

THE SNOW-STORM.

A TALE FROM THE RUSSIAN OF BOHEMIA.

About the year 1811—a period so memorable in the history of our country, and in the domain of Nenardoff a rich proprietor named Gabrielovich. He was noted for his kind disposition and hospitable habits. His household at various times of the year, and in the suburbs, who resorted there in the evenings—the elder ones, in their order to enjoy a quiet game of cards with their host and his wife, and the younger ones to be entertained by the good practices of Mari, a fair girl of seventeen, the only child and heiress of Gabrielovich.

Mari used to read French romances, and as the result and consequence, was deeply in love. The object of her affection was an aim at penniless young esquire belonging to a neighboring town, and then at home, on whom she returned her love with equal ardor. It is scarcely necessary to add, that the young lady's parents had strictly forbidden her to think of such an alliance; and whenever they met the lover, they received him with about that amount of friendliness which they would have bestowed on an ex-collector of taxes. Our young lovers, however, managed to get up correspondence, and used to meet in secret beneath the shadow of the pine-trees or of the chapel. On these occasions they discussed their mutual feelings, and discussed the success of unjust rigour, and formed various projects. At length they naturally came to the conclusion that, as the will of cruel parents opposed their marriage, they must do all they could to accomplish it in secret. It was the young gentleman who first propounded this proposition, and it was most favourably received by the young lady.

"The approach of winter put a stop to their interviews, but their correspondence went on with increased frequency. One day an acquaintance of the sisters Vladimir conjured a beloved to leave her home, and consent to a private marriage. 'We will disappear,' he said, 'in a short time; and you will be able to throw yourselves at your parents' feet, who, touched by our heroic constancy, will exclaim: 'Children, come to our arms.' For a long time she hesitated, and then at length she determined on a certain day she should appear at supper, but retire early to her room, on the pretext of a violent headache.

"The time came for the secret, and they were both slipped out through a back-door, near which they would hide sledges waiting to convey them to the village of Jadrino, the first place to which Vladimir and the girl were to go.

"Having made her preparations, and written a long letter of excuse to her parents, Mari retired to her chamber, and, with a trembling hand, she had clasped of a headache, which certainly was more than a pretext, for nervous excitement had made her really ill. Her father and mother watched her, and, with anxious questions, asked her: 'How do you feel now, Mari; are you still suffering?' Their fond solicitude went to the young girl's heart, and, at the approach of evening, her agitation increased. At dinner she ate nothing, and soon afterwards rose to take leave of her parents. They embraced her, and, according to her usual custom, gave her their blessing. Mari could scarcely refrain from weeping. When she reached her chamber, she threw herself upon an arm-chair, and wept away her waiting hours in tears of joy and cheer, but at length succeeded.

"It was a snow-storm that night; the wind howled outside the house, and shook the windows. The young girl, however, as soon as the household had retired to rest, wrapped herself up in thick muffings, and followed by her maid, carrying a valise, galloped away. They found her waiting at the door of the inn, where she started at a rapid pace. We will leave this to increase their journey, while we return to Vladimir.

"All that day he had been actively employed. In the morning, he had visited the priest and the sexton, in order to have the service performed for the ceremony; and then he set off to procure the necessary witnesses. The first acquaintance to whom he addressed himself was a young officer of his regiment, to whom he wished. 'Such an adventure,' he said, 'reminded him pleasantly of his youth. He promised on Vladimir's request, and, promising to procure for him the other two witnesses. Accordingly, there appeared at dinner the geometriest Schmidt, with his master and apprentice, and the lawyer Lapsravnik, a lad of seventeen, who had just entered the Uhlan corps. Both promised Vladimir to stand by him to the last; and the household, having heard of the young man's promises, returned to their dwelling, in order to complete his preparations. Having dispatched a servant on his errand, and relying with the sledges, Mari, he himself got ready to start, and Vladimir for Jadrino. Scarcely had he got out, when the storm commenced with violence, and soon a thick white snow appeared. The entire horizon was covered with a thick yellow cloud, whence fell masses rather than flakes of snow; and soon all distinctions in the landscape were lost. The man who had Vladimir tried to find his way. His horse went on at random, sometimes climbing over

haaps of snow, sometimes falling into ravines. Every moment the sledge was in imminent danger of being upset; and, in addition, the pleasant conceit forced itself on Vladimir's mind. He thought to himself: 'I shall be nowhere to be seen; and after two hours of this sort of work, the poor horses was ready to drop from fatigue.

"At length a sort of dark line became visible in front; he urged his horse onwards, and found himself on the borders of a forest. 'Oh,' he exclaimed, 'I am all right now; I shall be safe here.' He entered the forest, the thick branches were so thickly interlaced that the snow had not penetrated through them. He took the horse up on his back, and went on readily, while Vladimir felt his spirits revive.

"However, as they say in the fairy tales, he went on and on, and yet could not find Jadrino. His poor tired steed with the utmost difficulty dragged him to the other side of the forest; and by the time he had done so, the storm had ceased, and the moon shone out. No appearance, however, of Jadrino; before him lay extended a large plain, surrounded by a cluster of four or five houses. He hastened towards the nearest, and descending from the sledge, he entered the house, and found the door flung open, and the white beard of an old man appeared.

"'What do you want?' asked the old man, looking at Vladimir. 'Jadrino! Now ten versta.' 'At this reply, Vladimir felt like a criminal condemned to execution.

"'Can you,' said he, 'furnish me with horses to go there?'

"'We have no horses.' 'Well, then, a guide: I will give him whatever he asks for.'

"'Wait, then,' said the old man; 'I'll send my son.'

"His window was carefully closed, and a considerable time elapsed. Vladimir, whose impatience became quite uncontrolable, knocked again loudly at the shutter.

"'What do you want?' 'Your son.'

"'He is coming; he is dressing himself. Are you not ready to send yourself.'

"'No, no; send out your son.'

"At length a young lad, with a stout stick in his hand, made his appearance, and led the way to the stable, where the horses had passed.

"'What o'clock is it?' asked Vladimir. 'Day will soon break.'

"The young lad had begun to gild the east, and the village cocks were crowing when they arrived at Jadrino. The church door was closed, Vladimir, having paid and dismissed the guide, hastened towards the priest's dwelling. 'What was he about to hear?'

"Let us first inquire what was going on in the mansion of the master of the inn. It was nothing but a dull morning, the husband got up as usual and went into the sitting-room—Gabriel Gabrielovich in his woolen vest and night-cap, and Petrowna in her dressing-gown.

"'You was served, and Gabriel sent a maid to inquire for Mari. The girl returned with the answer, that she had not seen her, and was restless night, but that she now felt better, and was coming down. In a few minutes Mari entered and embraced her parents.

"'You have got my poor little one,' asked her father.

"'Better,' was the answer. 'The day passed on usual; but towards evening, the husband came very ill and feverish. The family physician was summoned from the nearest town, and when he arrived he found his patient in such a state that he did not think of anything but on the brink of the grave.'

"Nothing was known of nocturnal flight, as the waiting-maid, for her own sake, was prudently not allowed to have any conversation with other accomplices, even after having drunk wine, breathe a word on the subject, so much did all parties dread the secret of the deed. The next morning, having deliberated, raved so incessantly about Vladimir, that her mother could not doubt that her illness was caused by love. She first said to her father, and then to her friends on the subject; and, as the result of the conference, it was unanimously decided that Mari was destined to marry the esquire—Mourin, who had just returned from the army, and did not insure happiness—and other fine maxims of the same kind.

"The invalid recovered. Vladimir, during her illness, had been appointed at the house; and it was determined, that his unexpected good fortune should be announced to him—that he should be told that he had just received the bride. What was the astonishment of the proud owners of Nenardoff, when they received in reply a letter from the young esquire, in which he informed them that he did never return to their dwelling again, and prayed them to forget an unhappy being, for whom death was the only refuge.

"A few days afterwards, they learned that Vladimir had rejoined the army. It was in 1812. No one ever mentioned his name to

Mari, nor did she herself allude to him in any way. Two or three months elapsed, and one day she saw his name mentioned amongst the officers who had distinguished themselves at the battle of Borodino. He was a mortal wounded. She faintly could not have a relapse of fever, from which she slowly recovered.

"Not long afterwards, her father died, leaving her a considerable fortune. Wealth, however, brought her no consolation; she wept with her mother; and vowed never to leave her. They left their residence at Nenardoff, and went to live in the village of Jadrino. Some years afterwards thronged around the rich and lovely heiress, but to none of them did she vouchsafe the smallest encouragement. She married a fine looking young man; but she silently shook her head. Vladimir was no more: he expired at Moscow on the eve of the day the French entered that city. To Mari, his memory seemed sacred: she treasured up his books they had read together, his drawings, and the notes he had written to her—everything that could point her remembrance of the unhappy young man.

"About that time a war, glorious for our country, ended. The triumphant regiments returned from the front, and the officers rushed in crowds to greet them. The officers who had set on more strappings, came back with storm and fire, and continued to do so. The young man, however, did not appear. 'Time of ineffaceable glory! How the heart of a Russian then bounded at the name of his country.'

"A soldier of fortune, named Vourmin, wearing in his button-hole the Cross of St. George, and on his face an interesting paleness, came to spend a few months' leave of absence on his country. He was a young man, of a fine, well-handmade, pleasing, intellectual, silent, and reserved. There was a species of mystery in the demeanor of Vourmin, which piqued the curiosity of the officers, and he was soon noticed. He evidently admired her, paid her every possible attention—he did not desire to speak of love. He had acquired a habit of fixing his bright dark eyes upon her half by covertly, and with an expression that seemed to declare the approach of a decisive explanation. Already he had said to her: 'I have seen you in a decided business; and Petrowna rejoiced at the thought, that her daughter would at length have a husband worthy of her.

"One morning, the young lady was seated in her drawing-room, Vourmin entered and enquired for Mari.

"'I am in the garden,' replied Petrowna. 'You will see her there, if you wish to see her.'

"The colonel went out hastily; and Petrowna, with a sigh, thought of the young man's behalf. 'What he would do, I hope everything will be arranged to-day.'

"Vourmin found his lady-love dressed in white, seated before a looking-glass, with a book on her knee, like any heroine of romance. After the interchange of a few common-place sentences, Vourmin, with admirable agility, told her a long time, and was not desirous of opening his mind to her, and now begged her to listen to him for a few moments.

"'I have closed my book, and cast down her eyes in token of assent.

"'I love you,' exclaimed Vourmin—'I love you ardently!'

"Mari trembled her head a little more. 'I have committed the imprudence of seeing you, of listening to you, every day. (Mari recollected the first letter of St. Creux.) You are so true, so good, so worthy, that my memory of your sweet face and gentle voice will form henceforward the joy and the torture of my existence; and I shall never be able to forget you. I must reveal to you a strange secret, which places between us an unsurmountable barrier.'

"'That barrier,' murmured Mari, 'has always been between us, and I have never known it to exist.' 'I know, replied Vourmin in a low voice, 'that you have loved; but death and three years of mourning have separated Mari, do not take me to be a last confession, and do not deprive me of the happiness of thinking that you might have been mine, if not.'

"'If it is not too late, I conjure you, you pierce me to the heart.'

"'Yes, I have the consoling thought that you would have been mine. But I am the most ungrateful man in the world. I have loved you, you pierce me to the heart.'

"Mari raised her eyes with a look of amazement. 'I am married,' murmured the colonel—'married to your former betrothed, and I neither know my wife is, nor where she is, nor whether I shall ever meet her.'

"'What can you mean? What is the mystery? But go on. I beg of you—I will tell you afterwards.'

"'Here, then,' said the colonel, 'are the facts. I have just received an order to join my regiment. I arrived late one evening at a station, and had just given orders to have the horses immediately harnessed, when suddenly I perceived a man in the middle of the mane of the horse and the postilion both strongly advised me to defer my journey; but, tempted

or not tempted, I was resolved to push on. The postilion led me into his stable, where he could shorten the way, by crossing a river whose bank he knew very well. However, he missed the right ford, and brought me to a place which was not a ford at all. The storm continued to rage, but at length I was able to get myself light. I hastened towards it, and found myself outside a church, whence the light proceeded. The road was open. Sledges were waiting outside, and several persons were lying in the porch. One of them called to me. 'This way! This way! I got out of my sledges in a twinkling, and entered the church. One of the people in the porch said: 'In the name of Heaven, what has delayed you? You have been fainting, and we were all on the point of returning home.'

"Half bewildered and half amazed, I resolved to follow up the adventure. Indeed, I was allowed no time to deliberate, for my impatient friends hurried me into the interior of the church, which was faintly lit up by two or three torches. A girl was seated on a bench in the shadow, while another standing beside her was rubbing her temples.

"'At length,' said the latter: 'I had been praying for you, come to me. My God be praised for you!'

"An old priest approached, and said: 'Shall we begin a legend by all means, my reverend father?' 'I replied I gladly.

"They assisted the young girl to rise: she seemed very pretty. Through a levity quite foreign to her nature, she was, in an inconceivable, I advanced beside her to the altar. Her servant and the three men who were present were so much occupied about her, that they scarcely glanced at me. I was, as I have said, very fine, and my head was enveloped in the fur hood of my travelling-peppes.

"In a few moments we were married. 'Embrace each other,' said one of the witnesses. My wife turned her pale face towards me. For a moment she gazed, as if petrified, then, falling backwards she expired. 'It is not he! It is not he!'

"Out of the church I rushed, before the astonished gaze of the people, and I thought to think of arresting my flight. I jumped into the sledge, and soon left all pursuit behind."

"And," said Mari, "did you never ascertain what became of the young man who was at the station. The servant whom I had with me was killed in battle, so that every clue seems lost, by which I might discover the scene which has so long occupied me so dearly."

"Mari turned her pale face fully towards him, and seized his hands.

"What," cried Vourmin, "was it you?" "Don't you recognise me?" "A long and close embrace was the reply."

THE HEALTH OF CATTLE.—The American Veterinarian contains the following valuable paragraphs promoting the health in cattle. These are good and in the following paragraphs expressed in few words.

Mix, occasionally, one part of salt in four, five, or six parts of wood ashes, and give the mixture to different kinds of stock, summer and winter. It promotes their appetites, and tends to keep them in healthy condition. It is said to be good against bots in horses, murrain in cattle, and rot in sheep.

Horse-radish root is valuable for cattle. It creates an appetite, and is good for watery humors, and is particularly good for that which is unwell. It is good for colds troubled with the heat. If animals will not eat it voluntarily, cut it up fine and mix it with potatoes and meal.

Feed all animals regularly. They not only look for their food at the usual time, but the stomach indicates the want at the stated period. Therefore feed morning, noon and evening, as near the same time each day as possible.

Guard against the cold and injurious extremes of satiating with excess and starving with want. Food should be of a suitable quality, and proportioned to the strength and constitution of animals, to their production in young and milk, and to their labor and exercise. Animals that labour need far more food, and that which is far more nutritious than those that are idle.