

HAPPINESS.

IN the Government of Ufim once lived a Baschkir called Iljas. He sprang from poor ancestors, and his father died when Iljas had been married scarcely a year. Iljas's property then consisted of seven mares, two cows, and twenty sheep. But Iljas, like a good husbandman, knew how to increase his possessions. He was at work from morning to night with his wife, rose earlier and went later to rest than others, and became richer every year. Thirty-five years was Iljas thus active and acquired for himself great wealth.

At last Iljas possessed 200 horses, 150 head of oxen, and 1200 sheep. He kept hinds who guarded his herds, and maid-servants who milked the mares and cows and prepared kumis, butter, and cheese. Of all things Iljas had abundance, and he was envied everywhere around. "A happy man, this Iljas," said the people, "he has abundance of everything. He need not wish to die." Distinguished people sought Iljas' acquaintance and considered it an honour to associate with him. From great distances guests came to him, and Iljas received all hospitably, and entertained every one with sherbet and liquor. Whoever came found at all times kumis, and tea, and sherbet, and mutton at Iljas's board. Scarcely were guests arrived, than at once a sheep was dressed, or even two; and if guests appeared in greater number probably a mare also would be slaughtered.

Of children Iljas had two sons and a daughter, all of whom were married. When Iljas was poor, his sons worked with him and themselves looked after the herds; but when he had become rich, they took things easy and gave themselves up to drink. The elder was killed in a fray, and the younger, who had married a proud woman, wished no longer to be subject to his father, so that Iljas was obliged to establish him in separate housekeeping. He gave him a house, and cattle, and everything that was necessary, and thereby diminished his own wealth considerably.

Soon afterwards Iljas's flocks of sheep were attacked by a pestilence which swept away many of the animals. Then came a year of drought, the hay did not thrive, and numerous oxen perished in the course of the winter. Then the Kirghis stole Iljas's best horses from the pasture, whereby his property was grievously damaged. Continually deeper and deeper sank Iljas downwards, whereby his power diminished year by year. And when Iljas was nearly seventy years old he was obliged to sell his furs and carpets, his saddle and cart; then, finally, came his oxen, and one fine day Iljas possessed nothing more. Ere he was aware, everything was gone, and he was compelled in his old age with his wife to enter the service of strange people. Nothing remained to him but the clothes on his back, his furred coat, his cap, his shoes, and his helpmate Schamschemagi who had also grown old. His son, whom he had started in life, had removed into a far country, his daughter was dead, and there was no one from whom the old people could find help.

Then a neighbour, Muchamedschach by name, commiserated the aged couple. Neither poor nor rich, Muchamedschach lived plainly and was an excellent man. He thought how once Iljas had been a good neighbour to him, and said therefore compassionately to him: "Come, you and your wife can live with me. In the summer you can, so far as your strength allows, work in the vegetable-fields, and in winter feed the cattle, while Schamschemagi can milk the mares and prepare kumis. I will feed and clothe you, and if there is anything else you need, only mention it and I will give it to you."

Iljas thanked his neighbour and went to work with his wife among Muchamedschach's domestics. At first they felt it hard, but soon became accustomed to their new state; they lived contented and worked according to their strength. The master of the house found it to his interest to maintain such workers, since the old people had once themselves been housekeepers and understood the work. When Muchamedschach saw them at work, he deplored in his heart that people who had once stood so high had been compelled to fall so low.

One day it happened that a guest from a distance came to Muchamedschach, a matchmaker who proposed for his daughter. The Mollah also came with him. Muchamedschach told Iljas to kill a sheep; Iljas obeyed the command, made ready the sheep, and served it up for the guests. The guests ate of the flesh, drank tea with it, and then addressed themselves to the kumis. The host and the guests sat on down pillows and carpets, drank kumis out of bowls and gossiped, while Iljas vigorously performed his work in house and courtyard.

As he passed by the door, Muchamedschach perceived him and said to one of the guests: "Did you see the old man there, who just now passed before the door?"

"I saw him," replied the guest, "what is there peculiar about him?"

"The peculiarity about him is, that this old man was once the richest man in our neighbourhood. He is called Iljas—perhaps you have heard of him."

"Certainly," replied the guests, "the recollection of him is still fresh among us."

"Well, you see, nothing more is now left to him; he lives with me as a servant and his wife with him; she milks the mares in the stable."

Then the guest wondered in himself, chuckled, and shaking his head said: "Ah, there one sees how fortune turns like a wheel: some it raises on high, others it casts

down. The old man grieves very much for his fortune, I suppose."

"Who can know! He lives quietly and peacefully, and works industriously," answered the host Muchamedschach.

"Could we not speak with him?" asked the guest.

"Might I freely question him about his life?"

"Ask him, if you wish," replied the host. Then he called loudly outside the door:

"Babaj (which in Baschkirisch means 'grandfather') come here, and drink kumis with us and call your old woman also."

Iljas came with his wife, saluted the guest and the host, repeated a prayer, and squatted near the door on the stones. But Schamschemagi went behind the curtain and sat herself near the hostess.

They handed Iljas a bowl of kumis. He bowed to the guest and to the host, drank a little, and placed the bowl aside. "Say now, grandfather," addressed the guest to him, "you must still be very sorrowful at heart, when you see us thus and think of your former life, how then you lived in good fortune and now live in indigence?"

Iljas smiled and said: "If I were to tell you my opinion of fortune and misfortune, you would not believe me. Therefore rather ask my wife, she is a woman; what she has in her heart, she has also on her tongue. She will answer your question honestly and according to her best knowledge."

Then spoke the guest, as he turned towards the curtain:

"Well then, grandmother, do you tell me what you think about your former good fortune and your present indigence."

And Schamschemagi from behind the curtain began:

"Hear what I think about it: Fifty years lived I together with the old man; we sought happiness and found it not. Now, for a year past, nothing more is left to us, and we have to serve among strange people—now we have found true happiness and desire nothing different."

Then were the guests surprised, and the host wonderingly rose up and flung the curtain back in order to see the old woman. But Schamschemagi stood there with folded hands looking at her husband, and the old man smiled at her. And once again she began:

"I speak in earnest and not in jest. For half a hundred years we sought happiness and did not find it, so long as we were rich. Now nothing is left to us, we live with menials, and have found such happiness that we do not want any other."

"And in what consists then your happiness?"

"That I will tell you. When we were rich we had not an hour of rest, we could not speak to each other, neither think of our souls, nor say a prayer to God—so many cares had we. If guests came to us, it was necessary to care for them, so that they might be entertained while they were present, in order that they might not speak against us. Were the guests departed, it was necessary to look after the domestics, who live only to be lazy and to love tit bits, we had to keep our eyes open, that everything should not go to ruin, had to scold and sin. Then there is anxiety lest the wolf strangles the foals or the calves, lest thieves break into the herds and take away the horses. If one allows oneself to sleep, one is afraid that the sheep will crush the lambs; he gets up and goes to the stable in order to look after them. Scarcely has one composed oneself about the lambs, than he begins to feel anxious anew, how fodder was to be provided. Thus quarrel and strife was frequently produced between me and my husband; he said 'It must be so,' I replied so-and-so, and there was discord and sin. Thus we lived from care to care, from sin to sin, and did not succeed in finding happiness."

"Well, and now?"

"Now we rise with God, always speak to each other in love and concord, have nothing to dispute about, nothing to be anxious about—beyond that we serve the householder well. We work, so far as strength allows, work with love, that the householder may have no loss, but profit. When we come dinner is ready, supper is ready, and there is also kumis. Is it cold, some one takes fuel and makes a fire; also a furred-coat is at hand. We have time to talk with one another, time to think of our souls and to pray to God. For fifty years have we sought happiness and it is now first come."

The guest began to laugh, but Iljas said: Do not laugh, brother, for this is not a jest, but human life. Once I also and my wife were so foolish as to deplore our lost wealth, but now God has revealed to us the truth, and not for our diversion, but for your prosperity do we proclaim it to you."

"That is very well said," spoke the Mollah. "The simple truth has Iljas spoken, as it is written in the Scripture."

Then the guest became meditative and ceased to laugh.

—Translated for Open Court, from Count Leo N. Tolstoi.

A VERY tame sulphur-crested white cockatoo happened one day to be on his perch near a lawn-tennis ground. The day was damp, and the ground slippery. In the course of the game several falls occurred. Each tumble gave rise to much laughter and merriment amongst both players and onlookers, which seemed to attract the special attention of the bird. When the "set" was finished, and the performers were talking together on one side of the court, "Cocky" quietly descended from his stand, walked on to the lawn-tennis ground, rolled over two or three times on the grass, and then picking himself up, laughed long and loud in exact imitation of the players.

HENRYK SIENKIEWICZ.*

MR. Jeremiah Curtin, by translating "With Fire and Sword," has revealed to English readers another great Slav writer worthy to rank with that trio of Titans, Gogol, Turgenieff and Tolstoi. Henryk Sienkiewicz, the Pole, is of the same Order by the immensity of his conception, the hardy veracity with which he pictures semi-barbarians individually and in masses, and the unflinching melancholy of the philosophy that underlies his work. In "With Fire and Sword" there is, indeed, much excellent fooling, mirth, wit, tenderness, chivalry, purity of endeavour, and triumphing of man's soul over terrors of circumstance, but these things are only by-play to the huge drama; they do not deflect its course; the tale is of myriads trampling to no apparent purpose nor end but confusion, and of individual man scarcely more important to the outcome than a single leaf to the forest where it flutters out its little day. This Polish genius of literature has been reasonably likened to the Russian Verestchagin, a painter of such scope, detail and significance, that his pictures, which we had the good fortune to see in New York, outranked the masterpieces of the Metropolitan and the private galleries so immeasurably that these conventional canvasses appeared trivial, mere gauds, prettinesses, decorations, when one came to them after having long looked on the profoundly suggestive representations of the Russian. His were not, as some dismayed American painters said, only literal pictures of battle, field-hospitals, roads cumbered with corpses and the debris of war, vultures swooping to the dead, and gorged carrion crows waiting with assurance that digestion would soon fit them to banquet again on the meat that war supplies. Unquestionably the horrors were honestly painted, but there was no ministration to diseased tastes. By some magic of that mighty brush the spiritual was present, the triumph of man's soul over the grave was proclaimed; and, as one continued to gaze, disgust of the carnage passed in a growing sense that the manner of death is inconsequential, inasmuch as the fate is ordained alike for all. To regard the paintings as merely protests against war and rulers who make it, would be a narrow interpretation; their larger suggestion was that we are here, we know not wherefore nor why, struggling as sentient automata with illusions, and no more finished when this state ends than before we were submitted to its incidents. This manner of regarding existence belongs to the great Russian novelists, and is even more remarkable in Sienkiewicz.

The Cossack rising of 1648, under Bogdan Hmelnitaki, against the loosely combined oligarchy of Poland, is the historical subject of "With Fire and Sword." In the spirit of a true dramatist, with scarcely a trace of partiality for either side, or rather with plain affection for both, the author minutely describes the huge, horrible combats, the unmerciful following of victory, the worse than Indian atrocities habitual to both armies, the impalings, burnings and outraging of captives, the cruelties ordered for policy's sake, as well by the most heroic and genial leaders as by those whose ferocity was unmitigated by pity or chivalry. It is real war that Sienkiewicz writes; it is the war that Verestchagin paints; there are no cheap delusive sketches of the figure of Glory in this faithful work. It is war essentially as war is and ever must be, an employment wherein men are at once devils of destruction and saints of self-sacrifice, without departing one jot from their nature. In the hands of a weaker writer, the incidents of that frightful war would either be in some sort concealed lest the reader should turn away with disgusted incredulity, or would be so insufficiently described that civilized men could not feel themselves kin to the hosts that empurpled the earth from Kudak to Zamosc. But such is the persuasive power of Sienkiewicz that one never loses touch of feeling with the combatants, never doubts that they were bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, never fails to recognize the capacity of human beings to re-enact those horrors, were law to be again trodden down as in that time and place, were anarchy to return, and the force of brute courage to become once more the sole protection for liberty, life and acquisition. This valuable understanding is kept well to the fore by a multitude of characterizations, as lifelike, clear and bold as ever Sir Walter drew, all of human beings who declare themselves as men of this world, and every one perfectly differentiated from his fellow.

Of the thousands in the drama, one can mention but few. Pan Longin, the big Knight of Lithuania, is the most lovable, with his simple piety, his two-handed sword, his innocence, his imperturbable courage, his susceptibility to pretty women, his loyal adherence to a vow that he would not marry till God should have graciously permitted him to cut three infidel heads off with one blow, after the example of that venerated ancestor from whom he inherited the long sword, his mild expostulations against the gibes of Zagloba, and the infinite unselfishness with which he went even gratefully to death for duty, after happiness in this world seemed near, because, having duly struck off the three heads, he could go with a calm conscience to ask the hand of his flirtatious Anusia.

Pan Longin, the "very perfect gentle knight," is not however, a figure wholly unique in literature, as is Zagloba, who has been likened to the immortal Falstaff, on the strength of some unimportant superficial resemblances.

* "With Fire and Sword." By Henryk Sienkiewicz. Translated by Jeremiah Curtin. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.