

for reins, which he holds in both hands, a Russian coachman seems to know not what danger is; and, so that the road be not altogether broken up, he dashes along at full gallop, making but a very rare use of his whip, which hangs upon one of his arms, his voice being sufficient to urge forwards his indefatigable steeds. During a stage, which is frequently from twenty-five to thirty wersts, (more than eight French leagues,) he never ceases for a moment speaking to his horses, which appear to understand him; and less despotic with them than his lord is towards him, he never gives them an order or recommendation, without stating the motives. I made the servant, who served us as interpreter, translate some of these perpetual monologues, which are seldom interrupted, and then only by a national song. The Russian coachman varies his discourse and the inflexions of his voice according to the age, physical force, or moral qualities of each of his four horses—he addresses himself to the experience of the oldest, and points out to him the necessity of *showing a good example* to his comrades; he reproaches with idleness one which has remained several days in the stable, and tells him that he should expiate this shameful inactivity by renewed ardour; he observes to the largest, that he must no doubt have too great a heart to allow himself to be surpassed by less vigorous horses; and he tells the youngest, that he is fortunate in being joined to steeds remarkable for the good service they have performed, and that he ought, by an exertion of zeal, to show himself worthy of so honourable an association. Such is the exact meaning of the conversation which the Russian coachman carries on with his horses; his words, sometimes kind and encouraging, and sometimes reproachful, exercise a great influence on these intelligent animals; and when he is perfectly satisfied with them he rewards them by calling them his *little pigeons*.—

This is the most flattering mark of approbation that he can give them, the pigeon being an object of love and admiration to the Russian people. The most affectionate care is taken of these birds, and to kill or eat them is considered a culpable action. — The intrepidity of the Russian coachmen, and their contempt of danger, sometimes puts to a rude proof the courage of the travellers and the solidity of his carriage. To get over the ground as rapidly as possible, is considered by them their first duty; driving at full stretch, they trouble themselves but little with what takes place behind them, all they care for being to arrive at the next stage. There is a story told of a Russian coachman driving up to the post-house with only one-half of the carriage; the other half, with the travellers, having been left a league behind in the middle of the road, the rapid rate at which he drove, and his incessant cries and singing, having prevented him from perceiving the accident. Full of confidence in their address, the Russian coachmen habitually neglect those precautions so often necessary in travelling, and yet it seldom happens that they are at a loss to repair an accident. Their industrious hands turn everything to account. They quickly transform a branch into an axletree, and make a strong rope out of some shreds of beech bark. No matter how serious the accident may be of which you have to complain, the first word of the Russian peasant is, *nitchevau*, (it is nothing;) and he adds, *nebos*, (don't be afraid.) In the villages, these men preserve for a long time the ingenious character of childhood; everything furnishes them an occasion for sport. On arriving at the post-house, you see fifteen or twenty long-bearded peasants assembled before it, who leaving to chance to decide which of them shall furnish horses and drive you to the next stage, take hold of the right trace, and then shifting their hands alternately, he whose hand first at-