

MISCELLANEOUS.

LAMENTATIONS OF A TURKISH PROPHET.*

BY TEWFIK FIKRET BEY.

[The reform party of Turkey, known to-day as the "Young Turks," consider this the greatest poem of their greatest modern poet. Tewfik Fikret Bey, this Turkish Jeremiah, wrote it in 1900 in despair at the sad condition of his country. For years he lived in seclusion in constant danger of exile or death. He could not publish the poem, but he lent a copy to one friend, who passed it to another, until all Young Turkey knew by heart this sad and scathing condemnation of the Old Regime. When the revolution came, turning the poet's despair to brightest hope, Fikret Bey was at once called to edit a new Young Turk paper in Constantinople, and in the first number he published this poem together with a retraction in verse. The translator has followed the versification very closely, using the rhymed couplet, and a meter as close as possible to the Turkish meter.]

A cloud holds thy horizon in clinging embrace;
An obscurity white slowly grows o'er thy face,
Blotting out and absorbing, the mist's heavy net
Veils the scene, as with dust, to a faint silhouette—
A majestic dust veil, what lies 'neath this robe—
By its folds is concealed—our regard cannot probe.
But thee, oh how fitly do sad veils conceal,
Arena of horrors, fit nought should reveal.
Arena of horrors, yea, majesty's stage;
O glorious setting for tragedy's rage!
Thou of greatness and pomp at once cradle and grave,
Queen eternally luring, the Orient thy slave;
What bloody amours with no shuddered protest
Have been held to thy generous harlot breast.
Oh within the deep Marmora's azure embrace,
As one dead sleepest thou, whilst her waves thee enlance.
Old Byzance! still thou keepest, immune to all harm,
After husbands a thousand, thy fresh virgin charm.
Thy beauty the magic of youth still retains,
The trembling of eyes seeing thee yet remains.
To the eye of the stranger how lookest thou tame,
With thy languorous sapphire-blue eyes, oh how tame!
But the tameness is that of the woman of shame,
Without dole for the tears shed o'er thee, o'er thy fame.

* Translated from the Turkish by Hester D. Jenkins.

As though sapping thy very foundations in gloom,
 A traitor hand added the poison of doom.
 O'er each particle spreadeth hypocrisy's stain;
 No one spot of purity there doth remain;
 All stain: of hypocrisy, jealousy, greed,
 Naught else, and no hopes of aught else hence proceed.
 Of the millions of foreheads protected by thee,
 How few shining clearly and pure, may one see?
 Thou Debauched of the Ages, sleep on till mists fail.
 Veil thyself, O thou Tragedy, O city, veil!

O country most fertile, to Nature's heart near,
 Though gifted, thou'rt hungry and barren and sear.
 Each favor, each bounty, each step in advance,
 Fatalistic, thou begg'st with hypocrisy's glance.
 O glories, magnificence, processions and splendor!
 O bloody towers, forts of turreted grandeur!
 Thou sealed tomb of memories, temple so vast;
 Ye proud-rearing columns, the city's great past.
 Thou recountest and readst to the future her part,
 Giant keeper of records each pillar thou art.
 Thou toothlessly grinning procession of walls;
 Ye cupolas; glorious mosques where prayer calls;
 Minarets, that remind of the voices of truth!
 O medressehs,* and tiny courts low like a booth.
 Ye tombstones that cry, "'Tis the Dead that are Blest!"
 Are like beggars, a patient host finding your rest
 'Neath the cypress' deep shade on Eternal Earth's breast.
 O turbelhs,† what memories our senses thrill
 Of our ancestors, now lying silent and still.
 Old streets, struggling stream of dust and mud waves;
 Ye ruins, whose each hole of a dead event raves;
 O place of eternal deep sleep for the bad;
 O roofs, raven black, o'er a tumbling house sad;
 Thou'rt a dumb, standing sorrow, thy comrade in grief
 Is the tall mourning chimney, where storks hold their fief.
 Thou chimney, what bitterness sags in thy jowl;
 Hast forgotten to smoke, for long years dost but scowl.
 O ravening mouths who have swallowed all shames,
 On the clamorous belly's poisonous claims.
 O dog's howl! Thou being high-honored by reason,
 This voice of ingratitude blames thee in season.
 O tyranny brutal! O head, pressing foot!
 O stupid fanatic, who lickest the boot!
 O visions, assaulting the high vault of Heaven!
 O bad omen, star of ill augury given!
 O tears vainly shed, and smiles pregnant with fate,
 Those expressions of impotence—dark looks of hate!
 O Fear, armed Fear, to whose swift downfall go

* Medresseh, mosque school of theology.

† Turbelhs, the tombs of kings or great men in little kiosks.

From the widow and orphan each loud plaint of woe!
 Remembrance of honor, now sunk to a scoff,
 Servility's path points to Fortune far off.
 O laws but tradition! O tyranny, 'neath
 Whose oppression no safety nor right but to breathe!
 O justice, the courts have expelled thee for aye,
 Unredeemed is thy promise, thy lies only stay.
 People losing all power of emotion from fear,
 To you is aye stretched out suspicion's long ear.
 O mouths dumbly locked by the fear of the spy,
 Popularity wide brings but hate in full cry.
 To be Policy's slave, Sword and Pen, is your lot,
 O great Moral Law, e'en thy visage forgot.
 O crouching with fear, lowly hiding thy face,
 Ye nobles, ye people—a once honored race!
 O bent hoary head, thy companion thee shuns;
 Thou maid, and the youth that after thee runs;
 Thou mother abandoned, alas! broken heart;
 Ye children, lone, homeless, most sad is your part.
 Thou debauched of the Ages, sleep on 'till mists fail.
 Veil thyself, O thou Tragedy, O city, veil!

A MELBOURNE MEDIUM EXPOSED.

To the Editor of The Open Court:

In the May number of *The Open Court* appeared a communication from your pen under the heading of "The Ghost of a Living Person." A Melbourne medium, Charles Bailey, claimed to be controlled by the late Rev. W. H. Withrow while that gentleman was actually living in Toronto. During the last two months Charles Bailey has visited New Zealand giving seance meetings and inspirational addresses. Bailey claims to be controlled by four spirits, two of whom are Hindus who make use of him while in a trance to produce "apports" from India, Java and Australia. Live birds of diminutive size and eggs are said to be brought in a few seconds from those countries to New Zealand. Mats and silk shawls are also produced. The conditions under which Bailey produces these wonderful phenomena are a cabinet, darkness and a limited number of spiritualists and investigators,—generally no more than forty persons present, most of whom have paid five or ten shillings for admittance. Bailey's procedure is first to allow himself to be stripped and examined and then to enter a small cabinet where he goes into a trance and is controlled by a spirit who gives a short address and even answers questions through the medium. All this performance takes place in total darkness introduced by the usual singing of hymns. At the end of the address Bailey calls for the light to be turned on when he announces that he has apports to show—objects that evoke cries of wonderment from believers and skeptical remarks from the unconvinced. Since Bailey has been in New Zealand he has met with very severe criticism in the newspapers. Several of his seances did not come up to expectations owing in all probability to his fear of exposure. A very clever conjurer, Mr. Thomas W. Driver of Wellington, New Zealand, challenged Bailey to produce apports under rigid test conditions, Driver depositing £100 which he was prepared to forfeit if Bailey could pro-