternal resignation; he gave hints likewise that
the

the difficulties of the journey would not be so great, as a man of high consequence, whom he would not name, but they easily guessed, had provided him with the means of rendering it easier and pleasanter. When night arrived, Elizabeth on her knees, in broken accents, entreated her parent's blessing. Her father approached; the tears streamed down his manly cheeks; his daughter held out her arms to him; he beheld in her motion the sign of a farewell; his heart became too much oppressed to allow him to weep; his tears stopped; he laid his hands upon her head, recommending her to the protection of the Almighty, but had not courage to utter a sound. Elizabeth then, turning round to her mother, said, "And you, my mother, will you not likewise bestow your bene-

dition upon your child?"—"To morrow," replied she, in a voice almost stifled with the agony of grief, "To morrow"—"And why not to day, my mother?"—"Oh! yes," answered Phedora running to her, "to day, to morrow, every day." Elizabeth bowed down her head, while her parents, their hands joined, their eyes raised, with trembling voices pronounced a solemn benediction that was heard on high.

The missionary, with a cross in his hand, stood at a little distance, praying for them: it was the picture of virtue praying for innocence. If such invocations ascend not to the throne of the Most High, what can those be which have a right to attain it?

It was now the end of the month of May: that season of the year, when be-
tween

tween the deepening shades of twilight and the glimmering dawn of day there is scarcely two hours of night. Elizabeth employed this time in making preparations for her departure; she had provided herself with a travelling dress, and other articles for the journey. It had been her constant practice for nearly a year to work at night after she had retired to her chamber, that she might get these things in readiness, unknown to Phedora; during the same period of time, she had reserved from each of her collations, some dried fruits and a little flour, in order to defer as long as possible that moment when she must have recourse to the charity of strangers; but she was determined not to take any thing from the dwelling of her parents, where little was to be found, but what necessity

required. The whole amount of her treasure was eight or ten kopecks: it was all the money she possessed, all the riches with which she undertook to traverse a space of more than fifteen hundred miles.

“Father,” said she to the missionary, knocking softly at his door, “let us depart now, while my parents are asleep, do not let us wake them; they will grieve soon enough; they sleep tranquilly, thinking we cannot go out, without passing through their chamber; but the window of this room is not high; it is easy to jump out, and I will assist you.” The missionary agreed to this stratagem of filial tenderness, which was to spare three persons the agonies of such a farewell. As soon as they were in the forest, Elizabeth, having thrown her
little

little packet on her shoulder, walked a few steps hastily forwards; but, turning her head once again towards the dwelling she had abandoned, her sobs almost stifled her. Bathed in tears she rushed back to the door of the apartment in which her parents slept: “Oh Heaven!” cried she, “watch over them, guard them, preserve them, and grant that I may never pass this threshold again, if I am destined to behold them no more.” she then rose, and, turning, beheld her father standing behind her. “Oh, my father! you are here; why, why did you come?”—“To see you, to embrace you, to bless you once more; to say to you, My Elizabeth, if, during the days of your childhood, I have let one escape, without shewing all my tenderness, if once I have made your tears flow, if a
look,

look, an expression of harshness has afflicted your heart, before you go, pardon me for it, pardon your father, that if he is not doomed to have the happiness of seeing you again, he may die in peace...."—“Oh! do not talk thus;” interrupted Elizabeth.—

“And your poor mother,” continued he, “when she wakes, what shall I say to her? what shall I answer, when she asks me for her child? She will seek you in the forest, on the borders of the lake, every where, and I shall follow weeping with her, and calling despondingly for our child, who will no longer hear us.” At these words, Elizabeth, overpowered, supported herself, almost fainting, against the walls of the hut; her father, seeing that he had affected her beyond her strength, reproached himself

himself bitterly for his own want of fortitude. “My child,” said he in a more composed voice, “take courage; I will promise, if not to comfort thy mother, at least to encourage her to support thy absence with fortitude, and will restore her to thee, when thou returnest hither. Yes, my child, whether the enterprize of thy filial piety be crowned with success or not, thy parents will not die till they have embraced thee again.” He then addressed the missionary, who, with his eyes cast down, stood deeply affected at a little distance from the scene of affliction: “Father,” said he, “I entrust to your care a jewel which is invaluable; it is more precious than my heart’s blood; far, far more precious than my life; nevertheless, with full confidence I entrust it to you: depart then together; and may

choirs

choirs of angels watch over both ; to guard her, celestial powers will arm themselves, and that dust which formed the mortal part of her ancestors will be re-animated ; the all powerful Being, the Father and Protector of my Elizabeth, will not suffer her to perish."

Elizabeth, without venturing to look at her father again, placed one hand across her eyes, and, giving the other to the missionary, departed with him. The morning's dawn now began to illuminate the summits of the mountains, and gild the tops of the dark firs ; but all was still silent. No breath of wind ruffled the smooth surface of the lake, nor agitated with its breezes the leaves of the fir-trees ; the birds had not begun to sing, nor did a sound escape even from the smallest insect ; it seemed as if nature

ture preserved a respectable silence, that the voice of a father, calling down benedictions on his child, might penetrate through the forest which now divided them. I have attempted to convey an idea of the grief of the father, but of that of the mother, the endeavor would be fruitless. How could I describe her sensations, when, awakened by the cries of her husband, she runs to him, and reading in his desponding attitude, that she has lost her child, falls to the ground in a state of unutterable anguish, that seems to threaten her existence. In vain does Stanislaus endeavor to calm her grief ; she attends not to his voice ; love itself has lost its influence, and can no longer reach her heart : the sorrows of a mother are beyond all human consolation, and can receive it from no earthly source :

source: Heaven reserves to itself alone the power of soothing them; and if these agonizing sorrows are given to the weaker sex, it is formed gentle and submissive, to bow beneath the hand that chastises it, and have recourse to the only consolation that remains.

It was on the eighteenth of May that Elizabeth and her guide set out upon their journey; they were a whole month in crossing the marshy forests of Siberia, which is subject at this season of the year to terrible inundations. Sometimes the peasants whom they overtook, permitted them for a trifling compensation to mount their sledges; at night they took shelter in cabins so miserable, that, had not Elizabeth been long inured to hardships and privation, she would have scarcely been able to take any repose.

She

She lay in her cloaths upon a wretched mattress, in a room scented with the fumes of tobacco and spirits, into which the wind pierced through the broken windows, ill defended with paper; and, as a completion of its discomfort, the whole family, and sometimes even a part of their cattle, reposed in the same miserable apartment.

Forty verstes from Tinoen, is a wood, in which a row of posts mark the boundary of the division of Tobolskow; Elizabeth observed them, and it appeared to her like a second parting, to leave the territory which her parents inhabited. "Alas!" said she, "what a distance separates us now!" When she entered Europe, again this melancholy reflection occurred to her. To be in a different quarter of the world, presented to her imagination

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the idea of a distance more immense than the vast extent of country she had passed; in Asia she had left the only beings of the universe upon whom she had a claim, and upon whose affection she could rely; And, what could she expect to find in that Europe so famed for its learning? what in that imperial court, where riches and talents flowed in such abundance? Would she find in it one heart moved by her sufferings, softened by her afflictions, and from whose commiseration she might hope for protection? At this thought, one name presented itself to her mind. Ah! might she have dared to indulge the hope of meeting him at Petersburgh..... but there was no chance. The mandate of the Emperor had sent him to join the army in Livonia; there was not then the remotest probability of finding him

in Europe, which seemed to her to be inhabited by him only, because he was the only person whom she knew. All her dependence then was upon Father Paul, and, in Elizabeth's ideas, the man who had passed sixty years in rendering services to his fellow creatures, must have great influence at the court of Monarchs.

Perma is nearly nine hundred verstes from Tobolskow; the roads are good, the land fertile and cultivated; rich villages belonging to the Russians and Tartars are scattered about, whose inhabitants appear so contented and happy, that hardly can it be conceived, they breathe the air of Siberia; this tract of country contains even handsome inns, abounding with luxuries hitherto unknown to

Elizabeth, and which excited her astonishment.

The town of Perma, although the handsomest she had yet seen, shocked her from the narrowness and dirt of its streets, the height of its buildings, the confused intermixture of fine houses and miserable huts, and the closeness of the air. Perma, is surrounded by fens, and the country, as far as Cassan, (interspersed with barren heaths, and forests of firs,) exhibits the most gloomy aspect; in stormy seasons, the thunder frequently falls upon these aged trees, which burn with rapidity, and appear like pillars of the brightest red, surmounted by flames. Elizabeth and her guide were often witnesses of these flaming spectacles, and were obliged to cross woods, burning on each side of them; sometimes, they
saw

saw trees consumed at the root while their tops, which the fire had not reached, were supported only by the bark, or, half thrown down, formed an arch across the road, or, falling with a tremendous crash one upon another, make a pyramid of flames, like the piles of the ancients, in which pagan piety consumed the ashes of its heroes.

Amidst these dangers, and the still more imminent ones they encountered in the passage of rivers which overflowed their banks, Elizabeth was never disheartened; she even thought that the difficulties of her undertaking had been exaggerated. The weather, it is true, was uncommonly fine, and she often travelled in the cars or kibitkis, which were returning from Siberia, whither they had conveyed new exiles; for a few
kobecks,

kobecks, our travellers easily obtained permission of their drivers to mount them. Elizabeth accepted, without mortification, the assistance of her guide; for what she received from him, she considered as the gift of Heaven.

END OF PART THE FIRST.

ELIZABETH;

OR THE

EXILES OF SIBERIA.

PART THE SECOND.

OUR travellers arrived upon the banks of the Thama about the beginning of September; this river is but two hundred verstes from Cassan, and they had accomplished nearly half their journey. Had it been the will of Heaven that Elizabeth should complete her enterprize as it had been begun, she would have considered the happiness of her parents cheaply purchased; but it

was

was her destiny to experience a sad reverse; and with the winter season that period approached which was to put her firmness to the severest trial, and call forth all the exertions of her filial piety, to gain for its reward a crown of immortal glory.

The missionary had for several days visibly declined; it was with difficulty that he could walk, even with the assistance of Elizabeth, and supported by his staff; he was obliged to rest continually; and if a conveyance could be obtained in one of the kibitkis, the violent shocks he received from the roughness of the road, which was made of the trunks of large trees, carelessly thrown across the marshes, exhausted his little remains of strength, though the firm composure of his soul remained unmoved. On his arrival,

arrival, however, at Sarapol, (a considerable village on the northern banks of the Thama) the good missionary found himself so weak, that it was impossible to proceed on the journey. He was lodged in a miserable inn, adjoining to the house of the superintendant of the district; the only room he could be accommodated with was a sort of loft, the floor of which shook under every step; the only furniture this wretched apartment contained, consisted of a wooden table and a bedstead, upon which was strewed a few trusses of straw; upon this the missionary reposed his feeble limbs; the wind which entered through casements stripped of every pane, must have banished sleep from his relief, even would the pain he unremittingly endured have admitted of it. The most desponding reflections

reflections now presented themselves to the terrified imagination of Elizabeth; she had enquired for a physician; there was none to be had at Sarapol; and as she perceived that the people of the house took no interest in the state of the dying sufferer, she was obliged to depend solely upon her own efforts for procuring him relief. After fastening some pieces of the old tapestry, which lined the sides of the apartment, across the windows, she went out into the fields, in search of certain wild herbs, of which she made a salutary beverage for the suffering missionary, according to a receipt she had seen of her mother's.

As night approached, the symptoms of his malady grew every instant more alarming, and the unfortunate Elizabeth could no longer restrain her tears. She

withdrew

withdrew to a distance, that her sobs might not disturb his dying moments; but the good father heard them, and grieved for an affliction he knew not how to remove; for he felt well assured that he should rise no more, and that the period of his mortal career was very soon to be closed. To the pious philanthropist, who had dedicated a long life to the service of his Creator and of his fellow creatures, death could present no terrors; but the loss of an existence on which so much good still depended, failed not to excite regret: "Oh, Most High!" he inwardly exclaimed, "I presume not to murmur at thy decrees, but, had it been thy will to spare me till I had conducted this unprotected orphan to the end of her journey, my death would have been more easy."

When it grew dark, Elizabeth lighted a

rosin

rosin lamp, and stood all night at the foot of the bed to attend her patient : a little before day-break, she approached to offer him drink ; the missionary, feeling that the moment of his dissolution was near at hand, lifted himself up a little in the bed, and taking from her hand the cup she presented to him, raised it towards heaven, saying, “ Oh, my God ! I recommend her to thy care, who hast promised that a cup of cold water, bestowed in thy name, shall not go unrewarded.” These words carried with them the conviction of that misfortune Elizabeth had till this moment affected to disbelieve ; she discovered that the missionary felt his end approaching, and that she should soon be left destitute and unprotected ; her courage failed, she fell upon her knees by the side of the bed, while
her

her eyes became dim, her respiration difficult, and a cold sweat diffused itself over her brow. “ My God ! look down with pity on her, look down with pity on her, oh my God ! ” repeated the missionary, as he regarded her with the tenderest commiseration ; but, as he perceived that the violence of her anguish seemed to encrease, he said, “ In the name of God, and of your father, compose yourself, daughter, and hearken to my words.” The trembling Elizabeth stifled her sobs, and wiping away the tears that impeded her sight, raised her eyes to her venerable guide in token of attention ; he supported himself against the board placed across the back of the bedstead, and exerting all his remaining strength, addressed her thus :—“ My child, in travelling at your age, alone,

unprotected, and during the severe season that approaches, you will have to endure great hardships; but, there are dangers more alarming still, which must fall to your lot. An ordinary courage, that might stand firm amidst fatigues and suffering, would be unable to resist the enticements of seduction; but yours, Elizabeth, is not an ordinary courage, and the allurements of a court will not have power to change your heart. You will meet with many, who, presuming upon your unprotected situation and distress, will seek to turn you from the paths of virtue; but confide not in their protestations, trust not to their empty offers. The fear of God, the love of your parents, will place you beyond all their vain attempts. To whatever extremity you may be reduced, never lose sight of these

these sacred claims, never forget that a single false step will precipitate to the grave those to whom you owe your existence."—"Oh, father!" interrupted she, "fear not."—"I do not fear," said he; "your piety, your noble resolution, have merited implicit confidence, and I am well convinced you will not sink under the trials to which Heaven ordains you. You will find, my child, in my cloak, the purse, which the generous governor of Tobolskow gave to me, when he recommended you to my care. Preserve this secret with the strictest caution; his life depends upon your circumspection. The money this purse contains will defray your expences to Petersburg; when you arrive there, go to the Patriarch, mention Father Paul to him; perhaps the name may not have escaped his

memory;

memory ; he will procure an asylum for you in some convent, and will, I doubt not, present your petition to the Emperor...he cannot reject it, it is impossible...In my expiring moments, I repeat to you, my child, that a proof of filial piety like that you will display, has no precedent. The admiring world will bestow the applause it merits, and your virtue will be rewarded upon earth before it receives the glorious recompence destined it in Heaven. ..”

He ceased ; his breath began to fail, and the chilly damps of death already flood upon his brow. Elizabeth, reclining her head against the bed post, wept unconstrained. After a long interval of silence, the missionary, untying a little ebony crucifix, which hung suspended from his neck, presented it to her,

saying

saying in feeble accents, “ Take this my child ; it is the only treasure I have to bestow, the only one I possessed on earth ; and, possessed of that, I wanted not.” She pressed it to her lips with the most lively transports of grief, for the renunciation of such a treasure proved that the missionary was certain the moment of his dissolution was at hand. “ Fear nothing,” added he, with the tenderest compassion ; “ the good pastor who abandons not one of his flock, will watch over and guard thee, and will not fail to bestow more than he takes from thee ; confide securely in his goodness. He who feeds the sparrows, and knows the number of the sands of the sea-shore, will not forget Elizabeth.”—“ Father, Oh, father !” she exclaimed, seizing the hand he held out to her ; “ I cannot re-

sign myself to lose thee...."—“Child,” replied he, “Heaven ordains it; submit with patience to its decrees; in a few moments I shall be on High. I will pray for thee, for thy parents....” He could not finish; his lips moved, but the sounds he tried to utter, died away; he fell back upon his straw bed, and raising his eyes to Heaven, exerted his last efforts to recommend to its protection the destitute orphan for whom he still seemed to supplicate when life had fled: so powerful in his soul was the force of benevolence; so habitually, during the course of his long life, had he neglected his own interests to devote himself to those of others, that, at the moment he was to enter into the awful abyss of eternity, and to appear before the throne of his sovereign Judge to receive the irrecov-
ble

ble doom—he thought not of himself.

The cries of Elizabeth attracted the people of the house; they demanded their cause, and she pointed to her protector extended lifeless on the straw. The rumor of this event immediately gathered a crowd around the corps: some who were attracted by idle curiosity, regarded the youthful mourner with astonishment, as she stood weeping near the deceased; others compassionated her distress; but the people of the inn, anxious to receive payment for the miserable accommodations they had afforded, discovered with delight the contents of the missionary's cloak, which, in her grief Elizabeth had not thought of securing; they took possession of the purse, and told her they would restore the rest, when
they

they had taken enough to re-imburse themselves, and to pay the expences of the funeral. The persons employed for the interment soon arrived, followed by attendants with torches; they threw a black cloth over the deceased; and the unfortunate Elizabeth, obliged to let go the cold hand of her lifeless protector, which she had not till then relinquished, gave a scream of anguish, as she took a last view of that venerable countenance, still retaining its expression of serenity and benevolence. She retired to the furthest corner of the apartment, and there, bathed in tears, fell upon her knees and, covering her face with a handkerchief, as if to shut out from her sight that desolate world, in which she was now to wander alone, exclaimed in the voice of stifled agony, "Oh! thou blef-

fed

fed spirit, who hast taken thy flight to the realms of happiness, abandon not the destitute being thou hast left behind! Oh, my father! Oh, my mother! where are you at this moment that your child is bereft of all human aid?"

They now began to chant the funera^l hymns, and placed the body on the bier; when the instant arrived for its removal, Elizabeth, though weak, agitated and trembling, determined to attend to their last repository, the remains of him who had guided and protected her, and who had expired praying for her welfare.

At the foot of an eminence of the northern side of the Thama (on which are situated the ruins of a fortress erected during the remote period of the commotions of the Baschkirs) is a piece of ground, used as a burying place by the inhabitants

inhabitants of Saropol. This spot is at a little distance from the town; it is enclosed by a low hedge; in the centre of it is a small wooden building which serves for an oratory, around which heaps of earth, surmounted by a cross, mark the different receptacles of the dead; here and there a few straggling firs extend their gloomy shade, and large clusters of thistles, surrounded with wide spreading leaves, and mixed with another weed, whose bare and bending stem is divided into numerous slender stalks bearing flowers of a livid yellow, make their appearance from under the sepulchral stones.

The train that followed the coffin of the missionary was very numerous; it consisted of people of various nations, Persians, Turkomans, and Arabians who had made their escape from the Kirguis, and

and had been received into the colleges founded by Catharine the Second. They accompanied the funeral procession with tapers in their hands, blending their voices with those of the mourners, while Elizabeth followed slowly in silence, her face covered with a veil, feeling no connexion, in the midst of this tumultuous crowd, but with him who was no more.

When the coffin was let down into the ground, the officiant, according to the rites of the Greek church, put a small piece of money into the hand of the deceased to pay his passage, and after having thrown in a few shovels full of earth, he departed; thus, consigned to oblivion, lay the man, who had never suffered a day to elapse without rendering services to some of his fellow creatures;

tures; like the beneficent wind which scatters wide the grains of the earth, producing plenty all around, he had travelled over more than half the world, sowing the seeds of wisdom and of truth, and by that world he died forgotten: so little is fame attached to modest merit; so little of it do men bestow, except on those who dazzle them, or on those from whom they reap destruction. Vain worldly glory! fruitless honours! Heaven would not permit you to be thus the reward of human grandeur only, had it not reserved its own celestial glory for the recompense of virtue.

Elizabeth remained on this dismal spot until the close of day; she wept in solitude, offered up her supplications to the Almighty, and felt relieved. In afflictions like hers, a meditation between

heaven

heaven and the grave is salutary: a reflection on death will rouse our drooping spirits, a contemplation on the joys of Heaven will create hope and consolation; where a calamity is beheld in its extent, the horror we have conceived of it decreases; and where such a compensation is presented, the evil annexed to it loses its weight.

Elizabeth wept, but she did not repine: she was thankful for the blessings with which the hardships of half her journey had been lessened, and did not feel that she was now entitled to complain because it was the will of Heaven to withdraw them. Bereft of her guide, of every human succour, her courage still sustained her, and the undaunted heroism of her soul was proof against despair. "My father, my mother,"

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she exclaimed, "Fear not, your child will not sink under the trials that await her." Thus did she address her parents in the language of encouragement, as if they could behold her destitute situation; and when secret terror dismayed her soul, she would again invoke their names, and in repeating them her fears were dispelled. "Oh, holy spirit," said she, bending her head to the newly removed earth, "art thou then lost to us before my beloved parents could express their gratitude, could invoke blessings on the kind protector of their child?"

When night began to obscure the horizon, and Elizabeth was obliged to quit this melancholy spot, desirous to leave some memorial behind her, she picked up a sharp stone, and inscribed these words upon the cross which was over the grave:

The

*The just perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart.**

Then, bidding a last adieu to the remains of the poor missionary, she quitted the burying ground, and returned sorrowfully to the lonely apartment at Sarapol, in which she had so dismally spent the preceding night. On the morrow, when she was ready to set forward on her journey, the host gave her three rubles, assuring her it was all that remained in the missionary's purse. Elizabeth received them with emotions of gratitude and veneration, as if these riches, which she owed to her protector, were sent from that Heaven of which he was now an inhabitant. "Yes," exclaimed she, "my guide, my support, your charity

* Isaiah, chap. 'vii. verse 1.

survives you ; and though you are taken from me, that supports me still."

During her solitary route, Elizabeth's tears frequently flowed ; every object recalled the bitter recollection of the blessing she had lost : if a peasant, or an inquisitive traveller, regarded her with impertinent curiosity, or interrogated her in accents of rudeness, she missed the venerable protector who had ensured respect ; if, oppressed by weariness, she was obliged to seat herself on the road side to rest, she dared not stop the empty sledge that passed, fearing a refusal, accompanied perhaps by insult ; besides, as she possessed but three rubles, she preserved that pittance carefully to delay the period when she must have recourse to accidental charity, and denied herself every superfluity : thus was she debarred from
various

various little indulgencies the good missionary had procured her ; she always selected out the meanest habitation to demand a shelter, contenting herself with the worst accommodations and coarsest food.

Travelling by such slow degrees, she could not reach Cassan till the beginning of October. A strong wind blowing from the north-west had prevailed for several days, and had collected a quantity of ice upon the Wolga, which rendered the passage of that river almost impracticable ; it could only be crossed by going partly in a boat, and partly on foot, leaping from one mass of ice to another. Even the boatmen, who were accustomed to this dangerous navigation, would not undertake it but in consideration of a high reward, and no passenger ventured

to expose his life with them in the attempt. Elizabeth, without investigating the danger, was going to enter one of their boats, when they roughly pushed her away, declaring she could not be allowed to cross till the river was intirely frozen over; she enquired the probable lapse of time before that event would take place; on receiving the answer, "A fortnight at least," she determined to attempt the passage now. "In the name of Heaven, I conjure you," said she, in a tone of the most earnest intreaty, "to assist me in crossing this river; I come from beyond Tobolskow, and am proceeding to Petersburg, to petition the Emperor in behalf of my father, banished into Siberia; if I am obliged to remain a fortnight at Cassan, I shall not have a kopeck left wherewith to continue
my

my journey." This affecting appeal prevailed upon one of the boatmen, and taking Elizabeth by the hand, "Come," said he, "you are a good girl; I will endeavor to conduct you safe; the fear of God, and the love of your parents, guides your steps, and Heaven will protect you." He then helped her into his boat, which he navigated half way over; not being able to conduct it further, he took Elizabeth on his back, and walking and leaping alternately over the masses of ice, attained, by the assistance of his oar, the opposite side of the Wolga, and deposited his load in safety. Elizabeth expressed her acknowledgments in the most animated terms her grateful heart could dictate, and taking out her purse, which contained now but two rubles and a few smaller coins, offered a trifling reward
for

for his services. "Poor thing!" said the boatman, looking at the contents of her purse, "are those all thy riches, all that thou hast to pay the expences of thy journey from hence to Petersburg? and dost thou imagine that Nicholas Sokoloff would deprive thee of an obol? No, rather will I add something to thy little store; it will draw down a blessing upon me, and upon my six little ones." So saying, he threw her a small piece of money, and called to her, as he returned to the boat, "Heaven help thee, forlorn one."

Elizabeth picked up the little piece of money, and, regarding it with her eyes filled with tears, said, "I will preserve thee for my father; thou wilt afford a proof that his prayers have been heard,

and

and that a paternal protection has been extended to me every where."

The atmosphere was clear, and the sky serene, but the keen breezes of a northerly wind chilled the air. After having walked for four hours without resting, Elizabeth's strength began to fail; no human habitation presented itself to her view, and she sought shelter at the foot of a hill, the rocky summit of which jutting over defended her from the wind. Near to this hill was an extensive forest of oaks, trees which are not to be seen on the Asiatic side of the Wolga; Elizabeth knew not what they were; though they had lost some of their foliage, their beauty was not so much diminished, but that it might still have excited admiration; but, noble as they were, Elizabeth could not view these European productions with

with pleasure; they recalled too forcibly to her mind the immense distance which separated her from her parents; she preferred the fir, which solaced that spot where she had been reared, which had so frequently yielded shade to the days of her childhood, and under which, perhaps, her beloved parents at that instant reposed.

These reflections brought tears into her eyes: "Oh! when shall I be blessed again with beholding them!"—she exclaimed; "when shall I hear the sound of their voices? when return to their fond embraces?" As she spoke, she stretched out her arms towards Cassan, the buildings of which were still distinguishable in the distant prospect, and, raised above them, upon the summit of high rocks, the ancient fortress of the Chams
of

Tartary presenting a view picturesque and grand.

In the course of her journey, Elizabeth often met with objects which affected her compassionate heart in a scarcely inferior degree to her own distresses. Sometimes, she encountered wretches, chained together, who were condemned to work for life in the mines of Nerozinsk or to inhabit the dreary coasts of Angara; at others, troops of colonists destined to people the new city built by the Emperor upon the frontiers of China; some on foot, others on the cars which conveyed the animals, poultry, and baggage. Notwithstanding these were criminals, sentenced to a milder doom, for offences which might have been elsewhere. punished with death, they did not fail to excite compassion
passion

passion in Elizabeth; but, when she met culprits escorted by an officer of state, whose noble mien retraced to her remembrance that of her father, she could not forbear shedding tears over their fate, and would sometimes approach respectfully to offer soothing consolation, which often relieves the woes of the unhappy. Pity, alas! was the only gift Elizabeth had to bestow; with that she soothed the sorrows of those she overtook, and by a return of pity must she now depend for subsistence; for on her arrival at Volodimir, she was forced to change her last ruble. She had been nearly three months on her journey from Sarapol to Voldimir; but, through the kind hospitality of the Russian peasants, who never receive payment for milk and bread, her little treasure had not been yet exhausted; but

but now all began to fail; her feet were almost bare, and her ragged dress ill defended her from a frigidity of atmosphere which had already raised the thermometer above thirty degrees, and which increased daily. The ground was covered with a snow more than two feet deep; sometimes it congealed while falling, and appeared like a shower of ice, so thick that earth and sky were equally concealed from the view; at other times torrents of rain rendered the roads almost impassable, or gusts of wind arose so violent, that Elizabeth, to defend herself from their rude assaults, was forced to shelter herself under the snow, covering her head with large pieces of the bark of pine-trees, which she dextrously stripped off, as she had seen done by the peasants of Siberia.

One of these tempestuous hurricanes had raised the snow in thick clouds, and created an obscurity so impenetrable, that Elizabeth, no longer able to discern the road, and stumbling at every step, was obliged to stop; she took refuge under a high rock, against which she clung as firmly as she could to withstand the fury of a storm which overthrew all around her. Whilst she was in this perilous situation, with her head bent down, a confused noise, that appeared to issue from behind the spot where she stood, created a hope that a better shelter might be procured; she gained the opposite side of the rock with difficulty, and discovered a kибитки, which had been overturned and broken, and, at a little distance, a hut; she hastened to demand entrance; an old woman opened the door, and, struck at

at the wretchedness of her appearance, "My poor child," said she, "from whence dost thou come, wandering thus alone in this dreadful weather?" To this interrogation Elizabeth made her usual reply: "I come from beyond Tobolskow, and am going to Petersburg to solicit my father's pardon." At these words, a man who was sitting in a dejected posture in a corner of the room, suddenly raised his head from between his hands, and regarding Elizabeth with an air of astonishment, exclaimed, "Is it possible that thou comest from so remote a country, alone, in this state of distress, and during this tempestuous season, to solicit pardon for your father?... Alas! my poor child would perhaps have done as much; but the barbarians tore me from her arms, leaving her in ignorance of my fate; she

knows not what is become of me; she cannot plead for mercy; no, never shall I behold her again.....this afflicting thought will kill me....separated for ever from my child, I cannot live....now, indeed, that I know my doom," continued the unhappy father, "I might inform her of it; I have written a letter to her, but the carrier, belonging to this kibitki, who is returning to Riga, the place of her abode, will not undertake the charge of it without some small compensation, and I cannot offer the most trifling; not a single kopeck do I possess: the barbarians have stripped me of every thing."

Elizabeth produced her last ruble, and, blushing deeply at the insignificance of the offering, said, in timid accents, as she presented it to the unfortunate stranger, "If that would be enough...." He pressed

pressed to his lips the generous hand held forth to succour him, and hastened to make a proposal to the carrier; like to the widow's mite, Heaven bestowed its blessing on the offering: the carrier was satisfied, and took charge of the letter. Thus did her noble sacrifice produce a fruit worthy of the heart of Elizabeth; it relieved the agonized feelings of a parent, and carried consolation to the wounded bosom of a child.

When the storm was abated, Elizabeth, before she pursued her journey, embraced the old woman who had bestowed upon her all the care and tenderness of a mother, and said in a low voice that she might not be heard by the stranger, "I have nothing left to give, the blessing of my parents is the only recompence; I have to offer for your kindness,

it is the only treasure I possess."——
 "How!" interrupted the old woman aloud, "My poor child, have you then given away your all?" Elizabeth coloured and looked down. The stranger started from his seat, and, raising his hands to heaven, threw himself upon his knees before her: "Angel that thou art," he exclaimed, "can I make no return to thee, who hast thus bestowed thy all upon me?" A knife stood upon the table; Elizabeth took it up, and cutting off a lock of her hair, presented it to him, saying, "Sir, as you are going into Siberia, you will see the Governor of Tobolskow; give him this, I beseech you, and tell him, 'Elizabeth sends it to her parents;' he will perhaps permit this token to convey to them the knowledge of their child's existence."——

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"Your wish shall be executed," answered the stranger; "and if I have my liberty in those deserts of which I am to be an inhabitant, I will seek out the dwelling of your parents, that I may tell them what their child has done for me this day."

The prospect of conveying consolation to her parents created far greater delight in the soul of Elizabeth, than the offer of a throne could have produced. She was bereft of all, except the little piece of money, given her by the boatman on the shore of the Wolga; she might fancy herself rich, for the greatest felicity that wealth could have procured, had just fallen to her lot; she had bestowed happiness on her fellow creatures, revived the desponding heart of a father, and converted tears of bitter sadness, shed by
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the orphan, into those of soothing consolation: such blessings could a single ruble produce from the hand of benevolence.

From Volodimir to the village of Pokroff, the road lies through fenny low lands, interspersed with extensive forests of oaks, elms, aspens, and wild apples. These different trees, thus intermixed, present, during summer, a beautiful prospect, but they afford an asylum to numerous banditti, who infest the roads; in winter, as the boughs, despoiled of their foliage, yield but a bad ambush, these bands of robbers are less formidable. Elizabeth, however, upon her journey, heard repeated accounts of plunders that had been committed. Had she been worth any thing to lose, these narrations might have been

a source

a source of terror, but, obliged to beg her daily bread, poverty was her passport, as a shield defended her, and enabled her to traverse these forests in security.

A few verstes from Pokroff, the high road had been swept away by a hurricane, and travellers, journeying to Moscow, were forced to make a considerable circuit through meres formed by the inundations of the Wolga; these meres were now hardened by the frost to a solidity equal to dry land. Elizabeth attempted to follow the route which had been marked out to her; but after walking for more than an hour over this icy desert, through which were no traces of a road, she found herself in a swampy marsh, from which every endeavour to extricate herself was exerted for a long

time

time in vain ; at length, with great difficulty, she attained a little hillock ; covered with mud, and, exhausted with fatigue, she seated herself upon a stone to rest, and emptied her sandals to dry them in the sun, which at that moment shone in its full lustre. The environs of this spot appeared to be perfectly desolate ; no signs of a human dwelling were visible ; solitude and silence prevailed around. Elizabeth perceived she must have strayed widely from the road, and, notwithstanding all the courage with which she was endued, her heart failed ; her situation was alarming in the extreme ; behind was the bog she had just crossed, and before her an immense forest through which no track was to be distinguished.

At length, day began to close, and notwithstanding her extreme weariness,
Eliza-

Elizabeth was forced to proceed in search of a shelter for the night, of some being who might have the humanity to procure her one ; she wandered about in vain ; no object presented itself to revive her hopes, no sound re-animated her drooping spirits ; overcome with lassitude and terror, she burst into tears ; “ Oh, my father,” she cried, “ I shall never see you more ; I shall perish without delivering you from exile and bondage ; and you, my mother, what will become of you, when you hear the fate of your child....?” — At that moment a sound of voices issued from the forest, and a minute after several men made their appearance : invigorated by hope, she hastened towards them ; but as they drew near, terror again succeeded to joy ; their savage air and stern countenances

nances dismayed her to a still greater degree than the horrors of the solitude in which she had so lately been plunged. All the anecdotes she had heard of the banditti who infested that neighbourhood immediately recurred to her imagination, and she feared that a judgment awaited her for the temerity with which she had indulged the idea that a special providence watched over her preservation, and fell upon her knees to humble herself in the presence of divine justice. The troop advanced, stopped before Elizabeth, and regarding her with surprise and curiosity, demanded from whence she came, and what accident had brought her there. With a fluttering voice and downcast eyes, the terrified girl replied, that she came from beyond Tobolskow, and that she was going to
 implore

implore from the Emperor a pardon for her father; she added, that she had missed her road, and was near perishing in the marshes, from which danger she had escaped with difficulty, and had been obliged to rest a long while to recover strength to enable her to proceed in search of an asylum for the night. Her interrogators appeared astonished, questioned her again, and asked what money she had to undertake so long a journey. Elizabeth drew out the little coin given her by the boatman of the Wolga, and shewed it to them. "Is that all?" they exclaimed.—"All," she replied. At this answer, delivered with a candor that enforced belief, the robbers regard each other with amazement; they were not moved, they were not softened; rendered obdurate by a long habit of
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vice, an action of such noble heroism as that of Elizabeth's had no such influence over their souls, but it excited wonder; they could not comprehend what they felt necessitated to believe, and restrained by a species of veneration, they dared not to molest the object of Heaven's evident protection, and passing on, said to each other, "Let us leave her; some supernatural Power guards her."

Elizabeth rose and hurried from them; she had not penetrated far into the forest before four roads, crossing one another, presented themselves to her view; in one of the angles which they formed was a little oratory dedicated to the Virgin, and over it, upon the four sides of a post, were inscribed the names of the towns to which the different roads led. Elizabeth prostrated herself to offer up her grateful acknow-

acknowledgements to the Omnipotent Being who preserved her: the robbers were not mistaken, she was guarded by a supernatural Power.

Hope had restored to Elizabeth all her strength, and she resumed the road to Pokroff with her usual activity; she soon regained the Wolga, which forms an angle before this village, and washes the walls of a monastery. Elizabeth hastened to solicit shelter under its venerable roof; she related the hardships she had undergone, and disclosed to the community how much she stood in need of hospitality. The nuns received her with cordiality, and lavished upon her the most affectionate attentions; their kind solicitude reminded her of those endearments she was wont in former days to receive from her mother. The simple and mo-

lest recital Elizabeth gave of her adventures proved a source of edification to the whole community; her pious auditors could not find words to express the admiration they felt at that heroic perseverance which had endured so many hardships, sustained so many severe trials, without a murmur; they lamented their inability to assist her with money for supplying some of the expences of her journey, but their convent was very poor; no revenue was attached to it, and all their dependance was on accidental charity. They could not, however, let their guest depart in a ragged dress and nearly barefoot; to provide her with better habiliments they stripped themselves, and each gave her a portion of her own cloathing. Elizabeth endeavored to decline their gifts, for it was of necessaries her gene-

rous benefactresses deprived themselves; but, pointing to the walls of their convent, they said, "We have a shelter while you have none; part of the little we possess belongs to you, for you are poorer still than we."

At length Elizabeth set forward on the last stage to Moscow; she was astonished at the extraordinary bustle she now witnessed, at the immense concourse of carriages, carts, horses, and people of all ranks and ages, which was resorting to this great metropolis; as she passed onward, the crowd seemed to augment. In the village, where she stopped to rest, all the houses were filled with strangers, who paid so high for the smallest lodging, that it was with the utmost difficulty the destitute Elizabeth could procure the most wretched. She could not refrain

from shedding tears, as she received from the hand of scornful pity a little coarse food, and the shelter of a shed so miserable, that it scarcely excluded the falling snow; but she was not humiliated; she did not forget that Heaven looked down with approbation on her sacrifices, and that the restoration of happiness to her parents might be their reward; neither did she feel exalted; too artless to think she did more than duty prescribed in devoting herself for their sakes, and too affectionate not to feel a secret satisfaction in suffering for them.

The bells of all the adjacent villages were ringing, and from every side resounded the name of Alexander, accompanied by loud acclamations of joy. The report of the cannon from Moscow alarmed Elizabeth, for never before

had

had a sound so tremendous struck her ears; in a timid voice, she enquired the cause of a group of persons in rich liveries whom she overtook, surrounding a broken carriage; "Doubtless it is the entrance of the Emperor into Moscow," they replied:—"How," exclaimed the astonished Elizabeth, "is not the Emperor then at Petersburg?" They raised their eyes in pity and contempt of her ignorance, as they retorted, "Why didst thou not know that the Emperor Alexander was coming to celebrate his coronation at Moscow?" Elizabeth clasped her hands in an extacy; Heaven again in an especial manner evinced itself in her favor; the Omnipotent sent the sovereign to meet her, upon whom the fate of her parents depended, and willed that she should arrive at that pe-
riod

riod of general joy when the hearts of monarchs recede even from the dictates of justice, in favor of those of clemency. "My parents," she cried, looking back towards the home from which so great a distance separated her, "must such delightful hopes rejoice my heart alone? and while your child is happy, must you grieve in ignorance of her fate?"

In the month of March, in the year 1801, Elizabeth made her entrance into the vast capital of Muscovy, imagining herself at the end of her labors, and not considering that there could be still a calamity to apprehend. On her progress through the town, superb structures, decorated with the magnificence of royalty, presented themselves to her admiring sight, but, as in Perma, intermixed with wretched cabins, whose untiled
roofs

roofs and broken casements afforded no shelter from the inclemency of weather. The streets and alleys of Moscow were so thronged, that Elizabeth could scarcely proceed through the crowds that obstructed the passage; after some time, she found herself in meadows richly wooded, and began to imagine she was again in the country; she stopped to rest in a grand avenue formed by rows of birch-trees, which bear a resemblance to the limes of Prussia. An immense assemblage of persons thronged this avenue, all conversing on the subject of the coronation; trains of carriages passed backwards and forwards, which, jarring continually against one another, caused an incessant clatter; the enormous bells of the cathedral rang without cessation; they were answered by those of the small-

er churches from all parts of the town; and the sound of the cannon, which was fired at regular intervals, could scarcely be distinguished amidst the overpowering tumult of this prodigious city. As Elizabeth drew near to the Square of the Cremelines, the commotion appeared to encrease at every step she took; she approached timidly to one of the great fires which were lighted on this spot, and seated herself in a corner of it. Cold, weariness, and want of food, had exhausted her spirits, and the joyful hopes of the morning were converted into sadness: she had toiled through the numerous streets of Moscow, but among the splendid habitations she had beheld, none had offered to her an asylum; she had met people of various nations and degrees, but had looked in vain for a friend,

a pro-

a protector; some had enquired their way, had expressed uneasiness at having missed it; how much did she envy their lot! "Happy," said she, "to have a home to seek: I, who possess none, cannot lose my way; for in every place is shelter equally denied me."

Night now rapidly approached, and the cold was extreme; the dejected Elizabeth had not eaten a morsel the whole day, and was nearly famished with cold and hunger; she watched all who passed to see whether she could discern on their countenances that expression of compassionate benevolence which might embolden her to make an appeal to their pity; but among that crowd, every individual of which she observed so earnestly, no one stood in need of her assistance, and she escaped wholly unnoticed.

At

At last, she ventured to solicit an entrance at the doors of some of the poorest cabins, but met with only repulse. The hope of gain, during this period of rejoicing, had steeled all hearts against the importunities of distress, and withheld the donations of charity; never is mankind less inclined to liberality, than at the moment of acquiring an increase of wealth.

Elizabeth returned to the fire on the Square of the Cremelines, to weep in silence; her heart was so full, that she had not strength to eat a small piece of bread which an old woman, who had taken some pity on her wretchedness, had bestowed; she was now, for the first time, reduced to that degree of misery, which compelled her to hold forth her hand to any casual passenger, to implore an alms that might be carelessly granted,

or

or refused, perhaps with contempt. At the moment that she had resolved to make an essay of this last resource, an emotion of dignified pride, detained the hand she had advanced; but the cold was excessive; in spending the night exposed to the open air, her life would be endangered, and that life she did not consider in her own right of disposal. This reflection subdued her spirit; with one hand placed across her eyes, she stretched out the other to the passenger, saying, "In the name of the father whom you revere, of the mother whom you cherish, give me a trifle to procure a lodging for the night." The man to whom she addressed herself examined her with curiosity by the light of the flame. "Young girl," said he, "you follow a bad trade; cannot you work? At your age a live-

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likelihood might be easily gained. God help you! I never encourage beggars." He passed on.

The unfortunate Elizabeth raised her eyes to Heaven, to implore aid from thence; an inspiration of hope re-animating her sinking courage; again she ventured to repeat her appeal to the compassion of several who passed; some did not listen to it, others gave so small an alms that she could not collect enough to relieve her necessities. At last, when night was far advanced, the crowd dispersed, and the fire nearly extinguished, some of the guards attending the Emperor, in making their rounds, discovered Elizabeth, and demanded roughly why she remained abroad at that hour. The stern looks and fierce manners of these soldiers overpowered her with terror, and,

incapaci-

incapacitated from uttering a syllable, she burst into an agony of tears. The soldiers, little affected at seeing her weep, assembled round her, repeating their question with insolent familiarity. The trembling girl at last recovering sufficient courage to answer, in a voice broken with sobs, said that she came from beyond Tobolsk, to petition the Emperor for her father; "I have travelled the whole journey alone and on foot," continued she; "and as I have no money, I cannot obtain a shelter for the night." At these words, the soldiers laughed loudly, taxing her tale with falsehood. Elizabeth, more terrified than ever, sought to escape, but they would not suffer it, and rudely seized her. "Oh my God! oh, my father!" she cried in accents of horror and despair, "will you not come to my

succour? have you forsaken the wretched Elizabeth?" During the debate, some persons, attracted by the noise, and who had assembled in groups, murmured indignantly at the cruelty of the soldiers. Elizabeth stretched her hands, in act of supplication, towards them, exclaiming, "Before Heaven, I solemnly protest I have uttered nothing but the truth; I come from beyond Tobolskow, to implore pardon for my father; save me, oh! save me; let me not die, at least, till I have obtained it." This moving appeal affected her auditors; several advanced to her rescue, and one of them, addressing the soldiers, said, "I keep the Inn upon the Square of St. Basil; let this young girl come with me; her story appears to me to be true; and I will give her a lodging." The soldiers who
had

had begun to be a little softened by her extreme distress, consented to this request, and withdrew.

The grateful Elizabeth embraced the knees of her preserver; he raised her kindly, and, desiring her to follow him, led the way to his dwelling, which was at a little distance. "I have not a room to give thee," said he; "there is not one in my house unoccupied; but my wife will receive thee into hers for one night; she is kind and compassionate, and will readily endure so small an inconvenience to serve thee." Elizabeth, trembling and agitated, followed in silence; her guide conducted her to a small apartment, in which a young woman, with an infant in her arms, was seated near a stove; she rose on their entrance; her husband immediately gave an account of the

dangerous situation from which he had extricated his companion, adding, that he had offered, in his wife's name, a night's hospitality to the destitute stranger. The young woman confirmed the offer, and, taking Elizabeth by the hand, said with a smile of encouragement, "Be comforted, we will take good care of you, but be careful never to stay out so late again; in great towns like this, it is, at your age, an imprudence that must be ever attended by danger." Elizabeth answered that she had no asylum to resort to; every door had been shut against her; she owned her poverty without a blush, and related all the hardships she had so heroically encountered without vanity. Her hosts wept at the recital; neither of them thought of doubting her veracity;

city; the emotions which her story excited afforded a proof that it was true. The classes of society to which they belonged, are not so easily misled; brilliant fictions are beyond their capacities, while over their souls, truth in all its purity preserves its claims entire.

At the conclusion of her narrative, Jaques Rossi (the name of the host) said, "My influence in this town is but small, but as far as it could be exerted for my own interests, it shall for yours." His wife pressed his hand in token of approbation, and asked Elizabeth if she did not know some one who could present her to the Emperor. "No," she replied; she would not venture to mention young Smoloff, fearing to involve him in some difficulty; besides, no actual assistance could be expected from

from him, since he was in Livonia. "Well," answered the wife of Jaques Rossi, "the most powerful recommendation to our great sovereign is virtue in distress, and that will plead for you."—"Yes," interrupted her husband, "the Emperor Alexander is to be crowned to-morrow, in the church of the Assumption; you must place yourself in his way, and at his feet solicit the remission of your father's sentence; I will accompany and encourage you...."—"Oh, my generous benefactors!" exclaimed Elizabeth, clasping her hands with an expression of the liveliest gratitude, "Heaven beholds your kindness, and my parents will invoke blessings on you for it; on you who will conduct me to the feet of the Emperor, and support me in his presence.....Perhaps you will

will be witnesses of my happiness—of the greatest happiness a human being is capable of enjoying. If it is granted me to obtain this pardon for my father, to be the joyful bearer of the happy tidings to him and to my mother, to behold their delight...."

She could not finish her oration; the idea of such felicity almost forbade the hope that it might be realised; she could not believe that her deserts entitled her to expect it. The panegyrics which her hosts, however, bestowed upon the clemency of Alexander, the various anecdotes they recorded in evidence of the truth upon which these commendations were founded, and the grace with which the value of those acts of mercy had been enhanced, re-animated her spirits. Elizabeth listened to them with eagerness; she would gladly have spent the

the whole night in hearing them repeated, but as it grew late, her kind hosts wished her to partake of some repose, that she might be enabled to support the exertions of the morrow. Jaques Rossi retired to a small chamber at the top of the house, while his wife received Elizabeth into her own apartment.

A long time elapsed before the perturbation of her mind would admit of sleep; but, she was thankful to Heaven even for her sufferings, since the excess of them had heightened the value of the generous relief she had experienced: "Had I been less miserable," thought she, "Jaques Rossi, perhaps, would not have taken pity of me." When sleep, at length overtook her, visions of happiness in various forms fled before her; sometimes, fancy presented her parents,

rents, their countenances irradiate with joy; sometimes she imagined the voice of the Emperor, addressing her in terms of approbation and compliance with her entreaties; and sometimes another form presented itself to her imagination, but under characters more vague and indistinct; a mist seemed to obscure it from her sight, and the impression it had left upon her heart was the only trace that remained.

On the morrow, as soon as the thunder of the artillery, the beating of the drums, and loud acclamations of the people, announced the dawn of that joyful day, on which the ceremony of the Emperor Alexander's coronation was to be celebrated, Elizabeth, habited in a dress lent her by her kind hostess, and leaning upon the arm of Jaques Rossi, mixed among
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the throng that crowded to the cathedral of the Assumption, in which the coronation was to be performed.

Upwards of a thousand tapers illuminated the church, which was decorated in all the splendor of eastern magnificence. Upon a dazzling throne, under a canopy of rich velvet, were seated the Emperor and his youthful consort, habited in sumptuous dresses, which, displaying to advantage the beauty of their forms, gave to their appearance an air almost celestial. Kneeling before her august spouse, the Empress received from his hands the imperial diadem, and encircled her brow with this pledge of their eternal union. The venerable Plato, the Patriarch of Moscow, placed opposite to them in the sacred chair of truth, in a discourse at once pathetic and sublime,

lime, recalled to Alexander's mind the duties annexed to royalty, and the awful responsibility imposed upon his elevated station, in return for the pomp that environed it, the power with which it was invested. Amidst the assemblage of nations that thronged the cathedral, he pointed out the Kamtschatkan, bringing tributes of skins from the Thurile Isles, which border on America; the merchants from Archangel, loaded with rich commodities which their vessels were to convey to the ports of Europe; the Samoyeds, come from the mouth of the Jeniffer, a country condemned to the rigors of an eternal winter, where the beautiful flower of the spring, and the rich produce of harvest are alike unknown; and the natives of Astracand, whose fertile fields yield melons, figs, and grapes of an exquisite

quisite flavor; he shewed him, lastly, the inhabitants of the shores of the Black and Caspian Seas, and of the huge Tartary, which, bounded by Persia, China, and the Empire of the Moguls, extending from the extremity of the western hemisphere to that of the east, takes in almost half the globe, and nearly touches either pole. "Sovereign of the most extensive empire of the earth," said he, "who are this day to take the awful oath of presiding over the destinies of a state which includes a fifth part of the known world, bear it ever in remembrance that you have to answer at the tribunal of divine Justice for the fate of millions of your fellow creatures, and that an injustice done to the meanest among them through your negligence, must be accounted for at the last day." The young

Emperor

Emperor appeared deeply affected at this harangue: there was one among the auditors whose heart was not less profoundly moved; the suppliant came to solicit the pardon of a father.

At the moment that Alexander began to pronounce the solemn oath which was to bind him to devote his future life to the happiness of his people, the enraptured Elizabeth imagined she heard the voice of mercy pronouncing the edict which was to loosen the chains of the unfortunate: she could no longer preserve silence; assisted by a supernatural strength, she pierced the crowd, and, forcing a passage through the lines of soldiers, rushed towards the throne, exclaiming, "Mercy! mercy!" This outcry, which interrupted the ceremony, created a general commotion throughout the cathe-

dral;

dral; the guards advanced, and, notwithstanding her entreaties, and those of Jaques, they dragged Elizabeth out of the church. The Emperor, however, would not, on such a glorious day, be invocated in vain; he dismissed one of the officers of his suite to enquire what the petitioner wanted; the officer obeyed, and on quitting the church, heard the imploring accents of the agonised suppliant, still endeavoring to prevail upon the foldiers to allow of her return; he started, then rushing impetuously through the guard, beheld her, knew her, and clasping his hands together, exclaimed, "It is, it is Elizabeth!" Elizabeth turned, and knew not whether she might dare to encourage the transports of joy which suddenly elated her heart: she could not feel persuaded that Smoloff

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was before her, Smoloff who could supplicate with her, and obtain the pardon she so earnestly desired: nevertheless, when he spoke, the sound of his voice confirmed the evidence of her sight; she could no longer doubt; joy deprived her of utterance, but she stretched her arms towards him, as to a messenger sent from Heaven to her relief. He precipitated himself forward, seized her hand, and in his turn began to doubt the testimony of his senses. "Elizabeth," he exclaimed, "is it indeed you? or do I behold a vision from Heaven? Speak, whence do you come?"—"From Tobolskow."—"From Tobolskow! and hast thou travelled hither, alone, on foot?"—"Yes," she exclaimed, "I came alone, on foot, to entreat pardon for my father, and they force me from the presence of the Emperor."

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ror."——“ I will re-conduct you to his presence, Elizabeth,” interrupted the transported Smoloff; “ I will present you to him; he cannot resist your supplications; your prayer will be granted.” He then dispersed the soldiers, and led Elizabeth back towards the church. The imperial procession was at that instant issuing from the great gates of the cathedral; as soon as the newly-anointed monarch appeared, Smoloff, holding Elizabeth by the hand, forced a passage through the guards, and threw himself with her at the Emperor’s feet; “ Sire,” he cried, “ vouchsafe to listen to the voice of suffering virtue; behold the daughter of the unfortunate Stanislaus Potowsky, who comes from the desarts of Ischim, where her parents have languished out twelve years of exile; alone, unpro-

unprotected, she has existed upon charity, and, withstanding the united opposition of poverty, insult, and tempests, is come to your feet to implore forgiveness for her father.”

Elizabeth raised her joined hands, repeating the last words, “ Forgiveness for my father!” A clamor of admiration arose from among the crowd; the Emperor himself joined in it: deeply rooted as his prejudices had been against Stanislaus Potowsky, they were, in an instant, totally effaced: he could not hesitate to believe that the father of a daughter so virtuous must be innocent of the crimes alledged against him; but had it been otherwise, Alexander could not have withheld forgiveness. “ The pardon is granted,” said he; “ your father is free.” Elizabeth heard no more; at the words of pardon, joy overpowered her,

her, and she fell senseless into the arms of Smoloff; in this state, she was carried through immense crowds, (who opened a passage, shouting with joyful acclamations of approbation at the transcendent virtue of the heroine, and the clemency of the monarch) and was conveyed to the house of Jaques Rossi: The first object that met her eyes upon recovering her senses was Smoloff, kneeling beside her; the first sound she heard was a repetition from his lips of the words used by the Emperor, when he accorded pardon; "Elizabeth, the pardon is granted; your father is free." For some minutes, it was by looks only that she could express her joy and gratitude; but they expressed more than language could have imparted. At length, turning to Smoloff, she pronounced, in a faltering

faltering voice, the names of her father and mother: "We shall behold them again then," said she; "we shall enjoy the sight of their happiness." These words penetrated deep into the heart of him to whom they were addressed. Elizabeth had not said she loved him, but she had associated him with the first sentiment of her soul, with that object of felicity, in which her ideas and hopes had so long centered. From that happy moment, he ventured to indulge the hope, that she would, on a future day, consent to ratify the union she had thus involuntarily made.

Several days elapsed before the deed of pardon could be drawn up and signed: previous to its final accomplishment, it was requisite to take a review of the causes of Stanislaus Potowsky's condemnation;

nation. Alexander, on their investigation, was convinced that equity alone would have broken the chains of the illustrious patriot; but he had listened to the dictates of clemency before he knew what those of justice required; an act of generosity which those, whom he had thus nobly pardoned, never forgot.

One morning, Smoloff entered Elizabeth's apartment earlier than usual; he presented her with a scroll of parchment sealed with the imperial signet. "Behold," said he, "the mandate in which the Emperor commands my father to restore yours to liberty." Elizabeth seized the scroll, and, pressing it to her lips, bathed it with tears. "This is not all," continued Smoloff; "our magnanimous sovereign performs a noble action in a manner worthy of himself; with
liberty

liberty he likewise restores to your father all his dignities, the high rank he formerly held, and all his large possessions, honors and wealth, sources of the grandeur which exalts mankind in general, but can have no influence over the superior soul of Elizabeth. The courier who is to convey the order to my father departs to-morrow, and I have obtained leave from the Emperor to accompany him."
—"And may I not likewise accompany him?" eagerly interrupted Elizabeth. "You may," resumed Smoloff; "and from your lips only your father must learn that he is free. Presuming upon my knowledge of your sentiments, I told the Emperor that it was your wish to be the bearer of the joyful intelligence yourself; he approved the design, and charged me with the commission of
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informing you that you have leave to depart to-morrow, in one of his carriages, attended by two female domestics; and he sends a purse of two thousand rubles to defray the expences of your journey." Before Elizabeth returned an answer, she regarded Smoloff some moments with an air of reflection; then addressing him in a tone expressive of her feelings, "Since the first day I saw you," said she, "no favorable circumstance has forwarded my enterprize of which you were not the instigator; without your assistance, I could not have obtained my father's pardon; without your generous interference, never would he have beheld his country again: to you then it belongs to tell him he is free: this glorious recompence alone is adequate to your benefits."—"No Elizabeth;" replied Smo-

Smoloff; "that happiness must be yours; the recompence which I aspire to, is greater still."—"Oh, Heaven!" exclaimed Elizabeth, "What can that be?" Smoloff was on the point of answering in terms expressive of the rapture he felt, but, repressing his emotion, he colored and looked down: an interval of silence ensued; at length, in a faltering voice, Smoloff answered, "Elizabeth, I must not tell you but in the presence of your father."

Since Smoloff had recovered his Elizabeth, he had not suffered a single day to elapse without spending some hour in her company. Each day increased his love; but never for an instant did he deviate from that respect and reserve which he felt at present to be her due; separated from her parents, Elizabeth

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had now no protector but him; and the valuable deposit thus entrusted to his charge, he considered as so sacred that he could not have prevailed upon himself to express a sentiment that might have excited the most transitory embarrassment in its heart.

During the long journey they performed together, he preserved the same respectful silence. Constantly seated by her side, beholding her, hearing her, his passion hourly increased, but never overcame his resolution. He bestowed upon her always the appellation of sister; and if his attentions were more tender than those of the fondest brother, they were not less innocent; they were calculated to reassure a delicacy the most scrupulous, while they must have satisfied expectations the most unbounded.

Except

Except in the efforts he made to conceal his sentiments, they were not perceptible; friendship seemed to dictate all he uttered; in his silence only was love discernible.

Before she quitted Moscow, Elizabeth liberally requited her generous hosts; and, as she repassed the Wolga, she did not forget Nicholas Sokoloff, the boatman: on making an enquiry after him, she was informed that, in consequence of an accident which had befallen him: he had been reduced to extreme distress, and was now lying in a garret, surrounded by six children in the want of bread. Elizabeth immediately procured a guide to conduct her to his dwelling; when he had seen her before, it was in poverty, in dejection, and cloathed in rags; now that he beheld

her in a rich dress, with joy and animation sparkling in her eyes, and diffusing a brilliancy over her whole figure, he did not recollect her. Elizabeth drew from her bosom the little coin she had received from him, and, shewing it, recalled to his remembrance the act of kindness he had performed; then, putting into his hand a purse containing a hundred rubles, she added, "Charity fails not to reap its fruit: behold what you gave in the name of Heaven, behold how Heaven returns the offering."

Elizabeth was so eager to rejoin her parents, that she travelled night and day; on her arrival at Sarapol, however, she stayed to visit the tomb of the missionary; it was a tribute of grateful veneration, almost equivalent to an act of filial duty;

duty; and as such, Elizabeth could not let it pass unfulfilled. She beheld once more the cross, on which she had engraven the inscription it still preserved; she wept once more on that spot where she had suffered so severely; but the tears she now shed were those of soothing consolation; she imagined that in that celestial paradise, of which he was now a blessed inhabitant, the missionary partook of her felicity; and that in his soul, so full of benevolence, her happiness still added something to that which he enjoyed.

I feel impatient to bring my tale to a crisis, and with Elizabeth to reach that dwelling where the days of her absence were counted with such anxiety. I will not enter into a description of the scene of joy exhibited at Tobolskow, when

young Smoloff presented Elizabeth to his father, and she, in all the effusions of her grateful heart, acknowledged the blessings she owed to his assistance. Elizabeth would not consent to let her parents be informed of her approach; she had heard at Tobolskow that they were well; the happy tidings were confirmed at Saimka. With a palpitating heart, she proceeded to their habitation, followed only by Smoloff. What varying emotions agitated her as she crossed the forest, drew near the banks of the lake, and recognised every tree, every rock, which adjoined the dwelling of her parents! The paternal roof at length blessed her sight; she rushed forward; but the violence of her agitations retarded her progress; excess of joy, more violent in its effects than excess of suffering, was too great
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for her fortitude. Alas! behold the state of man! he seeks for happiness; insatiate he aims at its excess, and that excess he is not formed to bear. Elizabeth, reclining upon the arm of Smoloff, faintly uttered, "If I should find my mother ill." The dread of this misfortune tempered the felicity that overwhelmed her, and she recovered her strength. Again she hurries on, attains the threshold, hears the sound of a well known voice, and calls her parents in an extacy that almost deprives her of sense; the door opens, Stanislaus appears; at the cry he utters, Phedora rushes forward, and Elizabeth, unable to support herself, falls into their arms. "Behold your child," exclaimed Smoloff, "and in her the bearer of your pardon; she has triumphed over every obstacle, and has attained
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the object of her glorious enterprize." These words added nothing to the joy of the delighted parents: every sensation was absorbed in that all-powerful one of happiness the sight of their child produced: she is restored to them; she is to leave them no more; they forget there exists another blessing on earth.

For a length of time, they remained in a delirium of joy that can admit of no increase; a few sentences escape unconnectedly from their lips, but they know not what they utter: in vain do they seek for words to express the feelings that overpower their senses; by tears, by looks only, can they declare them; and their strength, with their reason, begins to fail under excess of joy.

Smoloff threw himself at the feet of Stanislaus and Phedora. "Ah!" exclaimed

claimed he, "deign in this happy moment to acknowledge another child. Till now, Elizabeth has called me brother; but here, perhaps, she will permit me to aspire to a different title." Elizabeth seized a hand of each of her parents, and, regarding them with the tenderest expression of affection and gratitude, spoke thus: "Without his aid, I should not, perhaps, have been here; it was Smoloff who conducted me to the feet of the Emperor, who spoke for me, who solicited your pardon, and obtained it; it is he who replaces you in your rights, who restores me to your arms. Oh, my mother! tell me how such a debt of gratitude as that I owe can be acknowledged. Oh, my father! teach me how to acquit it. Phedora, pressing her daughter to her heart, answered, "Thy gratitude

gratitude must be shewn in love; love like that which I have borne your father." Stanislaus interrupted her with enthusiasm: "The gift of a heart like thine, Phedora, is above all value," said he; "but the generosity of Elizabeth will not be limited." His daughter then joining Smoloff's hand with those of her parents, said to him in a timid voice: "Will you promise me never to leave them?"—"Oh, Heaven!" he exclaimed, "do I dream? Her parents give her to me, and she consents to be mine." Sensations of joyful rapture deprived him of further utterance; scarcely could he imagine in the disposal of Heaven a happiness more supreme than that he enjoyed. The transports of the mother in again beholding her child, and the exultation of the father who owed liberty to the

the unprecedented efforts of a daughter's courage, the inexpressible delight of the heroine herself, who, at so early a period of life, had fulfilled the most sacred of human obligations, and displayed a virtue beyond compare, seemed not, all united, to bear a competition with the happiness he owed to love.

Were I to describe the days that followed, I should represent the exulting father, the fond mother, discoursing with their child on the heart-rending affliction they had endured in her absence; I should represent them listening, with all the varying emotions of delight, terror, and admiration, to the recital she gave of the diversified adventures of her long journey; I should relate the benedictions Stanislaus invoked on all who had succoured his child, and describe the tender Phedora producing

producing the lock of hair, sent by Elizabeth, which, worn next her heart, had helped to support her in the absence of its owner; I should attempt to convey an idea of their feelings on the day that the exile who brought it, presented himself at the door of their cabin, to inform them of the noble action of their daughter, of the sensations which pierced their soul at the narrative of her sufferings, and of those that the recital of her virtue had excited; finally, I should describe their last farewell to that desolate spot where they had endured so many sufferings, but where they had likewise experienced a felicity rendered more animated and perfect by the sorrows which had preceded it, by the tears from which it arose: like the sun, which never produces so bright a lustre, as when it penetrates

trates the clouds which have enveloped it, and reflects its glorious beams from the glittering foliage bespangled with dew.

Pure and spotless as the angels who watched over her, Elizabeth was destined to partake, on earth, of happiness resembling theirs, like them to live in innocence and love.

And here my narrative must close: when representations of happiness are prolonged beyond a certain period, by losing the merit of truth, they fail to excite interest; too generally is it the lot of mankind to feel that lasting prosperity is not a blessing granted to the mortal state, to admit of their reality; even language so copious, so varied in its expressions of sorrow, is comparatively poor in its descriptions of joy. Elizabeth,

beth, restored to the arms of her parents, is conducted by them into their native country, replaced in the exalted rank her ancestors held, and united to the man she prefers, to him whom even her parents esteem worthy of her. Here let us conclude: were I to add another page to my history, the knowledge I have had of human life, of its various crosses, deceitful hopes, and unstable prosperity, creates the fear that thereon must be traced some vicissitude of fortune, the attendant of felicity too perfect for duration.

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