



# **GEORGIAN FOLK TALES**

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# **GEORGIAN FOLK TALES**

**BY**  
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## PREFACE

AS the first attempt to translate into English any part of the varied and interesting secular literature of the Georgian people, this little book may perhaps claim some attention from the public. A volume of sermons by Bishop Gabriel of Kutaïs was published by the Rev. S. C. Malan in 1867, but, with this single exception, I do not know of any other work in the Iberian tongue which has been offered to English readers. The state of comparative neglect into which Oriental studies in general have fallen of late among us, the rulers of the East, accounts, to some extent, for this fact; it is to be hoped that an improvement in this respect may soon be apparent.

Some years ago, a book written by my brother<sup>1</sup> first excited my interest in the Caucasus and its brave and beautiful inhabitants. A study of the classical literature, especially of the great epic poet, Shota Rusthaveli, of the twelfth century, has profitably occupied much of my time during the past two years, and it is my intention to give my countrymen an early opportunity of sharing in the pleasure I have derived therefrom.

As a relaxation from these more arduous studies, I amused myself by turning into English the originals of the following stories. I showed the manuscript to Dr. E. B. Tylor, who told me that it presented many features of interest to folklorists, and advised me to publish it; it is, therefore, fitting that I should dedicate the book to the creator of the modern science of anthropology, and he has kindly given me permission to do so.

The geographical position of Georgia, a region lying between East and West, forming a bridge along which a great part of the traffic in ideas as well as in commodities must pass, makes it a rich field of inquiry for the student. By their religious and political connection with Byzantium on the one hand, and by their constant intercourse with Persia and Turkey on the other, the Iberians have gained much from both Christendom and Islam, and among

<sup>1</sup> The Kingdom of Georgia: Notes of Travel in a Land of Women, Wine, and Song. To which are appended Historical, Literary, and Political Sketches, Specimens of the National Music, and a Compendious Bibliography, with Illustrations and Maps. By Oliver Wardrop. London: Sampson Low, 1888.













































































































































































































































































































































