EMELYAN'S WIFE.

Emelyan was a laborer living in his mother's house. Emelyan was going to go back to the fields one day when a page, who lived in his hall almost trembling, came to front of him. Emelyan quickly stepped over to Sadlon to be heard some one call him. Emelyan turned around and saw a beautiful girl standing behind him, who said:

"Why do you call sacry, Emelyan?"

"How can I marry my girl? I have nothing except myself; no woman will go to me."

"Sacry now."

The girl greatly pleased Emelyan.

"If he replied with delight: "But what shall we do?"

"Is it worth bothering about?" said the girl. "It only seems that we shall go to work a little more and sleep a little less, and then whenever we see we will buy ourselves clothes and food."

"Very well, then, we will marry; but where shall we go?"

"Let us go to the city."

Emelyan and the girl went to the city. There he hire to a small house at the outskirts of it; they were married and began housekeeping. The governor was out one day, and as he passed by saw Emelyan's wife sun out to sit down. When the governor saw her he was struck with admiration at so beauty and said to himself, "Where did this poor a beauty have come from? I do suppose she called her and began to question her.

"Who are you?"

"The wife of the peasant Emelyan."

"How come such a beauty as you to marry a peasant? You should have been a princess."

"Thank you for your kind words. I am well content to be a peasant's wife."

The governor made a few more remarks, then went and returned to his palace. He could not get the wife of Emelyan out of his head. He did not sleep a night. He thought of how to contrive to send Emelyan's wife and get her to himself. He could hit upon no way of doing it, so he called his servants and asked them to find a way.

The servants said to the governor: "Take Emelyan as one of your laborers. We will then kill him with hard work. The wife will be left a widow and you can have her."

The governor sent for Emelyan to be one a man of all work and to live with his wife in the palace. The messenger went and gave Emelyan the message. He wife replied:

"Go, Emelyan. Go. You can work during the day and at night you can return to me."

Emelyan went. He arrived at the palace. The governor's lieutenant asked him:

"Why is you come alone, without your wife?"

"Why bring her? She has her house."

The next Emelyan work in the governor's yard that would have been a hard job for two men. Emelyan set to work and was afraid he would not be able to finish it, but he thought he had finished it all. The lieutenant saw that he had done all of it so gave him for the next day four times as much.

Emelyan went home. There he found everything swept clean and tidy; the new fire in the baking and cooking all done. The wife was sitting at the table and seeing whole she waited for her husband. She saw him, laid the supper, gave him to eat and drink, so when he had finished began to tell him about his work.

"There is no use talking; it is bad. You gave you more than you can do. You will kill me with work."

"But you—you need not think about work. Don't look to the one side or to the other how much have you done or how much is left. Only work. All will be done in time."

It is morning. Emelyan returned to work. He started work, never looking to one side. Let by the evening it was all finished, and before it was dark he said home. They put more and more work upon Emelyan, but he always finished it in time and went home.

A week has gone by. The governor's servants see that they cannot kill Emelyan with much work. They begin to give him skilled tasks, but with this they cannot kill him. Carpenter's tools, smith's work—all that they gave him he finishes in time and goes home to his wife and to sleep.

Another week goes by. The governor calls his servants and says:

"Do I feed you with bread for nothing? Two weeks have passed, and as yet I see nothing from you. You want to kill Emelyan with hard work, and you my window I observe? him going home every day, singing. Did you tell him to make a pot of me?"

The servants begin to excuse themselves.

"We tried," they said, "with all our might to kill him with hard work, but he would not do it. When he swept up a heap we see it is without fatigue. We then begin to give him skilled work, thinking he would be worn of tasks, but with that we could not break him down. Where does he get from? Everything he approaches succeeds. It must be that there is which call to him or to his wife. We wanted to find out about it, but we are tired of him. We want to give him a rest beyond his power. We thought of giving him an order to build a cathedral in a day. Do you call Emelyan and command him to build a cathedral in front of your palace in a single day and then, if he fails to do it, he can be cut off for disobedience."

The governor sent for Emelyan.

"Hear, man," he said, "this is my order to you. Build me a new cathedral in front of my palace in the square. If you do it well by tomorrow, if you don't do it I will order head on you. If you do it not well I will cut off your head."

Emelyan listened to the order, turned pale and went home. "Now," he said to himself, "my end is come."

"Tell me, my wife and child."

"Do you know, Emelyan, why we are happy? Because, if we do not we will be lost, and all for nothing."

"What" he asked. "Have you become frightened that you want to run away?"

"How can I be otherwise than frightened? The governor has ordered me to build a new cathedral, and all in one day. If I do not build it he threatens to cut off my head. Only one thing is left—to run away wherever I can."

The wife did not accept this suggestion.

"The governor has many servants, and wherever we go we will be caught," she said. "You cannot escape him, and as long as we have power we must obey."

"But how to obey when it is beyond our?"

"Little father! Do not grieve. Take your supper and go to bed. In the morning you will get up and everything will be all right."

Emelyan went to bed. The wife awoke him.

"Go," she said: "go quickly and get your cathedral built. Here you have nails and a hammer, and there is only one day's work left for you."

Emelyan went to the city, arrived at the palace and behold! there was a new cathedral standing in the middle of the square, wanting only a little of being finished. Emelyan started to give it the finishing touches when they were suddenly, and by the evening everything was complete. The governor awoke, looked out from the palace and saw—the cathedral, with Emelyan walking around it, merely putting in a nail here and there. The sight of the cathedral did not gladden the heart of the governor. He was famous as having an opportunity of killing Emelyan and taking his wife. The governor calls his servants again.

"Emelyan fulfilled this task also," he said. "We must invent something new. Go and inquire for him. Invent it. If you do not I will behead you first." His servants contrived that the governor should order Emelyan to make a river flowing around the palace, with lotus-seeds floating on it. The governor ordered Emelyan to perform this new task.

"If," he said, "you could build a cathedral in one day, you can do this also. All must be ready tomorrow, so I have ordered it. If it is not ready your head will be off."

Emelyan became more dejected than ever, and returned with the gloomiest of faces.

"Why," she said, "are you so gloomy? Has something new been ordered?"

Emelyan told her all.

"It is serious," he said, "to run."

"It is impossible to run away," she said. "We shall be caught wherever we go. We must obey."

"But how obey?"

"Go, little father, dread troubles about anything! Take your supper and lie down to sleep. Get up earlier and everything will be in time."

Emelyan lay down to sleep. In the morning the wife waken him up.

"Why," said she, "do you sleep? All is ready. There is only a little work left beside the harbor. Take your spade and level it."

Emelyan went and arrived at the city. Through the palace ran a river towards the harbor, and on it floated a lotus, which he started to level. The governor walked up before him and saw a river where previously there had been none. On the river velvet were floating, and floating with the spade to level the lotus.

The governor was astonished, and he was not pleased with either the river or the vessels, being vexed to think that he could not behead Emelyan. He thinks to himself: "There is nothing that he cannot do. What is it to be done?" He called the servants and began to consult with them.

"Invent for me," he says, "a task that Emelyan cannot fulfill, for all that we have hitherto invented he has done, and I cannot take away his wife."

The servants thought and thought, and at last they found something. They went to the governor and said:

"Call Emelyan and speak to him thus: 'Go there, without knowing where, and bring that, without knowing what.' Whatever he goes you can then say that he has not gone where he was needed, and whatever he brings you can say that it is not what is wanted. He can then be executed without any fault."

The governor was delighted.

"This," he said, "you have invented wisely." He sent for Emelyan and said to him:

"Go there, without knowing where, and bring that, without knowing what. If you do not bring it I shall cut off your head."

Emelyan went to his wife and told her what the governor had said. The wife pondered.

"Go, little father," she said, "they have taught the governor a lesson that he himself will suffer by. The thing has to be managed wisely."

She sat down, reflected, and spoke to her husband as follows:

"Now, little father, go as far—to our grandmother—to our old peasant mother. You must implore her kindness and you will receive something from her. You must then go straight to the governor and I shall be there. This time I shall not be able to escape from their hands. They will take me by force, but it will not be for long. If you do all the grandmother tells you, you will soon be free."

The wife prepared her husband for the journey, giving him a small bag and a spindle.

"Give this spindle to our grandmother," she said. "By this she will know that you are my husband."

The wife showed him the way and Emelyan started on his journey. After leaving the city he saw some frankincense-cedars growing. Emelyan stopped and looked on. The frankincense perished for awhile and then sat down to rest. Emelyan went up to them and asked:

"Don't you know, brothers, which is the way to go and leaves not water, and how are to bring one knows not what?"

The frankincense trees astonished at the question.

"Who," they said, "has sent you to find that?"

"The governor."

"No," they said, "we cannot help you."

Emelyan, after sitting awhile, got up and went further. He journeyed on and on, and came to a forest. In the forest was a lion. In the hut sat an old crone—the old peasant mother—spinning flax and crying. The old woman saw Emelyan and screamed out:

"What have you come for?"

"I have come to see the grandmother."

The old woman frightened and said to him: "Why have you come to her. The old woman immediately became milder in her manner, and began to question him. Emelyan started to tell her all his adventures. The old woman listened, and when he ceased she said: "Now he would go over to the city to live, how he was taken on as a man of all work; how he served the governor; how he built the cathedral; how he made the river with the vessels to sail on it; how the governor had ordered him to go there, without knowing where, and bring that, without knowing what.

The old woman listened and stopped to weep. She began muttering to herself.

"All right," she said: "sit down, little son, and eat."

Emelyan ate, and the old woman started giving him instructions.

"Here," she said, "you have a ball. Roll it before you, and go after it wherever it runs. You will have to go a long way—to the ocean. You will go to the ocean, and there you will see a large city. Enter the city, and ask in the farthest house for a night's lodging. There you must search for what you need."

"But, dear, grandmother, don't know what it is!"

"When you see what people obey before you, you will know that will be the thing. Catch hold of it and carry it away. You will bring it to the governor; he will say you that you have not brought what was needed, and you must then say, 'If this is not the thing please be kind enough to show it.' Then take it and then take it to the river, break it and throw it into the water. You will then get back your wife."

Emelyan bade the grandmother good-by and departed, rolling the ball before him. The ball rolled and rolled, and brought him to the ocean. By the ocean was a large city. At the far end of it was a big house. Emelyan asked for leave to sleep in the house and was allowed. He lay down to sleep. Early in the morning he awoke and saw the father going up to arrange his son that he might send him to chop wood. The son does not obey.

"It is early yet," he says. "There is time."

Emelyan hears the mother getting down from the oven, and she says:

"Go, my little son; the fathers horses are asking. Must he go himself? It is time."

The son sorely smacked his lips and slept more soon. While he slept there arose a terrible noise in the street and a roaring, as of drums. The son jumped up, put on his clothes and ran out into the street. Emelyan also jumped up and ran after him.

The ball is there which the son obeyed better than fathers or mothers!

Emelyan ran out and saw a man going along blindfolded and carrying a round thing on which he beat with sticks and which resounded. This thing the son obeyed better than father and mother. He ran after it and saw—a thing that was round, like a barrel, and had both ends covered with skin. He began to ask what it was called.

"A drum," the man said.

Emelyan was astonished and he asked that it should be given him. It was so given. Emelyan gave up asking and commenced to walk after the man. He walked all day, and when the man laid down to sleep Emelyan, seeing it was drum, sat down and began to beat it with sticks. He thought that he could see his wife, but she was no longer there. She had been taken off the next day to the governor.

Emelyan reported to the governor: "He who went there, without knowing where, has brought that, without knowing what."

The announcement was made. The governor ordered that Emelyan should come the next day. Emelyan started to announce himself again.

"I have come today," he said, "and have brought what was ordered. Let the governor come out to me; if not, I will myself go to him."

The governor went out.

"Where," he says, "have you been?"

He answered.

"You have not been there," said the governor. "But what did you bring?"

Emelyan was astonished at the question, but the governor did not want to hear.

"That is not it," he said.

"If it is not," said Emelyan, "it must be broken, and the devil with it."

Emelyan went out with the drum and rose upon it. As he had upon it all the military of the province marched around Emelyan. They saluted him and waited for orders from him. The governor began shouting out to his soldiers that they should not follow Emelyan. They paid no attention, but all marched after him. The governor saw it and ordered that Emelyan's wife should be brought out before him. Hearing that Emelyan give him up the drum.

"I cannot," said Emelyan: "I have orders to leave it and throw the pieces in the river."

Emelyan went with the drum to the river, and the soldiers followed him. Near the river Emelyan broke the drum stick. He broke the wood into small fragments and threw them into the river. And all the soldiers ran away.

Emelyan took his wife and led her home. From this time the governor ceased to bewing him, and Emelyan began to live comfortably, gathering around him the poor people. He was fitting himself of the lot.—Count Tolstoi in New York Sun.

An Adventure with Black Snakes.

John D. Snyder, of Berlin, Berks county, the skillful watchmaker, was cut after wild raspberries the other day on the premises of his brother, Jacob Snyder, above Fergeville, when he met with quite an adventure. He was busy picking the berries and brambles, when a big black snake suddenly reared up near him and came at him full tilt. The only weapon Snyder had was his berry bottle, which he swung at the head of her serpent, knocking it over, then jumped upon and dispatched the enemy.

Just then down from a bush dropped the mate of the ugly reptile and at once showed fight, but this one also got a whack with the bottle and was soon killed. Mr. Snyder lost all his berries and left the field somewhat nervous and excited after his narrow escape and victory. The "snake" was about 5½ feet long.—

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