

him to his regular pace. Passing before Miss Blandemere, the Kurd saluted her. She could not remain insensible to that mute admiration. Oftentimes she had been told that she was beautiful, and she esteemed as flatteries what she heard of herself in the salons of Europe; but the language which the eyes of this man spoke, demi-barbarian as he was, could not but be sincere, and in no respect resembled a vulgar compliment. She returned the salutation. He looked at her once more, then galloping off with his troop he was soon lost to view.

During the three following days the caravan continued its route. The mountains became more and more bare, and the nights more cold. Even at midday the sun seemed to have lost his heat. Autumn advanced. One morning the grass was covered with a white frost. The winds, coming from the eternal snows on the summits of Tauris, blew upon the plain, despoiling the trees of their last leaves, while the crows wheeled in the whirling blasts of heaven.

The travellers could only lie in their tents. The evening of the fourth day it was necessary to seek an asylum in the house of a poor village. The only abode of any size was that of an Armenian Priest of the place. They were sent thither by the *Mouktar*. Whilst the strangers warmed themselves before the small fire, the master of the house, a poor creature, clad in a covering of blue cloth, silently smoked his cigarette in a corner. He had spent his life in cultivating the plain, as did his parishioners. He was almost as stupid as they, and, without the round bonnet, entwisted with a black rag, which covered his head, one would have taken him for a peasant. He complained of his misery to Tikraïne, in whom he soon recognized a compatriot. He pretended that the Turks, the Armenian Bishops, and the Kurds were alike in their way of despoiling the village. "The Kurds," said he, "are not our worst enemies. Those around belong to the tribe of Abdurrahmanli. Their chief, Selim Agha, attacks only rich travellers like you."

The conclusion of this discourse was not reassuring. Tikraïne interrogated the Priest, and learned that the Agha of Abdurrahmanli often despoiled caravans to avenge his people of the Governor of Van, who troubled them a long time. Otherwise he is not a bad man, added the priest, but if the government is not strong enough to conquer him it should not quarrel with him, Selim