

The Princess Rucsanda departed after once more kissing his hand. Her husband accompanied her to the door.

"Ah, have you arranged everything?" he asked, moving quickly towards his esquire who entered at that moment.

"Everything is ready."

"But will they come?"

"They will come."

At eventide came the news that on the next day, being Sunday, all the boyars were to assemble at the Metropolitan Church, where the Prince would be present to attend the Liturgy, and afterwards were to feast at the court.

Upon the arrival of Alexandru Voda divine service began; the boyars were all assembled. Contrary to his usual custom, Lapushneanu was dressed with regal splendour that day. He wore the crown of the Paleologs; over his long Polish tunic of crimson velvet, he wore a Turkish royal cloak. He carried no weapon except a small dagger, inlaid with gold; but between the fastenings of the tunic could be seen a shirt of mail.

After listening to divine service he descended from his stall, prostrated himself before the Icon, and approaching the shrine of St. John the New, bent forward with great humility and kissed the sacred relics. It is said that at that moment his face was very yellow, and that the saintly shrine shook.

Then once more ascending his stall, he turned to the boyars and said:

"Most noble boyars! From the time I assumed kingship until this day, I have shown myself harsh towards many: I have been cruel, severe, shedding much blood. Only God knows how hard this has been for me, and how I regret it, but you, boyars, know that I have only been constrained thereto by the desire to end the various quarrels and disputes which aimed at the disturbance of the country and my destruction. To-day the state of affairs is different. The boyars have come to their senses; they have realized that the flock cannot exist without a shepherd as the Saviour said: 'They were distressed and scattered as sheep not having a shepherd.' Most noble boyars! Let us henceforth live in peace, loving one another like brothers, for this is one of the ten commandments: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' and let us pardon one another, seeing that we are mortal, beseeching our Lord Jesus Christ"--here he made the sign of the cross--"to forgive us our daily trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us."

Having finished this disjointed speech, he passed to the centre of the church, and after prostrating himself once more turned towards the people in front, and to the right and to the left of him, saying:

"Pardon me, good people, and you also, most noble boyars!"

"May God forgive you, your Highness!" they all replied, except two young boyars who were standing lost in thought, hidden by a tomb near the door, where no one paid heed to them.

Lapushneanu left the church, bidding the boyars come and dine together with him; he mounted his horse and returned to the palace.

The people dispersed.

"What do you think of it?" said one of the boyars, who, we have seen, did not extend his pardon to Alexandru Voda.

"I advise you not to dine with him to-day," replied the other.