

LITERATURE, &c.

FROM THE LIVERPOOL ALBION.

EXTRACT FROM IVAN VEJECHEN, A NEW RUSSIAN NOVEL, TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH.

THE AMBUSCADE.

Ivan Vejechen, the hero of the tale, having fallen into the hands of a renowned division of the Kirghesian horde, lived with this wandering tribe for a considerable period, and gained the entire affection of their chief, Arsanal Sultan. At length, during a hard winter, distemper broke out among their cattle, which being accompanied by a deficiency of provision and firewood, left them in danger of perishing by famine. In this dilemma Arsanal Sultan determined to conquer their misfortune by force of arms. Having received intelligence that a rich caravan was on its way through the steppe; and that Sultan Alteen, the enemy of his tribe, escorted it with his best horsemen, he prepared to attack it; and our hero, Ivan Vejechen, who made one of the party, thus describes the rencontre:

Next day, at dawn, a hundred excellent horsemen were all in readiness for action. In addition to these, there were about twenty men with baggage-horses, and some camels loaded with provisions. To my astonishment I saw no signs of lamentation among the women, and heard no sighing when they took leave of their husbands and lovers. Those who were not able to conceal their grief did not show their faces; others, folding their arms, in silence regarded our preparations for advancing. That silent grief and melancholy had a more powerful impression upon the hearts of the warriors than a loud demonstration of sorrow. Arsanal appeared in a rich shooab, (fur coat) mounted on horseback. He turned towards the crowd of women, old men, and warriors who remained for the protection of the aool, and saying, 'Adieu!' galloped away into the steppe. The horsemen followed him, bidding farewell to their dears in dumb-show. After we had gone such a distance from the aool that we could see nothing but its smoke, we halted to allow the baggage-cattle to get up with us, which he had ordered to keep within sight. In our first bivouac on the steppe, we took up a position beside a kootgan (cairn); the horses were let loose into the steppe, sentinels were posted round, and, fires being lighted, we arranged ourselves in a circle upon our felts. Next day we took the direction of the river Seer-Derya, and continued to move in a single column, guided by the kootgans, and the course of the sun, and attesting the correctness of our movements in the nighttime by the position of the stars. We went a long way without meeting a living soul in the steppe; and at last, on the seventh day in the evening, we saw a smoke from afar; but the horsemen who were sent forward informed us that it was the bivouac of a caravan we halted, and Arsanal resolved, in the nighttime, to reconnoitre and inform himself exactly, if this caravan were the same which was the object of our expedition to fall upon it in the morning and finish the affair. Eight of our best horsemen were detached towards the caravan in three directions. Four of them made haste and crept in amongst the reeds on the banks of a small lake at such a distance, that they could hear the voice of the guard and see the faces of the enemy. We, in the meantime; stood ready for action and resolved to set out on the first alarm, to rescue our reconnoiters; but they returned safe, and informed us, that it was covered by a numerous body, and that to fall upon it in the night time would be dangerous, because a sort of fortification was made of the bales of goods, and the guards armed with matchlocks, kept a sharp lookout. We retired some yards to a side, and took our night's quarters beyond a hill, that our fires might not be seen. Arsanal collected his warriors into a circle, and made the following disposition. Our forces were formed into three divisions. He himself with fifty horsemen was to remain in the centre. One detachment of five-and-twenty men had to make a false attack on the front of the caravan, and another detachment of equal strength on the flank. When this should be executed, then our main body was to fall upon the centre of the caravan, and endeavour to cut out a part of it; and protect their booty by covering it with the horsemen of the two smaller detachments who were then to endeavour to unite with the main body, retiring from both flanks of the caravan, and drawing off the enemy's horsemen farther from it. I, with Arsanal's son, Gaynk, was included in the main body. Before day break our two small detachments set off, and we remained behind them and extinguished the fires, in order that the smoke might not be seen with the daylight. About midday we

heard from a distance the tramping of horses and the cries of the camel-drivers. Arsanal, wrapped in a horse-coverlet, climbed up the hill, in order to observe the caravan. When he was out of sight, we mounted on our horses, and set off immediately after him, as soon as we heard the report of the fire-arms, we galloped up to the caravan, and, on getting up to it, commenced the attack with loud cries. The enemy not choosing to waste their powder on our two detachments, and seeing their numerical inferiority; fell upon them with pikes, and left the caravan at a distance. We availed ourselves of this opportunity, encountered those who remained behind, beat them, took possession of the greater part of the caravan, drove all the loaded camels into one body, and resolved to defend our booty to the last extremity. Sultan Alteen, observing our success, gave up the pursuit of our small detachments, who made a feint, as if they would save themselves by flight, and had enticed him farther into the steppe. On returning to the caravan, Alteen fell upon us with fury, perceiving in the crowd his personal enemy, Arsanal Sultan. Arsanal, also, could not restrain his rage, and, seizing a lance, left his own people and threw himself upon Alteen. Rising upon his horse, Arsanal closed upon his antagonist, and was already prepared to give him a blow, but in that very moment a shot was fired. Arsanal's horse fell and knocked his rider under him.

With hellish joy Alteen leaped from his horse, and unsheathing a Turkish yataghan, threw himself upon the prostrate Arsanal with an intention to cut off his head. I was within a few paces of Arsanal, and, on seeing his danger, took a loaded pistol from my belt, cocked it and fired, and Alteen fell dead beside his enemy, who, in the meantime succeeded in extricating himself from under his horse. Arsanal seized upon Alteen's yataghan, and with that weapon cut off his head, put it on the end of a pike, and rode towards his people. Alteen's horsemen had scarcely seen their commander's head upon the pike, when their brutal courage sunk into dismay, and they had no more strength than children. They immediately took to flight with doleful lamentations, leaving in our possession the whole caravan, which consisted of a hundred camels loaded with valuable Asiatic merchandise, a numerous flock of sheep, and a number of baggage and provision horses. Besides, we took prisoners ten Buckharian merchants, with fifty drivers and twenty slaves.

FROM BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

TO A BUTTERFLY NEAR A TOMB.

I stood where the lip of Song lay low
Where the dust was heavy on Beauty's brow;
Where stillness hung on the heart of Love,
And a marble weeper kept watch above.

I stood in the silence of lonely thought,
While Song and Love in my own soul wrought;
Though each unwhisper'd, each dimm'd with fear,
Each but a banish'd spirit here.

Then didst THOU pass me in radiance by,
Child of the Sunshine, young butterfly!
Thou that dost bear, on thy fairy wing,
No burden of inborn suffering.

Thou wert flitting past that solemn tomb,
Over a bright world of joy and bloom;
And strangely I felt, as I saw thee shine,
The all that sever'd THY life and mine.

MINI, with its hidden mysterious things,
Of Love and Grief, its unsounded springs,
And quick thoughts, wandering o'er earth and sky,
With voices to question Eternity.

THINE, on its reckless and glancing way,
Like an embodied breeze at play:
Child of the Sunshine; thou wing'd and free,
One moment—ONE moment—I envied thee.

Thou art not lonely, though born to roam.
Thou hast no longings that pine for home:
Thou seek'st not the haunts of the bee and bird,
To fly from the sickness of Hope deferred.

In thy brief being no strife of mind,
No boundless passion, is deeply shrined;
But I—as I gazed on thy swift flight by,
One hour of MY soul seem'd Infinity.

Yet, ere I turned from that silent place,
Or ceased from watching thy joyous race,
Thou, even THOU, on those airy wings,
Didst waft me visions of brighter things.

Thou, that dost image the freed souls birth,
And its flight away o'er the mists of earth,
Oh, fitly, THOU shinest amid flowers that rise
Round the dark chamber where Genius lies.

MRS. HEMANS.

MANNER OF EATING.—In the Old Testament times, they seem to have been seated, like Homer's heroes, each at a little table of his own, but, in later times the Persian custom of reclining was very generally adopted. Three couches were wheeled up to the table on three sides, the lower being left open, that the servants might be able to approach the guests. They lay upon their left sides, with the heads towards the table, and their feet resting near the outer edge. This position would have been constrained and uneasy had they not been supported; but the couches were provided with pillows, which could be arranged about the person as the guest thought proper, against the back or under the side. Thus reclining, they feed themselves with the right hand, using neither fork nor spoon, the meat having been previously carved or torn to pieces. They often dipped bits of bread, called sops, in the dish, before they ate them. When they lay in this manner, one of course had his back turned to the person next to him, and, when he wished to speak with his neighbour, he turned in such a way as to bring his head upon the other's bosom. So that the expression, 'to be in another's bosom,' only meant being honoured with a place next him at the table.—North American Review.

SIR CHARLES WITHERELL.

Sir Charles is a tall man with a considerable stoop, and a swing in his gait; his face is intelligent and rather remarkable; the forehead expansive, the eyes not large, but expressive of humour; the nose straight, and rather short, or appearing so from the unusual length of the upper lip and chin; his voice is good, but not musical, and his manner is sometimes calm and impressive, but, for the most part, his efforts even upon the most important occasions, are attended by a whimsicality which is the most distinguishing feature of his manner as an advocate. In former days, he used to be accused of idleness, but whenever he took up a case with interest, there could be no more useful advocate; for, however odd his manner, his views were shrewd and to the point, and there is no beating him down; he will insist on having the last word; and yet, there is nothing offensive or overbearing in his pertinacity, but it seems so much the result of honest zeal, and is so mixed up with his strange peculiarities, so garnished with odd quotations and ludicrous illustrations, that his opponent is forced to yield to his humour, and to join in the laugh, though he does not win. His oratory is a most curious combination of really serious and sound argument, with out-of-the-way irrelevancy, or what seems irrelevant, until he, by some odd application, which no one under heaven but himself, would have thought of, contrives to connect it with his argument. His violent excitement about matters of dry equity, is of itself sufficient to give a character of extreme singularity to his pleading in the Court of Chancery; but, when we add to this his unusual gesticulation, his frequent use of common and antiquated words, his bits of Latin so oddly and familiarly introduced, and his circumlocution, where the use of an ordinary phrase would express his meaning, we find they all combine to make up his character for eccentricity as a Chancery barrister. When he goes forth into the street he is more strange than even in Court. He wears clothes that seem to have been suddenly grabbed from some shop window in Monmouth street, without any consideration as to the fit. He scorns the appendages of suspenders, and only sometimes wears a waistcoat long enough to meet the other garment, which for lack of the appendages aforesaid, are wont to sink below the ordinary level: his inside coat is old, his outside one, for he often indulges in two coats, is of great antiquity, and commonly flies behind him in the breeze, while he strides along, muttering to himself, with his hands lodged deep in the recesses of his breeches pocket; his cravat seems as if it had not been folded, but rolled up, and tied on in the dark, by hands not of the cleanest; he wears huge shoes, tied with great black tapes, or what should be black, except that, like his hat, the vicissitudes of time have turned them to a hue of brown. In this costume he moves along, cheery and pleasant, nodding to many, talking to some, and recog-