

places at the tables on the pavement under the awning to enjoy the renewed life and motion, which, under the circumstances, was more attractive than any carnival. Unfortunately, this day happened to be a *prazdnik*, the anniversary of the Tsar's accession to the throne, and what was worse was that next day was one of the great church festivals, the Kazanski Ikoni Bozhe Materi, and the following day was Sunday. It was absurd that three holidays should immediately follow six days of strike. Many tradesmen, however, kept their shops open, and anything wanted could be obtained. All Batum was beflagged, and the garrison marched with flying colours and lively music to divine service to celebrate the day. But what was of most importance to us, the railway was still in the same forlorn state as before, and no one had any notion when a train would depart for Tiflis. Certainly we could now drive about and observe the exhibition of different types of Caucasian and Levantine peoples who moved through the streets, the beauty prize being deserved by the tall, broad-shouldered, graceful Georgians and Imeretians in their becoming costumes, which did full justice to the harmonious lines of the figure. And we could sit and enjoy the odour of the luxuriant vegetation which flourished round the pools in the Alexanderski Sad, where in the warm air the dark-green cypresses stood out in sharp outline against a cloudless sky.

But our only wish was to get to Tiflis, and still the railway station remained empty and desolate, constantly guarded by soldiers. The bridge over the Rion was blown up and the rails torn up at several places. One contingent of navvies after another was despatched from Batum and Tiflis to repair the line, but while work was proceeding in one section the rails were pulled up in another. When a long military train was sent off from Kutais for Poti it ran off the track before it reached the next station. Twenty-three persons were killed or severely injured. The damage here done to the line was cunningly contrived. The rails were left, and everything appeared to be in perfect order, but the iron bolts which held the rails to the sleepers had been removed. The engine and some