

By Order of the Czar

A Story of Russian Power

By MARCUS EASTLAKE

CHAPTER VII.—(Continued.)

I grind my teeth in an excess of impotent fury. I clutch the air with a wolfish hunger to fly at the throat and crush the life out of this insignificant yet noxious reptile.

"Maruscha," I begin, "this Isajeff—has he ever accosted thee?"

She bends her looks to the ground, and I, intent on every sign her face may disclose, observe the vivid color rise, dyeing her neck, her cheeks, her brow. "I like not the man, Vladimir. He is an impudent fellow"—she hesitates. I grasp her arm almost savagely.

"Has he dared to speak to thee?" I gasp. "Tell me—tell me, what has he said? If he has insulted thee by so much as a look—a word—I will go now, at once, and tear the tongue from his throat!"

My vehement words are scarcely uttered ere I am regretting them, for I see the fear spring to her eyes. And now she will not tell me the truth. She laughs uneasily.

"Now see how thou takest things up!" she says. "For indeed there is none to tell. The man has always been civil to me, only giving me 'good-day' as I went and came, or passing a remark on the weather. It is only that I have taken an unreasonable antipathy to him—a quite unreasonable and unjustifiable antipathy, Vladimir. Thou knowest my strange temper! And thou art wrong," she continues, in nervous haste. "Assuredly thou art wrong that Isajeff has informed the police. Why should he? And how should he suspect—"

"He watched us leaving the lodging. He followed us along the colonnade. We both saw him as we mounted the droski to come here. He has driven after us—spied on us—"

"I will tell thee what I will do only—only give me time, Vladimir." She presses her hand to her side.

I am subdued. To soothe her, calm her, undo the mischief I have done is now my only thought.

"My sweet love, forgive me!" I beg. "I have frightened thee!"

She smothered bravely a storm of rising sobs, still holding me with both her small hands until she has sufficiently controlled herself to speak. "I need never go back to my lodging—he need never see me again," she begins, watching the effect of her words with wide eyes fastened on my face.

"Go back," I repeat, thrilling with apprehension at the emere suggestion. "Thou wilt go from here to Olga Petrovna's, and quit not her lodging save to go to the station and take train for thy home! St. Petersburg is no place for thee, Maruscha. Promise me that thou wilt leave it to-morrow never to return."

"I promise—but—but—I owe a week's lodging—I must give notice—my clothes!"

"And thou wouldst take into consideration such paltry matters where so much is at stake!" I cry, beside myself.

"Listen to reason, Vladimir," she falters. "If I pay not my landlord he will have an excuse for instituting a search for me. Thou art so violent that I cannot get in a word. I will go to Olga, and she will pay the money for me, and bring away my things."

"So that he can follow her and find thee! No, that will not do! And yet," I say, moderating my tone, "thou art perhaps right about the money"—I muse a moment, "then Olga must find someone else to pay it, and invent some lie. He must be led to expect my return. Say that thou hast been called away suddenly—to a dying relative!" I laugh grimly at the gibbness of my inventions. "She has been commissioned to take part of thy wardrobe to send after thee. Thou canst give her a line for the scoundrel to that effect."

"Yes, yes," Maruscha agrees eagerly. "That is well planned. And as proof that I am returning everything will be left standing in the room—my stove and all my belongings."

"Thou wilt be strong now as thou hast ever been, my brave one!" I say encouragingly. "Something tells me our parting will be brief. And I will write to thee as soon as I am over the frontier. Olga will forward my letters."

In a moment her features begin to work, and ere I am aware she has cast herself at my feet, and is clasping my knees.

"Thou canst not mean it, Vladimir!" she gasps. "Thou wouldst not drive me from thee before—before the last! And whither wouldst thou go to-night? Where wilt thou hide? Oh, leave me not in ignorance, or I shall go mad!"

"I will write whenever I can. But, Maruscha, I must also hear from thee. I will make for Luga first, write to me from thy home to the postoffice there."

"How shall I address thee?"

"Ah, yes, I forgot that I am nameless! I will keep the name that Ivan gave me to the landlord—it will do as well as any: 'Waldemar Nicolavitch Alikanoff.' Thou wilt remember?"

"Waldemar Nicolavitch Alikanoff," repeats Maruscha, slowly.

"And for heaven's sake, word thy letter carefully, so that it reaches me not, and the officials open it they will see nothing to make them suspect aught. I will observe the same caution in writing to thee, and will sign my assumed name."

"I will be careful," she murmurs, with another heart-broken sigh.

"And now, my own Maruscha, farewell until our next meeting—our joyful meeting to part never again! Think of

that, only that, my love, and the time will seem short."

Her arms are about my neck. I hear her laboring heart throb against mine. A long, last kiss. My anguished soul invokes the blessing on her that my quivering lips refuse to utter, and I tear myself away.

One look back I take to see her totter a few steps after me with arms outstretched, and stop. I wave my hand and flee as if lashed by furies from the sight of her agony—forward—onward—into darkness and uncertainty.

CHAPTER VIII.

Where am I? I halt and gaze around me in stupid bewilderment. The east is glimmering in cold, silver sheen, throwing an uncertain, mystic light on the faintly defined landscape. I look back along the straight, white road, with its tall telegraph posts starting up at regular intervals. A sudden flash like a golden needle pierces the dim distance.

A ball of gold begins to burn lower down on the horizon. They are the spire of the Admiralty and the dome of St. Isaac's in St. Petersburg, which I have left behind me. Can it be possible that I have come so far? It has been weary work trudging along that road!

I take out my handkerchief and wipe the drops from my face, with a woful stab of dolorous recollection of the touch of Maruscha's little fluttering, solicitous hands as she put the handkerchief into my pocket. In returning it my hand comes in contact with a parcel of sandwiches. Again Maruscha! I draw them forth, for I am ravenously hungry.

I eat with a vision of her as she stood at the table in Ivan's room, forgetful for the moment of her grief in ministering to my needs, her sweet, pale face downcast and absorbed.

At last I am treading the margin of the wood—am entering its stately aisles. And now that effort is no longer imperative, my limbs begin to yield under me. I stagger rather than walk, catching at the boles of the trees for support. Yet a few steps farther into the shade—a mist rises before my eyes. I lurch forward—prone on the ground, and become instantly oblivious.

An incessant tapping over my head is the first thing I am aware of. I open my eyes in vague curiosity and see the dark, interlacing branches of a pine tree above me, and lower down on the red stem a green woodpecker diligently at work.

From force of habit I insert my forefinger and thumb in the watch pocket which was wont to contain a watch, and am withdrawing it with a foolish, baffled laugh, when my finger comes in contact with some small object. I dive for it and pull up a watch key; but that is not all—it is tied with a bit of blue ribbon which is attached to something else. Another pull and I bring to light Maruscha's tiny watch!

It is there in the palm of my hand—the little toy of a thing she has worn at her girdle ever since I have known her. I gaze at it with such a mighty rush of emotion that my whole body thrills with a sharp shock of electricity.

I perceive that the tiny monitor I am gazing at points to the hour of five. I wind it up, and returning it to where the tender, subtle fingers had placed it in preparation of a surprise for me, scramble to my feet.

A long, profound sleep in the invigorating atmosphere of the sun-steeped pines has put new life into me. It is only my feet that are swollen and painful, and I hobble, rather than walk, to the margin of the wood. If I can but get a lift of any kind, I think I will take a bed at an inn for this one night to give my feet a chance of recovering. I stand and look up and down the interminable road.

In advance there is a long cavalcade of carts laden with firewood winding slowly into the distance, each with its attendant Mujik trudging beside it or seated on a shaft of his cart. Toward me a peddler's wagon lumbers on creaking wheels. Its owner sits nodding on the box, framed in the opening of the canvas tent that arches above him. The two little nags crawl along with drooping heads, as if they, too, were indulging in a nap. I take a good look at the peddler.

He is a middle-aged man, with a strong, grizzled beard and broad, Slav countenance. The nose in it is like a potato. There are good-natured creases about the corners of the eyes, so I take courage.

"Good day! God assist you!" I exclaim amicably.

The peddler instantly removes his cap, while a slow smile gradually spreads over and broadens his heavy features.

"God be with you, Gentle," he replies. "Whither are you bound?" I question.

"My destination is Kovno, but to-night I make halt at the village of Little Kolga."

"Ah, that is my way. Would you object to give me a lift for a compensation?"

"The Gentle will honor me!" The peddler leaps down from his seat with as much alacrity as his lumbering body and enormous boots will permit. "Would the Gentle like a seat on the front of the wagon, or would he prefer to recline on the merchandise?"

"With your permission, little father, I will get inside," I say.

As I advance to mount the wagon he remarks on the lameness of my gait. "The Gentle has hurt himself?" he observes.

"My boots cripple me somewhat," I reply carelessly,

"That is bad, if the Gentle has so far to go."

"I go to Luga. I am a student and have been sitting rather closely over my books, so I thought the walk through the country would clear my brains a little," I laugh.

"The Gentle is right," agrees the peddler. "There is nothing like the country air for bracing the wits, or helping one to think out a weighty matter. I make all my calculations in the open. The Gentle will feel the benefit of it even though he should be obliged to continue his journey by post from Little Kolga. He will still inhale the fresh air."

After this he relapses into silence and whips up his horses. When noontime comes I share his frugal repast and fall into a doze until at nightfall we reach the village of Little Kolga.

"Has the Gentle ever been to a hanging?"

I feel the blood rush tumultuously to my smooth-shaven, tell-tale face. "A hanging? I—hem—no, I have never seen a thing of the kind," I stammer.

"Perhaps the Gentle likes not such spectacles? I never miss a chance. I like to see perish the enemies of our father, the Czar."

The peddler lifts his cap. "When I last visited the city I went to see a hanging. There were five of them—five gallows in a row, and a man for each. Ah, that was a sight! There were thousands went to see it, and I went early and secured a good place. There is courage in us Russians even in the worst of us. We know how to meet death. They were traitors all, but they died like brave men. I assure you, rascals as they were, my heart glowed to witness how they died! There was one—what limbs the fellow had! He was nobly built, the dog, and he had a face as handsome as a saint. Such a beard! Such eyes, dark and burning! I could not take my eyes off the fellow. I saw only him all through the hanging. And when he spoke his words were like arrows: 'I repent not,' he said, the sinner, yet he was a brave one."

He looks straight before him as if conjuring up the scene and continues: "And what an affair that was! Shall I ever forget it? The rope broke ere he was finished. I was carried off my feet, for the populace in their rage rushed forward to effect a rescue. Surely the Noble must have heard of it?"

"Ah, well, I doubtless heard it spoken of at the time, but I take little interest in such things."

"No? Yet there are always students at the hangings. There were many at this one. There was one close to me went clean mad at the breaking of the rope, and made a rush, but the soldiers drove him back. He had his sweetheart with him, and she fainted. It is abominable that delicate women will go to see these sights! They scream and faint, and yet they like it. They will not stay away."

I answer nothing. I have an unpleasant feeling as of a rope being tightened about my neck, checking the free course of my breath. I take out my handkerchief and mop my face with it.

"The Gentle feels it warm under the cover," observes the peddler. "Will he not sit awhile in the front of the wagon for change of position?"

I gladly scramble to the front of the vehicle, where I sit crouched like a grasshopper, because of my height. The peddler regards me from head to foot with twinkling eyes, and at length breaks into a laugh.

"I crave pardon," he says, "but just such a frame had that sturdy rascal who perished on the gallows. Just such length of limb and breadth of shoulders; yet methinks he was stouter," still observing me critically. Then doubtless perceiving how I color under his fixed gaze he adds quickly: "The Noble has a splendid body, and so had the fellow I speak of, but there the resemblance ceases. God forbid that I should give offense!"

After this he relapses into silence and whips up his horses, for the light is fading from the sky in which the evening star is brightening. We soon begin to pass a smoke-stained cabin here and there by the roadside, and then a long, low wooden building, with benches and tables before the door, where we make halt. The peddler throws the reins on the horses' backs.

"I put up here," he says, "and I thank the Noble for his good company; there is good accommodation at the post station, not five minutes' walk from here."

I thank him for his kindness and slip a rouble into his hand. He begins to expostulate, but with a "good-night" and a wave of my hat, I turn from him to ascend the unpaved, straggling street which constitutes Little Kolga.

(To be continued.)

Convincing the Barometer.

Sir Archibald Geikie tells a story in his book, "Scottish Reminiscences," which he says is characteristic of the simplicity of some of the Scots. It concerns a farmer in the Cheviot Hills who had been told that it would be useful to have a barometer in the house, for it would let him know whether the weather would be good or bad.

After he had been persuaded to buy an aneroid barometer, which has a large round dial, he hung it up in his hall, and duly consulted it each day, but without much edification.

At last there came a spell of wet weather. The barometer continued to record, "set fair." The rain continued to fall heavily, and still the dial made no sign of truth. Then the farmer's temper rose.

He took the instrument from the nail and marched with it to the bottom of the garden, where a brook, swollen with the drainage from the upper slopes, was rushing along, brown and muddy. He plunged the barometer into the flood.

"Will you believe your ain een now, then!" he cried, angrily.

NEWEST SCRAP BOOKS.

Latest Scheme for the Consolation of Widows and Orphans.

Among the strange callers at a house of mourning, people to whom casual death is a profit, there is one visitor of a totally new kind. He is neither monument agent nor insurance adjuster, promoter of a widows' stock company, nor, in fact, any of the old conventional types. He usually requests an interview with the head of the family, says the New York Post.

"Madam, I am sorry to trouble you so soon after your great bereavement, but the matter requires prompt action and doubtless it will be a solace to you in later years."

"I do not understand you, sir."

"Why, madam, our firm has already sent you a letter or two in reference to the matter. Of course, in the stress of sorrow—Ah, I see you recollect—an enduring memento of your loved one, an album containing the many and interesting newspaper accounts of your husband's honorable career."

"He was not a public character," the widow may object.

"My dear madam, the notices show the contrary. I assure you that we can prepare a very neat and extensive book of press clippings. It will be elegant. It will be quite correct; a lasting source of pride and joy to your family. I may say that the best families—"

"But only newspaper notices?"

"Not at all, madam. We appreciate and respect, therefore embody in our album or scrapbook all mementoes pertaining to this sacred subject. That is, letters from friends, business, letterheads, locks of hair, souvenirs of birthplace, medals, diplomas, insignias of benevolent and secret societies and lodges, photographs and everything that indicates the honors gained by the deceased."

"My husband asked for a fine monument and I have ordered it," replied a widow recently at such a stage of the negotiations, "but I do not think I could afford an album."

"We have them at every price," answered the visitor triumphantly. "For \$5 we will furnish you a neat book of clippings, or for \$10 a handsomely bound volume. Of course, we have them to cost hundreds of dollars. The widow of Senator ——— ordered one at \$300, but the cheaper ones are no less comforting as essential tokens."

"Please excuse me to-day, sir. Perhaps I will send you my order next week."

"Oh, that is impossible. I said prompt action was necessary. You see the obituaries and eulogies of your husband are appearing in the current press and a few days' delay might prevent any one from making a complete collection of them."

It is a hard-hearted widow who will not yield to these deft persuasions, especially since the cost of the pious memento is on a sliding scale. To some of them it seems as if a new avenue for the expression of affection and sentiment had been opened by the mortuary scrapbook. It is a novelty, and it is an art. It is a monument not inferior to that in Greenwood, or perchance the costly funeral urn upon the mantel. Mounted coffin plates may do for the old-fashioned and cardboard replicas for the mechanic class, but a mourner of standing assuredly needs the desideratum of the Senator's widow. It may be some skeptical relief desires to know in just how and what esteem her lord was held by the community as shown in the newspaper notices; woman's curiosity accounts for many things.

All by Yourself.

Therefore, remember that all the good you accomplish is going to come out of yourself. You cannot borrow it and you cannot make it out of that which has been poured into you by education or otherwise. All that you receive is only a certain quantity of knowledge, acquired by education, experience or other training, which will have a certain influence upon what comes out of yourself as your own. It is the inherent capacity to perform with your own brain which will make you what you become, and not the mere transmission of that which you have acquired. Your knowledge, therefore, is of little avail until you make it inherently a part of yourself through mental assimilation and utilization.

The clearer you comprehend these things, the more readily you can make use of them as against the process of mere acquirement with a vague motive that in some way or other what you acquire may be of benefit, or that environment will be the force that makes your talent effective. Some have gone through experience without acquiring it, and many a man who has received an education has not got any because he allowed it to be a thing apart from his personality and it slipped away.—Electrical Review.

Easily Satisfied.

Hostess—What part of the chicken will you have, Willie?

Willie—Either half. I'm not particular.—Detroit Free Press.

The average man thinks that while he does not personally know the president and other distinguished men, they "know of him."

HOPE FOR THE SICK



A VICTIM OF LA GRIPPE.

Mrs. Henrietta A. S. Marsh, 769 W. 18th St., Los Angeles, Cal., President Woman's Benevolent Ass'n, writes:

"I suffered with la grippe for seven weeks, and nothing I could do or take helped me until I tried Peruna."

"I felt at once that I had at last secured the right medicine and I kept steadily improving. Within three weeks I was fully restored, and I am glad that I gave that truly great remedy a trial. I will never be without it again."

In a letter dated August 31, 1904, Mrs. Marsh says: "I have never yet heard the efficacy of Peruna questioned. We still use it. I traveled through Kentucky and Tennessee three years ago, where I found Peruna doing its good work. Much of it is being used here also."—Henrietta A. S. Marsh.

Address Dr. Hartman, President of The Hartman Sanitarium, Columbus, Ohio.

Clerical Jolt.

She was wealthy and consequently a target for much flattery.

"Is it a sin," she asked her spiritual adviser, "to take pleasure in having people call me beautiful?"

"Of course it is, my child," replied the good old parson. "It is always wicked to encourage falsehood."

Mothers will find Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup the best remedy to use for their children during the teething period.

Seasonable Inquiry.

"Allow me, Mr. Bifkins," said the hostess to a late arrival, "to introduce Captain de Jones, a man who has faced death in a score of battles."

"Pleased to meet you, captain," said Bifkins. "By the way, are you a military or football captain?"



Many women are denied the happiness of children through derangement of the generative organs. Mrs. Beyer advises women to use Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I suffered with stomach complaint for years. I got so bad that I could not carry my children but five months, then would have a miscarriage. The last time I became pregnant, my husband got me to take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. After taking the first bottle I was relieved of the sickness of stomach, and began to feel better in every way. I continued its use and was enabled to carry my baby to maturity. I now have a nice baby girl, and can work better than I ever could before. I am like a new woman."

—MRS. FRANK BEYER, 22 S. Second St., Meriden, Conn.—\$5000 forfeit if original of above letter proving genuineness cannot be produced.

FREE MEDICAL ADVICE TO WOMAN.

Don't hesitate to write to Mrs. Pinkham. She will understand your case perfectly, and will treat you with kindness. Her advice is free, and the address is Lynn, Mass. No woman ever regretted having written her, and she has helped thousands.