

which fortunately did not amount to more than seventy roubles. "It is best to lock the compartment," he said, and vanished in the darkness, never to return.

I made myself as comfortable as I could on the seat, lay and read a while by a smoking tallow candle, and then slept peacefully on a bench with my revolver handy. Stealthy and uncertain steps were heard sometimes round and underneath the carriage, and once some one sneaked up on to the back platform. At midnight a couple of men got in with a lantern and proceeded to make themselves at home as I had done; they were passengers for Nakichevan. A proper night's rest was accordingly an impossibility, and with the first break of dawn I got up, stepped out and walked along the platform to an open-air buffet, where I procured a glass of tea, with bread, *zakuska*, and grapes. I rather regretted that I had not travelled direct to Persia instead of skirting the outermost limits of the Caucasus, and passing through a corner of it inhabited by adventurers, outcasts, and ruffians.