

THE GEORGIAN MESSENGER



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The Rosy Future.

In Paris the representatives of the people of the world are gathered together. Great nations and little ones have brought thither their age-long aspirations and their hopes. From the representatives of the Allied powers, who carried on the war in the name of the liberty of the nations and who have brought it to a victorious conclusion, they are expecting the fulfilment of their dreams. From the Peace Conference they are awaiting the reparation of long-standing injustice and the establishment of peace and liberty in the future.

From now on the relations between the states and the peoples of the world must be rebuilt on new foundations, which accord with the basic principles of civilization. Not the might of the sword is to be the judge henceforth between the nations of the world, but law and justice, to guard which will be the duty of the „League of Peoples“. All peoples, both great and small will be members with equal rights in this great international family: the League should ensure the right, both to the strong and to the weak, alike, to proceed without interruption and without question along the path of civilization and progress.

The peoples of the Caucasus have already taken their fate into their own hands: almost a year has gone by since the formation of the independent republics of the Transcaucasus: Georgia, Armenia and Aderbeijan. On the 26-th of May of last year Georgia declared her independence, and during the ensuing 10 months the nation has exerted every effort to establish the young republic on the basis of European democracy. For 15 centuries the

little Georgian people, cast up by fate at the gateway of Asia, bleeding from countless wounds, has defended the Christian religion and its rich national culture against the barbarians which assaulted it from every side. In the course of the last few centuries it has cast its eyes longingly and with great hopes to the west, awaiting aid and salvation from the civilized peoples of Europe. But help did not come from Europe, and could not come at that time. The Georgian people continued to defend itself alone without letting go of the sword even in times of peace, and maintained its national existence to the threshold of the 19-th century. Further continuation of the struggle for existence threatened it with destruction: several times at the end of the 18th century Georgia was devastated by the Turks and the Persians. Realizing that the destruction of Georgia was inevitable as matters thus stood, the wise Georgian king Heraclius II placed his kingdom under the protection of the Russian tsar by a treaty, in accordance with which the latter took upon himself the obligation to maintain the internal independence and liberty of the Georgian state. But the faithless autocratic government of Russia paid no attention to a „scrap of paper“, and converted Georgia into a Russian province, and extended over her the power of its officials and the oppression of the autocratic régime.

120 years have gone by, and in the hurricane of the world-wide war after enormous sacrifices, Georgia again obtained the possibility of restoring the rights which had been trampled on, and again entered upon an independent political existence. Those Asiatic powers, which for centuries had threatened to swallow her up, are now paralyzed by

the force and might of the European countries. The resurrection of Georgia's national existence begins from the moment when she entered into contact with the great democratic countries. The age-long aspirations of our people are being fulfilled: she is making her entrance into the family of the civilized countries of the world.

The Georgian people has already received proofs that their just national aspirations will be supported by the united countries, and first of all by Great Britain. The Georgian people believes that the Peace Conference will assure both it and its neighbors, Armenia and Aderbeijan, the right of independent existence and of unhindered progress along the paths of civilization.

Note of the Georgian Government.

The commander-in-chief of the Volunteer Army has sent in a ultimatum to the Government of the Mountaineer Alliance, ordering them to, throw up their offices to hand over the power to the Volunteer Army and to increase the forces of the latter by six regiments of Daghestan mountaineers, four Ossete regiments and several regiments from other mountain tribes. At the same time the troops of General Lyakhov began to disarm the mountain population, to arrest their leaders and to take away their lands. All this caused friction between the Volunteer Army and the Alliance of Mountaineers, and war began between them. Fierce fighting is going on in Vladikavkaz, Grozny and other places in the Northern Caucasus. In connection with these actions of the Volunteer Army, the Georgia Government sent the following note to the representatives of the foreign powers.

„According to the official news received by us from the Mountaineer

Alliance, the commanders of the Volunteer Army have handed in an ultimatum to the government of the Alliance of the Mountaineers of the Northern Caucasus that the latter should hand over the power to them, while all the mountaineers have been called upon to form detachments to strengthen the Volunteer Army.

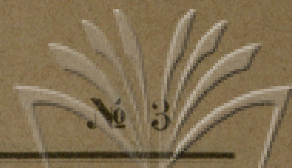
The Government of the Georgian Republic considers that, in accordance with the declarations of the Volunteer Army the main object which it has in view in general and in the Northern Caucasus in particular, is to combat bolshevism, and that the demand made by it to the Mountaineer Government is an infringement of the principle of the self definition of peoples and an attack on the independence of the Mountaineer Government, whereas the recognition or non-recognition of the latter depends wholly upon the decision of the Peace Conference.

The solidarity of the peoples of the Transcaucasus is based upon the mutual recognition and trust in one another of the Caucasian Republics, which are closely united amongst themselves by economic and historical ties, and this solidarity lays an obligation upon the Government of the Georgian Republic to make a categorical protest against such enforced demands on the part of the commanding officers of the Volunteer Army, which, inasmuch as they are directed against the best interests of the population of the Mountaineer Republic, force the mountain peoples into the path of bolshevist actions, and thereby become a source of danger to the peace of the various peoples of the whole Caucasus.

Regarding what has been said above I consider it my duty at the request of my Government to bring the same to Your Excellency's attention, and to declare that the Georgian Government expresses full sympathy and solidarity with the mountain peoples in their struggle for independence“.

Minister for Foreign Affairs

Gegechkori.



Prince John.

The public will learn with pain and surprise of the death, which took place on Saturday, of *Prince John*, the fifth son and the youngest child of the *King and Queen*. The *Prince* had not been generally understood to be in ill health, but from the nature of the malady to which he has succumbed it was clear that his tenure of life was always precarious. While the knowledge that he suffered from an increasing constitutional infirmity may alleviate, to a certain extent, the sorrow of those nearest and dearest to him, *Their Majesties'* bereavement will be not the less sincerely deplored by the nation. The personality of the late *Prince*, on account of his tender years, was necessarily unknown to the people at large, but the example consistently set by his royal parents, and amply illustrated, during the war, by the conduct of his elder brothers, is sufficient to warrant the belief that, had he been endowed with normal health and spared to enjoy it, an honourable and useful career would have been his. The fortunes of the royal house are matters of concern to so large a portion of mankind that the removal by death from that circle of any member of it cannot fail to be attended by a natural and universal sympathy. It is some solace to remember that to these loyal feelings of regret no anxiety for the Succession

(„The Times“ 25-th January).

The Peace Conference.

The work of the Peace Conference for the past week as well as previously has turned for the most part upon questions of territorial delimitation of different countries and of new states, and on the decision of the requests and demands of the majority of the peoples of this planet.

During the past week there have been discussed the questions regarding the western boundary of Germany, the Rumanian frontiers and also those of South Slavonia, Bulgaria and Albania. The claims of Greece on Asia Minor were examined; the Armenian representatives were given a hearing, and the Belgian claims on part of Dutch territory were looked into. The Zionist question was taken up, in connection with which a difference in opinion came to light on the one hand, between representatives of the Jews of England and America, who insisted on the formation of a Jewish state in Palestine, and the French Jews on the other, who expressed the fear that a state of this sort would not be capable of a separate existence. These latter proposed that something like an asylum should be founded in Palestine for the reception of the Jews of those countries where they receive bad treatment.

In addition to questions of boundaries and of newly-formed states, the

Conference subjected to detailed consideration the matter of the size of the contribution which Germany together with her allies will be forced to pay. It became clear that the Allies will insist on the payment of a proportionate part thereof by all the states which are now formed out of what was formerly the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Czecho-Slovaks have already agreed to pay their part. It likewise came out that Germany would be unable to pay her total debt to the Allies at once. For this reason it is proposed to extend payment over a period of from 20 to 30 years. The total sum will probably amount to about 100 billions.

In the Commission of Labor there was discussed the question of the measures to be taken to exert pressure on those countries which do not observe the principles of social legislation, and also regarding labor conditions in the various colonies.

TIFLIS*).

Tiflis takes its name from the hot medicinal springs, for which it has been famous for fourteen centuries at least; in Georgian it is called Tphilisi, which philologists assert to be derived from a root akin to or identical with the Indo-European tep; the meaning of Toepnitz and Tiflis is thus the same. In the fifth century king Vakhtang Gurgaslan founded Tiflis, and began to build the Cathedral of Sion, which still stands in the midst of the city. The castle, situated on a high, steep rock, near the Kura, is older than the city itself, and its construction is attributed to the Persians. Tiflis has shared in all the triumphs and misfortunes which have befallen Georgia, and the history of the capital would only be a repetition of the history of the nation.

The city is built on both sides of the Kura, at an elevation of 1200 feet, between two ranges of steep, bare hills, which rise to a height of 2500 feet, and hem it in on all sides, thus it lies at the bottom of a deep rock basin, and this accounts for the terrible heat which renders it such an unpleasant dwelling place in July and August. The river Kura is crossed by several fine bridges, the best of which is named after Prince Vorontsov, who during his governorship did great things for Trans-Caucasia, and gained for himself the lasting gratitude of all the peoples committed to his care. The population of 350,000 consists not only of Georgians, but of Russians, Armenians (traders and money-lenders), Persians, Tatars, and few Europeans, viz. Germans (colonists from Sibiria), Frenchmen (milliners, hotel-keepers), &c. Although the English residents might

* From Oliver Wardrop's „The Kingdom of Georgia“.

be counted on one's fingers, it seems a pity that her Majesty's Consulate should have been closed in 1881; surely Great Britain has in Georgia interests at least equal to those of France, Germany, Belgium, and the other nations which have representatives in Tiflis.

The effect which Tiflis produces on the mind of the stranger is perfectly unique; its position, its surroundings, the varied nature of its street-life, the gaiety and simplicity of its social life, all combine to form a most powerful and most pleasurable impression. If the reader will mentally accompany me, I shall take him through some of the more interesting quarters, and endeavour to give him some idea of the place. First of all, starting from the fashionable district called Sololaki, let us climb the rocky road which leads to the ruins of the castle, whence we obtain the finest view of the city. The best time to enjoy the panorama is evening, and in summer no one would ever think of making the toilsome ascent much before sunset. From these crumbling walls one looks over a vast expanse of rooftops and church spires, through the midst of which winds the muddy Kura. At our feet lies the old town, a labyrinth of narrow, crooked streets, stretching from the square of Erivan down to waterside, where stands the Cathedral of Sion. Quite near at hand the river becomes very narrow, and advantage of his circumstance has been taken by building a bridge, which leads to the citadel of Metekh (now used as a prison) and the large Asiatic quarter called Avlabar. On this side of the river, forming a continuation of the range of hills on which we are standing, rises the Holy Mount (Mtatsminda), and perched high up near its summit is the pretty white church of St. David, behind which rises a wall of bare, black rock; half-way between it and the river is the Government's palace, with its extensive gardens, just at the beginning of the Golovinski Prospekt, a long boulevard with fine shops and public buildings; between the boulevard and the river lies the Municipal Garden, named after Alexander I. Turning our eyes towards the other side of the Kura, beyond Avlabar, we see, on the hill facing St. David's, a large block of buildings used as military depot, arsenal, and barracks, and still farther on, on the river bank, is a thick green belt which we recognize as the gardens of Mikhailovskaya Street, ending in the splendid park called Mushtaid. Crossing the ridge, we now turn our back on the city and descend into the Botanical Garden, situated in a sheltered ravine, a delightful place for an evening stroll; on the opposite side of the ravine is a Tatar suburb with a lonely graveyard.

(To be continued).

IN EUROPE
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GREAT BRITAIN.

In Britain (a great increase in activity is noticeable in all lines. As good examples of this we can take ship-construction and aviation. At the present time a hundred new vessels are under construction in the London yards with a tremendous total tonnage: one single firm has fifty vessels under way.

Regarding aviation, the Government proposes to organize a series of flights to demonstrate the power of British aeroplanes. The first flight will be to Madrid on a Handley-Page biplane; later ones are planned to Australia, India, Capetown.

A colossal social reform is being carried through in England at the present time. The Government, for example, has introduced into Parliament a bill regarding transport, which puts all routes of communication into the hands of the state. The nationalization of all electrical energy is projected.

GERMANY.

Internal conditions in Germany still keep the form of a conflict between the Government and the communist rebellion, which has grown into a gigantic movement, involving a huge area. In Bavaria Munich is in the hands of the rebels: no papers except the communist ones are being published, the power is in the hands of the council of armed workingmen; throughout the rest of Bavaria a bloody struggle is going on, inclining in favor of the communists.

Düsseldorf has been taken by Government troops: fighting is going on in the streets of Hamburg: between Spartacists and Government troops there took place a battle at Bottrop near Halle: strikes are going on in Thuringia, Kieland, the Ruhr district. It is characteristic that the German middle class is making use of the strike. In Leipzig with the demand that the general strike of the workingmen cease, all the doctors, engineers, lawyers and Government officials struck. The employers started a lock-out at factories still at work. The workmen threaten reprisals against the intelligent classes.

The German Government is energetically combatting disorder. A volunteer army of 300,000 men is being organized, and almost all of Germany is under martial law. In many places meetings and demonstrations have been forbidden. Who will win out is as yet hard to say, but it is clear that the country is being totally ruined by the civil war. The railroads and many towns and villages have suffered greatly in the course of it.

In the field of external politics must be noted the conditions of the arm-

stice, the exact terms of which have come in during the last week.

We have printed above the terms concerning marine matters; other conditions of which news has been received are as follows: all heavy guns are to be surrendered, all aeroplanes and machine-guns, 150,000 cars and 5,000 locomotives.

Representatives of German-Austria have arrived in Germany to negotiate a union of both countries.

Treaty concerning marine affairs with the powers hostile to the entente.

Germany destroys all her submarines, all supply vessels for them, all dry docks for the construction of submarines and the docks at Kiel. All war-vessels interned in foreign ports are likewise to be destroyed. Germany surrenders to the Allies 8 battle-ships, seven light cruisers, 42 destroyers and 50 torpedo boats. The forts and the port of Heligoland, and all coast fortifications in the Baltic are to be dismantled at Germany's cost. All auxiliary cruisers are to be transformed into commercial vessels. The Austrian fleet—13 battleships, 2 cruisers, 10 light cruisers, 19 torpedo boats, 33 submarines and 20 monitors must be surrendered to the powers of the entente. The same is to be done with the fleets of Turkey and of Bulgaria. All fortifications which hamper the freedom of navigation between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean are to be destroyed. Germany must pay a compensation for crimes committed on the high seas.

THE UNITED STATES.

American public opinion has been much alarmed during the last few days by the discovery of a conspiracy against the life of President Wilson. So far four ringleaders have been arrested.

President Wilson was met with great pomp by the population of the United States upon his return from his first European trip. The president is now leaving for Europe once more to attend the Peace Conference. He does not intend to call Congress together before he returns from Europe.

In general the president is occupied with questions of world politics. For example, he insists that America should support Europe with food to the sum of 300 million pounds sterling.

ITALY.

The centre of affairs in Italy at the present time is occupied by the conflict with the South Slav peoples—Croats, Serbs and Slovenes. The conflict has arisen over Fiume (on the eastern shore of the Adriatic), to which

both sides lay claim. The conflict became so acute that Italy closed her frontiers and deprived the South Slavs of the possibility of obtaining food. On hearing of this, Slovene soldiers in Laibach forcibly detained the Italian mission. Only the intervention of the Peace Conference averted a new war.

RUSSIA.

As before, the leading feature of life in Russia is unending civil war. The bolsheviks continue to press forward in the Ukraine: they have taken Rostov and Kazatin. According to the latest news, they have reached the former Russian frontier. The Ukraine Directory, according to the last reports, has been shifted to Stanislavov.

Fighting is continuing between the Volunteer Army and the bolsheviks in the western part of Russia. In those places where the bolsheviks get the upper hand, independent "council" republics are formed: up to the present there have come into being Livonia, Lithuania, White Russia, Estland. The second and third of these have been fused into one by agreement of their governments.

The powers of the alliance have decided to propose for the last time to all states which have been formed out of former Russian territory to meet together on the Princes' Islands near Constantinople to discuss the question of coming to some mutual agreement. If this proves to be unsatisfactory, strong military forces will be sent to Russia.

GEORGIA.

The Consecration of the Katolikos in Mtskheta.

In accordance with the election of the all-Georgian consistory and the decision of the Patriarchal Council, the consecration of the Metropolitan Archbishop of Tiflis, Leonid, as the Georgian Patriarch (Katolikos), was celebrated in the Cathedral of the Twelve Apostles at Mtskheta (near Tiflis), February 23-th.

In spite of the bad weather, a huge crowd of worshippers came in from Tiflis, from Kutais and the surrounding villages.

At 10 o'clock sharp in the morning a special train arrived at Mtskheta from Tiflis, bringing, His Holiness Archbishop Leonid, Archbishops Amvrosii and Nazarii, Bishops Pyrr, David and others, as well as the members of the Patriarchal Council and Court. The representatives of the Georgian Government and the Georgian Parliament arrived in automobiles, as did also the representatives of the foreign governments: from Great Britain, General Beach with his suite; from France, Colonel Chardigny with his suite; from the Republic of Aderbeijan, its repre-

sentative Djafarov with the members of the embassy; the representatives of the Mountain Government, Poland, Lithuania, the Balkan Slavs and others.

The liturgy of the consecration of the Patriarch was celebrated by the two Metropolitan Archbishops, three bishops seven archimandrites with the participation as well of numerous representatives of the Georgian clergy. At the consummation of the ritual, upon the head of His Holiness Leonid was placed the ancient patriarchal mitre, made of beaten gold, and set with gems. While the archdeacon Salaridze intoned the "Axios (worthy)", thrice repeated by the whole assembly.

His Holiness Patriarch Leonid, who in general is a highly talented orator, upon this occasion was exceptionally eloquent, and pronounced a brilliant oration in token of thankfulness, wherein he took a solemn oath to devote himself wholly to the defence of the interests of the church of his dear country.

At the conclusion of the service, which lasted until 2 P. M., His Holiness, Patriarch Leonid, on coming out from the cathedral received the congratulations of the whole people. The first to express his good wishes was the Speaker of Parliament, then the representative of the Minister of Justice. Then there offered their congratulations the representatives of England, France, Aderbeijan, of the Mountain Government, Poland, Lithuania, of the Balkan Slavs, the railroad clergy, who presented the Patriarch with a magnificent crozier, the nuns of the monastery of St. Nina at Bodbe, who offered him an ikon painted by themselves, and others.

The Patriarch thanked all the representatives separately, pointing out incidentally that the English race had always been distinguished by extreme religious sentiment and high moral qualities.

The speech of the Patriarch in answer was translated into English by the pastor of the Sion Cathedral Kapan-dze, who was for 12 years a missionary in the United States.

His Holiness then blessed the troops and went to the patriarchal chambers, where a lunch for 300 guests was laid. The meal was marked by great friendliness. The toastmaster R. Ingilo (a member of the Patriarchal Council) infused great life and amusement into the affair.

A whole series of brilliant speeches were made which concerned the church and the political situation.

Colonel Chardigny proved himself a brilliant orator, and at once won the sympathy of those who were present. G. Gvazava, one of the members of the Patriarchal Council, answered him in French. The toasts in honor of the Georgian army and the Allies were greeted with general enthusiasm, and were accompanied by the singing of the national hymn with an orchestral accompaniment.

The lunch lasted until 5 P. M., when, according to tradition, His Holiness went to the monastery of Mtskheta, where he prayed in the church of St. Nina.

At 7 P. M. His Holiness together with the clergy returned in his special train to Tiflis.

Elections to the Constitutional Assembly.

The elections to the Constitutional Assembly are finished. There are only lacking the figures from two or three districts to make up the final returns. It is already clear that the majority of the deputies will belong to the Social-Democratic party. Out of the total of 130 deputies, this party will have not less than 100. More than 400,000 votes were cast for it.

Events in Akhaltsikh.

The troops of the Georgian Republic marched into the district of Akhaltsikh March 5; after having occupied the district of Atskhur, they are marching on the town of Akhaltsikh. The enemy has been forced out of his positions and is retreating. Our losses are slight. The Turkish bands have been unable to establish any sort of order in the district, where robbery and anarchy are in full sway. The population not only offers no resistance to the Georgian troops, but is glad to be rid of the tyranny of the Turkish bands.

According to the latest despatch received in Tiflis, the Georgian troops have occupied Akhaltsikh. The enemy withdrew from the town.

The Georgian-Armenian Conference.

Not long since a conference took place in Tiflis between the representatives of the Republics of Georgia and Armenia. At this meeting a number of questions were taken up by mutual agreement which have to do with the relations between the two republics, such as, for example, regarding free transit, the abolishment of hindrances for travellers, the regulation of the movement of trains, postal and telegraph communications, the resumption of diplomatic relations and the like.

The recent Armeno-Georgian war brought about an entirely abnormal state of affairs between the two republics, whose interests are so closely united with each other and also with those of the other Caucasian republics. As warm partisans of friendship and solidarity among the peoples and the republics of the Caucasus, we greet



heartily the first attempt towards renewing normal relations between Georgia and Armenia, and feel sure that this conference will lead to the strengthening of those warm and friendly relations which are so essential for the interest of both parties.

The Conference of the local eroba boards of the Georgian Republic.

A week ago a congress of representatives of the local eroba boards of Georgia met in Tiflis, at which a decision was reached regarding all important questions concerning local self-government.

THE CAUCASUS.

Governmental crisis in Aderbeijan.

The governmental crisis, in the Republic of Aderbeijan has been dragging on for more than a week. The cabinet of Khankhoiski has resigned. Parliament has empowered its speaker to pick out some one to select a new cabinet. The latter has as yet not been formed.

In the Armenian Parliament.

There took place in the Armenian Parliament a bitter attack of the socialist opposition on the governmental party of the «Dashnaksutun». The opposition blamed the Government for not having been capable of forming a governmental machine, of establishing order, of making a fight against crime and so on.

The Armenian Constitutional Assembly.

It is proposed to call together a Constitutional Assembly in Armenia on the basis of a general democratic election.

Withdrawal of the Staff and detachments of the Volunteer Army from Baku.

By the order of the commander of the British forces, the staff and detachments of the Volunteer Army have left Baku and moved to Petrovsk and to the Transcaucasian District.

THE GEORGIAN HUMOUR.

The Pious Sinner *).

There was a man who did all sorts of evil; in the leisure he had from ill-doing he began to pray and weep; he was most devout. An angel appeared to him and said: «For thy wicked deeds the Lord has denied thee Heaven, but since thou art so devout He will give thee all thou prayest for, excepting Heaven».

The man answered him thus: «If I may by no means go to Heaven, but any other request of mine will be fulfilled, let God make me so big that there will be no room in Hell for anybody but me». God could not do this, so He let him go to Heaven.

The Bitterest and the Sweetest Dish.

A king commanded his vizier: «Go, bring me the sweetest food there is on land or sea». The vizier went out, bought a tongue, cooked it, and gave it to the king to eat; it pleased him. Another day he bade him bring the bitterest of all foods in the world. He went, bought a tongue again and gave it to him. The King said: «I asked a bitter dish, thou hast brought me a tongue; I asked a sweet dish, then too thou broughtest me a tongue!» The vizier answered: «I swear it by thy head, that in all the earth there is nought sweeter than the tongue and nought bitterer».

The Mountaineer and the Walnut-tree.

There was a dweller in the mountains who had never seen a fruit garden. He came down into the plain, saw such a garden, went in and looked at all kinds of fruit trees and vegetables; everything greatly pleased him; he gave thanks to God saying: «Thou hast done all things well, but this alone is not well that Thou hast made a mean herb bring forth melons, while a great tree bears walnuts!» He wandered hither and thither, and then fell asleep under a walnut tree. A raven flew up, perched on the tree and knocked down a nut which fell on the man's brow and bruised him. Thereupon he arose and said: «O, Lord! Thou hast done all things for the best; if the fruit on the tree had been a melon it would have smashed my head».

*) From the Georgian «Book of Wisdom and Lies» by Sulikhan Orbeliani (1655-1725), translation by Oliver Wardrop.

The man and the Bear.

A man and a bear became friends. The man invited the bear to his house and made a feast for him; when the bear took his leave and went away, the man kissed him, and made his wife do the same. She perceived the unpleasant odour of the bear, and said: «I am not fond of guests with stinking mouths». The bear then departed. Afterwards the man went out to the forest and took an axe with him to cut firewood. The bear came thither and greeted the man after his fashion; then he said to him: «Strike me on the head and wound me». The man refused, but the bear insisted, so he struck him with the axe and broke his head. The bear went away into the woods, and the man went home. When they met about a month later, the bear said to him: «The wound thou gavest me with the axe is healed, but my heart, wounded by thy wife's tongue, is still sore».

THE THEATRES.

The Georgian opera.

Ever since the rebirth of our country, the national talents seem to have struck fresh root and to be giving new and vigorous shoots under the inspiring influence of freedom. Poets Georgia has always had, for even darkness and oppression cannot prevent a bard from singing his complaint, but music has remained in the background. At the present time, however, two Georgian operas are being produced in Tiflis with equal success.

Last week I said something about «Absalom and Esther»: today a few words about Mr. D. Arakishvili's «Shota Rustaveli» will not be amiss. Thanks to Miss Marjory Wardrop's beautiful translation of Shota Rustaveli's poem, «The Man in the Tiger's

Skin», many Englishmen are well acquainted with this splendid poem of the 12-th century. I will say only a few words in this place regarding his life as it is set forth in the opera, where romance and fantasy have come to the aid of too laconic history.

Shota lived in the days of the great queen Tamara (Tamar the King, as she is called among the Georgians). He was her devoted slave, her bard and her platonic lover. As a reward for the magnificent poem which he dedicated to her, the queen crowned him with the plumed cap we see in all his pictures, presented him with a sword and a gold-embroidered garment—in fact, made him a noble.

The poet, however, had a wife whom he dearly loved. The latter lady had a lover, with nothing platonic about him, in the shape of her Arab servant Abdul. There comes into the plot a girl, Nina, once betrothed to Shota and then forsaken by him. She is disguised as a man, and the poet does not recognize her. She informs him about his wife's infidelity, and leads him away from the banqueting hall, where the queen and courtiers are feasting, back to his own house.

Desperate upon learning the infamous truth, he quits his home and takes refuge in a monastery, where he ends his days.

Such is the plot of the two acts with which Mr. Arakishvili has favored us. It is not long, but shows great beauty and poetic power. The lovely melodies are modelled and moulded by a master hand, and we can only regret that the curtain drops so soon upon the charming glimpse of the past which the author has given us. Mr. Arakishvili has also been presented with 10,000 rubles and the Georgian coat of arms as a decoration. We await his next piece with eagerness, anticipating fresh pleasure for ourselves and a fresh success for him.

Elisabeth Orbeliani.

AMUSEMENTS.

OPERA HOUSE:

Monday, 10 March.—Benefice for Georgian Invalids—„SHOTA RUSTAVELI“, opera in 2 acts by D. Arakishvili; Ballet from „Prince Igor“; the united Military Orchestras.

Tuesday, 11 March.—„ABESSALOM and ETERI“, opera by Z. Paliashvili.

Wednesday, 12 March.—„GHEISHA“—comical opera, player M-me Sabaneeff.

Thursday, 13 March.—„MANON“ player M-me Sabaneeff.

Saturday, 15 March.—„OTELLO“.

Sunday, 16 March.—„PIKOVAIA DAMA“—morning performance; „FAUST“—evening performance.