



THE GEORGIAN MESSENGER

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Editor: Elisabeth Orbeliani.

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A great holiday.

On last Wednesday, the 12-th of March, the capital of Georgia was decked out with flags: from all quarters of the city there streamed to the palace crowds of the populace: in the close of the adjacent cathedral troops were drawn up. In a word, Tiflis wore a holiday air. Not Tiflis alone: the 12-th of March was a holiday for the whole of Georgia. The thoughts and sentiments of the whole republic, of the whole people, were concentrated on the capitol, where was being held the first session of the Constitutional Assembly.

Nought can be more splendid than a festival of liberty, and on the 12-th of March Georgia celebrated her double liberation: liberation from oppression as a nation, and her liberation from civil and political slavery. The Constitutional Assembly is but the consummation and the crowning of the hard fight which the Georgian people has been carrying on for years, which has cost so much effort and so many sacrifices. Together with the other peoples which made up the former Russian Empire, it cast off two years since the yoke of the autocracy which was crushing all Russia. It received thereby political freedom, it freed itself from the tyrannical imperial rule, and cleared the path for the national liberation of Georgia.

In May of last year the independence of the Republic of Georgia was declared. The following ten months have been consumed in unceasing and severe struggles to defend this same independence. Now at last the Georgian people has received the possibility of electing on the basis of a general secret, direct and equal ballot, with the principle of proportional

representation, its empowered representatives, to whom is entrusted the task of establishing on a firm basis all that has been won in the preceding bitter conflict, and to invest in a final and legal form the governmental institutions of the Republic.

These representatives met in Tiflis on March 12, where the first session of the Constitutional Assembly was held in the palace. What was the first step, the first act of the people's representatives? *It was the unanimous Greek, is worth noting*atives of the Allied Powers, of the neighboring Caucasian republics and other states, who were present as guests, there was read out the solemn act regarding the independence of Georgia. The deputies, rising to their feet, listened to the reading of the document, and adopted it *unanimously*, under great and joyful applause. Thus the Georgian people, in the person of its representatives, once more categorically confirmed its unshakable resolution to live free and independent. It desires to be master of its own destiny, and this decisive utterance of the Assembly was echoed by the people on the streets of the capital, was echoed by the whole of Georgia, ready and willing to lay down its life for its native land.

Such was the first word, the first decision of the Constitutional Assembly. The further path along which it is to proceed is clearly defined by the words of the president, which found unanimous approval and support among the deputies. We wish to tear ourselves loose from Asia and to enter into the family of the civilized democratic countries of Europe.

We know of no other case where a nation has carried into effect so accurately and so correctly the idea of the self-determi-

nation of a people. We know of no other example where independence and the desire for independent existence have been realized more unanimously and more widely than in our own little country.

We are likewise sure that this united voice of our people will be heard and its desires fulfilled by those who have proclaimed to the world the great ideal principle of the liberation of small nations.

The declaration of the independence of Georgia *).

During the course of many centuries Georgia existed as a free and independent state.

At the close of the eighteenth century, under the pressure of enemies from all sides, Georgia united herself to Russia of her own accord upon the condition that Russia should undertake to defend her from external foes.

During the great Russian Revolution a state of things was established in Russia which brought in its train the break-up of the entire front and the departure of the Russian army from the Transcaucasus.

Left to her own resources, Georgia and together with her the whole Transcaucasus, took in hand the guidance of their own destinies and founded the necessary organs of government, but the pressure of external forces brought about the break-up of the alliance, which united all the peoples of the Transcaucasus, and to the dissolution of its political integrity.

The present condition of the Georgian people inevitably dictates to Georgia

the need for founding her own political and governmental organization so as to preserve herself from enslavement by hostile forces and to lay a firm foundation for free development.

In accordance with this, the Georgian National Council, elected by the National Assembly of Georgia November 22, 1917, now declares to the whole people:

1. From henceforth the Georgian people is the possessor of sovereign rights, and Georgia is an independent state.
2. The form of the government of the independent state of Georgia is that of a democratic republic.
3. In case of international conflicts, the Georgian Republic will remain invariably neutral.
4. The Georgian Democratic Republic seeks to establish friendly relations with all members of the international family of nations, above all with those adjacent to her own borders.
5. The Georgian Democratic Republic guarantees to all citizens within its bounds civil and political rights without regard to nationality, social position, creed or sex.
6. The Georgian Democratic Republic grants all peoples inhabiting her territory full opportunity for free development.
7. Until the Constitutional Assembly is summoned at the head of the Georgian government stands the National Council, filled up by representatives of the parties of the minority, and the Provisional Government, which is responsible to the National Council.

May 26, 1918.

The Sochi incident.

The faithless attack of the detachments of the Volunteer Army upon Sochi at the time aroused a quite understandable feeling of indignation throughout all Georgia. We use the

* This declaration was passed by the Georgian National Council the day that the independence of the republic was declared, May 26, 1918, and was unanimously adopted and signed by all the members of the Georgian Constitutional Assembly upon the occasion of its first session, March 12, 1919.

expression, thoroughly understandable, for what other feeling could such a deed call forth, which testifies merely to the extreme cowardice and the absence of any conceptions, even the most primitive, among those who committed it, as to waging a regular war. We will not stop on this aspect of the matter, as we want to point out that we are more interested in the ultimate results of the risky step which the Denikinites have undertaken. In the whole history of this affair there is one point which is exceedingly important. We refer to English prestige. The readers will probably remember that previous to the attack of the Denikinites the English commander had declared to the Georgian Government that no danger threatened them from this quarter.

None the less the fact took place—the attack was made. The following step of the English authorities—the order to General Denikin to withdraw his troops from the district of Sochi—was clearly dictated first of all by the necessity of supporting the prestige of England. Great Britain fulfilled her duty first of all in this connection towards herself. This was the interpretation of the intervention of the commanders in Constantinople which was made by the public opinion of the whole Transcaucasus. It would seem that with this one could consider the whole Sochi incident liquidated. This was the way, apparently,

the matter was handled. It is sufficient quantity on the coast of the Black Sea, not to commence hostilities, but—inscrutable are thy ways, O Lord! It is already a month that negotiations have been going on with General Denikin, but this latter individual not only has no idea of evacuating the district of Sochi, but according to reliable information, continues to mass his forces in this locality. Such are the facts. We refrain from drawing any conclusions from the same: we shall merely say that there is one party who is vitally interested in the affair—this is the Republic of Georgia. She is not in the least interested at the present time in holding on to the Sochi district; indeed, it is three months ago that the Georgian Government declared its readiness to withdraw its forces from the district. For Georgia, however, it is by no means a matter of indifference where Denikin's forces are located. Along this front Georgia has a historical and a strategical boundary, and the holding of this boundary alone can guarantee her from the repetition of the Sochi incident. This is the river Makhadar, and this line she must occupy under all circumstances. The Georgian forces are occupying at the present time the left bank of the Bzyb and cannot remain in this position without the danger of a whole lot of unpleasant surprises. Most serious attention would be paid to this matter. The

Sochi knot must be unravelled, or else the delay in doing this will make it necessary to cut it.

The Peace Conference.

The chief questions discussed at the Peace Conference during the preceding week were those concerning Germany, the demarcation of frontiers, the Russian problem, the league of peoples and the organization of armies.

Regarding Germany, the representatives of the powers present at the Conference came to the conclusion that it was essential first of all to supply Germany with provisions as speedily as possible. The representatives of France opposed this, but the necessity of the immediate import of provisions into Germany was upheld by Lloyd George and the American representatives, and their point of view won out. In connection herewith an agreement was reached on one indispensable condition,—namely, that the transport of supplies will be under Allied control, and the Powers of the Entente for the time being take charge of the entire German commercial fleet.

The question of the boundaries of Germany was likewise brought up. This matter was complicated by the proposal of the French representatives to form the Rhine district into a buffer zone. This proposal has not been met with a favorable reception at the

hands of the representatives of England and America. The intention is to form this state so that its population, once Germany has fulfilled her obligation to the Allies, may express itself by means of a referendum as to whether it desires to remain independent or to unite once more with Germany.

The question of the German army was likewise brought up for consideration. It was decided that the rank and file should consist of 250,000 men with 9,000 officers. The period of service of the latter should be 250,000 men with 9,000 officers. The period of service of the latter should be 25 years; that of the men—twelve. The army is to be recruited on a volunteer basis.

In connection with Russia, as is well known, an agreement was reached.

A proposal was made to the representatives of all the states which have been formed on the former territory of Russia (with the exception of those of the Caucasus) to come to the Prince's Islands to discuss, in conjunction with the representatives of the Allied Powers, the question as to what is to become of Russia. In case this proposal is not taken up, it has been decided to actively intervene in Russia with a view to restore order in the country. In regard to the last point, disagreement ensued among the Allies. President Wilson declared that America would not send armed forces to

Russia. From the last speeches of Lloyd George it is evident that he also considers that armed intervention in the affair of Russia is not feasible. Two plans accordingly remain: either to leave Russia to herself, or else, to establish an economic blockade of Bolshevik Russia. The Allies are apparently inclining in favor of the latter proposal.

Regarding the question of the league of peoples, it has become clear that England and America are supporting the original project as proposed by President Wilson, while France and Italy demand that a series of alterations be made in it.

Lastly, regarding the future organization of armies, a very important agreement between the representatives of the great powers has been reached. The principle of conscription has been disavowed, and it has been recognized that the armies in all countries shall be raised upon a volunteer basis, as was the case in Great Britain before the war.

TIFLIS*.)

The Erivan Square is the great centre of activity; in its midst is the Caravanserai, a vast rectangular building full of shops, not unlike the Gostinói Dvor, in Petersburg, but poorer. From that corner of the square in which the Caravanserai is situated, a street of which is occupied by the Caravanserai of the Georgian Nobility and behind, in a fine garden, is the Georgian theatre; both the garden and the theatre belong to the Land Bank of the Nobles, an institution which deserves the attention of all who are interested in the Ivorian nation. The bank was founded in 1874 in order to aid farmers to work their lands by advancing them money at the lowest possible rate of interest; all the profits are spent in the furtherance of philanthropic schemes and in the encouragement of national education.

Continuing our walk, we emerge from Palace Street into the Wide Golovinski Prospect, which takes its name from Golovin, a former governor of the Caucasus. On the left lies the palace, a fine modern building in the European style, and on the right is the Caucasian Museum, in which the student will find geological, zoological, ethnographical, entomological, botanical, archeological, and numismatic collections of the highest interest. On the walls of the staircase are several large pictures, the most interesting of which are, a portrait of Queen Tamara, copied from the painting at Gelati, and "The Arrival of the Argonauts in Colchis", the figures in which are all portraits, the Grand Duke Nicholas Mikhailovich,

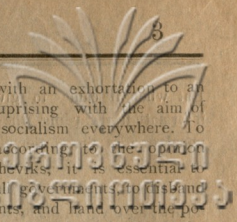
being represented as Jason. There is also a very large collection of photographs, comprising all that is worth seeing in the Caucasus and in Persia. In the same block of buildings is the Public Library, in which will be found most of the literature relating to the country, and a fair number of books on general subjects.

The library is at the corner of the Prospekt and Baronskaya Street, and turning down the latter, the first turning on the right brings us to the Post Office, facing which is a girl's grammar school. The traveller who happens to pass that way when the lessons for the day are over (and he might do worse if he likes to see pretty young faces), will be surprised, unless he has been in Russia, to see that all the children are dressed alike, regardless of age, complexion, and taste; he will be still more surprised when he hears that if one of these uniforms is seen out after 5 p. m., the fair wearer is severely punished, it being the opinion of the Tsar's Minister of Education that school-girls, and school-boys too, should after that hour be at home preparing their tasks for next day. The school accommodation is lamentably inadequate; in the government of Tiflis there are only about 280 children at school for every 10,000 of the population, in the government of Kutais only 250.

Returning to Golovinski Prospekt, we pass on the Staff Headquarters of the army of Georgia, some good shops, and then arrive at the Aleksandroviski Garden, which slopes down to the river bank; its shady walks are thronged every evening when a military band performs.

The new theatre on Golovinski Prospekt is a handsome edifice. The farther you get from the Erivan Square the less aristocratic does the Boulevard become, the only other building of note in the part of it being the Cadets' College; the opening of the new theatre will, however, make a great difference, and in a few years the dirty little beershops on the left will doubtless disappear, and Golovinski Prospekt will be one of the finest streets in the world. Its situation is a splendid one, and is not unworthy of comparison with that of Princes' Street, Edinburgh; the Holy Mount, rising black and steep to a considerable height, and adorned with the pretty white church of St. David, might not inaptly be said to be to Tiflis what the Castle Hill is to the modern Athens. At the end of the Boulevard is the posting-station, whence we can return to our starting-place by tram-car. All the main thoroughfares of the city are now laid with tram-lines, the construction of which is due to a Belgian company which is paying very good dividends.

(To be continued.)



Above All Nations is Humanity.

When British Tommies came to Georgia every English speaking Georgian welcomed them at heart and earnestly wished to approach the boys and speak to them and listen to them learning thereby each other's thoughts and ways. And the best way to do this was to publish a newspaper, a messenger of Georgian minds and souls.

As a nation we never did ply under false colors and that is the reason why we have named our paper «The Georgian Messenger». We are proud that we are Georgians. It should have been ridiculous to call it «The Asiatic Herald» simply because a few thousand Georgians happened to live in a certain part of Asia and wanted to call to themselves the attention of newcomers by brandishing before them somebody else's banner.

We are aware that the enemies of the Georgian nation are continuing to weave their fabric of lies against the people that in times past had always given them an asylum. We do not consider ourselves entirely free of sins that the human flesh is heir to but we do know that the famous verdict of the besetting sin of the Oriental, the sin of lying, concerns those individual members of the much suffering race of whom our illustrious English contemporary **Oliver Wardrop** *) has said: «the peculiar conditions under which they had lived for many centuries have necessarily made Shylocks a large percentage of them».

Nothing can be gained by lies. After all honesty is the best policy. In the words of Abraham Lincoln «you can fool some one for some time, but you cannot fool everyone and all the time». Truth will speak for itself.

It is regrettable that the «Georgian Messenger» is forced to defend the so called «Georgian interests» on its pages in such a manner. We did sincerely hope that its pages could have been free from the petty quarrels and revelations of our family affairs.

«To serve my country is to serve Civilization» in no sense implies that to serve another fellow's country is to serve barbarism. We do firmly believe that «Above All Nations is Humanity» and that the Russian and the Georgian, the Gentile and the Jew, the Whites and the Blacks have already reached that stage of human relationship when Fair Play and Square Deal only can settle their differences.

Jason.

IN EUROPE.

GREAT BRITAIN.

In Great Britain wide-spread workmen's movement has been going on. The chief demand of the workmen is

for a six-hour working day. The boiler-makers, smiths and stevedores have struck, while the railroad employees and electricians have made demands. The Scotch miners in addition to a six-hour working day, have demanded a 30% increase in wages, nationalization of the mines and full pay to unemployed and demobilized workmen. But thanks to the deep-seated culture in English life, all these strikes have so far ended with an agreement between the workmen and their employers, while regarding certain demands of the workmen discussions are still continuing. Thus in Belfast negotiations are proceeding between the representatives of the workmen and the owners of the ship-yards. The representative of the latter is Lord Pirrie. The British Government has in all cases acted as an intermediary between the employers and the workmen in the negotiations.

In this regard the speech of Lloyd George at the Conference of Industry is very characteristic: «Our country, perhaps not for the first time, has got to save civilization». In order to avoid socialistic upheavals, the fate of Germany and Russia, it is essential, according to the opinion of the prime minister of England, that the workmen and the employers should make mutual concessions. As far as we can judge from the data which have been received, the disputes, in accordance with the wish of Lloyd George, have ended by an agreement between both parties.

Of other news which has come in during the week, is worth noting the project for the extension of self-government in India, which is being discussed in higher British governmental spheres.

GERMANY.

The chief noteworthy events of the preceding week in Germany have been the Spartacist uprising in Berlin, the battle between the Government forces and the Spartacists, and the agreement between the Government and the majority of the social-democratic party.

Events in Berlin are reported as follows. As a result of the agitation of the Spartacist (the German bolsheviks), a general strike broke out in Berlin, which developed into an uprising. The rebels demanded that industrial concerns be socialized without delay, that the power be entrusted to the hands of the councils, and that all who had been arrested in connection with the preceding uprisings should be liberated.

The town was seized by the rebels, stopped the publication of the newspapers, and arrested the representatives of the government. On the 8-9th of March the army of the government under the command of General von Listwitz and Colonel Reinhardt forced their way into the city. In the bloody fighting on the streets of Ber-

lin large numbers of people were killed, buildings were destroyed, and more than 40 million marks worth of damage was done. After stubborn fighting the victory remained on the side of the Government, but the rebels hold the eastern suburbs of Berlin up to the present time.

Bloody Spartacist outbreaks have spread through the whole of Germany. Thus a council republic has been proclaimed in Bavaria, where the congress of councils has taken the power into its hands and demanded, that the Constitutional Assembly be disbanded, the power be handed over to the councils and an alliance be made with the Russian bolsheviks. This has forced the government to have recourse to two separate series of measures.

On the one hand in Berlin and throughout the whole of Germany military law has been proclaimed. The military authorities have been given the right to shoot without trial any rebel captured with arms in his hands, and in general measures are being taken to put down the revolt without mercy. On the other hand, the Government has made an agreement with the social-democratic majority (the party of Scheidemann), consisting of the following points: 1) The councils of workmen delegates are recognized as the directors of the economic development of the country. 2) The military authorities are answerable for their actions before a civil court. 3) The distribution of food-products

most important branches of industry are to be socialized at once, beginning with the coal mines.

RUSSIA.

Internal affairs in Russia clearly show that the economic crisis through which the country is passing is becoming more acute. The last decree of the Council of Popular Commissaries brilliantly evidences this, which closes down all passenger traffic on the Russian railroads, on which only freight and military trains are to be despatched. Famine in Petrograd and in Moscow has reached an unheard of point. On the streets may be seen the corpses of people who perished from hunger. There is no place left in the cemeteries to bury the dead. One has to wait a week to bury a corpse in view of the number of coffins which are brought. The sole hope of the council government is in the world-wide revolution. In Moscow a council of the bolsheviks of the whole world has been held. England, France, Germany, Hungary, South-Slavonia, Armenia, Sweden and almost all the countries of the world were represented. The council was opened with a speech of Lenin, in which he expressed the certainty that all Europe would soon be in the hands of the councils. The conference appealed to the workmen of

the world, with an exhortation to an immediate uprising with the aim of introducing socialism everywhere. To effect this, according to the opinion of the bolsheviks, it is essential to overthrow all governments and all parliaments, and hand over the power to the workmen's councils. At the conference, among others, the representative of the German Spartacists declared that his party would soon finish with Scheideman's government.

In honor of the communist conference the Moscow bolsheviks held a parade of the red army and a special meeting of all bolshevik institutions.

In the Ukraine the power of the councils has set firm foot. At the head of the government is the bolshevik Rakovskii. The banks have been socialized; the capital of private persons has been confiscated; plants and factories together with theatres and cinematographs have become the property of the state. The Directory of the Ukraine, which was forced to remove to the territory of Galicia, has, according to last accounts, come to an agreement with the allies.

In the north of Russia on the Siberian border, stubborn fighting is going on with the troops of Admiral Kolchak without definite advantage to either side. In Western Russia the bolsheviks are getting the upper hand in Livonia; in Esthonia fighting is going on on the banks of Lake Chuda between the bolsheviks and Esthonian anti-bolshevik forces.

In the Trans-Caucasus, where the mountaineers have risen against the army of General Denikin, the mountaineers have torn up the railroad-line near Grozny.

Figures once more.

The «Trans-Caucasian Post» continues to print very ungentlemanly attacks on the Georgian people and the Georgian Republic.

In № s. 3 and 4 of this paper appeared some statistics regarding the ethnography of the Caucasus («The Caucasus and its Nations») in the form of the following table:

1. Russians.	3,154,898
2. Tartars.	1,509,785
3. Georgians.	821,720
4. Ineritins.	273,184
5. Mingrels.	239,615
6. Svanets.	15,756
etc...	

These data are gotten together on the basis of the census taken by the Russian officials in the Caucasus in 1897. It is a well-known fact that the autocratic Russian government was unable to give any more or less accurate statistical data regarding its own country; in Europe people were always suspicious of Russian official statistics.

*) «The Kingdom of Georgia».

But when it came to giving accurate information regarding the non-Russian population of the border districts, here, in addition to incompetency, the Russian official intentionally endeavored to falsify and give an incorrect impression of the actual numerical relationship between the various nationalities.

This is entirely in accord with the general policy of the autocracy, which sought to russify the local population and oppressed all that was not Russian. Such was the attitude of the Russian officials towards the Georgian people.

The Georgian nation is made up of several different tribes, which live in various parts of our country. Thus, for example, in the Government of Tiflis live the Kartvelians, Kakhetians, Pshavs, Khevsurs, Georgian Mahometans and others; in the Government of Kutais—the Imeretines, Mingrelians, Gurians, Svans and others. All these tribes speak the same Georgian language, have a common Georgian literature and Georgian culture, a common origin and a common historical past—in a word, form a one and indivisible nation—the Georgians.

The imperial government, however, in order to lessen the importance of attain cultural and national self-definition, *intentionally split it up in the statistical tables, putting down the Georgians of the Government of Tiflis as such, and entering those of the Government of Kutais under the head of different nationalities.*

Hence, according to the official statistics of the imperial bureaucrats, we find, as it were, in 1897 in the Caucasus but 821,720 Georgians against 1,509,785 Tartars and 1,118,094 Armenians. In actuality, granting that the Russian statistics are accurate, we have a total figure (of Georgians, Imeretines, etc...) not of 800,000, but of 1,300,000.

This was the way in which the imperial government acted with the Georgian people, and we know what ends they had in view. The question now naturally arises as to what the «Trans-Caucasian Post» is driving at when they present their English readers with facts regarding whose falsity no one collaborator on the paper can doubt for a single moment.

Their aim can be only one: to lead astray the unwary reader who is not aware of local conditions, by representing the latter in a light unfavorable for the Georgian people.

We shall leave it for the reader to

judge whether it befits a serious paper to have recourse to such means to cast discredit on a whole people.

GEORGIA.

The Election of the Head of the Government and the Supreme Representative of the Republic of Georgia.

The premier-minister, N. N. Zhordania, made his report to the Constitutional Assembly during the session of March 14th and tendered his resignation. The latter body accepted the same, and requested the former government to continue in office until a new cabinet could be formed. The formation of the same was entrusted to N. N. Zhordania, who was elected by an overwhelming majority to be the head of the government and the Supreme Representative of the Republic.

Review of the troops.

The day that the Constitutional assembly was opened, the Minister of War G. Guigardze, reviewed the troops. The soldiers answered the words of greeting of the minister with enthusiastic shouts of applause in honor of

Akhalsikhe and the whole district of Akhal-sikhe taken by the Georgian troops.

According to the last reports of the General Staff of the Republic of Georgia Georgian troops have captured Akhalsikhe, and are continuing the pursuit of the Turkish bands, dislodging them from their positions and inflicting great loss upon them. Abbastuman has already been occupied, and our troops are approaching the southern frontier of the Akhalsikhe district.

Ghognuah the lute-player.

By Akaki Tsereteli *).

(A legend as to how the thrush, the night ingale and the lapwing first appeared on earth).

It was such a dark night that one could not see one's own finger, even if it were brought before your very eyes; just for that very reason no foot-step could be heard all around. At that moment, wafted, as it were, on the wing of a miraculous wind, something vibrated in the air, and there trilled forth the tones of a lute, soft and beautiful. The chords sobbed

*) A celebrated Georgian poet.

so piteously that it seemed as if the suffering of the whole world had resolved itself into something so fine and delicate that it might pass through the eye of a needle. The chords vibrated long, in a heart rending fashion, instinct with a strange force; then all of a sudden pealed forth a song. The accents of this song had no joy in them, nor the voice of many bells; they were full of sorrow, malediction and reproach.

The song ceased, and in its place there broke forth in the still night groans, murmurs and uncanny laughter.

The moon rose and disclosed the following picture. Before a house stood Ghognuah the lute-player, his head bare and with his lute in his hand. He was looking at the balcony of the house, on which three women were standing.

One of them, an old crone, was grumbling out something; the second—a pleasant looking girl—was sighing, while the third, a young and comely lass, was laughing gaily. But, strange to say, it was the very same melody which had made such a different impression on all three.

«So you are going after all, you are going, and who will look after the house? I will not speak of myself; I am only your mother, but are you not sorry for your father, and do you feel your heart breaking at leaving your young wife alone? Who is to take care of us?»—said the old crone.

«Mother dear,—Ghognuah answered quietly,—he who has not fulfilled his duty has no right to love either mother, wife or sister. It is shameful for a man to hide his head on his mother's lap; to hang on his sister's neck, or to sit with his wife in a time of civil war.

«I cannot say any more. I am going where my duty calls me: I must die or conquer—so my heart has decided! As a keepsake I am leaving you this lute of mine; each of you must play on it every day, and so long as the strings do not break, know that I live; but once they are broken, think of me as one amidst the dead».

With these words Ghognuah, his eyes full of tears, embraced the three women, bade them farewell, made the sign of the cross and went his way.

Bitter and grieved, his mother cursed him with her tongue, though the feelings in her heart were quite different; his sister simply showed what she really felt, and implored a blessing for him; his wife, on the other hand, only pouted and wiped her eyes.

That night the sister slept well; the young wife also snored sweetly, but the old mother lay awake and bedewed her pillow with her tears.

(To be continued).

Elisabeth Orbeliani.

THE GEORGIAN HUMOUR.

The tortoise and the scorpion *).

A tortoise and a scorpion became friends; they set out to travel, and came to a river which they must cross. The scorpion was sad because he could not get over, but the tortoise said: «Sit on my back and I shall carry thee across». So the scorpion got on his back. No sooner had the tortoise begun to swim than the scorpion stung him on the back. The tortoise asked: «Brother why art thou doing this?» The scorpion replied: «How can I help it? I do not wish to it, but our nature is such that we must bite both friend and foe». The tortoise dived to the bottom, threw the scorpion into the water, and said: «Brother, I do not wish to thee harm, but my nature is such that if I do not bathe my body after it is stung it swells up and I die».

The fox and the fleas.

The fox is a dumb brute, but it has so much sense, that when fleas swarm on it, knowing that they will annoy it, it takes in its mouth a piece of old leather, and lets its tail down into the water; when the fleas crawl up the tail to the body, it gradually sinks its body; when they move up from the body to the head, and then to the piece of leather, it dips its head under water, and lets the piece of old leather with the fleas float away in the stream.

*) From the Georgian «Book of Wisdom and Lies» by Sulikhan Orbeliani, translation by Oliver Warden.

A MUSEMENTS.

OPERA HOUSE:

Wednesday, March 17.—„AFRICAIN».

Monday, March 18.—„GHEISHA».

Tuesday, March 19.—„ABESSALOM and ESTHER» by Z. Paliashvili.