

## Literature, &amp;c.

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## THE FALL OF THE JANISSARIES.

Who is this that cheapens pistols when he rather needs a coat of mail?

On hearing these words, pronounced in a low significant tone, the handsome young soldier turned quickly and beheld near him two female figures, shrouded in dark blue mantles, and long muskyaks, or veils of white muslin. One of them, however, chanced, to be in the very act of adjusting her veil, and thus, allowed the yuzbashi or captain, or captain—for such his scarlet pelisse, and the golden star embroidered on his jacket, bespoke him—to catch a glimpse of the youthful face of ravishing beauty. The eyes were fixed on the ground, and a deep blush suffused her rounded cheeks. In another instant the veil was replaced, and the two muffled figures moved on and mingled with the throng, leaving the soldier in a state of extreme astonishment and perplexity.

The principal bazar of Constantinople presented that day, as usual a scene of great brilliancy and animation. The numerous arcades, with rows of shops on either hand, were crowded by people of all classes and every race of the east. Grave Turks, in flowing robes, and turbans of various hues, shuffled slowly along, followed by slaves who carried their master's purchases; Persians and Arab traders, Bedouin chiefs, Armenian merchants, Greek islanders, Arnauts from Albania, Mangrobbins from northern Africa, Toorkomans, Khoords, Tartars, and now and then a Frank of some western nation, all added by their varied costumes, to the picturesque liveliness of the shifting panorama.

Women, whose large languishing eyes were alone visible from within the muffled folds of their vestments, fitted incessantly from shop to shop, displaying quite as much fondness as their western sisters for the delightful trouble of bargaining. Rich young Osmanlis, mounted on handsome steeds, with splendid housings of velvet and gold, rode slowly along in the central avenues; and an arab, or carriage, like a huge cage, all lattice-work and gilding, occasionally stopped to allow one or two shrouded figures to issue forth and join the moving throng.

One customary element of variety, however, was wanting, the absence of which excited no little remark. Very few of the Janissaries—whose crimson pelisses, white turbans, red shawl-girdles, and silver-mounted weapons, usually made a conspicuous appearance, as they swaggered through the crowd—were now to be seen. The cause of their absence was no secret. This was the 14th of June 1825, a year and a day memorable in the annals of the Ottoman empire. On the previous day the Grand Vizier Selim Mehmed Pasha, and the celebrated Aga Pasha Hussein, commander of the forces, had assembled the Janissaries in their great square—called the Etmeidan, or 'Place of Meat,' because they there received their daily rations of soup—and had announced to them the new regulations to which they would be required thenceforth to submit. These regulations, which affected not merely their organisation, but also their pay and perquisites, their dress and their weapons, were all of a nature to be highly distasteful to the members of that lawless and intractable corps. The precautions of the sultan and his ministers, who had previously gained over or put out of the way many of the leading and most dangerous characters, prevented any open expression of feeling. The Janissaries listened in sullen silence, and retired quietly to their kislas or barracks, when the ceremony was over. The grand vizier beheld this apparent submission with great satisfaction, and congratulated his fellow-minister on the easy success of their master's favourite project. But the aga pasha, better acquainted with the character of his old comrades, shook his head and said, 'It will not be done without much blood.'

This day, the 14th, was appointed for the first drilling of the new companies which were to be drawn from each orta, or regiment, of Janissaries, and placed under Egyptian officers of the army of Mehemet Ali. Those of the corps who were not in the companies were collected either in the Etmeidan, or in their barracks, anxiously discussing the nature and probable effect of the new regulations, and the course to be pursued by the body at the present crisis. Thus it was that very few of them made their appearance that day in the bazaar; and their place was but poorly supplied by the soldiers of the regular troops—the seymens (infantry), tobjees (artillery), bostanjes (seraglio-guard), and galionjes (marines), who were present in considerable numbers, and in their ungraceful summer uniforms of white cotton jacket and trousers, with the red cloth fess, or scull-cap, and leather belt, made anything but a pleasing appearance in the eyes of the Mussalmen beholders. Their officers however, in their embroidered jackets, and the scarlet mantles which they were allowed to retain, were seen to more advantage. Of this number was the young soldier who has been already mentioned, and who was at once known by his uniform to be a captain of the corps of *gözcüs*. Nor did those who were familiar with the various races of the East fail to per-

ceive in the tall and well-set figure, the bold military bearing, the keen blue eye, chestnut locks, and classically moulded head and features, the marks which denoted his Circassian or Georgian blood.

'Who is this that buys a bridle when he more requires a spur?'

The voice was the same that had before struck his ear; and on turning, he again beheld the lovely face, over which the yashmak was just falling. This time the large dark eyes were fixed on him for a moment, with an expression of timid anxiety. The soldier stood and gazed at the retreating forms with still greater astonishment than before. The women were evidently of the higher class; and the words which had been uttered seemed to imply some knowledge of and interest in him. Yet he had been but four months in Constantinople, and of that time the greater part had been spent in his barracks at Tophanna, out of which he had hardly an acquaintance. If it were a mere frolic of two laughter-loving damsels, making their sport of the foreign soldier, why did she who partially unveiled her face assume an expression so little akin to mirthfulness? And why did her companion, who, he felt assured, was the one that had spoken, keep her countenance carefully concealed?

While pondering upon this mystery, and pretending to be absorbed in the examination of some Farangee shawls, which were displayed upon the stall of an Armenian merchant, he caught sight of two muffled figures, whose approach caused his heart to beat with a kind of instinctive presentiment. This time his hand was slightly touched, and a soft voice murmured beside his ear, 'To-night, before the mosque of Raghil Pasha.' The figures passed slowly on, and the soldier followed at a little distance, until he saw them enter a carriage, which immediately drove away. The young man, however, easily kept it in sight, until it passed out of the gate of the bazaar. Here a number of Jew porters were seated, waiting to offer their services to any one who might seem to require them. Dropping a coin into the hand of one of them, he said, 'Tell me, Jew, know you whose carriage it was that just now passed the gate?'

'Truly effendi,' replied the Jew, 'I know it well, for it is one often seen in the bazar. It is the araba of the Choorbages Osman, of the seventeenth orta.'

'Osman, a choorbagee of Janissaries,' said the soldier to himself, as he drew his mantle about him, and moved slowly away. 'I have heard of him as a favourite leader among his comrades and a violent partizan of the old institutions. But how can I have become known to any in his harem? There is some mystery; and I will not renounce the adventure until I know more. At all events there can be no harm in spending an hour or two before the mosque of Raghil Pascha.'

Thus meditating, the young man was proceeding in the direction of the Etmeidan, when he encountered a brother officer, who was hastening rapidly towards the port. 'How Serjouk Saduk,' said the other, 'are you not for Tophanna? Have you not heard the news?'

'What! Have the Janissaries risen?'

'Not yet,' replied the other; 'but the Etmeidan is all in commotion. An Egyptian officer has struck one of the men in his company, and all the rest have thrown down their arms and torn off their new uniforms. The ortas are assembling, and there will be burning and bloodshed, if something is not quickly done to appease them. I am going to inform the tobjee bashee, (chief or general of the artillery).'

'I will wait and learn more,' returned Saduk; and will follow you in a few hours.'

With these words he took leave of his companion, and directed his course through the most unfrequented streets leading towards the mosque of Raghil Pascha, which was beyond the barracks of the Janissaries. It was now sunset, and he made a wide circuit, in order to allow the night to close in before he reached the place of rendezvous. The few persons whom he met on his way hurried by with looks of expressive fear and agitation. He could not doubt that some calamitous event was apprehended; and knowing that an outbreak of the Janissaries was almost always preceded or accompanied by extensive conflagrations, he easily understood the anxiety of the citizens.

On reaching the mosque, he took post in an obscure angle within its shadow, and remained there motionless for two or three hours. At length just as he was about to quit the spot, with the conviction that he had been the subject of a very annoying practical jest, a veiled female figure hastily approached the mosque, and after a moment's hesitation, came towards him. Uncovering her face sufficiently to let him perceive that she was an Abyssinian slave, the woman inquired, 'Are you the Yuzbashi who buys pistols and bridles, as though he were still a rider on the hills of Atteghai?'

'I am he whom you seek,' replied the young man, much surprised at the latter part of the question.

'Then,' continued the negress, 'I am sent to bid you follow me to the presence of a daughter of Atteghai.'

Atteghai is the name which the natives of Circassia give to their country. Saduk at once concluded that some female of his nation the slave, or perhaps the wife of the choorbagee Osman, desired to speak with him, for the purpose of making inquiries respecting the friends whom she had left in her native land. With this idea, and excited by the hope of

once more seeing the face of the beautiful young houri, whom he had met that morning, he bade the messenger lead on without delay. The negress obeyed, and after a walk of some length, through several narrow by-streets, she stopped before a small postern door. Opening this with a key, she introduced him into a low, dark passage, and producing a small lantern from beneath her mantle, directed him to move forward as noiselessly as possible. In this way they passed through several rooms, and at length the slave, drawing aside a curtain, said 'enter effendi, for the mistress awaits you.'

Saduk advanced and found himself in a small apartment, furnished in a costly and luxurious style. A divan of crimson velvet encircled three sides of it; on this and on the Persian carpet, were heaped numerous cushions, covered with red cloth and Morocco. The ceiling was painted in fresco; and from the centre hung a lustre of four lights, which illumined the apartment. A veiled figure was seated at the upper end of the room, and a voice, the same that he had heard in the bazaar—said in Turkish, '*Kosh geldin, Cherkess!*' (You are welcome Circassian.)

Before he could reply, the veil was drawn aside, and the soldier beheld, to his astonishment, what he would have said was the same face that he had seen in the bazaar, but with the addition of some fifteen or sixteen years to its age. The features and expression were the same. The eye was as large, dark, and languishing; but the sparkle of youth was gone. The cheek was as beautiful in its outline, but without the glow and smoothness of early years. Was it possible that his momentary glimpse could have so much deceived him?

As he stood thus embarrassed; the lady, who seemed rather to enjoy his perplexity, said with a smile, in the Circassian tongue, 'Sit my friend, while I speak a few words on a subject near to my heart. You are a son of Atteghai, of the family of soujouk, and the tribe of Natukaita. This I have heard from those who have made inquiries respecting you.'

'It is true, lady,' replied the young man, 'however you have learned it.'

'I too, am a child of Atteghai,' continued his hostess, 'of the tribe of Shegatak. Yours is a great tribe, and a noble family, but mine is obscure and poor. Yet perchance you may have known the Dar Khaldeer of Malakoy.'

'Unhappily,' replied the young man, 'I know too little of my native land. When I was a boy of fifteen, the Muscov (Russians) and Cossacks, crossed the Kouban, and ravaged all the neighboring valleys. The Natukaitas assembled, and drove them back over the river; but my father and my brother were killed in the battle, and I was wounded and taken prisoner. They carried me with them to Tcherkask, where my wound was healed, and afterwards I was sent to the military school to receive the education of a Russian officer, in the expectation that I would do them good service in the war against my own country. Seven years I remained at the college and in the Russian army, and at length I was called to fight against my brethren of Atteghai. But I laughed at the boasts of the Muscov, and escaped; and fled to the army of my own people, and fought among them until our enemies were driven once more from the land. But when I returned home, my heart was heavy, for there were none to welcome me. My mother and my brothers were dead, and our uncles had taken or sold our property; so rather than make ill blood and dissension in the family, I said to myself—'I understand the science and the discipline of the Franks: I will go to Stamboul and offer myself to the Sultan, to serve in his new army. Perhaps I may find favor, and rise to honor, as many others of my countrymen have done.' So I came hither four months ago, and presented myself before the padishah; and when he heard my story and especially that I knew the art of founding canon, he was greatly pleased, and made me a yuzbashi at once. This is my history, lady, and thus it is that I know so little of my country, and cannot inform you respecting your friends, for which misfortune I am greatly grieved.'

'So be it,' said the fair Circassian with a sigh; 'they are under the protection of Allah. If it be their fate to be well and prosperous, they will be so, and if not, who can alter it? With this philosophical reflection her dis-appointment seemed to be assuaged, for she proceeded in a different tone: Tell me my young friend, did you see my daughter's face in the bazaar, when I made her put aside her yashmak? And did she please you?'

'Was she your daughter?' asked the young man. 'Truly she is a houri—the loveliest of maidens. I have never seen her equal. Happy will be the man who shall possess such a light to his herem.'

'Can you not guess, my friend,' asked the lady with a smile, 'what a mother means when she allows her to uncover her face before a man?'

'Is it for me that you intend this happiness?' asked the youth, at once astonished and delighted. Then he thought of his situation occurred to him, he continued in a despondent tone, 'But alas, what can I say to the choorbagee? What shall I offer as the dowry of his daughter?—I a poor yuzbashi, with nothing but my mantle and my sabre?'

'You are rich in the favour of the sultan,' replied the lady. 'Think you not that all these matters are known in the harems of Stamboul as well as in your barracks at Tophanna? You have the knowledge of Frank

arts of war, which the Sultan prizes above everything else. In a year you will be bin-bashi (a colonel of artillery); in five years you will be a bey; in ten years, inshallah—please God—a pasha. I will answer for it, that when your messenger comes to the corbajee, he will send back words pleasant to your heart. Even now you can do more to win his friendship than if you could offer him the dowry of a pasha's daughter. You know that the evil advisers who surround the sultan, and pervert his mind, have persuaded him to take away the ancient privileges of the Janissaries, and after the laws and customs, which were established by the great and wise Sultan Urkhan, and the holy dervish Hadji Bectash. But the Janissaries are strong, and will maintain their rights in spite of traitors and evil counsellors; and when they meet in all their ortas, with their camp-kettles borne before them, and require their restitution of their old laws and privileges, and demand the heads of their enemies, be assured that they will obtain both and the other. But whether they will prevail without much fighting and bloodshed, is another matter. Allah only knows. But the dear Saduk, is what I would teach you, the you may know how to win the favour of the chorbajee. Of all the troops of the nizamedjed, there are none which are not as dutiful as bosh (nothing) in the eyes of the Janissaries, save only the artillery. Most of these as you know, were formerly Janissaries, friends of the Janissaries, and will be loath to fight against them. It is their officers alone who are strangers and enemies to the Janissaries. If now there could be found one officer of the tobjees—one yuzbashi—who, in the hour of conflict, would say to his men, 'Do not fire upon your brethren, the children of Hadjee Bectash,' they would all obey at the word, and the victory would be secure to the good cause without more blood. Surely, Saduk, dear friend, child of Atteghai,' she said bending forward and looking into his darkening face, 'you will not fire upon my husband—upon the father of my daughter Shereen?'

'This is a spare!' exclaimed the soldier, rising hastily from his seat, and gathering his mantle about him. 'What dust is this you would have me eat? Shall I dishonour my father's grave? Shall I break my oath to the sultan for a handsome face? Is this becoming a daughter of Atteghai to mislead her countryman to disgrace and ruin? Know that for seven years I have carried my life in the hollow of my hand, ready to throw it away at the first warning; but my faith I have kept secure, holding it a thousand times dearer to me than life. This is the law of Atteghai. Have you never heard the history of Mahemet Gherrai, my ancestor, how he gave himself up to death to redeem his word? Farewell, hanoum; I truly believe that your daughter knows nothing of this deception, else she would have been with you. For her sake, and the sake of her country blood, I pardon you this evil design, and hereafter do you good.'

So saying, before the dame could recover from her confusion, he hastily thrust aside the curtain which concealed the entrance to the room, and seizing the slave by the arm, drew a poniard and bade her show him the way to the door. The terrified negress obeyed without hesitation. And Saduk presently found himself in the street. Taking as he was he could the direction of the port, he hurried forward until he reached the aqueduct of Valens. Here, while he stood concealed in the shadow of an arch, he heard the tramp of a body of men approaching, and presently about a hundred soldiers, in the Janissary uniform, completely armed, passed at a rapid pace within a few feet of him. From the course which they pursued he had no doubt that their object was to surprise their aga, who was especially obnoxious to them, from the part which he had taken in favour of the new regulations. This then was the commencement of the insurrection. As soon as they were out of hearing he turned and hurried in another direction towards the Ayazmah landing. On arriving, he roused a boatman from his slumber, and bade him row as rapidly as possible to Tophanna. Twenty minutes brought them thither and the young man hastened directly to the quarters of his commander, the tobjee bashi. The latter had directed his slaves to awaken him on the arrival of any important intelligence, and Saduk was quickly ordered before him. When the commander heard his statement, he said, 'You bring great news, yuzbashi. This must go direct to the padishah. We will proceed to Bektash together in the caïque which brought you hither. Beybars,' he continued, turning to his orderly in waiting, 'tell Kara Jehennam to make sure that his gun-carriages are in good order, and that his men are staunch. Foresee,' he added, 'a day of bloody work in which we tobjees shall have to bear the heaviest share.'

So saying, he proceeded with Saduk to the landing, and put off in the caïque for Bektash. They were half an hour in reaching the palace, where they found that the sultan, as became a sovereign whose empire was trembling in the balance, had been up all night engaged in close consultation with his ministers. The grand vizier, the mufti, the pasha of the Janissary aga, the capudan pasha, and other great officers of the state, were present at the council. The tobjee-bashi was a member at once, and Saduk was presently summoned to the council-chamber. He found the sultan