

WHAT'S IN A NAME.

(From the French.)

WEALTHY foreigner, Sutherland by name, had been naturalized in Russia and resided in St. Petersburg, where he was banker to the court. He was quite a favorite with Empress Catherine. One morning he is told that

his house is surrounded by the Imperial guards, and that the captain wishes to speak to him.

The officer whose name was Reliew, is introduced and presents himself with consternation depicted on his face.

"Mr. Sutherland," he said in a solemn tone "it is with a feeling of deepest sorrow that I find myself entrusted by my gracious Sovereign with the execution of an order concerning you, the severity whereof fills me with amazement and horror, and I am at a loss to imagine by what fault or crime you have to such a degree aroused Her Majesty's ire."

"I! sir" answered the banker. "Surely, I am just as much at a loss as you are, and my surprise is still greater than your own. But, tell me, what may the order be?"

"Sir" replies the officer "to tell the truth I have scarcely the courage to make it known to you."

"What! have I lost the confidence of the Empress?"

"If that were all, you wouldn't see me so down-cast. Confidence can be regained, a situation restored."

"Well! is there a question of sending me back to England?"

"That would indeed be a misfortune, but a wealthy man like yourself can live happy anywhere."

"Good heavens!" cries Sutherland in a tremor "am I to be exiled to Siberia?"

"Alas! one may return even from Siberia."

"To be put in prison?"

"If that were all, one may be released from prison."

"What can you mean? Am I to be knouted?"

"That is indeed an awful punishment; still it doesn't kill."

"What then!" said the banker sobbing, "am I in danger of losing my life? "Is it possible that the Empress, hitherto so kind to me, who but the day before yesterday addressed me in terms of familiar friendship would now . . . I cannot believe it. For heaven's sake! go on. Death itself would be less cruel than this intolerable suspense."

"Well, my dear sir," the officer said at last in a sorrowful voice, "Her Gracious Majesty has ordered me to disembowel and stuff you."

"Stuff me!" cried Sutherland, gazing in fixed horror upon his interlocutor; sure, you have lost your senses, or the Empress has gone mad; you at least can't have received such an order without expostulating with her on its barbarity and extravagance."

"Alas! my poor friend, I did do that which I never dared before; I did show my surprise, my horror; I even went so far as to humbly remonstrate with her, but my august sovereign rebuked me in angry mood, commanded me to go and at once execute the order she had given, and added these words which still ring in my ears: 'Go, and do not forget that your duty is to discharge the commissions which it is my pleasure to entrust you with.'"

It would be impossible to describe the astonishment, the anger, the fear, the despair of the poor banker. When his outburst of sorrow had somewhat subsided, the captain told him he would give him a quarter of an hour to settle his affairs.

Thereupon, Sutherland begins to beseech and conjure him—but long were his prayers vain—to allow him to send a note to the Empress, imploring her pity. The captain, conquered by his supplications, yields with fear and trembling to his request, takes the note, and not daring to go to the palace himself, runs with all speed to the house of the Count of Bruce. This nobleman thinks the captain has gone mad, tells him to accom-