

RUSSIAN CLASSIC LITERATURE

FYODOR DOSTOYEVSKY

THE GAMBLER

Translated by *C. J. Hogarth*

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Вашему вниманию предлагается переводное издание одного из самых известных романов русского писателя Ф. М. Достоевского. Центральными темами произведения стали всепоглощающая страсть к азартной игре и актуальная для писателя проблема взаимоотношений между Россией и Европой. В основе сюжета лежат мучительные отношения между генеральской падчерицей Полиной и молодым учителем Алексеем, для которого игра из средства самоутверждения превращается в «ужасное наслаждение удачи, победы, могущества».

Английский перевод с русского языка, выполненный К. Д. Хогартом, снабжен постраничными комментариями. Книга адресована студентам языковых вузов, носителям языка и всем любителям русской классической литературы.

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This edition includes the English translation of “The Gambler” — one of the most celebrated novels by the Russian writer Fyodor Dostoyevsky. The central themes of this work are obsessive gambling and an important problem in the eye of Dostoyevsky, namely the complex relationship between Russia and Europe. The basis of the plot makes an excruciating affair between a General’s stepdaughter Polina and a young teacher Alexis, for whom the gambling transforms from a means of self-assertion into “a sort of fearful pleasure — the pleasure of success, of conquest, of power.”

The English translation of the novel made by C. J. Hogarth is complemented with footnotes. The book may be of interest to the University or College students who study English, the native English speakers and everyone who admires Russian Classic Literature.

LIFE AND WORKS OF FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY



Fyodor Mikhaylovich Dostoyevsky was born in Moscow in 1821 and got an excellent education despite unsuccessful situation of his family. His moving to St. Petersburg became the significant moment in the biography of the writer, the city of contrasts captured his soul forever which was reflected in his works, in the extraordinary mastery of depicting the city life.

He didn't serve even a year and in 1844 Dostoyevsky retired and refused from the hereditary rights of noble properties whereby literature became the only source of income for him. Within 1844–1845 he worked with enthusiasm on his first novel “Poor Folk” (it was written in an epistolary form), which caused a huge delight in the Petersburg representatives of the “natural school”, in particular a well-known critic V. G. Belinsky. Further Dostoyevsky wrote some stories (“The Double”, “Mr. Prokharchin”, “The Hostess”, etc.) in which he penetrated deeply into the psychology of man. This feature of creativity

of Dostoyevsky — the psychologism, the thinnest analysis of the depth of human characters –developed in his famous novels and made him one of the greatest world writers and philosophers.

In 1849 Dostoyevsky was arrested in connection with the “Petrashevsky’s case” because he failed to report about the distribution of the criminal “freethinking” letter of V. G. Belinsky to N. V. Gogol where all Russian reality was criticized. On penal servitude he spent four years, from 1850 till 1854, after this the exile followed, and only in 1859 the Russian officials allowed the writer to return to St. Petersburg. The period of the imprisonment and military service became the turning point in the life of the writer, it changed his life views and resulted in deep religiousness. It became the time of the rebirth of his creed and of the refusal of socialist ideals of the writer. His impressions of the exile Dostoyevsky expressed in the documentary story “Notes from the House of the Dead” (1861–1862) about life of the criminals. The concept of “good” human nature still remained here, but the writer found a more important aspect of the personality and human life and it was the material and spiritual freedom.

In 1861 the novel “Humiliated and Insulted” was published. It is about the tragedy of the “little

people” whose human dignity is offended by those in power.

In 1864 Dostoyevsky went abroad where he was carried away by a roulette, and experienced the continuous financial need. In 1866 he published one of the most known novels “Crime and Punishment” which reflected all his own difficult and contradictory way of his personal internal search.

Further he began to work on two novels — “The Idiot” (1868–1869) and “The Possessed” (“The Devils”) (1871–1872). The Duke Myshkin — the main character of the novel “The Idiot” — embodies the best noble human qualities and personifies an image of Jesus Christ. A criminal case of murder conceived by one of the activists of the revolutionary circle to consolidate his power and caused a great resonance in society became the basis of a plot of the novel “The Possessed”. From 1873 to 1881 Dostoyevsky published “A Writer’s Diary” in which his own reactionary (from the point of view of the populist intellectuals) political judgments and a sentimental appreciation to the idols of his youth (G. Sand, V. G. Belinsky) came face to face. This work represented a series of feuilletons, sketches and publicistic notes about actual problems of the day.

In 1880 his last novel “The Brothers Karamazov” was published. The main subject of this work is a thin border between the good and the evil. The story is about three brothers — Ivan, Alexey and Dmitry, each of whom tried to find for himself the answer to the basic philosophical questions — about the Prime Cause and sense of life, about human soul and God.

For many years the writer suffered from serious illnesses — an epilepsies, an emphysemas of lungs and a tuberculosis. His premature death in 1881 was the result of his grave fortune and intensive creative work.

Dostoyevsky’s creativity had a huge impact on the Russian and world cultures. The special concept — “dostoyevshchina” — connected with the name and works of the writer has two meanings: “a psychological analysis in Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s manner (with a touch of condemnation)” and “a spiritual unbalance, sharp and inconsistent experiences which are peculiar to the heroes of the novels of Fyodor Dostoyevsky”.

His works represent the social turmoils and spiritual transformations of mankind, they were translated into tens of languages, and Dostoyevsky is recognized as one of the most read writers of the world.

This edition includes a novel “The Gambler” written by Dostoyevsky in less than a month in 1866. This novel became partly autobiographical because during his trip abroad in 1865–1867 the writer himself experienced the intoxicating force of passion and all troubles from similar addictions. However, the author found force in his own soul to refuse from roulette forever, unlike his main character. So, the novel represents a history of the passion which became for the person not only the sense of game and not even the sense of life, but the only vital reality. The action takes place in the German resort town. Alexey Ivanovich — the main character — travels with the family of the retired general as the teacher of his children. The love of the game is directly connected with Alexey’s love to Polina, the stepdaughter of the general which had fallen in love with another man. For the sake of Polina the hero took up the dangerous way of the game, wishing to provide his beloved financial independence.

THE GAMBLER



I

At length I returned from two weeks leave of absence to find that my patrons had arrived three days ago in Roulettenberg¹. I received from them a welcome quite different to that which I had expected. The General eyed me coldly, greeted me in rather haughty fashion, and dismissed me to pay my respects to his sister. It was clear that from

¹ **Roulettenberg** — Wiesbaden, the city in southwest Germany. (Hereinafter — Editor's Note.)

somewhere money had been acquired. I thought I could even detect a certain shamefacedness in the General's glance. Maria Philipovna, too, seemed distraught, and conversed with me with an air of detachment. Nevertheless, she took the money which I handed to her, counted it, and listened to what I had to tell. To luncheon there were expected that day Mezentsov, a Frenchman, and an Englishman; for, whenever money was in hand, a banquet in Muscovite style was always given. Polina Alexandrovna, on seeing me, inquired why I had been so long away. Then, without waiting for an answer, she departed. Evidently this was not a mere accident, and I felt that I must throw some light upon matters. It was high time that I did so.

I was assigned a small room on the fourth floor of the hotel (for you must know that I belonged to the General's suite). So far as I could see, the party had already gained some notoriety in the place, which had come to look upon the General as a Russian nobleman of great wealth. Indeed, even before luncheon he charged me, among other things, to get two thousand-franc notes changed for him at the hotel counter, which put us in a position to be thought millionaires at all events for a week! Later, I was about to take Misha and Nadia for a

walk when a summons reached me from the staircase that I must attend the General. He began by deigning to inquire of me where I was going to take the children; and as he did so, I could see that he failed to look me in the eyes. He wanted to do so, but each time was met by me with such a fixed, disrespectful stare that he desisted in confusion. In pompous language, however, which jumbled one sentence into another, and at length grew disconnected, he gave me to understand that I was to lead the children altogether away from the Casino, and out into the park. Finally his anger exploded, and he added sharply:

“I suppose you would like to take them to the Casino to play roulette? Well, excuse my speaking so plainly, but I know how addicted you are to gambling. Though I am not your mentor, nor wish to be, at least I have a right to require that you shall not actually compromise me...”

“I have no money for gambling,” I quietly replied.

“But you will soon be in receipt of some,” retorted the General, reddening a little as he dived into his writing desk and applied himself to a memorandum book. From it he saw that he had 120 rubles of mine in his keeping.

“Let us calculate,” he went on. “We must translate these roubles into thalers. Here — take 100 thalers, as a round sum. The rest will be safe in my hands.”

In silence I took the money.

“You must not be offended at what I say,” he continued. “You are too touchy about these things. What I have said I have said merely as a warning. To do so is no more than my right.”

When returning home with the children before luncheon, I met a cavalcade of our party riding to view some ruins. Two splendid carriages, magnificently horsed, with *Mlle. Blanche*, Maria Philipovna, and Polina Alexandrovna in one of them, and the Frenchman, the Englishman, and the General in attendance on horseback! The passers-by stopped to stare at them, for the effect was splendid — the General could not have improved upon it. I calculated that, with the 4000 francs which I had brought with me, added to what my patrons seemed already to have acquired, the party must be in possession of at least 7000 or 8000 francs — though that would be none too much for *Mlle. Blanche*, who, with her mother and the Frenchman, was also lodging in our hotel. The latter gentleman was called by the lacqueys “*monsieur le comte*,” and *Mlle. Blanche*’s mother was dubbed “*madame la comtesse*.”¹ Perhaps in very truth they were *comte et comtesse*.

¹ *monsieur le comte... madame la comtesse* — (French)
Monsieur the Count... Madam the Countess

I knew that “*monsieur le comte*” would take no notice of me when we met at dinner, as also that the General would not dream of introducing us, nor of recommending me to the “*comte*.” However, the latter had lived awhile in Russia, and knew that the person referred to as an “*outchitel*”¹ is never looked upon as a bird of fine feather. Of course, strictly speaking, he knew me; but I was an uninvited guest at the luncheon — the General had forgotten to arrange otherwise, or I should have been dispatched to dine at the *table d’hôte*². Nevertheless, I presented myself in such guise that the General looked at me with a touch of approval; and, though the good Maria Philipovna was for showing me my place, the fact of my having previously met the Englishman, Mr. Astley, saved me, and thenceforward I figured as one of the company.

This strange Englishman I had met first in Prussia, where we had happened to sit *vis-à-vis*³ in a railway train in which I was travelling to overtake our party; while, later, I had run across him in France, and again in Switzerland — twice within the space of two weeks! To think, therefore,

¹ *outchitel* — (*Russian*) a teacher

² *table d’hôte* — (*French*) a general table, a table for everyone

³ *vis-à-vis* — (*French*) face to face

that I should suddenly encounter him again here, in Roulettenberg! Never in my life had I known a more retiring man, for he was shy to the pitch of imbecility, yet well aware of the fact (for he was no fool). At the same time, he was a gentle, amiable sort of an individual, and, even on our first encounter in Prussia I had contrived to draw him out, and he had told me that he had just been to the North Cape, and was now anxious to visit the fair at Nizhni Novgorod. How he had come to make the General's acquaintance I do not know, but, apparently, he was much struck with Polina. Also, he was delighted that I should sit next him at table, for he appeared to look upon me as his bosom friend.

During the meal the Frenchman was in great feather: he was discursive and pompous to every one. In Moscow too, I remembered, he had blown a great many bubbles¹. Interminably he discoursed on finance and Russian politics, and though, at times, the General made feints to contradict him, he did so humbly, and as though wishing not wholly to lose sight of his own dignity.

For myself, I was in a curious frame of mind. Even before luncheon was half finished I had asked

¹ **had blown a great many bubbles** — Russian proverb, meaning to be engaged in something useless, frivolous

myself the old, eternal question: "WHY do I continue to dance attendance upon the General, instead of having left him and his family long ago?" Every now and then I would glance at Polina Alexandrovna, but she paid me no attention; until eventually I became so irritated that I decided to play the boor.

First of all I suddenly, and for no reason whatever, plunged loudly and gratuitously into the general conversation. Above everything I wanted to pick a quarrel with the Frenchman; and, with that end in view I turned to the General, and exclaimed in an overbearing sort of way — indeed, I think that I actually interrupted him — that that summer it had been almost impossible for a Russian to dine anywhere at *tables d'hote*. The General bent upon me a glance of astonishment.

"If one is a man of self-respect," I went on, "one risks abuse by so doing, and is forced to put up with insults of every kind. Both at Paris and on the Rhine, and even in Switzerland — there are so many Poles, with their sympathisers, the French, at these *tables d'hote* that one cannot get a word in edgewise if one happens only to be a Russian."

This I said in French. The General eyed me doubtfully, for he did not know whether to be angry or merely to feel surprised that I should so far forget myself.

“Well then, someone must have taught you a lesson somewhere,” said the Frenchman in a careless, contemptuous sort of tone.

“In Paris, too, I had a dispute with a Pole,” I continued, “and then with a French officer who supported him. After that a section of the Frenchmen present took my part. They did so as soon as I told them the story of how once I threatened to spit into Monsignor’s coffee.”

“To spit into it?” the General inquired with grave disapproval in his tone, and a stare of astonishment, while the Frenchman looked at me unbelievably.

“Just so,” I replied. “You must know that, on one occasion, when, for two days, I had felt certain that at any moment I might have to depart for Rome on business, I repaired to the Embassy of the Holy Set in Paris, to have my passport visaed. There I encountered a sacristan of about fifty, and a man dry and cold of mien. After listening politely, but with great reserve, to my account of myself, this sacristan asked me to wait a little. I was in a great hurry to depart, but of course I sat down, pulled out a copy of ‘*L’Opinion nationale*’¹, and fell to reading an extraordinary piece of invective against Russia

¹ “*L’Opinion nationale*” — the daily political newspaper, published in Paris from 1859 till 1914.

which it happened to contain. As I was thus engaged I heard some one enter an adjoining room and ask for Monsignor; after which I saw the sacristan make a low bow to the visitor, and then another bow as the visitor took his leave. I ventured to remind the good man of my own business also; whereupon, with an expression of, if anything, increased dryness, he again asked me to wait. Soon a third visitor arrived who, like myself, had come on business (he was an Austrian of some sort); and as soon as ever he had stated his errand he was conducted upstairs! This made me very angry. I rose, approached the sacristan, and told him that, since Monsignor was receiving callers, his lordship might just as well finish off my affair as well. Upon this the sacristan shrunk back in astonishment. It simply passed his understanding that any insignificant Russian should dare to compare himself with other visitors of Monsignor's! In a tone of the utmost effrontery, as though he were delighted to have a chance of insulting me, he looked me up and down, and then said: "Do you suppose that Monsignor is going to put aside his coffee for YOU?" But I only cried the louder: "Let me tell you that I am going to SPIT into that coffee! Yes, and if you do not get me my passport visaed this very minute, I shall take it to Monsignor myself."

“What? While he is engaged with a Cardinal?” screeched the sacristan, again shrinking back in horror. Then, rushing to the door, he spread out his arms as though he would rather die than let me enter.

Thereupon I declared that I was a heretic and a barbarian — “*Je suis hérétique et barbare*,”¹ I said, and that these archbishops and cardinals and monsignors, and the rest of them, meant nothing at all to me. In a word, I showed him that I was not going to give way. He looked at me with an air of infinite resentment. Then he snatched up my passport, and departed with it upstairs. A minute later the passport had been visaed! Here it is now, if you care to see it,” — and I pulled out the document, and exhibited the Roman visa.

“But...” the General began.

“What really saved you was the fact that you proclaimed yourself a heretic and a barbarian,” remarked the Frenchman with a smile. “*Cela n’était pas si bête*.”²

“But is that how Russian subjects ought to be treated? Why, when they settle here they dare not

¹ *Je suis hérétique et barbare* — (French) I am a heretic and barbarian.

² *Cela n’était pas si bête*. — (French) It wasn’t so stupid.

utter even a word — they are ready even to deny the fact that they are Russians! At all events, at my hotel in Paris I received far more attention from the company after I had told them about the fracas with the sacristan. A fat Polish nobleman, who had been the most offensive of all who were present at the *table d'hôte*, at once went upstairs, while some of the Frenchmen were simply disgusted when I told them that two years ago I had encountered a man at whom, in 1812, a French 'hero' fired for the mere fun of discharging his musket. That man was then a boy of ten and his family are still residing in Moscow."¹

"Impossible!" the Frenchman spluttered. "No French soldier would fire at a child!"

"Nevertheless the incident was as I say," I replied. "A very respected ex-captain told me the story, and I myself could see the scar left on his cheek."

The Frenchman then began chattering volubly, and the General supported him; but I recommended the former to read, for example, extracts from the memoirs of General Perovski, who, in 1812, was a prisoner in the hands of the French. Finally Maria Philipovna said something to interrupt the conversation. The General was furious with me for having

¹ The character talks about events which occurred during the War of 1812.

started the altercation with the Frenchman. On the other hand, Mr. Astley seemed to take great pleasure in my brush with Monsieur, and, rising from the table, proposed that we should go and have a drink together. The same afternoon, at four o'clock, I went to have my customary talk with Polina Alexandrovna; and, the talk soon extended to a stroll. We entered the Park, and approached the Casino, where Polina seated herself upon a bench near the fountain, and sent Nadia away to a little distance to play with some other children. Misha also I dispatched to play by the fountain, and in this fashion we — that is to say, Polina and myself — contrived to find ourselves alone.

Of course, we began by talking on business matters. Polina seemed furious when I handed her only 700 gulden, for she had thought to receive from Paris, as the proceeds of the pledging of her diamonds, at least 2000 gulden, or even more.

“Come what may, I **MUST** have money,” she said. “And get it somehow I will — otherwise I shall be ruined.”

I asked her what had happened during my absence.

“Nothing; except that two pieces of news have reached us from St. Petersburg. In the first place, my grandmother is very ill, and unlikely to last

another couple of days. We had this from Timothy Petrovitch himself, and he is a reliable person. Every moment we are expecting to receive news of the end.”

“All of you are on the tiptoe of expectation?” I queried.

“Of course — all of us, and every minute of the day. For a year-and-a-half now we have been looking for this.”

“Looking for it?”

“Yes, looking for it. I am not her blood relation, you know — I am merely the General’s step-daughter. Yet I am certain that the old lady has remembered me in her will.”

“Yes, I believe that you WILL come in for a good deal,” I said with some assurance.

“Yes, for she is fond of me. But how come you to think so?”

I answered this question with another one. “That Marquis of yours,” I said, “— is he also familiar with your family secrets?”

“And why are you yourself so interested in them?” was her retort as she eyed me with dry grimness.

“Never mind. If I am not mistaken, the General has succeeded in borrowing money of the Marquis.”

“It may be so.”

“Is it likely that the Marquis would have lent the money if he had not known something or other about your grandmother? Did you notice, too, that three times during luncheon, when speaking of her, he called her ‘la baboulenka’¹? What loving, friendly behaviour, to be sure!”

“Yes, that is true. As soon as ever he learnt that I was likely to inherit something from her he began to pay me his addresses. I thought you ought to know that.”

“Then he has only just begun his courting? Why, I thought he had been doing so a long while!”

“You KNOW he has not,” retorted Polina angrily. “But where on earth did you pick up this Englishman?” She said this after a pause.

“I KNEW you would ask about him!” Whereupon I told her of my previous encounters with Astley while travelling.

“He is very shy,” I said, “and susceptible. Also, he is in love with you.”

“Yes, he is in love with me,” she replied.

“And he is ten times richer than the Frenchman. In fact, what does the Frenchman possess? To me it seems at least doubtful that he possesses anything at all.”

¹ *la baboulenka* — (*Russian*) dear little Grandmother

“Oh, no, there is no doubt about it. He does possess some *château*¹ or other. Last night the General told me that for certain. NOW are you satisfied?”

“Nevertheless, in your place I should marry the Englishman.”

“And why?” asked Polina.

“Because, though the Frenchman is the handsomer of the two, he is also the baser; whereas the Englishman is not only a man of honour, but ten times the wealthier of the pair.”

“Yes? But then the Frenchman is a marquis, and the cleverer of the two,” remarked Polina imperturbably.

“Is that so?” I repeated.

“Yes, absolutely.”

Polina was not at all pleased at my questions; I could see that she was doing her best to irritate me with the *brusquerie*² of her answers. And I took the notice of this.

“It amuses me to see you grow angry,” she continued. “However, inasmuch as I allow you to indulge in these questions and conjectures, you ought to pay me something for the privilege.”

¹ *château* — (French) a castle

² *brusquerie* — (French) brusqueness, abruptness

“I consider that I have a perfect right to put these questions to you,” was my calm retort; “for the reason that I am ready to pay for them, and also care little what becomes of me.”

Polina giggled.

“Last time you told me — when on the Shlangenberg — that at a word from me you would be ready to jump down a thousand feet into the abyss. Some day I may remind you of that saying, in order to see if you will be as good as your word. Yes, you may depend upon it that I shall do so. I hate you because I have allowed you to go to such lengths, and I also hate you and still more — because you are so necessary to me. For the time being I want you, so I must keep you.”

Then she made a movement to rise. Her tone had sounded very angry. Indeed, of late her talks with me had invariably ended on a note of temper and irritation — yes, of real temper.

“May I ask you who is this *Mlle. Blanche*?” I inquired (since I did not wish Polina to depart without an explanation).

“You KNOW who she is — just *Mlle. Blanche*. Nothing further has transpired. Probably she will soon be Madame General — that is to say, if the rumours that Grandmamma is nearing her end should prove true. *Mlle. Blanche*, with her mother

and her *cousin*, the Marquis, know very well that, as things now stand, we are ruined.”

“And is the General at last in love?”

“That has nothing to do with it. Listen to me. Take these 700 florins, and go and play roulette with them. Win as much for me as you can, for I am badly in need of money.”

So saying, she called Nadia back to her side, and entered the Casino, where she joined the rest of our party. For myself, I took, in musing astonishment, the first path to the left. Something had seemed to strike my brain when she told me to go and play roulette. Strangely enough, that something had also seemed to make me hesitate, and to set me analysing my feelings with regard to her. In fact, during the two weeks of my absence I had felt far more at my ease than I did now, on the day of my return; although, while travelling, I had moped like an imbecile, rushed about like a man in a fever, and actually beheld her in my dreams. Indeed, on one occasion (this happened in Switzerland, when I was asleep in the train) I had spoken aloud to her, and set all my fellow-travellers laughing. Again, therefore, I put to myself the question: “Do I, or do I not love her?” and again I could return myself no answer or, rather, for the hundredth time I told myself that I detested her. Yes, I detested her; there

were moments (more especially at the close of our talks together) when I would gladly have given half my life to have strangled her! I swear that, had there, at such moments, been a sharp knife ready to my hand, I would have seized that knife with pleasure, and plunged it into her breast. Yet I also swear that if, on the Shlangenberg, she had REALLY said to me, "Leap into that abyss," I should have leapt into it, and with equal pleasure. Yes, this I knew well. One way or the other, the thing must soon be ended. She, too, knew it in some curious way; the thought that I was fully conscious of her inaccessibility, and of the impossibility of my ever realising my dreams, afforded her, I am certain, the keenest possible pleasure. Otherwise, is it likely that she, the cautious and clever woman that she was, would have indulged in this familiarity and openness with me? Hitherto (I concluded) she had looked upon me in the same light that the old Empress did upon her servant — the Empress who hesitated not to unrobe herself before her slave¹, since she did not account a slave a man. Yes, often Polina must have taken me for something less than a man!

Still, she had charged me with a commission — to win what I could at roulette. Yet all the time I

¹ Allusion to the legends about Cleopatra.

could not help wondering why it was so necessary for her to win something, and what new schemes could have sprung to birth in her ever-fertile brain. A host of new and unknown factors seemed to have arisen during the last two weeks. Well, it behoved me to divine them, and to probe them, and that as soon as possible. Yet not now: at the present moment I must repair to the roulette-table.

II

I confess I did not like it. Although I had made up my mind to play, I felt averse to doing so on behalf of some one else. In fact, it almost upset my balance, and I entered the gaming rooms with an angry feeling at my heart. At first glance the scene irritated me. Never at any time have I been able to bear the flunkeyishness which one meets in the Press of the world at large, but more especially in that of Russia, where, almost every evening, journalists write on two subjects in particular namely, on the splendour and luxury of the casinos to be found in the Rhine towns, and on the heaps of gold which are daily to be seen lying on their tables. Those journalists are not paid for doing so: they write thus merely out of a spirit of disinterested

complaisance. For there is nothing splendid about the establishments in question; and, not only are there no heaps of gold to be seen lying on their tables, but also there is very little money to be seen at all. Of course, during the season, some madman or another may make his appearance — generally an Englishman, or an Asiatic, or a Turk — and (as had happened during the summer of which I write) win or lose a great deal; but, as regards the rest of the crowd, it plays only for petty gulden, and seldom does much wealth figure on the board.

When, on the present occasion, I entered the gaming-rooms (for the first time in my life), it was several moments before I could even make up my mind to play. For one thing, the crowd oppressed me. Had I been playing for myself, I think I should have left at once, and never have embarked upon gambling at all, for I could feel my heart beginning to beat, and my heart was anything but cold-blooded. Also, I knew, I had long ago made up my mind, that never should I depart from Roulettenberg until some radical, some final, change had taken place in my fortunes. Thus, it must and would be. However ridiculous it may seem to you that I was expecting to win at roulette, I look upon the generally accepted opinion concerning the folly and the