

M E N Z I E R S O F.



IN TWO VOLUMES.

FROM THE GERMAN OF

AUGUSTUS LA FONTAINE.

From thirst of rule what dire disasters flow !
How flames that guilt ambition taught to glow !
Wish gains on wish, desire surmounts desire,
Hope fans the blaze, and Envy feeds the fire :
Till Heav'n at length awakes, supremely just,
And levels all its tow'ring schemes in dust.

SMOLLETT.

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DOLGORUCKI

AND

MENZIKOF.



LETTER I.

Maria to Sophia.

Petersburg, June —

SOPHIA, dear Sophia, my Fedor has been here. I saw him on that detested day, when I was betrothed to the Emperor. Oh! how could he so cruelly wound a poor heart already so much lacerated? When I was

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dressed, and arrayed with a magnificence that gave me pain, my mother melted into tears—of joy, probably; for it was evident she contemplated with pleasure the splendid lot that awaited me. She once, however, loved Fedor; but it should seem that I must henceforth depend only on the energy of my own mind. My father wished to see me, before waiting on the Emperor;—he conducted me into a cabinet, in order to give me some instructions. This was what I wished. He regarded me with a look of paternal pleasure, which redoubled my courage. I took his hand, which I kissed and bathed with my tears, and said, with a profound sorrow—

“ You have destined me to become the wife of the Emperor; but once again, my father, I conjure you not to exact this sacrifice! Take pity on your daughter, and do not place her in a perilous situation, in which she must lose all hope of future happiness. You dispose of my heart, and

you know I have already resigned it to Prince Fedor Dolgorucki. I know well, my father, the young Emperor is not influenced by any attachment for me, and that we allow ourselves only to be enslaved, in conformity to your orders; but I declare I will not regard myself as bound by the ceremony about to be performed, and that he never shall obtain my hand. I solemnly swear, never will I accompany him to the altar!—I reserve all the firmness, all the powers of my mind for the moment when you shall command me to pronounce the sacrilegious vow; and I am convinced I possess sufficient energy of character to resist it: but save me from the pain of publicly opposing the will of my father. One word, one single word more, and I have done:—I may counterfeit sickness, the ceremony will be delayed, the projected alliance be broken off, and your daughter rendered happy.”

My father was for a moment embarrassed.

B 2

He

He walked up and down the apartment in silence; then turning, he said, in the most peremptory tone—

“It is impossible, Maria; this alliance has always been the most anxious desire of my life, and I have hazarded every thing to accomplish it.—It must be so, Maria, and I command you to obey!”

“Well then, my father, whatever may happen, from the present moment I hold myself innocent. You have commanded it.”

He took my hand with inquietude.

“What do you wish to do, Maria?—what are your projects?”

“All what you wish, my father, except the giving of my hand to the Emperor before the altar; in that alone, my heart and my conscience alike prevent me from acceding to your wishes.”

He paced the room in silence.

“Three

“Three years must first elapse,” said he; “but promise me at least, Maria, that to-day and till then, you will suffer yourself to be guided by my advice.”

“Till then I will do every thing that you shall require; but then, my father, then I must cease to obey.”

“We shall have time to reflect,” said he, with kindness; “act only to-day according to my wishes, I entreat you, since it is that alone which can secure my happiness and my life. Do something for your father, Maria; one day he will do every thing for you.”

What, could I say, Sophia—“I submit to-day only, my father—to-day I go to deceive for the first time of my life; I go to promise in appearance what I am determined never to perform—that which my heart altogether belies.”—If you are aware how much it cost me, you would not call in question my submission and filial love.

I left him, and the horrible ceremony of the espousals was consummated; it was rendered, if possible, still more painful by the superlative magnificence displayed during its performance. Notwithstanding all the dazzling splendours by which I was environed, methought I sometimes saw a spectre, whose hideous aspect threatened me with destruction; and at others, I heard the steps of an invisible genius approaching to crush me into atoms. You know, Sophia, it was never my wish to occupy a rank, to which my birth did not entitle me; yet I cannot wholly exculpate myself from reproach:—for who could force me to enter the hall, to receive this ring? My father! my father only, Sophia!—Did he not affirm that his life and happiness were at stake, and that, by taking this step, it was in my power to secure both? Could I, therefore, think of mine, and occupy myself with my own happiness?

Ah, Sophia, it is finished! This odious
ceremony

ceremony is at last concluded; but what followed, was to me a thousand times more painful. I was compelled to receive the congratulations of the whole Court, which were extremely monotonous and insignificant; but, wholly absorbed in my own painful reflections, I heard not their compliments, when suddenly my ears were struck by the sound of a voice too well known, to be mistaken. It was Fedor, Sophia—he whom I believed in Persia, and who, mixing with the crowd of courtiers, approached in his turn to felicitate me; but in place of the usual compliments, he said, in a low voice, with an expression of fury—

“Perfidious woman! is it thus you keep your oaths?”

I trembled—my whole frame became disordered; and, staggering, I fell senseless into the arms of my mother, who, seeing me become pale, had flown to my assistance.

On recovering, I found myself in an adjoining chamber, surrounded by my mother and the Imperial family. My mother whispered to me that no person suspected the cause of my indisposition, and that it was attributed to the fatigue of having stood so long, in order to receive the compliments of the courtiers. My father soon joined us, and I could read in his countenance, the rage and vexation which he in vain endeavoured to dissemble. The festival concluded at an early hour, and every one retired. My father affected to be ignorant of the reason of my sudden illness; he said not a word of Fedor, and even bestowed on me some caresses; but his eyes sparkled, and his smiles were instantly obscured. He remained with us until an officer of his regiment came to make a report, whom he conducted to an adjoining apartment. I listened, and heard my father say to him, in an accent of joy—

“ Well, very well! Be secret, on your
life!

life! Remain here until I make out an order to the Commandant."

My father left the room, and my resolution was instantly taken. I opened the door between my chamber and that in which the officer waited his return, and entered into a conversation with him on some indifferent subjects. Suddenly I said to him, in the most natural tone, but in a lower voice—

"Had you any difficulty in arresting young Dolgorucki?"

"Does your Highness then know of it?" enquired he, with a confused air.

"Doubtless. Why should I not know it? He is to be conducted to Cronschlos."

More uneasy still, he replied—

"No, Madam, it is to Schlussembourg. But, Madam, it was the Prince unquestionably who confided it to you!—He has ordered me——"

“To be silent, and I, your future Sovereign, command you to speak. When do you depart? I will wait for you in the pavilion, at the extremity of the garden. I have something to say to you before you set out. Not later than two hours hence I shall expect you.”

He bowed to me, saying, in a low voice—

“I will obey you.”

I flew to my chamber, and wrote to my dearly beloved Fedor, after which I repaired to the pavilion.—“Ah! at last,” thought I, “this fatal elevation, which cost me so many tears, will now befriend my purpose.”

The officer waited for me.

“You are about to conduct your prisoner to Schlussembourg, by the order of your General; and I, the future spouse of your Emperor, command you to deliver
this

this letter into his hand, and bring me back an answer."

He remained irresolute.

"Menzikof," said he, "has strictly prohibited me from allowing any communication."

"Are you prohibited from obeying me?" said I. "I suppose not. I command you then, and I give you my word that, should this letter be discovered, it shall never be known through what medium it was conveyed. But if you refuse to execute my orders, I shall recollect it one day, and you—I hope I do not command in vain!"

"Dare I inform Prince Menzikof of your orders?"

"When I have received a reply to my letter, you may act in that respect as you judge proper."

"Your Highness must know how rigorous the Prince your father is!"

"Do you deliver this letter, and bring me back four lines in reply. Prince

Dolgorucki will, like me, keep your secret. I pledge my honour on his account; and for myself I promise."

He still hesitated, and took not the letter.

"I did not expect," said I, in a very gentle tone, "to be this day subjected to a refusal. If you will not obey the orders of your future Empress, yield at least to the prayers of a friend."

He kissed my hand, and said—

"Your letter shall be delivered, Madam, and I will bring back a reply."

We separated by different allies, to prevent discovery; and I repaired to my aunt's, where I remained as long as I was able. On my return to the palace, I was put to bed extremely feverish, in consequence of what I had undergone during this terrible day; but on the following morning, the hope of receiving a letter from Fedor, induced me to arise, and descend to the saloon.—I have received it, and am perfectly calm.—Adieu, Sophia!

LETTER

LETTER II.

Fedor to Sapieha.

Petersburg, June —

I HAVE seen her once again, Sapieha; it was impossible not to see her, to keep a foolish oath which my heart belied at the time my mouth uttered it. Yes, I have seen her! She was standing under a canopy by the side of the young Emperor; her looks were fixed on the ground, and her whole frame appeared torpid; her fine large eyes were raised up with difficulty, and her pale lips only opened to suffer a
sigh

sigh to escape from the bottom of her oppressed heart. No, Sapieha, Maria is not unfaithful; her barbarous father forced her to appear so! A woman who values a crown, and who beholds half the world at her feet, does not appear humbled, cast down, nor sigh like my Maria. I have, nevertheless, been outrageous. I have named her perfidious, and I have seen her fall under the weight of my injustice, which gave the finishing blow to her misfortunes.—Poor innocent victim!—no, no, thou art not culpable!

I was behind the crowd of courtiers who waited to pay their compliments. She appeared to see nothing, to listen to nothing! Ah, Sapieha! perhaps in the bottom of her heart, she saw, she listened only to Fedor, without suspecting he was so near her!—The Duchess of Holstein advanced to embrace her. Maria bent her knee before her; but soon after relapsed into her former state of melancholy and abstraction.

My

My turn at last came to kiss her hand. I was violently affected on approaching her; but instead of the usual compliment, I said, in a low voice—

“Perfidious woman, is it thus you keep your oaths?”

Ah, Sapieha! these cruel words were scarcely pronounced, when I beheld a death-like paleness overspread her visage, and her eyes became closed. She staggered; her hand sought a support, which she found in the arms of her mother, who ran to her assistance.—‘Go out,’ said the Princess to me, in a low but severe tone, which maternal tenderness rendered, however, affecting. She received her fainting daughter in her arms; and I, Sapieha—I flew in despair from the hall, where my cruel egotism had produced so much disorder, and remained in the corridors until I learned she was recovered. I leave Petersburg—I depart instantly!

instantly!—Adieu, Sapieha!—you will very soon hear from me. No, I say to you, she is not culpable; but she has been sacrificed, and is not therefore less lost to me for ever. What have I more to lose? My life!—It is become odious to me!—Adieu perhaps for ever!—I have——

My dwelling is surrounded by soldiers, sent again to arrest me. My domestic has been——

LETTER.

LETTER III.

Maria to Fedor.

(BILLET SENT BY THE OFFICER.)

Petersburg, June —

FEDOR, is this then your faith in my love, and in my constancy?—You recall my oaths, and it is you who have failed in the performance of your own! Have you then forgotten that moment when, falling at my feet, you swore by Heaven, by our love, by every thing the most sacred, that you would believe no rumour, no recital, not even from my mother nor Sophia, when they

they told you I was unfaithful—that you would disregard the strongest appearances, until confirmed by my own mouth?—Thy oaths have then been only vain words. My Fedor, I have not broken mine—I am faithful!—but while the least ray of hope remains, I suffer myself to be guided as they incline. I informed my father, however, that I did not consider myself bound by this vain ceremony, to a child who could have no inclination of his own; and that a woman who can never love, and who is not beloved, could not render him happy. What have I done then, that I must be accused of perjury? Have you beheld me, at the foot of the altar, vow to belong to another? Have I said—have I thought that I could love another than Fedor?—To-day, under the canopy, in the midst of grandeur, and surrounded by courtiers and flatterers, I was as much thine, my Fedor, as in the groves of Ronebourg; and a thousand times more unhappy than you in your prison, environed with your guards. Fedor, I dwell with you
in

in this prison where they have retained you captive; because you love Maria. I take a melancholy pleasure in considering my chamber as a dungeon, my latticed windows as grates and bars. Ah! could I really be a prisoner with you during my whole life, what happiness should I experience!—And can you believe that this ring you saw me receive—that the throne on which I was seated—that the homage paid to me, could please and flatter me? You know then no longer your Maria!

By an exertion of courage, I have secured the means of writing, and receiving your answer. I have solemnly promised that you will maintain the most absolute secrecy. Be tranquil, my Fedor—I am and will always be thine; nothing can detach our hearts from each other, neither a *prison* nor a *crown*. A shadow of hope still remains. Should it wholly vanish, should I be unworthily deceived, then shall we be reunited in a better world, where our true and constant love will receive its reward.

Supported

Supported by this idea, and by the most unbounded confidence in the heart of my Fedor, and in the goodness of Providence, I remain perfect, calm, and resigned.—Does it depend on my father to separate us?—Can he prevent our souls mingling together—our hearts beating for each other—our imaginations approaching, notwithstanding absence?—Though the whole world were betwixt us, we cannot be separated. Doubt not again my fidelity, my Fedor. Doubts of thy faithfulness never for a moment entered my mind;—it is a confidence in thy love which has enabled me to support every trial, even thy new arrest—even thy suspicion of perfidy!—Adieu, Fedor! Thine for ever!

Fedor's Answer.

Oh Maria! adored Maria!
you have saved me! Yes, I confess it, I
doubted;

doubted; but what I have suffered, must expiate this fault. At present I am restored to love, to hope, to happiness; and the day of my arrestation—this day, when my enemies believe me most unfortunate, is the most delightful of my life; because we are reunited for ever. How I revere the friendly hand which conveyed to me your letter! May the Heavens protect him! He is my brother and my friend; and as his first recompence, he beheld my eyes overflowing with the sweet tears of joy and gratitude. Yes, Maria, I had renounced life; but, as my good genius, you stretched forth your hand to draw me back from the abyss, to give me strength to suffer for thee! —Oh thou who hast saved me from despair, be you a thousand times blessed! Yes, I am tranquil; I will never again doubt the heart of Maria; no, divine woman! no weakness, no complaint shall ever dishonour the heart you have found worthy of thine.—Worthy of thine, Maria!—no, that heart exists not; but blessed, a thousand times blessed is he
who

who can assimilate to such excellence—he whom thou lovest!—Adieu!—our benefactor entreats me to conclude.—Adieu! Adieu!

LETTER. IV.

Princess Menzikof to Sophia.

RETURN to us, my dear Sophia; thy gentleness has often calmed the violence of my husband, and may perhaps be still able to produce the same effect. I was deceived when I thought Maria had begun to perceive the value of a crown. It is now evident to me she detests it; but what then are the projects of this beloved child? Several circumstances have occurred since I
last

last wrote to you, which clearly demonstrate that she continues to love Fedor with unabated affection ; yet, nevertheless, I cannot comprehend her. This worthy young man expiates, in one of the prisons of the fortress of Schlussembourg, his audacity in having dared to appear at Petersburg on the day in which Maria was espoused to the Emperor ; she knows this, and yet remains calm. Her father requires that she shall endeavour to gain the affection of the young Emperor. Without positively disobeying these commands, her manners are so respectful and reserved, as rather to repress, than embolden her destined husband ; she nevertheless admits that he is very amiable. To the aunt of the Emperor, who is frequently with him, she assumes the same cold and respectful behaviour ;—in short, without seeing our Maria, you cannot comprehend the grace and dignity with which she conducts herself, and which gains her the heart of all who approach her. The Emperor is the only one who pays little
court

court to Maria, and appears rather to fear than love her. She however receives the homage of the courtiers as their future Sovereign, and silently submits to her situation. Can you explain, my dear Sophia, these contradictions?

I begin otherwise to enjoy some repose of mind, and to experience less uneasiness respecting the fate of my husband. The Emperor appears to be much attached to Alexis Dolgorucki; and his son Ivan, the friend and favourite of the young Monarch, remains in the palace, and seems to be reconciled to Menzikof. My son has been created Grand Chamberlain, in order that he might be near the Sovereign, and counterbalance his love for Ivan Dolgorucki;—his behaviour is frank and engaging to us all, except, however, to Maria, who reflects, as it were, upon him the serious turn of her own mind. Brukenthal, whom nothing escapes, has remarked with uneasiness, that whenever any question respecting State
affairs

affairs is discussed, the young Emperor hangs down his head, and listens in silence with an air of discontent; but what is most material to me, is that he doubtless entertains an attachment to my husband. He gave lately a proof of his gratitude in a very amiable and delicate manner. On entering the hall, in which the whole Court was assembled, he cast a glance upon Menzikof, saying—

“ I wish henceforth to abolish the office of Field Marshal.”

My husband became pale; but the Emperor immediately approaching him with the greatest cordiality, put into his hand a commission, and said—

“ You are no longer Field Marshal,—you are now Generalissimo of my whole armies.”

No person had suggested to the Emperor

this mode of rewarding the services of Menzikof; he had ordered the commission to be made out under his own inspection. My husband was so overjoyed, that I could not help partaking in his happiness.

“Now,” said he, the same evening “my power is unassailable.”

“At least whilst the Emperor remains your friend,” said our evil prophet, the prudent and fearful Brukenthal.

The Prince who admits the greatest freedoms from his friend, could not then wholly repress a sentiment of anger.

“Thou art a fool!” said he to him. “In what a situation should I have been at present, had I followed your timid counsels?”

Brukenthal replied to him coldly—

“Menzikof, you became pale at the first words of the Emperor. Why that pallid countenance,

countenance, if I am wholly wrong? It did not escape the observation of the Emperor himself, and he hastened to reassure you. But what I observed well, although it might probably escape your notice, was the secret pleasure he seemed to experience from your agitation. At his age, before the features are sufficiently under controul, a look or a smile unfolds the whole soul.—‘I have made the all-powerful Menzikof tremble,’ thought he, with transport, ‘and it depends on myself wholly to annihilate him.’—Be not deceived by the flattering favours you daily receive from his hand; they are not proofs of his friendship, but of an impatient desire to govern by himself. I wonder an experienced courtier like yourself, cannot discern why he loads you with so many favours;—it is because that these are the only occasions in which he can exercise his authority, without previously obtaining your concurrence. Even his favourite, young Ivan Dolgorucki, whom he loves with the warmest affection

remains a simple Gentleman of the Bed-chamber, whilst your son has been appointed Grand Chamberlain.—Why? Because he could not have invested his favourite with this office without your consent, and it would then have been you, not the Emperor, who made him Grand Chamberlain;—but in bestowing honours on your family, he satisfies your desires, without yielding obedience to your orders. Menzikof, if he once perceives that he can depress as easily as he can elevate you, and that your overthrow is necessary to his independence, then———And who can tell if your agitation, on supposing he had deprived you of your rank as Field Marshal, has not already made to him this important discovery? The whole Court remarked that on this occasion he was more dignified, more animated than usual, and spoke in a much more decisive tone. What could be the cause of this change?—You are silent!—I will tell you, because I read what passed in his soul:—‘I have made Menzikof tremble,’ thought the Emperor;

Emperor; 'very soon shall I be my own master.'

Do not you think, dear Sophia, this idea too far fetched, to be true? Can a child of thirteen!——My husband, however, seemed to be uneasy for a few moments, although every new favour augments his security. I express myself thus, Sophia, because I am well aware that others term this security, pride and self-sufficiency, and that Brukenthal, whom he loves, of whose attachment he is convinced, and who dares to tell him every thing, bestows on it a still more frightful appellation; he availed himself of the momentary uneasiness he had produced in the mind of his friend, yet farther to impress on it the danger of his situation.

“Your palace,” continued he, “is named by order of the Czar, the Imperial Palace; you will one day be accused of excessive and unpardonable haughtiness, and of

having even committed a kind of usurpation, by accepting this title for your dwelling. The remarkable permission, you have obtained, of quartering your regiment in this island, will likewise be brought against you as a crime. Let the Emperor but testify the least coldness towards you, and a thousand voices will instantly be raised to enumerate all the offences you have committed, and all the perfidy that you meditated."

"Have you lost your senses, Bruken-thal?" cried my husband. "Offences—perfidy—what do you say?"

"That you have suffered your dwelling to be named the *Imperial Palace*—that you have drawn round you the regiment you command, and which is known to be perfectly devoted to your service—that you have caused yourself to be named Generalissimo of the whole army during the minority of the Emperor—and that you have suppressed the Supreme Council nominated by the defunct Empress. Will
not

not these circumstances be brought forward, as proofs of high treason, whenever a pretext may be wanting to overthrow your power?—In fact, were not those you brought forward against Count Devier and his party, much more insignificant?—There are others that I could mention, did not the Court of Vienna present to you the Principality of Kosel in Silesia? Does a foreign Court ever make such a present but to a traitor?"

My husband shrugged up his shoulders, but remained silent. The eloquence of Father Brukenthal appeared to have made no impression whatever in his mind. He despises his warning voice, and obstinately persists in believing himself secure from the strokes of fate; he scarcely gives himself the trouble to conciliate those with whom he is compelled to act, and when a Grandee of the Empire, whatever be his rank, dares to utter an opinion different

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from

from his own, he treats him with haughtiness, and often with contempt. Even the supple Ostermann himself was so much offended by him, in consequence of a slight altercation which occurred betwixt them, that he has never since returned to the palace.—But what gives me the most uneasiness, is the neglect with which he treats the Court of Holstein, and the friends of the late Empress. Brükenthal indeed says there is not the least danger to be expected from that quarter; this may be true, but are they not entitled to respect?—No, Sophia—I am not born for a Court; my heart feels for all those who experience misfortune; and I would only covet power, in order to become their protectress.

At my earnest solicitations, and by the order of Maria, Count Devier and his unfortunate companions in Siberia, are treated with as much gentleness as possible. The Governor is a worthy and
compassionate

compassionate man. An office, where it is necessary to exercise rigour, ought only to be bestowed on an individual endowed with a heart sufficiently sensible to soften, not to add to the severity enjoined by the law. Adieu, dear Sophia!—Do you not then wish to return to your friends?



LETTER. V.

Maria Menzikof to Sophia.

Petersburg, August —

FEDOR has been removed from Schlus-selburg to another fortress. Could my father learn that I wrote to him?—or rather

might he not believe that he was still too near me?—Oh worthy Sophia! that I could tell Fedor our troubles are about to terminate!—Heaven be praised, the Emperor does not love me—I think even he hates me; he appears to regard me not merely with indifference, but with despite, from having been compelled to espouse me.—My father, Oh Sophia! he is absolutely blinded by his ambition; he sees not that the foundations of his powers are shaken, and yields more and more every day; whilst I, who am not acquainted with Court intrigues, clearly perceive that the heart of the Czar is entirely estranged from him and all of us.

It would afford me a gratification, could you see, Sophia, how Alexis Dolgorucki bows almost to the ground when he meets me—how he keeps always like a slave at a respectful distance—and how, when I deign to speak to him, he casts down his eyes with a submissive smile. Does not so much respect, bestowed on the daughter of
Menzikof,

Menzikof, look like irony? And his son Ivan—a smooth and complaisant young man, ever ready to fly on the least sign, always polite, who smiles continually, and never changes countenance—who, when he is asked where the Emperor is, and if he be engaged, uniformly replies—‘I know not—I never see him, unless when officially called upon;’ yet this young man possesses exclusively the confidence of the Emperor; but he carefully conceals it, like a dangerous secret, in his own bosom.—This young man has been born a courtier; he appears already to possess all the policy, all the cunning of this character; he engages the friendship of the young Monarch by every possible means, by his eagerness in rendering him services, by his complaisance, his well-timed flattery, to which he knows how to give the semblance of truth, and particularly by an appearance of the most devoted attachment, and of a sympathy which causes him always, and at the same moment, to participate every the least wish of the

Sovereign. The young Monarch is really sensible and open-hearted—desires to be loved as a friend, and not as a master; his throne has not hitherto made him forget he is a man, and that he possesses a heart; and it is to this heart only that Ivan wishes to be attached.

“ Lovest thou me, Ivan?” said the Czar, one day to him in a paroxysm of tenderness.

“ As if you were not Emperor,” answered the young Dolgorucki. On which the Monarch, with eyes overflowing with tears, threw himself into his arms.

Imuch wish also, you could see the Princess Elizabeth, the aunt of the Czar, and her sister, the Princess Natalia; both of them formerly testified for me the greatest friendship, but now they approach me with the most cold politeness. Every thing is changed, my dear Sophia, and some direful misfortune hovers over us. The

Emperor still continues to follow my father's counsels, without even attempting to contradict him; yet it seems to me that he wishes to try his strength by degrees, like an eaglet who, perched on the top of a rock, shakes at first his wings, then darts upon the nearest height, and afterwards still farther, till at last taking a bolder flight, he mounts into the air, and precipitates himself upon his prey. The Emperor now and then hazards an unimportant opinion of his own, in a very peremptory tone; it was thus that he voluntarily recalled from banishment all the Lapuchins. My father wished to remonstrate with him on this subject; but the Czar coloured, and said, in a very serious and resolute manner—

“I will it.”

He longs to proceed to Moscow for the celebration of his coronation; a ceremony which my father, for some reasons, wishes

to

to defer. The Czar never appeared more bent on any thing than on this journey:—he has not yet, however, pronounced—*I will it*; but I foresee he will very soon do so. The young Count Ivan sleeps in the chamber of the Czar, who scarcely ever separates from him. The Lapuchins, the Dolgoruckis, the Gallitzins stand high in favour, and are very active;—my father is aware of this, yet remains tranquil.

“They dare not attack me,” observed he, smiling; “I am become too powerful—I have nothing to fear.”

The Court of Holstein is gone. I could not restrain my tears, when I beheld this Princess, the daughter of our great Emperor, so humbled, and surrounded only by cold and formal courtiers, when she took leave of her nephew.

The Czar every day gains more the love of his people, and he really merits it. I shall

shall never forget his conduct at the time of the last dreadful fire, which consumed the magazines of the marine, and thirty-two vessels upon the stocks. The flames arose even above our Palace, like a sea on fire; the dazzling reflection from the waters of the Nava—the whirlwinds of fiery smoke ascending to the clouds—the cries—the groans—the noise of the steeple bells—the firing of alarm-guns—the almost insufferable heat—the dread that our palace might be very soon consumed—Oh Sophia! what an horrific spectacle!

Immediately the Czar, with a courage superior to his years, repaired to the spot in a shallop. He gave himself the necessary orders; and while he encouraged, and recompensed those who displayed the most zeal in affording succour, he caused the indolent to be punished. It was the first time that he appeared before the people as Emperor, and he was everywhere received with the most flattering testimonies of their

their affection. As soon as he was recognised, the cries of terror were changed into acclamations of joy; he was indefatigable, and did not retire till the danger was wholly over.

When he returned to the Palace, covered with dust, overheated by action, with his clothes blackened by the smoke, and accompanied by thousands of his subjects, it seemed as if he had been suddenly transformed into a man—that he was no longer a child, but a great Sovereign, who commanded the respect and admiration of his people. He felt himself probably influenced by such a sentiment; for he advanced with a noble pride, surrounded by the Grandees of the Empire, delivered orders, and said, in a tone almost terrific—

“Observe that my orders be executed as I have given them.”

He

He saluted the multitude as he passed, with marks of great condescension and affability. His sister, who went out to meet him on his return, enquired what might be the extent of the loss occasioned by the fire. Some one replied, "several millions."

"Who can bestow a thought on a pecuniary consideration?" said the young Monarch with great emotion. "Five hundred persons have perished in the flames!"

Dear Sophia, I could have fallen at his feet! I caused all the money in my possession to be distributed among the unfortunate sufferers by the fire, and for the first time experienced that supreme power might be a blessing. Oh, how insignificant are the means and faculties of man, in comparison with the rapid devastation produced by this destructive element! When the flames, extending up the Nava, reached the vessels lying in the road, causing their
guns

guns to explode, and when the powder-magazines blew up with a noise, of which it is difficult to convey an idea, I beheld men tremble, who till that moment perhaps had never known fear; then all eyes were turned towards Heaven, as if imploring succour in this calamity.

Since that unfortunate day, the Czar appears to have thrown away the leading-strings by which he was fettered. He rides about the city on horseback; he indulges in the chace, an amusement to which he is extremely partial; and not unfrequently even passes the night at some of his hunting-seats. When we enquire after him, we are told, he is hunting with the Dolgoruckis or the Gallitzins. He is now less easily swayed than formerly; and according to frequent reports, he is said to cherish a secret hatred, which yet he conceals from the public. I am afraid, my dear Sophia, that this may soon display itself, and be directed against

against my father. But would it involve him in utter ruin?—I cannot think so; it would be very ungrateful in the Emperor wholly to ruin him, who placed the crown upon his head:—no, my father will lose only a portion of his great power; his projects of ambition will vanish, and we shall become more happy. Then, Sophia, Fedor must be set at liberty, because he is a Dolgorucki, and then——

LETTER. VI.

Maria to Sophia.

Petersburg.

THE misfortune which I dreaded, is at length accomplished, my well-beloved Sophia;—all our pretended friends have abandoned us; we dwell in solitude, and regarding each other with inquietude, have lost the power to utter a single word. My father is, as it were, annihilated, nor is this surprising, since he has been deprived, by a single stroke, of every thing which attached him to life—every thing which had the least charm for him—the end, and the

the support of his existence! And how much is my poor mother deserving of pity! Not that she attached any value to the rank and power of which we are deprived;—did she not tremble at what may still happen, and what will assuredly soon come to pass, she would not term our present disgrace a misfortune.—But is it not the most terrible of all evils, to be in terror for the safety of a beloved object?

Father Brukenthal was right; he had but too much reason to fear for my father. For a long time, a sword must have been suspended over his head, which has at last fallen. Four days were only necessary to break and dissever all the ties of gratitude, by which he supposed the young Emperor attached to him.

Menzikof had gone, on account of a slight indisposition, to pass a few days at Oranienbourg. On his return to his palace, he found that the Emperor had gone to hunt

hunt with Alexis and Ivan Dolgorucki.—Dolgorucki!—this name is always dear to me, Sophia; although it is they who have been the cause of our misfortunes.

Four days elapsed before my father again beheld the Emperor, and in that period our ruin had been determined. On their return, every thing was changed; and they could not conceal the joy they experienced on this long-desired triumph.

I met them in the middle of the hall, and saluted them graciously; but they scarcely returned my salutation. Alexis regarded me with a gloomy air, and immediately withdrew; and Ivan, smiling ironically, followed him. It is not of them, however, that I complain, Sophia; they have only acted the part of courtiers by avenging themselves on a fallen enemy; but it is of those whom my father has loaded with benefits—whose fortunes he has made.—These men have also suddenly disappeared,

disappeared, with an insulting laugh;—they have passed insolently before those to whom formerly they were prodigal of the vilest homage, and in whose presence they would have prostrated themselves on the earth. Ah! even I can forgive them; they believe I was ambitious, and are inclined to punish me.—But they seem to make a sport of the misfortunes of my respectable mother, and insult her tears.—This I cannot pardon. Did they but know that simple and virtuous woman! Never did she covet riches or honours, on her own account; and now she weeps only for the misfortunes of her husband and her children.—Ah! how despicable are those men who flatter only the prosperous, as if power was a virtue, and misfortune a crime! My worthy mother, observing the despair of her husband, wished to go and make a last attempt on Ostermann.

“Where do you wish to go, mamma?” said I to her.—“Is not our overthrow already

already determined? Remain tranquil:—a noble dignity is the most becoming attitude of misfortune.

She raised her eyes to me, bathed in tears.

“It is for your sake, my children, I do so.”

She very soon returned from this visit, more cast down—more despairing. You know me too well, my Sophia, to believe that our banishment from Court is the cause of my present distress; my heart had far other desires! A peaceful cabin, a small garden, a bank of flowers—and my Fedor!—what more did I desire to render me happy?—Even separated from Fedor, I shall be a thousand times more resigned in a state of private mediocrity, than upon that throne to which I was destined, in spite of myself. You know, Sophia—you, who taught me to relish the happiness of
simple

simple and retired life; but it is the terrible corruption of these ungrateful, hard-hearted, and hypocritical men, which has so deeply wounded my heart. Not a friend, Sophia, not a single friend remains to us, except the worthy and faithful Brukenthal, who makes a part of our disconsolate family. Amongst all those who appeared so tenderly attached to us, not one of them, for these four or five last days, have shown the slightest sorrow for our situation, or evinced the smallest appearance of friendship; they have destroyed, in my mind, all confidence in mankind—even in Fedor, whom I could have believed like God himself——But is he not also a man?—Appertains he not to this egotistical, false, and versatile species?——You see, Sophia, what a subtile poison has penetrated into this poor heart, which opened itself to all the tender sentiments of which the human mind is susceptible, when not stifled by ambition. They have annihilated my delightful dream of virtue. Our present

misfortunes seem to me, like the noise of distant thunder, which murmurs in the horizon long after the lightning has announced its approach. Perhaps—perhaps we may experience only this terrifying lightning;—perhaps the destructive thunder may yet spare us——But I must proceed to give you some of the details of our misfortune.

My father, trusting to his power, employed a sum of money, which the Emperor had appropriated to the use of his sister, for some other purpose; which being told to the Monarch, rendered him extremely discontented. Menzikof came out one day from his presence pale as death, after an audience of only a few minutes; and, on our enquiring what had happened, he related to us that the Emperor was very much irritated against him.

“And did that terrify you?” said Brukenthal.

“No,

"No, not precisely; but——"

My father interrupted himself, and, casting his eyes downwards, remained some time in a state of abstraction; he then said, in a lower tone—

"There is some project in agitation which I cannot develop; the Dolgoruckis are at its head; but they shall learn to know me."

His courage became re-animated, and he immediately adopted such measures as re-assured us also.

He ordered all the posts on the Neva, and around our palace, to be occupied by some of the most trusty soldiers of his own regiment, which is firmly devoted to his interest, and has for some time been quartered in our island: he then assembled the superior officers of this regi-

n 2

ment,

ment, and we all became somewhat more tranquil.

Next morning, we heard the noise of an extraordinary bustle, and cries of distress. I arose quickly, in order to fly to my mother; in crossing the antichamber, I observed an Adjutant hastily enter the apartment of my father, and after him a second, on whose countenance was depicted a strong expression of inquietude and terror. My fears were so great as to rivet me to the spot where I stood; soon Menzikof came out of his chamber, with great violence, crying—

“How?—What?—Why?”

My emotion augmented to such a degree that I lost the power of enquiring into the cause of his agitation; and remained, unperceived, between the two doors that lead to my mother's apartment. At last I heard
some

some one say, that the Emperor and the Dolgoruckis had quitted the palace; an officer out of breath, with a wild look, entered the saloon, and said, in an interrupted voice—

“The Emperor is gone to the summer palace, the guards are under arms, and they are enjoined to receive no orders except from Soltikof, or the Emperor himself.”

At these words, my father evinced great anger; but very soon he suffered his arms to fall, with an air of the most extreme dejection. Immediately the greatest number of those by whom he was surrounded disappeared, and I heard them descend the stairs as if panic-struck. I trembled so much that I was forced to lean against the door for support. A short time after, an officer of the guards entered with a haughty step; the attendants gave way to him, he approached my father, and, bowing, said to him—

"I bring an order to remove the property of his Majesty to the imperial summer palace."

"From whom did you receive this order?" asked Menzikof, hastily.

"From the Emperor himself," replied the officer, coldly.

My father returned it.

"I will this instant," said he, "execute the order of his Majesty." And he went out to give the necessary directions for that purpose.

In the mean time, the officer attentively viewed those who remained in the saloon; on which, the few friends who had not yet deserted us, immediately left the palace. All those who every morning attended Menzikof, and who filled his antichambers, as well as those who arrived successively in the course of the day, again departed on learning the news of his disgrace.

I went

I went to my mother, who was still in a profound sleep. Oh my dear Sophia! already misfortunes had reached us; but, for a while, the beneficent hand of Nature had dispelled the remembrance of them from her heart. I softly fell on my knees by her bedside, and sent up the most fervent prayers to Heaven on her behalf. Her waiting-maid entered to awaken her, but I prevented her; and seated myself tranquilly—yes, Sophia, tranquilly by her bedside.

She awakened at the end of a few moments; then my brother entered with the terrible news, which the paleness of his visage announced before his trembling lips had power to utter them.

“The Emperor has left the palace during the night;—my father is disgraced;—we are lost!”

My mother fell back on her pillow, and

the paleness of death overspread her countenance. I am unable to express to you what I felt at this moment;—it is inexpressible.

In a little time we were joined by my father, who had assumed an air somewhat more calm: he related what you already know, and added, that he had likewise been ordered to transport all his own effects, and those of my brother, to the summer palace of the Emperor. He had recovered some degree of hope, which he partly communicated to our minds.

“It is impossible,” said he, “that the Emperor can so quickly forget that it was I who placed him on the throne.”

My mother bowed her head in sadness, without returning any answer; she held my hands in her's, and I perceived she trembled excessively. We dressed ourselves in haste, without daring to utter
our

our thoughts, our fears, or our hopes. Ah! how sensibly did I feel, at this moment, that a state of suspense is the most intolerable of all human calamities.

By degrees, however, some of my father's friends returned, and re-assembled in the saloon. They had informed themselves respecting what passed at the palace, and had recovered some degree of courage. We females retired into the great cabinet, through the glass-door of which we could see all that passed in the saloon, and even hear what was said. When it was known that my father had been ordered to send his effects to the summer palace, a momentary grandeur again surrounded him. All bowed before him as formerly; but very soon an officer arrived with the sad news, that the Emperor had given orders they should not be admitted into his residence; at the same time prohibiting my father and brother from appearing in his presence.

Menzikof remained immoveable, like a statue; my mother covered her face for some moments, and on again raising up her head, she beheld my father alone, abandoned by every one except the faithful Brukenthal, upon whose shoulder he supported himself almost lifeless.—Sophia, one trait in the character of this excellent man did not escape me. The tears flowed down his venerable cheeks, and he said not a single word which could remind his fallen friend, that he had neglected his advice in the days of his prosperity. My father arose, and looking at him attentively, said—

“You believe your prophecies are already accomplished; but it is not so.”

He then gave orders to his Aide-de-camp to summon to his presence all the officers of his regiment.

“What are your intentions, in the name of Heaven?” said the terrified Brukenthal,

Brukenthal, after the departure of the Aide-de-camp.

My father made no reply; but walked rapidly about the apartment.

"In the name of Heaven! what are your intentions?" repeated Brukenthal, still more inquietly.

He had not yet received a reply, when the officers of his regiment arrived, and surrounded my father. You know that they, as well as the soldiers they command, are entirely devoted to my father. Then Brukenthal said, in a tone truly commanding—

"My Lord, before communicating your intentions, listen to me a moment; I request this audience as the recompence of my friendship."

He hurried Menzikof through the cabinet, where we were, into an inner apartment, making a sign for us to follow them. When we had entered, he shut the door, and addressing my father, as if with an inspired voice, said to him—

“Menzikof, I wished to be silent, because you are already sufficiently unfortunate. But at present I must speak to you;—you must hear me. In the name of Heaven! what are your intentions?—Menzikof! my prediction is accomplished; it could not fail, because you were become formidable to your master. You inclined to place a crown upon the head of your daughter; it is that which has destroyed you. Look around you—behold your virtuous wife—your innocent children: it is you who have caused the death-like paleness, which you behold on their visage; and, notwithstanding their innocence and their virtues, they tremble like criminals!

Is

Is not that sufficient? They have lost every thing: there remains to them only one consolation—it is that their too ambitious father is not chargeable with any actual crime. Do you then intend to ravish from them this remaining comfort? To what purpose assemble the officers of your regiment?—You doubtless wish to avenge yourself——But this vengeance will ultimately fall upon yourself and your family. Menzikof, you inclined to ornament this head with an imperial diadem,” said he, taking my hand, and drawing me towards my father; “do you wish to see it fall on a blood-stained scaffold? Be not the assassin of your children!—Go now—go and pronounce yourself their condemnation, if you listen to the voice of ambition and of vengeance.”

My father appeared to be very sensibly affected; we threw ourselves at his feet, and my brother, who had come in, cast himself beside us; he hesitated and trembled;

whilst his eyes were filled with tears, he placed his hand upon our heads as if to bless us.

"You have overcome," said he, at last, to Brukenthal; "yes I will sacrifice myself, if I can preserve them at this price. Follow me!"

We accompanied him to the saloon; he said to the officers, who waited for his orders—

"Let my regiment return to their former quarters in the city. It is the last order I give you, report it to the Emperor, to Alexis Dolgorucki, or to Soltikof."

They appeared thunderstruck; my father reiterated this order, adding—

"You must answer to me, that tranquillity be maintained!—Go immediately to the Emperor, I dismiss you."

"Prince!"

"Prince!" said an old officer, "we know that you have been injured;—you may reckon on our services,"

"Go to the Emperor, I tell you; and cause the guards to be relieved around my palace. I have no more need of them."

They departed somewhat discontented, and we threw ourselves upon the bosom of my father.

"Ah!" said he, pressing us in his arms, "this is the first time I ever embraced you simply as my children, and not as the heirs of my riches and my power. At present, I am only your father; but it is in order to partake with you, the misfortunes I have drawn down by my own fault," and he turned from us with sorrow.

All the labours in the garden, and in the building were stopped; and the workmen discharged. The guards were withdrawn from the palace, and my father's regiment dispersed

dispersed into different quarters in the city;—thus passed the morning. Towards the evening, my father said, with a sad smile—

“It is a long time since we have been so much alone.”

He received a few letters, and Father Brukenthal had learned some good news; so that we found ourselves a little relieved, and separated for the night not without hope.

But how deceitful was this repose! We were condemned to drink to the bottom the cup of misfortune. At breakfast, we assembled in the same disposition as we had separated for the night; a mournful silence prevailed, which none of us had the courage to break. My father at last said—

“It is impossible the Czar can hate me! Was it not I who placed the crown on his head?—They cannot reproach me with
having

having prevented his journey to Moscow, because I feared his grandmother Lapuchin. Whatever he can say to me, I will reply to him;—It was I myself who invested you with the power, which you now exercise against me with so much severity. It was I who placed securely on your head that crown which would have been disputed with you, and which has rendered you my master.—No; he cannot intend to crush me altogether."

This discourse somewhat tranquillized us. Brukenthal alone remained gloomy and silent; when suddenly the door was opened, and General Soltikof entered. We all approached him with imploring looks, except my father, who remained seated. Soltikof continued silent, as if collecting courage to deliver the message with which he was charged. At last he informed my father, that he was the bearer of a decree which prohibited him from intermeddling in any affairs of State. Menzikof attempted
to

to reply, but the words died on his lips, and he fell back in a swoon; his heart had expanded to hope, and this second stroke was too much to be endured.

“Oh God!—dear Alexander,” cried my mother, beside herself, “this is too much!—it is cruel—very cruel! Tell the Emperor, General, what you have witnessed, and into what a state he has plunged the man whom he once loved, and whom he had every reason to love!—I read pity in your eyes. Oh! console us, give us hope, that we shall very soon be left in tranquillity.”

Soltikof drew up his shoulders in token of compassion.

“Great God!” added my mother, “what farther have you to announce?—Is the fury of our enemies not yet satiated?—Speak, what have we yet to fear?”

“I pity you,” said Soltikof, with emotion.

“Perhaps

“Perhaps it would be better, Madam, were you to see the Emperor yourself.”

I must here interrupt this long letter, in order to acquire strength to proceed. I have viewed for a whole hour the heavens scattered over with stars. But, alas! methinks they are as cold, as unpitying, as man.

My mother proceeded to the summer palace of the Emperor, but was refused admittance; she alighted from her carriage in order to wait until the Czar returned from Church, believing that a being who prayed to the Almighty, could not be devoid of compassion. She threw herself at his feet, in presence of several thousands of spectators; but, alas, in vain!—Ah! Sophia, when she re-entered her house in a state of despair, and related with what inhumanity she had been repulsed, I was overcome with respect for a sentiment capable of such a great sacrifice, and I embraced

embraced with animation the knees of my mother. My brother and my sister imitated my example; it was a scene at which you would have been violently affected. Brukenthal was moved by it into tears. My mother tore herself from our arms, smiling.

"All hearts are not shut against pity," said she, "I will wait upon the Grand Duchess, and the Princess Elizabeth."

"Go not to them," said my father, mournfully; "it is useless, you will find no compassion; because—I had none myself towards the unfortunate whom I persecuted;—none towards my brother-in-law!—Go not to them," repeated he more hastily; "my sister, my own sister threw herself at my feet in vain;—I was inexorable!—My crimes fall upon you; it is you who have been punished!"

My mother, however, persevered in her intention; but the Princesses refused to see

see her. She returned with so much tranquillity, and with such an air of resignation, that I believed she was exhausted; but this calm was only that of an inexpressible grief. Poor mother, she trembles for the life of a beloved husband. Heaven only knows what will be the termination of our present sufferings.—Adieu, dear Sophia!

LETTER VII.

Maria to Sophia.

Petersburg, September —

HE is at liberty, my Sophia!—my Fedor is at liberty! He has demanded of my father the *proces verbeaux* of his accusation.

“Alas!” said he, sighing, “this Dolgorucki ought to detest me more than all the world besides; I am forced to tell him, he has committed no crime.”

Sophia, with the termination of his misfortunes, our's have commenced; I
should

should rejoice at this, if I alone were the sufferer. That, however, has not reconciled us; we are not happier; we have only changed sides. Will a member of the family of Dolgorucki, at present all powerful, dare to bestow his hand on the daughter of the disgraced Menzikof?—Oh! why is it necessary that we must always be separated by the hatred and ambition of men, when our hearts are only filled with love and peace?

My father is exiled to his estate at Oranienbourg; he has lost his dignities, his employments, his pensions, and all his fortune is confiscated for the use of the Imperial Treasury: they have only left him the estates which belonged to him before his elevation. You know this delightful Oranienbourg, situated under the most serene sky. Here have I passed many happy moments with you and my mother; they have banished us to the place that I love, into the enchanting abode of my happy infancy,

infancy, which I called, you will remember, *my Arcadia*. With this estate alone, we are more rich than thousands of human beings; but my father hopes also to be able to preserve the capital which he has placed in the Banks of Venice and Amsterdam (of which the Government appear to be ignorant), and which, joined to his landed property, will still render him a very rich private individual. Could he forget what he has been, we might yet be happy; but I fear he never can. He has escaped the most dreadful of shipwrecks with at least life; and his most ardent desire would be again to attempt a new voyage upon this stormy ocean; whilst, on the contrary, the only wish of my mother and me, is to be quietly settled in the Ukraine, forgotten and unknown. Yes, Sophia! there only, far from Court—far from the haunts of men—and especially from false friends, we might be able again to find tranquillity. Ah! had it been any one but a Doglorucki who had produced our fall, Fedor might

might have shared with us this delightful retirement. My father, who wished to load my head with the weight of a diadem, would there have stretched out his paternal hands to bless his children. He would have been acquainted with the true charm of supreme power, that of conferring happiness on others; and, in their happiness, would have felt his own. Ah Sophia! if this was to be the termination of all my sufferings, my life would then have been, like this thorny stalk, crowned by the finest flowers!—But whither does my imagination lead me? What a dream have I allowed myself to be hurried into?——

Ah! yes it is but a dream.——The fall of my father will render the hatred of our families eternal, and separate us for ever!——I could have made to Fedor, the sacrifice of a crown;—I could have abandoned the splendour of my father's palace, to follow him into some solitary retreat, and have been the happiest of women.—But can I forsake my parents in misfortune, and

sacrifice my father to my love? Were I to fly with Fedor at present, the Dolgoruckis, rendered furious, would revenge themselves upon my disgraced and unprotected father; they would undoubtedly complete his ruin.

Sophia! Sophia! I see nothing around me but an abyss of despair!—Oh, my God! take pity on us!—We never invoke an all-wise God in vain;—I have prostrated myself before him, and am become more tranquil. My heart opens anew to hope, the future is still before us.—May not some unexpected event happen, which may render possible, what at present appears impossible? Cannot a wise and bountiful Providence work a miracle in my favour? Did it not conduct Fedor to to the forest where we first met? Did it not develop in our hearts this sweet and powerful sympathy, which has for ever attached us to one another? May not the same power still bring about the means to render us happy?—My imagination at
present

present can devise a thousand ways by which Fedor could offer me his hand, with the consent of his parents. Cannot Providence readily execute what it allows my love to imagine?

Oh! how I long to see him once—only once, before quitting Petersburg; and to be able to tell him, at least by a look, that I will love him for ever! The preparations for our departure are completed. Father Brukenthal returns to-day into his Convent. He has entreated my father to set out with as little noise as possible; but his prayers and his representations are in vain, my father means to take with him all his people.

“Take them if you desire it,” said Brukenthal, to him; “but make them depart before you, with the greatest privacy. It is only humility which can disarm your enemies: the least display of magnificence

or presumption, on your part, will render them still more implacable."

My mother has not said a single word respecting Fedor, and I have not spoken of him. Shall I augment her troubles by the weight of mine?—Shall I add a single tear to those, which already continually flow from her eyes?—No, I will suffer my griefs alone, and she shall only be the partaker of my hopes.

Brukenthal has left us; his departure has deeply affected us all; and, ever since, my father has been extremely dejected.

"It seems," said he, "as if he had carried away with him all my courage."

We all esteem this extraordinary man, and he well deserves it; he will be able also to render us some great services, because every body knows, and considers him

as a man of the most rigorous sincerity. Even in this abode of vice, virtue is respected; and the man whose reputation has never been tarnished by suspicion, and who is known never to have committed a bad action, always preserves the power of doing good.

Adieu, my dear Sophia, adieu! my mother is happy that our misfortune is limited to an exile to Oranienbourg, and looks upon what my father calls *miser*y, as the greatest blessing of her life. I also am satisfied: Fedor is at liberty, and I am going to dwell in my favourite retreat. You will come there and see us, Sophia; you who fear not a disgraced family. My mother's brother and his wife accompany us; they also are banished from Petersburg. —We set out to-morrow——To-morrow I shall be far distant——Ah Sophia, he is at liberty, and I have not seen him!—I have not been able to give him a token of eternal love—to place my hand upon

my heart, and stretch it out towards him.—He must even now be at Petersburg——and I have not seen him!—What am I to think of it?

LETTER VIII.

Maria to Sophia.

September —

THE sweet illusions to which I had abandoned myself have quickly vanished. The all-powerful Prince Menzikof and his family are on their road for the abode of misery—for Siberia, dear Sophia!—Weep and mourn for us! we can shed no more
tears

tears—grief has already rendered us insensible. Sophia, we shall see you no more!—Neither you—nor him!—Tears cannot assuage the torments of my heart!—Oh! how shall I begin my sad recital?

We set out from Petersburg on the morning after I last wrote to you. The pageantry attendant on our departure had probably awakened the hatred of our enemies, as Brukenthal had predicted. A long train of carriages waited before our palace, by my father's orders, to receive us, our people, and our baggage. We were all, however, very simply dressed in black; and my father was not decorated with the insignia of any order—not even with those of foreign courts. We descended the marble staircase, and followed him in silence. My mother and my sister were as pale as death, and cast their eyes downwards: my mother, as you know, fears the broad day-light, on account of the weakness of her eyes. As for me, I strove to

keep up my courage, and raised mine; for I hoped still to see Fedor. But how much was our confusion augmented when we saw the square filled with spectators, who murmured against the magnificence and the number of our carriages. They loudly expressed their dissatisfaction; and, when my father appeared, they overwhelmed him with maledictions.

My mother, already greatly depressed, was so much affected that my father and I were obliged to support her. The melancholy appearance of my mother ought to have softened this multitude, upon whom she had conferred so many benefits; but their hearts are hardened, and the favours of the best of women are forgotten, because she is the wife of the disgraced Menzikof. With what cruelty they insulted our misfortunes!—how they reproached us for these remains of our former splendour, which unquestionably ought not to have been displayed! But was not my
father

father sufficiently humbled—sufficiently unfortunate!—Oh no! not sufficiently to glut the envy of his enemies.—My poor father, what a dreadful moment for him!—My heart was already lacerated by his sufferings.

We made our way slowly through the spectators, who had placed themselves on the new bridge. In vain I sought in this multitude one compassionate countenance, one eye wetted with tears; I saw nothing but expressions of contempt, of ridicule, and of curiosity. I even conceived that I saw people of distinction, enemies of our house, mingling with the crowd. My mother covered her eyes, obscured by tears; and I, Sophia, I confess to you, mine still sought Fedor. Ah! if I had seen him—if I had only beheld pity in his looks, of what consequence to me would have been the injuries of these people, who rendered us evil for good?

“ *Long live the Empréss!* ” said they, with an insulting laugh.

They knew not how much this title and this throne are hateful to me, and that my only consolation in our misfortune was, that I have left them behind me. But, Sophia, Fedor was not there; I have been compelled to leave Petersburg without seeing him. When we had left the city, I still sought him, in vain, in the solitary plain; but I scarcely saw a living creature. Where is my Fedor?—Sophia!—Where is he?

We continued our rout in silent despair. We heard nothing but the monotonous steps of the horses, the noise of the wheels, and the sobs of my mother. Leaning upon my shoulder, she burst into tears; I entreated her to be tranquillized: the physician is apprehensive that her eyes, already weak, will be completely ruined by her weeping. She covered them with her handkerchief,

handkerchief, and appeared to stifle her tears. And again abandoned to myself, my thoughts wandered to Fedor—to this inexplicable Fedor.

Suddenly, at a turning of the road, I saw a horseman, who followed us at full speed, and discerned that he wore regimentals. Who could this be but my Fedor!—I fancied I recognized his slender figure, his noble and elegant air, the inimitable grace with which he sat on horseback. He left the great road and slowly followed our carriages at a distance, appearing attentively to observe us. Soon after, he was overtaken by two others, one of whom wore a red uniform. It is Sapieha, thought I; but they were too far for me to recognise them perfectly. I put my head out at the coach-door, and waved my handkerchief to Fedor, as a sign that I knew him.

“What can be his design?” said I, with a joy blended with inquietude.

But how much did joy predominate!—In the hope of soon seeing him much nearer, I forgot all my troubles. I rejoiced when we beheld Isehora, where we intended sleeping, and which we had now nearly reached.

“Approach,” said I, softly, “approach, dear Fedor, in order that I may behold one tender and consoling look.”

It seemed to me as if my tutelary angel conveyed to him my words. The three cavaliers stopped for a moment, and then suddenly putting their horses to the gallop, advanced to our side; my emotion prevented me from distinguishing any thing, and I involuntarily exclaimed:—

“Ah God! he comes.”

Suddenly, a terrible and unknown voice cried out—“*Halt!*”—and our carriage was surrounded on all sides by dragoons.

“Stop;

"Stop; we command you to stop, in the name of the Czar!" was repeated.

And I saw a stranger, whose physiognomy was harsh and savage, open the carriage-door, while he cast upon us a fierce look. My mother shrieked, and immediately fell into a swoon.

"Where is Menzikof?" demanded he, with brutality.

Oh Fedor! how had I been able to take him for thee?

"Here I am," answered my father with dignity.

The officer gave him a paper. Menzikof took the paper, and cursorily glancing it over, his increasing paleness, anguish, and tremor, too soon discovered to me the contents of this fatal writing, before he was able to utter a single word. He placed one
hand

hand upon his forehead, I took the other, which was covered with a cold sweat.— On my mother's recovering her senses, she fixed upon him her half-closed eyes.

“ Dear wife,” said he, “ now is the time to shew the courage of a great soul. This paper contains my accusation and my condemnation.”

He began to read with a steady voice: he was therein upbraided with having been the cause of the catastrophe of the unfortunate Grand Duke Alexis—with having committed the most dreadful depredations on the tolls—and on the farming of tobacco. At the same time his voice faltered, he could not go on; his quivering lips could no longer articulate.—Oh Sophia! an insufferable anguish took possession of my soul; but how much was it augmented, when I heard my father say to the officer—

“ Yes, I acknowledge the truth of all these

these charges; tell it to the Emperor.—I am culpable without doubt;—but,” added he, sorrowfully, “was it for him to punish me?—Him!—I submit to his will, where are you to conduct me?”

“To Berezof, in Siberia,” answered this man, in a voice which rendered his words still more terrible; but had they been pronounced in the most mild and gentle tone, they would still have pierced our hearts like a poniard.

On hearing this arrest, cries of grief burst from the whole party, a part of our people had alighted from their carriages and surrounded our's. My father was the only one who preserved his usual firmness.

“We are near Isehora,” said he, with mildness to the officer; “allow us to repair to it?”

“*Pass on!*” said the officer.

And

And a detachment of dragoons, sword in hand, escorted our carriage on both sides.

My mother did not change colour; I believed she was tranquil. She looked at me tenderly, and taking my hand, attempted to smile.

"How are you, mamma?" said I, kissing her hand.

"Very well," said she, softly; "I go with my children, with my dear Alexander; and our fate is decided."

We soon after arrived at Isehora, and alighted from the carriage.

"Give me your arm, Maria," said my mother, with an extraordinary look.

She walked slower, and with more caution than usual; I perceived, however, by her manner of leaning upon me, that she was
not

not much cast down. We entered a miserable inn; I placed for her a wooden chair, she sat down immediately, and then said to us, with a sweet smile—

“ We shall not be happily situated at Berezof, but we will at least live together; we love one another, we shall be happier than thousands of other human beings, more deserving than ourselves.”

She said this in such an affecting manner, in a tone of such sensibility, that I believed I heard the voice of an angel say to us:—“ Go, you will be happy.”

“ Yes, mamma, we shall be happy,” said I, embracing her. “ Our love, our mutual confidence will change these dreary regions into a paradise; and the most wretched cottage, while we continue near you—near one another—will become a palace, or rather the abode of happiness and peace.—They hated the family of Menzikof when
it

it was all-powerful; perhaps they will love, and surely they must admire it, in adversity."

"Yes," replied she, our misfortune is in fact only an idle dream, which will vanish with the light of day. Let patience, resignation, and even hope take possession of our souls; let us shew the courage suitable to great minds, as your father said to us. Come my children—come to my heart!"

We threw ourselves into her arms, and embraced one another; our tears flowed, but they flowed gently.

"Oh!" cried my father, deeply affected; "is it possible that misfortune, banishment, and the total loss of fortune can produce sentiments so delicious!—And have I so long mistaken these sentiments—these sources of true happiness?"

The officer, notwithstanding his harshness,
appeared

appeared touched; his eyes filled with tears, his countenance relaxed, his voice became milder.

But alas, dear Sophia! this tranquillity which my worthy mother endeavoured to communicate to us, was only to be the forerunner of a new misfortune, the most dreadful of all. This celestial and generous soul concealed from us, under this apparent serenity, the greatest of all calamities: all the carriages were to be sent back to Petersburg. The officer had positive orders to leave us only the most absolute necessities; he declared it to us, but with mildness and consideration.

“Absolute necessities!” repeated my father, with vehemence, “we have brought only what *is necessary*. Behold my poor wife, feeble and languishing;—behold these two delicate young girls, who have always been accustomed to prosperity. Their feet have never trodden upon uneven ground—
their

skin has never been exposed either to the piercing cold or the burning heat—their hands have never performed any laborious work—and at present——”

“ I have orders to furnish you with a kibitsch (a Russian cart),” said the officer, in the most mild and gentle tone.

My father continued—

“ They have always sat upon the softest cushions;—to-morrow they will sit upon a hard wooden cart. Oh Sir! do not deride our misfortunes. Take all that you have orders to take from us—cruel necessity must learn us to support such privations; but allow us at least to retain what we cannot yield up without injury.”

The officer addressed himself to me, and (with the exception of a carriage, which did not depend upon him to leave us), he desired me to chuse what I thought most necessary. Why did he address himself to me?

me? Was it because I appeared more tranquil, more courageous?

Whilst I executed this task, he gave me some very useful advice. He made me think on the length of the way we had to travel, and in which we should be in want of almost every thing. He chose himself the most warm and commodious clothing, linen, medicine, and even provisions. Our people again set out for Petersburg, with the carriages: the greatest part of them left us coldly; some of them, however, were a little affected; but only an old domestic of my mother's, and one of my female attendants, named Liziska, entreated to follow us. They declared to the officer, that they would die sooner than leave us. The good old man threw himself at my mother's feet, she stretched out her hand—

“Faithful friend,” said she to him, “henceforth you shall make one of our family; you will be a father to us all.

I will

I will be also in my heart the generous daughter, who will not abandon you, in calling you my friend."

I began now to share with them in performing all the necessary labour.

"We shall see," said I to him, "who will be able to surpass the other in zeal, in affection, and in activity."

I helped them to cook the meat; they shewed me what to do, and praised my skill. This employment diverted me, and I recovered somewhat of my usual gaiety. "Berezof, they say, is a pretty little town," said I to myself. "My father is not poor; and even, supposing they had taken all from him, does not Fedor still remain? If he dare not see me, at least he will not allow either my parents or me to be in want. He loves, he respects my mother; we can depend upon his assistance."—There was superadded to this idea, that I could labour for my parents, for my brother, for my sister,

still so young and so little accustomed to misfortune. As for me, Sophia, I have experienced misfortunes much greater than misery and exile, and I can be happier in Siberia, than I should have been seated on a throne. This reflection was a great consolation; but what consoled me above all, was my mother's perfect tranquillity. She allowed me to do every thing without disturbing herself, without offering to help me; she approved all; I believed she was perfectly resigned, and I said to her laughing—

“Mamma, you shall have your task also; you also must labour for your children.”

At these words, she uttered a grievous sigh; then resuming her serene air, she answered, smiling—

“All, every thing for my dear children; every thing which shall depend upon me.”

Her

Her contented manner rendered me happy; but it was an illusion which was soon to vanish in the most dreadful manner. Oh Sophia! it is only at present that I know misfortune.

Whilst I helped to serve up our wretched little supper, I observed something very unusual in the manner of my mother: she remained in one place during the whole evening, and made my sister afterwards conduct and place her by the table. She looked up and down, spoke with her ordinary mildness; but I soon perceived that her hand sought the knife and fork with uncertainty, and that she did not look directly at those to whom she addressed herself.—I arose softly and placed myself behind her chair.

“Maria,” said she, casting her eyes towards the side where I had been sitting, and holding out her plate, “give me some more of this milk-pottage, which thou hast so well prepared;—I find it excellent.”

“Mamma!”

"Mamma," cried I, "how are you?—Great God! have you lost your sight?"

All my relations, till then tranquil, became pale, and surrounded her, repeating my question. I was so affected that I fell to the ground unable any longer to support myself. She answered—

"No, my child, I see very well; you are all near me:" and she stretched out her arms to embrace me, being guided alone by the sound of my voice.

The sad truth was then too soon perceivable. A gutta serena had affected her eyes, injured by constant weeping.—They appeared very clear; but the pupil remained immoveable and the blindness was complete. All the family dissolved into tears and rose from the table; nobody could eat. Our lamentations took from my poor mother the fortitude with which

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she had till then dissembled her misfortune. She stretched out her arms, crying—

“Yes I am blind! My friends—my children—I shall see you no more!—no more—never!”

I cast myself into her arms, kissing her eyes.

“Is it thou, Maria?” said she, pressing me to her bosom. “Is it thou who hast kissed my sightless eyes?”

My grief was such that I could not answer a single word; but her heart guessed it was me.

“Yes, it is thou,” added she in a tone still more tender. “Thou, I know, wilt see for thy mother.”

This was too much, Sophia! I lost all
recollection

recollection on the bosom of my mother. On again opening my eyes, the first object they beheld was my mother, seated near my bed, with her eyes bound up; because the dazzling whiteness of the snow injured them, although she could only distinguish it from the pain it made her suffer.

“ Does not this obscurity which surrounds me,” said she softly, “ help to conceal from me the appearance of your sadness? And you afflict yourself at it, Maria!—Ah! I am happier than you; I experience only half of the misfortunes which oppress you. Think not on the troubles this blindness will spare me. The most miserable cottage will, to me, be a palace; its black and smoky walls, my imagination will conceive covered with the finest hangings;—you can if you are willing, grant me all these happy illusions:—only let me no more hear your sighs; let your voice no more have the expression of grief, and I will be contented. I shall no longer

behold your troubles, my dear children, and if your voice be serene, I will believe I see you as in our happier days.—Do not envy your mother the comfort an all-wise Providence has granted her.”

I seized this idea, and really employed the means to deceive, that she had employed to console me. My filial love invented a thousand ways to conceal the inconveniencies, and the frightful and disgusting objects that we so often encountered on our journey. We never complained but by sighs, or by silent tears; and we endeavoured to speak in a tranquil, nay almost cheerful manner.

This morning our kibitsches, which are nothing but covered wooden carts, was brought before the poor inn where we had passed the night. Each contains but one person and the guide. At my earnest entreaty, I was at last permitted to place myself in that of my mother's; and I sat

at

at her feet, upon the plank at the bottom. They represented to me that it was impossible I could long support, in this situation, a journey so painful. I have persisted; and have conducted my mother—Oh God! my blind mother, in this cart. On entering it, she had, by a tender movement, pressed to her lips the hand which I had placed in her's. Oh my Sophia! I have raised that hand to heaven, and vowed that I will never cease to labour for my worthy and unfortunate mother—that I will never cease to conduct and shield her from every danger!—I love Fedor more than I can express; but he will never be able to induce me to leave this dear mother—to separate myself from her for a moment,—if he could make the request, he ought never to have been beloved. When we had been seated on the kibitsch—

“Art thou well, my dear daughter?” said she to me.

And she sought with her hand the plank where she believed I was sitting. I have persuaded her that we were in a little chariot, with two seats, that they have permitted my father to purchase for our convenience.

“God be praised!” said she, raising her eyes, covered with an eternal night, towards that God who——Oh Sophia! I will not murmur against that being who has created the light, and who has bereaved my poor mother of it for ever.

“Yes,” added she, “I return thanks to God for this blessing! I am so happy at being with thee, Maria, that our present journey appears to me only like a party of pleasure; and deprived of my sight, how sad should I have been alone; but now at least I hear the sound of thy voice, which enlivens me so much that methinks I am
in

in a new world, enlightened by a pure and serene day;—I believe myself in company with an angel, who will conduct me to Heaven."

Sophia, what a mother Heaven has given me! Yet this angelic woman is blind, and an exile! And fate and man seem united to overwhelm her!—We have crossed the town of Sablai; the inhabitants of which gathered together to behold the disgraced Prince Menzikof. They regarded us with hatred, with contempt, and derision; we were painfully affected at their behaviour. My mother alone smiled, because I spoke on indifferent subjects, in order to distract her attention and prevent her hearing their imprecations.—Poor mother! I told her that they appeared affected at our misfortune, and that the love of the Russians followed us into our exile. She then for the first time mentioned the name of Fedor. —I have given her hopes which I myself feel not; and the tears which streamed

F 4

from

from my eyes, could she have seen them, would have contradicted my assertions. It was thus, with an assumed tranquillity, that we arrived at Torna.

“I have never made a more pleasant journey,” said this good mother to me, with one of her bewitching smiles.

Sophia, at this moment I was happy!—Yes, in spite of the Czar—in spite of Fedor. It is then true, that the sources of true happiness are in ourselves.

Me happy! No, Sophia, no, I am not happy! How has my pen been able to trace the word happiness? This word is not made for us!—I write to you near the wretched couch on which my mother reposes:—her sleep is disturbed, her hands tremble, her pulse beats with extreme quickness. She believes me sleeping; but I watch near her—and I write to you. Those are the only two comforts of my
heart

heart—I write to you, and my paper is blotted with my tears.—Our guide, whose heart is not so hard as the first words he addressed to us seemed to indicate, has promised to put this letter into the post at Novogorod. I wished to have enclosed in it a few lines to Fedor, which you could have transmitted to him, through the medium of Sapieha; but if he knows our situation—(and can he be ignorant of it?)—if he knows it and does not give me some token of his remembrance, I wish not that my complaints should become reproaches to him.

Antigone conducted her blind father in his exile—Oh Sophia! if thou sawest me conduct my dear, my respectable mother upon the frightful roads in the deserts of Siberia!—Must I then be called upon to realize the most affecting fable which ever entered the imagination of poets!—Wilt thou call to mind how much I weep when you read it?—Adieu!

the courier, who is charged with this, sets out for Petersburg; in an hour we will also set out for Loubani, where we are to sleep.—It is already broad day—but alas, always night for my mother!—Adieu, still———God be with you!

LETTER. IX.

Fedor to Sapieha.

Petersburg, October —

SAPIEHA, thy father has told me that thou art at Warsaw. I stand in need of all thy friendship; fly to my assistance. Maria, that angel of a woman, is banished into Siberia—into those dreary and savage countries!

countries!—I am beside myself;—I follow her this evening—all is ready; I only wait to ascertain the rout they have taken, and the place of their exile.

On arriving at Petersburg, after my enlargement, my first business was to demand from my father, from the ambitious Alexis, and from the hypocritical Ivan, who triumphed at the fall of Menzikof—

“ Alas what has been done by his wife, his excellent companion? What has this generous woman done?—whose whole life has only been one continued scene of good and benevolent actions. What has his innocent children done, to be so cruelly banished into those deserts?”

They appeared extremely surprised at hearing such language from me, a Dolgorucki.—Could I say a word in favour of Menzikof.—“ Art thou a fool? Art thou in a delirium?” asked my father.—Ah yes,

unquestionably I was delirious—my blood boiled in my veins!

“Do you not then see,” said Ivan, “that these Menzikof’s were always an obstacle to us?”

I grasped with so much fury the hand of this young hypocrite as to make him shriek;—and I said to him, with a menacing look—

“Thou hast not only raised this hand as a thief, who kills and robs on the highway; but as a villain, who conceals and plants an assassin behind him that he wishes to strip. Thy hypocritical smile was the dagger under which the man who was an obstacle to thy ambition was doomed to fall, and to drag after him in his descent his respectable family, of whom thou hast never complained!—For myself, I would have wished to overthrow Menzikof, because that proud man governed and oppressed the
the

the Empire. But in order to crush him, I should not have flattered; I should not have bent my eyes even to the earth in his presence; and above all, I would not have overthrown him because I envied his treasures and his power!——Go now, ambitious youth—go, occupy his place.—Perhaps another aspiring hypocrite, like thyself, has already prepared thy overthrow; and thou shalt then fall in thy turn, without exciting pity!”

My father regarded me with anger mixed with surprise.

“Of what consequence is Menzikof to you?” enquired he, with asperity. “Have you already forgot your unjust imprisonment?”

“Of what consequence—great God!” replied I, clasping my hands (the image of my amiable, of my angelic Maria was uppermost in my thoughts), “Menzikof was my enemy; he ravished from me the most precious

precious of all rights—liberty. I would have avenged my personal injuries as a man of honour; the love of my country would have induced me to overthrow him.—But nothing, nothing in the universe would have induced me to make his innocent family the victims of his crimes. Menzikof, banished to his estate, was, with the loss of his power, sufficiently punished; and his wife and his children would have enjoyed the only happiness which they desired, which their virtues merited.—Oh could I at the price of my liberty insure their happiness! could I but make them return from this hateful Siberia—with what joy would I again enter for ever into the prison from which you have liberated me, in order to render me a witness and an accomplice of your useless cruelty.”

All my relations regarded one another with astonishment and with pity, on hearing me speak thus; they imagined that
solitude

solitude and captivity had impaired my reason. The Field Marshal, Prince Bazil, who was present during this conversation, was the only one who approved my sentiments.

“After all,” said he, “Fedor has spoken the truth. You have, it is true, been the gainers at this dangerous sport; but is it on that account less dangerous?—The enemies of Menzikof have now become your’s; because they hated not his person, but his rank, his authority, and the brilliancy of his power. You believe, perhaps, that the name of Dolgorucki will protect you?—Like Fedor, I love my country, and on that account am not grieved at the fall of Menzikof; but recollect what has undone him:—the thirst to govern, his haughtiness, his ambition, his want of consideration for the unfortunate exiles.—I fear, in a short time, you yourselves may be reproached with the same crimes; the banishment of Menzikof already proves it.”

“The

“The whole empire cried out for vengeance against him,” replied Alexis; “the opinion of the capital, the insulting joy with which they beheld him depart, have clearly demonstrated it.

“Interrogate your conscience,” rejoined the virtuous Basil; “it will tell you whether it was as the enemy of the people, or as your own enemy, that you persecuted him with so much rigour.”

I remained silent, whilst the Field Marshal so forcibly pleaded the cause nearest my heart; I began to fear they might discover my secret motives, and my connection with Maria. They afterwards began to deliberate to whom they would confide the first places in the government, and whom it might still be necessary to banish, in order to secure in their own family the supreme power. Ivan proposed to nominate me to an eminent situation. I interrupted him, smiling:—“You expect, Ivan, to shut my mouth by making me an accomplice.”

accomplice."—My father was vexed; he entreated the Field Marshal to bring me back to more just ideas. The respectable old man regarded them all, and taking me by the hand—

"This man alone is reasonable," said he, with a very significant air; "I see what you incline. Beware that you produce not the destruction of our family. I give you my word to remain silent as long as honour will permit me, and to throw no obstacle in the way of your enterprise; but on this condition alone, that you suffer me to die in peace, and join me not in any of your plans. I shall fulfil my duty as Field Marshal; but I will accept no other situation; and even if I embarrass you in that, mention it, and I will instantly resign. Fedor, I admire your virtuous warmth.—Adieu!" and he departed.

It was now that they loaded me with reproaches.

"What

"What are your intentions?" demanded my father.

"I intend first to join my friend, Sapieha, at Warsaw."

"Well, go fool!"

On quitting them, I flew to the palace of Menzikof. An old porter, who had been left, supposed from my melancholy air that I was a friend of his late master's. He accosted me with tears in his eyes, and related their departure; he told me as much as I wished respecting Maria and her mother, whom he respected and loved. I listened to him for two hours, with a mingled sentiment of pleasure and grief. Their physician, who accompanied them a few days' journey, is returned. I expect him every moment, having requested he would visit me; I shall learn from him where he left them, and where it is probable they will be at present. I wished not to make these enquiries of my own family, for fear of awakening their suspicions.

I have

I have seen the physician: he accompanied them to Isehora; they are to proceed by Moscow, Cazan, and Tobolsck in their way to Berezof, a small town on the Solva, not far from the course of the Oby. He spoke to me, with tears, of the celestial patience of this unfortunate family, and of the refined cruelty exercised against them. They have been compelled to swallow, drop by drop, the bitter cup of their affliction.——The earth burns under my feet; I expect my horses with the fury of impatience.

I have employed your letter of credit, my dear Sapieha, and I am provided with jewels, in case of need. You may write to me under the name of Moses Popof, which is that of my most faithful domestic, a native of Tobolsck, and who accompanies me. I send this letter by a courier, who travels with a passport from Government; immediately on its reception, you must write to one of the Dolgoruckis, informing him

him that I have joined you, and that we are about to depart together for Paris. Render this intelligence as public as possible; I have already told it to all my people. Ah! it is to a far different climate—it is to the heart of the savage Siberia that I burn to go!—I fly to succour oppressed innocence—to tear from misfortune a celestial woman. If you still love your friend—if my angel Maria still interests you, hasten to meet us; I will rejoin you with my adored Maria; we will for ever abandon our frozen country, and together seek some peaceful retreat, where we may enjoy happiness.

Your secretary has procured the necessary passports for the two brothers, Popof, dealers in skins, going to Tobolsck and beyond it to purchase fur. Take care only that we find horses on our return; and take whatever road you incline.

God be praised! my carriage is ready.
Adieu,

Adieu, Sapieha! adieu, dear and generous friend! Friendship will very soon conduct you on my steps, in order to succour two unfortunate lovers.

LETTER. X.

Maria to Fedor.

Twer, October —

NO, Fedor, my wounded soul cannot support much longer the grief with which it is loaded! On every side I see only misery! Nothing, no nothing can save us; but a little consolation might enable me to support life, my life alas! so necessary to the best of mothers, and to which, on
that

that account alone, I attach some value. It is to thee, Fedor, I must look up for this consolation, which I can receive only from thee. Grant me—no, not succours, they would be useless; but a small share of compassion. Ah, Fedor! have you been able to see your Maria descend slowly into the abyss, without stretching out your hand to preserve her—without at least bidding her a last adieu!—Fedor! Fedor! if you even——My God dispel this fatal presage! That Fedor lives, that he is happy; whilst the unfortunate Maria dies alone, of grief, in these far distant countries. Already, Fedor, already I owe to you a moment of less misery, a torrent of tears has somewhat relieved my oppressed heart; but how much does it still suffer! It is only now that I perceive my forlorn situation;—the courage which supported me is annihilated. Ah! if I could only once again behold my Fedor, if I could receive a line—a single line, in which I read:—*Fedor still loves Maria, Fedor pities her!*—

Ah!

Ah! yes, yes, we are to be pitied; our banishment, our poverty are trifles; but the hatred, the contempt, the derision which pursue us from place to place, the cruelty by which they heap misfortune on misfortune; have made us perceive all the weight of our humiliation!—Fedor, even that I was able to support;—my innocence and my pride, if they could not disarm their barbarity, at least tended to blunt my sorrow, if my mother, if you——Ah Fedor! if you have forgotten me, if you have betrayed me, may my name then never be mentioned in your presence! may you never listen to the recital of our misfortunes! may this paper, on which my lacerated heart pours out its complaints, never reach you!

When we left Petersburg, surrounded by a multitude of cruel men who insulted our misfortunes, my eyes then sought Fedor, and, had I perceived you, I should have supposed I beheld a messenger of grace.

In

In the vast deserts which we were compelled to traverse, my eyes still wandered in search of Fedor. During a whole month I never ceased to look for you, and each day I hoped to behold you; but this heart is now dead to hope, I no longer expect you! So fully persuaded was I that you would follow us, in order to bring consolation to your Maria, that I mistook for you the officer who brought the news of our condemnation. These cruel and wicked men, with the exception of one who displayed some pity for our situation, have deprived us of every remaining comfort; we were placed on wretched carts; and Fedor was not by, to defend and console us! all our domestics have left us. My father exclaimed, with tears in his eyes—

“Soon shall we be wholly abandoned!”

“No, my father,” replied I, smiling,
“we will not be abandoned.”

I then thought of thee, Fedor, and thou
art

art not come. My mother's old domestic, and my waiting-maid have voluntarily remained with us; but Fedor is not come—Fedor abandons me.

Well, would you believe it, this misfortune is not the greatest of those which have reached me; an event still more cruel has befallen us: my mother has lost her sight.—It was then alone that hope fled for ever from my heart. The idea even that perhaps you yet might follow me; this delightful moment, which I had so often represented to my mind when I might see you enter, or hear that adored voice exclaim—“*Maria behold thy Fedor!*”—this moment has lost its charm: my mother could not behold you. I still, however, continue to seek you; and when throwing my eyes over these desolate and arid countries, I perceive you not—you who could alone embellish them. I envy my mother the eternal night which covers her eyelids; what remains for me to behold on this

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earth, if I no more see my Fedor?—Ah my mother! No, nothing more for me; but for you—for you alone, Maria will live, and watch over you.

Our enemies pursued us from place to place. At the end of the first day's journey from Isehora, we found officers who had orders to deprive us of our garments, and clothe us, in exchange, with others made of the coarsest stuff, in order to remind us every moment of our humiliation. And Fedor comes not, thought I again. In submitting to this refinement of cruelty, I recollected the little lace robe that you stole from Sophia. Fedor, will you be able to recognise your Maria under these coarse habiliments? Yes, because her heart is unchanged; but thine———Shall I once again behold you before grief has wholly destroyed what remains of my life? Behold me seated before my mother; she wishes to create an illusion by a forced smile; but the tears that flow from her
extinguished

extinguished eyes, upon her withered and palid cheeks, sufficiently betray the anguish of her heart. I cease not for a moment to watch her looks; they become more pale every day; her respiration is impeded, whilst on the contrary her pulse beats with increased force, and I am convinced she cannot long survive the misfortunes which have fallen so heavily upon us. Her soul is already in heaven; she speaks like a dying mother, whose only regret is that of leaving her children in this abode of misery, and advancing before them into the regions of felicity! When I listen to her conversation, when seated at her feet on our hard cart, I can for a moment distract her attention from our sorrows, or elevate with her my mind to the sublime contemplation of another world, methinks also I am happy. But the night, these long nights which I pass near the miserable bed where she enjoys a disturbed repose—one of these nights might reconcile Heaven to the most culpable heart, and

expiate the most enormous crimes;—and I, Fedor—I have already passed thirty in this manner! How delightful might these long melancholy nights become, if Fedor only said to me,—“Good night, Maria!”—and Fedor has been able to abandon me!

One morning I enquired of our conductor if we should soon arrive at the borders of the Twersa, and I made him describe the surrounding country. On reaching the little beech wood, of which you spoke when you accompanied Sapieha to Twer, I said that I felt benumbed, and requested to descend a moment from our vehicle. I had no difficulty in finding the spot which you had depicted with so much truth, and where you left your sledge on issuing from the wood. On this spot, Fedor, I threw myself on my knees, and extended my arms towards heaven; I could scarcely tear myself from these beeches, the witnesses of your sighs and your vows for Maria. I earnestly entreated of Heaven

to

to vouchsafe some sign—a stroke of thunder, a celestial vision, or only a murmur amongst the leaves; but in vain, Nature remained mute to me. I heard not, like you, even the sound of the bells of the sledge; for the carts in which we were compelled to travel have no such appendages. Not a sound broke on my ear, and never in my whole life have I found myself so forlorn. I covered my eyes with my hands, and ran with the utmost speed to rejoin my disconsolate family. Ten months have now elapsed since you traversed the same country, even on that very day when they celebrated my birthday with so much magnificence at Petersburg; and at present, great God! I confess it, I sunk for a moment into utter despair.—Ah! if only this deceitful meteor, which you beheld in the heavens and mistook for a messenger of happiness, had appeared to me, it would have produced in my mind the same delightful illusion; I should have hailed it as a happy presage of your arrival; but it

appeared not—and I beheld only the heavens uniformly covered with a black cloud.

In traversing a hill, which you cannot fail to recollect, I beheld the Twerza, the waves of which dash against the rocks and are precipitated to the bottom in foaming cascades; here nothing is to be seen but the hard and sparkling ice—nothing can be heard but a terrible and incessant noise, exciting in the mind a mixed sensation of pleasure and pain. I ran to the edge of the precipice, and viewed with avidity this foaming cataract! Ah Fedor! how would I have blessed the friendly hand that would have dashed me headlong into its waters! The recollection of my mother,—of you, perhaps, stopped me at the brink of the abyss; I fled from this dangerous place, and, very soon rejoining our carriage, I replaced myself at the feet of my mother.

“Where have you been, my dear child?” said she, in a tender voice.

Oppressed

Oppressed with grief, I embraced her knees, and confessed, sobbing, that I had stopped near the beech wood.

“All powerful God!” cried she, with an expression of which I cannot convey any just idea, “if my beloved daughter cannot be happy, grant her at least courage and patience to support her afflictions!”

Her prayer was instantly answered; scarcely had she concluded these affecting words, than, as by a miracle, I perceived my courage re-animated. I embraced this adored mother, and vowed to myself that henceforth she should no more listen to my complaints; from this time I surmounted my grief, and forced myself to smile at the future. The tomb at least will not deceive me; should you one day discover the grave of your Maria in these dreary deserts, you may say, with a sigh—“Here reposes a young female, who knew how to *love*, to *suffer*, and to *die*.——A few

words more, and I have done. My mother is dying; our misfortunes, and not her own, have killed her. At Tooschek, our last station, she was so feeble that we were obliged to lift her into the carriage; here she has sunk altogether, so that it is impossible to continue our route. I fell at the feet of our conductor, and supplicated him to allow my mother to die in peace, and to consent that we might remain with her. Thanks be to Heaven! the heart of this man was not insensible, he has permitted us to remain here until—Great God!—until my mother has departed to the regions of peace. Soon we must remain at some other station, until I follow her to the silent tomb;—I perceive my strength begin to fail me; my mother smiles on her death-bed. Ah! I believe she cannot long survive!—She dies surrounded by those whom she loved. A cherished hand will close her eyes, already insensible to the light. But mine, Fedor! what hand will shut mine?—If it

was

was your's?—No, Fedor, no it is impossible you can be unfaithful! your cruel parents retain you.—Alas! perhaps you suffer as much as your Maria.

LETTER XI.

Maria to Sophia.

Twer, October —

I CONTINUE to write, my worthy Sophia, as, from the complaisance of our conductor, I am in hopes my letters will reach you. In this you will find one, open, for Fedor, containing my last adieus; I confide it to your friendship. Deliver it the first time

you see him, should he speak of Maria; but withhold it if he has forgotten her, and tell him I have been extremely unhappy. Ah Sophia! I know not even my own wishes. Sometimes I desire, what I dread more than death itself, to be forgotten by Fedor, to spare him any share in my misfortunes; but what is life without love? Methinks that love could transform these arid deserts into the most delightful plains. When Fedor remained a captive, how ardently did I long to share his prison: to live, and to die near him would have rendered me a thousand, and a thousand times more happy than the possession of a crown! Had he been exiled to Siberia, no power on earth could have prevented me from partaking his banishment. Will he be able to deceive me—to forget me? Ah Sophia! why is not my heart satisfied with filial love alone? The heart of a mother admits of no change. I love and cherish my mother with all the strength of my soul; my attachment to this excellent woman
amounts

amounts almost to adoration; yet my love for her, equals not that which she experiences for her daughter. I love her not as I do Fedor, since I would have left her to fly into his arms; and this angel of a mother preferred my happiness to her own, as she would have consented to be separated from me, to deprive herself of my cares, in order to render me happy! To-day, even when my attentions are become more necessary to her than ever, she said to me, smiling—

“I would bless my lot, Maria, were you united to Fedor; if you had followed——”

“No, no mamma,” replied I, “no earthly consideration would tempt me to separate from you at present. If I could not resolve to leave you in the days of your prosperity, could I live far from you at this moment? No, I feel greater happiness in serving, in consoling you, than I could do at a distance from you, even were I the wife of Fedor.”

I felt, dear Sophia, the truth of what I said. My mother at present occupies my whole thoughts; I preserve this sad life only for her sake—ah! very sad, Sophia, every day adds to our misfortunes.

After having passed Subani, a messenger from the Court brought an order for our conductor, which he received on the road by the side of our cart. On reading it, he became pale, and threw on us a look full of compassion. I made a sign to him to be silent, pointing at the same time to my mother's eyes. When we alighted, he drew me aside, and informed me that the dispatches he had received, contained an order obliging us to relinquish our present dress for one more coarse, such indeed as is worn by the vilest criminals. What refinement of cruelty! It appeared to me so base and contemptible, that I almost took a pride in being subjected to it.

“We will obey you,” said I to the officer,
with

with the greatest calmness; "I only entreat that you will conceal it from my poor mother, and communicate it secretly to the other members of my family."

I was impatient to arrive at the place where we were to sleep, in order to receive the garments destined to our use. The rest of the family, my sister alone excepted, experienced the same impatience. Poor Alexandrina, she burst into tears! Dear child, misfortunes have reached you, before reason has attained sufficient strength to enable you to support them. In the evening we changed our habits as silently as possible, that my mother might not perceive it. Those we received from the officer, are a kind of robe, ill made, and of the very coarsest stuff. I was the most expeditious in putting on this garb, and entered smiling. The officer regarded me with an air of pity and interest, which penetrated to my heart.

"Your

"Your attentions console me," said I to him, "and render me contented. In my embroidered robe, I excited perhaps only envy."

I still smiled; but when I saw my father, my aunt, and my sister appear in this frightful costume, and especially my poor Alexandrina, who concealed her face, bathed in tears, with her two hands, I could not retain mine; the most oppressive weight fell upon my heart; I embraced my father, who putting his hand upon my shoulder, as if to find my robe, whispered in the most mournful accent—

"Empress!"

This single word marked but too well the contrast between our past greatness and our present abasement.

Notwithstanding all our precautions, my mother perceived among us an unusual
sadness,

sadness, and enquired its cause. I imputed it to some insignificant circumstance, and she remained satisfied; my aunt spoke to the officer, who replied with more than his accustomed respect, and even bowed when addressing her. Such a proof of delicacy has sincerely attached me to this worthy man; as it is a virtue rarely to be met with in his situation, to respect misfortune. I grieve that I can only testify my gratitude by words.

We had obtained permission not to change my mother's dress until the following morning; besides she retired to bed the moment we arrived at the place where we were to remain for the night, as in her weak and feeble state she was so much bruised by our miserable chariot, as to be scarcely able to support herself on alighting. I wished her to perform the remainder of the journey on my knee, supported in my arms; but to this she will not consent. I however joined together our
wretched

wretched moss mattresses, in order to render her seat less hard. Often does she say to me, smiling—

“ My bed is almost as good as that in our palace at Petersburg. I flatter myself, Maria, that thine is good also?”

Alas! mine is a wooden bench by the side of her's; but by the side of her's, Sophia, I find myself more comfortable than I could be on a bed of down, at a distance from my adored mother.

Before she left her bed in the morning, I said to her, that the rigour of the climate rendered warmer clothing, and made after the fashion of the country through which we travelled, absolutely essential to our comfort; that I had procured some, coarse indeed, but the best that could be found in our present situation, and which at least would preserve us from the cold. Poor mother! when dressing her, she
thanked

thanked me, and I rejoiced that the deception had succeeded.

Soon after the family entered, she embraced them one after another, and my father last; when all of a sudden she exclaimed, bursting into tears—

“And him also!”

Judge what we experienced at this moment; she had divined the truth. From this time she never touched my robe without heaving a profound sigh.—I laugh, I jest, I affirm that I am warmer, that my robe fits me, without being able to console her.

Sophia, he is here!—my worthy, my faithful Fedor is here! He still loves me! He loves me more than ever!—Ah my Sophia! how can I be so happy, and at the same time so miserable? How can I make you comprehend it; how ill do I comprehend

comprehend it myself. I am happy, Ah! yes, the most happy being that exists on the face of the earth!—My mother, my relations, however—Oh my God! I believe I possess two souls, one for happiness and Fedor—the other for misery and my family. Alas! for my own also should I lose mother; but I have again found Fedor!—Think on every thing that has happened to me. Is not Fedor all, every thing to me? I feel it; but I cannot give language to these feelings. Fedor is here! He loves me, he has cured my heart, my soul, my imagination, which can discern no more evil and misery upon this earth. My heart is nevertheless lacerated by the misfortunes of my family, and especially by those of my poor mother; it is however more calm—it opens itself to hope. Fedor has appeared as my tutelary angel. The first word he uttered, the sound even of his voice, after such a painful separation, rendered me happy, but not gay. Methought I arose from the tomb, and took my flight

flight towards heaven. I seized his hand, I placed it on my heart, and for some moments I lost all distinct recollection of our troubles and our sufferings—there only remained a vague idea of sorrow. I was, I believe, like a dying wife, who having already sacrificed every thing in this world, employs her remaining strength to press the hand of her husband, and to bless him.

Before his arrival, when I thought he had forgotten his unfortunate Maria; when I was convinced that he, for whom I would have sacrificed a thousand lives, inclined not to partake with me exile and misfortune, I possessed nothing on which to repose my thoughts. Every thing around me, like my own mind, appeared a desert—a chaos. Life was become an unsupportable burden; I went astray. Shall I confess it, Sophia, that faith, which had so long supported me, began to diminish; I dared even sometimes to call in question the justice and goodness of a Providence I adore! I

was—

was—Ah I was lost! but he came and healed my soul, and rendered me as happy as it is possible to be in our present situation.

Yesterday evening I left our miserable hut, whilst my mother slept, to walk by the side of the Volga, and relieve my oppressed heart by shedding those tears, which I restrain with so much difficulty in the midst of my family. I took the road which brought us to this place; my heart, my thoughts were at Petersburg, and I viewed with a melancholy sentiment this road, this long road which separated me from Fedor, and from you, my Sophia! from you, whom I always associate with him in my remembrance! A sledge, to which I had scarcely paid any attention, approached me.—“Stop, stop,”—cried a voice which sunk to the bottom of my heart, and which I instantly knew. Sophia, it was him—it was Fedor! who, darting from his carriage, pronounced my name, threw himself into my

my arms, and pressed me almost fainting to his bosom, repeating—"Maria! dear Maria! I have found you!"—It is impossible to express what I experienced during this happy moment.

It was not a distant idea, but a torrent of happiness seemed to flow into my soul! My heart beat with so much force as to be painful, which was, however, attended with inexpressible delight; I felt like one rescued from the jaws of death. Yes, Sophia, yet even now, when by his side, I perceive that my supreme felicity would be to expire this moment in his arms. Yes, to expire together!—Ah! could we die thus pressed in each other's arms, at the same instant of time.

"Maria," cried he, at last, "I am come to save you!"

"I am already saved," replied I, with a sentiment wholly new, which penetrated my whole frame.

"Moïse,"

“Moïse,” said he to his domestic, “bring quickly those male habits. Come my dear Maria, come, ascend my carriage, and clothe yourself in this disguise, which I have brought you. It is God himself who conducted me hither upon this road;—come lose not an instant.”

It was only now that he perceived I was arrayed in the coarse garb of a criminal. He raised his eyes to heaven with a furious look and a menacing gesture. Doubtless he thought on his barbarous relatives.

“Wherefore fly so quickly?” said I to him, smiling; “here we have always an opportunity. Do you not wish first to see my poor dying mother?”

“Your dying mother!” repeated he, with a melancholy surprise; “but no, no, I have already too often allowed happiness to escape me! You leave not your mother alone, Maria;—and I—I wish not to risk
again

again losing you.—Come, Maria, come if you still love me!”

I embraced him.

“And you, Fedor, if you love me, you will follow where my heart calls me—to the death-bed of our beloved mother. Could you love me, Fedor, if I abandoned her?”

“I fear, Maria!” said he, with uneasiness.

“From this moment I fear nothing,” replied I; “because you are near me. Come, follow me.”

On saying which I took his arm and conducted him slowly, in the course of the river, towards the cabin where we lodged; giving him, by the way, a detail of our melancholy journey. His servant and carriage proceeded to an inn. I knew that we should find my mother alone with my woman; my father being gone with the rest of our company to the Commandant
of

of the place. I made a sign to my good Lisiska to be silent. My mother heard me enter, and held out her arms towards me; and I seated myself by her side. Fedor remained standing at the foot of her bed.

“Maria,” said my mother, “I waited for you with impatience. I wished to converse with you, during the absence of the rest of my family.—My death fast approaches—I relinquish life without regret—and I experience only a single desire; it depends on you alone, my dear child, whether I shall expire with the most delightful tranquillity. Your father supports his misfortunes with inconceivable courage; but I suspect, what I never learned from him, that it is the courage of despair: the weight of his affliction, when I shall be no more, will overwhelm him, and quickly bereave him of life. Worthy girl, abandon not your father! He will require your care during the remainder of his life, and at the hour of his death. You are more firm, more courageous
than

than any of us; promise to your expiring mother that you will not forsake your unfortunate father."

She extended her hand, in the hope of receiving mine in token of my promise. I hesitated not to comply with her request; but I wished that Fedor would decide my lot, in order to avoid the torment of resisting his inclinations, and I regarded him with a supplicating air.

"Do you hesitate, Maria?" said my mother; "forget not that he, for whom I solicit, is your father!—an unfortunate father, who is about to be deprived of the companion of his life. Believe me, at the hour of death, we contemplate life in a very different point of view from what we have formerly done. At that awful moment nothing remains to us but the remembrance of the little good we have been able to perform, and the recollection of having fulfilled all our duties. It will one day also

reach you, Maria;—the moment will arrive when you must join your unfortunate parents in the tomb.”

“What ought I to do?” enquired I of Fedor, fixing my eyes upon him.

My mother believed that I spoke to her.

“I have already told you, Maria,” said she. “Promise me that.”

Fedor gave her not time to conclude; he seized my hand, and placed it in that which my mother held out to me. I was no longer mistress of myself; I kissed her beloved hand, and, bathing it with my tears, I cried out—

“Mamma! Fedor—your son, Fedor, the beloved husband of my heart, is by your side; it is he who places my hand in your’s—who engages himself for your Maria!”

Sobs here cut short my words;—my mother made an effort to rise.

“Fedor!” said she, in an animated tone; “where is he?—where is he? Heaven has then answered my prayers! How good he is, even when it was in his power to retaliate!—Fedor, my son, speak to me! I cannot behold you; but I can still listen to your voice.”

He had thrown himself on his knees by her side.

“Here I am, my mother,” said he. “Never will Maria forsake her father;—never will I forsake Maria!”

She extended her arms towards him, and clasped them round his neck.

“Ah!” she often repeated, “my heart called you. Thanks be to God, he has heard my prayers!—Your virtue receives its
H 2 recompence.

recompence.—Ah, my children, be ye blessed!”

I fell on my knees by the side of Fedor; she groped with her hands for our foreheads, in order to bless us. At this moment my father opened the door; but remained on the threshold in astonishment at what he beheld, without however recognising Fedor.

“May an all-powerful God bless you, my children!” continued my mother. “Abandon not your father, Maria!—Fedor, abandon not Maria, and God will bless you, as your mother blesses you.”

“What do I here?” cried my father, advancing with an air of discontent.—“Dare a Dolgorucki come here to brave my oppressed family?”

Fedor arose, and, approaching my father with calm dignity, said to him with the greatest mildness—

“Unfortunate

"Unfortunate Prince, forget that I am a Dulgorucki, as I have forgotten that Prince Menzikof for a long time deprived me of my liberty."

My father cast down his eyes, and appeared uncertain what he should reply.

"What brings you here?" enquired he at last.

"I come to be your son," said Fedor, with still greater mildness; "I come to be the companion of your exile and your misfortunes. I came with the intention of taking away Maria, of tearing her from misery; but from this moment I belong to you. Maria cannot, ought not to leave you, and I will never leave Maria more."

"What!—what do you intend?" cried my father, with the greatest surprise. "Open your eyes! look around you, and behold the situation into which my family is plunged by your's! We are exiled to Berezof. You fly your country. Great

God, that a Dolgorucki should wish to unite himself to the daughter of Menzikoff! If it could be the means of reconciling our differences——”

“Once that was possible,” said my mother; “but at present it is not—Fedor, do they know at Petersburg that you are here?”

Fedor explained to us that his relations believed he was in France, and that Count Sapiéha alone was in the secret.

The surprise of my father increased; he could not comprehend how a Dolgorucki, with the career of honours open before him, could resolve to become a voluntary exile to Siberia. After reflecting a long time, he said at length to Fedor, frowning—

“Your strange determination will only render us still more unfortunate. In the first moment of rage, at seeing yourself deprived of the object of your passion, it
appeared

appeared pleasant to follow her; but in less than a month you will repent this conduct. Your cruel relations will punish my family for this youthful folly, and aggravate all our misfortunes. Leave us—depart! I was once cruel and unjust towards you; it is that which at present preserves you from my anger.”

“I will follow you to Berezof, my father,” said Fedor, with calmness; “no power on earth can ever separate us more. But you have nothing to fear from the consequence of this resolution; examine my passports: I am not a Dolgorucki; I am described as a dealer in furs, named Popof, and my person is wholly unknown in Siberia. The Commandants, the Governors cannot have seen me at Petersburg, where indeed I seldom lived. Under my assumed name, I am furnished with recommendations to the Governor of Tobolsck; and I have others, even from my uncle the Field Marshal, to the civil and military functionaries in the districts we

are to traverse. You see then that I may be of some use, without exposing you to the smallest danger on my account. The Dolgoruckis have occasioned your misfortunes, and it is a Dolgorucki who will aid and enable you to support them."

My father at last yielded to my prayers, without having more reliance on the constancy or the promises of Fedor. When we were alone—

"You will pay, dear Maria," said he, "for this moment of happiness This young man will but too soon leave us."

We agreed that Fedor should only be known, even to those members of our family who were strangers to his person, by his assumed name. This arrival gave to us all new life; my father even enjoyed with gratitude the indulgences he had already procured. On the very evening of his arrival, he obtained aid to my mother,
and

and a better bed; we were likewise furnished, through his intervention, with the best provision the place could afford, and every convenience not directly prohibited by the orders of Government. He had not the power to change our habits; but under our coarse clothing we had finer linen, and every thing that could preserve us from the cold. Alexandrina began to regard her robe without sorrow, and even sometimes to laugh at mine. Sophia! never did I think myself so beautiful as at present, because Fedor still loves me. His attachment appears, if possible, to be augmented; his letters of recommendation have procured him much respect, which is even extended to us: since his arrival we have been no more insulted. My aunt and her husband have been told that the merchant, Moses Popof, had formerly received* the greatest favours from my father, and that having met us by chance, he had resolved from gratitude to accompany us in our journey, in order as much as

possible to lighten its hardships. The whole family regard him as our tutelary angel. My father can form not the smallest idea of an attachment like Fedor's.—“If this young man persist in his present conduct,” said he to me, one day, “I shall at last be compelled to believe that love may be more powerful than ambition.”—I am summoned to my mother.

Oh, Sophia, she is no more!—This most excellent of women has ceased to exist!—It is sorrow which has cut short her days. She could not support the sorrows of her husband and her children. Sophia, I have no longer a mother! I cannot weep; my soul is too much oppressed, my eyes are immoveable like her's. Before she expired, she raised herself up, and exclaimed—

“Great God! I have recovered my sight: I see you all, my husband, my children, Fedor.”

We

We set up a cry of joy, and ran to embrace her; but already had she fallen back without strength, and stammering out—"Heaven be praised, I have seen you once again!" she breathed her last sigh, with an angelic smile. My name, and that of Fedor, were the last sounds she endeavoured to utter. In the morning she had spoken of you.

"Sophia," said she to me, "will be to you another mother."

Weep for me, Sophia!—Yes, you remain to me, and I still possess my Fedor;—but my mother!—Oh, my mother!—The courier departs. Adieu!

LETTER XII.*Fedor to Sapiaha.*

Twer, October —

ADIEU, dear Sapiaha! I shall see you no more; but I will always love you. Your friend is the most happy of men: I have attained the grand end of my existence, the certainty of consecrating the remainder of my days to my adored Maria; to this soul, so noble, so generous—this heart so pure, so affectionate—to this angel under the form of a woman. Sapiaha, she will be mine, and I have sworn to her father never to abandon her. I must not yet
become

become her husband, this ceremony would attract attention; it might expose my secret—that secret on which depends the happiness of my existence; but of what consequence is this? Are we not united by the strongest ties? Am I not her friend and protector? Ah Sapiëha! it is here, surrounded by every thing the world terms misery, that I begin to perceive the true value of my life, and what a treasure Nature has placed in the heart of man.

This Menzikof, whom you would believe humbled under the weight of his misfortunes, is now more lofty, more proud than ever; or rather it is only at present that he is truly great, since he can support misfortune with dignity. They all appear truly noble in the costume of slaves; Maria especially diffuses around her the courage of her magnanimous soul, and the serenity of her innocent heart.—Send not the horses: Maria has promised, to her dying mother, not to abandon her father; I
am

am the guarantee of this promise, and I accompany them to Berezof. Blame me not Sapieha, will not the husband of Maria, be any where the most happy of men? Recall to mind how, in the reveries of our youth, we preferred a life of savage independence, among the inhabitants of North America, to the slavery of Courts; how much preferable, and a thousand times more happy did such a life appear to our mind, than the indolent repose, the false politeness, and the shackles of that society to which we were condemned by our birth;—recollect how often we have regretted not having been born in these frozen deserts, into which I travel; where man, truly free, appertains only to himself, and to Nature; where he requires nothing but health and labour, and is never obliged to belie the sentiments of his heart. We found then, that in order to enjoy this life of freedom, it was necessary to relinquish luxury, the charms of wit, and those even of love. Well, now at present, it is the most pure,
the

the most tender, and the most passionate love that conducts me into these forests; which gives me back to nature, to liberty, and to the true destination of man.

Maria's mother is dead. Why did I not reach them sooner? My cares, my attachment, and the certainty of her daughter's happiness, might have preserved her life. She died, because she could no longer afford succour to those whom she loved; and because I was not at hand to protect them. Believe me, Sapieha, if even I loved not Maria to adoration, the idea of being every thing to these unfortunate beings, of having the power to alleviate their sufferings, and to diminish their hardships, would eternally attach me to this unfortunate family, the victim of mine.

Interrogate your heart, Sapieha, your noble heart enthusiastically attached to virtue; what is its ardent wish in your most dazzling and happy moments? Is it not

to be able to struggle with courage against misfortune, against tyranny, and to preserve your fellow creatures; to overcome these difficulties, and to partake this triumph with a beloved heart, with an adored being; to exist only for this beloved object, and in every other respect to be independent of fate and of man?—Such, in a few words, is the virtuous and free life I am about to lead; and nothing but the most vile interest, the most contemptible cupidity, or the most detestable ambition could induce me to return to cringe at the Court of Petersburg. I have attained, while yet young, the object of the longest and most painful existence—*independence* and *happiness*. What can be more desirable to a sensible and courageous man, who perceives the true value of his life!—Talk not to me of enthusiasm, or of romantic ideas.—Well, yes, I am enthusiastic! Was ever any great or sublime action performed without enthusiasm? Does not the ambitious man every day sport with his liberty, in order to obtain riches and honours?—

Well,

Well, I pursued the enjoyments of love as others have done those of ambition, at the risk of being exiled to Siberia. Is there any thing in this so wonderful or so uncommon? Does not every courtier do the same? Has not Prince Menzikof himself done so? Does not all my relations at present run the same risk as myself?

You must take care that it be universally supposed I am in France; unless you yourself proceed to Paris, in which case you will write to my relatives that, in conformity to my misanthropic humour, I have left you, to traverse mountains, deserts, and the most uninhabited countries. If they search for me in France, you must inform them that I have crossed the Alps, or the Pyrennes. From time to time you will as it were receive letters from me, from any of the different countries of Europe which you think the best calculated to preserve the deception respecting my residence; and, should they persecute you for my address, you must in the end say I am dead.

Then

Then at least they will suffer me to remain in tranquillity. Fear not ever to be reproached for concealing the truth; for whatever may happen, a Dolgorucki will never be suffered to espouse a Menzikof. It is then necessary that my existence, in order to be happy, must be unknown; hence you may rest assured that I will never contradict the rumour of my death. My existence is linked to that of Maria; I live only for her, and with her—I shall die only for her, and with her. You know not how much her misfortunes, her affecting confidence, her resolution to prefer, on account of her love to me, the tomb, to the first throne of the universe, has attached her soul to mine. I could not have ceased to love her, had she even been placed on this imperial throne; but I have beheld her, stretched on a bed of moss, in the costume of a slave. Misfortune has only left to her life, and my love; and shall I, more barbarous than my relations, ravish from her the only blessings she continues to possess?

Forget

Forget not that I am called, Moses Popof; should I be at any time in want of money, I will freely apply to you; but at present the only thing which is necessary to me, are recommendations to the constituted authorities in Siberia. These you can effectually procure for me. I shall require them, to save Maria and her family, as well as myself, from a variety of inconveniences. Adieu, Sapieha! guard the secrets of your friend. No power, I have sworn it, shall ever be able to separate me from Maria. —Tomorrow we pursue our journey.

LETTER XIII.

Maria to Sophia.

Catherineburg, November —

I AM in Asia, my dear Sophia; divided from you by almost an entire hemisphere; but this immense space cannot separate our hearts. The idea of no longer inhabiting the same quarter of the globe that you do, is very dreadful. However, at Petersburg, when we were only at the distance of a day's journey, we were equally deprived of the power of seeing, or listening to each other; we were forced to be satisfied with thinking of one another; and,
under

under this relation cannot we still draw near to each other? Oh! yes, my friend! my mother! suffer me to pronounce this name so dear to my heart;—allow me to call you my mother. Do not you love me with the same affection? Did she not bequeath to you, her poor Maria? I continually associate your image with her's in my thoughts; each morning I charge the rising sun to carry my salutations to my Sophia, at Ronneburg; and my regrets to the tomb of my mother, on the banks of the Volga. Each evening I confide to the moon, or the brilliant stars, the care of speaking to you of your Maria—of recalling to your mind, that we can fix our eyes on the same azure vault, on the same heaven where we shall one day be united. Ah! if man could banish his fellow men to a region lighted by another sun, another moon, and other brilliant stars, then indeed would his power be truly formidable; but, thanks to the Divinity, he cannot do this: Sophia, we still inhabit the same globe,
the

the same point in the immensity of space; and the air which I breathe will carry to you my sighs, and bring back your affectionate wishes for my happiness.

We are tranquil, my worthy Sophia, and even serene; since my excellent mother can no longer suffer from the fatigues of the journey. I scarcely perceive any inconvenience from it: would I not have found myself extremely happy to have undertaken a journey, such as this, along with my family and Fedor, in order to have become acquainted with foreign nations.

My mother was interred on the banks of the Volga, a large stone, placed there by Fedor, serves for a monument; it bears no inscription, but a grateful daughter has bathed it with her tears; and a beech-tree, planted by the hand of friendship, will cover it by its shade. Sophia, I could not tear myself from this tomb; Fedor
was

was forced to constrain me—I perceive that I shall never see it more.

Since Fedor has been with us, we travel much more rapidly; his passports and recommendations, make even our escort consider him as a man of consequence. From his example, they pay much more respect to my father; and, thanks to his cares and his money, we every where find all the comforts that his active imagination can procure.

My father continues to support his disgrace with much greatness of soul. Misfortune, like a flame, has purified his heart from ambition, from vanity, and from pride. I wish you could see how mild and humane he is become; it would be impossible for you to recognise him. I was much affected when he said, one day—"I have merited my fate!" and afterwards, embracing his children in silence, he continued, sighing—"but you, my children, it is you whom I pity."

pity."—At other times, he speaks to my brother on the nothingness of grandeur; and conjures him early to acquire a relish for the true enjoyments which flow from friendship, love, and moderation.

"Ah! my dear Brukenthal," said he then, "you who have loved me even in prosperity, when I inclined not to listen to your warning voice; how much will you now love me?"

He wept, he named my mother, he called on his friend, and he protested that, were they with him, he should be a thousand times more happy in the deserts of Siberia, than he had ever been in our *ostentatious island*. Misfortunes have given to us a father. Was it not this I have so often solicited from Heaven? Ought I to repine because my prayers have been answered?

Yes, my worthy Sophia, I am happy! a pleasing serenity has taken possession of my

my soul; yet I feel the presentiment of a melancholy future. When my Fedor depicts to me how our love, and our courage, will change these frozen deserts into a paradise, I smile; I perceive that to be near him, to be his wife, his beloved companion, has already created a paradise around me; yet I cannot partake in his hopes. The tomb of my mother is on the banks of the Volga, in an unknown desert; and soon, too soon I fear, mine may, perhaps, be raised in a place still more savage.

Love, vexation, and at last despair, have consumed my life. I have already expended all the strength of a long existence, to love, to suffer, to combat, to conceal my feelings, and to support the courage of my family. I perceive its source is dried up; at present, Sophia, I should require strength to support my happiness: I am happy—more happy than any other human being; because, never was a woman so truly beloved. Sometimes, by the side

of Fedor, methinks a new life renovates my debilitated frame. The tranquillity, the repose, the happiness I experience, make the blood circulate more freely in my veins, and redouble the pulsations of my heart; but this momentary illusion quickly vanishes, and I fall back into my usual state of languor and dejection. The momentum of the circulation becomes diminished, and my heart beats so feebly, that I scarcely perceive my existence: the efforts I make to conceal my situation from my friends, augments the malady which preys on my frame; yet this concealment is necessary, if I wish not to plunge them into despair.

You ask if I wish to live?—I scarcely know, my dear Sophia, what I can reply to this question: doubtless, it is delightful to love and to be beloved; but there are certain trials, certain misfortunes which consecrate, thus to speak, the heart to death; and which leave behind them such a sad and terrible impression, as to poison all the
future

future enjoyments of life. We have heard the history of a young woman who was taken, by a happy chance, out of her grave alive, but who ever afterwards, although in a state of perfect health, retained the paleness of death, and was never again seen to smile. Can you now comprehend what has happened to me? I shall never for the future lose the appearance of suffering—tears have become the only expression of my feeling, even of my joy; and I shall never be again able to laugh, during the rest of my life. I repeat, however, that it is impossible to be more happy than I am at present; it will, however, I fear, be a momentary happiness—a fugitive image of that eternal felicity which awaits me beyond the tomb, whither I am fast hastening. Methinks I am already only a shadow: I sometimes even surprise myself, speaking to Fedor of our present happiness, as a thing passed by.

“ I was so happy in Siberia,” said I to

him, one day. Then he smiled, and replied to me, that I was led away by the reveries of an exalted imagination; and afterwards fell into a profound fit of musing, from which I could only draw him by resuming my serenity, and saying—"How much I love you—how happy is your Maria!"

We arrived, a few days ago, at Kongour, in the vicinity of which is situated a large and remarkable cavern. Our guides not being able immediately to procure a change of horses, we resolved to visit it on the following morning. My brother observed that its entrance resembled the gate of hell. None of our family, except myself and Fedor, had the courage to venture into this cavern; we lighted our torches, and in descending through the opening, I said to him, in a low voice—"Your Maria will follow you every where, even into those terrible places, of which this is the image."

An Ostiack was our guide; and we traversed,

traversed, like spirits of another world, these elevated vaults, that our three torches were insufficient wholly to enlighten. Our guide wished to conduct us out by a shorter way, and left us for the purpose of ascertaining its practicability. In the meantime we seated ourselves on a kind of step, formed of a large piece of the rock; near this place, and behind us, was placed a huge cross; we were obliged to support our feet against another portion of this rock, and in that position waited the return of our Ostiack. The bent attitude we were obliged to preserve in this species of sepulchre, the visage of Fedor, to which the light of the torch gave a death-like paleness, the icy coldness of our hands—all led me back to my habitual idea of approaching death. I embraced Fedor, and said to him, weeping—

“My love! death, even hell itself shall not separate us!”

“Nothing shall separate us, Maria!” cried

he; "to live for thee—to die with thee, is the constant prayer of my heart."

Our Ostiack being slow in returning, we arose, took up our torches and still farther explored these subterranean caverns, holding each other by the hand. We suddenly perceived daylight issue from an opening above our heads, which diffused around us a mild twilight. Following this light, we reached a large hall, illuminated by the rays of the sun, which penetrated into it through some fissures in the rock. Here there was some appearance of vegetation, and I even found a small flower, which I plucked and placed upon the heart of Fedor, saying to him, with a sentiment of pleasure—"Hell, even itself, produces flowers for lovers."

My imagination became so exalted, that methought I should have been too happy to live alone with Fedor in this dreary abode; and still more so, to die in it with him.

him. A small rivulet ran through this place; we drank of its water, which appeared to me as that of the river of oblivion for the sorrows of this life. In a few minutes, reaching the opening, we found our guide waiting for us. On issuing from this abode of darkness, our eyes were dazzled by the clear light of day. Regarding each other mournfully, I said to Fedor—"The twilight of yon dismal cavern, is far more soothing than this brilliant light."

Fedor gave our guide some tobacco to smoke, and ordered him plenty of bread and other provisions; the poor man was transported with joy, and said that he would pray to God to render us light as air. This is the ordinary petition of the Ostiacks; I had often before heard it, and I know not why it struck me so forcibly at this moment.

"You wish us then to die," said I to him, with tenderness, "to become two blessed spirits."

"No, no, not to die," replied he, with embarrassment; "it is something good that I wish you: it is to live without pain; this renders us light as air."

Worthy Ostiack, how little dost thou require to render thee happy!—only to live free from pain.

We walked together, in silence, along the banks of the river, across the rocks by which Kongour is environed.

"Well," said Fedor, "we are happy: we live, we love, we are together, and we do not suffer; is it not so, Maria?" said he, interrupting himself, in an accent mingled with terror. "Thou dost not suffer?"

"No," replied I, whilst tears of delight flowed from my eyes; "no, Fedor, I do not suffer—I experience nothing but happiness!"

He passed one arm around me, pressed me to his heart, and we thus pursued our walk

walk absorbed in a soothing reverie. Ah, Sophia! how enviable is our present lot; it is impossible to conceive the felicity we enjoy, even in these moments of melancholy. My father and the rest of our family are more happy than they could possibly be, when diamonds and costly robes covered their hearts, devoured by ambition and anxiety. Here we are not poor; the most opulent inhabitants, and even the rulers of this country, envy us the comforts and conveniences we possess; in comparison with them, we live in the midst of abundance; and I once again experience the painful feeling of being exalted above my fellow-creatures: I am arrayed like a Queen, whilst the Ostiack women are only covered with dried fish or bears' skins. They inhabit holes dug in the earth, covered with the bark of trees, either exposed to all the inclemency of the weather, or surrounded by a thick smoke. We are, on the contrary, wrapped up in very warm comfortable pelisses, procured

to us by Fedor; we repose in good moss beds, and are preserved by a thick tent from the rigour of this intemperate climate. Even the rich Tartar, who looks down with contempt, from his wood cabin, upon the cavern of the poor Ostiack, admires with ecstasy the wonders of our equipage. When my brother weeps for our misfortunes—when my sister complains, my father points out the habitations of these savages, and recounts to them with how much pain and toil they are able to preserve themselves from dying of hunger, by means of fishing and the chase.

“I too, long forgot,” added he, sighing, “that they are men also; and that we are born with no more right than they, to the conveniences and luxuries, without which I once believed it impossible to exist.”

One day, before reaching Catherineburg, we strayed into a forest; and, stopping at a miserable hut, found the family roasting
the

the bark of a beech-tree, to preserve their lives. The weather had been extremely inclement, and they had found it impossible to procure either game or fish. I ran to our carriage and brought them part of our provisions: bread, wine, and tobacco. They threw themselves at our feet, and I exclaimed—"Behold the poor and unfortunate! but we——"

When our tent had been pitched, and we were drinking tea, the delicious odour of which extended to a distance, I said to my brother—

"Behold these poor people; dare you now complain?"

He confessed, blushing, that we were happy in comparison with them; but, added he, they have never known better days. The reflection was just; I grasped his hand—I embraced my sister, who wept. Poor child! she has not, like me, a Fedor! And

my father—my unfortunate father! Listen, Sophia, to what I have farther to relate.

At the last post, before reaching Catherineburg, we were obliged to wait, as travellers of distinction were expected, and their horses, which returned to the city, were to conduct us thither. We waited with much impatience, being anxious to leave, as soon as possible, the very wretched inn where we were compelled to remain.

At last they arrived, and entered the cabin where we were; on throwing aside their pelisses and bonnets, we recognised——Great God! my aunt, the Countess Devier, whom an Imperial ukase had recalled from exile—the exile to which my father had condemned this family. Sophia, the goddess of vengeance for once appeared to my father under the most terrible form. His sister and him did not immediately recollect each other. I approached her, and said, in a low voice—

“Dare

"Dare I supplicate you to listen to me for a single moment?"

She surveyed me with terror, and exclaimed—

"God is just!—Maria Menzikof, the daughter of my brother!"

"Menzikof!" cried Count Devier, "where is he—where is he?"

"Here I am!" said my father, advancing slowly and with extreme confusion; "here is this Menzikof whom thou hatest. Behold him humbled, overthrown, insulted, poor, and, like thyself, an exile to Siberia!—Thou art right, my sister, God is just!"

The Count was deeply affected to see my father, of whose fall he was ignorant; the powerful Prince Menzikof, the Regent of the Empire, the father-in-law of the Emperor; when he beheld him in the garb of a criminal, pale, his eyes dim, in a humble attitude advancing towards him, a sentiment

a sentiment of pity seemed at first to take possession of his soul; but very soon his features assumed a look of anger, his eyes sparkled with rage, and he cried—

“Monster! barbarian! keep at a distance from me.”

“Be less cruel,” said my father; “the road I am obliged to travel is sufficiently rugged.”

“It is that which thy cruelty forced us to take,” cried the Count, with fury, “which thou thyself must now travel over. Thy name is known in these deserts; millions of victims have pronounced it in cursing thee, who still continue to drag on their miserable existence. Go, barbarian! thou wilt groan in thy turn, without consolation, in that abode of misery. There, no person will dry up thy tears; thou wilt tremble at the aspect of every human creature thou meetest. What was to us a consoling sight, will be to thee an object of terror; from the consciousness
of

of being the author of his despair—of being his executioner; every eye will be averted from thee with horror, thy children will be hooted, and despised, because they bear the name of Menzikof. In the midst of these deserts, the greatest criminal finds friends, thou alone wilt be friendless;—thou wilt be condemned to live in the solitary dens, with the bears thou wilt be forced to pursue. Thy family will expire with hunger on thy account, greedy and vindictive monster! thou wilt find only enemies. Thou art going to Beresof, there thou wilt meet the unfortunate Tolstoi, who unceasingly prays to Heaven to grant him vengeance upon Menzikof, before he finishes the term of his miserable existence.”

My poor father, pale as death, allowed his head to fall on his breast, and staggered; we supported him to a seat, sobbing. Count Devier had painted the future in frightful, but too true colours.

“ I supplicate

"I supplicate you, my unele," cried I; "spare the unfortunate!"

"No," said my father, in a feeble voice, "no, my daughter, let him proceed; I behold in him only the avenging minister of heaven. Speak, Devier, speak! plunge at every word a thousand poniards into my heart. I persecuted you with all the fury of vengeance; and it was you whom alone I feared in the deserts of Siberia. My most ardent prayer was, that I might not meet you there, to witness the end of your misfortunes. My prayers are answered; you are avenged; satiate yourself in a view of my misfortunes, and afterwards return to the bosom of abundance and happiness. Adversity has taught me to be a husband and a father; I am also become a brother. My sister, your image every instant pursued me; I incessantly beheld you, pale and desolate, wandering in the deserts, and cursing a brother who ought to have loved you. You will curse me no longer, I proceed, therefore, with greater pleasure to

Berezof,

Berezof, although Tolstoi waits me there. Go to Petersburg, Devier, and be happy."

Ah, Sophia ! what a heart-rending scene. The Count was affected; I read it in his eyes; but he endeavoured to conceal his sentiments under an ironical and triumphant air. He turned his back to my father before he ceased to speak. Menzikof arose slowly from his seat, and, stretching out his arms towards his sister, he said—

"Elizabeth, I solicit not your pardon, but speak to me a single word with gentleness—pronounce a last adieu ! Allow me not to entreat in vain; you know the misfortunes which await me and my innocent family."

My aunt wept.

"You rendered us very unfortunate," said she to him, in an altered voice.

"It is too true, my sister," replied my father,

father; "if now I was the powerful being Menzikof, you once knew me, I would fall at your feet, and at those of your husband, and say to you—pardon me your misfortunes."

Then I threw myself on my knees before my aunt, and said to her, dissolving into tears—

"My dear aunt, my worthy mother charged me, with her latest breath, to supplicate your forgiveness!"

"Is your mother no more?" cried she, in the most melancholy accent.

The Count looked around, as if in search of her.

"Why does not the best of women still live?" said my father, with feeling. "For her sake, Devier, you would have pardoned me?"

Devier

Devier turned away his eyes.

“Ah yes! why does not the best of mothers and of sisters still live!” exclaimed I, addressing my aunt; “you would not then have refused your blessing to her daughter—to your Maria.”

My aunt on this pressed me, weeping, in her arms, and kissed my forehead, saying at the same time to my father—

“Adieu, my brother!—May you be less unhappy than we have been!—May Heaven grant you patience and courage to support your sufferings!”

My father threw himself into the arms of his sister, and their tears mingled together. The Count still remained at a distance, with a gloomy air; his wife did not reject the embraces of her brother, but she did not return them. I approached my uncle, and took his hand, he did not repress me; his

his looks expressed neither disdain nor anger, but he was cold and ceremonious. I supplicated him, in a low voice, to pardon my father, and render his mind somewhat more tranquil. He made no reply; but I saw his eyes were humid, and I hoped to have triumphed. Suddenly, however, he withdrew his hand which I held in mine, opened the window, and enquired of his people if the carriage was ready. They replied it was; he then approached his wife, took her by the arm, and led her out.

“ May God bless you, my dear children!” cried she, from the threshold of the door, “ and you also, my brother!”

The Count spoke not a word; my father followed them, and, after they were placed in the carriage, he went up to the side where Devier was seated, and putting his knee on the frozen snow, joined his hands in silence.—But how expressive was this

silence!—My uncle threw himself from the carriage, raised up my father, and pressed him in his arms.

“This is too much—this is too much!” said he; “unfortunate Menzikof, I pardon you, and restore you to my friendship!”

We all ran and threw ourselves at his feet, and at those of my aunt; they embraced us one after another, and nothing but sobs and the interrupted expressions of my brother, my sister, my uncle, my aunt, and those of peace and reconciliation. Oh my mother! if, as I believe, thou canst look down upon us from the abode thou inhabitest, thy happiness must at this moment have been augmented. It became at last necessary that we should separate. My father's eyes followed them with an expression of extreme contentment.

“Dear Maria,” said he, with a sweet smile (almost as sweet as that of my
angelic

angelic mother), "dear worthy Maria!—how much I am relieved! I have expiated my faults—Divine Justice is appeased. Come, let us go, your misfortunes, my children, will not be of long duration; as soon as I am no more, your uncle will recall you. You will pardon me your exile; and you will never forget what a mother Heaven bestowed on you."

Fedor was not present at this scene; some affairs of consequence having obliged him to go out the moment we arrived, which was a happy circumstance, as otherwise his secret would have been discovered. On his return, my father joyfully related to him that he was reconciled to his brother-in-law and his sister.

Being all relieved from an enormous load, we ascended our carriages, and arrived at Tobolsck, more contented than our persecutors at Petersburg could possibly conceive. My father was now fully
convinced

convinced that he had never before truly appretiated the value of life. Formerly, and in the days of his greatness, he was so wholly occupied with projects of ambition, as to have no leisure to converse with his family; and I scarcely knew the beauties of his mind, having never beheld it but clothed in suspicion. Yesterday, he talked to us a long time of his infancy, and related a great many circumstances respecting his early days, of which we were wholly ignorant, with a gaiety in which we all participated. He was particularly pleased to recall the sentiments with which he had regarded his sister in their early youth, to repeat her name, and to pronounce an eulogium on her virtues.

“This good and gentle Elizabeth resembled Alexandrina,” said he in a tone of tenderness, and caressed my sister.—Tell me, Sophia, are we not happy? How many blessings has the Emperor bestowed on us, a thousand times more precious than those

those of which he has deprived us. An uncle, an aunt, and dare I say it—a father; and my Fedor, my adored Fedor!—yes, Sophia, I repeat it to you, I am too happy; but this happiness will be transient, and very soon——

We have experienced the most lively vexation at this place:—the good and humane officer who has hitherto escorted us, has been ordered to return, and his place to be supplied by a stranger. This man had become our friend, and our separation from him was truly painful. His name is Louschin; should you ever meet him, speak of us, and tell him that Maria Menzikof will never forget him. At the moment of his departure, I said to him, with a profound sigh—

“We shall never see you again, my generous friend! You have shed many tears of compassion for our unhappy fate; and I can give you nothing in exchange but the tears
of

of gratitude, and this ring, which I entreat you will keep in remembrance of me."

It was a plain gold hoop, and only valuable to me as having been my mother's; but it was on that very account that I requested his acceptance of it. He had sweetened the last moments of this valuable woman, by permitting me to travel with her in the same carriage.—Ah God! Sophia, had he forced me to leave her alone, blind—Sophia, I should have died first, if he had separated us.—"It was my mother's ring," said I to him, on presenting it, "and I would not have parted with it but to her benefactor. He took the ring, and pressed it to his lips. I entreated him to visit, on his return, the tomb of this affectionate mother. Sobs suffocated his voice, and he could only reply to me by an inclination of his head, and by pressing my hand. I embraced him; he placed his hand upon his heart,

and pronounced a vow to be henceforth humane and gentle towards the unfortunate.

“Never,” exclaimed he, with energy, “shall they experience any harshness on my part. I know at present how respectable may be the unfortunate.”

Fedor, who likewise esteems this man, conversed a long time with him, and discovered, by a happy accident, that he expected to be advanced by means of Sapiaha. In consequence of this, Fedor wrote to his friend, entreating him to use his utmost influence in his favour. He did not send this letter by Louschin himself, for fear of being betrayed; but it will arrive at Petersburg before him.

LETTER XIV.*Maria to Sophia.*

Tobolsck, December.

THE Governor of Tobolsck shews us great kindness; we are allowed to remain here until the cold, which is at present unusually severe, may somewhat abate. Fedor, in the meantime, is busily employed in collecting every thing needful for us in the solitude we are condemned to inhabit. The other day he shewed me, with much satisfaction, a great quantity of flour he had purchased.

"But," observed I, smiling, "my dear Fedor, we might have procured some at Berezof."

"That is true," answered he, with a forced smile; "I am over solicitous."

Struck with a sigh which escaped him, I questioned him respecting the place we were going to inhabit, and I learned—Oh my dear Sophia! you must, like myself, be seized with terror on being informed, that Berezof is situated so far to the north, that the soil is not susceptible of culture. I was restrained through fear from making farther enquiry, lest I might be informed of circumstances still more terrible. Well, Sophia, if Berezof were still more steril and frightful, it would be to me a paradise, with Fedor alone for my companion; and I know his sentiments are in perfect unison with my own; but as my parents are not influenced by these predominant feelings, which render every place delightful to us accompanied by the beloved object, which

triumph over every difficulty, it is for them I suffer. Dear sufferers! neither my cares nor my tenderness can avail you in this dreary solitude. I leave you, my dear Sophia—my soul is sorrowful, and unusually cast down; but be not surprised—Fedor has left us, in order to avoid suspicion; as, while he continued in this city, he might incur the dangers of meeting with persons who had known him at Petersburg: he is gone to make a circuit in the neighbourhood, and to secure the means of obtaining succour when we arrive at Berezof. At this place, he found bills of exchange, from his friend Sapieha, to a considerable amount, for which he has already obtained payment. He has besides received, under the name of Moses Popof, fresh recommendations from the Court, and an order that every where the necessary assistance might be afforded him. He is our tutelary angel, and I cannot describe how helpless and wretched I have become during his absence. His presence inspires me with the courage

and energy of which I stand in need. We expect his return in a few days.

Oh Heaven! Sophia, we must set off immediately, and without Fedor!—Great God! Fedor, where art thou?—A courier has brought the most positive orders to the Governor, to quicken our departure, without any regard either to the rigour of the season, or the state of our health. I leave this letter under cover to Fedor; he will find it on his return, and forward it to you.—What a return! He will return, and no longer find his Maria!

Postscript by Fedor.

They departed a few days ago! Worthy, amiable, and generous Sophia, you may conceive my grief—I fly after them. Fortunately, I had previously sent to Berezof every thing most essential to their comfort. I take here a military escort for my safety.

Alas!

Alas! it was my wish that Maria might only reach those frightful deserts during the season of spring; whereas, now she will discover nothing but snow, and an uninterrupted twilight, like that in the cavern of Kongour: nevertheless, Sophia, my dear Maria and I are—must be happy. Love will diffuse his genial influence over us, in the midst of hoar frost and snow; and Maria, in spite of malicious and savage cruelty, will be rendered happy. I shall oppose to their hatred the power of love; I entertain no other wish, no other desire than to render Maria happy, to dissipate her sorrows, and to secure her from all evil. Grief has already made but too many inroads on her constitution, and I am afraid the wounds of her heart are too deep ever to be closed. The loss of her excellent mother, whom grief alone destroyed—the remembrance of all which that angel of a woman suffered, have inflicted a mortal stroke on the tender heart of Maria. She has made efforts, almost supernatural, to

overcome her grief; her mind is tranquil and unruffled; but, alas! her health appears irretrievably ruined. Oh that you could see her, Sophia! Her courage, and the nature of her malady, still render her beautiful. Sometimes her pallid cheeks are tinged by a hectic flush, and her eyes become animated: how beautiful does she then appear!—but how much do I suffer on reflecting that the cause of it is the slow fever which consumes her! She even endeavours by degrees to prepare me—prepare me!—Oh Sophia! I can, you observe, speak with calmness of the death of Maria;—it is because I know we are inseparable, and that I cannot survive her. But whilst Maria shall continue to breathe, my life is dearer and more precious to me than I can express. I can alleviate her sufferings, I can surround her with my love—I no longer experience any other happiness, any other enjoyment; and I am the most fortunate of men. Maria loves me beyond all expression, and I feel that I merit it; for

Maria

Maria is the whole world to me. Oh, that we might still be for a long time happy as we are now! But I tremble lest the period be near at hand, when Fedor shall close the eyes of his adored Maria—close them for ever, and follow her to the tomb! My mind has a dreadful presentiment of it. Oh, that our hearts would cease to beat at the same instant, in like manner as they began to beat at the same moment for each other. But no—I must support Maria at this dreadful period. She must breathe her last sigh upon the bosom of her Fedor. She knows, she feels, by her own heart, that we shall not be long separated. I am ready to set out, in order to rejoin them in their dreary journey. I hear, as I imagine, the angelic voice of Maria calling upon her dear Fedor. They are three days' journey before me; but I have sent forward couriers to procure for me horses, rein-deer, and also dogs, to draw my sledge more quickly. I wish

that Maria may not arrive without me, in that dreadful abode which is about for ever to bury the celestial happiness, the interminable sorrows, and, very soon, the mortal part of two virtuous beings.

May Heaven bless you, dear, worthy Sophia! How will you be able to support the news, that Fedor and Maria are no more? Yes, you will not complain. They will have together left this abode of misery and crimes—be happy and reunited for ever!

LETTER

LETTER XV.*Sapieha to Fedor.*

Petersburg, December.

I HAVE transmitted you some more bills of exchange, my dear Fedor, with fresh passports, and recommendations to different persons. Every one here is anxious to know what is become of you. Your parents smile when I affirm you are in France; but no one suspects you a voluntary exile in Siberia. They have sought for you at Petersburg, at Pozeck, and in the adjacent country. I comprehend very clearly, how a passion, so ardent as your's,

can animate and vivify the frozen regions you traverse; since friendship, or honour alone, would operate the same effect on myself, and render habitable to me the coldest corner of the earth.

Often, in my most apparently happy moments, I feel conscious of envying your lot. Then the remembrance of our early years presents itself to my imagination under the most lively colours. Ambition, titles, riches, all that men usually dignify with the name of great, appear to me truly contemptible! A heart, a single heart devoted to me alone, filled with love and constancy, I estimate as the sovereign good, and every thing besides, a mere nothing. I foresee then, my friend, how happy you must be in the company of that Maria, for whose sake you have sacrificed every thing; for a heart, truly generous, never fails to be attached by sacrifices. — And how much your happiness must be still farther augmented, when she becomes

becomes your spouse—when she becomes wholly thine! Oh, I readily conceive that the climate which shall witness your union, will be viewed by you as the finest of climates—that the country in which you reside with her, as her husband, will appear to possess the mildest temperature, whatever may be its latitude.

Your family pursues its career. It possesses the same power as Menzikof, and governs the whole empire; and, like him, is generally hated. Great preparations are making for the coronation of the young Emperor; he is the idol of the people, who hope he will bring back the golden age. Your uncle, the Field Marshal, Prince Basil, is the only true great character among the ambitious crowd. He alone remains a virtuous and quiet spectator; he lives in retirement, solely occupied with privately doing good. He betrays no wish to share the favours which the Monarch heaps on your family.

Your

Your cousin Ivan, that young hypocrite, full of pride and cunning, is in the meantime the Czar's declared favourite, and openly boasts of the unlimited power that he owes to this friendship. In a confidential conversation I had lately with him, I insinuated the idea of a marriage between a Dolgorucki and one of Menzikof's daughters, by means of which, his family might acquire the immense riches which Menzikof had placed in different foreign banks; and it is affirmed, that at Amsterdam, and Venice, these sums would only be paid upon receiving an order for that purpose from Menzikof himself. Ivan frowned; and I perceived, by some words which escaped him, that the mere name of Menzikof made him tremble. He will certainly remain an exile, so long as a Dolgorucki shall continue in power. How inexplicable is man! All the courtiers who have aided the fall of Menzikof, are astonished that they have effected nothing but a change of masters, and continue to detest,

detest, not merely a Menzikof or a Dolgorucki, but every favourite, whatever be his name, and the masters whom they themselves have set up. It is a general opinion, that a Prince can never possess a friend; I begin to think that he dares not have one. We readily pardon great faults in a Minister who enjoys only the esteem, but not the friendship of his master; but we scarcely ever pardon even the virtues of their favourites. A Monarch is the representative of the Deity upon earth; and we demand of him the most rigorous equity. Every thing which appears like a preference on his part, is construed into caprice, and an act of injustice. They are at present acting the same drama, as Menzikof did, while he continued in favour. The principal characters are merely changed. Every one secretly wishes to play the first, and for myself, I frankly confess, I would not reject it, were Fortune to put it in my power;

power; although all conceive they have a right to hold a favourite in detestation, and to conspire against him. Deride me not, Fedor, if I begin to doubt whether perfect independence be a blessing. At first sight, it is a chimera: if we depend not on our fellow-men, we are still, however, dependant on circumstances, on chance, on our own heart, and on our passions. I am even tempted to believe, that man is rather born for ambition than for liberty. The longing of young people for independence, is nothing else but a masked ambition. When we cannot rule ourselves, we wish at least not to be ruled over by others. My father frequently observed, that a Minister at twenty, governed more despotically than one at fifty; even supposing him to possess the most rigid virtue, and the generous principles that are almost uniformly the inheritance of youth.

Whatever,

Whatever, however, may be my opinion, I am not, my dear Fedor, less devoted to you; say only a word, and I relinquish my present reveries of grandeur and of fortune, to come and sojourn with you at the pole, in order to renew with you the delightful, though, perhaps, more chimerical dreams of our youth. But my friendship for you, for the angelic Maria, is a reality; it constitutes the most lively sentiment in the heart of him who can never cease to love you.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

Maria to Sophia.

Berezof, February.

YES, my Sophia, there exist still greater misfortunes than I imagined—yes, I am now separated from you, the friend of my youth, my other beloved mother. I live in another land, under another sky; other constellations shine over my head;—no, it is no longer the same sun that enlightens us. What do I say—enlightens us! That sun, which I have merely a glimpse of, never illuminates the dwelling of your poor Maria. He can only be seen for a few
seconds,

seconds, resembling a dreadful meteor; he skirts the horizon, diffusing only a dull and reddish light, scarcely sufficient to dispel the gloom of this solitude. Ah! if we could only possess, for a few minutes, that profound obscurity which I regret!—but never here do we enjoy either the enlivening brilliancy of day, or the soothing obscurity of night. The sky in this climate, after the setting of the sun, is covered with shining and scintillating lights, which appear to contend in the horizon. These lights impart no genial warmth to the earth, and are considered by the terrified mind only as the presages of misfortune. Sophia, I dare scarcely raise my eyes to these unknown luminaries. Methinks, my prayers cannot penetrate to the Supreme Being through this foreign sky. Alas! it is beyond, and on the farther side of these sky-coloured mountains, that the dark red orb is concealed, which so little resembles your sun—the sun of my native land. The stars, a knowledge

knowledge of which my Sophia first taught me, and which she still continues to admire, I shall never more behold! Never, Sophia!—Ah! yes, it is now only I feel we are separated. Since I began this letter, I have been repeatedly stopped by the intrusion of this gloomy idea—who will convey that which I now write to my Sophia, into the happy climate she inhabits?

Fedor endeavours, as much as possible, to revive my courage; he never ceases to admire all these phenomena of light, to which I am not accustomed. Such strange meteors, as double suns, twin moons, northern lights, lightnings variously coloured like the rainbow, only inspire me with terror. The stillness of death which reigns in these dreary deserts, uninhabited by any animal, appears more terrible, and infinitely more frightful than the thunder in my native land, in which I have always resided. Ah Sophia! soon, very soon will
my

my heart become benumbed and lifeless, like Nature in this dismal climate; no beneficent zephyrs will blow over my tomb, and agitate the flexible branches of a tree planted over it by the hand of friendship; no flower will flourish on this obscure tomb!—Flowers, did I say?—there only grew one in the subterranean cavern of Kongour; it was the last I plucked; I presented it to my Fedor; now I have no longer any thing to offer him, but a participation in my exile and my misery. Oh Sophia! I am indeed very ill; for the generous, the invincible love of my Fedor cannot restore me to life. Whilst, however, I am able to write, I must finish the recital of our laborious journey.

On leaving Tobolsck, our sledges glided, with the rapidity of lightning, over the ice which covered the river; our breath froze upon our lips; our tears became congealed on our cheeks. As far as the eye was able to reach, no human habitation,
not

not even the smallest hut, could be discovered. Neither sound, nor noise was heard in this abode of desolation. We alone, poor unfortunate beings—we uttered cries of joy when we met an Ostiack upon his sledge; we shook hands with these simple savages, who comprehended not our salutations. Was he not a brother—a fellow creature?—In this manner we proceeded, always farther from our country, the sun, and every human dwelling.

We at last reached the borders of a lake, which is formed by the confluence of the Oby and the Tirtisch, near Tobolsck. Fedor had not yet rejoined us; his absence was not felt by me alone, but also by all our family. All loved and cherished him, as our benefactor; and I, Sophia, as the most estimable of men. Great God! what could we have done without him?—His love for me, that love which was formerly imputed to him as a crime, is become

become to us all a supreme blessing—the first of benefits from a bountiful Providence! His sledge at length overtook us. Oh Sophia! when the first sound of his horses' bells struck my ear, when we perceived him afar off, when we saw him approaching us, when we heard his voice greeting us, it appeared like that of a consoling angel! We all ran to meet him, and rushed into his arms with transports of joy. All my family seemed, at that instant, to partake in the feelings of Maria; and all embraced him with equal rapture as myself. There was, however, intermingled with my transports, an exalted joy. Is it not I whom he loves? Is it not in order to follow me into an obscure and savage desert, that he has forsaken the world, its pomp, and pleasures? Ah, dear Fedor! how can I recompense you? Doubtless my love equals thine; but what will be thy reward for so many sacrifices? To behold thy Maria die, and to expire with her!—The joy experienced
by

by my father on again seeing him, was in proportion to the fears he had entertained of his having for ever abandoned us. They did not understand his heart as I do. I had not a shadow of doubt, not the slightest inquietude. And this confidence, dear Sophia, was to me a source of the purest happiness, which has compensated me for all the anxiety and hardships I have suffered. And when I saw his eye single me out in the midst of my family—when he pressed me in his arms, saying—“Maria! I have found you—I am happy!”—when his eyes read in mine what I had undergone, and when he added—“You knew well, I would never abandon you!”—when afterwards he excited our courage—when he smiled at the recital of our difficulties, while recounting in his turn how he would alleviate them, surmount obstacles, and render practicable that which appeared impossible—when he—he alone communicated to all of us, his tranquillity, his firmness, sometimes even a little gaiety by his playful wit.

wit—Oh Sophia ! I enjoyed—yes, I enjoyed greater happiness than falls to the lot of many here below ; and I felt no uneasiness but from the sufferings of my poor parents : it is that alone which destroys me ; my father participates in my enthusiasm for our guardian angel. He frequently exclaims, with tears in his eyes—

“ You were in the right, Maria ; Fedor’s heart is of infinitely greater value than a throne : forgive me, my child—I was at that time ignorant of how much the human heart may be elevated, when inspired by love and virtue. Without the aid of this Fedor, whom I despised, and persecuted, I must have fallen into despair.”

Every day brought us nearer to the frozen zone. Fedor alone supported, without murmuring, the fatigue, the inconveniences of the journey, and the intense cold. The sun arose every day more late, and set more early ; he seemed to me to pass,

as it were, by degrees into the region of darkness. Every thing was for a while obscured by a continual twilight. At last we reached Berezof, wherein we were henceforth to be entombed. We stopped at the bottom of a hill, where is situated the place appropriated for the residence of the prisoners. The chief of our escort immediately waited on the Waiwode, or Governor, to announce our arrival.

Fedor accompanied him, with a view to dispose this Waiwode in our favour; but he had previously caused a large fire to be kindled, round which we arranged ourselves. We were scarcely seated, when a tall, meagre figure, with a pale and harsh visage, apparently more broken down by misfortune than age, slowly approached us. After silently surveying us for some time, during which his countenance gradually brightened up, and lost its melancholy cast, he asked one of the Cossacks of our escort, whence we came.

“ From

"From Petersburg," he replied.

Then turning towards us, with the most affable air—

"You are welcome," said he to us, "my associates in misfortune; we must become friends."

So saying, he stretched out his hand to my father, who accepted it with sincere pleasure. Oh Sophia! you cannot comprehend how highly we prize here a benevolent look, a friendly grasp of the hand, a simple salutation!

"Yes," said my father, in a feeling tone, "we shall be companions in misfortune; we will become your friends. Oh! if you knew whence I have descended into this abyss! You see here before you, the unfortunate family of Menzikof."

At these words, the old man hastily drew

back his hand; his features assumed a terrible expression; and fixing his eyes intensely on my father, said, gravely—

“And I am Tolstoi.”

He suddenly withdrew, and retook the road leading from the residence of the prisoners. My father shuddered, and covered his face. The maledictions of his brother-in-law, Count Devier, scarcely made so strong an impression on him as these three words—“*I am Tolstoi.*”—I approached him, and seized his hand, which he allowed to fall from his pallid and dejected visage. He said to me, in a faint voice—

“It is I who am the most unfortunate of all those who inhabit this abode of misery. I bear their sorrows, and my own; they only suffer, while I expiate; all the sufferings of which I am a witness, and your’s, my children, fall heavy upon
me,

me, for they are the work of my own hands."

No one made any reply; all our eyes overflowed with tears, and were cast down to the ground. At last, my aunt cried out, in an accent of despair—

"Yes, you say true, all our sufferings are the work of your hands. I am guiltless; my husband is so also; we suffer for your detestable ambition. Oh, that all of us were with the mother of these unfortunate children, in the peaceful grave!"

Sophia, Sophia, what a dreadful impression did these harsh words, uttered by my aunt, in a paroxysm of grief, make upon my father and me! It seemed as if a sharp poniard had been thrust into my heart, and inflicted a deep wound; but my father—my wretched father!—he started up in an agony, and, throwing himself on the ground, hid his face in the snow. I went up, and

endeavoured to raise him; he half raised himself, and exclaimed, in the most sorrowful accent, placing his hand upon his heart—

“Will then this culpable and contrite heart never cease to beat? Cannot excess of chagrin destroy it?”

“Our love will remove it, my father,” said I; “the tenderness of your children will make you bless the misfortune that has united us—that has restored to us our father.”

He hearkened not to me, but, tearing himself violently from my arms, ran after Tolstoi, seized his hand, and said to him—

“Tolstoi, pardon, or kill me.”

I followed, and bathed with my tears the other hand of the angry old man; but he contemptuously drew them back, and retired in silence. My father, after following him

him for a few minutes with his eyes, returned to the fire, with his head cast down, and fixed upon it a vacant stare. The colour of his cheeks changed every instant, and marked the extreme agitation of his soul. He gave no reply to my questions, and was insensible to my sympathizing consolations. He walked on in silence before us, with folded arms, and his head bent downwards, to the house of the Waiwode, who had ordered us to be called. He opened not his lips in the Governor's presence, and returned in the same manner before us, into the hut that was destined for us. Fedor had hired for himself a neighbouring cottage, and joined us in the evening. Even he could not succeed in calming the agitation of my father, who walked with hurried steps, and appeared to undergo a violent internal struggle. Suddenly stopping before my aunt—

“My sister,” said he, “say that you

forgive me! I cannot obliterate the past, but I will do every thing that depends on me; I am ready to offer my whole fortune to the Dolgoruckis for your liberty; as soon as they accept it, I shall die, and my death will appease them. But Tolstoi—Tolstoi, he alone will pursue the unhappy Menzikof with his curses even beyond the grave."

He then went out, to conceal from us his tears. Upon relating to Fedor what had passed, he followed my father, and succeeded, as he generally does, in tranquillizing him. He brought him back much less agitated, and both of us received him with extreme kindness; my aunt even did what lay in her power to repair her cruelty.—"Ah!" said she to me, "his sister augments his distress, while a stranger consoles him!"

A stranger!—Fedor is no longer such to us; all love him, every one is sensible how
unfortunate

unfortunate we should be without him; he directs his attention to all—he has not only provided us with every thing that could be deemed necessary, but that might in the least degree prove useful. His provision of live stock is so considerable, that methinks they would be more than sufficient for us, during our lives. He has taken into his service a number of Ostiacks, whom he proposes to employ in building for us a warm and commodious house, with wood, floated down the river Oby; nothing almost is wanting to us, but a more temperate climate, and the most valuable of all blessings to man, liberty! and to your Maria, health. But I declare to you, Sophia, when I hear his soothing and mellifluous voice—when I see his looks fraught with love, it seems as if I were enjoying the delights of paradise; but these delights are, and must be always empoisoned by the sighs of my parents. My life is a succession of pleasures the most sweet, the most delicious, and of sorrows the most bitter: my happiness seems to elevate my soul

above this earth, and grief impairs my health, and weakens the springs of life. I perceive I am fast hastening to the tomb; but, although entering it so young, I can affirm, I have fully enjoyed my short span of life; for I have loved, and been beloved, as much as it was possible.

Return me an answer quickly, dear Sophia, if you wish I should read your letter. I am on the brink of the grave, I tell you, and in six months perhaps—Great God! I tremble when I reflect on the immense distance which separates us. Six months must elapse before I can receive your answer; and my poor heart, harassed by the most opposite feelings, will be soon alike insensible either to pleasure or pain. I force myself to appear less ill than I really am, and no one suspects that the threads of my existence are successively breaking, one after another, as every one of their groans inflicts on my unhappy heart a deadly wound. Once again, Sophia, write to me soon, and send your letter to Sapieha, by whose

means I shall receive it much more early than by the usual channel.

I have received a letter from our first worthy conductor. He has visited the tomb of the best of mothers, and watered it with his tears. He tells me, that the journey he took with us, has rendered him sympathizing and compassionate: if this be true—if our tears have operated to soften a callous heart, they will not have flowed in vain.

The generous Sapieha must have already recompensed our worthy Loutschin for his humanity, and realized his wishes. He informs me that he has nothing so much at heart in this world, as to revisit us; there is still then a heart that recollects, with sentiments of friendship and gratitude, the poor exiles. No, I shall not die unregretted, were it only by thee, my Sophia; but are we not already separated more, even than by death!—Adieu, adieu, my friend—my only friend!

Here there appears a chasm in the correspondence, which the Editor has supplied by the following authentic details.

MARIA formed but too accurate a judgment respecting her situation. The rigorous climate which she inhabited, combined with the incessant grief preying on her mind, occasioned by the deplorable fate of her family, finally operated to destroy a constitution always delicate, and for a long time impaired by sorrow. Her love even for Fedor, and the passion he felt for her in his turn, too strongly agitated her mind. Completely happy in his presence, she yet suffered from the reflection that he had sacrificed his existence, and the most brilliant prospects on her account. Possessing a heart too susceptible of impressions, she felt a victim to the influence of lively and opposite sentiments. She

was

was aware of her situation; but she struggled against her languor and decay with an energy of soul almost inconceivable. Her countenance uniformly displayed a serene and melancholy smile:—thus angels smile when they contemplate the last moments of a virtuous man, and when they reflect on the everlasting happiness they are about to enjoy.

Menzikof was altogether resigned to his melancholy fate; he no longer sighed, but while he frankly confessed he merited his lot, the sufferings of his family overwhelmed him with sorrow. Wholly occupied with this idea, he offered, with the view of obtaining their liberty, to deliver into the hands of the Dolgoruckis the vast sums he had secured in the banks of Venice and Amsterdam; and he only relinquished the sanguine hopes he had entertained from the adoption of this step, on receiving a letter from Sapieha, whom he had empowered to make this proposal, informing

informing him of its rejection. They manifested the utmost aversion to this mode of enriching themselves, and absolutely refused to enter into any negotiation on that account.—The contempt, the indifference, and repulsive behaviour which the austere Tolstoi uniformly evinced towards him, also added greatly to his distress. Every time that he met with this man, (which happened frequently) he returned home dejected and melancholy; on such occasions, he pronounced the name of Tolstoi, in an accent of despair.

“No,” said he, striking his forehead, “I cannot hope for divine mercy, till Tolstoi cease to load me with his maledictions!”

Fedor and Maria made various attempts to reconcile Tolstoi to the unfortunate Prince, but they proved abortive; he harshly repulsed them, and his animosity became redoubled. He fell dangerously ill.

“Ah!”

“ Ah !” said Menzikof, with affright, “ his last sigh will call down divine vengeance on my devoted head !”

On this occasion, Maria assumed the dress of an Ostiack female, and, under this disguise, was introduced into the obscure hut of the unfortunate old man, and nursed him without intermission. Wholly destitute, she supplied to him all his wants, and attended him in silence, lest her speech might betray her. When it was impossible to dispense with speaking, she imitated as much as she could, the accent of the native savages. She passed with him, as one of the Waiwode's slaves, sent to nurse the old sick prisoner. Tolstoi regarded her as an angel from heaven. He could not comprehend how she procured for him suitable remedies, well-dressed food, and a thousand other conveniences, of which he had almost forgotten the use. Thanks to the care of the supposed Ostiack, his health was re-established,

re-established, and he was persuaded that he owed it solely to her indefatigable zeal. As soon as he found himself convalescent, he determined to wait on the Waiwode, in order to thank him for sending this slave, and allowing her to supply him with so many conveniences. But Maria detained him, and said, with great timidity—

“Do not go, my friend; for it was not the Governor who sent me. I came of my own accord, because I loved you, because you were sick, and that I had offended you.”

Tolstoi replied with the greatest astonishment—

“You offended me? You!—Who are you then?”

Maria cast herself at his feet—

“I am

"I am the eldest daughter of the unfortunate Menzikof."

Tolstoi drew back, and said to her, in a very rude manner—

"Wretched woman! withdraw."

Maria arose, and retired slowly towards the door.

"You have saved my life," then said Tolstoi, in a milder voice. "I thank you for it, although your father has rendered it hateful; but it is not you, and I thank you for your kindness."

"You can grant me in return much more than life," returned Maria. "Grant me the pardon of my father. He is much more miserable than you. You are avenged. What would you have more?"

Tolstoi raised his eyes to heaven, advanced

advanced towards her; but suddenly he exclaimed, in an accent of rage—

“Menzikof! No, never!” and he rushed out.

On the following day, Maria returned, but later than usual. She presented herself with timidity; he received her as if he impatiently expected her. Having frequently heard him observe he was passionately fond of chess, she brought him a chess-board, and proposed to play with him; but dropped not a word in regard to her father. Tolstoi preserved the same silence; but as he enjoyed that game with exquisite gratification, he anxiously solicited her to return the next day. She failed not to keep her appointment; and the unfortunate old man became insensibly so much accustomed to her society, and to the agreeable amusement it afforded him, that he daily anticipated the hour of

her coming, and indulging in his favourite game. At the expiration of a month, she seized a moment when the winning of a warmly contested game had put him in a good humour; and raising towards him her suppliant eyes, she again entreated him to become reconciled to her father. He made no answer, his countenance fell, and when Maria, disconcerted, arose to depart, he did not say, as usual, "*to-morrow.*" She then began to despair of the success of her plan, which she had imparted only to Fedor, and returned home very sorrowful. Scarcely, however, had she entered her cottage, when the door opened, and Tolstoi made his appearance. Menzikof was appalled, on beholding him; but Tolstoi advanced to him, and stretched out his hand. Maria threw herself on his neck with an expression of the most lively joy; then passing an arm round each of the old men, she brought them close together; and Menzikof received from Tolstoi the kiss of peace and

and reconciliation. Maria kneeled before them.

"Who could resist this angel?" said Tolstoi, with the most lively emotion. "You who imparted to her life, are my friend."

He embraced Menzikof. From this moment, they were scarcely ever separated; they became intimately attached to each other, and the profound sorrow of Menzikof was converted into a source of consolation. A ray of hope once more animated him. The generous Sapieha laboured with indefatigable zeal to obtain his recall, and that of his family; this business was in a happy train. The Dolgoruckis had obtained so fully the confidence of the Emperor, that they no longer feared Menzikof. Sapieha dispatched a courier to Fedor with this intelligence. All the family were overjoyed. Menzikof alone shook his head, with an air of doubt.

Maria

Maria thought within herself that this favour would arrive too late for her, and regarded her Fedor with a melancholy smile. Menzikof said to them—

“I have offered the half of my fortune to these people, to procure the liberty of Tolstoi: the other moiety for my own: but do not rejoice too soon. Yes, I might hope, if they saw me as I now am; but they cannot believe this change: they still regard me as the formidable, the ambitious Menzikof.”

He was in the right; his concealed enemies, who had reason to dread a reconciliation between him and the Dolgoruckis, published a violent libel against the latter, in which they craved Menzikof's recall. This piece was written in such a manner, as to persuade the world that Menzikof was its author. At the same time the negotiations which had been entered into for his recall, and which even seemed to be rapidly

rapidly advancing towards a happy termination, were broken off; and from that moment the family of Menzikof had no longer any hope of escaping from thralldom. The Prince was less affected by this intelligence than might have been expected. He said to Tolstoi—

“Friend, it is perhaps better; we shall not be disunited.”

Almost at the same time, he appeared as if a new thought had come into his head, and as if buried in a profound reverie. During these three days, he displayed the air and manner of a man who suffers inwardly a violent struggle; at last, breaking silence, he observed to Fedor and Maria, that he wished to speak with them in private.

“I have,” said he, “something to communicate to you, which highly interests your happiness, and my tranquillity.”

Finding himself alone with them,
Menzikof

Menzikof took Fedor and Maria by the hand, and said to them, in a serious tone—

“My dear children, it is pleasing to me to believe that you have no doubt of my readiness to sacrifice my life for your liberty; but the greatest of my misfortunes is the being condemned to live without being able to save you. Noble Fedor! it pains me to see you here; your life is spent without utility; you are not happy any more than Maria, than me, than all of us. I do not disguise my sentiments:—were it possible for me to escape from this place, I would travel on foot through the most frightful deserts—I would climb the steepest rocks—I would reach China, or lose my life in endeavouring to regain my liberty; but I am too strictly watched, to think of making the attempt. But you are free, Fedor, and your passports and recommendations would secure you an easy journey. What then prevents you from procuring the same advantage to her you love? I know why
you

you are here; but believe me, it is not my own misfortunes, it is not my exile that grieves me—I am tormented by continual self-reproaches for being the cause of your sufferings; and if I knew you had escaped, I should be happy, though I were on that account sent to Kamschatka, or even to the mines, to sink, like the basest criminals, under the severest labours. These labours would be a thousand times less painful than my remorse. I should become a model of patience and resignation—no sigh would ruffle the happiness created by your deliverance. Oh my children! from you I have learned what happiness can be experienced in making sacrifices for those we love; Fedor, take the hand of Maria: she is your's. In the eyes of the Supreme Being, the benediction of a father is as sacred as that of a Priest. Depart together. Rescue as many of my family as possible. Do not make it an objection that your presence is necessary to me. The happiness of one of my children is a thousand times
more

more dear to me than all the conveniences you can procure me. Besides, the provisions you have brought here, are sufficient for me for several years. You need only leave with me your faithful domestic, Moses Popof; he would completely supply your place with respect to any attentions that may be necessary. Money I shall not want. You know I have taken care to preserve a small treasure, sufficient to maintain us here fifty years, were we to live so long."—He shewed them diamonds of great value, which he had concealed on leaving Petersburg.—"You see I shall not be made worse by your departure; and my dear Maria will obtain the liberty and happiness which her virtue and her love have long merited. And shall I not have the generous friendship of your dear Sapieha? I found a letter of his, which you had lost, in which he offers to come and join you, to assist in the care you take of us, or even to remain in your place, if you would fly."

Fedor threw himself in the arms of Menzikof, and exclaimed—

“Yes, I confess my plan was to fly with Maria, but she would not.”

“I order you, my girl,” said Menzikof, pressing her tenderly to his bosom.

Maria fell on her knees, and urged the most affectionate objections, founded partly on the oath she had made to her expiring mother, never to abandon her father.

“I absolve you from it, in her name,” said Menzikof.

This noble contest between parental and filial love continued long. Fedor waited in silence, to see which would obtain the victory. At last Menzikof said to his daughter—

“I command you to go, under pain of my malediction!”

Maria

Maria then lifted up to heaven her eyes, which were bedewed with tears.

“ I yield, father! I shall depart as soon as my health will permit; at present I am too weak to undertake a journey.”

Menzikof was satisfied with this promise.

When Fedor was alone with Maria, he explained the means he intended to have recourse to, for securing their flight. He proved to her that nothing was more easy, and that it would scarce be perceived, as her maid, Lisiska, passed at the Governor's for one of the daughters of Menzikof, and Maria for the companion of Popof. Fedor, who always meditated a flight, had taken this precaution beforehand: the flight of Maria could therefore meet with no obstacle. Fedor took her hand with tenderness, and painted, in glowing colours, the delightful life they would lead in some beautiful valley of China, apart from all

the world, and in perfect repose. Maria threw her arms round him, and pressed him to her heart.

“ Oh ! ” said she, with an expression of the most lively affection, “ why can I not this moment fly with you to that happy valley, which is to be the asylum of our love ! But, Fedor, should your hopes be destroyed ! ”

“ You have not heard me, Maria,” and he repeated again all the particulars of his plan. She smiled sweetly, saying—

“ What if I myself should destroy your hopes ? ” Then pressing him still more ardently to her bosom, she exclaimed—
“ Fedor, my dear Fedor, do not paint in such delightful colours, a happiness for which I am not destined. I shall go wherever you lead me ; but you see that at present I have not strength to travel. I am too weak, too sad. Let us wait until the approaching spring reanimates me. Then, Fedor, I shall be entirely your’s, if Heaven permit.”

Fedor

Fedor turned pale. He recollected the cavern of Kongour. He already thought he saw Maria laid in the tomb. His soul was filled with gloomy presages, but he mentioned them not. Menzikof, who knew the virtue and scrupulous delicacy of his daughter, feared that she would not agree to accompany Fedor before she was his wife; he therefore studied to remove this pretext, and to sanctify their union. In a village at a short distance from Berezof, there was an old Priest, who had been exiled in the reign of Peter the Great, and whose pardon Menzikof had solicited in vain. This venerable old man having learned that his protector was exiled at Berezof, solicited, and obtained permission to live there, and attached himself, with a paternal and interesting affection, to the unhappy family. Menzikof determined to entrust to him the secret of his daughter's love for the young Popof. Fedor was known by this name, and his servant passed for his elder brother. He begged of him

to unite them by the nuptial benediction, as he knew not any other means by which he could shew his gratitude for the infinite obligations he owed that excellent young man.

The old Priest consented, and then Menzikof communicated to him the real name of Fedor. Notwithstanding the dangers which his compliance might make him encounter, the good old man did not retract.

“What have I to fear from men,” said he, “I who must so soon appear before the Judge of judges? I have nothing more to fear here below. I am happy to be able, before I die, to render one service to my benefactor, and to secure the felicity of this young couple.”

One day, when all the family had assembled in the cabin, the Priest entered, and Menzikof declared that he was come to marry his daughter Maria to young Popof.

Fedor

Fedor was overwhelmed with felicity at finding his dearest wish obtained. Ever since the positive declaration of Menzikof, his delicacy had prevented him from soliciting Maria. He now threw himself at her feet, and covered her hands with passionate kisses. She rose smiling, and both threw themselves at the feet of Menzikof, who laid his hands on their heads, and blessed them:—then in the abode of misery, a whole family shed tears of joy. The Priest joined their hands, and pronounced the marriage service; both declared with enthusiasm the vow of eternal fidelity. Thus did a pair of truly noble lovers become husband and wife—thus in a wretched hovel, in the gloomy and savage Siberia, was the festival of love and happiness celebrated. Maria for a moment forgot her dismal presentiments. She wished too much to live the wife of Fedor, not to hope for that blessing. Some days after, the good Priest died of old age, carrying

with him to the grave the dangerous secret entrusted to him.

Fedor declared publicly that Maria was his spouse, and she lived with him in the cabin which he had hired near that of the prisoners; but he passed the day with their relatives and Tolstoi, who was still ignorant of the real name of Fedor, and attached to him with the affection of a father.

“What occasion have we to fly?” Maria would often say to her husband and her father. “Am I not happier here than ever I could have hoped to be in the most brilliant days of our family? Have I not obtained the greatest happiness that can be possessed on earth—a husband according to my heart—the only man that heart ever could love? What signifies it whether I live with him in the obscure vallies of Mount Titlis in Switzerland, or in the frozen region of Siberia? Between him and

and my father, misfortune cannot reach me."

A short time after their marriage, a Major arrived from Tobolsck, with about fifty men, to relieve the garrison of Berezof. He had express orders from the Government, to give every assistance to the Merchant, Moses Popof. This officer was indebted for his fortune to Sapieha, and he interested himself for Prince Menzikof, on finding that this famous Popof was his friend. They were therefore well protected. Their habitation was enlarged, and Fedor obtained facilities for procuring to this family a number of those conveniences, which cannot be easily dispensed with, when custom has established their use. Winter passed away, and the sun began to describe a wider circle on the horizon; Nature assumed every day a more animated aspect, and the contrast between the universal ice with which she had been covered, and the charming verdure in which she now

was arrayed, rendered her still more beautiful. The ice and the deep snows were gradually converted into streams, whose gentle murmur animated the landscape. The birch trees, whence Berezof takes its name, acquired a thick foliage; and, to the great astonishment of the languishing Maria, all this country, formerly so desolate and gloomy, appeared to spring up from chaos, and assume new life. The Solwa was covered with canoes, in which the Ostiacks bring to Berezof the tribute of furs they pay to the Crown. Fedor, hoping to improve the health of Maria, walked with her every day, sometimes on the banks of the Solwa or the Oby, and sometimes they took a sail on the river, in the boat of an Ostiack. One time they went as far as Tobolsck, to lay in provisions, and to procure several things they still wanted. These little excursions amused, but did not invigorate Maria. She smiled when Fedor expressed hopes of her speedy recovery, and could not think of saying
any

any thing to diminish the flattering prospect he drew. She felt her end approaching, and yet life became daily more dear to her.

They went to Tobolsk by water, and returned in a cart, following the course of the river. When half-way home, they observed a kind of promontory, which advanced into the river. It was shaded with beautiful talniks, and formed a delightful peninsula. They alighted from their cart, to walk under the shade, and advanced close to the water's edge. This spot was precisely at the confluence of the Oby and the Tirtisch. They admired the superb aspect of the immense extent of water which they saw flowing before them. The mountains of Schamarof formed a majestic chain, extending in perspective in the distance. The banks on both sides were variegated with agreeable groves of birch and talniks; behind these groves, majestic cedars shot up to the sky. A single black cloud hung

over the summit of the mountains, and emitted some flashes of lightning. The setting sun appeared ready to plunge into the immense sheet of water that skirted the horizon, and gilded its surface.

“See,” said the enraptured Fedor, passing his arm around Maria, “see, my dear Maria, what an astonishing, what a superb spectacle! Would you have thought, when you came to this country, which appeared only a frozen desert, that it could now be embellished as we see it. That eternal night, the image of death, has disappeared. A more mild and brilliant sun adorns an azure sky, scarce sets, and the day is permanent as our love. Thus, my dear Maria, thus will your languor also disappear, and with it all my fears for your life. Health and happiness will return and embellish you!”

The eyes of Maria were filled with tears.

“I hate

"I hate not life, Fedor," said she. "I love it perhaps too much since you made me the happiest of women; but if I must lose it, how can I complain? Ah! I have already lived more for love and happiness, than the longest existence could be expected to afford."

She opened her arms to clasp Fedor to her heart; but he tore himself away, gave a cry of terror, and ran a short distance from her. He returned quickly, and taking his wife in his arms, said—

"We are lost!"

She experienced a singular emotion, and perceived that the promontory, having been undermined by the water, was just separated from the land, and that it floated slowly down the river—a circumstance which frequently occurs in these regions. Fedor exerted himself in vain to regain the main land. The river was too deep, and the

the little floating island on which he stood with Maria, was carried every moment farther from the bank. Not knowing either the contexture or the thickness of the earth, they expected every moment to see it open, and separate under their feet.

The Ostiack who conducted their cart, came to the bank, in consequence of the cries of Fedor. He appeared little surprised, and was not at all alarmed at a phenomenon to which he was accustomed. He called to them that floating islands were very common in the Oby, and that they need not be afraid; but they were too far off to hear him. Fedor, pale and trembling, clasped Maria in his arms, and believed their death inevitable. She also pressed him to her heart; and though she had long been prepared to die, the idea of the danger of Fedor filled her with terror. She looked with horror at the menacing waves, and cried sorrowfully—

“ Are

"Are there no means of saving us?"

But no where was either boat or human figure to be seen. Fedor in despair extended his arms towards the shore.

"We are not yet far from the land," said he to Maria. "Oh, if you knew how to swim!"

"Do you know how to swim!" cried she; "dear Fedor, save yourself for the love of my father and of my family. Consider that it will be only a short anticipation of our separation."

She tried to pull him to the edge of the island.

"Maria," said he, "do you then wish that we should not die together? Great God! leave you—separate from you! No, never!—we shall perish in each other's arms."

She

She still conjured him to save himself for her father's sake. After a moment's silence—

"It is too late," said he tranquilly, "it is now too late; I should not now be able to reach the shore."

In fact, the land could scarcely be distinguished. The isle seemed in the middle of the ocean.

"Yes," said she, sighing, "it is too late! Oh Fedor! are you then destined to die with me?"

"Can you doubt it," replied he; "did you not know my heart?"

"Well, Fedor, let us die as we have lived, with courage, and intimately united."

They then ascended a little eminence towards the middle of the island, because the waves began to cover its edges; they sat down, wrapped in each other's arms, and
in

in this manner waited the moment in which they were to be swallowed up. They soon found themselves in the middle of the river, and were carried down the stream with great velocity. The island had a quick motion, and rolled like a vessel at sea. Every moment large pieces of earth separated from it, and were lost in the river. They thought every moment they were to be ingulphed in the waves, and then they clasped each other more closely; but in spite of all their resignation, Nature revolted within them at the sight of sudden death. The thunder rolled dreadfully; and mingling its sound with the dashing of the waves, added to the horror of the scene. Their senses were gone; they believed they were already struggling with death.

“Maria, my dear Maria!”—“My adored Fedor!—Adieu—adieu!—We shall soon meet again in a celestial dwelling!” they alternately exclaimed, and, clasped each

each other in their arms; but their island, which constantly diminished in size, began to float more gently, and the sun penetrating the black cloud which had concealed him, enlightened them with his horizontal rays which appeared to border the river. They lifted up their eyes, and perceived that the current, which was now less rapid, was conducting them slowly towards the sun, which they seemed to approach nearer and nearer. What a sublime spectacle! The optical effect was so striking, and the illusion such, that it appeared as if the gate of Heaven was opening to receive them. The island soon after turned rapidly round; Nature seemed to depart from her eternal laws, and all things appeared about to dissolve. They conceived that the sun was describing a rapid circle of fire round the horizon. They thought they saw the Grand Regulator of the universe travelling through chaos in a blazing chariot, and ordering all Nature to return to nothingness.

nothingness. Black clouds once more environed the sun, and obscured his light; the river was covered with a profound darkness, which was frequently furrowed by flashes of lightning. This spectacle, at all times awful and impressive, inspired them with new courage.

“The Eternal sees us,” cried they; “he is about to receive us into his bosom!”

At the same moment, the sun penetrated anew the clouds. He shed torrents of light on the waters, and at the same time lighted up a ray of hope in the soul of Fedor. The island became so steady, that they hardly perceived the slightest motion. Fedor arose, and examined it in every direction. He found that the water had detached the earth from its sides; but the eminence on which they were placed, was founded on a kind of grassy tuft, that innumerable roots of trees and shrubs rendered still more compact. He returned to

Maria

Maria in transport, and told her he had still some slight hopes of safety. The anxiety she had experienced, rendered her feeble, and she perceived herself ready to faint. Fedor made a fire by rubbing the dried roots of trees against each other; he afterwards ascended a cedar-tree that grew in the middle of the island, and which had afforded them a shade. Very soon he redescended with a cry of joy, and brought to Maria a handful of cedar-apples. He partook with her this frugal repast, and they drank a little water from the hollow of their hands, after which Maria laid her head upon Fedor's knee, and fell into a profound sleep. The sun now set; but at this season of the year, total darkness never prevails in Siberia, and even midnight there, was still sufficiently light to enable him to distinguish objects, and to examine the surrounding country. Fedor at last perceived the bank at a great distance, which they seemed to be approaching with rapidity, and very soon the island was violently

violently pushed against the firm ground. The shock awakened Maria, and Fedor, hastily rising, carried her with precipitation upon the bank.

"God be praised!" cried he; "Maria, we are safe! You will rejoin your father, your family; we are upon land."

Maria was so enfeebled, that Fedor was obliged to carry her to the cabin of an Ostiack; and during the time she enjoyed some repose, he sent the Ostiack in search of his cart.

When Maria awoke, she still believed herself in a painful, though not unpleasant dream.

"Fedor," said she to her husband, "I am daily more convinced that we could not exist without each other. I am sensible that you could no more survive my loss, than I could be able to outlive you.
I regret,

I regret, therefore, that we had not perished together on this island, which would have served for our tomb. There we should have found a shelter from the sorrows and the evils of life; we should have expired together at the same moment in each other's arms. I fear—I fear that you may yet experience some moments of grief on my account. Thus as the waves undermined this island, have misfortunes and anxiety sapped my life. Dear Fedor, it will not be for a long time that Maria is given back."

He arose sorrowfully, and entered a birch wood which surrounded the hut. On returning from this melancholy walk, he met Maria, who had come in search of him.

"Pardon me," said she, throwing herself into his arms, "if I have afflicted you—I who exist only for your happiness. Heaven, which wrought a miracle in our favour, may perhaps perform a second; since
Providence

Providence has snatched us from a certain death, it may perhaps render me back to life."

They returned to Berezof with fresh courage, and from that moment, their love assumed a still more sublime character. A sentiment more delightful, more pure, more sacred, filled their hearts, and diffused a melancholy serenity over all their actions. External objects, life, the earth they inhabited, every thing became indifferent to them. They were together, and that was sufficient. Their tranquillity, their gentleness, their patience, the charms of their conversation, the sublime ideas that already raised them above this earth, shed around them peace. A species of enthusiasm, of virtuous resignation, and religious hope was imparted, by their example, to all the members of this persecuted family; and never was there heard amongst them a single complaint. Even Tolstoi himself was

was astonished at his own happiness and tranquillity.

“Ah!” said he to them, “how much more have you benefited me by your example, than Menzikof has done me evil!”

The health of Prince Menzikof, however, began gradually to decline. He often said to his friend Tolstoi—

“The behaviour of my children has taught me how to die. Would I may expire before them!”

Tolstoi formed the same wish; he loved Maria, as if she had been his own daughter, and could not support the idea of her loss. They all foresaw her approaching end; but each feared to disturb, by any expression of regret, even by a melancholy sigh, the tranquil felicity of this angel. Often, however, their eyes were filled with tears when she

she appeared in the midst of them like a breathing shadow, scarcely able to support herself; but very soon her celestial smile, the tender expression of friendship which she addressed to each of them, her look so full of benevolence, changed their tears of sadness into a tender pity, and they acquired additional courage and magnanimity from her example.

Thus passed the days, the months, the years. Already the third winter approached, and Maria still existed, if that life could be called existence, which the slightest breeze seemed ready to extinguish. Sapieha wrote to Fedor that his father absolutely insisted on his return to Petersburg. The Dolgoruckis had attained to the summit of power. What Menzikof had so long laboured to accomplish, had fortuitously presented itself to them. The young Emperor having one day honoured Prince Alexis Dolgorucki with a visit at one of his country seats, on his return

from the chace, beheld for the first time his daughter, the young and beautiful Catherine, whose soul was in unison with the delicacy of her figure. He passed the night at this mansion, and next day returned to Moscow, his heart filled with a sentiment altogether new to him. Soon he repeated his visit to the father of the charming Catherine, and timidly acquainted him with the passion he experienced for his child. Prince Alexis, astonished at his good fortune, would instantly have summoned his daughter to their presence; but the Czar retained him, and went himself to the young Princess, to solicit her heart and hand. Catherine had also been smitten by her amiable Sovereign; she loved him, not for his crown, but for himself; and since his first visit, the tears of this poor girl had often fallen in secret for a hopeless passion. She received then his declaration with the most extreme joy, and avowed, blushing, that his love constituted the supreme felicity of her life, since she loved

as sincerely as she was beloved. The same day the Emperor announced to his grandmother, that he was about to espouse Catherine Dolgorucki; and the very next day was appointed for the celebration of this ceremony. The most lively joy reigned among the Dolgoruckis, and their fears respecting the stability of their favour, was changed into a haughty security.

The Field Marshal alone remained the same; long experience had taught him to be wise. A few minutes before the commencement of the ceremony, he took the hand of Catherine, and said to her in a serious tone—

“My niece, you are about to become my Sovereign; but in whatever situation you are placed, never forget what a change a single day may produce. I have already seen your illustrious spouse undergo the same ceremony. Where is she at present, who ought to have occupied that throne,

where love is about to place you? Enjoy your good fortune with moderation, and recollect that, from this moment, you make no longer a part of your family. It is your subjects who must henceforth be your friends. A Dolgorucki ought to receive no portion of your favours, but in so far as he merits them by his virtues."

"Well, my uncle," said Alexis, the same evening, to the Field Marshal, "this glorious day is at length finished, and the good fortune of our family is secured for ever."

The respectable old man replied—

"Is it then always necessary to remind you of the uncertainty of the future? Prince Menzikof has likewise seen as brilliant a day, and now he is humbled and in exile."

From this period, Prince Basil withdrew wholly from Court, and lived in retirement. The other Dolgoruckis termed odd and

and pusillanimous this conduct, which was the effect of the greatest wisdom and moderation. They turned into ridicule this respectable old man, the head of their family; and in the intoxication of their ambition, they forgot his wise counsels, which were so essential to their safety.

How strange the destiny of man!—The very same day that the espousals of the Czar with Catherine Dolgorucki had elevated this family to the highest honours, this same day did Menzikof, in the heart of Siberia, attain also what had become the sole object of his ambition, the termination of his unfortunate life, and the recompence of those virtues that his exile had developed!—At this awful moment, when man appears without disguise, how much greater, more courageous, and more contented was Menzikof, than he had ever been in the midst of his glory and prosperity! Could the Dolgoruckis have cast a look into the gloomy cabin where this

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disgraced

disgraced favourite breathed his last sigh, they would have heard with what energy he conjured his son to guard against pride and ambition, and to keep his soul free from every desire of vengeance.—“Pride,” said he, with earnestness, “always precedes a fall.”—They would then have moderated their triumphant haughtiness;—but, on the contrary, Alexis said that very day to his son Ivan—“Menzikof will learn in his deserts to what a height we have risen, and this will be the greatest of his misfortunes.”

Menzikof learned it not; death spared him the painful feeling he might perhaps have experienced, from knowing that a Dolgorucki had become Empress of Russia; or perhaps his soul, purified in the school of adversity, was superior to the passion of envy. He expired with fortitude in the arms of his children, surrounded by his sister, his brother-in-law, and his old friend Tolstoi, who all sincerely mourned his loss,

as well as every one who had known him since his arrival at Berezof.

A short time after this event, news arrived that the Emperor had chosen the young Princess Catherine Dolgorucki for his spouse, and that the eighteenth of January was appointed for the celebration of their nuptials.

"Catherine Dolgorucki!" exclaimed Fedor. "Heaven be praised! Maria, her heart resembles thine—she is like the good, gentle and compassionate; I know that this charming woman is my friend. A few lines from me will induce her to render us all free and happy. She will not be surprised to learn where I am: in a confidential conversation I one day held with her, she discovered my attachment to thee. She alone of all my family shed tears of compassion over thy misfortunes. Certainly, my dear Maria, we shall soon owe to her our deliverance."

Maria trembled, and sighing, replied—

“I wish not to afflict you, my dear Fedor; yes, I long once more to revisit Petersburg, to weep once more over the tomb of my mother, to again see my dear Sophia; but this wish is useless—it would even be dangerous. Should they learn that you are here, and should Catherine be unable to obtain our recall, they would tear you from me, and your poor Maria would be left to die, forsaken and alone. Dear friend, let us not sport with the portion of happiness Heaven has vouchsafed to us; let the few days I have yet to live, be passed near you, in happiness and tranquillity; and barter them not, I entreat you, for the uncertainty of hope. My father's death has impaired my remaining strength so much, that I was scarcely able to support myself by the side of his bed, in order to console him in his last moments. But now our separation approaches.”

At

At these words, her head fell on the bosom of her husband; so feeble and exhausted was she become, that he could no longer conceal from himself the fatal truth, and his soul was torn by it, although he endeavoured as much as possible to hide from her the agonies he suffered.

The roses had disappeared from the cheeks of Maria, her eyes sunk, and her strength daily diminished; but her soul became more magnanimous and sublime. She might already have been supposed an inhabitant of Heaven. Fedor could no longer beguile himself by an illusion; he perceived he was about to lose her, and his love assumed a more pure character. They mutually endeavoured to console, and inspire each other with fortitude, to support their separation; and they always appeared calm and serene. They never left each other for a single moment, and lived almost always in a peaceful repose. The hopes which the other members of their

N 5

family

family had formed for their deliverance, made them smile. Catherine had conversed with Sapieha, who had informed her with interest and sensibility of their present situation. Sophia Rcales had also thrown herself at her feet. Catherine embraced her, saying—

“I know what you solicit; you wish me to exert my influence in favour of your unfortunate friends, exiled to Siberia. Write to Maria Menzikof, that the fate of her family, and especially her own, has often made me shed tears; and that I will never consider myself completely happy, until she be so.”

“Fedor!” said Maria, after having read the letters containing these details, “now when I am about to leave the world, it ceases to persecute me. Thy cousin Catherine reconciles me to my species; she has afforded me before I expire, the sweet consolation of thinking that my relations will be restored to liberty and their country.”

It

It was, in fact, the favourite project of the generous and amiable Catherine; and the first use that she intended to make of her power, would have been to recall the Menzikofs, and unite Fedor and Maria. But this plan was frustrated in the most melancholy and unexpected manner. The young Emperor was seized with the small-pox; and on the very day fixed for his nuptials, Alexis Dolgorucki, pale as death, burst into the hall where all his family were assembled, scarcely able to articulate these words—" *The Emperor is dead!*"

Ivan had the audacity to entertain the idea of making his sister ascend the throne as the spouse of the Emperor, and of proclaiming her Empress. Already he was about to put the guards under arms, when the Field Marshal stopped him by this exclamation—

"Unfortunate fool, is not this sufficient to destroy all thy hopes!"

The same evening the Privy Council assembled, and Anne, Duchess of Courland, was nominated Empress. By the advice of the Dolgoruckis, certain conditions were prescribed to the new Sovereign before they announced her election, to all of which she readily consented. Prince Basil shook his head, on seeing the trouble taken by his relatives to support their declining authority. His advice, which had formerly been so prophetic, was still as little regarded, and they continued despotically to govern the Privy Council. Their enemies redoubled, however, their activity; and on the arrival of the new Empress at Moscow, Osterman and Biron, the favourites of Anne, found means to render her altogether independent of the Privy Council, and to procure for her an unlimited authority. The Dolgoruckis were completely overthrown; they imputed to them the intention, which had been manifested by the favourite Ivan, of placing the crown on the head of the affianced bride.

bride of the late Emperor; and after a summary proceeding, the whole family were banished to Berezof, in Siberia, for life, with the exception of the Field Marshal alone.—How strange is the destiny of man!

During the time that these transactions were going forward at the Russian Court, the sun began anew to diffuse its genial influence over the dwelling of Fedor and Maria.

"I see yet another spring," said she to him; "I wished not to leave you amidst decaying nature. Behold, Fedor, my prayers are answered: The ice of the Solwa is dissolved; the vast meadows are clothed with the thickest verdure, and the trees are covered with the most beautiful foliage."

Each fine day Fedor and his Maria walked for a short time on the border of the river, but she was unable to support long continued exertion. He had therefore constructed

constructed on the banks of the Solwa, under the protecting shade of a few beech-trees, a small hut, where Maria could repose herself, whilst she contemplated, by the side of her adored husband, the beautiful prospect of reanimated nature. Near this spot was erected the modest tomb of her father, upon a small hill adjoining to the habitations of the prisoners, and behind a birch-wood, which recalled to her mind that which she, as well as Fedor, had traversed, dreaming on one another, on the banks of the Twerza.

"Ah!" said she, one day to Fedor, after having enjoyed a long time the delightful prospect which surrounded them, "suffer me to die on this spot, and here let my tomb be raised."

Fedor could no longer stifle his grief; he turned away his head to conceal from her the burning tears that fell from his eyes. On the same evening, he ordered a small pavilion to be constructed in place of this
this

this hut, more spacious and better built. It was furnished with windows, and the floor covered with bears' skins, after the joints of the wood had been filled up with moss. It was here that Maria passed the last days of her life, frequently casting her sunken eyes towards that side of the country where her mother reposed, and where still lived her Sophia. She expressed, with a species of enthusiasm, her love for Fedor, and incessantly demanded of him if she had rendered him happy. Her sensible and generous heart shrunk not from the approach of death; but was alone occupied with the dread that she had not sufficiently recompensed the love and the sacrifices of her Fedor. She observed, notwithstanding all her efforts to conceal it, how much he suffered; and more than once regretted they had not perished together in the waters of the Oby: but love softened the last hours of Maria. She expired on the bosom of her Fedor, and death detached gently, and without a struggle, her pure soul from its terrestrial envelope.

The two following letters contain some details respecting the last moments of Maria and Fedor, as well as the other members of their unfortunate family.

LETTER XVII.

Catherine Dolgorucki to Sophia Rocaes.

Berezof, August.

THIS letter will convey to you, my dear Sophia, the last adieus of Maria Menzikof, and the first vows of a new friend, the unfortunate Catherine Dolgorucki. Oh Sophia! grant her that place which Maria occupied in your heart: she bequeathed

to

to me your friendship—allow me to become to you what she once was: I will endeavour to resemble her—you will believe she is not lost to you, and we shall both be less unhappy.

In addressing you, permit me to use the simple language of friendship, which she always employed; we are not strangers to each other, dear Sophia: when I was about to become the most happy of women—when I was espoused to the Emperor, you supplicated me in favour of your friend, the unfortunate Maria.—Ah! at present I am much more to be pitied than she ever was. She lived in the deserts with the well-beloved of her heart; she died first—she breathed her last sigh in the arms of an adoring husband! And I—unfortunate being!—when you came to me, tears of the most tender compassion flowing from my eyes, mingled with your's; from that moment, Sophia, I began to love you, because in your grief you absolutely forgot whom you addressed, and

said

said to me, in the true character of friendship—"Ah! if you but knew this Maria, who would have embellished the first throne of the universe, and whose virtues even in banishment have rendered her more respectable than an Empress!"—Well, Sophia, I have seen this Maria; she was not only more respectable than an Empress, but she was also more happy—yes, Sophia, dry your tears, Maria was happy!

You may probably have learned in your retirement, my melancholy fate: the death of the Emperor would have banished me from the world, without any exertion on the part of my enemies. It is indifferent to me where I pass the remainder of a life, robbed of every hope of happiness. Here at least I can weep at liberty. They have separated our family, and treated my father, my brother, and myself with inconceivable rigour! Their vengeance has conducted us upon the road that my family forced the

Menzikofs

Menzikofs to travel. Upon the banks of the Volga, my father seated himself upon a large stone, under the shade of a young beech-tree; I did not inform him that he sat on the tomb of the virtuous Princess Menzikof. A beggar whom I met near it, told me to whom it belonged. I watered in secret with my tears, this simple monument, and these tears could not disturb the repose of the best of women. The officer who commanded our escort, was the same who had conducted the Menzikofs to Tobolsck; and he now carried an order to recall from exile all the remaining members of that unfortunate family:—he mentioned them with the greatest respect and attachment, and more especially Maria, whom he named with the warmest enthusiasm. This man knew that the Dolgoruckis had been the most bitter enemies of Menzikof, and that my father and brother in particular had caused their ruin; yet, notwithstanding this circumstance, he behaved to us with so much delicacy and humanity, as perfectly

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to astonish us. I expressed this to him, on which he answered, that he was indebted for this disposition to the respectable family he had formerly conducted to Siberia, and which he now went to recall.

“Who could behold this angel,” added he, prostrating himself before the tomb, “and her adorable daughter, without losing every trait of cruelty?”

He could scarcely tear himself from this stone; but, from respect to my father, he never mentioned before him to whom it belonged. He had earnestly requested to be sent on this journey; and being a favourite with Sapiéha, found little difficulty in obtaining his desire.

“None,” said he, with energy, “no other than myself, ought to announce to them their deliverance.”

He related to me a thousand affecting
circumstances

circumstances respecting Maria, which occurred during their journey, and the care and attention with which she watched over her dying mother, as well as how much a young merchant, named Popof, was attached to her and to her family.

"He adored Maria, and she loved him also," said he; "and I am certain he will never abandon her."

This account a good deal surprised me, as I believed she had otherwise disposed of her affections; but a short time cleared up this seeming mystery.

The more nearly we approached the termination of our journey, the more did the impatience of our conductor augment, and the more did he press us to proceed. In order to accelerate us still more, he caused us to embark at Tobolsck upon the Tirtisch, and afterwards upon the Oby. It

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is impossible to describe to you the despair of my father and brother during the whole of our route, and the grief which I experienced on their account. Ah! had it not been for this, how contented should I have been in thinking that I was about to meet Maria, to connect myself with her in the strongest bonds of friendship!

At length Berezof appeared at a little distance, and we debarked. Before us I beheld a beech-wood, and near it a small wooden house, extremely well constructed, from which two persons came out, and advanced slowly towards the bank of the river; it was a very elegant young man, on whose pale, gentle, and expressive countenance were depicted traits of the most profound sorrow. He gave his arm to a beautiful young female, infinitely more pale and meagre than himself. Her interesting figure exhibited at once a picture of sickness and resignation. Our officer approached them;

when

when all of a sudden he remained some moments immoveable, and then precipitating himself before them, he exclaimed—

“My God! am I not deceived?—It is herself—it is Maria Menzikof!”

She also addressed him by his name, holding out her hand to him with an expression of friendship. He put one knee to the ground, and pressed her hand to his lips. His exclamation, and the name of Maria, had attracted my attention, and I was sufficiently near to witness this touching scene. Maria, turning with a celestial look towards the young man who had given her his arm—

“Behold,” said she, “my dear Fedor, what pleasure a good Providence has yet granted to me, in seeing once more our compassionate friend.”—She then addressed the officer, and enquired in a trembling voice

voice—"Have you been upon the banks of the Volga?"

"Yes," replied he; "I have visited the tomb of your mother—I have embraced the cold stone which covers her remains, with the most profound sorrow!"

"Embrace then also her dying daughter, good and worthy friend!" said she, pressing him to her heart.

I could not withdraw my eyes from this angelic figure. How can I depict her paleness, her large dark blue eyes, her long eyelashes which shaded her wan cheeks, her fine light hair confined by a handkerchief, and the slow and interrupted sound of her sweet voice which indicated her extreme debility, and penetrated to the bottom of my heart! The name of Fedor, however, had excited my curiosity; and notwithstanding the profound grief imprinted on every feature, I at last recognised him; but although I readily comprehended that
he

he and the merchant Popof must be the same person, I involuntarily exclaimed—

“ Noble Maria! noble Dolgorucki!”

Maria appeared uneasy on hearing me pronounce this last name, and looked at me a moment in silence. A faint blush overspread her cheeks; she cried in a more animated accent—

“ Do you then know my Fedor? Ah! for pity’s sake, betray him not! Suffer me to die in his arms! The Dolgoruckis are so powerful!”

“ No, no person shall tear him from your arms, dear Maria,” replied I; “ our family are fallen in their turn; embrace me, thou who must serve as a model to me in misfortune. I am Catherine Dolgorucki.”

“ Is not this the name of the Empress?”

“ Yes.”

“ Where am I then? Fedor, have I lost my memory?”

Fedor on this question seemed to awaken from a reverie, and to recollect himself. From the moment I approached, he had never raised his head, and appeared deeply absorbed in his own reflections. But on regarding me for some time, he recollected me, and threw himself into my arms.

"Yes, it is she," he exclaimed; "my eyes do not deceive me; it is the worthy Catherine Dolgorucki, my good, my amiable cousin."

My father and brother advanced also.

"What do I behold!" cried Fedor; "and you also in Siberia! You, my uncle—you, Ivan, the friend and favourite of the Emperor, are you also banished? All my family is then devoted to misfortune!—But why—wherefore? I cannot comprehend."

I endeavoured to recount our sad history; but in pronouncing the fatal words, "the

Emperor

Emperor is dead," a torrent of tears interrupted my words, and I leaned sobbing on the shoulder of Fedor.

"Ah God!" said Maria, passing her arm around me, "poor unfortunate girl! How much more happy am I than thou! Ah! come into the arms of a compassionate friend, who knows what it is to love, and who will soon be torn from the object of her affections."

During this time, my father and brother had saluted Fedor with a sentiment of fear. They understood at once that he must have followed Maria into Siberia, and that he was warranted to reproach them with the misfortunes of her whom he loved.

"Fedor," said my father with embarrassment, "an evil fate, an evil genius has precipitated us all, one after another, into the abyss. I see too late that we might have been more happy by the exercise of greater moderation."

"Happy, my uncle!—I have been more happy than any other human being; I am so still; because the heart of Maria and mine are broken together."

He spoke low, his head hung down, and he repressed his sobs with difficulty. He looked stedfastly to the earth, as if he thought this would soon be the dwelling of Maria, and then turned his eyes towards her, full of love and tenderness. Luschin, the Officer, had remained at some distance from this scene of sorrow, and sobbed aloud. He afterwards departed, in order to announce our arrival to the Governor. Fedor entreated us to enter his cabin, to which he slowly reconducted Maria. There my father related to him in detail the fall of our house. Fedor exclaimed in a tone of despair—

"God! ah God! how shall I be able to support this scene of misery!"

I at first thought that this exclamation regarded

regarded our misfortunes, and was much surprised; but I soon perceived that he had scarcely listened to what had been said, and that his eyes were fixed on his wife, whose extreme weakness, in consequence of the emotion she had undergone, evinced that her end approached. Love and despair absorbed his whole soul, and left room for no other sentiment.

Very soon the other Menzikofs came to enquire who had arrived in the bark. They immediately knew us; but none of them uttered the slightest reproach, not even by a look. They treated us with the greatest benevolence, after the example of Maria, who, although so much exhausted as to be unable to speak, still regarded us with the most tender and benevolent smile.

We had not yet announced their deliverance, when the Major, entering the cabin, said to them—

“God be praised, my good friends, you

are free! I have orders to announce it to you in the name of the Empress."

This news was received with much joy by the Menzikofs, and even by Maria, who, making a great effort, exclaimed—

"They will be no longer unfortunate. From what a weight am I relieved!—and how good is God! But we are still more happy," continued she, turning towards her Fedor; "are we not already free?"

The Menzikofs now offered to receive us into their dwelling, and to give it up to us altogether on their departure. Thanks to the cares of Fedor, it is more commodious, and larger than we could have believed it possible in this desolate region.

Not being willing to leave Maria, I remained in her cabin, which she quitted no more! I informed Fedor that his father was likewise banished, at which he was greatly affected. I wished to divert him from his present grief, and requested him

to go to my father, and learn the particulars; but he shook his head in silence, and regarded Maria, as if he would have said—“I cannot leave her!” In the evening he led her to the stone before the door of the cabin, as she had expressed a desire to behold the setting sun; she remained some minutes leaning upon the bosom of her husband.

“Fedor,” said she, “should I not be happy to expire at this moment such as I am—supported in thy arms, and with this superb spectacle before my eyes!”

She pronounced these few words with a certain degree of agitation, and her paleness augmented every moment. Fedor trembled, his eyes assumed a look of wildness, and all his features became contracted, much more so than those of his dying wife, whose life was gradually and tranquilly extinguished.

“It is then finished,” she said, in a voice
o 4 scarcely

scarcely articulate; "the solemn hour is arrived, which is to separate us for a short time. God be praised that I have been preserved until this moment: contrary to my expectations, I leave my family happy, I expire on thy bosom—and I leave you a friend!" She made an effort to join our hands in her's.—"Adieu, Catherine!" said she to me, smiling; "salute Sophia, send her my last farewell, replace to her Maria; tell likewise all my relations that——"

She could not finish the sentence, and immediately sunk down. Fedor carried her to bed; she took his hand, and turned towards him her dim, and half-closed eyes; then collecting all her strength, she said to him—

"Fedor, I love you!"

After pronouncing these words, she appeared to sleep; but, alas! she awoke no more!

I trembled lest the grief of my cousin
should

should display itself in cries of despair; but he remained calmly seated by her bedside: he took the hands of Maria, crossed them on her breast, covered them with kisses, and said, in a low voice—

“Angel of Heaven, repose in peace! I have never voluntarily given you pain! I will not now disturb thy celestial happiness by my despair; I adored thee, and I still adore thee.”

He placed himself on his knees by the side of the bed, and from time to time kissed the hands, or the cold lips of his adored Maria. Ah Sophia! she has been happy during her short life! But who merited better than herself to be so?

On the news of Maria's death, our two families ran to us bathed in tears, and nothing was to be heard but the most heart-rending sobs. Old Tolstoi appeared to be most afflicted.

“She is dead, and I live!” said he, with an expression, of which it is impossible to convey an adequate idea. The eyes of Fedor were alone dry; he even smiled, and I cannot paint to you the effect produced by this melancholy smile. He heard not a word that was said, and never for a moment removed his eyes from the bed where Maria had expired. It was whilst he continued in this state of stupefaction, that we removed the body of his wife: he recovered a little, consented to take some nourishment, and seemed not to perceive that Maria was no longer near him. We never mentioned her name in his presence; his eyes wandered as if in search of some object, but were soon again fixed on the same point, and sometimes an angelic smile escaped from his lips.

On the following day, he enquired with calmness respecting the arrangements we had made for her funeral; he wished once again to behold his dear Maria. He kissed
her

her altered visage, closed himself the coffin, accompanied the body, and saw it deposited in the earth. The officer, who waits for the family of Menzikof, assisted also. He is inconsolable for her loss. This worthy man ceased not to supplicate Fedor, as he was not included in the exile of his relatives, to return to Moscow; but he replied not, and retired to seat himself in silence on the tomb of Maria, which is not two paces distant from the hill. They followed him, in order to induce him to depart; but he replied to their solicitations in a very decisive tone—
“I leave not Maria!”
Adieu, my friend!—my profound sorrow for the melancholy separation of two such faithful hearts, makes me for a while forget my own misfortunes.
LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

Catherine Dolgorucki to Sophia Rocals.

Berezof, September.

HARD-BY the tomb of your two friends, the most faithful of lovers, I write you, my dear Sophia, and transmit by our worthy officer a packet of their letters, as well as that which Fedor has entrusted to my care. This heroic man remained here, as long as it was possible, to settle some affairs relative to Menzikof's family, which had already set out for Tobolsck, in order to resign to us their habitation—to us—to the Dolgoruckis! How capricious is destiny! After
their

their departure, Fedor never spoke but to me alone, and that only when I addressed him, and in broken and obscure sentences. He almost constantly sat upon Maria's tomb, with a green veil in his hands, and said to me on displaying it—

“ I have never resigned this pledge of her attachment, from my first dawn of hope to the present day. She religiously preserved what she promised on giving it me—*fidelity unto death.*”

One day, a bark came down the river, and landed Prince Lukisch, Fedor's father, near the cottage. On coming ashore, the first object which attracted his attention, was the sight of his son, whom he believed to be in a foreign land, far distant from Russia, and in the full enjoyment of health and liberty. This unexpected sight affected him so powerfully, that he fell down senseless by the side of the tomb. Fedor raised him up, recognised him, and rushed into his

his arms. I drew near, with a view to prevent conversation which could only prove very distressing to his father; for Fedor knew, and often affirmed, that the Dolgoruckis were the cause of Maria's death.

"What purpose," said he once to me, "has their detestable ambition answered, but to break two hearts zealously attached to each other?"

Dreading lest such a sentiment might again escape him in a paroxysm of sorrow, I suggested to my uncle, upon his recovery, the propriety of treating his son with delicacy.

"No," said Fedor, "fear nothing, Catherine—I will not afflict Maria."

And he was as gentle as a lamb. Once only it had nearly escaped from him during a fit of irritation; but I had only to say to him—"Fedor, Maria hears you—
you

you will not afflict her!"—and he held his tongue.

As I clearly foresaw that he could not long support the struggles which agitated him, I endeavoured to prepare his father for his death.

"Ah!" said he to his son, with an expression of anguish; "thou couldst live for Menzikof, and canst thou not live for thy father?"

Fedor cast himself at his feet.

"Can I do that which is impossible?" replied he; "can I restore to life that generous and sensible heart, with which mine was inseparably leagued? I will do, I solemnly promise, all that my strength shall allow; I wish not to afflict either you, or her, but without her I cannot live. As often as I view the hillock, under which she lies,

lies, I wish to be able——My father, thou knowest not what I suffer!"

After this he only lived a month. On the approach of death, he requested me to place next his heart her green veil, and I have fulfilled his wish. His father was frantic with despair.

"It was I, my son," exclaimed he, "it was my criminal ambition that destroyed thee!"

The body of Fedor was interred beside that of Maria.

Farewell, Sophia! I live here in the cottage they so lately occupied, at a little distance from their graves. I contemplate them, and weep; and when I hear the hollow murmurs of the wind among the birch-trees, I think their spirits call me hence. Oh Sophia! when shall I also repose in the tomb?

tomb?—These two faithful hearts were happy, a thousand times more than ever will be your poor Catherine. Fedor gave it to me in charge, to impart his last wishes to his friend Sapieha, to whom you will be kind enough to forward the packet here enclosed, and the other to his friend Gustavus.—Adieu, worthy Sophia! when will your unfortunate Catherine, like Maria and Fedor, find rest in the tomb?

FINIS.

