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*POPULAR STORIES AND  
LEGENDS.*

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TOLSTOY.

POPULAR STORIES  
AND  
LEGENDS.

By LEO TOLSTOY.

*Newly translated by N. . . . and*

*A. C. Fifield.*

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**The Free Age Press,**  
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## Where Love Is, There God Is.

THERE lived in a town a cobbler named Martin Avdeitch. He lived in a small room half sunk below the level of the street, with one window which opened on the street. From this window he watched the passers by, and although he could only see their feet Martin could recognise acquaintances by their boots. He had lived in the same room many years and he knew many people. There was hardly a pair of boots in the neighbourhood that had not passed once or twice through his hands. Some he re-soled, some he patched or mended, others he put new toes to. Often through the window he could see his handiwork. He had plenty of work because he sewed well, used good leather, was moderate in his prices and kept his word. If he could finish the work by the day fixed he would undertake it; if not he would say so frankly and never try to deceive. And every one knew him and he was never short of work.

Martin had always been a good man, but as he approached old age he began to think more about his soul and drew nearer to God. While he was still an apprentice his wife died, leaving him one boy, three years old. None of the other children had lived; they had all died in infancy. At first Martin wanted to send his little son to live with his sister in the country, but afterwards he felt sorry for the child. "It would be hard for my little Kapiton to grow up in a strange family," he thought; "I will keep him with me."

Martin left his master and went to live in the little room with his child. But it seemed that he was to have no happiness with his children. Just as the boy had grown old enough to begin to help his father, to whom he was

the delight of life, he fell ill, lay burning with fever for a week, and died. Martin buried his son, and his heart was filled with despair. He despaired so great that he upbraided God. Such misery overwhelmed him that he prayed for death and reproached God for not taking him, an old man, rather than his only beloved son. And Martin ceased to go to church.

One day an old man from Martin's own village came to see him. He had been absent for eight years, and Martin told him about his life and complained bitterly of his sorrow.

"I have no longer any wish to live, man of God," said the cobbler. "My only desire is to die quickly. That is the only thing I pray for. I am a man without hope now."

"You don't speak well, Martin," said the old man: "We must not judge God's ways. Not by our understanding, but by God's judgment. God ordained that your son should die and that you should live. Therefore it must be better thus. If you despair, it is only because you want to live for your own happiness."

"And what else should I live for?" Martin asked.

"You should live for God, Martin," said the old man. "He gives you life, and you must live for Him. When you live for God, you will cease to grieve over anything, and all will seem easy to you."

Martin was silent for awhile.

"How must one live for God?" he asked.

The old man said: "Christ taught us how to live for God. Can you read? Then buy the Gospels and read them and then you will learn how to live for God. It is all explained there."

The words fell into Martin's heart. He went the same day and bought the Gospels in large print and began to read.

At first he intended to read only on holidays, but when he began, the words made him feel so happy that he got into the habit of reading every day. Sometimes he would become so absorbed that all the oil in the lamp would burn out, and still he could not tear himself from the book. And so Martin began to read every evening, and

the more he read, the better he understood what God required of him, and how he should live for God ; and the more and more happy and contented he became. Formerly when he went to bed, he used to lie sighing and moaning and thinking of his little Kapiton ; now he only said : "Glory to God, glory to God ! Thy will be done !"

From that time Martin's whole life was changed. Formerly on holidays, he used to go to the inn and drink tea ; and sometimes he would not refuse a glass of brandy either. He would drink with a friend, and although he was never drunk, he would get rather the worse for liquor and talk foolishly and quarrel and dispute with people. Now all this went from him, and his life became peaceful and contented. In the morning he would sit down to work, and when working-time was over he would take the lamp from its hook, place it on the table, get the book from the shelf and open it and settle down to his reading. The more he read, the better he understood, and the more serene and cheerful he became.

One day Martin sat reading late into the night. He was reading the sixth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, and he came to the verses : "And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other ; and him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee, and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."

He read the verses where Jesus says : "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say ? Whosoever cometh to me and heareth my sayings and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like. He is like a man that built a house and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock ; and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house and could not shake it, for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the sand, against which the stream did beat vehemently and immediately it fell ; and the ruin of that house was great."

Martin read these words, and his soul was glad. He

took off his spectacles, laid them upon the book, leant his elbows upon the table, and fell into deep thought, weighing his own life by the words he had just read.

"How is my house built—upon a rock or on the sand?" he thought. "If it is on the rock, it is well. But though it is all so easy, sitting here alone, and it seems as though you really have done everything God commands, yet the moment you forget, you fall into sin again. Still, I will try on. I feel so happy. Help me, Lord!"

He sat thinking till it was long past his bed-time, yet he could not leave the book. He began the seventh chapter. He read about the centurion and the widow's son, and about the answer to John's disciples, and came to the story of the rich Pharisee who invited Christ to his house. He read how the woman who was a sinner anointed his feet and washed them with her tears, and how he forgave her. He came to the forty-fourth verse, and read:

"And he turned to the woman, and said to Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet, but she has washed my feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss, but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint, but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment."

"Thou gavest me no water for my feet," Martin repeated; "thou gavest me no kiss, my head with oil thou anointedest not." And he took off his spectacles, laid them on the book, and again was lost in thought.

"Just such a Pharisee as I am! Like me, he only thought of himself—how to drink tea and lie warm and comfortable, but never thinking about his guest. Himself he cared for, but he had no care for his guest. And the guest was the Lord himself. If he came to visit me, should I do the same?"

Martin rested his head on both hands, and unknown to himself he fell asleep.

Suddenly something seemed to breathe into his ear—"Martin," it whispered.

Martin started up from his sleep. "Who is there?" he asked. He turned round and looked at the door—no one

was there. Again he dozed off. Suddenly he heard quite distinctly: "Martin! Martin! Look into the street to-morrow; I will come."

Martin awoke again, rose from his chair, and rubbed his eyes, but could not be certain whether he had really heard the words or only dreamed them. So he put out the lamp and went to bed.

The next morning he rose before daylight, prayed to God, lighted the stove, prepared the cabbage soup and buckwheat gruel, put the water in the tea urn (samovar) and set it to boil, put on his apron and sat down at the window to work.

And all the time he worked, his thoughts dwelt on what had happened in the night. He thought and thought and could not be sure whether he had only dreamed of the voice or whether he had really heard it.

"Such things have happened," he said to himself.

Thus he sat at the window, thinking, and all that day he looked out into the street more than he worked, and whenever anyone went by in unfamiliar boots, he would bend down and stare up through the window, to see the face as well as the feet. The house porter (dvornik) passed by, in new felt boots, then the water carrier, then an old soldier of the time of Nicolas I., shod in old patched felt boots and carrying a spade. Martin recognised him by the boots. His name was Stephen, and he lived with a neighbouring merchant who gave him a home out of charity. His occupation consisted in helping the house porter. He began to clear away the snow before Martin's window. Martin looked up at him and went on with his work.

"I am growing crazy in my old age;" he thought, "Stephen is clearing the snow away and I imagine that Christ is coming to me. Old dotard that I am!"

He made a few stitches more, and then he felt a desire to see Stephen again. He looked out, and saw that Stephen had leaned the spade against the wall and was resting, and trying to warm himself. He was very old and worn out, and seemed to have no strength even to shovel the snow. "I think I will offer him some tea," thought Martin; "and, by the way, the samovar is just boiling

over." He stuck his awl into his work, rose, placed the samovar on the table, made the tea and tapped at the window. Stephen turned round and came to the window. Martin beckoned to him and went to open the door. "Come in and warm yourself," he said; "you must be frozen."

"God bless you!" said Stephen. "It is true that my bones are aching." He came in, shook off the snow, and wiped his feet not to dirty the floor; but he was so weak that he tottered in doing it.

"Don't trouble to wipe your feet," said Martin. "I'll clean up the floor. That's my business. You sit down and have some tea."

Martin poured out two glasses of tea and gave one to his guest; his own he poured into the saucer and blew on it.

Stephen finished his glass, turned it upside down, put the remains of the lump of sugar on top, and began to thank Martin. But it was clear he wanted more.

"Have another glass," said Martin, pouring out two more glasses. As he drank, he glanced again and again towards the window.

"Are you expecting any one?" said his guest.

"Well, I am ashamed even to say whom I expect. And I can't say that I am really expecting any one, but a word has fallen into my heart. Whether it was a vision or whether I really heard it, I cannot say. You see how it was, brother, last night I was reading the Gospel about Jesus Christ, the little father, how he lived among men and how he suffered. You have heard about it, I suppose."

"Yes, I have heard," said Stephen, "but I am an ignorant man. I can't read."

"Well, you see, I was reading about him and about how he lived on earth. And I read about how he came to the Pharisee, and how the Pharisee didn't give him any welcome. And as I was reading, I thought to myself: How could this man receive Christ, the little father, so badly? If, I thought, such a thing could possibly happen to me, why I shouldn't know how to do enough to welcome him. But the Pharisee did nothing for him! Well, little

brother, as I was thinking, I fell asleep, and while I dozed I heard someone call my name. I started up, and it seemed to me I heard a voice whispering, 'Expect me, I will come to-morrow.' Twice it whispered. And would you believe, these words so fell into my heart that, although I scold myself for it, still I cannot help expecting him."

Stephen shook his head, but said nothing. He finished his glass and laid it on its side, but Martin stood it up and filled it again.

"Drink to your heart's content. You see, I have been thinking that when the little father lived among us men he didn't despise anyone. He preached mostly to simple folk, he walked mostly with the poor, and he picked his disciples out of our brothers, sinners like ourselves, working men. Says he: He who exalts himself shall be abased, and he who abases himself shall be exalted. You call me Lord, says he, but, says he, I will wash your feet. He who would be the first, says he, let him be the servant of all, because, says he, blessed are the poor, the humble, the meek and the merciful."

Stephen had forgotten his tea. He was an old man, easily moved to tears, and sitting there, listening, the tears rolled down his face.

"Well, have some more," said Martin.

But Stephen crossed himself, made his thanks, pushed away the glass, and got up.

"Thank you, Martin Avdévitch," he said, "you have fed me and comforted me, body and soul."

"Quite welcome," said Martin, "come again, I am always glad to have a guest." Stephen departed and Martin poured out the remaining tea, drank it, put away the dishes and sat down again near the window to work. And as he stitched, he glanced again and again at the window—waiting for Christ and thinking of him and of his works. And his heart was full of the sayings of Christ.

Two soldiers went by, one wearing Government boots and the other his own; then came the master of the next house in shining goloshes; then the baker with his basket. They all passed by, and then came a woman in woolien

stockings and country-made shoes. She also went by, but stopped near the window-sill. Martin looked up through the window and saw that she was a stranger, poorly dressed and carrying a baby. She was standing by the wall with her back to the wind, trying to cover the child, only she had nothing to cover it with. Her clothes were only fit for the summer, and poor and old. And through the window Martin could hear the baby crying and the woman trying to comfort it, but the child could not be comforted. Martin arose, opened the door, went to the steps and called out: "Hey, my good woman, hey!" The woman heard him and turned round. "What do you stand there in the cold for, with the child? Come in here. You can comfort him better in the warmth. Come in here."

The woman was surprised at the words, but seeing an old old man with apron and spectacles calling her into a house, she followed him.

They went down the steps and entered the little room. Martin led the woman to his bed. "There," he said, "sit down there, closer to the stove. Warm yourself and feed the baby!"

"I have no milk," said the woman, "I have not eaten since this morning." Still she laid the child to her breast.

Martin shook his head, went to the table, brought a basin and the loaf, opened the oven-door, and poured some cabbage soup into the basin. Then he went to the pot with the gruel, but it was not ready yet, so he put the soup on the table by itself. Then he cut some bread, and took a cloth from the hook and spread it on the table.

"Sit down," he said, "and eat; I will mind the little one. I have had children of my own, so I know how to manage them."

The woman crossed herself, sat down at the table and began to eat, while Martin sat on the bed near the baby. He tried to smack his lips to the child, but, as he had no teeth, he could not manage it very well, and the child went on crying. Then Martin tried to amuse him by pretending to poke him with his finger. He would shake his finger at the child, and thrust it right up to his mouth, and then snatch it away again quickly. He was afraid to

let the child suck his finger, because it was black with wax. The child stared and stared at the finger, till at last he stopped crying, and then began to laugh. Martin was delighted.

Meanwhile the woman was eating, and then she began to tell Martin who she was and where she was going.

"I am a soldier's wife," she said; "they sent my husband far away somewhere eight months ago, and I have heard nothing of him since. I was in service as a cook, but then the baby came, and they would not let me stay with a child. So I have been struggling to live for three months without a place, and I have sold everything I had for food. I wanted to go as a wet-nurse, but nobody would take me; they said I was too thin. Now I have just been to a merchant's wife, where a woman from my village is in service, and she has promised to take me. I thought she would let me come at once, but she tells me I am not to come before next week. She lives a long way off, and I have quite worn myself out and the dear little one too. I am thankful that the mistress of our lodgings pities us and keeps us there for nothing for Christ's sake, otherwise I don't know how we should live."

Martin sighed. "Haven't you got any warm clothing, at any rate?" he said.

"How could I have any, little father? Yesterday I pawned my last shawl for fivepence (twenty kopecks)."

Then the woman walked to the bed and took the child. Martin arose, went to the cupboard, rummaged about in it and brought out an old jacket.

"There," he said; "it's not very good, but still it will do to wrap up a little."

The woman looked at the jacket and then at Martin, then she took the jacket, and burst into tears. Martin turned away, and dived under the bed again; pulled out a little box, rummaged about in it for some time, and then came and sat down opposite the woman again.

"God bless you, little father," said the woman. "It is Christ that must have sent me under your window. The child would have frozen. When I went out it was quite mild, but now it is freezing hard. Surely it must

have been Christ that bid you to look out of the window, little father, and to pity me, poor miserable."

Martin smiled and said: "Yes, he did tell me. I wasn't looking out of the window without a reason."

And he told the woman his dream, and how he heard the voice promise that Christ would visit him to-day.

"Everything may happen," said the woman; and she rose and put on the jacket, wrapped the child in it also, and again thanked Martin with all her heart.

"Take this for Christ's sake," said Martin, and he gave her twenty kopecks. "Now go and get your shawl." Then they both crossed themselves, and Martin opened the door and the woman went out.

When she was gone, Martin finished the soup, put the things away, and sat down again to work. But as he worked he never forgot to keep a watch on the window; immediately a shadow darkened it he would look up to see who it was. Strangers, and people he knew, went by, but no one of importance. At last an old apple woman stopped just in front of his window. She was carrying a basket of apples, of which she had sold almost all, and but few remained. Over her shoulder she held a sack of chips, which she had probably gathered at some new building, and was now taking home. The sack had evidently tired her for she stopped to shift it to the other shoulder. She put the apple basket on a post, dropped the sack on the footpath, and began to shake the chips together. While she was doing this, a boy in a ragged cap rushed up to the basket, seized an apple and made off as fast as he could. The old woman saw him, turned round, and caught him by the sleeve. The boy struggled to get free, but the woman held fast with both hands, and at last she knocked off his cap and caught him by the hair. The boy screamed and the woman scolded. Martin did not even wait to stick his awl into the table; he threw everything on the floor, ran out and stumbled up the steps, dropping his spectacles as he did so. When he got into the street, the old woman was boxing the boy's ears and swearing and threatening to give him to the policeman, and the boy was struggling and screaming. "I didn't take it! What

are you hitting me for? Let me go." Martin ran in between and separated them; then he took the boy by the hand and cried, "Let him go, little mother; forgive him for Christ's sake."

"I'll forgive him so that he won't forget it till next spring! I'll take him to the police, the rascal!"

Martin again tried to pacify the old woman.

"Let him go, little mother, he won't do it again. Let him go, for Christ's sake."

The old woman let go; the boy tried to run away but Martin held him fast.

"Ask the little mother's pardon," he said, "and don't do it again. I saw you take it."

The boy began to cry, and asked the old woman's pardon.

"That's all right. And now here's an apple for you. Take it," and Martin took an apple from the basket and gave it to the boy. "I will pay, little mother," he said to the woman.

"You'll spoil them like that, the rascals," said the woman. "He ought to be rewarded so that he couldn't sit down for a week."

"Ah, ah, little mother," said Martin, "that may be right in our eyes, but in God's sight it is not right. It he must be thrashed for taking an apple what must be done to us for our sins?"

The old woman was silent.

And Martin told her the parable about the king who pardoned one who owed him a large sum, and how the debtor then went and persecuted a man who owed him a little sum. The woman listened and the boy also stood still and listened.

"God bids us forgive," said the old cobbler, "else we shall not be forgiven. Every one must be pardoned, and especially children, who have no understanding." The old woman shook her head and sighed.

"Yes," she said, "that is all very well; but they've got dreadfully spoilt."

"Then it is for us old people to teach them better," said Martin.

"That is what I say," answered the old woman. "I

had seven children, but only one daughter's left now." And she began to tell him how she lived with her daughter, and how many grandchildren she had. "I have very little strength left now, but still I toil on. I am fond of the children, and they are very good children too. No one loves me as much as they do. Annie will not leave me when I am at home. It is always grandmother; dear grandmother; darling grannie,"—and the old woman was quite overcome.

"Of course," she said, looking at the boy, "he is only a child, God bless him."

She tried to lift the sack to her shoulder, but the boy ran up and said: "Let me carry it, little mother; I am going your way!"

The old woman shook her head, and let him take the sack.

They went down the street together, and the woman even forgot to ask Martin to pay for the apple. Martin stood gazing after them for a long time and listening as they went along talking to each other.

When they were quite out of sight, he went indoors, found his spectacles on the steps where they lay unbroken, picked up his awl, and again sat down to work. But soon it grew dark and he could no longer put the thread into the holes; then he saw the lamplighter pass by to light the lamps in the street, and he thought, "I suppose it must be time to light up." So he trimmed his lamp, hung it up and continued his work. Presently he finished the boot he had been sewing. He turned it around, looked at it, and saw that it was well done. So he put away the tools, swept up the clippings, gathered together his threads and awls and leather, took down the lamp and placed it on the table. Then he took the Gospels from the shelf and tried to open them at the place he had marked the evening before with a strip of leather, but they opened at another place. Then Martin suddenly remembered his dream of the night before, and he had hardly recollected it when he seemed to hear a noise behind him—footsteps in the room. He turned round, and looked. In the dark corner people seemed to be standing—dim forms he could hardly make out.

And a voice whispered in his ear "Martin, Martin! Don't you know me?"

"Who is it?" said Martin.

"It is I," said the voice.

And the form of Stephen came out from the dark corner, smiled, and vanished like a cloud; and there was no one there.

"And this is I," said the voice. And the woman with the child appeared out of the darkness, and the woman smiled and the child laughed, and they also vanished.

"And this is I," said the voice again. And the old woman and the boy appeared, smiled, and vanished.

Martin's soul was filled with gladness. He crossed himself, put on his spectacles, and began to read just where the book had opened. At the beginning of the page he read:—

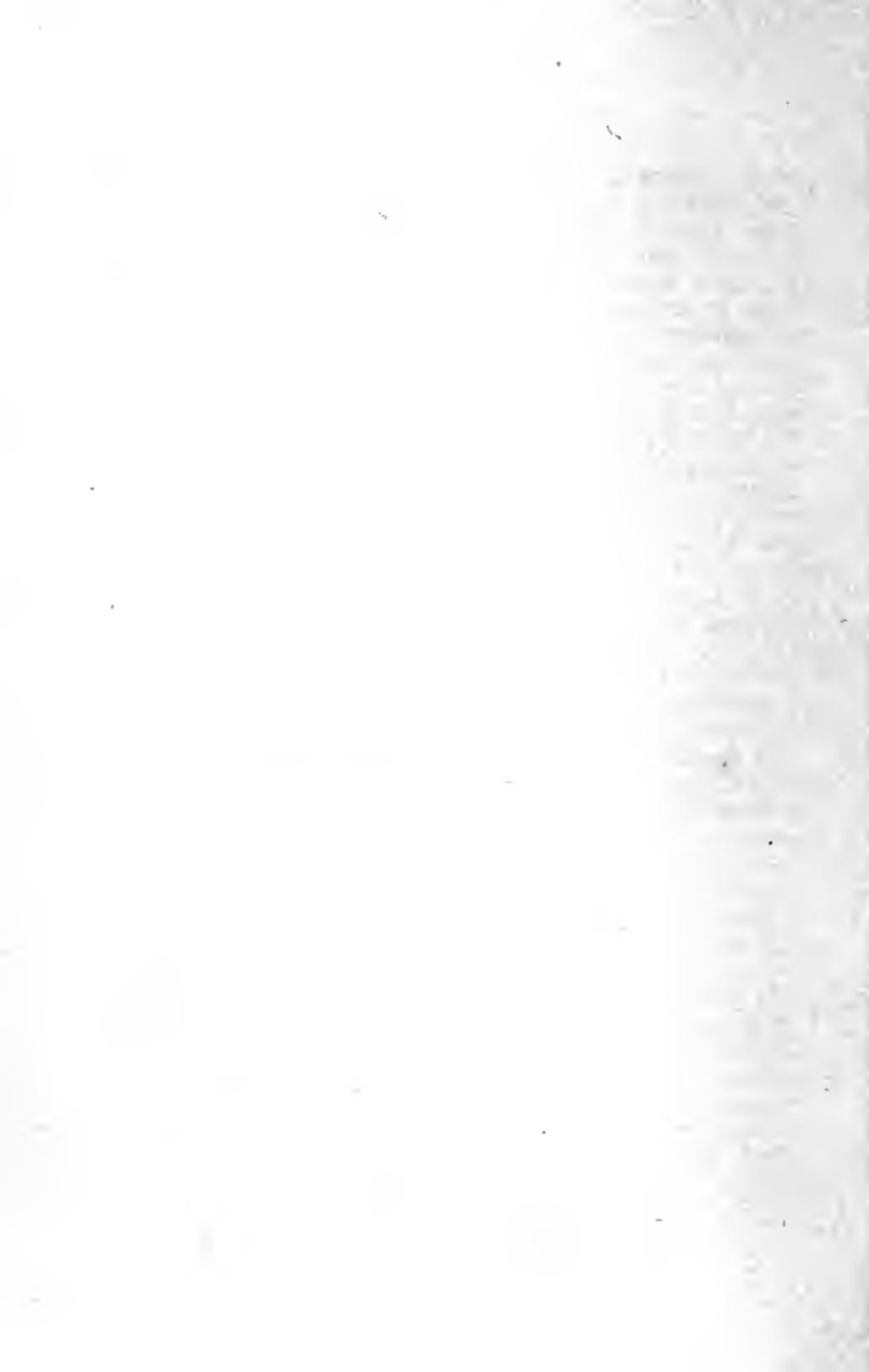
"I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in."

And at the bottom of the page he read:—

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

And Martin understood that his dream had not deceived him, that Christ had indeed come to him that day, and that he had indeed welcomed him.

*Translated by N. . . .  
and A. C. Fifield.*



# If You Neglect the Little Fire, You Can't Put Out the Big One.

---

"Then came Peter and said to him, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Until seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

"Therefore is the Kingdom of Heaven likened unto a certain king which would make a reckoning with his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not wherewith to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant, therefore, fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And the lord of that servant, being moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

"But that servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants which owed him a hundred pence; and he laid hold on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay what thou owest. So his fellow servant fell down and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay that which was due.

"So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were exceeding sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord called him unto him, and saith to him, Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou besoughtest me: shouldst not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow servant, even as I had mercy on thee? And his

lord was wroth and delivered him to his tormentors, till he should pay all that was due.

“So also shall my Heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not everyone his brother from your hearts.” (Matt. xviii 21-35.)

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In a certain village there lived a peasant called Iván Shtcherbakoff. He was doing well, he was in the full strength of his years and the best workman in the village, and he had three grown up sons: one was married, one was about to marry, and the third was a lad who could drive the horses, and was beginning to plough. Iván's old wife was a clever and thrifty housekeeper, and his daughter-in-law quiet and industrious. The only one of the family who had to be fed and could not work was Iván's old father, who had been lying on the oven very bad with asthma for the last seven years. Iván had plenty of everything: three horses and a foal, a cow with a calf, and fifteen sheep. The women made the men's clothes and their footwear, and worked in the fields, and the men earned the bread. There was always food enough, always last year's corn left over after the new crops. The oats alone paid all the taxes and their usual necessities. Iván might have lived in peace and content with his children, but over the hedge lived his neighbour Gabriel the Lame—the son of Gordey Ivanoff. And there was hatred between Gabriel and Iván.

When old Gordey was alive and Iván's father was master, they had been quite friendly. If the women needed a sieve or a bucket, or the men a corn bag or a wheel, they would lend them to each other, and mutually afford help as good neighbours should. If a calf strayed into the barn, he would only be chased away and his owner asked to be careful because the corn or the hay had not been stacked yet. But they never thought of locking the animal into the shed or the barn, or of hiding things, or of slandering each other.

That was in the old men's time. But when the young people became masters, everything changed.

It all began out of nothing.

A hen belonging to Iván's daughter-in-law began to lay

early—on Holy Week (before Easter). Every day the young woman could find an egg in the cart box under the barn. One day some children frightened the hen, and she flew over the hedge into the neighbour's plot and laid there. The young woman heard her hen clucking, but she thought "I've no time now; I must clean the house up for Easter. I'll get it later." In the evening she went to look in the box under the barn, but there was no egg there. Then she asked her father and brothers-in-law whether they had taken it. No, they had not; but Tarass, the youngest brother, said: "Your hen laid an egg in the neighbour's yard; I heard her clucking there, and then she flew back over the hedge." The young woman went to look at the hen; she was sitting on the perch near the cock, her eyes half closed, and half asleep. She could not say where she had laid the egg, so it was useless to ask her; and the young woman went to the neighbours.

The old mother came to meet her.

"Well," she said, "what is it?"

"My hen flew over into your yard this morning, grandmother. I've come to see if she hasn't laid an egg somewhere."

"We never saw her. Our own hens have been laying for a long time, thank God. We have enough eggs of our own, and we don't need other people's. We don't go begging for eggs in other people's houses, my good girl."

This angered the young woman, and she answered sharply; the other woman retorted, and they began to scold. Iván's wife passed by carrying water, and she joined in. Gabriel's wife flew out of the house and began to rail at her neighbours, recalling things that had happened, and also things that had not happened. The brawl waxed high and all the women screamed together, trying to put in as many words as they could, and all the words were bad ones. "You this and that—you thief—you slut—you hussy—you let your old father-in-law starve for want of food." . . .

"And you are a beggar and have stolen my sieve! And you've got our yoke too; give it back at once."

They caught up the yoke and began tugging at it, and

spilt the water and tore each other's kerchiefs and at last came to blows. Gabriel, who was returning from the fields, came to help his wife, and then Iván and his son jumped up, and they all tumbled down in a heap together. Iván was a strong man and he soon pushed them all apart, and tore out a piece of Gabriel's beard. Then other people came running up and separated the fighters with some difficulty.

That was how it all began. Gabriel wrapped the piece of his beard in a piece of paper, and laid a complaint before the district law-court.

"I didn't grow my beard for the purpose of giving Iván the pleasure of pulling it out, curse him," he said.

And his wife boasted to the neighbours that they would have Iván judged and sent to Siberia. So the enmity continued on both sides.

The old man had remonstrated with them from the first, sitting on the stove, but they would not listen to him.

"All this that you do is silly, children," he said; "and you make a great noise about nothing. Just think, the whole matter began about an egg. Well, the children took the egg;—God be with them, there is no great loss in one egg. God has given enough for all. They spoke ill to you—well, correct them, teach them to speak better. You quarrelled and fought each other. Well, that does happen; men are sinful. But at least now go and make it up, and that will end it. But if you begin to pay each other back, it will be the worse for you both."

But the young people would not listen to him; they thought he was talking idle talk, and that he had grown foolish in his old age.

And Iván would not ask forgiveness of his neighbour.

"I didn't tear out his beard. He pulled it out himself, and his son broke my button holes and tore my shirt off my back. Here it is." So Iván also brought an action against Gabriel, and the case was judged by the justice of the peace and also in the district court. While this was going on the bolt disappeared out of Gabriel's cart. His women accused Iván's son. "We saw him sneaking up to the cart under our windows last night, and the

woman next door said he went to the alehouse and tried to sell the bolt to the keeper."

Again they went to law, and at home daily there was wrangling, and sometimes blows. The children quarrelled, following the example of their elders; and when the women went to the river to wash the clothes there was more nagging and wagging of tongues than scouring of linen.

At first the men accused each other falsely, but soon they really began to take each other's things whenever they could lay hands upon them. And they taught their women and children to do the same. And their lives grew worse and worse. They went to law against each other at the village assemblies, at the justices of the peace, and at the district courts, till all the judges were sick of them. Sometimes Gabriel was fined or imprisoned for a day or two, and sometimes Iván. And the more harm they did to each other the more furious they became. When dogs attack each other the more they fight the more savage their fury becomes. If you strike the dog from behind he thinks it is his opponent and bites with added passion. It was the same with these peasants. When either was punished with imprisonment or a fine, his resentment doubled, and rankled in his heart. "Wait a bit; I'll pay you off some day." And so it went on for six years.

Only the old man on the stove remonstrated and tried to stop it.

"What are you doing children?" he would say. "Leave your quarrels and attend to your own affairs, and cease to bear malice. It will be much better. The more you get angry the worse it is for you all." But they would not listen to him.

At last in the seventh year, during a marriage in the village, Iván's daughter-in-law tried to shame Gabriel before all the people, by accusing him of having been caught stealing horses.

Gabriel, who was drunk, lost control of himself, and struck the woman so hard that she fell down, and lay in bed for a week. This delighted Iván, because the woman was expecting a child. So he immediately went

to the magistrate with a petition. "Now," he thought, "I'll finish him; this time he can't escape Siberia." But again Iván was unsuccessful. The magistrate would not accept the petition. The woman was examined, but she had risen from her bed and there was no signs of the blow. Then Iván went to the justice of the peace, who sent the case to the district court. Here Iván took strong measures; he bribed the clerk and the elder with half a vedro (a gallon and a half) of the best brandy, and finally succeeded in getting Gabriel condemned to be flogged. The clerk read Gabriel's sentence in the court: "The court has decided to punish the peasant Gabriel Gordéiff with twenty strokes of the lash, to be administered at the district law-court."

Iván looked across at Gabriel to see how he took it. Gabriel listened to the end, grew as white as a cloth, turned on his heel, and went out into the hall. Iván also was going out, to see to his horse, when he heard Gabriel say:

"Very well; he will beat my back, and it will burn; but let him take care something of his doesn't begin to burn before long."

When Iván heard this he turned back immediately and said to the judges: "Righteous judges! He threatens to burn my house. Listen to him; he said it before witnesses."

The judges called Gabriel back.

"Is it true that you said this?"

"I said nothing. Beat me; it is in your power. I am in the right, therefore I must suffer. But to him all things are allowed."

He wanted to say something more, but his face and lips were twitching and he turned away to the wall. Even the judges were startled by his appearance. "Indeed" they thought, "he may do some evil to himself or to his neighbour."

And one of them, an old man, said:

"Let me advise you, my friends: better make it up and come to an understanding. Do you think you did well, Gabriel, to strike a pregnant woman? It is well that God had mercy on her; else what a sin might have been yours!

Is that well? Submit and ask his pardon. And he will pardon you. And we will alter the sentence."

The clerk heard this and said :

"That is impossible, because according to the 117th Article, the dissentient parties did not come to terms, and therefore the sentence of the court must be carried into effect."

But the old judge would not listen.

"Don't talk nonsense, my friend," he said. "The article which is most important is that we must remember God, and God has ordered us to live in peace with one another."

And again he tried to argue with the peasants. But they would not be reconciled. Gabriel interrupted him.

"I am nearly fifty," he said, "and I have a married son, and I have never been flogged in my life, and now Iván, curse him, has brought me to this shame, and I am to ask his pardon! Well, it is enough. He shall remember me, also."

Gabriel's voice broke. He could say no more, and turned and went out.

The court-house was ten versts (seven miles) from the village, and it was late when Iván returned home. The women had gone to meet the cattle, so Iván unharnessed the horse, put everything right, and went into the cottage. There was no one there; the women were with the cattle, and the children had not returned from the fields. Iván sat down on a bench and pondered. He recalled how Gabriel's sentence had been read to him, and how white he had grown, and how he had turned his face to the wall. And Iván's heart smote him. He thought of what he would feel if he had been condemned to be flogged, and he felt sorry for Gabriel.

Then he heard his father coughing and turning about on the stove, and soon the old man put his legs out, crawled down, tottered to the nearest bench, and sat down. The effort was too much for him, and he coughed and coughed but when at last he got his breath, he leant his arm on the table and said: "Well, is he sentenced?"

"Yes," said Iván, "twenty strokes of the lash."

The old man shook his head.

"You do ill, Iván," he said. "You do great evil—not to him but to yourself. Well, they will beat him. And will you be the happier for it?"

"He won't do it again," said Iván.

"Do what? What has he done worse than you?"

Iván grew angry. "What has he done?" cried he. "He has beaten the girl to death, and now he threatens to burn our house. Am I to go and thank him for this?"

The old man sighed and said: "You, Iván, are free to go about all over the wide world, and I have lain for seven years on the oven. So you think you know everything and I know nothing. No, my son, you can see nothing, because hatred has blinded you. The sins of other people stand before your eyes, but your own you put behind your back. Why do you say: He does ill? If he alone did ill, there would be no evil in the world. Evil is not born from one man—it is born among two men. You see his errors, but your own you do not see. If he alone were evil and you were good there would be no evil. Who pulled out his beard? Who stole his hay? Who dragged him about the law courts? And now you turn it all upon him. You yourself live badly, and that is where the evil comes from. I did not live so, nor did I teach you to do so. Do you think that was how we managed with the old man, Gabriel's father? We lived as good neighbours ought to live. If his flour was finished, his wife would come and say: Uncle Froll, we want some flour. And I would say: Very well, my dear, go into the loft and take as much as you need. Or if he had no one to send with his horses, I would say to you: Go, Vania, look after his horses. And if I was in need of anything, I would go to him: Uncle Gordey, I want this or that. Yes, uncle Froll, take what you please. That was how things stood with us. And you could have lived just as pleasantly. And now what have you done? The other day there was a soldier here talking about Plevna. Well now, there's war between you worse than any Plevna. Is that true life? And what a sin it is! You are the householder, the master. It will be asked of you, What are you teaching your women and children? To wrangle and to hate? The other day

Tarasska, the little boy, was swearing at Arina, and his mother was delighted and laughed. Is that well? You are responsible. Think of your soul. Is it well, if you say one word to me and I answer you two? If you strike me, and I strike you back? No, my dear, when Christ lived on earth, that is not what he taught us simple people. If a man speak ill to you, answer him not, and his own conscience will smite him. That's what he taught, my son. And if he strike you, turn the other cheek, meaning: 'Strike me again if I deserve it.' And his conscience will smite him, and he will humble himself and listen to you. That is how he taught us, and not to let our backs get up. Well, why don't you speak? Am I right?"

Iván listened, but was silent. The old man began to cough, and when at last he got his breath again, he went on:

"Do you think Christ taught us anything bad? It is all for our own good. Think of your earthly life even; is it better or worse since you began this Plevna between you? Try and count up what you have spent on your lawsuits, and on your food and lodging and journeys. Your sons have grown like strong eagles and ought to be living in happiness and bettering you, instead of which your wealth is going. And why? Always for the same reason. Because of your pride. You ought to be ploughing and sowing in the fields with your sons, but to harm your enemy you go to the magistrate and to the lawyer instead. And if you do not plough and sow at the right time our mother earth will not bring forth fruit. Why were the oat crops bad? When did you sow them? When you returned from town. And what did you get by your lawsuit? You only made it hotter for yourself. Why will you not keep to your work with your sons, plough the earth in the fields and look after your house, and if any man offends you forgive him in the name of God? You will have more time for your work and your soul will know content."

Iván was silent.

"Listen to me, Vania, I am an old man. Go and harness the brown horse and get back to the court as fast as you

can and stop the whole business. Next morning, go to Gabriel and make it up with him and ask him come here, which will be the more timely as to-morrow is a holiday (it was the eve of the Virgin's Nativity), buy a bottle of brandy, give him tea, finish all your quarrels, and make up your mind to have no more. And tell your women and children so."

Iván sighed, and thought, "Surely the old man speaks the truth"; and his heart grew light within him. Only he could not see how he could settle the matter, and how to make peace with Gabriel.

But the old man seemed to guess his thoughts and said:

"Go, now, Vania, do not put it off. Put out the fire at the beginning; if you let it spread, it will be too late."

He wanted to say something more, but had no time: the women came into the room and began chattering like magpies. They had already heard everything: how Gabriel had been condemned to be flogged, and how he threatened to set fire to Iván's house. They had found out everything, and had added more of their own, and had hastened to quarrel with Gabriel's women in the meadow. Gabriel's daughter-in-law had threatened them with the magistrate. The magistrate was on Gabriel's side, and would turn the whole affair to his advantage, and the schoolmaster had already written a petition to the Emperor, and in the petition everything was set forth, also about the cart-bolt and the orchard; and half of Iván's farm would be given to Gabriel.

Iván listened to them, and his heart hardened, and he ceased to wish to make peace with Gabriel.

A master has always much to do. Iván did not stay talking with the women, but rose and left the room, and went to the barn and then to the shed. When he had finished his work, he returned to the yard. The sun had set and the boys were just returning from the fields. They had been sowing the spring corn for the winter. Iván asked what they had done, helped them to put things in order, and set aside a torn horse-collar to be mended. Then he went into the shed to work at some poles. But it was getting quite dark, so he decided to

leave the poles till next day, gave the cattle their food, opened the gate for Tarasska, who was leading the horses into the pasture for the night, closed it and shot the bolt. "Now supper and then to sleep," thought Iván, and taking up the horse-collar he walked to the cottage. He had quite forgotten about Gabriel and about what his father had been saying, but just as he stood with his hand on the door-handle he suddenly heard Gabriel over the hedge swearing in a hoarse voice. "May the devil take him," Gabriel shouted to someone. "I should like to kill him." All Iván's former hatred rose in his heart at the words. He stopped, stood still and listened while Gabriel swore, shook his head, and then entered his cottage. A lamp was burning in the room, his daughter-in-law sat in a corner spinning, his old wife was preparing supper; his eldest son was plaiting bark for shoes, his second son was sitting by the table reading.

Everything would have been pleasant and cheerful, were it not for that thorn in his side—the wicked neighbour.

Iván strode in furiously, threw the cat down from the bench, and scolded the women because the wash tub was in its wrong place. He sat down, sick at heart, and began mending the horse collar, but he could not get Gabriel out of his head: how he had threatened him at court and how just now he had shouted in a hoarse voice, "I should like to kill him!"

The old woman gave Tarass his supper, and when he had finished he put on his long coat and his fur coat, tied on his girdle, took a hunch of bread and went out into the street to the horses. The elder brother was about to go with him, but Iván himself arose and went out on the steps.

The night was very dark, with great clouds overhead, and a wind had arisen. Iván went down into the street, helped his son on to the horse, drove the little foal after him, and stood looking and listening as Tarass rode down the lane, met the other boys, when they all rode out of hearing together. And Iván stood waiting and waiting in the night with Gabriel's words ringing in his ears: "Take care something of yours doesn't burn."

"He won't care what happens to himself," thought Iván. "The weather is dry and there is a wind. He'll get in somewhere through the back yard and set fire to some dry stuff and get away; and he'll burn everything and nobody will be able to prove he did it. If only I could catch him, I wouldn't let him off so easily!" And his thoughts so took possession of him, that instead of going indoors, he went down into the street and round the corner. "I think I'd better look round the house. Who knows what he may be up to?" And stepping softly he passed the gate and crept on by the edge. He turned a corner and there, at the other end of the hedge he seemed suddenly to see something move and disappear again. Iván stopped short and listened, peering into the darkness; all was still, only the leaves whispered and the straw rustled in the breeze. It had seemed to Iván black as pitch, but now his eyes had grown accustomed to the darkness, and he could distinguish the corner, and the plough, and an opening in the hedge. He stood watching, but nothing appeared.

"I suppose it was nothing," thought Iván. "Still I had better go round," and he crept stealthily along the hedge. He stepped so softly in his bark shoes that he could not hear his own footfalls. He came to the corner and there, near the plough, something flashed for a second and disappeared.

Iván's heart seemed to stop beating, and he stood breathless. There was a brighter flash on the same spot, and in the light Iván could clearly see a man crouching on the ground with his back to him, lighting a bundle of hay which he held in his hands. Iván's heart fluttered like a bird, and he started running with great strides. He did not feel his own limbs under him.

"He won't get away this time. I'll catch him on the spot." But before he had reached the opening in the hedge, there was a great blaze, which caught the straw near the barn, and a sheet of flame shot up towards the eaves. And there stood Gabriel, the lame, clearly visible.

Iván rushed at him like a hawk at a lark.

"I'll tie you up this time," he thought.

But the lame man heard the steps, looked behind him and like a hare hobbled swiftly along the barn-wall.

"You won't get away," shouted Iván, rushing at him.

He almost caught him by the collar, but Gabriel slipped out of his grip, and he clutched the lame man's coat-tails instead. The coat tore, and Iván fell to the ground. He sprang up immediately, shouting "Stop thief," and ran on.

Gabriel had reached his own yard, but Iván rushed in. And just as he was about to seize him, something smashed down upon his head, right on the forehead. Gabriel had seized an oak stake and struck at Iván with all his strength.

Iván turned sick and dizzy, and sparks flashed before his eyes; then all grew dark and he sank to the ground. When he came to himself, Gabriel had disappeared; all around was light as day, and behind him was a great roaring and rushing and cracking. He turned around, and there was his big barn ablaze and the little barn just catching, and the wind driving the flames and the smoke and burning shreds of straw towards the cottage.

"Brothers, brothers\*" shouted Iván, putting his hands to his thighs in despair. "Oh, if I had only pulled out the straw and stamped it out! Brothers, why didn't I do it!" He tried to cry out, but his heart beat too quickly, and his voice failed him. He tried to run, but his legs refused to move and shook beneath him. He staggered forward, but the beating of his heart suffocated him and he had to stop and get his breath. When he had crept round the fence and reached the fire, both barns were a mass of flame, and the gate and a corner of the cottage were beginning to burn. The flames were pouring out of the windows, and it was impossible to get into the yard. A crowd had gathered but nothing could be done. The neighbouring peasants were busy getting their belongings out into the street and driving the cattle out of the yards. Soon Gabriel's house caught, and a wind arose and carried the flames across the street, and half the village was ablaze.

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\* Russian peasants address each other collectively as "Brothers," irrespective of family relationships.—*Trans.*

At Iván's farm they only had time to save the old man, and to run out themselves in just what they had on; nothing else could be saved. All the cattle were burnt (except the horses, who were in the field), the hens, the carts and ploughs and harrows, the women's boxes and the corn in the bins—all were destroyed.

At Gabriel's farm they saved the cattle and rescued some of the household things. The fire burned the whole night. Iván stood near his house, gazing into the flames and muttering unceasingly, "Brothers, what have I done? I had only to pull out the straw and stamp it out!" But when the roof fell in he rushed into the flames, caught hold of a burning log and began to pull at it. The women called him back, but he succeeded in pulling the log out, and went in after another. But he staggered and fell into the flames, and his sons rushed in and rescued him. His hair and beard and hands were burned, and his dress was spoiled, but he seemed insensible to everything.

"He has gone crazy with grief," said the people. The fire began to slacken, and still Iván stood there, muttering "If only I had pulled it out!"

Towards morning the son of the village Elder came up to Iván.

"Uncle Iván, your father is dying and sends for you to bid him farewell."

Iván had forgotten about his father and could not understand.

"How," he said, "my father? Whom has he sent for?"

"He sends for you to say farewell to him. He is lying in our cottage, dying. Come, uncle Iván." And the Elder's son took him by the arm, and Iván followed him.

Some of the burning straw had fallen on the old man when he was being carried out, and had burned him. He had been taken to the Elder's cottage, in a distant part of the village which had not caught fire.

When Iván reached the cottage there was no one there but the old women and the children sitting on the stove. All the others were at the fire. Iván's father lay on the

bench with a candle in his hand and his eyes fixed on the door. When his son entered, he moved a little, and the old woman came up and told him that Iván had arrived. He called him to come nearer, and when Iván had done so he began to speak.

"Vania, what did I tell you? Who burned the village?"

"It was he, father," said Iván, "I caught him! I saw him thrust the fire under the eaves. If I only had pulled out the handful of burning straw and stamped out the fire, nothing would have happened."

"Iván," said the old man, "I am dying, and you also will die some day. Whose fault was it?"

Iván stared at his father, and was silent, unable to say a word.

"Before God, tell me, whose fault was it? What did I say to you?"

Only then did Iván come to himself and understand. And he gave a great sob and said:

"It was my fault, father!" And he fell on his knees by the old man and wept, crying: "Forgive me, father, I have sinned before you and before God!"

The old man's hands moved feebly; he took the candle in his left hand and tried to lift the right to his forehead to cross himself, but he had not the strength and his hand fell down helpless.

"Lord, I thank Thee! Lord, I thank Thee!" he said and again fixed his eyes upon his son.

"Vania! Listen, Vania!"

"Yes, father."

"What will you do now?"

Iván was still weeping.

"I don't know, father," he said. "Father, I don't know how I can live now?"

The old man closed his eyes and his lips moved as if he were gathering his strength; and then he opened his eyes again and said: "It will be well. If you live with God all will be well with you." He was silent for a while and then smiled and said: "Look you, Vania, do not tell who set fire to the house. If you hide another's sin, God will forgive yours too." And the old man took

the candle in both hands, clasped them on his breast, sighed, and stretched out his legs, and died.

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Iván did not tell about Gabriel, so no one knew how the fire had begun; and he forgot his anger against Gabriel. Gabriel wondered why Iván had not accused him, and at first he feared him, but afterwards he grew used to him again. They ceased to quarrel, and so did their families. While they were re-building they lived together in one cottage and when the village had been rebuilt on a bigger scale, they still remained neighbours as before.

And they were as good friends as the old men before them had been. And Iván always carried in mind his father's words and God's command that the fire must be put out in the beginning.

If any man did him an evil, he tried not to revenge himself, but to mend the evil. If any man spoke evil to him, he tried not to answer worse, but to teach the man not to speak evil. And he taught his women and children in the same way. And his affairs flourished and he lived better than before.

*Translated by N.  
and A. C. Fifield.*

# How Much Land Does a Man Need ?

## I.

An elder sister came from town to visit her younger sister in the country. The elder was married to a shop-keeper in the city, the younger to a peasant in the village. While they were drinking tea and talking, the elder sister began to boast of her life in town, of how well she lived, and what large rooms they had, and how nicely she dressed herself and her children, and what good things she had to eat and drink, and how she amused herself at shows, theatres, and entertainments.

The younger sister was piqued, and began to speak slightly of the life of tradesmen, and to praise her own life as a peasant.

"I wouldn't change my life for yours," she said; "if we do live poorly, at any rate, we haven't any fears. You live better, but you must always be getting a lot, or else you will lose the lot. To-day you are rich, but perhaps to-morrow you may be begging in the streets. Our peasant's life is more sure, at any rate. A peasant's stomach is lean, but it lasts long. We shall never get rich, but we shall always have enough."

"Enough," said the elder sister: "Yes, perhaps you will have enough,—like pigs and calves! But you have no comforts, no society, no manners. However much your good man may work, you'll live in muck, and you'll die in muck, and your children after you."

"What does it matter?" said the younger sister. "That's our life. But at least we are safe. We bend

our backs to no one, we're afraid of no one. You in the towns live in the midst of temptations. To-day you are all right, but to-morrow the Evil One may come and tempt your husband with cards, or wine, or women; and everything is lost. Isn't that true?"

Pakhom, the husband, was lying on the oven\* listening to the women's chatter.

"That's true," he said, "that's God's truth. When you have worked and turned our little mother earth about almost since you were a baby, you don't get any nonsense into your head. The only trouble is that we haven't enough land. If we could have as much land as we liked, I shouldn't be afraid of any one, not even of the devil himself."

The women finished their tea, talked a little about their dresses, and then put away the things and went to bed.

But the devil had been sitting behind the oven all the time, and had heard everything. He was delighted that the woman had made her husband boast that if he had enough land, he would be a match for the devil himself.

"Very well," says he, "I'll have a brush with you. I'll give you a lot of land. And that's how I'll get you."

## II.

Near the village lived a lady who owned three hundred acres bordering on the land of the peasants. She lived in peace with the peasants and never ill-treated them; but one day she took an old soldier as her steward, and he began to worry the peasants with fines. Pakhom was as careful as he could be, but there was always either a horse found in the oats, or a cow that had strayed into the garden, or calves were caught in the meadows—and always a fine for everything.

Pakhom paid the fines, but there were always blows and scolding at home now. Often during that summer he was led into sin by the steward, and he was glad when the time came to house the cattle for the winter. He grudged the fodder, but at least he would not be worried.

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\* The top of the great brick oven in Russian peasants' houses is used as couch and bedstead.—*Trans.*

During the winter the rumour spread that the lady was selling her land, and that the local *dvornik*\* wanted to buy it. The news made the peasants groan.

"Worse and worse," they said; "if the *dvornik* gets that land he'll suck us dry with fines. Worse than the lady. We can't live without the land; we are surrounded by it on all sides."

So all the Elders of the village went to the lady and begged her not to sell the land to the *dvornik*, but to them instead, promising to pay a higher price for it. The lady agreed. Then the peasants tried to arrange together to buy the whole land in common. They held several meetings, but could never settle anything. The devil made them quarrel each time, and they could come to no agreement. At last they decided that each man should buy for himself as much of the land as he was able. The lady agreed to this also. Then Pakhom heard that a neighbour had bought sixty acres, and that the lady had consented to let him pay half the money by instalments in the course of two years. Pakhom became envious. "They'll buy all the land," he thought, "and I shall get nothing." So he talked about it to his wife.

"Everybody is buying," he said, "we must also buy thirty acres. We can't manage otherwise. That *dvornik* with his fines will ruin us."

So they thought the matter over. They already had a hundred roubles (£10) laid by; and now they sold the foal and half the bees; then they hired out their son as a workman. And so at last they collected half the money.

When he had the money, Pakhom chose fifty acres with some wood-land, and went to the lady to make his bargain. They settled the matter, and Pakhom paid a deposit. Then they went to town and had the deeds drawn up, and Pakhom paid down half the purchase money, and promised to pay the other half in two years.

So Pakhom went to live on his own land. He borrowed

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\* In Russian towns *dvornik* is a "house-porter," but in the rural districts of middle Russia the name is applied to a small class of peasant freeholders, men who have left their communes, and by favour, trickery, or purchase have become possessed of separate holdings. Between these men and the communes they have left there is generally trouble.—*Trans.*

seeds, and sowed the new fields, and gathered a fine harvest. In one year he paid all his debts, both to the lady and to his brother-in-law. He became a landed proprietor. He ploughed and sowed his own land, and pastured his cattle on his own meadows, and cut his own hay, and felled his own trees. Whenever he went out to plough the land, which was now his own for ever, or to look at the young crops or meadows, his heart was filled with joy. The grass and the flowers seemed to him quite different from any others. Formerly, when he happened to pass that way, this particular piece of land had never seemed different from any other; but now it was a quite unusual and uncommon piece of land.

### III.

So Pakhom lived, and was happy. And all would have been well if only the peasants had not begun to trespass on his fields and pastures. He complained and warned them again and again, but they would not stop. One day the herdsmen would let the cows wander into the meadows; the next night horses would break from their pickets and trample the wheat. Pakhom drove them away and forgave them time after time without going to law. But at last he grew tired of this; he went to the district law court and complained. He knew the peasants did not trespass intentionally, but because they had too little land. But he thought: "I can't let them off every time, They'll finish up by trampling the whole of my land. I must teach them a lesson."

So he taught them in the court once, twice, and several peasants were summoned and fined. Then the peasants got angry and began to injure Pakhom purposely. One night one got into his wood and cut down a dozen lindens and peeled off the bark to make shoes. The next time Pakhom went into the wood he saw the light coming through the trees in one spot. He walked up, and there were the felled trees lying on the ground and the stumps sticking up among them. If at least the rascal had left one tree in every clump and cut down only the outside ones! he thought. But, no! The clumps had been cut clean down.

Pakhom was furious. "Akh!" he thought; "if only I could find out who did this I would pay him out."

He thought and thought. Who could it be?

"It must be Simon," he said at last; "there is no one else." So he went to Simon's yard and looked everywhere, but could find no bark, and he only quarrelled with Simon for nothing. But after that he was more certain than ever that Simon had done it, and he went to the court. Simon was prosecuted, once, twice. In the end he was acquitted. There were no proofs. Pakhom was more furious than ever, and quarrelled with the village Elder and the judges.

"You protect thieves," he said; "if you lived honestly yourselves you wouldn't acquit them." So Pakhom quarrelled with the judges, and with his neighbours. These even threatened to set fire to his house and woods.

Pakhom had more room on his farm now, but there was less room in the world for him.

About that time it was rumoured that the people were starting off to settle on new lands. And Pakhom thought: "I shouldn't like to leave my land, but if some of our people were to go we should have more room. I would buy their lands and it would be much better living. We are getting too crowded."

One day Pakhom was sitting at home when a travelling peasant came in. They gave him food and told him to stay the night. Then they began to talk and ask where he had come from. The peasant said he had come from the South—from the Volga, where he had been working. Little by little he told them how the people were coming and settling there; how peasants from his own village had come and had been taken into the community and given thirty acres each. "The land is so good," he said, "that when they sow rye, it comes up tall enough to hide a horse, and so thick that five handfuls make a sheaf. One peasant came there quite a poor man," he said; "nothing but his hands to work with; and now he has six horses and two cows."

Pakhom's heart kindled.

"Why should we struggle along in this crowded place, he thought, "when we could live well there. I'll sell my

house and land, and with the money I'll start afresh over there and get everything new. Here in this crowded hole a man is always getting into trouble. Only I must find out everything thoroughly myself first."

In the spring he started. He went down the Volga to Samara in a steamer. Then he travelled on foot for nearly three hundred miles, and at last he reached the place. He found everything just as he had been told. The peasants were living comfortably and each had thirty acres given him. All new-comers were welcomed by the community. And if any one had money, he could buy as much more land as he liked for his own private property, besides his allotment. The best land was only two shillings an acre and you could buy as much as you wanted.

Pakhom found out all he wanted to know, returned home in the early autumn, and began to sell out. He sold his land at a good profit, sold his house and cattle, struck his name off the roll of the community, and the following spring started with his family for the new place.

#### IV.

At last he reached the new lands and enrolled himself with one of the large village communities. He feasted the Elders, settled all his papers, was duly received into the community, and had one hundred and fifty acres besides pasture-lands, given him in separate lots, for the five members of his family. He built a cottage and bought cattle. He now had three times as much land as he had before, and the land was rich. His living also was much better. He had plenty of both cornland and pasturage, and could keep as many cattle as he pleased.

At first while he was settling and building, Pakhom was delighted with it all; but later on he found that here also the place was getting crowded. The first year he sowed wheat on a part of his allotment and gathered a good harvest. So he wanted to sow more wheat, but "hadn't enough land, and what he had wasn't suitable." In those parts wheat is grown either on grass or fallow lands. It is sown one year, two years, and then the land lies fallow

till the grass comes again. This wheat land is much sought for and there isn't enough for everyone.

Disputes also arose; the rich peasants cultivated their lands themselves, but the poor ones had to let theirs to merchants, who paid their taxes in return, or they had to borrow money.

Pakhom wanted to sow a lot of wheat; so the next year he went to a merchant and rented another piece of land for a year. The wheat gave a good crop, but it had to be carted to town, ten miles away. Pakhom saw the merchant-peasants around him living in good farmhouses and growing rich. "That's the way," thought he; "if only I could get enough land to be my own property, I would build a good house too. I should want nothing more." And after that he often thought how he could buy a piece of land which should be his own for ever.

Three years went by. Every year Pakhom hired land and sowed it with wheat. The years were good and the harvests plentiful; and Pakhom began to gather a little hoard. He lived very comfortably now, but he grew tired of having to hire land afresh every year, and having so much trouble about it. As soon as good land was to be had anywhere there was a rush for it from all sides, and it was taken up at once; and if you came late, there was nothing left for you to sow on. Once he went shares with a merchant and bought a meadow; and when they had ploughed it a dispute arose among the peasants they had bought it from, and all their work was lost. "If I only had my own land," thought Pakhom, "I should be dependent on no one, and there would be no trouble."

So Pakhom began to make enquiries where he could buy land to be his own for ever; at last he found a peasant who owned fifteen hundred acres, and who was selling them cheap because he was in trouble. Pakhom haggled and bargained and at last they settled the price at 1,500 roubles (£150), half the money down, the other half later. The matter was quite settled when a travelling merchant happened to come along, and asked Pakhom to let him have a little food.

They drank a glass of tea and began to talk. The

merchant said he had come from the land of the Bashkeers, far away; there he had just bought 5,000 acres for 1,000 roubles (£100).

Pakhom questioned him eagerly. "You have only to get the Elders on your side," said the merchant. "I gave them 100 roubles' worth of dressing gowns and carpets, and a chest of tea, and treated them to a little wine, and then I got it for 20 kopecks (5d.) an acre. The land lies along the banks of a little river, and it is all covered with grass." The merchant showed the title deeds, and Pakhom began to ply him with more questions—how much land was there, and to whom did it belong?

"There's no end of land there," said the merchant; "you couldn't walk round it in a year, and it all belongs to the Bashkeers. The people are as stupid as sheep. You can almost get the land for nothing."

"Well," thought Pakhom, "why should I pay 1,500 roubles for 1,500 acres and hang a debt round my neck besides when I can pay 1,000 roubles and have as much land as I want?"

## V.

Pakhom found out how to get to the place, and as soon as the merchant was gone he made his preparations to start. He left his wife to look after the home, took his man with him and went on his journey. They stopped in a town by the way, and bought wine and tea and presents, just as the merchant had advised. They went on and on 300 miles. At last on the seventh day they came to the land of the Bashkeers. Everything was just as the merchant had described. The people all lived on the steppes near the river in felt-covered carts. They ploughed no land and ate no bread. The cattle and horses were grazing in herds on the steppe. The foals were tied behind the carts, and the mares were driven to them twice a day. The women milked the mares and made koumiss out of the milk, and also cheese by shaking the koumiss; and the men idled about and did nothing but drink tea and koumiss and eat mutton, and play on their reed pipes. They were all jolly and well-fed, and never thought of work all through the summer. They were quite ignorant,

and could not even speak Russian; but they were hospitable and good-natured.

As soon as they saw Pakhom they dropped out of their carts and surrounded him. An interpreter was found, and Pakhom told him what he had come for. The Bashkeers were delighted. They embraced Pakhom, took him into their best cart, seated him on rugs and gave him feather cushions to lean on. Then they all sat round, and offered him tea and koumiss. A sheep was killed and they gave him mutton. Then Pakhom got out his presents and distributed them among the Bashkeers, and divided the tea. The Bashkeers were very pleased and talked a great deal among themselves. At last they told the interpreter to speak to Pakhom.

"They wish me to tell you," said the interpreter, "that they are very pleased with you, and that this is our custom—to give our guests every pleasure and to make returns for all their gifts. You have given us presents. Now tell us what of ours would you like to have, that we may offer it to you?"

"I should like best of all some of your land," said Pakhom. "We have little land, and what there is has been worked to death. But you have a lot of land and it is good. I have never seen such land before."

The interpreter translated and the Bashkeers began to talk again and to make a great noise. Pakhom could not understand what they were saying, but he saw they seemed pleased, and that they shouted and laughed. At last they were silent, and sat looking at Pakhom while the interpreter spoke: "They wished me to tell you," he said, "that they will give you as much land as you like, for your kindness; only point with your hand what pleases you best, and it is yours."

Again the Bashkeers began to talk and this time seemed to be quarrelling. Pakhom asked the interpreter what the disagreement was about. "Some say that the Elder must be asked about the land and that you cannot have it without his permission," he replied; "and some say that it can all be settled without him."

## VI.

While they were talking a man in a cap of fox's skin came towards them. The Bashkeers became silent and stood up. The interpreter said: "This is our Elder."

Pakhom immediately unpacked his best dressing gown and five pounds of tea and gave them to the Elder. The Elder accepted them, and sat down in the place of honour. The Bashkeers began to speak to him at once. The Elder listened to everything for a long while, nodded his head to them to be silent, and spoke to Pakhom in Russian.

"Well," he said, "let it be so. Take whatever pleases you. We have plenty of land."

"How can I 'take what I like,'" thought Pakhom. "I must have some deed to make it sure. Otherwise they can say now that the land is mine, and later they can take it away again."

"I thank you," he said, aloud, "for your good words. It is true that you have much land and I need but little. I should only like to know what land will be mine, and I should also wish it to be measured, and a title deed drawn up. God is the master of our life and death; and if *you* are kind enough to let me have the land how can I be sure that your children will not take it away again?"

"You are right," said the Elder. "We will give you the deeds."

"I heard that a merchant visited you," said Pakhom, "and you let him have land also, and gave him a purchase deed. I should like to have the same."

The Elder understood at once.

"All that can be done," he said. "We have a clerk, and then we can all go to town and put the seals on."

"And what is your price?" said Pakhom.

"We have only one price—1,000 roubles a day."  
(£100).

Pakhom did not understand.

"What measure is 'a day'?" he asked; "how many acres does it make?"

"We do not know how to measure," said the Elder; "we sell our land by the day. As much as you can

walk around in a day is yours, and the price is 1,000 roubles."

Pakhom was amazed.

"That is a great deal," he said; "you can walk round a lot in a day."

The Elder laughed. "It will all be yours," he said, "only on one condition: that if you do not return on the same day to the place you started from, your money belongs to us."

"How shall you know the way I go?" said Pakhom.

"We will go to any spot you choose, and stay there while you make your boundary line. Take a spade with you and dig a little hole every now and then, and put the turf by the hole. Afterwards we will plough a furrow from one hole to another. Make your circle as wide as you like. Only you must return before sunset to the place you started from. All you will have walked round will be yours."

Pakhom was delighted. He decided to start early; and then they all talked a while and ate mutton and drank tea and koumiss, till at last night came on. Then they put Pakhom to bed on a feather mattress, and left him, promising to be ready by dawn and to get to the spot before sunrise.

## VII.

Pakhom lay on his feather pillows and could not sleep. His mind was full of the land. "I must walk round as much as I can," he thought. "I can easily walk thirty-five miles in a day. The days are as long as a year now. And there must be I don't know how many acres of land in a circle of thirty-five miles. I shall sell the worse parts, or let it to the peasants, and settle down myself on the best bit. Then I'll buy two teams of oxen for the ploughs, hire two men, plough about fifty acres of the best land, and pasture the cattle on the rest."

All night Pakhom lay awake, and only towards dawn did he doze a little. His eyes were hardly closed when he began to dream. He dreamt that he was lying in the

same cart and heard some one chuckling outside. Wanting to know who was laughing, he went outside and there was the Elder sitting on the ground near the cart holding his stomach with both hands and roaring and shaking with laughter. Pakhom came closer and asked what he was laughing about, and then he saw that it was no longer the Elder but the merchant who had told him about the land. And just as Pakhom was going to ask him when he had come he saw that it was no longer the merchant but the peasant who had come from the Volga and stopped at his house. And then it was the peasant no longer, but the devil himself with horns and hoofs who sat there laughing, and at his feet lay a man, barefooted, in a shirt and trousers. Pakhom looked closer and saw that the man was dead, and that it was himself. He awoke in terror.

Then he thought "It is all dreams and nonsense," and and went to peep out of the cart door. There was a grey light: the dawn was breaking.

"It is time to start," he thought; "I must wake the people." So he roused his workman, bade him harness the horse, and began to wake the Bashkeers.

"It is time to start and measure the land," he said.

The Bashkeers arose and got ready, and the Elder came out. They began to drink koumiss, and offered Pakhom some tea, but he refused.

"If we go we must go now," he said. "It is time."

## VIII.

At last they were all ready; some went in carts, others on horseback. Pakhom and his workman rode in their own cart, carrying a spade with them. When they came to the steppe, the day was just beginning to break. They reached a hillock (called by the Bashkeers "shikhan"), got out of their carts and off their horses, and collected in a group at the top. The Elder came up to Pakhom and swept his hand round.

"All this is ours," he said, "as far as your eye can reach. Choose what you please."

Pakhom's eyes sparkled: it was all grassy meadow

land, as flat as the hand, and the earth as black as poppy seeds; and in the hollows the grass was as high as a man's chest.

The Elder took off his cap and placed it on the ground.

"There," he said; "this will be the mark. Go hence and come hither. All you walk round will be yours."

Pakhom took out his money and put it in the cap; took off his long-skirted coat, stood up in his blouse, tightened his belt, thrust a little bag of bread into his breast, tied a flask of water to his belt, pulled up his long boots, took the spade, and was ready to start. He waited. He could not decide which way to go: every way was good. "No matter," thought he, "I will go straight towards the sunrise."

So he turned his face towards the sun and stretched his limbs, waiting till it should appear above the horizon. "I musn't lose a second," he thought; "and it's easier walking when it's cool."

The moment he first rays shot over the plain Pakhom swung the spade over his shoulder and started down the hill.

At first he walked at a moderate pace. When he had done a verst (two thirds of a mile) he dug a little hole and piled up the turf to mark the place. Then he went on. As he got into his stride his speed increased. After a time, he dug a second hole, then another, and another.

Then he glanced back. The hillock was clearly to be seen in the sunlight with the people standing on it and the tyres of the wheels glistened in the rays. Pakhom reckoned that he must have done five versts. He was getting warm, so he took off his blouse, slung it over his shoulder and went on. After a time he glanced up at the sun. It was time for breakfast.

"A quarter of the day gone," thought Pakhom, "and there are four of them: it is too soon to turn yet. I shall only just pull off my boots."

He sat down, got his boots off, stuck them in his belt, and went on.

It was easy walking now, and he thought: "I shall do five more versts straight on and then I'll

turn to the left. It's such a fine place that I don't like to leave it. The further I go, the better it is."

He strides on ahead. At last he turns round and looks at the hillock. It is hardly visible now; the people look like black ants crawling about, and the glistening of the wheels is only just perceptible.

"Well," thinks Pakhom, "this will do on this side. Now I must turn to the left. And I am hot and thirsty."

So he digs a larger hole, heaps up the turf, unfastens his flask and drinks, and then starts off again, turning sharply to the left. He strides on and on; the grass grows higher and the sun is very hot. Pakhom is beginning to feel tired. He looks up at the sun and sees it is time for dinner.

"I shall have a little rest," he thinks. So he sits down, eats a little bread and drinks some water; but he is afraid to lie down. "If I lie down," he thinks, "I shall go to sleep."

So he rests a little, and goes on his way. At first he walks easily—the food has strengthened him; but it is getting very hot and he is very tired and sleepy. And still he marches on, thinking, "It is only an hour to suffer: and a lifetime to live."

He walks straight ahead for a long distance. Just as he is about to turn to the left, he sees before him a damp hollow. "It would be a pity to leave that out," he thinks; "flax would grow finely there." So he takes in the hollow, digs a hole at the farther end, and turns his second corner.

Now he looks again towards the hillock. The hot air is quivering, and a heat haze has arisen, through which he can scarcely distinguish the people on the top.

"Well," he thinks, "I have made the sides too long. I must make this one shorter."

He hurries on as fast as he can. When he looks at the sun he sees it is now past noon, and he has only done two versts on the third side, and there are fifteen versts between him and the hillock.

"I can't go any further," he thinks; "my land won't be square, but I must go straight back, or I shan't have time. I have quite enough as it is."

So he digs out a hole, and turns, aiming straight for the hillock.

## IX.

He walks now with difficulty. He is covered with sweat, and his bare feet and legs are cut and bruised, and almost refuse to carry him. He would like to rest, but does not dare—he knows he would not reach the hill before sunset. The sun will not wait for him, and it is gradually sinking lower and lower.

"Have I made a mistake and gone too far?" he says "what shall I do if I am late?"

He looks towards the hillock and then at the sun—the hill is far away, and the sun is sinking towards the horizon.

He struggles on with difficulty, but still quicker and more quickly. At last he breaks into a run. The hillock is still far away. He throws away his blouse, his flask, his boots, his cap; he keeps only his spade and tries to help himself on with that.

"Ah," he says, "I have tried to get too much and now I have lost everything. I shall never have time before sunset."

The fear takes his breath away. He runs straight on. His shirt and trousers stick to his body with sweat, and his mouth is dry. His chest is bursting, his heart beats like a hammer, his legs seem not to be his and shake beneath him. Fear seizes Pakhom—what if he were to die of exhaustion?

He fears to die, and yet he cannot stop. "If I stop now after having run so long, they will call me a fool." He is close now and can hear the shrieks and whoops of the Bashkeers, and their shrieks make his heart beat still more painfully.

He runs now with his last strength; the sun is near the edge of the horizon, setting in a haze and looking like a great glowing disc of blood. It will sink below the edge at any moment now,—but the hillock also is quite close now. Pakhom can see the people beckoning to him and waving their hands. He can see the fur cap with the money in it. And he can see the Elder sitting on the

ground and holding his hands to his stomach. And Pakhom remembers his dream. "I have much land," he thinks; "but shall I ever live on it? I am ruined! I can never reach the place."

Pakhom looks at the sun—the lower curve has sunk below the earth. He gathers up all his strength for one last effort and flings his body forward so that he can hardly move his legs fast enough to prevent himself from falling. He reaches the hillock. Suddenly the earth darkens. He glances round; the sun has gone. He groans. "All is lost" he thinks.

He is on the point of stopping, but he hears the Bashkeers screaming and shouting above him and he remembers that although he can no longer see the sun it is still to be seen from the hillock. Pakhom runs up the slope, gasping for breath. The setting light is still on the summit. There is the cap, and there is the Elder, sitting on the ground with his hands to his stomach roaring and shaking with laughter. Pakhom remembers his dream and moans, his legs give way under him and he drops down on his face, clutching at the cap with his hands.

"Well done!" screams the Elder. "Good luck to you! You've a fine piece of land."

Pakhom's man runs to help him up. But Pakhom is quite dead, and the blood pours from his mouth.

The Bashkeers shake their heads to show their sorrow. And Pakhom's workman takes the spade, and digs a grave, just long enough for Pakhom's body from head to foot—seven feet—and buries him.

*Translated by N. . .  
and A. C. Fifield*

# The Story of Ivan the Fool,

AND HIS TWO BROTHERS: SIMON THE WARRIOR  
AND TARAS THE STOUT, AND OF HIS DUMB  
SISTER MARTHA, AND OF THE OLD DEVIL  
AND THE THREE DEVILKINS.

## I.

ONCE upon a time, in a certain province of a certain country, there lived a rich peasant, who had three sons—Simon the Warrior, Taras the Stout, and Iván the Fool, besides a daughter, Martha, the spinster, who was deaf and dumb. Simon the Warrior went to the wars to serve the King; Taras the Stout went to a merchant's in town to trade, and Iván the Fool stayed at home with the lass, to work the land till his back bent.

Simon the Warrior earned high rank and an estate, and married a gentleman's daughter. His pay was large and his estate was large, but yet he could not make ends meet. What the husband earned his lady wife squandered and they never had money enough.

So Simon the Warrior went to collect the income from his estate, but his steward said, "We have no means to get an income. We have neither cattle, nor tools, nor horse, nor cow, nor plough, nor harrow. We must first get all these, and then the money will come."

Then Simon the Warrior went to his father and said: "You, father, are rich, but have given me nothing. Let me have my third part, that I may improve my estate."

But the old man said: "You haven't brought anything into my house; why should I give you a third part? It won't be fair to Iván and the girl."

But Simon answered, "Why, he is a fool, and she is an old maid and deaf and dumb besides ; much they want indeed !"

The old man said, "Let us see what Iván says."

And Iván said, "All right, let him take it."

So Simon the Warrior took his share of his father's goods and moved them to his estate, and went off again to serve the King.

Taras the Stout also gathered much money, and married into a merchant's family, but still he wanted more. So he came to his father and said, "Give me my portion."

But the old man did not wish to give Taras a share either, and he said, "You have brought nothing here. Iván has earned all we have in the house, and why should we wrong him and the lass."

But Taras said, "What does he need ? He is a fool ! He cannot marry, no one would have him ; and the dumb lass also needs nothing. Look here, Iván !" says he, "give me half the corn ; the tools I won't take, and of the live stock I will take only the grey stallion, you can't use him for the plough."

Iván laughed and said, "All right, I'll go and work and get some more."

So they gave a share to Taras also, and he carried the corn into the town, and took away the grey stallion. And Iván was left, with one old mare, to lead his peasant life as before, and support his father and mother.

## II.

Now the old devil was vexed that the brothers had not quarrelled over the division, but had parted in peace ; and he summoned three devilkins.

"Look here," said he, "there are three brothers : Simon the Warrior, Taras the Stout, and Iván the Fool. They should have quarrelled, but they are living peaceably, and meet on friendly terms. The fool has spoilt the whole business for me. Now you three go and tackle the three brothers, and cross them till they scratch each other's eyes out ! Can you do it ?"

"Yes, we'll do it," said they.

"How will you set about it?"

"Why," said they, "We'll first ruin them. And when they haven't a crust to eat we'll tie them up together, and then they'll fight each other, sure enough!"

"That's capital, I see you understand the business. Go, and don't come back till you've set them by the ears, or I'll skin you all alive."

The devilkins went off into a swamp and began to consider how they should set to work. They disputed and disputed, each wanting the lightest job, but at last they decided to cast lots as to which of the brothers each imp was to take. And if one imp finished his task before the others, he was to come and help them. So the devilkins cast lots, and also appointed a time to meet again in the swamp so as to learn who had finished and who needed help.

Well, the time came and the devilkins met in the swamp as agreed. And each began to tell how matters stood. The first, Simon the Warrior's devilkin, began: "My business is going well. To-morrow Simon will go to his father."

His comrades asked, "How did you manage it?"

"First," says he, "I gave Simon so much courage that he promised his King to conquer the whole world, and the King made him his general and sent him to fight the King of India. They met for battle, but that very night I damped all the powder in Simon's camp, and made more straw soldiers for the Indian King than you could count. And when Simon's soldiers saw the straw soldiers surrounding them they got frightened. Simon ordered them to fire, but their cannons and guns would not go off. So Simon's soldiers were seized by panic and ran like sheep, and the Indian King slaughtered them. Simon was disgraced. He has been deprived of his estate, and to-morrow they intend to execute him. There is only one day's work left for me; I have just to let him out of prison that he may run home. To-morrow I shall be ready: so which of you shall I come and help?"

Then the second devilkin, that of Taras, began to tell how he had fared. "I don't want any help," said he, "my

job is going all right. Taras can't hold out for more than a week. First I caused him to grow fat and greedy. His covetousness got so great that whatever he saw he wished to buy. He has spent all his money in buying immense lots of goods, and still he continues to buy. Already he has begun to use borrowed money. His debts hang like a weight round his neck, and he is so involved that he can never get clear. In a week his bills come due, and I will turn all his stock into dung. He will be unable to pay and will go home to his father."

Then they asked the third devilkin (Iván's), "And how are you getting on?"

"Well," says he, "my affair goes badly. First I spat in his jug of *kvas*,\* that he might have the stomach-ache, and then I went into his field and hammered the earth as hard as a stone, so that he should not be able to work. I thought he wouldn't plough it, but he, the fool, came with his plough and began a furrow. He groaned with the pain in his stomach, but went on ploughing. I broke his plough for him, but he went home, got out another one with new cords, and again started ploughing. I crept under the earth and caught hold of the ploughshares, but there was no holding them; he leant heavily upon the plough, and the ploughshare was sharp and cut my hands. He has all but finished ploughing the field, only one little strip is left. Come brothers, and help me, for if we don't get the better of him, all our labour is lost. If the fool holds out and keeps on working the land, they will never know want, for he will feed both his brothers."

Simon the Warrior's devilkin promised to come next day and help, and so the imps parted.

### III.

Iván had ploughed up the whole fallow, all but one little strip. He came to finish it. Though his stomach ached, the ploughing must be done. He freed the harness ropes, turned the plough, and began work. He made one furrow, but as he was coming back the plough began to drag as if it had caught in a root. It was the imp, who

\* A common Russian non-intoxicating drink made from rye.—*Trans.*

had twisted his legs round the ploughshare and was holding it back.

"What a strange thing!" thinks Iván. "There were no roots here at all, and yet here's a root."

Iván pushed his hand deep into the furrow, groped about, and, feeling something soft, seized hold of it and pulled it out. It was black, like a root, but it wriggled. Why, it was a live devilkin!

"What a nasty thing!" said Iván, and he lifted his hand to dash it against the plough, but the devilkin squealed out.

"Don't hurt me," said he, "and I'll do what you like for you."

"And what can you do for me?"

"Just whatever you tell me to do."

Iván scratched his head.

"My stomach aches," said he; "can you cure that?"

"I can."

"Well, cure it."

The devilkin bent down to the furrow, searched about, scratched with his claws, and pulled out a little root—a three-pronged one—and handed it to Iván.

"Here," says he, "whoever swallows one prong of this will be cured of any illness."

Iván took the root, tore off a prong and swallowed it. The pain in his stomach ceased at once. The devilkin again begged: "Let me go," said he; "I will jump through the earth, and never come back."

"All right," said Iván; "God be with you!"

And as soon as Iván mentioned God, the devilkin plunged into the earth like a stone thrown into the water. Only the hole was left.

Iván put the other two pieces of root into his cap and went on with his ploughing. He ploughed the strip to the end, turned his plough over and went home. He unharnessed the horse, entered the hut, and saw his elder brother, Simon the Warrior, and his wife, sitting there at supper. His estate had been confiscated, he himself had barely managed to escape from prison, and had run home to live with his father.

Simon saw Iván and said: "I have come to live with

you. Feed me and my wife till I find a fresh appointment."

"All right," said Iván, "stay with us."

But when Iván was about to sit down on the bench, the lady disliked the odour from him, and said to her husband, "I cannot eat my supper with a dirty peasant."

So Simon the Warrior said, "My lady says you don't smell nice. You'd better go and eat outside."

"All right," said Iván; "any way I must go out for the night to pasture the mare."

So he took some bread, and his coat, and went with the horse into the fields.

#### IV.

Simon's devilkin, having finished his work that night, came to find Iván's devilkin and, as agreed, help him to subdue the fool. He came to the field and looked and looked, but instead of his comrade he found only a hole.

"Evidently," thought he, "some misfortune has befallen my comrade. I must take his place. The field is ploughed up, so the fool must be tackled in the meadow."

The devilkin went to the meadows and flooded Iván's hayfield with water, which left it covered with mud.

Iván returned from the pasture at dawn, sharpened his scythe, and went to mow the hayfield. He began to mow, but had only swung the scythe once or twice when the edge turned up, so that the scythe would not cut at all, but needed re-sharpening. Iván struggled on for awhile, and then said: "It's no good. I must go home and bring tools to straighten the scythe, and I'll get a chunk of bread at the same time. If I have to spend a week here, I won't leave till the mowing's done."

The devilkin heard this and thought to himself, "This fool is a tough 'un; we can't get round him this way. We must try some other dodge."

Iván returned, sharpened his scythe, and began to mow. The devilkin crept into the grass and began to catch the scythe by the heel sending the point into the earth. It was difficult for Iván, but he mowed the whole meadow, save one little bit in the swamp. The devilkin crept into

the mire, and, thinks he to himself, "Though I cut my paws I will not let him mow."

Iván got to the swamp. The grass didn't seem thick, but all the same it resisted the scythe. Iván grew angry and began to swing the scythe with all his might. The devilkin had to give in; he could not keep up with the scythe, and seeing it was a bad business scrambled into a bush. Iván swung the scythe, caught the bush, and cut off half the devilkin's tail! Iván finished mowing the grass, told the lass to rake it up, and himself went to mow the rye. He went with the scythe, but the dock-tailed devilkin was there first, and had entangled the rye, so that the scythe was no use. But Iván went home and got his sickle, and began to reap with that, and he reaped the whole of the rye.

"Now it's time," said he, "to start on the oats."

The dock-tailed devilkin heard this and thought, "I couldn't get the better of him on the rye, but I shall on the oats. Only wait till the morning."

In the morning the devilkin hurried to the oat field, but the oats were already mowed down. Iván had mowed them by night, in order that less grain should shake out. The devilkin grew angry.

"He has cut me all over, and tired me out—the fool. It is worse than war. The accursed fool never sleeps; one can't keep up with him. I will now get into his heaps and make them all rot."

And the devilkin entered the rye-heaps and crept among the sheaves and they began to rot. He heated them, grew warm himself, and fell asleep.

Iván harnessed the mare, and went with the lass to cart the rye. He came to the heaps, and began to pitch the rye into the cart. He tossed two sheaves, and again thrust his fork—right into the devilkin's back. He lifts the fork and sees on the prongs a live devilkin, dock-tailed, struggling, wriggling, and trying to jump off.

"What, you nasty thing, are you here again?"

"I'm another," said the imp. "The first was my brother. I've been with your brother Simon."

"Well," said Iván, "whoever you may be you've met the same fate!"

He was about to dash him against the cart, but the devilkin cried out: "Let me off, and I won't do it again, but I'll do whatever you want."

"What can you do?"

"I can make soldiers out of anything you like."

"But what is the use of them?"

"You can turn them to any use; they can do anything."

"Can they sing?"

"Yes."

"All right; make some."

And the devilkin said, "Here, take a sheaf of rye, bump it upright on the ground, and simply say:—

"Oh, sheaf! my slave  
This order gave:  
May every straw  
A soldier grow."

Iván took the sheaf, struck it on the ground, and said as the devilkin had told him. The sheaf fell asunder and changed into soldiers, with a trumpeter and a drummer playing in front.

Iván laughed.

"That's clever!" said he. "This is fine. How pleased the girls will be!"

"Now let me go," says the devilkin.

"No," says Iván, "I must make my soldiers of thrashed straw or the grain will be wasted. Teach me how to change them back again into the sheaf. I want to thrash it."

And the devilkin said, "Repeat:—

"Each soldier now  
A straw become,  
For my true slave  
This order gave."

Iván said this, and the sheaf reappeared.

Again the devilkin began to beg, "Now let me go."

"All right." And Iván took him by the legs and, nolding him in his hand, pulled him off the fork.

"God be with you," said he.

And as soon as he mentioned God, the devilkin plunged into the earth like a stone into water. Only the hole was left.

Iván returned home, and there was the other brother, Taras, with his wife, sitting at supper.

Taras the Stout had failed to pay his debts, had ran away from his creditors, and had come home to his father. When he saw Iván, "Look here," said he, "till I can start in business again, keep me and my wife,"

"All right," said Iván, "live here."

Iván took off his coat and sat down to table, but the merchant's wife said, "I cannot eat with the fool. He smells of perspiration."

Then Taras the Stout said, "Iván, you smell too strong. Go and eat outside."

"All right," said Iván, taking some bread and going into the yard. "Anyhow, it is time for me to go and pasture the mare."

## V.

Taras's devilkin, being also free that night, came, as agreed, to help his comrades to subdue Iván the Fool. He came to the cornfield, looked and looked for his comrades—no one was there. He only found a hole. So he went to the meadow and there he found a tail in the swamp, and in the rye stubble another hole.

"Evidently, some ill-luck has befallen my comrades," thought he. "I must take their place and tackle the fool."

So the devilkin went to look for Iván, who had already stacked the corn and was cutting trees in the wood. The two brothers had begun to feel crowded living together, and had told the fool to cut down trees to build new houses for them.

The devilkin ran to the wood, climbed among the branches and began to hinder Iván from felling the trees. Iván under-cut one tree so that it should fall clear, but in falling it turned askew and caught among some branches. Iván cut a pole with which to lever it aside, and contrived with difficulty to bring it to the ground. He set to work to fell another tree; again the same thing

occurred, and with all his efforts he could hardly get the tree clear. He began on a third tree, and again the same thing happened.

Iván had hoped to cut down half a hundred small trees, but had not felled even half a score, and now the night was come. Iván was tired out. The steam from him spread like a mist through the wood, but still he stuck to his work. He under-cut another tree, but his back began to ache so that he couldn't stand. He drove his axe into the tree and sat down to rest.

The devilkin, noticing that Iván had stopped work, grew cheertul.

"At last," thinks he, "he is tired out. He will give it up. Now I'll take a rest myself."

He seated himself astride a branch and chuckled. But Iván got up, pulled the axe out, swung it, and smote the tree from the opposite side with such force that the tree gave way at once and came crashing down. The devilkin was not prepared for this, and had no time to get his feet clear, and a breaking branch gripped his paw. Iván began to lop off the branches, when he saw a live devilkin. Iván was surprised.

"What, you nasty thing," says he, "so you are here again, are you?"

"I am another one," says the imp. "I have been with your brother Taras."

"Whoever you may be, you have met the same fate," and Iván swung his axe, and was about to strike him with the haft, but the devilkin began to implore, "Don't strike me," said he, "and I will do whatever you like."

"What can you do?"

"I can make money for you, as much as you like."

"All right, make some."

And the devilkin showed him how.

"Take," said he, "some leaves from this oak and rub them in your hands, and gold will fall out."

Iván took some leaves, rubbed them, and the gold ran down.

"This stuff will do fine," said he, "for the fellows to play with in their spare time."

"Now let me go," said the devilkin.

"All right." And Iván took the pole and freed the devilkin. "God be with you," says he.

And as soon as he mentioned God, the devilkin plunged into the earth, like a stone into water. Only the hole was left.

## VI.

So the brothers built houses and began to live apart; and Iván finished the harvest work, brewed beer, and invited his brothers next holiday. His brothers did not come.

"Don't we know what a peasant's holiday is like?" said they.

So Iván entertained the peasants and their wives, and drank until he got rather tipsy. Then he went into the street to a ring of dancers; and going up to them he told the women to sing a song in his honour, for, said he, "I will give you something you never saw in your lives before."

The women laughed and sang his praises, and when they had finished they said, "Now let us have your gift."

"I will bring it directly," said he.

He caught up a seed basket and ran to the forest. The women laughed. "He is a fool!" said they, and forgot about him.

But Iván came running back, carrying the basket full of something.

"Shall I divide it?"

"Yes! divide it."

Iván took a handful of gold and threw it to the women. You should have seen them throw themselves upon it to pick it up! And the men around scrambled for it and snatched it from one another. One old woman was almost crushed to death. Iván laughed.

"Oh, you fools!" says he. "Why did you crush the old grandmother? Be quieter, and I will give you some more," and he threw them some more. The people all crowded round, and Iván threw them all the gold he had. They asked for more but Iván said, "That's all I've got now. Next time I'll give you some more. Now let us dance. Sing me your songs."

The women began to sing.

"Your songs are no good," says he.

"What songs are better," say they.

"I'll soon shew you," says he.

He went to the barn, took a sheaf, thrashed it, stood it and bumped it on the ground.

"Now," said he—

"Oh sheaf! my slave  
This order gave:  
May every straw  
A soldier grow."

And the sheaf fell asunder and became soldiers. The drums and trumpets began to play. Iván ordered the soldiers to play and sing. He appeared with them in the street. The people were amazed. The soldiers played and sang, and then Iván (forbidding anyone to follow him), led them back to the thrashing ground, changed the soldiers into a sheaf again, and threw it in its place.

He then went home and slept in the stable.

## VII.

Simon the Warrior heard of all these things next morning and went to his brother.

"Tell me," says he, "where did you get the soldiers from, and where have you taken them to?"

"What does it matter to you?" said Iván.

"What does it matter? Why, with soldiers one can do anything. One can win a kingdom."

Iván wondered.

"Really!" said he; "Why didn't you say so long ago? I'll make you as many as you like. It's well the lass and I have thrashed so much."

Iván took his brother to the barn and said:

"Look! I will make them but you must lead them away, for if we have to feed them they will eat up the whole village in a day."

Simon the Warrior promised to lead away the soldiers and Iván began to make them. He bumped a sheaf on the thrashing floor—a detachment appeared. He bumped

another sheaf, and there was a second detachment. He made so many that they covered the field.

"Will that do?"

Simon was overjoyed and said, "That will do! Thank you, Iván!"

"All right," said Iván. "If you want more, come back, and I'll make more. There is plenty of straw this season."

Simon the Warrior at once took command of the army, collected and organised it, and went off to make war.

Hardly had Simon the Warrior gone, when came Taras the Stout. He, too, had heard of yesterday's affair, and asked his brother—

"Shew me where you get gold money? If I had such free money to start with, I would make it bring me in money from the whole world."

Iván wondered.

"Really!" said he. "You should have told me long ago. I'll make you as much as you like."

His brother was delighted.

"Give me at least three baskets-full."

"All right," said Iván. "Come into the forest; or, better still, let us harness the mare, for you won't be able to carry it."

They drove to the forest, and Iván began to rub the oak leaves. He made a big heap.

"Will that do?"

Taras was overjoyed.

"It will do for the present," says he. "Thank you, Iván!"

"All right," says Iván, "if you want more, come back and I'll rub more. There are plenty of leaves left."

Taras the Stout gathered up a whole cartload of money, and went off to trade.

The two brothers went away; Simon began to fight and Taras to trade. And Simon the Warrior conquered himself a kingdom, and Taras the Stout piled up a heap of money in business.

The two brothers met and each told the other: Simon how he got the soldiers, and Taras how he got the money. And Simon the Warrior said to his brother, "I have con-

quered a kingdom and live well, but I have not money enough to keep my soldiers."

And Taras the Stout said, "And I have made a heap of money, but the trouble is, there is nobody to guard it."

Then said Simon the Warrior, "Let us go to our brother. I will tell him to make more soldiers, and will give them to you to guard your money, and you will tell him to rub money for me to feed my soldiers."

And they drove away to Iván, and Simon said, "My soldiers are too few, brother dear; make me another couple of ricks or so."

Iván shook his head.

"No!" says he, "I'll not make you any more soldiers."

"Didn't you promise?"

"Yes, I promised, but I won't make any more."

"But why not, you fool?"

"Because your soldiers killed a man. I was ploughing the other day near the road, and saw a woman carting a coffin and crying. I asked her who was dead. She said, 'Simon's soldiers have killed my husband in the war.' I thought the soldiers would play music, but they have killed a man. I won't give you any more."

And he stuck to it, and did not make any more soldiers.

Taras the Stout, too, began to beg Iván the Fool to make him more gold money. Iván shook his head.

"No, I won't rub any more of it."

"Didn't you promise?"

"I did, but I'll make no more," said he.

"Why not, you fool?"

"Because your gold coins took away the cow from Michael's daughter."

"How?"

"Simply took it away! Michael's daughter had a cow. Her children used to drink the milk. But the other day her children came to me to ask for milk. I asked them, 'Where's your cow?' They said, 'Taras the Stout's steward came, gave mother three bits of gold, and she gave him the cow, so we have nothing to drink.' I thought you were going to play with the gold pieces, but you have taken the children's cow away. I won't give you any more."

And the fool stuck to it and did not give any more. So the brothers went away. And as they went they began to discuss how to meet their difficulties. And Simon said:

"Look here, let us do this! Give me money to feed my soldiers, and I will give you half of my kingdom with soldiers to guard your money." Taras agreed. So the brothers divided what they possessed and both became kings, and both were rich.

### VIII.

And Iván lived at home, supported his father and mother and laboured in the field with the dumb lass. Now it happened that Iván's yard dog fell sick, grew mangy, and was near dying. Iván, pitying her, got some bread from the dumb lass, put it in his cap, carried it out to the dog, and threw it to her. But the cap had got torn, and, together with the bread, one of the little roots fell to the ground. The old dog ate it up with the bread, and as soon as she had swallowed it she jumped up, began to play, barked and wagged her tail—in fact, was quite well again.

The father and mother saw it and were astonished.

"What have you cured the dog with?" asked they.

Iván answered: "I had two little roots that would cure any pain, and she swallowed one."

Now about that time it happened that the King's daughter fell ill, and the King proclaimed through every town and village that he would reward any man who would heal her, and if a bachelor healed the King's daughter he should have her for wife. This was proclaimed also in Iván's village.

His father and mother called Iván, and they said to him: "Have you heard what the King has proclaimed? You were saying you had a root. Go and heal the King's daughter, and you will be made happy for life."

"All right," said he.

And Iván prepared to go, and they dressed him up. But as he went out of the door he met a beggar woman with a crippled hand.

"I heard," said she, "that you can heal. Cure my hand, for I can't even put on my boots myself."

"All right," said Iván, and he took the little root, gave it to the beggar woman, and told her to swallow it. The beggar woman swallowed it and was cured. She at once began to move her hand.

His father and mother came out to accompany Iván to the King, but when they heard that he had given away the root, and that there was nothing left to cure the King's daughter with, they began to scold him.

"You pitied a beggar woman, but for the King's daughter you are not sorry," said they. And Iván felt sorry for the King's daughter. He harnessed the horse, put straw in the cart, and sat down to drive away.

"Where are you going, fool?"

"To cure the King's daughter."

"But you've nothing to cure her with?"

"All right," said he, and drove off.

He drove to the King's palace, and as soon as he stepped on the threshold the King's daughter got well.

The King was delighted, and had Iván brought to him, and dressed up in fine robes.

"Be my son-in-law," said he.

"All right," said Iván.

And Iván married the Princess. Her father died soon after, and Iván became King. So all three brothers were kings.

## IX.

The three brothers lived and reigned. The eldest brother, Simon the Warrior, prospered. With his straw soldiers he levied real soldiers. He commanded throughout his whole kingdom a levy of one soldier from every ten houses, and that soldier had to be tall, and clean in body and in face. So he gathered many such soldiers and trained them. And when anyone opposed him, he at once sent these soldiers and got his own way, so that everyone began to fear him. And his life was a comfortable one. Whatever he wanted, and whatever he cast his eyes on, was his. He sent soldiers and they brought him whatever he wanted.

Taras the Stout also lived comfortably. He did not lose the money that he got from Iván, but largely increased it. He introduced law and order into his kingdom. He kept his money in coffers and taxed the people. He instituted a poll-tax, tolls for walking and driving, and a tax on shoes and stockings and dress trimmings. And whatever he wished for he got. For his money people brought him everything, and they offered to work for him—for everyone needed money.

Iván the Fool also did not live badly. As soon as he had buried his father-in-law, he took off all his royal robes and gave them to his wife to put away in a chest, and he again donned his hempen shirt, his breeches and bark shoes, and started to work again.

"It's dull for me," said he. "I'm getting fat, and I've lost my appetite and my sleep." So he brought his father and mother and the dumb lass to live with him, and began to work as before.

People said, "But you are a king!"

"Of course," said he, "but even a king must eat."

One of his ministers came to him and said, "We have no money to pay salaries."

"All right," says he, "then don't pay them."

"Then no one will serve."

"All right; let them not serve. They will have more time to work; let them carry out manure. They have piled up a lot of it."

And people came to Iván to be tried. One said, "He stole my money." And Iván said, "All right, that shows that he wanted it."

And they all got to know that Iván was a fool. And his wife said to him, "People say that you are a fool."

"All right," said Iván.

His wife thought and thought about it, but she also was a fool.

"Shall I go against my husband? Where the needle goes the thread follows," said she.

So she took off her royal dress, put it away in a chest,

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\*The peasants in Russia wear shoes plaited of birch bark.—*Trans.*

and went to the dumb lass to learn how to work. And she learned to work and began to help her husband.

And all the wise men left Iván's kingdom; only the fools remained.

Nobody had money. They lived and worked. They fed themselves; and they fed good people.

## X.

The old devil waited and waited for news from the devilkins to tell how they had ruined the three brothers. But no news came. So he went himself to inquire about it. He searched and searched, but instead of finding the three imps he found only the three holes.

"Evidently they have not succeeded," thought he. "I shall have to tackle it myself."

He went to look for the brothers, but they were no longer in their old places. He found them in different kingdoms. All three were living and reigning. This was painful to the old devil.

"Well," says he, "I must try my own hand at the job."

First he went to King Simon. He did not go to him in his own shape, but drove up in the guise of a general.

"I hear, King Simon," says he, "that you are a great warrior, and as I know that business well, I desire to serve you."

King Simon questioned him, saw that he was a wise man, and took him into his service.

The new commander began to teach King Simon how to form a strong army.

"First," said he, "we must levy more soldiers, for there are in your kingdom many people unemployed. We must recruit all the young men without exception. Then you will have five times as many soldiers as formerly. Secondly, we must get new rifles and cannon. I will introduce rifles that will fire a hundred balls at once; they will fly out like peas. And I will get cannon that will consume with fire either man or horse or wall. They will burn up everything."

Simon the King listened to the new commander, ordered all young men without distinction to be enrolled as soldiers, and had new factories built in which he manufactured plenty of improved rifles and cannons. Then he hastened to declare war against a neighbouring king. And, as soon as he met the other army, King Simon ordered his soldiers to rain balls against it and shoot fire from the cannon, and at one blow he burned and crippled half the enemy's army. The neighbouring king was thoroughly frightened; he submitted and gave up his kingdom. King Simon was delighted.

"Now," said he, "I will conquer the King of India."

But the Indian King had heard about King Simon and adopted all his inventions, and added more of his own. The Indian King enlisted not only all the young men but all the single women also, and got a greater army even than King Simon. And he copied all King Simon's rifles and cannons; and invented a way of flying through the air to throw explosive bombs from above.

King Simon set out to fight the Indian King, and thought to beat him as he had beaten the other king; but the scythe that had cut so well had lost its edge. The King of India did not let Simon's army come within gunshot, but sent his women through the air to hurl explosive bombs on Simon's army. The women began to rain down bombs upon Simon's army like borax upon cockroaches. The army ran away and Simon the King was left alone. So the Indian King took Simon's kingdom, and Simon the Warrior fled as best he might.

Having finished with this brother, the old devil went to King Taras. He changed into a merchant, settled in Taras's kingdom, organised a house of business and began paying out money. The merchant began to pay high prices for everything, and all the people hurried to the merchant's to get money. And so much money spread among the people that they began to pay all their taxes promptly, and paid up all their arrears, and King Taras rejoiced.

"Thanks to the merchant," thought he, "my money will now increase still more—my life will be yet more comfortable."

And Taras the King began to form new plans, and began to build a new palace. He notified the people to bring him wood and stone, and to come to work, and he fixed high prices for everything. King Taras thought people would come in crowds to work as before, but to his surprise all the wood and stone were taken to the merchant's, and all the workmen went there too. King Taras increased his price, but the merchant bid yet more. King Taras had much money, but the merchant had still more, and the merchant outbid the King.

The King's palace was at a standstill; the building did not get on.

King Taras planned a garden, and when autumn came he notified the people to come and plant the garden, but nobody came. All the people were engaged digging a pond for the merchant. Winter came, and King Taras wanted to buy sable furs for a new overcoat. He sent to buy them, but the messengers returned and said, "There are no sables left. The merchant has all the furs. He gave the best price and made a carpet of the sable skins."

King Taras wanted to buy some stallions. He sent out to buy them, but the messengers returned saying, "The merchant has got all the good stallions; they are carrying water to fill his pond."

All the King's affairs came to a standstill. Nobody would work for him, but everyone was busy working for the merchant, and they only brought King Taras the merchant's money to pay their taxes.

And the King collected so much money that he had nowhere to store it, and his life became wretched. He ceased to form projects and would have been glad enough simply to live, but he could not even do that. He ran short of everything. The cooks, coachmen, and servants began to leave him to go to the merchant. Soon there was a lack even of food. When he sent to the market to buy anything, there was nothing to be got—the merchant had bought up everything, and people only brought the King money to pay for their taxes.

Taras the King got angry, and banished the merchant from the country. But the merchant settled just across

the frontier, and went on as before. For the sake of the merchant's money, people took everything, not to the King, but to him.

Things went badly with the King. For days at a time he had nothing to eat, and a rumour even got about that the merchant was boasting that he would buy up the King himself. King Taras got frightened, and did not know what to do.

At this time Simon the Warrior came to him, saying, "Help me, for the King of India has conquered me."

But King Taras himself was over head and ears in difficulties. "I myself have had nothing to eat for two days," said he.

## XI.

Having done with the two brothers, the old devil went to Iván. He changed himself into a general and came to Iván, and began to persuade him that he ought to have an army.

"It does not become a king," said he, "to be without an army. Only give me the order, and I will collect soldiers from among your people, and will form one."

Iván listened to him. "All right," said Iván, "form an army, and teach them to sing songs cleverly. I like that."

The old devil went through Iván's kingdom to enlist soldiers. He told them to go and be entered as soldiers, and each should have a pot of liquor and a red cap.

The fools laughed.

"We have plenty of wine," they said. "We make it ourselves, and as for caps, the women make all kinds of them, even striped ones with tassels."

So nobody enlisted.

The old devil came to Iván and said: "Your fools won't enlist of their own free will. We shall have to make them come."

"All right," said Iván, "do it."

So the old devil gave notice that all the fools were to enlist, and that Iván would put whoever refused to death.

The fools came to the general and said, "You say that if we do not go as soldiers the King will put us to death,

but you don't tell us what happens to soldiers. People say that soldiers get killed!"

"Yes, it happens sometimes."

When the fools heard this they became obstinate.

"We won't go," said they. "Better meet death at home. Either way we must die."

"Fools! You are fools!" said the old devil. "A soldier may be killed or he may not, but if you don't go, King Iván will have you killed for certain."

The fools were perplexed, and went to Iván the Fool to ask him.

"A general has come," said they, "who orders us to go as soldiers. 'If you go as soldier,' says he, 'you may be killed or you may not, but if you don't go King Iván will certainly kill you.' Is this true?"

Iván laughed and said, "How can I, alone, put you all to death? If I were not a fool I would explain it to you, but as it is, I don't understand it myself."

"Then," said they, "we will not serve."

"All right," says he, "don't serve."

So the fools went to the general and refused to enlist. And the old devil saw that this game was up, and went off and ingratiated himself with the King of Tarakán.\*

"Let us make war," says he, "and conquer King Iván's country. It is true there is no money, but there is plenty of corn and cattle and everything else."

So the King of Tarakán prepared to make war. He mustered a great army, provided rifles and cannon, marched to the frontier, and entered Iván's kingdom.

And people came to Iván, and said, "The King of Tarakán is coming to make war on us."

"All right," said Iván, "let him come."

Having crossed the frontier, the King of Tarakán sent scouts to look for Iván's army. They looked and looked, but there was no army! They waited and waited for one to appear somewhere, but there was no sign of an army, and nobody to fight with. The King of Tarakán then sent to seize the villages. The soldiers came to a village, and the fools, both men and women, rushed out in

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\* Cockroachland.

astonishment to stare at the soldiers. The soldiers began to take the fools' corn and cattle; the fools let them have it, and did not resist. The soldiers went on to another village; the same thing happened over again. The soldiers went on for one day, and for two days, and everywhere the same thing happened. The people let them have everything, and no one resisted, but instead invited the soldiers to live with them.

"If," said they, "you, poor fellows, have a hard life in your own land, come and stay with us altogether."

The soldiers marched and marched, still no army, only people living and feeding themselves and others, and not resisting but inviting the soldiers to live with them. The soldiers found it dull work, and they came to the King of Tarakán and said, "We cannot fight here, lead us to another place. War is all right, but what is this? It is like cutting pea-soup! We can't make war here any longer."

The King of Tarakán became angry, and ordered his soldiers to over-run the whole of the kingdom, to destroy the villages, to burn the grain and the houses, and to slaughter the cattle. "And if you do not obey my orders," said he, "I will execute you all."

The soldiers were frightened, and began to act according to the King's orders. They began to burn houses and grain and to kill cattle. But the fools still offered no resistance, but only wept. The old men wept, and the old women wept, and the young ones wept.

"Why do you harm us?" they said. "Why do you waste good things? If you need them, you had better take them for yourselves."

The soldiers could stand it no longer. They went no further, and the army disbanded and fled.

## XII.

So the old devil had to go away. He could not get the better of Iván with soldiers. So he changed himself into a fine gentleman, and settled down in Iván's kingdom. He meant to overcome him by means of money, as he had overcome Taras the Stout.

"I wish," says he, "to do you a good turn, to teach you sense and reason. I will build a house among you and organise a trade."

"All right," said Iván, "live among us."

Next morning the fine gentleman went out into the public square with a big sack of gold and a sheet of paper, and said, "You all live like swine. I wish to teach you how to live properly. Build me a house according to this plan. You shall work, I will tell you how, and I will pay you with gold coins." And he showed them the gold.

The fools were astonished; there was no money in use among them; they exchanged goods among themselves, and paid each other with labour. They looked at the gold coins with surprise.

"What nice little things they are!" said they.

And they began to exchange their goods and labour for the gentleman's gold pieces. And the old devil began, as in Taras's kingdom, to be free with his gold, and the people began to exchange everything for gold, and to do all sorts of work for it.

The old devil was delighted, and, thinks he to himself "Things are going right this time. Now I shall ruin the Fool, as I did Taras, and I shall buy him up body and soul."

But as soon as the fools had provided themselves with gold pieces, they distributed them among the women for necklaces. All the lasses plaited them into their tresses, and at last the children in the street began to play with the little pieces. Everybody had plenty of them, and they stopped taking them. But the fine gentleman's mansion was not yet half-built, and the grain and cattle for the year were not yet provided. So he announced that people should come and work for him, and that he wanted grain and cattle; for each thing, and for each service, he was ready to give many more gold pieces.

But nobody came to work, and nothing was brought. Only sometimes a boy or a little girl would run up to exchange an egg for a gold coin, but nobody else came, and he had nothing to eat. And being hungry the fine gentleman went through the village to buy something for dinner.

He tried at one house and offered a gold piece for a fowl, but the housewife wouldn't take it.

"I have a lot already," said she.

He tried at a widow's house to buy a herring, and offered a gold piece.

"I don't want it, my good sir," said she. "I have no children to play with it, and I myself have already three pieces as curiosities."

He tried at a peasant's house to get bread, but neither would the peasant take money.

"I don't need it," said he, "but if you are begging 'for Christ's sake,'\* wait a bit and I'll tell the housewife to cut you a piece of bread."

At that the devil began to spit, and ran away. Let alone receiving anything for Christ's sake, to hear Christ's name mentioned hurt him more than sticking a knife into him.

And so he got no bread. Everyone was supplied with gold, and wherever the old devil went, nobody would give anything for money, but everyone said, "Either bring something else, or come and work, or receive what you want in charity for Christ's sake."

But the old devil had nothing but money, for work he had no liking, and as for taking anything "for Christ's sake"—he could not do it. The old devil grew angry.

"What more do you want, when I give you money?" said he. "You can buy everything with gold, and hire any kind of labourer." But the fools did not heed him.

"No, we do not want it," said they. "We have no payments to make, and no taxes, so what should we do with money?"

The old devil lay down to sleep—supperless.

The affair was told to Iván the Fool. People came and asked him, "What are we to do? A fine gentleman has turned up, who likes to eat and drink well, and to dress neatly, but he does not like to work, does not beg in 'Christ's name,' but only offers little gold pieces to every one. At first people gave him all he wanted, until they had plenty of

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\* "For Christ's sake" is the usual appeal of Russian beggars or poor pilgrims.—*Trans.*

gold pieces, and now no one gives him anything. What's to be done with him? He will be dying of hunger."

Iván listened.

"All right," says he, "we must feed him. Let him live by turn at each house as a shepherd \* does."

There was no help for it. The old devil had to begin making the round.

In due course the turn came for him to go to Iván's house. The old devil came in to dinner, and the dumb lass was getting it ready.

She had often been deceived by lazy folk, who came early to dinner—without having done their full share of work—and ate up all the porridge.

The dumb lass had the wit to recognise the sluggards by their hands. Those who had hard places on their hands from blisters, she placed at table, but the others got only the leavings.

The old devil sat down at the table, but the dumb lass seized him by the hands and looked at them—there were no hard places there. the hands were clean and smooth, with long nails. The dumb girl grunted and pulled the devil away from the table. And Iván's wife said to him, "Don't be offended, fine gentleman. My sister-in-law does not allow anyone to come to table who hasn't had blisters on his hands. But wait awhile, and after the folk have eaten you shall have what is left."

The old devil was offended, that in the King's house they wished him to feed like a pig. He said to Iván, "It is a foolish law you have in your kingdom that everyone shall work with his hands. It's your stupidity that invented it. Do people work only with their hands? What do you think wise men work with?"

And Iván said, "How are we fools to know? We do most of our work with our hands and our backs."

"That is because you are fools! But I will teach you how to work with the head. Then you will know that it is more profitable to work with the head than with the hands."

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\* It is often arranged that the shepherd in a Russian village should get his board and lodging at the houses of those whose cattle he watches, passing from one to another in turn.—*Trans.*

Iván was surprised.

"Well," said he, "then there is some sense in calling us fools!"

And the old devil went on. "Only it is not easy to work with the head. You give me nothing to eat, because I have no hard places on my hands, but you do not know that it is a hundred times more difficult to work with the head. Sometimes one's head quite splits."

Iván became thoughtful.

"Why, then, friend, do you torture yourself so? Is it pleasant when the head splits? Would it not be better for you to do easier work with your hands and your back?"

But the devil said, "I do it all out of pity for you fools. If I didn't torture myself you would remain fools for ever. But having worked with my head I can now teach you."

Iván was surprised.

"Do teach us!" says he, "so that when our hands get cramped we may use our heads instead of them."

And the devil promised to teach the people. So Iván proclaimed throughout the kingdom that a fine gentleman had arrived, who would teach everybody how to work with the head; that with the head more could be produced than with the hands; and that people should come and learn.

Now there was in Iván's kingdom a high tower, with straight stairs leading up to a stand on the top. And Iván took the gentleman up there that he might be seen by everyone.

So the gentleman took his place on the top of the tower and began to speak, and the fools came together to see him. The fools thought the gentleman would really show them how to work with the head without using the hands. But the old devil only taught them in words how one may live without working. The fools could make nothing of it. They looked and looked and at last went off to attend to their own affairs.

The old devil stood on the tower a day, stood there a second day, talking all the time. But he wanted something to eat, and the fools never thought of bringing him bread up the tower. They thought that if he could work

with his head better than with his hands, he could at any rate easily provide himself with bread.

The old devil stood on the top of the tower yet another day, talking away. People would come near, look on for awhile, and then go away.

And Iván asked, "Well, has the gentleman begun to work with his head yet?"

"Not yet," said the people; "he's still spouting."

The old devil stood on the tower one day more, but he began to grow weak, so that he staggered and hit his head against a pillar. One fool noticed it and told Iván's wife, and Iván's wife ran to her husband, who was in the field.

"Come and look," said she. "They say the gentleman is beginning to work with his head."

Iván was surprised.

"Really?" says he, and he turned his horse round, and went to the tower. And by the time he reached the tower the old devil was quite exhausted with hunger, and was staggering and knocking his head against the pillars. And just as Iván arrived at the tower, the devil stumbled, fell, and came bump, bump, bump, straight down the stairs to the bottom, counting each step with the knock of his head.

"Well!" says Iván, "the fine gentleman told the truth when he said that 'sometimes one's head quite splits.' This is worse than blisters; after such work there will be swellings on the head."

The old devil tumbled out at the foot of the stairs, and struck his head against the ground. Iván was about to go up to him to see how much work he had done—but suddenly the earth opened and the old devil fell through. Only the hole was left.

Iván scratched his head.

"What a nasty thing," says he. "It's he again! Must be the father of them—what a whopper!"

Iván is still living, and people crowd to his kingdom. His own brothers have come to him, and he feeds them too. To every one who comes and says, "Give me food!" Ivan says, "All right. Stay with us; we have plenty of everything."

Only there is one custom in his kingdom; whoever has hard places on his hands comes to table, but whoever has not must eat what the others leave.

*Translated by  
Aylmer Maude.*

#### TRANSLATOR'S NOTE TO IVAN THE FOOL.

As this translation follows, for the most part, the anonymous version issued by the Brotherhood Publishing Company in 1898, I have to explain that the latter was to a large extent my work. Asked, in the first instance, to revise a completed version of *Iván the Fool*, and not liking the style adopted, instead of merely revising, I almost re-wrote it, and having now once more revised what was then published, there is very little of the original version left.

AYLMER MAUDE.

Great Baddow, *June*, 1901.



# POPULAR STORIES AND LEGENDS.

BY  
Leo Tolstoy

SECOND SERIES.

What Men Live By. The Godson. The Two Pilgrims.  
How the Little Devil Earned the Crust of Bread.  
The Story of Ilias.

*Newly translated by N . . . , and A. C. Fifield.*

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# What Men Live By.

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"We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not, abideth in death." (1 Epis. St. John; ii. 14.)

"But whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue, but in deed and truth." (iii. 17-18.)

"Love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." (iv. 7-8.)

"No man hath beheld God at any time: if we love one another, God abideth in us." (iv. 12.)

"God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him." (iv. 16.)

"If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen cannot love God whom he hath not seen." (iv. 20.)

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## I.

A COBBLER who owned neither house nor land lived with his wife and children in a little room in a peasant's cottage, where he earned their living by bootmaking. Bread was dear and labour was cheap and all they earned was spent in food. The cobbler and his wife had one fur coat between them, and that was worn to rags. For two years he had been thinking of buying sheepskins for a new coat.

Towards the winter the cobbler had gathered a little

money; a three rouble note (6s.) was hidden in his wife's box, and the peasants in the village owed him five roubles and twenty kopecks (10s. 5d.) more.

One winter morning he decided to go to the village for the new coat. He put on his wife's nankeen wadded jacket over his shirt, and his own cloth coat over that, thrust the three-rouble note into his pocket, took his stick, and started off after breakfast. He thought: "I shall get five roubles from the peasants, and I have three roubles of my own—that will buy enough sheepskins for a coat."

The cobbler came to the village and went to the cottage of one of the peasants; the man was out, and his wife promised to send him over next week with the money, but refused to give any herself. Then he went to another peasant, who swore that he had no money, and would only pay twenty kopecks for mending his boots.

The cobbler tried to get the sheepskins on credit, but the merchant refused to let him have them.

"Bring the money," said the merchant—"then you can choose which you like. I know what it is to sell things on credit."

So the cobbler got nothing for his pains, except twenty kopecks for the boots he had mended and a pair of old felt pattens which a peasant had given him to re-cover with leather.

The cobbler felt unhappy, so he spent his twenty kopecks on brandy, and then started home. He had felt very cold in the morning, but now after the brandy he was warm even without the sheepskin coat. So he trudged down the road, tapping his stick on the frozen ground with one hand and swinging the pattens with the other, and muttering to himself meanwhile—"I am warm without a coat. I've had my drop of brandy, and it's running all about inside me. I don't want any coat. I'm all right, and all my trouble's forgotten. That's the sort of man I am! What do I want with a coat? I'll live all my life and never think about it. Only, the old woman will be cross about it. And then it's a shame: I work for him, and he fools me. Well, you wait a little; if you don't bring the money, I'll teach you, in the name of God, I wil I Do you think to hoax me—paying me twenty

kopecks! What can I do with twenty kopecks? Only get drunk, and nothing else. You say you haven't got the money. Well, if you have no money, do you think I have? You have a house and cattle and everything, and I have nothing. You've got your own bread, and I have to buy mine—three roubles a week for bread alone, and I've got to scrape them together as best I can. Now I shall come home and if the bread's finished, it'll be another rouble and a half! So you'll just have to pay me my money."

The cobbler had now nearly reached a little chapel at a turning in the road, and as he looked up, he thought he saw something white near the wall. The twilight was darkening, and the cobbler strained his eyes, but could not make out what it was. "There was no such stone here"—he thought. "Is it a beast? It does not look like one. The head is like a man's, but it's too white. And why should a man be here?" The cobbler was quite close now and could see clearly. It was indeed a man—either dead or alive—but sitting down perfectly naked and leaning motionless against the chapel wall. Fear seized the cobbler, and he thought: "Someone has killed the man and stripped him and left him here. If I go and meddle there'll be no end of trouble afterwards."

So he went on and rounded the corner—the man was no longer to be seen. But when he had quite passed the chapel and looked behind him he saw that the man was sitting up and moving, and seemed to be looking at him. The cobbler felt more afraid than before, and thought: "Shall I go on, or shall I speak to the man? What will he do if I go up to him? The Lord knows who he is and what he's doing here. He can't be up to any good, anyhow. If I go near him perhaps he'll fly at me and strangle me and I shan't be able to get away. And if he doesn't strangle me, what am I to do with him? I'm not going to be bothered with the naked beggar. I'll be having to take off my things next and give him the last I have! The Lord help me to get away!"

So he hurried on. The chapel was already a good way behind him when his conscience smote him.

He stopped in the middle of the road.

"What are you doing, Simon," he said to himself. "A man is in trouble and dying and you are afraid and pass him by. Perhaps you've got very rich and are afraid people will rob you of your money? It is not well, Simon."

And Simon turned back and went to the man.

## II.

Simon drew near to the man and looked at him closely. He was young and strongly-built, and no wounds were visible on his body, only he seemed frozen and afraid; he sat huddled up without looking at Simon, as if exhausted and unable to lift his eyes. Simon came up close to him, and suddenly the man seemed to awaken, lifted his head, opened his eyes and looked at Simon. And for that one look Simon loved the man. He dropped the felt boots on the ground, took off his waistband and laid it on the boots, and drew off his coat.

"No use talking," he said; "put that on quick! Come on."

And Simon put his hand under the man's elbow and helped him to his feet. The man stood up. Simon saw that his limbs were whole, his body clean and shapely and his face winsome. He drew his coat over the man's shoulders, but the man could not find the sleeves. So Simon helped him into the sleeves, wrapped the coat round close, and girded it with his waistband.

Then he took off his ragged cap to put it on the naked man's head, but his own felt cold and he thought: "I haven't a hair on my bald head and his is long and curly." So he put his cap on again. "I'd better put his boots on for him."

He made the man sit down and drew on the felt boots.

When he had dressed the man, Simon said to him: "Now, brother, move on and get warm. Don't worry; these things haven't to be settled by us. Can you walk?"

The man stood up, looked at Simon with emotion, but was unable to say a word.

"Well, why don't you speak? We can't spend the winter here. We must be going home. There's my stick for you to lean on if you feel weak. Come, look alive!"

The man started walking and trod lightly, keeping pace with Simon.

As they went down the road, Simon said:

"Well, and where do you come from?"

"I'm not from these parts."

"Yes, I know all the people around. How did you get here, near the chapel?"

"I cannot say."

"I suppose someone hurt you?"

"No one has hurt me. I am punished by God."

"Of course, it's always God, but still you must live somehow. Where do you want to go?"

"It is all the same to me."

Simon was astonished. The man did not look like an evildoer, and his speech was soft, and yet he was afraid to say anything about himself. But Simon said to himself: "What do I know about such matters?" So he said to the stranger:

"Well, come to my house; if you like, you can rest and warm yourself a little."

Simon walked towards the cottage, and the stranger kept by his side, keeping pace with him. A wind arose and blew under Simon's shirt, and that sobered him, and he felt very cold. He trudged on, snuffling through his nose and drawing his wife's jacket closer round his body, and he thought: "There's a nice coat for you! I went off to get a fur coat, and now I'm coming home without my kaftan" (the long cloth coat worn by the peasants) "and bringing a naked beggar with me. Martha won't be pleased." And when he thought of Martha, he felt uneasy. But when he looked at the stranger and remembered the look he had given him near the chapel, his heart danced within him.

### III.

Simon's wife had finished her work early. She had cut wood for fuel, and brought the water, and fed the

children, taken a little food herself, and then she sat thinking, trying to decide whether she should mix the bread to-day or to-morrow. There was a large crust left yet.

"If Simon eats over there," she thought, "and if he doesn't have much at supper, there will be enough bread for to-morrow."

Martha turned the bread about in her hands, and said: "I won't mix the bread to-day. As it is we only have enough flour for one loaf. We must manage till Friday."

So Martha put away the bread and sat down at the table to sew a patch on her husband's shirt. As she sewed she thought of her husband and of how he would buy the sheepskins for the coat.

"If only the merchant does not swindle him! He's really too simple for anything, is my good man. He wouldn't cheat anybody himself; but any child could lead him by the nose. Eight roubles is a good sum. You can get a nice coat for that. Not a tanned one perhaps but still a good one. How we suffered last winter without a coat! We couldn't go out to the river or anywhere. When he went out he used to put on everything and I had nothing to wear. He's a long time coming. He ought to be here now. I hope he hasn't got drunk, this little pigeon of mine!"

As she was thinking, she heard the doorsteps creak and someone entered. Martha stuck the needle in the shirt and went out into the passage. There she saw two men: Simon, and with him, a strange peasant without a cap and in felt boots.

Martha instantly smelt the brandy from her husband's breath. "There," she thought, "he has gone and got drunk, just as I feared." Then when she saw that he was without his kaftan, and had on only her jacket and had brought nothing with him, and stood still saying not a word and looking uneasy, her heart sank within her. "He has drunk away all the money;" she thought, "he has been carousing with this drunken vagabond, and now he has brought him home with him."

Martha let them into the room and went in after them; she saw that the stranger was young and slight and wore their kaftan. There was no shirt visible under the kaftan

and he had no cap. As soon as he was in the room he stood still without moving and with his eyes on the ground.

And Martha thought: "He is not a good man: he is afraid."

Martha frowned and went to the oven, then stood watching for what they would do next.

Simon took off his cap and sat down on the bench pretending not to notice anything.

"Well, Martha," he said, "give us something to eat, will you?"

Martha muttered something under her breath but did not move from the side of the oven. She stood where she was and looked from one to the other, shaking her head. Simon saw that his wife was not herself, but there was nothing to be done, so he pretended not to notice, and took the stranger by the hand.

"Sit down, brother," he said, "and let us have supper."

The stranger sat down on the bench.

"Well, Martha, have you not cooked anything?"

Martha flared up. "I cooked," she said, "but not for you. Has your drink made you lose your senses? You went to get a coat and you come home without your kaftan and bring with you a naked vagabond. I have no supper for drunkards like you!"

"That's enough, Martha; why do you let your tongue rattle on like that? Ask first what sort of a man he is."

"What have you done with the money?"

Simon fumbled in his kaftan, took out the money and laid it on the table.

"Here is the money, but Trivonoff has not paid me yet, he promised to do so to-morrow."

Martha grew still more furious: Simon hadn't the coat, had given away his only kaftan to a naked beggar, and had brought him into the house.

So she snatched up the money from the table to hide it away, saying: "I've got no supper. I can't feed all your naked beggars!"

"Hold your tongue, Martha. At least listen to what I wish to say."

"What sort of sense shall I hear from a drunken fool? Good reason I had not to want to marry you! Drunkard! Mother gave me linen—you got drunk on it. You went to get a coat, you get drunk on that too!"

Simon wanted to explain that he had spent only twenty kopecks for drink, and to tell her where he had found the man; but Martha would not let him put in a word. She rattled on, the words tumbling one on the top or the other; things that had happened ten years ago she up-braided him with now.

She scolded and scolded, and then she flew at Simon and tugged him by the sleeve.

"Give me my jacket! It's the last one I have, but you don't care; you take it from me and put it on yourself. Give it here, you miserable dog, and may the devil seize you."

Simon began to pull off the jacket, and turned one of the sleeves inside out; Martha tugged at it and the jacket burst its seams. She snatched it up, threw it over her head and went to the door. She meant to go out, but paused; her heart was uncertain. She wanted to vent her anger, but she also wanted to know who the stranger was.

#### IV.

Martha paused and said:

"If he was a good man, he wouldn't be naked. He hasn't so much as a shirt on. If he hadn't been up to some mischief you would have told me where you found such a beauty!"

"But I have been trying to tell you all the time. I was walking along, when I saw this man sitting by the chapel, naked and half-frozen. It's not summer now, for a man to sit about naked. God brought me to him or he would have died. Well, what was I to do? How can we know what has befallen this man? So I took and dressed him and brought him here. Soften your heart, Martha; why do you sin? We must all die."

Martha wanted to begin scolding again, but she looked at the stranger and said nothing. The stranger was sitting motionless on the side of the bench, just as he had sat

down. His hands were crossed on his knees, his head hung on his breast, his eyes closed, and he kept wincing as if something were striking him. Martha was silent, and Simon said:

"Martha, is there no God in you?"

Martha heard the words and glanced at the stranger, and suddenly her heart softened towards him. She left the door and went to the oven and got the supper. She set a bowl on the table, poured out the kvass (a cheap home-made fermented drink) and brought out the last crust. Then she gave them a knife and spoons.

"There's your supper," she said.

Simon drew the stranger towards him.

"Come along, young man," he said.

Simon cut the bread, crumbled it into the soup, and they began to eat. Martha sat at the corner of the table, resting her head on her hand, and gazed at the stranger.

And Martha began to feel sorry for him and to love him. And suddenly the stranger's face lit up, he ceased to wince, lifted his eyes to Martha, and smiled.

They finished supper. Martha cleared the things and began to question the stranger.

"Where are you from?"

"I'm not from these parts."

"How did you get on to the road?"

"I cannot tell."

"Did someone rob you?"

"God punished me."

"And you were lying there naked?"

"Yes, quite naked. I was freezing. Then Simon saw me and pitied me, took off his kaftan and gave it to me, and brought me hither. And here you fed me, and gave me drink, and pitied me. God will reward you!"

Martha rose, and took from the window Simon's old shirt which she had been patching, and gave it to the stranger; then she got a pair of trousers, and gave them also.

"There," she said, "I see you have not even a shirt. Put this on and lie down where you like, in the loft or on the oven."\*

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\* Russian peasants use the top of the great brick stove or oven as their sleeping place.—*Trans.*

The stranger took off the kaftan, put on the shirt, and lay down in the loft. Martha put out the light, took the kaftan, and lay down beside her husband.

Martha pulled the end of the kaftan over her, but she lay without sleeping; she could not get the stranger out of her mind.

When she remembered that he had eaten the last crust and that there was no bread for to-morrow, and that she had given him the shirt and trousers, she felt unhappy: when she remembered how he had smiled at her, her heart danced within her.

Martha lay awake a long time; by-and-by she found that Simon also was not sleeping, and was pulling at the kaftan.

"Simon," she said.

"Well?"

"You ate up the last of the bread, and I haven't mixed any for to-morrow. I don't know what to do. Perhaps I might borrow some of neighbour Amelia."

"We shall get along somehow, so long as we're alive."

The woman lay still, and thought. Then she said—

"He seems a good man, but why doesn't he speak of himself?"

"I suppose he can't."

"Simon!"

"Well?"

"We give to others; why does nobody give to us?"

Simon didn't know what to answer. So he only said, "That's enough talking," and turned on his side and went to sleep.

## V.

The next morning Simon awoke. The children were asleep and the wife had gone to the neighbours to borrow some bread. The stranger was sitting on the bench in the old shirt and trousers, and looking upwards. His face was brighter than on the day before.

And Simon said—

"Well, my friend; the belly asks for bread, and the naked body for clothes. You must earn your living. What can you do?"

"I know nothing."

Simon was surprised, but said :—

"Well, with a will a man can learn anything.

"Men work, and I will work."

"What is your name?"

"Michael."

"Well, Michael, if you don't want to speak about yourself, that's your own affair; but you must earn your living. If you will work as I tell you I will keep you."

"The Lord reward you! I will learn. Show me what I am to do."

Simon took a thread, drew it through his fingers and shewed him how to wax it.

"It's not difficult, look!"

Michael watched, twisted the thread in his fingers, managed to imitate him at once, and made the point.

Simon showed him how to stick the inner and outer soles together with the pitch. Michael understood this also immediately. His master then taught him how to put the bristle in, and how to sew. This also Michael understood straight off.

Whatever Simon showed him he understood immediately; and in three days he began to work as though he had been a cobbler all his life.

He worked without rest, ate little, and when the work was finished he would sit silent, looking upwards. He seldom went into the street, he never talked more than was necessary, he never laughed, and never jested.

They only saw him smile once, on the first evening, when the woman gave him the food.

## VI.

Day after day, week after week, a whole year crept round. Michael lived on in Simon's lodgings, working for him. And the fame of Simon's workman went abroad; people said that no one could make such neat, strong boots as Michael; and from the whole neighbourhood people came to Simon for their boots: and Simon began to grow quite wealthy.

One day in the winter Simon and Michael were sitting

at their work when a sleigh with three horses and bells drove up to the cottage. They looked out of the window and saw the sleigh stop in front of the door; a man jumped down from the box and opened the door. A nobleman in a fur coat got out of the coach, walked up to Simon's cottage, and went up the door steps. Martha ran to the door and opened it wide. The nobleman bent his head to pass through the door; then he drew himself up and almost touched the ceiling with his head; he seemed to take up half the room.

Simon rose and bowed and stared at the stranger in astonishment. He had never seen anyone like him. Simon himself was lean, and Michael was thin, and Martha was like a dry herring; but this man seemed to be from another world.

His face was florid and well-fed and fleshy, his neck was like a bull's; and he seemed made of cast iron.

The nobleman recovered his breath, took off his fur coat, sat down on the bench, and said:

"Who is the master here?"

Simon came forward and said:

"I, your honour."

The nobleman shouted to his servant:

"Theodore, bring the leather!"

The servant ran in with a parcel. The nobleman took the parcel and laid it on the table.

"Open it," he said. The servant opened it.

The nobleman pointed to the leather and said to Simon:

"Now listen, shoemaker. Do you see this leather?"

"Yes, your honour," said Simon.

"Do you understand what kind of leather it is?"

Simon felt the leather and said:

"Fine leather."

"I should think it was fine, you simpleton! You've never seen such leather before in your life. It is German leather, and it costs twenty roubles."

Simon was awestruck. He faltered: "How could we see anything like it, indeed."

"Tut, tut. Now, can you make boots of this leather that will fit me?"

"I can, your honour."

"Oh, you *can*, can you," thundered the nobleman. "Well, understand whom you are making these boots for and out of what leather. You must make them so that they will wear for a year without splitting or losing their shape. If you *can*, take the leather and cut it; if you cannot—say so and don't spoil the leather. I tell you now, that if the boots split or lose their shape before a year, I will have you put in prison. If they do not split or wear out, I will pay you ten roubles for your work."

Simon hesitated, and hardly knew what to say. He glanced round at Michael, and nudged him with his elbow and whispered: "Shall I take the job?" Michael nodded, meaning: "Yes, take it."

Simon obeyed, and undertook to make a pair of boots which should wear for a year without splitting or losing their shape.

The nobleman shouted to his servant to pull off his left boot, and stuck out his leg.

"Take the measure!"

Simon cut off a strip of paper seventeen inches long, smoothed it out, knelt down, wiped his hands on his apron not to dirty the nobleman's stockings, and began to measure. He measured the sole, he measured the instep; but when he wanted to measure the calf, the paper was not long enough. The leg at the calf was as thick as a beam.

"Take care you don't make it too narrow in the leg!"

Simon got up to add on another strip of paper. The nobleman sat moving his toes about in his stocking and looking at the people in the cottage. He caught sight of Michael:

"Who is that?" he said.

"That is my workman. He will make the boots."

"Well, look now," said the nobleman to Michael, "remember you make them so that they shall last a year."

Simon looked round and saw that Michael was looking, not at the nobleman, but somewhere beyond him, into the corner, as if he saw something there. Michael stared and stared and suddenly he smiled, and his whole face lighted up.

"What are you grinning at, you idiot," thundered the nobleman. "You had better take care that the boots are ready in time."

And Michael said :

"They will be ready when needed."

"Enough."

The nobleman put on his boots and his fur coat, drew this close round him, and went to the door. But he forgot to bend down, and so struck his head against the lintel.

The nobleman swore and rubbed his head ; then he got into his sleigh and drove off.

When he had gone, Simon said : "Well, there's a bull for you. You couldn't kill him with a mallet. He smashed the door-post with his head, but he didn't seem to mind it."

Martha said : "Of course they get fat, living as they do. I should think death itself could do nothing with a great piece of flesh like that."

## VII.

Then Simon said to Michael : "Now look here, we've taken the job and we must try and not get into trouble over it. The leather is dear, and the gentleman is bad tempered. We must take care not to make a mistake. You take the measures ; your eye is quicker, and you've got more skill in your hands now than I have. Cut out the leather, and I will finish up the vamps."

Michael obeyed ; he took the leather, smoothed it out upon the table, folded it in two, took the knife, and began to cut.

Martha came and watched him, and was astonished to see what he was doing. Martha was accustomed to shoe-making, and now she saw that Michael was cutting the leather not for boots, but for slippers.

Martha wanted to speak, and then she thought : "I suppose I don't know how gentlemen's boots are made ; I suppose Michael knows better ; I won't interfere."

When Michael had cut out everything he took the thread and began to sew, not with a double thread, as one sews boots, but with a single thread as for slippers.

Again Martha wondered, but still she did not like to interfere. Michael sewed on steadily until noon-tide. Then Simon got up, looked, and saw that Michael had made slippers out of the nobleman's leather.

He groaned. "How is this," he thought, "Michael has lived for a whole year and has never made a mistake, and now he has done a thing like this. The gentleman ordered thick boots, and Michael has made slippers without soles, and spoiled the leather. How shall I manage now with the gentleman? I can't find any leather like it here."

And he said to Michael :

"What have you done, my good friend? You have ruined me! The gentleman ordered boots, and what have you made?"

He was just in the middle of his talk, when there came a sharp rapping at the knocker outside. They looked out of the window; some one had come on horseback and was fastening the horse. They opened the door, and the nobleman's servant who had been with him in the day-time came in.

"Good-day."

"Good-day! What do you require?"

"My mistress sent me about those boots."

"What about the boots?"

"Well, the gentleman does not need the boots any longer. He is dead."

"You don't say so!"

"He died in the sleigh before he got home from your house. When we reached home, we went to help him out and there he was, stretched out like a bag; he was quite dead and stiff, and we could hardly get him out of the sleigh. And the lady has sent me to you to say: 'Tell the bootmaker that the gentleman who ordered the boots and left him the leather does not need the boots any more, and tell him to make slippers for a corpse instead out of the same leather. And wait till they are ready and bring them home with you.' So I have come."

Michael gathered the cuttings of the leather from the table, rolled them up, took the slippers, which were quite ready, slapped them together, wiped them with his apron

and handed them to the young man. The young man took them.

"Good-bye, masters! And good luck to you!"

### VIII.

A year passed, two years passed, and now Michael had been living with Simon five years. He lived as before. He never went anywhere, he never talked unnecessarily, and in all the time he had only smiled twice, once when Martha had given him food, and a second time when the gentleman had sat in the room. Simon was delighted with his workman; he no longer asked him where he came from, and his only fear was that Michael should leave him.

One day they were sitting at home. Martha was heating irons in the oven; the children were playing on the benches and looking out of the window. Simon was sharpening his tools at one window, Michael was raising a heel at the other.

One of the boys ran along the bench to Michael, leant on his shoulder and looked out of the window.

"Uncle Michael, look, a merchant's wife is coming to our house with two little girls. One of the girls is lame."

Hardly had the boy said this, when Michael threw down his work, turned towards the window and stared out into the road.

Simon was astonished, Michael never used to look out, and now he seemed glued to the window and was staring at something. Simon also looked out; he saw a woman coming straight towards his door; she was neatly dressed, and held by the hand two little girls dressed in fur coats and with shawls on their heads. They were so much alike that it was difficult to tell them apart; but one was lame and limped as she walked. The woman came up the steps into the passage, found the door, lifted the latch and came in.

"Good day, masters."

"Welcome! What do you need?"

The woman sat down by the table; the two little girls were shy and clung to her knees.

"I want you to make for these little girls leather boots for the spring."

"Very well. We have never made such small ones, but we can make them. Do you wish them with welts, or lined with linen? There's Michael; he's a good hand at anything."

Simon looked round at Michael and saw that he had thrown aside his work and was staring straight at the little girls.

Simon was surprised. The little girls were pretty certainly: they were dark-eyed, plump and rosy, and they wore nice coats and kerchiefs; but still Simon couldn't understand why Michael should gaze at them so fixedly, as if he knew them. Simon wondered, but began to talk with the woman and to settle the price. When that was fixed, Simon prepared his measures. The woman lifted the little lame girl on her lap and said:

"Take two measures from this little girl. Make one shoe for the twisted foot and three for the straight one. Their feet are perfectly alike; they are twins." Simon took the measures and then said, looking at the little cripple:

"How did it happen to her? She is such a pretty child. Was she born so?"

"No," said the woman, "her mother crushed her."

Then Martha joined in; she wanted to know who the woman and children were, and she asked:

"Are you not their mother?"

"No, little mistress; I am not their mother nor any relation to them. They were quite strangers to me; I adopted them."

"Not your children at all, yet you love them so!"

"How can I help loving them? I nursed them both at my own breast. I had a child of my own, but God took him. I did not care for him even so much as I do for these."

"Whose children are they?"

## IX.

The woman began to talk and told them the whole history.

"Six years ago," she said, "these two children became orphans in one week. The father was buried on Tuesday, the mother died on Friday. They were born three days after their father's death, and their mother did not live a day. At that time I was living with my husband in the country. We were neighbours; their cottage was next to ours. Their father was a lonely peasant and worked at wood-cutting in the forest. One day a tree fell upon him and caught him across the body and crushed him so that all his bowels came out. They had hardly time to bring him home when he gave up his soul to God, and the same week his wife gave birth to twins—these little girls. She was all alone, in poverty and solitude, with no one to help her. She was alone in childbirth and alone in death. Next morning I went to see how she was, and I found her already cold and stiff. And as she was dying she must have rolled on to the little girl—this one, and crushed her and twisted her foot. The neighbours came in soon and washed the body and laid it out, and made a coffin and buried her. They were good people, all of them. But the two little girls—what were we to do with them? I was the only woman who had a baby. I had been nursing my first boy for eight weeks. So I took the little girls with me for the time. The peasants gathered together and talked and talked of what to do with them, and then they said to me: 'Keep them with you, Maria, for a while, and give us time to think over it and decide.' So I nursed the straight one, but I didn't think it worth while to feed the crippled one. I didn't think she could live. But then I thought, 'why should the little angel's soul suffer?' And I pitied her, and fed her also. And so I nursed them all three with my own breast—my boy and these two besides. I was young and strong, then, and I had good food. And God gave me so much milk in my breasts that I had more than I knew what to do with. I nursed two at a time and the

third waited. When one had had her fill I took the third. So God let me nurse the three, but my own boy was not two years old when I buried him. And God has not given me a child since. But we got better off, and now we are living with the merchant at the mill. We get good wages and live well. But I have no children. How could I live alone, without these children? How can I help loving them? They are to me what the wax is to the candle!"

The woman pressed the little lame girl to her side with one arm, and with the other hand she wiped the tears from her cheeks.

Martha sighed and said: "The old saying isn't amiss: Men can live without father or mother; but without God they cannot live."

And as they were talking thus between themselves, the whole room was suddenly illumined as with the glow of lightning, from the corner where Michael sat. They all looked at him, and saw him sitting with his hands clasped upon his knees, gazing upwards and smiling.

#### X.

The woman went away with the children. Michael rose from the bench, laid down his work, took off his apron, bowed low to the cobbler and his wife, and said:

"Farewell, masters; God has forgiven me. Do you, also, forgive me if I have done amiss."

And they saw that from Michael a light was shining.

Then Simon arose, bowed low to Michael, and said: "I see, Michael, that you are no common man, and I may not hold you nor may I question you. Yet tell me one thing only: why, when I found you and brought you home, were you sad, and why, when the mother gave you to eat, did you smile at her and since then become more lightsome? Then when the gentleman came to order the boots why did you smile a second time and become brighter still? And now, when the woman brought the little girls, why did you smile a third time and become so radiant? Tell me, Michael, why does such a light shine from you and why did you smile three times?"

And Michael said: "The light shines from me because

I have been punished and now God has forgiven me. And I smiled three times because it was demanded of me that I should learn the three words of God. And now I know these three words. The first I learned when your wife pitied me, and therefore I smiled the first time. The second I learned when the rich man ordered his boots, and therefore I smiled again. And now, when I saw the little girls, I learned the third and last word and therefore I smiled the third time."

And Simon said: "Tell me, Michael, why did God punish you, and what are the three words, that I too may know them?"

And Michael said: "God punished me because I disobeyed Him. I was an angel in heaven and I disobeyed God.

"I was an angel in heaven, and God sent me to take a woman's soul. I flew down to earth and I saw the woman lying alone and sick—she had just borne twins—two little girls. They stirred feebly near their mother and she was too weak to draw them to her breasts. The woman saw me, she understood that God had sent me to take her soul and she wept and said: 'Angel of God! They have just buried my husband; a tree in the forest fell and killed my husband. I have neither sister nor aunt nor mother to care for my little orphans. Take not my little soul! Let me nurse my children myself and bring them up and start them in life. How can the children live without father or mother?' And I did as the mother asked me, I laid one child to her breast and gave the other into her arms and I returned to God in heaven. I flew back to the Lord, and I said: 'I could not take the soul of the woman. The father was killed in the forest, the mother bore twins and prayed that her soul might be left within her. She said: 'Let me nurse my children and bring them up. How can they live without father or mother?' I cannot take the mother's soul."

"And the Lord said to me: 'Go back and take the mother's soul. And thou shalt learn three words: thou shalt learn *What there is in men*, and *What is not given to men*, and *What men live by*. When thou knowest these three words, then return to heaven!'"

"I flew back to earth and took the mother's soul. The babes fell from her breasts. The dead body rolled over on the bed and crushed one of the little ones and twisted her foot. I rose above the village and tried to take the soul to God; but a great wind seized me, my wings drooped and fell off; the soul arose alone to God, and I fell to earth by the roadside."

## XI.

Now Simon and Martha saw whom they had fed and clothed, and who had lived with them, and they wept for fear and joy; and the angel said:

"I was alone in the field and naked. I had never known human needs and poverty, nor hunger, nor cold; and now I had become a man. I was famished and frozen and I knew not what to do. Then I saw in the field a chapel built for God. I went to God's chapel, thinking to find shelter there. But the chapel was locked and I could not enter. So I sat down by the chapel wall, to shelter myself from the wind. The evening came and I was hungry and frozen, and ached all over. Suddenly I heard a man coming down the road. He carried a pair of boots and was talking to himself. For the first time since I had been man I saw the mortal face of man, and this man's face filled me with horror and I turned away from it. I heard the man talking to himself about how he should protect his body from the cold during the winter and how to get food for his wife and children. And I thought: 'I am perishing from cold and hunger and this man here is thinking only of how to get a warm coat and enough bread for himself and his wife. He cannot help me.' The man saw me, frowned and became more terrible than before. Then he passed on and I despaired utterly. Suddenly I heard the man coming back. I looked at him and did not recognise in him the same man: before there was death in his face, now he was alive; and I saw God in his face. He came up to me and dressed me, took me with him and led me to his home. When we reached his house, a woman came out to meet us and began to speak. The woman was still more terrible than

the man. The spirit of death came out of her mouth and I was suffocated by the stench of corruption. She wanted to hunt me out into the cold, and I knew she would die if she did so. Suddenly her husband reminded her of God, and instantly the woman changed. And when she gave us to eat and looked kindly upon me, I looked at her and in her face death was no longer; she was alive, and in her I saw God.

"And I remembered God's first word 'Thou shalt learn what there is in men.' And I understood that *love* is in men. And I was glad, because God had already begun to reveal what He had promised to me, and I smiled for the first time. But I could not yet understand all. I did not know *what was not given to men*, and *what men live by*.

"I began to live with you, and I had lived for a year when a man came to order boots that should wear for a year without splitting or losing shape. I looked at him and suddenly, behind his back, I saw my comrade, the angel of death. None saw the angel but myself; but I knew him and I knew that before the sun was down he would take the rich man's soul. And I thought: 'This man is making provision for a year, and he knows not that before this evening he will die.' And I remembered God's second word: '*Thou shalt learn what is not given to men.*' I knew already what was in men. Now I knew also what was not given to men. It is not given to men to know what they need for their bodies. And I smiled a second time. I was glad that I had seen my comrade angel, and I was glad that God had revealed His second word to me.

"But still I could not understand everything. I could not understand *what men live by*; and I waited and waited till God should reveal to me His last word. And in the sixth year the little twin girls came with the woman and I recognised them and I learned how they had been saved from death. And when I had heard I thought: 'The mother prayed for her children and I believed her—I thought the children could not live without father or mother. And yet this stranger has nursed them and brought them up.' And when the woman wept

over the children that were not her own, and when I saw her tenderness towards them, I recognised in her the living God and I knew *what men live by*. And I knew that God had revealed to me his last word and had forgiven me, and I smiled the third time."

## XII.

And the clothes fell from the angel's body and he was clad in light so bright that the eye could not bear to look on him; and when he spoke, his voice was sonorous as if it came not from him but from the heavens above.

And the angel said:

"I have learned that every man lives not by care of himself but by love.

"It was not given to the mother to know what her children needed for their life. It was not given to the rich man to know what he himself needed. It is not given to any man to know whether he will need boots for his live body or slippers for his own corpse in the evening.

"When I was a man, I remained alive not by the care I took of myself but because there was love in the hearts of a stranger and his wife, and they pitied and loved me. The orphans remained alive, not by the thought they took of themselves, but because there was love in the heart of a strange woman and she pitied and loved them. And all men live not by the care they take of themselves but by the love that is in men.

"I knew before that God gave life to men and desires them to live; now I have understood another thing.

"I have learned that God did not wish men to live dis-united and therefore He did not reveal unto them what each man needs for himself; but He wished them to live in union and therefore He revealed unto them what all men need for themselves and for all together.

"I have learned that it only seems to men that they live by care for themselves; but in truth they live only by love. He who lives in love lives in God and God in him, for God is love."

And the angel sang to the praise of God, and the cottage shook with the sound of his voice.

And the roof parted and a column of fire rose from earth to heaven. And Simon and his wife and children fell to the ground. And wings sprang from the angel's shoulders and he arose into the heavens.

And when Simon lifted his eyes, the cottage stood as it was before, and there was no one in it except himself and his family.

*Translated by N. . . .  
and A. C. Field.*

# The Godson.

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"You have heard that it was said; An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil . . ." (Matt. v. 38, 39).

"Vengeance is mine, I will repay." (Rom. xii. 19.)

## I.

A SON was born to a poor peasant. The peasant was glad and went to a neighbour to ask him to be god-father. The neighbour refused; no one wants to be god-parent to a poor peasant. The peasant went to another neighbour who also refused.

He went through the whole village; no one wished to be god-parent. Then the peasant went to the next village. On the road he met a stranger. The stranger stopped.

"Good morning," he said, "my friend; whither does God lead you?"

"The Lord has given me a child," said the peasant, "to be the delight of my eyes in youth, to console me in my old age, and to pray for my soul when I am dead. But because I am poor, no one in our village will be god-parent. I am going to look for a god-father."

The stranger said: "Let me be god-father."

The peasant was delighted, thanked the stranger and said: "Now who shall I get for god-mother?"

"Well," said the stranger, "for god-mother go and ask the shop-keeper's daughter. Go into the town; in the square you will see a stone house with shops; go to the door and ask the merchant to let his daughter be god-mother."

The peasant felt doubtful.

"How, chosen god-father, can I go to the merchant, a rich man? He will disdain me and won't let his daughter go."

"You need not trouble about that. Go and ask. To-morrow morning I will come to the christening. Be ready."

The poor peasant returned home, went to the city and found the merchant's house. He led his horse into the back yard. The merchant himself came out.

"Well, what do you want," said the merchant.

"This, honoured merchant: God has given me a child to be the joy of my eyes in youth, the consolation of my old age, and to pray for my soul when I am dead. I pray you let your daughter be his god-mother."

"When is the christening?"

"To-morrow morning."

"Very well. God be with you. She shall come to-morrow morning."

Next day the god-mother came, the god-father came also, and they christened the child. As soon as the child was christened, the god-father left the house and they knew not who he was. And from that day they saw him no more.

## II.

The child began to grow up to be the delight of his parents; he was strong and industrious, and intelligent and gentle. At last he reached the age of ten, and his parents sent him to learn to read and write. What others took five years to learn, the boy learnt in one year. And soon he had nothing more to learn in the school.

Holy Week came and the boy went to his god-mother to congratulate her on the coming Easter, and when he returned home he asked:

"Father and mother, where does my god-father live? I should like to go to him and salute him."

And the father said:

"We do not know, my dear little son, where your god-

father lives. We ourselves are sorry about it. We have not seen him since he christened you. We have not heard about him, we do not know where he lives, we do not even know if he is alive."

The boy bowed low before his father and mother : "Let me go, father and mother," he said, "to seek for my god-father. I want to find him and give him the Easter greeting."

The father and mother let their son go, and he started off to find his god-father.

### III.

The boy left his home and walked along the road. He walked half the day, when a stranger met him.

The stranger stopped.

"Good-evening, boy," he said ; "whither does God lead you?"

And the boy said : "I went to my god-mother to salute her for Easter, and I came home and asked my parents where my god-father lived. I wanted to give him the Easter greeting. My father and mother said, 'We do not know, little son, where your god-father lives. On the day he christened you he went away from us and we know nothing about him, nor even if he is still alive.' And I wanted to see my god-father, and now I am going to look for him."

And the stranger said : "I am your god-father."

The boy was delighted and saluted his god-father.

"Where are you going now, god-father?" he said. "If in our direction, then come home with me ; if you are going to your own house, then I will come with you."

The god-father said : "I have no time now to go home with you ; I have business in the village. But I will be at home to-morrow. Come to me then."

"How shall I find you, god-father?"

"Go always towards the sun-rise, always straight on. You will come to a forest and in the forest you will see a clearing. Sit down in this clearing, rest, and see what will happen. When you come out of the wood, you will see a garden, and in the garden a house with a golden

root. That is my house. Go up to the gate. I will meet you there myself."

Having said this the god-father disappeared from the boy's sight.

#### IV.

The boy went on as his god-father had told him. He went on and on and came to a forest. He reached the clearing; in the middle of the clearing he saw a pine tree, and on the pine tree a rope fastened to a branch, and hanging on the rope a heavy oak log. Under the log was a trough containing honey. While the boy was wondering why the honey was put there and the log hung up, he heard a crashing in the forest and saw bears coming: first the she-bear, then a yearling, then three small cubs. The she-bear sniffed at the air, and marched straight for the trough, the cubs behind her. She thrust her nose into the honey and called the cubs. The cubs ran to her and fell to upon the honey. The log swung off a little, came back and hit the cubs. The she-bear saw it and pushed the log away with her paw. The log swung off further, and flew back again into the midst of the cubs, striking some on the back and others on the head. The cubs screamed and jumped away. The she-bear roared, grasped the log with both paws above her head and pushed it from her. The log flew high up; the yearling came on again and thrust his head into the trough and munched, and the cubs pressed on behind. They had not time to get close when the log came flying back and struck the yearling on the head, killing him on the spot. The she-bear roared more furiously than before, and caught the log and flung it from her with all her might. The log flew up higher than the branch, so high that the rope slackened; and the she-bear again went up to the trough followed by her cubs. The log flew up and up; it stopped, and fell back. The lower it fell, the swifter grew its motion. Now it flew very swiftly right on towards the she-bear, and struck her a terrible blow on the head. She rolled over on her side, jerked her legs convulsively, and died. The cubs ran away.

The boy wondered, and went further. He came to a large garden, and in the garden was a great palace with a golden roof. At the gate stood the god-father, smiling. He greeted his godson, led him through the gate and took him into the garden. Never even in his dreams had the boy dreamt of such beauty and delight as he found in the garden.

The god-father led the boy into the palace. The palace was still more beautiful. He took the boy through all the rooms; each was better than the other, each was more beautiful than the last, till they came to a sealed door.

"Do you see this door?" said the god-father. "There is no key only a seal. It can be opened, but I forbid you to do so. Live here and walk about where you like and as you like; enjoy all pleasures and happiness; but one command is put upon you: Do not enter this door. But if you do enter, then remember what you saw in the wood."

Thus spoke the god-father and vanished.

The godson remained alone and began his new life. And he was so happy and contented that it seemed to him he only lived in the palace three hours, whereas he lived thirty years.

When the thirty years had gone by the godson came to the sealed door, and he thought:

"Why did my god-father forbid me to enter this room? I shall just go in and see what is there."

He pushed the door, the seals fell off, and the door opened. The godson entered and saw a room larger and more beautiful than all the others, and in the middle of the room a golden throne. The godson walked to and fro in the room, came to the throne, mounted the steps, and sat down. He sat down and saw a wand standing against the throne. The godson took the wand in his hand. And as soon as he had taken the wand, the four walls of the room fell asunder. The godson gazed around him and saw the whole world, and all that men are doing in the world. He looked straight before him and saw the sea and ships sailing on it. He looked to the right and saw foreign, non-Christian nations living. He looked to the left and saw Christian nations, but not Russians. He looked toward

the fourth side and saw the Russians living. "Now," he thought, "I shall see what they are doing at home, and whether the corn is good."

The godson looked towards his field and saw the sheaves standing. He began to count the sheaves to see how much grain there would be when he saw a cart driving through the field and a peasant sitting in it. The godson thought it was his father coming to gather in the sheaves by night. But looking closer he saw the thief, Basil Kudrashoff. Basil went up to the sheaves and began to toss them into his cart. That angered the godson and he cried: "Father, your sheaves in the field are being stolen!"

At home in his bedroom the father awoke.

"I dreamt that the sheaves are being stolen," he thought. "I shall just go and see." He got on his horse and rode off.

He came to the field and saw Basil and called the peasants to help him. Basil was bound, beaten, and taken to prison.

The godson looked at the town where his god-mother lived. He saw she was married to a merchant. And she was in bed asleep, but her husband rose and went to his mistress. The godson cried to the merchant's wife: "Get up, your husband is doing evil things."

The god-mother jumped up, dressed herself, found out where her husband was, upbraided and thrashed his mistress, and drove her husband from her.

The godson looked towards his mother and saw her lying asleep in her cottage. And a thief crept into the cottage and began to break open the chest.

The mother awoke and screamed. The robber looked up, seized an axe, and swung it over the mother, intending to kill her.

The godson could not bear to see more. He flung the wand at the robber, struck him on the temple, and killed him on the spot.

## V.

The moment the godson had killed the robber, the walls closed again, and the room became as it was.

The door opened and the god-father entered. He came up to his godson, took him by the hand and led him from the throne, saying: "You have not obeyed my command; you have done one evil deed—you opened the forbidden door; you have done another evil deed—you mounted my throne and took my sceptre into your hand; you have done a third evil deed—you have added much to the evil of the world. If you had sat there an hour more, you would have ruined half mankind."

The god-father led his son to the throne again, and put the wand in his hands. And again the walls fell asunder and all things became visible.

And the god-father said: "Look now what you have done to your father. Basil has been in prison for a year, has learned everything evil, and become a desperate brute. Look! he has stolen two of your father's horses and now you see he is going to set fire to his cottage. That is what you have done to your father."

As soon as the godson saw that his father's house was on fire, the god-father hid it from his sight and told him to look on the other side.

"Look," he said, "it is a year ago since your god-mother's husband deserted her. He has abandoned himself to dissipation with other women, his former mistress is ruined body and soul; his wife, in despair, has taken to drink. That is what you have done to your god-mother."

The god-father hid this also and showed the godson his own cottage. The godson saw his mother; she was weeping over her sins and repenting and saying: "Better would it have been if the robber had killed me, for then I should not have committed so many more sins."

"That is what you have done to your mother."

The god-father hid this also and pointed down. And the godson saw the thief; two gaolers held him before the prison.

And the god-father said: "This man has destroyed nine lives. He ought himself to have atoned for his sins but you have killed him and have taken all his sins upon yourself. Now you must answer for them. That is what you have done to yourself. The she-bear pushed

the log once and hurt her cubs: she pushed it a second time and killed her yearling; she pushed it a third time and destroyed herself. You have done the same. I give you thirty years' time. Go into the world, atone for the robber's sins. If you do not atone, you shall go in his place."

The godson asked: "How am I to atone for his sins?"

And the god-father replied: "When you have undone as much evil as you have done in the world, then you will have atoned for your own sins and for the sins of the thief."

The godson asked: "How can I undo the evil that is in the world?"

The god-father answered: "Go straight on towards the sunrise. You will come to a field with people in it. See what the people are doing and tell them what you know. Then go further and notice what you see. On the fourth day you will come to a forest; in the forest is a cell, in the cell an old man lives. Tell him all that has happened to you. He will teach you. When you have done all he tells you, you will have atoned for the robber's sins and for your own."

Thus spoke the god-father and led the godson out of the gate.

## VI.

The godson went his way. And as he went he thought: "How can I destroy evil in the world? Men try to destroy evil by throwing wicked men into prison, sending them into exile, and executing them. What then am I to do, to destroy evil without taking upon myself the sins of others?"

The godson thought and thought, and could think of nothing. He went on and on till he came to a field. In the field the corn had grown thick and good, and it was ready for the reapers. The godson saw that a little heifer had strayed into the corn; and as soon as the peasants noticed it they got on their horses and began to chase the little heifer from side to side. As soon as she tried to run out of the corn, some one would ride up and frighten her back into the corn again. And again they would

chase her through the field. On the road stood a woman weeping: "They will kill my little heifer," she said. The godson said to the peasants: "Why are you doing this? Ride out of the corn, all of you, and let the woman herself call out her heifer." The men obeyed. The woman came to the edge of the field and began to call, "Tprusi, Tprusi." The little heifer pricked up her ears and listened attentively. Then she ran straight up to the woman, thrust her nose under her skirt and almost knocked her off her feet. And the peasants were glad and the woman was glad and the little heifer was glad.

The godson went on his road and thought: "Now I see that evil is increased by evil. The more men punish evil, the more evil they produce. Thus evil cannot be destroyed by evil. But how to destroy it I do not know. It was well that the little heifer obeyed her mistress, but if she had not obeyed, how would they have got her out?"

The godson thought and thought but could find no answer, and went on further.

## VII.

He went on and on till he came to a village. He asked for a night's lodging in the last cottage. The mistress let him in. There was no one in the cottage but herself and she was scrubbing.

The godson entered, climbed on the oven\* and watched what the woman was doing. She scrubbed the room and then she began to scrub the table. When the table was clean she wiped it with a dirty towel. She wiped it one way—the table remained as dirty as before. Streaks of dirt were left by the dirty towel. She wiped it the other way—some of the stains came away and others appeared. Then she began again to rub it from one end to another and it was just as before. She smeared it with the dirty towel. As fast as she removed one smear she made another.

The godson looked and looked, then he said: "What are you doing, little mistress?"

"Don't you see?" said the woman; "I am washing up

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\* The usual sleeping place in the cottages of the Russian peasants.  
—*Trans.*

for the holy days. But see, I can't clean my table. It's as dirty as it was and I am quite tired out."

"If you would first wash your towel," said the godson, "then you could wipe the table."

The woman did so, and soon cleaned the table. "Thank you," she said, "for telling me how."

Next morning the godson said good-bye to the woman and went on his way. He walked on and on till he came to a wood. There he saw some peasants bending hoops for wheels. He came close and saw the rods wouldn't bend. He came closer still, and then he saw that the block the peasants fastened the hoops to was quite loose and shifted as they worked.

The godson looked on and said :

"What are you doing, brothers?"

"We are bending hoops; twice we have steamed them and still they will not bend, and we are quite tired out."

"Well, brothers, if you first fix your block firmly then you will be able to bend your hoops."

The peasants did as the godson told them, and made the block fast, and after that the work went on merrily.

The godson spent the night with them, and then he went on. He walked all day and all night. Before sunrise he came upon some drovers and lay down beside them. He saw that the drovers had halted the cattle and were trying to light a fire. They took dry twigs and lighted them; but before letting them get well kindled they piled up the fire with damp brushwood. The brushwood fizzled and the fire died out. The drovers brought more dry wood, lighted it, and again piled on the damp scrub till they stifled the fire. They tried again and again, but could not kindle the fire.

Then the godson said: "Don't be in a hurry to put on the brushwood, but first let the fire burn up properly. When it is well alight, then throw on the wood."

The drovers did so. They made a hot fire and then piled on the wood; the wood caught and the fire burnt high. The godson stayed a little while with them and then went further. He thought and thought for what purpose he had seen these three things, but he could not understand.

## VIII.

The godson went on and on till the fall of day. He came to a forest; in the forest was a cell. The godson went up to the cell and knocked.

A voice from the cell asked.

"Who is there?"

"A great sinner; I go to atone for the sins of another."

The sage came out and asked:

"What are these sins that you carry for another?"

The godson told him everything: about his godfather and about the she-bear with her cubs, and about the throne in the sealed room, and about his godfather's commands, and about the peasants he had seen in the field and how they trampled the grain, and about the little heifer who had so willingly run to her mistress.

"I have understood," said the godson, "that it is impossible to destroy evil by evil, but I cannot understand how it is to be destroyed. Teach me."

The old man said:

"Tell me what more you saw on your way."

The godson told him about the woman who scrubbed the table; about the peasants who bent the hoops, about the drovers who lighted the fire.

The sage listened and went into his cell and brought out a blunt hatchet. "Come," he said.

He went to a little clearing by the cell and pointed to a tree.

"Cut it down," he said.

The godson cut it down. The tree fell.

"Now cut it into three parts."

The godson obeyed. Then the sage returned to his cell and brought some fire. "Burn those three logs," he said.

The godson kindled a fire, and burnt the logs till there remained three brands.

"Now bury them to the half into the earth. So."

The godson buried them.

"You see the river at the foot of the hill; bring hither water in your mouth and water them. Water that brand

as you taught the woman. Water this one as you taught the hoop-makers; water this other as you taught the drovers. When all three have sprouted, and when three apple trees have grown from them, then you will know how to destroy evil in men; then you will have atoned for your sins."

Thus spoke the sage and returned to his cell. The godson thought and thought and could not understand what the old man meant. But he began to do as he had been told.

## IX.

The godson went to the river, filled his mouth with water and poured it on the brands. He went again and again and watered them all. Then he felt tired and wanted something to eat. So he went to the cell to ask the sage for food. He opened the door and saw the old man lying dead upon the bench. The godson looked about him, found some dry crusts, and ate. Then he found a spade and began to dig a grave. By night he brought water and watered the brands; by day he dug the grave. The day he finished digging and was going to bury the body, people came from the village, bringing food for the sage.

They learned that the old man was dead, and had blessed the godson, and told him to take his place. So they buried the body and left bread for the godson; then they promised to bring more, and went away.

The godson remained living in the hermit's place. He lived on what people brought, and fulfilled the command laid upon him; he brought water in his mouth from the river and watered the brands.

The godson lived so for a year, and many people began to come to him. And the fame of his holiness spread and people said that a holy man lived in the forest and saved his soul by carrying water in his mouth up the hill and watering burnt stumps. Many began to come to him. And rich merchants came and brought him gifts. The godson took nothing for himself but what was needful, and whatever was given him he gave to the poor.

And so the godson lived. Half the day he carried the

water in his mouth and watered the brands, and the other half he rested and saw those who came to him.

And the godson began to think that thus he had been ordered to live, and that thus he would destroy evil and atone for his sins.

The godson lived thus a second year, and not a day passed without his watering the brands, and yet not one of them had begun to sprout.

One day he was sitting in his cell, when he heard someone riding by and singing songs. The godson went out to see what sort of a man it was. He saw a young and powerful man, dressed in good clothes, seated on a rich saddle and mounted on a fine horse.

The godson stopped the man and asked him who he was and whither he was going.

The man halted.

"I am a robber," he said. "I ride along the roads and kill men. The more I kill the merrier are my songs."

The godson was filled with horror, and thought: "How am I to destroy the evil in this man? It is easy to speak to those who come to me and confess of their own accord. But this man prides himself upon his wickedness." So the godson said nothing and turned away thinking.

"What shall I do? If this robber comes riding about the place, he'll frighten everybody, and people will stop coming to me. They will thereby do harm to themselves, and besides, how shall I live then?"

The godson halted and said to the robber, "Men come to me not to boast of their wickedness, but to confess and pray that their sins may be forgiven. Repent you also, if you fear God; or if you have no wish to repent, then go hence and come never again; trouble me not, nor frighten the people from coming to me. If you do not heed me, God will punish you."

The robber laughed.

"I am not afraid of God," he said, "nor will I listen to you. You are not my master. You live by your piety, and I live by my robbery. We must all live somehow or other. Preach to the old women who come to you, but you need not teach me. And because you have spoken to me of God, therefore will I kill two more men to-morrow.

I would kill you to-day, but I don't want to dirty my hands. Only don't come in my way a second time."

Thus the robber threatened and rode away. But he came no more, and the godson lived quietly as before for eight years.

## X.

One night, after the godson had watered his brands, he returned to his cell to rest, and sat watching the foot-path, waiting for the people to come. But not a man came during the whole day. The godson sat alone till the evening and he felt unhappy and began to think about his life. He remembered how the robber had accused him of getting a living by his piety. And he looked over his whole life. "I am not living," he thought, "as the hermit ordered me to live. He laid a penance upon me, and from that penance I am getting food and the praise of men. And I have become so greedy for these things that I am unhappy when people do not come to me. And when they do come, then I am glad only because they extol my holiness. It is not good to live so. I have been led astray by the desire for glory. I have not atoned for my old sins and I have committed new ones. I will go away into the forest, to a new place, so that the people may not find me. And I will live alone, to atone for my former sins and avoid committing new ones."

Thus thought the godson, and he took a little bag of dry bread and a spade, and departed from the cell into the ravine and dug a cave for himself in a lonely spot, to hide himself from the people.

The godson was walking along with his bag and his spade, when the robber appeared before him. The godson was frightened and tried to run, but the robber overtook him.

"Where are you going?" he asked. The godson told him he wished to go away from the people to a place where no one would come to him. The robber was astonished.

"How will you live then," he said, "if the people do not come to you?"

The godson had not even thought of this before, but

when the robber asked him he remembered about his food.

The robber said not a word and rode on.

"Well," thought the godson, "I have said nothing to him about his life. Perhaps now he will repent. He seems gentler to-day and did not threaten to kill me." So the godson cried after the robber :

"All the same you must repent. You cannot escape from God."

The robber turned his horse. He pulled a knife from his belt and threatened the godson with it. The godson was afraid and ran into the wood.

The robber did not follow him but only said : "Twice I have forgiven you, old man, come not across me a third time or I will kill you !"

Thus he spoke and rode away. In the evening the godson went to water his brands and behold ! one had begun to sprout. A little apple tree was growing from it

## XI.

Thus the godson hid himself from men and lived alone. Soon his bread was finished. "Well," he thought, "I shall go and look for some roots." No sooner had he begun to search, when he saw a little bag of bread hanging to a branch. The godson took it and began to eat.

When he had finished the bread, he found another bag hanging on the same branch. And so he lived. He had only one care—he was afraid of the robber. Whenever he heard the robber he would hide himself, thinking : "He will kill me and I shall have no time to atone for my sins."

So he lived for ten years. The apple tree grew alone, the other two stumps remaining as they were.

One day the godson rose early and went to his work. He watered the earth round the brands and was weary and sat down to rest. He sat and thought : "I have sinned. I have become afraid of death. If God wills, I can atone for my sins by death as well as in any other way." Hardly had he thought of this, when he heard the robber coming and swearing. The godson listened and

thought: "None can do me good or evil except God." And he went to meet the robber.

He saw the robber was not alone, but behind him a man was tied to the saddle. The man's hands and mouth were bound. The man was silent and the robber was swearing at him. The godson came up to the robber and stood in front of the horse.

"Where are you taking this man," he said.

"I'm taking him into the forest. He is a merchant's son, and he won't say where his father's money is hidden. I am going to thrash him till he tells me."

The robber tried to pass, but the godson would not let him, and caught the horse by the bridle. "Let this man go," he said.

The robber grew angry and lifted his knife.

"Would you like me to do the same to you," he said. "I have promised to kill you. Let go!"

The godson was not afraid.

"I will not let you go," he said. "I do not fear you; I fear God alone. And God tells me not to let you go. Unloose the man!"

The robber scowled, unsheathed his knife, cut the ropes, and freed the merchant's son.

"Go to the devil, both of you!" he said, "and don't come across me again."

The merchant's son jumped down and ran into the forest. The robber started to go on, but the godson stopped him again and exhorted him to leave his evil life. The robber stood still, listened to everything, and said not a word; then he rode on. In the morning the godson went to water the brands. And behold! another had sprouted—a second apple tree was growing.

## XII.

Ten years more passed. The godson still lived. He desired nothing and he feared nothing and his heart was glad within him. And one day he thought to himself: "What happiness is given to men by God! And yet they will torment themselves in vain, when they could live on and on in never ending joy." And he remembered all human wickedness, and how men torment themselves. And he

was sorry for mankind. "I am wrong to live as I do," he thought, "I must go and tell people what I know."

Hardly had he thought this, when he heard the robber coming. He meant to let him pass, thinking: "What is the use of speaking to him; he will not understand."

That was his first thought; but then he changed his mind and went out on the road. The robber was gloomy and rode with his eyes on the ground. The godson looked upon him and was filled with pity for him. He ran up and caught him by the knee.

"Dear brother"—he said—"have pity on your soul. In you lives the spirit of God. Yet you torment yourself, you torment others, and you will be tormented still more bitterly. And God loves you so tenderly; he has prepared such happiness for you! Brother, do not ruin yourself. Change your life!"

The robber frowned and turned away. "Leave me alone," he said.

The godson held the robber's knee more tightly and burst into tears.

The robber lifted his eyes to the godson's face. He looked and looked, then he slid from his horse and fell upon his knees before the godson.

"You have conquered me, old man," he said. "Twenty years I have struggled with you. Now you have overcome me. Henceforward I have no more power over myself. Do with me what you will. When you spoke to me the first time, I only became more angry and wicked. I began to think over your words only when you hid yourself from men and I saw that you required nothing of them. Since that day I have fastened food for you to the branch."

And the godson remembered that the woman succeeded in washing her table only after she had cleansed the towel. When he ceased to think about himself, his heart was purified and he began to purify the hearts of others.

And the robber said:

"When you were not afraid of death, then my heart turned within me."

Then the godson remembered that the hoop makers could bend their hoops only after having fixed their

blocks. When he ceased to fear death and established his life in God, he caused a rebellious heart to become obedient.

And the robber said :

“When you pitied me and wept before me, then did my heart melt within me.”

The godson was filled with joy and led the robber to the spot where the brands were planted. And as they came near they saw that from the last brand an apple tree had grown. And the godson remembered that the damp wood had caught fire only when the drovers had kindled a strong blaze. When his own heart burned, another had caught fire from it. And the godson was joyful, because, now he had atoned for his sins.

He told all this to the robber, and died. The robber buried him and began to live as the godson had commanded him, and to teach men.

*Translated by N...  
and A. C. Fifield.*

# The Two Pilgrims.

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“The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

“Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father. Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know; for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers.”—John iv. 19-23.

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## I.

Two old men once agreed to go on a pilgrimage together to Jerusalem to worship God. One was a rich peasant call Yefim Sheveleff, the other was not wealthy and was called Elisha Bodroff.

Yefim was a staid, respectable man, upright and severe. He neither drank brandy nor smoked tobacco, nor took snuff, and he had never in his life used bad language. Twice he had been chosen starosta (president of the village commune), and in neither term had he made any debts. He had a large family: two sons and a married grandson,—and all lived together. He himself was a hale, strong, long-bearded man, and although he was seventy years old his figure was still erect and his beard was only just beginning to show a few grey hairs.

Elisha was also an old man, and was neither rich nor poor; formerly he had worked as a carpenter, but now he was old he lived at home and kept bees. One of his sons

worked away from home, the other stayed with his father. Elisha was a kind-hearted and jovial little old man who liked his brandy and his snuff, and was fond of singing, but he was very peaceable and inoffensive and lived on good terms with his family and neighbours. He was a short and dark-haired little man, with a little curly beard and a head as bald as his patron saint, Elisha the prophet.

The old men had made their vow and had agreed to go to Jerusalem together long ago, but Yefim's time was always taken up. There was always some business on hand. As soon as one thing was finished, he took up another. First his grandson was to be married; then his son was coming home from the army; and now he had begun to build a new hut.

One festival day the old men met, and sat down on some timber to chat.

"Well, gossip," said Elisha, "when shall we set out to fulfil our vow?"

Yefim frowned: "I must wait," he said; "this is a hard year for me. When I began to build this hut I thought it would cost me about a hundred roubles (£10) and I have already spent near three hundred, and it isn't finished yet. We must wait till next summer. Then, God willing, we will certainly go."

"As I look at it," said Elisha, "we shouldn't put it off. We ought to start now. Spring is the best time."

"Time! yes, that's the best time, but now that I've begun the hut, how can I leave it?"

"Haven't you any one at home? Let your son see to it."

"Yes, I know how he would see to it. He is not to be depended on. He is a drunkard."

"Well, neighbour, when we die, you know, they will have to get on without us. Let your son begin to learn now."

"No doubt, no doubt. But somehow I always want to have my eye on everything and finish it myself."

"Well, you can't finish everything, my friend. The other day my women were scrubbing and cleaning everything or the holiday. *This* had to be done and *that* had to be

done, and there was always something more to do. So my eldest son's wife, who is a sensible woman, said: 'It's a good thing,' says she, 'that the holiday doesn't wait for us, else,' says she 'we should never be done, however much we worked.'

Yefim became thoughtful.

"I have spent a lot of money on this hut," he said, "and I can't start on this journey with empty hands either. A hundred roubles is no small sum."

Elisha laughed.

"Don't commit a sin, neighbour," he said. "You have ten times as much as I have, and yet you talk about money! Only say when you will start, and although I haven't any money, I'll get some."

Yefim smiled.

"I didn't know you were such a rich man," he said. "How will you get the money?"

"Oh, I'll scrape some of it together somehow at home, and as for the rest, I'll let a neighbour have half a score of my bee hives. He has been wanting them a long while."

"If the swarms turn out good, you'll be sorry."

"Sorry! Not I, neighbour; I have never in my life been sorry about anything, except my sins. There is nothing dearer than the soul."

"Yes, that's true, but still it's bad when things go wrong at home."

"And when things go wrong with the soul? That's much worse. We have made a vow and we must go. Come, don't put it off any longer."

## II.

At last Elisha persuaded his friend. Yefim thought and thought about it, and the next morning he came to Elisha.

"Well, let us go," he said. "You speak the truth. God is the master of our life and death. While we have life and strength we must go."

Within a week the old men were ready.

Yefim had money in his house. He took a hundred roubles and left two hundred with his old wife.

Elisha also was ready; he sold his neighbour the ten

hives with all the new swarms when they came. He raised seventy roubles by this. The remaining thirty roubles he collected from his family, and fairly cleaned out everyone. His old wife gave him every rouble she had saved up for her funeral; his daughter-in-law also gave him hers.

Yefim left instructions with his son concerning all household matters: how many fields to rent for haying, what land to manure, and how to finish and roof the hut. He thought about everything, and gave orders how everything was to be done.

Elisha only told his old wife to be sure to separate the young swarms that were to be sold from his own, and to give them all honestly to the neighbour; and that was all. He did not even speak of household affairs. "You will see for yourself what there is to be done," he said. "You are masters, and you will do what you think best."

At last everything was ready. The women folk baked a lot of flat cakes, sewed some bags to put them in, gave them new boots, plaited some extra shoes of birch-bark, and cut new strips of linen for the leg-bands (used by Russian peasants instead of stockings). Then the old men set out accompanied by their families as far as the end of the village. There they bade them good-bye and went on their way alone.

Elisha started with a light heart, and forgot all his cares as soon as he had left the village behind. His only thoughts were how to please his comrade, how not to speak a harsh word to anyone, and how to get to the journey's end and home again in peace and love with all men. As he walked he was all the time whispering prayers to himself or repeating what lives of the saints he could remember. When he met people on the road or stopped anywhere for the night, he was always on the watch to do a kindness to anyone, and to say a good word to all. And he went on his way rejoicing. There was only one thing he could not give up. He had meant to give up taking snuff, and had even left his snuff-box at home, but he felt very bad without it,—and then a stranger on the road gave him some. So from time to

time he fell behind his companion—not to lead him into temptation—and took his pinch.

Yefim also got on well. He walked steadily, said very little, and did no wrong; but there was no content in his heart. He could not free his mind from cares about his household matters. He was always thinking of how they were getting on at home. Had he forgotten to give this or that order to his son? Would his son do what was necessary? Whenever he saw potatoes being planted or manure carted along the road he would think, "Is my son doing just as I told him?" And sometimes he felt almost ready to turn back and show his son how the things ought to be done, or even do them himself.

### III.

Five weeks went by. They had worn out their new shoes and had to buy others. At last they came to Little Russia. All through their journey so far they had always had to buy their food and to pay for their night's lodgings, but here in Little Russia all the people seemed eager to invite them freely. They were lodged and fed, and their bags were filled with bread or cakes for the journey, and no one would take any money in return. So they made another seven hundred versts (500 miles) which cost them nothing, crossed into another government, and came to a famine-stricken district.

The people here also let them spend the nights without payment, but they got no food. In some places they could not even get any bread, and no money could buy it. Last year, the people said, the crops had failed altogether. The rich peasants had been ruined, and had sold all they had; those who had been moderately well off were now in misery, and the poor had either disappeared altogether or had become beggars; a few only remained at home, eating ground corn-husks and tree-bark in the winter.

One morning, after spending the night in a village, the two pilgrims bought fifteen pounds of bread and started off before sunrise, so as to travel a good bit before the heat of the day. They walked about ten versts (seven miles) and then came to a brook, where they sat down to rest, filled their cups with water, soaked their bread and

ate. Then they rested awhile, and changed their leg wrappers. Elisha took out his snuff box. Yefim shook his head at him.

"Why don't you give up that dirty trick?" he said.

Elisha waved his hand in despair. "I can't help it," he said; "the sin has got the better of me."

They rose and went on. After ten more versts they came to a large village which they passed through. The sun was hot by this time and Elisha was tired and wanted to rest and have a drink. But Yefim kept on steadily. He was a stronger walker than Elisha, who found it difficult to keep up with him.

"I should like a drink," said Elisha.

"Well, go and get a drink. I am not thirsty."

Elisha stopped.

"Don't wait for me," he said. "I'll only go into this cottage and get some water and catch you up in a moment."

"All right," said Yefim, who continued on his way alone, while Elisha turned towards the cottage.

It was a small hut with mud walls, painted black below and white above, but the clay was crumbling away in several places and the roof had fallen in on one side. It was clear the hut had not been repaired for a long time. The entrance was through the yard, so into the yard Elisha went, and there was a gaunt beardless man lying on the ground near the bench, with his shirt tucked into his trousers after the manner of the Little Russians\*. The man had probably lain down in the shade, but now the sun was burning full upon him, and though he was not asleep he lay there without moving. Elisha called to him and asked for water but got no answer.

"He is either sick or bad-tempered," thought Elisha, and he went to the door. He could hear a child crying inside. He rapped with the latch ring: "Masters!" he called. No answer. He tapped the door with his stick. "Christians!" No sound. "Servants of God!" No reply. Elisha was about to turn away when he seemed to hear some one groaning inside.

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\* The peasants of Great Russia wear the shirt outside the trousers, after the manner of a smock frock.—*Trans.*

"Something's happened," he thought. "I had better see." And he approached the door again.

## IV.

Elisha turned the handle—the door was unfastened. He opened it and stepped into the passage. The inner door was open; on the left of the room was the stove, in the corner a stand with images, and a table; near the table a bench, and on the bench sat an old woman with nothing on but a shirt, resting her bare unkempt head on the table. By her side stood a little boy with a swollen stomach, thin, and white as wax, pulling her by the sleeve, and screaming and sobbing and asking for something to eat. Elisha entered. The stench in the room was suffocating. Behind the oven, on a shelf, lay another woman, her legs twitching convulsively and her body rolling over from side to side. She lay on her face and did not look up; her throat was rattling, and a stench rose from her shelf. It was clear that she was too ill and weak to move herself, and that no one had been attending to her or doing anything for her. The old woman raised her head and saw Elisha.

"What do you want?" she muttered in Little Russian. "What do you want? We've nothing for you."

Elisha understood and came near to her. "I want some water, friend," he said.

"There's no one to get any. And we have none. We have nothing. Go your way."

"Is there no one to look after this woman?" said Elisha.

"No, no one. Our man is dying in the yard and we are dying here."

The boy, who had stopped crying when he saw the stranger, caught the old woman by the sleeve again as soon as she began to talk—"Some bread, grandmother," he cried, sobbing, "give me some bread."

Elisha was going to question the old woman further, when the man stumbled across the threshold, and tried to reach the bench by clinging to the wall, but he tottered and fell down in the corner near the door, and lay there unable to rise. Then he began to speak. He brought out one word at a time, gasping for breath between each

"We are ill..." he muttered, "and starving... Look...he is dying...of hunger!" And he pointed to the little boy and burst into tears.

Elisha shook his arms free from the straps, slung his bag to the floor, lifted it to the bench and opened it. He took out a loaf of bread and a knife, cut off a slice and offered it to the peasant. The peasant shook his head and pointed to the boy; "Give it to them." Elisha offered the bread to the boy, who stretched out his arms, seized it with both hands, and began to eat it ravenously. Then a little girl crawled out from behind the oven and stared at the bread. Elisha gave her a piece also. Then he cut another slice for the old woman. She took it and tried to munch it. "Will you get some water?" she said: "their throats are parched. I tried to get some—I don't remember when,—yesterday or to-day,—but I fell down—and could not get there, and the pail must be there, if no one has taken it."

Elisha asked where the well was and she told him. He went out, found the pail, and brought water and gave them some to drink. The children and the old woman ate some more bread and water, but the man refused. "I can't eat," he said.

The woman was still unconscious, and lay tossing from side to side on the shelf.

Elisha went into the village and bought meal, salt, flour and butter. Then he found a hatchet, chopped some wood and lighted the fire; the girl helped him and he made some soup and gruel and fed them all.

## V.

The man ate, and the old woman also, and the children licked the bowl clean and then lay down to sleep in each other's arms. Then the peasant and the old woman began to tell Elisha how it had all happened.

"We were never rich," said the peasant, "and last year all the crops failed, and since autumn we have been living on what we had laid by. When we had spent everything we had, we asked the good people around to help us. At first they gave but after a time they refused.

Even those who would have been glad to help us had nothing themselves. And we were ashamed to go on begging—we owed everyone—money, flour and bread. I tried to get work, but there was none to be had. All the people are looking for work these famine days, so as to get food. One day I had work and two I did nothing, and went about hunting for something to do. The old woman and the girl went begging far away from home, but they got very little. No one had any bread. Still we managed to keep along somehow, hoping to pull through till the new crops. But when spring came no one would help us any more, and then sickness came. We were very bad then. One day we ate and two days we had nothing. Then we began to eat grass. Then my woman fell ill—whether it was from the grass or not I don't know. She couldn't move and I, also, have no strength left. And I don't know how we are going to be cured."

"I was the only one to keep up a little longer," said the old woman, "but I grew very weary without food and my strength is gone. The girl also became very weak and frightened. I tried to send her to the neighbours but she would not go. She got into a corner and we couldn't get her out. The other day one of our neighbours looked in but when she saw we were sick and hungry she turned and went out. It is true her husband has left us and she has nothing to feed her children with. . . . And so we lay here, waiting for death."

Elisha listened to them and changed his mind about trying to join Yefim that day. He stopped the night, and the next morning he set to on the household work as if he had been the master. He made the fire and helped the old woman to mix the bread; then he took the girl and went to the neighbours to get the most needful things. There was nothing in the cottage, neither food nor clothing; everything had been eaten or sold. Elisha began to get the most necessary things together; some he made himself, others he bought.

So he lived there three days. The little boy got stronger and began to run about and to make friends with Elisha. The girl became quite bright again and helped Elisha with everything, and followed him about calling him

grandfather. The old woman got well enough to go to her neighbours. The peasant himself could walk a little, holding on to the wall. Only the young woman was no better, but on the third day she came to herself and asked for food.

"Well," thought Elisha, "I must be going now. I never thought to waste so much time."

## VI.

The fourth day was the end of the summer fast from meat-eating, and Elisha thought: "I'll stay and break the fast with them and buy them something for the Saint's Day, and then I can start in the evening." So he went into the village and bought milk and lard and white flour, and helped the old woman to cook; and next morning he went to church, and came home, and ate the festival meal with them. The young woman got up that day and began to move about feebly. The man shaved, put on a clean shirt which the old woman had washed for him, and went into the village to a rich peasant to ask a favour. His corn and hay fields were mortgaged to this peasant and now he went to ask whether he might have them till the new crops. In the evening he returned weeping and in despair. The rich peasant had refused. "Bring the money first," he said.

Elisha grew thoughtful again.

"How will they live now?" he thought. "People will be haymaking, and he will have nothing because his field is pledged. When the rye ripens and the men are reaping it (and what fine crops there will be too this year,) he will have nothing because his three-acre is pledged to the rich peasant. If I go away they will soon be just as they were before."

So Elisha again changed his mind, and instead of leaving that evening he put it off till the morrow. Then he went to sleep in the yard. He prayed and lay down but he could not sleep. He wanted to go on with his journey; as it was he had spent much, both time and money; and yet he was sorry for the people. "You can't help everybody," he thought. "I wanted to give them a piece of bread each and get them some water, and now

this is where I am ! Now I must go and buy out their rye field and their grass land. And when I have done that, I must buy a cow for the children's milk and a horse for the man to cart his crops. You've got caught, friend Elisha. You've dropped your anchor, and now you can just get out of it as best you can !”

Elisha sat up, pulled his kaftan (long cloth coat) from under his head, got out his snuff box and took a pinch, hoping to clear his mind. But it was of no use. He thought and thought, but could come to no decision. He must go, yet he was sorry to leave these people. What to do he did not know. So he rolled up his kaftan, put it under his head again, and lay down. He lay till dawn and cock-crowing, and was just falling asleep, when suddenly some one seemed to wake him. He dreamed that he was dressed for the journey, with his bag and his staff, and that he had to pass through the gate which was open only just wide enough to squeeze through. As he was slipping through his bag caught on one side, and while he was busy with this, his foot-cloth caught on the other side, and became unfastened. He bent down to put that right, and then he saw that it was not the gate that held him, but the little girl, who clung to him crying : “Grandfather, little grandfather, bread !” He looked down and there was the boy clutching his foot, and the old woman and the man were looking out of the window. Elisha awoke and said to himself aloud : “To-morrow I will redeem the rye field and the grass land, and I'll buy a horse, and a cow for the children, and flour to last till the new crops. Else in going to look for Christ beyond the seas, I shall lose him in my own soul. I must help these people.” Then he went to sleep till the morning.

He got up early—went to the rich peasant and paid him for the rye and grass fields. Then he bought a scythe—even that had been sold—and carried it to the cottage. He sent the man to mow his field, and he himself went back into the village. At last he found a horse and cart for sale at the inn, bargained for it, and paid the price ; bought a sack of flour which he put into the cart, and went off to buy the cow. On his way he overtook two women who were talking together as they went. He

heard what they said, and understood enough of the dialect to know that they were talking of him.

"At first they thought he was just an ordinary man. He said he had come in to get some water to drink. And then he stayed with them. The things he has bought for them! To-day I saw him buying a horse and cart for them at the innkeeper's. I have never seen such people in the world. It is a thing to wonder at."

Elisha understood that they were praising him and he decided not to buy the cow. So he turned back to the inn, paid for the horse, harnessed it and drove to the cottage. At the gate he stopped and got down. When the people saw the horse they were amazed, and though it seemed plain that he had bought it for them they hardly dared to think so. The man came to open the gate.

"Where did you get your horse, little father?" he asked.

"I bought it. It was going cheap. Better cut some grass to put in the manger for the night; and put the sack in the loft."

The man unharnessed the horse, took the sack, mowed some grass and put it into the manger. Then all the family lay down to sleep. Elisha lay down in the yard taking his own bag with him. When everyone was asleep he rose, put on his shoes and his kaftan, slung his bag on his shoulders and went on his way to find Yefim.

## VII.

Elisha walked on about five versts (three miles); the dawn was beginning to break. He sat down under a tree, untied his bag and counted his money. He found he had only seventeen roubles and twenty kopecks left.

"Well," he thought, "I can't cross the sea with that. And if I begin to beg, I may fall into worse sin than before. Friend Yefim will have to get there alone, and he will burn a candle for me. As for me, the vow will be upon me till my death. Thanks be to the Master, He is merciful; He will forgive me."

Elisha arose, put the bag on his shoulders, and turned homewards. Only he made a sweep in order to avoid the village, so that the people might not see him. He soon reached his home. The outward journey had

seemed hard to him ; at times he scarcely had been able to keep up with Yefim. But going back God gave him such strength that he knew no weariness. He walked along lightly, swinging his staff, and making seventy versts a day.

When he got home he found the harvests already gathered in. His family was delighted to have their old man back again, and questioned him eagerly as to his journey, and how he had lost his companion, and why he had given up his journey and returned home. Elisha however did not tell them how it all came about, but contented himself with saying :

“ Well, God ordered it so. I spent the money on the road, and then I lost my companion, and so I had to give it up. Forgive me, for Christ’s sake.”

He gave his old wife what remained of the money, and asked about the household matters. All was well, everything had been done, there had been neither mistakes nor carelessness, and all were living in peace and concord.

Yefim’s family heard about Elisha’s return that very day, and came to ask him about their old man. He told them the same thing.

“ Yefim was quite well,” he said, “ when we parted three days before St. Peter’s day. I wanted to catch him up but then it so happened that I spent my money, and there was not enough left to go on with, so I came back.”

The people wondered how a clever man could do such a foolish thing—start on a journey and not finish it and lose all his money instead ! They talked about it and then forgot it. And Elisha also forgot. He took up his house-work again, helped his son to store the wood for the winter and his women to grind the grain ; he roofed the barns and hived the bees and gave the ten hives with their increase to the neighbour.

His old wife wanted to hide the number of young swarms, but Elisha knew very well which of the old hives were swarming and which were not, and he gave the neighbour seventeen instead of ten. When all was finished, Elisha sent his son out to work and settled down at home for the winter, to plait bark shoes and to make bee-hives.

## VIII.

All that day while Elisha was in the hut with the starving peasants, Yefim was waiting for him. He only went a little way, and then he sat down. He waited and waited, and fell asleep and woke and waited again, but Elisha did not appear. He looked and looked till his eyes ached. The sun had sunk behind the tree, and still no Elisha came. "Perhaps he has passed me," he thought, "or perhaps someone gave him a lift and he did not see me while I was sleeping. And yet how could he have missed me? One sees far in the steppes. If I go back and he goes on ahead we shall lose each other completely. I will go on; we are sure to meet at night."

He walked on to the next village and asked the Elder, if a little old man came, to send him to the same hut.

But Elisha did not come.

Yefim went further, and of every one he asked whether they had seen a little bald old man. No one had seen him. Yefim wondered and went on his way alone.

"We shall meet in Odessa," he thought, "or on board ship," and he ceased to trouble about it.

On the way he met a pilgrim wearing a skull-cap, a cassock, and long hair; he had been to the monastery at Mount Athos and was now going a second time to Jerusalem. They met at a lodging place, fell into conversation, and went on together.

They reached Odessa, and waited there three days for a ship. Crowds of pilgrims from many lands were waiting there. Yefim again enquired about Elisha, but no one had seen him.

Yefim got a foreign passport, which cost him five roubles; then he paid forty roubles for the passage to Jerusalem and back, and bought bread and herrings for the journey.

The pilgrim tried to tell Yefim how he might get on the ship without paying, but Yefim would not listen. "No," he said, "I came prepared to pay, and I prefer to pay."

The ship was freighted and the pilgrims went on board, Yefim and his companion among them. The anchor was lifted and they started. The first day was fine, but towards evening a wind arose, the rain came down in

torrents, and the ship was tossed about till the waves swept over the deck. The people were terrified; the women wailed and screamed, and some of the weaker men ran about looking for shelter.

Yefim also was frightened, only he would not show it; he sat on the deck without moving, on the spot he had chosen on coming aboard, among the Tambov pilgrims, and there he remained the whole night and all the next day. None of them spoke, but all sat holding their bags tightly all the time. On the third day the weather cleared up again, and on the fifth they came to Constantinople.

Some of the pilgrims landed and went to see the church of St. Sophia, which is now in the hands of the Turks; but Yefim stayed on board, and only bought some white bread. They stayed there for a day, and then started again. They stopped at Smyrna and then at Alexandria, and at last reached Jaffa. At Jaffa all the pilgrims had to land, and thence to travel seventy versts on foot to Jerusalem. At the landing the pilgrims were greatly frightened. The ship was high and the people had to jump down into the boats, which tossed to and fro so that you were as likely as not to fall into the water. Two pilgrims did get a wetting, but at last all were safely landed.

Then they continued their journey on foot, and on the third day, towards noon, they reached Jerusalem. They stopped outside the city, in the Russian quarter; had their passports examined; ate some food, and then went off to see the Holy places. But there was no longer any admittance to the grave of Christ.

So they went to the Patriarchal Monastery, where all the pilgrims were gathered together and the men separated from the women. Then they were told to take off their foot-gear and to sit in a circle. Then a monk appeared with a towel and began to wash their feet. He washed, wiped, and kissed the feet of each pilgrim in turn, and did the same to Yefim. Then the pilgrims attended vespers and matins, said their prayers, burned candles, and offered petitions for their relatives. Here they ate again, also, and wine was given them.

The next morning they went to the cell of Mary of Egypt

where she had lived in penitence. There also they offered candles and paid for a *Te Deum*. Then they went to Abraham's Monastery and saw the garden of Jehovah, where Abraham nearly sacrificed his son to God. Afterwards they visited the spot where Christ appeared to Mary Magdalen, and to the church of James the brother of Christ.

All these places were pointed out to Yefim by the pilgrim, who also told him how much money was to be given everywhere.

They returned to their inn for dinner, and after they had eaten they were getting ready to go to bed, when suddenly the pilgrim began to cry out and to search among his clothes. "They have stolen my purse," he cried, "with twenty-three roubles. I had two ten rouble notes and three roubles in change." He groaned and mourned, but as there was nothing to be done, they all finally lay down to sleep.

#### IX.

Yefim lay without sleeping, and temptation beset him. "No one has stolen his money," he thought; "he never had any. He did not give anywhere. He only told me to give and took a rouble from me."

Then Yefim began to blame himself for thinking such things. "Why do I judge the man?" he said to himself. "I am sinning. I will not think about it any more." But he soon forgot his resolution and remembered how greedy the pilgrim seemed about money and how unlikely it sounded when he said that his purse had been stolen. "He never had any money," thought Yefim. "It's only a trick."

They rose early to go to mass in the great church of the resurrection—the Lord's sepulchre. The pilgrim stuck to Yefim and followed him about everywhere.

They reached the Church. There were crowds of pilgrims of all nations: Russians and Greeks and Armenians and Turks and Syrians. They all crowded to the Holy Gate. Then a monk came and guided them past the Turkish sentries to the spot where Christ's body had been taken from the cross and anointed, and where nine

great candles were burning. The monk explained and showed everything, and Yefim placed a candle there.

Then the monks led him to the right up some steps to the hill of Golgotha, where the cross had stood, and Yefim prayed there. They showed him the hole in the earth where it had opened to its nethermost depths, and the spot where the hands and feet of Christ were nailed to the cross. They showed him Adam's grave, where Christ had shed his blood on Adam's bones; the stone on which Christ had sat when he was crowned with the crown of thorns; the post to which he was bound when the soldiers scourged him; the stone with two holes for his feet.

The monks wanted to show something else, but the people were impatient and all hastened to the cave of the Lord's sepulchre. The foreign mass was over, and the Orthodox (Greek) mass had just begun. Yefim went with the people into the cave.

He tried to get rid of the pilgrim, for in his thoughts he sinned against him all the time; but the pilgrim stayed by him and followed him everywhere,—to the mass, and to the Lord's sepulchre. They tried to get to the front but were too late. The crowd was so packed that one could not move a step either forward or backwards. So Yefim stood up, looking straight before him and praying and from time to time feeling for his purse. He was not quiet in his mind: on the one hand he thought that the pilgrim was lying to him, and on the other hand, that he might be speaking the truth, and then if the money had been really stolen from him, the same thing might happen to Yefim himself.

#### X.

So he stood praying and looking before him into the shrine where the tomb itself stood, and above the tomb thirty-six lamps burned. And as he stood gazing over the heads before him he suddenly saw, standing just under the lamps where the sacred fire burns, and in front of all the people—a little old man in a grey kaftan, with his bald head shining in the light, just like Elisha Bodroff. "He looks like Elisha," thought Yefim, "but it cannot be. He could not have got here before me. The last

ship started a week before ours. He could not have caught it, and I know he was not on ours, for I saw all the pilgrims."

Hardly had Yefim thought thus, when the old man began to pray, and bowed three times, first straight before him to God, and then to all the Christian world—to right and left. And when he turned his head, Yefim recognised him. It was Bodroff himself: he could see his black, curly beard, with the gray hairs on the cheeks, his eyebrows and eyes and nose, and his whole face—it was Elisha Bodroff without a doubt.

Yefim was delighted to have found his companion and wondered how he had managed to arrive before him.

"There's a clever one," he thought; "he has got on in front of everybody! I suppose he found someone who helped him and brought him there. I will look for him when everyone goes up, and I will take leave of my pilgrim with the skull cap and go with Elisha. I daresay he will find a place for me too in front."

Yefim stood watching Elisha all the time, not to lose sight of him. When the mass was finished, the crowd surged forward, crushing each other in their haste to kiss the cross, and Yefim was pushed aside. Again fear seized him lest he should lose his purse. He clutched it with one hand and began shouldering his way through the crowd to get into the open. When at last he succeeded, he began to wander backwards and forwards, watching and looking for Elisha, both in the court and inside the church. In the cells surrounding the chapel he saw a great many people, some of them eating and drinking wine, and sleeping and reading. But nowhere could he see Elisha. And Yefim went back to the inn without finding him. That evening the pilgrim did not return. He disappeared, and Yefim's rouble with him. And Yefim was left alone.

The next day he again went to the Holy Sepulchre with an old Tambov peasant who had come on the same ship with him. He tried to get to the front, but was crushed back, so he stood against a pillar and began to pray. He looked forward, and there was Elisha again, standing right in front, beside the tomb, under the lights,

with his arms stretched out like the priest at the altar, and his bald head was shining. "Well," thought Yefim, "I shan't miss him this time." And he pushed his way to the front, but when he got there, Elisha had disappeared. Clearly, he had left his place. On the third day, while Yefim looked, there was Elisha again, standing in full sight on the most sacred spot, with his arms spread out and his face turned upwards, as though he saw something above him; and his bald head shone more than ever. "Well," thought Yefim, "I must catch him this time, I shall go and wait for him at the entrance. We can't miss each other there." So he went out and stood at the gate, and waited there half the day. All the people passed him, but there was no Elisha.

Yefim remained six weeks in Jerusalem and went everywhere: to Bethlehem and to Bethany and to the Jordan; and at the Holy Sepulchre he had a seal put on a new shirt, that he might be buried in it; and he took some water from the Jordan in a bottle, and sacred earth, and candles with the sacred flame, and he paid in eight places for prayers for the souls of his relatives, till all his money was spent and he had only just enough to get home with. At last he started on his way back. He reached Jaffa; got on board a ship that was sailing for Odessa, and thence started home on foot.

## XI.

Yefim followed the road by which he had gone. As he came nearer to his home he was again beset with anxieties as to how things had been going on during his absence. "Much water runs away in a year! It takes a life-time to build a house, but not long to destroy it. Has the son managed the business properly without me? How had the spring opened, and how have the cattle passed the winter, and how has the hut been finished?"

Yefim was now near the spot where he had parted with Elisha last year. The people were not to be recognised. Where last year they were starving now they were living in plenty. The harvest had been good, and the people were better off and had forgotten their former misery.

One evening Yefim came to the place where Elisha had

left him. As he entered the village, a little girl in a white shirt ran out from behind one of the huts.

"Grandfather, little grandfather! Come to our house!"

Yefim wanted to pass on, but the little girl caught him by his kaftan and dragged him towards the hut, laughing. A woman with a small boy stood in the door-way and beckoned to him. "Come and have supper with us, little grandfather; then you can spend the night."

Yefim entered. "I will just ask about Elisha," he thought. "I believe this was the very hut he went into for some water."

The woman took the bag from his shoulders, gave him some water to wash himself, and seated him at the table. Then she gave him milk, varénniki (curd dumplings) and gruel. Yefim thanked her, and praised her for being so hospitable to strangers.

The woman shook her head. "How can we help taking in strangers?" she said. "A stranger gave us life. We lived without remembering God, and God punished us so that we expected nothing but death. Last summer we were all lying in this hut, sick, and with nothing to eat. And we should have died, only God sent us an old man like yourself. He came in one day at noon to drink; and when he saw us he pitied us and stayed with us. He fed us and gave us drink, and helped us, and redeemed our land, and bought a horse and cart and left them with us."

Here an old woman entered the hut and interrupted the speaker.

"And up to this day," she said, "we don't know whether he was a man or an angel of God. He loved us all, and pitied us all, and then he went away without saying who he was; and we don't even know who we should pray to God for. I can see it all now just so. I was lying here waiting for death, when in comes a little old man with a bald head. He didn't seem anything much, and he asked for water. And I sinned and thought: 'What does he want here?' As soon as he saw us he took off his bag and placed it here and opened it."

"No, grandmother," the little girl said, "he put it first on the floor in the middle of the room and then he lifted it on to the bench."

So they disputed, calling to mind all his words and deeds: where he sat and slept, and what he did, and what he said to them.

Before the night the peasant came home in his cart, and he also began to talk of Elisha and what he had done for them.

"If he hadn't come to us," he said, "we should all have died in our sins. We were dying in despair, cursing God and man. But he brought us back to life, and through him we learned to know God and to believe in the goodness of men. Christ bless him! We lived like beasts before: and he made us men."

They gave food and drink to Yefim, and made a place for him to sleep in, and then lay down themselves.

Yefim lay awake, thinking of Elisha; his mind full of the three times he had seen him in the chapel at Jerusalem.

"So that is how he got a place before me," thought Yefim. "Whether God has accepted my labours or not I don't know. But God has certainly accepted his."

The next morning the people bade good-bye to Yefim, gave him patties for his journey and went to their work. And Yefim continued his journey.

## XII.

Yefim's journey had lasted a year. It was spring when he returned.

He reached home in the evening. His son was not at home, he was in the tavern, and when he did appear he was drunk. Yefim questioned him, and soon saw that his son had been making merry during his absence—had squandered all the money, and neglected all the work. Yefim began to upbraid him and he answered insolently: "Why didn't you stay yourself, instead of going off for a journey? You took all the money, and now you expect me to have some."

The old man grew angry and struck his son.

The next morning Yefim went off to the village headman to speak about his son. As he was passing Elisha's house, he saw Elisha's old wife standing in the doorway and beckoning to him,

"Good morning, friend," she said. "How did you make your journey?"

Yefim stopped. "Glory to God," he said, "all went well with me. I lost your old man but I hear he has come home."

The old woman began to talk—she was always glad of a talk.

"Yes, he came back long ago, our breadwinner," she said. "He came home soon after the Assumption. And glad we were that God had brought him. We were lonesome enough when he wasn't with us. It's true he can't work much now, because his years are great; but still he is our master and we are glad. And how glad the boy was! 'Without him,' he says, 'it's as bad as without sunlight.' Ah! yes, desired friend, we were lonesome enough without him, and missed him very much, for we love him so."

"Well, then, is he at home now?"

"Yes, dear friend, he is at home, in the bee-garden; he is hiving the swarms. He says the bees are swarming finely this year. He says God gives us more than we deserve for our sins. The bees are so strong that he can't remember the like. Go, desired friend, he will be glad to see you."

Yefim passed through the passage into the yard and the bee-garden. And there stood Elisha in his gray kaftan, under the birch tree, without face-net or gloves, looking upwards, his arms stretched out, and his bald head shining, just as Yefim had seen him in Jerusalem. And above him through the birch branches, the sun burned like a flame, and round his head the golden bees had formed a halo and buzzed gently without stinging him. Yefim stood still.

The old woman called to Elisha.

"Gossip," she said, "our friend is here."

Elisha turned round, was glad, and went to meet him, plucking the bees gently out of his beard.

"God be with you, neighbour! God be with you, my dear friend! Well, and did you make your journey?"

"Yes, my feet made the journey. And I have brought you some holy water from the Jordan. Come and take it. But I don't know if God has accepted my labour . . ."

"Well, well, glory to God, Christ save you!"

Yefim was silent.

"My feet were there," he said at last, "but whether my soul was there, or someone else's . . ."

"God's affair, neighbour, God's affair."

"I stopped on the way back at the cottage where you stayed behind . . ."

Elisha looked frightened and interrupted him hurriedly.

"God's affair, friend, God's affair. Well, come in and rest awhile, will you, and I will bring you some honey."

And Elisha changed the conversation and began to talk about household matters.

Yefim sighed and did not try again to speak about the people in the hut, or how he had seen Elisha in Jerusalem. And he understood that in this world God has ordered each man to fulfil his appointed labour till death—by love and good deeds.

*Translated by N. . .  
and A. C. Fifield.*

# How the Little Devil Earned the Crust of Bread.

BY LEO TOLSTOY.

A poor peasant went out to plough his field one morning, before breakfast, taking with him a crust of bread. He tipped the plough over, took out the bar, and laid it under a bush with the crust, and spread his coat over all. Presently the peasant got hungry, and the horse was tired. So he stuck the plough into the ground, unharnessed the horse and let her loose to graze, and went to the bush to have a bite and rest awhile. He lifted the coat: the crust had gone! He looked and looked, rummaged in the coat, shook it—still no crust! The peasant wondered. "That's strange," he said; "I saw no one, yet someone must have taken the bread."

It was a little Devil who had taken the crust while the peasant was ploughing, and he now sat behind the bush to listen how the peasant would swear and call on his—the devil's—name.

The peasant was sorry.

"Oh, well," he said; "I shan't die of hunger! I suppose whoever took it was in need of it. Let him eat it, and may it give him health!"

And the peasant went to the well, drank some water, rested, caught the horse, harnessed her, and set to work again.

The little devil was disappointed that he had not led the peasant into sin, and he went to tell it to the big devil.

He came to the big devil and told how he had stolen

the bread, and how the peasant instead of swearing, had wished him good health.

The big devil was very angry.

"If the peasant has had the best of you in this matter," he said, "it's your own fault: you were a fool about it. If the peasants and then their women get into that sort of habit, we shall have nothing left to live by. The matter can't be left like this! Go to that peasant again, and earn your crust. If in three years you haven't got the better of the peasant, I'll throw you into holy water!"

The little devil was frightened, and ran out on to the earth thinking how to redeem his error. He thought and thought, and at last found it.

He turned himself into a workman and hired himself out to the poor peasant. The following year was a dry summer, and the little devil told the peasant to sow his corn on marshy ground. All the other peasants' corn was burned up by the sun; but the poor peasant's corn grew tall and thick and full-eared. The peasant lived on it till the next harvest and still had a lot left. Next summer the little devil told the peasant to sow his corn on the mountain. The summer was a rainy one: all the corn was beaten down, and rotted, and the grains died, but the peasant's crops on the mountain side were splendid.

He had still more extra corn now, and didn't know what to do with it.

And the little devil taught the peasant how to crush the grain and to make whisky out of it. And the peasant began to make whisky, to drink it himself, and to give it to others.

The little devil went to the big devil and began to boast that he had earned the crust. The big devil went to see.

He came to the peasant's house and saw that the peasant had some guests and was treating them with whisky. His wife poured it out, but just as she was about to carry it round she tripped against the table and let a glass fall.

The peasant was furious and shouted at her. "You devil's fool!" he said; "can't you take care, you idiot, and not pour the spirit on the floor as if it were dirty water!"

The little devil nudged the big one with his elbow, and

said: "What do you think he would do now if someone stole his crust?"

When the peasant had finished swearing, he began to carry the spirit round himself. Soon a poor peasant returning from his day's work came in uninvited, and sat down. He saw the people drinking, and being very weary, he thought he would also like to have a drink. So he sat and sat, licking his lips, but the master didn't offer him any, and only muttered under his breath: "I don't make whisky for all the vagrants that happen to want it."

This pleased the big devil; but the little devil only boasted the more and said: "You wait; you'll see some more!"

The rich peasants drank and the master drank also. Then they all began to toady to each other, and to flatter and speak oily and lying words to one another.

The big devil listened and listened, and praised the little devil. "If," said he, "this drink can make them as full of lies and cunning as I have seen, then they are in our hands.

"Wait a bit," said the little devil, "this is only the beginning; wait till they drink a little more. Now, like foxes, they are wagging their tails and trying to trick each other, but soon they'll be as cruel as wolves."

The peasants drank another glass each, and their talk grew louder and rougher. Instead of oily words, there was wrangling and curses, and soon they worked themselves into a fury and flew at each other and smashed each others noses in. The master also fought and got beaten.

The big devil looked on and was very pleased. "This is good," he said.

But the little devil said: "Wait a bit, there's more to follow. Let them drink a little more. Now they rage like wolves, but soon they will wallow like swine."

The peasants drank again, and soon were maudlin drunk. They shouted, and muttered they knew not what, unable to understand each other.

Presently they began to disperse and went slouching through the streets, alone or in twos and threes. The master went to see his guests off, but he fell into the gutter and lay covered with filth and grunting like a pig.

This pleased the big devil immensely. "You have made a good drink," he said, "and you deserve your crust. Only tell me, what did you make it of? You must have mixed in it first the blood of the fox—that was why they grew as cunning as foxes; then the blood of the wolf—that was why they grew as cruel as wolves;—then the blood of the swine—that was why they grovelled like pigs."

"No," said the little devil, "I did none of those things. The only thing I did was to give him more bread than he needed. The blood of the beast is always in man but when he earns his bread with labour it hasn't free scope. At first the man was willing to part with his last crust, but when he began to have more bread than he needed, he began also to think how to provide for his pleasures. And I taught him a pleasure—to drink whisky. And as soon as he began to turn God's gift into spirit for his own pleasure, the blood of the fox and of the wolf and of the swine rose up within him. And as long as he continues to drink he will always remain a beast."

The big devil praised the little devil and forgave him for losing the crust and appointed him chief among his servants.

*Translated by N. . . .  
and A. C. Fifield.*

## The Story of Ilias.

IN the Government of Ufa there lived a Bashkeer called Ilias. His father had found him a wife a year ago, and then died, leaving him very little. All his possessions consisted only of seven mares, two cows, and twenty sheep. But Ilias was thrifty, and a good manager, and he began to grow richer. From morning till night he worked with his wife, rising earlier and going to bed later than any of his neighbours;—and every year his possessions increased. Thus he laboured for thirty-five years, and became the master of great wealth.

He now had three hundred horses, a hundred and fifty head of cattle, and two thousand sheep. Many workmen herded his flocks and horses, and many women milked the cows and the mares, and made koumiss,\* butter, and cheese. He had plenty of everything, and everyone in the neighbourhood envied him.

“He is a lucky man,” they said. “He has lots of everything; no need for him to die.”

People of position began to know Ilias and be friendly with him; and guests came to visit him from afar. He welcomed them all, and gave them food and drink. Koumiss, and tea, and mutton, were ready for all comers. Whenever a guest arrived, a sheep, or perhaps two, was killed; and if the visitors were numerous, a mare was killed as well.

Ilias had two sons and a daughter, and he married them all off. While Ilias was poor his sons worked with him and looked after the sheep and horses, but now that he was rich, they began to lead a wild life and one of them took to drink. The eldest got killed in a brawl, and

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\* A preparation of mare's milk.—*Trans.*

the youngest married a self-willed woman, and ceased to obey his father, so that Ilias had to give him his share, and let him go his ways.

He gave his son a house, and some cattle. And soon after, a disease broke out among the sheep and a great many died. Then there came a year of famine, and the hay crops failed, and many cattle died during the winter. Then the Kirghis stole his best herd of horses.

So his wealth grew less and less, and he fell lower and lower. His strength also began to go, and at the age of seventy he had to sell his fur coats, his carpets, and saddles, and waggons; then he sold the last of his cattle, and stood face to face with want.

It all came so quickly that he hardly saw how everything went; and there was nothing left for himself and his wife in their old age but to hire themselves out to work.

Ilias now had only the clothes he stood up in, and one fur coat and cap and a pair of boots,—and his old wife Shem Shemaghi. His son had gone to a distant land, and his daughter was dead, and there was no one to help the old people.

But their neighbour Muhammed Shah pitied them. Muhammed Shah himself was neither rich nor poor, but he lived comfortably and was a good man. He remembered Ilias's hospitality, and was sorry for him, and said:

“Come and live with me, Ilias, with your old woman. In the summer you can work for me in the orchard just as much as you can, and in the winter you can feed the cattle; and Shem Shemaghi can milk the mares and make koumiss. I will feed and clothe you; and whatever you need, tell me, and I will give it.”

Ilias thanked his neighbour, and settled down with his wife to work for Muhammed Shah. At first it seemed hard to them, but they soon got accustomed to it, and they began to live and work as much as they were able.

Muhammed Shah soon found it was to his advantage to have such workpeople. The old couple had been masters themselves and knew all that had to be done, and they were never lazy, working as hard as they could. And Muhammed often pitied them, that people of such high position had fallen so low.

One day some guests came to Muhammed from afar, and among them was a Mullah. Muhammed bade Ilias catch a sheep and kill it. Ilias dressed the flesh, boiled it, and served the guests. When they had eaten the mutton they drank tea and koumiss. As they were sitting with their host on feather cushions and carpets, drinking koumiss and chatting, Ilias, who had just finished his work, passed by the door.

Muhammed saw him and said to one of his guests. "Did you see the old man who passed just now?"

"Yes," said the guest; "what about him?"

"This about him: he was once the richest man in the place. His name is Ilias; perhaps you have heard of him?"

"Of course I have heard," said the guest; "I had never seen him, but he is well-known far and wide."

"Well, now he has nothing left, and he lives here as my workman, and his old woman milks the mares."

The guest was astonished, smacked his tongue, and shook his head. "Yes," he said, "luck is like a wheel: lifts one to the top, puts another to the bottom. He must fret about it, the old man."

"Who can tell? he is very quiet and patient, and works well."

"Can I talk with him and ask him about his life?"

"Certainly you can," said Muhammed, and he shouted towards the tilt-cart: "Babāi (little grandfather) come in and have some koumiss, and bring your old woman with you."

Ilias came in with his wife, greeted the master and his guests, said a prayer, crossed his legs, and sat down by the door; his wife passed behind the curtain and sat with the mistress.

Ilias was given a cup of koumiss. He bowed to the master and his guests, wished them good health, drank a little, and set the cup down.

"Well, grandfather," said the guest, "and does it make you sad to see us and remember your former wealth. Then you lived in joy, and now you live in sorrow."

Ilias smiled and said: "If I tell you about my happiness and my sorrow, you won't believe me. Better ask my old woman there. She is a woman: all that's in her

heart is on her tongue. She will tell you the whole truth about it."

The guest turned towards the curtain: "Well, granny, tell us what you think of your former happiness and your present misfortune."

And Shem Shemaghi answered from behind the curtain: "This is what I think about it: fifty years we lived, my old man and I, looking for happiness and never finding it. And now that we have nothing and live by our labour, now at last we have found real happiness and we want no other."

The guests were amazed, the master was amazed. He even rose from his seat and pulled aside the curtain, to look at the old woman. There she sat, with her hands folded, smiling and looking at Ilias; and Ilias smiled back at her. Then she said: "I speak the truth. I don't joke. Half a century we sought happiness, and as long as we were rich we could not find it. But now that we have lost everything and are living in service, we have found such happiness that none could be better."

"In what, then, does your happiness consist now?"

"I will tell you. When we were rich, we had never a moment's peace; no time to speak together, or to think of the soul, or to pray to God, so many cares we had. First there were the guests; we had to think of how to entertain them and what presents to give, so that they should not speak evil of us. Then when guests had gone, there were workmen to be looked after; they tried to get as much sleep and food as they could, and we tried to get as much out of them as we could; and so we sinned. Then a care lest the wolves should kill a calf or a foal, or the thieves drive off our horses. We went to bed, we could not sleep for thinking that the sheep might crush the lambs; we get up, and walk round in the night. No sooner are we quiet than a new care—how to get enough fodder for the winter. Besides all this, there was no peace between me and my old man. He would say one thing must be done, and I would say another; and we began to quarrel and sin. And so we lived—from care to care, and from sin to sin, and we did not know what it was to be happy."

"Well, and now?"

"Now, we get up in the morning, I and my old man, and have a talk in peace and love, and there is nothing to quarrel about or to be anxious about;—our only care is to serve the master. We work willingly and as much as our strength will allow, so that the master should not lose but gain through us. When we come home, everything is ready—there is dinner, supper, there is koumiss. When it is cold, we have a fur coat and fuel to warm ourselves. We have time to speak together, to think of the soul, to pray to God. Fifty years we have sought for happiness, and only now have we found it!"

The guests laughed.

But Ilias said: "Don't laugh, brothers, this is not a jest, it is human life. We also were foolish at the beginning and wept because we had lost our wealth; but now God has revealed the truth to us and we tell it to you, not to please ourselves, but for your welfare."

And the Mullah said: "These are wise words, and Ilias has spoken the truth; for so it is written in the sacred books."

And the guests ceased to laugh and became thoughtful.

*Translated by N. . .  
and A. C. Field*

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