

The Chronicles of Addington Peace

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THE STORY OF AMAROFF THE POLE

(Continued.)

A jump, a scramble, and all three of us were over the wall, dropping into a ragged shrubbery of laurel. We groped and stumbled our way through the growth of bushes until we emerged on a grass plot. Then I understood. We were at the back of Amaroff's studio. On one side where we stood was the outhouse, its sloping roof reaching up to the long windows under the eaves—the upper lights, as sculptors call them. And even as I looked there came through these windows a flicker of light, an eye that winked in the darkness and was gone. We crept softly forward until we reached the shadow of the outhouse. It was roofed with rough tiles, which came to within seven feet of the ground. Fortunately, they did not project out from the wall of the building.

"You must help us up, Jackson," Peace whispered, "and then go round to the door, which I see at the back there. If they make a bolt that way, blow your whistle. If I whistle, start hammering on the door as if you were a dozen men. Now then, take me on your shoulders."

He scrambled to the roof like a cat. Lying flat he thrust out a hand. A bolt from the sergeant, and I landed beside him. We waited a few moments, and then commenced to work our way up the roof. From its upper angle I found that the greater part of the interior of the studio was within our observation.

The moonlight that drifted through the opposing panes flooded the center of the studio with soft light, in the midst of which the bust in bronze rose darkly upon its pedestal. A minute, and then the eye of light winked out, flickered, explored the pools of shadow, and finally steadied on the wall as three men moved from the room beneath us, following one by one. A second lantern came into play, and before our eyes commenced a search such as I could have hardly credited, so swift, methodical and thorough were its methods. The cushions were probed with long pins, the cracks of bare boards, and the nails that held them in position, were studied each in turn, the plastered walls were sounded inch by inch, the locks of desk and drawer were picked with the ease of mechanical knowledge.

We heard it before the men below, the faint pitter, pitter on the road outside of a runner in desperate haste. The footsteps grew silent, and in the pause there must have come a sound, audible to them though not to us, for the lantern slides were shut down like the snapping of teeth, and the men vanished into the gloom. Only the moonlight remained, bathing the Nero in its gentle beams. I glanced at Peace. His expression was one of beatific enjoyment, but his whistle was at his lips.

I could not see the entrance door, so that the struggle was well-nigh over before I knew it was begun. The stranger fought hard, as I judged from the scuffling thuds, yet he raised no cry of help. Then the eyes of the lanterns glowed again and they led him into the center of the studio with the glint of steel marking the handcuffs on his wrists. It was Greatman—the fox that had run into the den of the wolves!

"And so, mon ami, you play a double game."

It was not until he spoke that I re-

alized that I could hear what went forward within. The big ventilators above me were open, and Nicolin—for it was he—did not modulate his voice. "It is you that killed him," cried the prisoner, raising his fettered hands. "You that have betrayed me. Murderer and liar that you are."

"I had almost forgotten," he said. "It may be that you have some cause of complaint against me. But now that you are here, you will doubtless be kind enough to save us trouble. Where, my good Iroll, are the bombs hidden?"

"Do you think I shall tell you?" "Remember, Amaroff is dead. They will not go to Paris now. Do not be foolish. Show me the hiding place, and no harm shall come to you."

"No." "Then you will return to Russia. The Odessa forgery will carry you there by English law—but, remember, it is for something more than forgery that you will have to answer when you arrive."



SWINGING THE BUST HIGH ABOVE HIS HEAD.

There was a silence, and then Nicolin spoke again—two words.

"Sagallen Island." "I shall not go there," said the prisoner, simply. "I shall not go there—Nicolin the spy, Nicolin the murderer and liar!"

"Then you will achieve a miracle. For, as the Czar rules, before a week is out you will be on the sea, and within a month—stop him, stop him!"

He had sprung from them with a bound like that of a wild beast, and with his fettered hands had gripped the shaft of the bust of Nero, swinging it high above his head. For a part of a second, as a film might seize the photograph, I saw him stand in the moonlight with that cruel face in bronze rocking above his own white face in flesh and blood below; yet, as I remember it, there was neither fear

nor anger in his expression. And then, as it were, the shutter clicked, for Peace dealt me so violent a blow that it sent me rolling down the roof into the darkness. And as I tumbled headlong from the ledge, the whole air seemed to burst into fragments about me—a mighty concussion that left me, deafened, shaken, bewildered, amongst the broken tiles and falling fragments on the ground below.

I was in my most comfortable chair, with old Jacob washing the cut on my head, and the inspector's nimble fingers twisting a bandage before I quite realized that I had escaped that great explosion. Vaguely, as in a dream, I remembered that two men, presumably Peace and the sergeant, had dragged me to my feet, had knotted a handkerchief round my head, had pushed me over the wall, and finally lifted me into a passing cab—all with a mad haste as if it were we who had been the criminals. Anyhow, I was at home, which was of the first importance to me at the moment.

"What blew up, inspector?" I asked, faintly.

"The dynamite hidden in the bust—but don't ask questions."

"Oh, I'm all right," I told him. "Do explain things."

"I'll call tomorrow, and—"

"No, tell me now, or I shall not sleep a wink."

He looked at me a moment, with his head cocked on one side after his quaint fashion.

"Very well," he said at last. "I'll talk, if you'll promise to keep quiet." I promised, and he began.

"It's quite a simple story. Nicolin had got word that an attempt was to be made on the Czar, who is due in Paris the day after tomorrow, and that Amaroff was engineering the

itself suspicious. I knew the Russia was not the bungler he pretended to be, and I admit that I was puzzled. Then you came along and told me of the business with the key. It was plain they were coming back—but why? It was to discover it that I left three men to watch the studio while I kept my appointment with Jackson in Malden square. From what I learnt from him it was evident that Greatman was a man who knew something; so I tried a bluff on him. It's quite simple, isn't it?"

"Oh, yes," I said; "but how did you know Greatman was going to the studio when he ran away?"

"Rather an unnecessary question, Mr. Phillips, isn't it? Consider a minute. Amaroff was a Nihilist; he was playing a big game—which means dynamite with folks of their persuasion. He had been knocked out of the running, but the dynamite remained. And here? In the studio where Nicolin was returning to search for it; where Greatman also would go to recover it if he desired to revenge himself on Nicolin by carrying out his friends' plot himself. Mark you, I do not believe that originally he had any active part in carrying out this assassination. But when he heard how Nicolin had fooled him, he was anxious to get square by risking all and smuggling the bombs to Paris himself. Moreover, Mr. Phillips, I wanted to locate that dynamite. It is not well to have bombs floating about London, ready to the hand of well-bred lunatics. They breed international squabbles in which we, the police, get jumped upon."

"And they were hidden in the bust?"

"A very good place, too. With careful packing, they would have got to Paris safe enough. The Nero was a known work of art. No one would have suspected it for a moment. Of course I had no idea that the dynamite was stored in the bronze till Greatman grabbed it, and I saw his face. Then I punched you in the chest and rolled after you myself."

"You saved my life, anyway," I said gratefully.

"Tut, tut, Mr. Phillips, that's nothing. Another day you may do the same for me."

"If I get a chance," I told him. "But what will be done now?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?"

"I dragged you off to be away before the crowd arrived. There was no point in your being found in the neighborhood and asked questions at the inquest on what remains of their bodies. I shall report to Scotland Yard, and Scotland Yard will talk to the Foreign Office, and the Foreign Office will make polite representations to St. Petersburg, and everything will be hushed up. After all, there's nobody left to punish and nobody to pity, barring Greatman, who had the makings of a man in him. Amaroff was a romantic murderer, and Nicolin a practical one; but neither of them were at all the sort of people to encourage. So I should advise you to keep quiet. Mr. Phillips, and not talk of your adventure. Do you agree?"

"Certainly," I said; and we shook hands on it.

(CHRONICLES TO BE CONTINUED.)

WORLD OF HIS OWN CREATION

Great French Writer in His Absent-Mindedness Lived Far Apart From His Fellow Men.

A writer in the St. James Gazette tells us that Theophile Gautier's absent-mindedness amounted to actual somnambulism. He so identified himself with his mental pictures as to lose all consciousness of time and place, and for the time he would actually live in the scene that he had created. We are told that rarely, if ever, has a man had such a gift for getting out of himself. He would enlarge on his magnificent golden tea and breakfast service, when the most humdrum china lined his shelves. And though his servants were all treated in the most fatherly way, Gautier would tell you that he never permitted them to utter a word in his presence, that he only employed negroes. "I give my orders by signs. If they understand my signs, well and good. If they don't, I kick them into the Bosphorus." And there is no doubt that he actually heard the wave closing over the head of a black slave. He actually meant what he said. The street outside was actually for him the Bosphorus.

The Retort Pertinent.

"Look at me!" exclaimed the leaning lawyer warmly. "I never took a drop of medicine in my life, and I am as strong as any two of your patients put together."

"Well, that's nothing," retorted the physician. "I never went to law in my life, and I'm as rich as any two dozen of your clients put together."

Lost and Found.

The ferryman, whilst plying over a water which was only slightly agitated, was asked by a timid lady in his boat whether any persons were ever lost in that river. "Oh, no," said he, "we always finds 'em agin, the next day."—Life.

Examine what is said, not him who speaks.—Abdu-Falah.

GRANT CHILD RIGHTS

LET HIM MOLD HIMSELF, IS ADVICE GIVEN BY WRITER.

Putting It in Another Way, a Little "Letting Alone" is a Wise Course for Parents to Pursue—Matter of Freedom.

Let your children alone. Do not neglect them. There is a difference between a wise letting alone and a foolish neglect.

There have been probably as many children spoiled by over-management as by negligence.

Don't forget that the prime right of a child is the right to his own personality. In fact, his chief business in life is to develop properly the expression of that personality. How can he do this if he is continually hedged and thwarted by you?

A child learns by three means—by experience, by example and by atmosphere.

It is doubtful if didactic teaching and preaching ever did much good to anybody, child or grown-up. Only inspirational preaching is of any account.

To let the child touch the stove and get hurt a little is far better than to say "You mustn't touch it!"

Be chary of your commands. Every useless order is a burden that interferes with his growth and tends to alienate him from you.

Let him run as free as you dare. One lesson he learns from his own experience is worth a dozen he gets from you.

How many little lives are rendered utterly wretched by the loving but irritating tyranny of parents. The little ones are crossed at every turn. The mother is continually scolding, the father breaking in at times with sharp prohibitions.

The queer part of all this is that those parents think they are doing their high duty by the child. They propose to give their children some "bringing up" and not let them "run wild." So they cramp, thwart, oppose the growing mind.

Children are sharp. They soon adjust themselves to this, and get their parents' measure. Then they turn to become one or two things—"good," that is, shrewd little hypocrites, prigs and time-servers; or "bad," that is, angrily insistent upon having a life of their own.

Study the child, seek to bring out what is in him. Don't study your catechism or "system of education" and try to make your child measure up to that.

There is no genuine morality without freedom.

Anything done from fear is immoral. Even the "goodness" your child puts on because he is afraid of you is wicked.

Quit trying to mold your child. Stand by and help him. Let him mold himself. Be his friend. Let him feel you understand him.

A lot of our "moral principle" is mere self-conceit and vanity of opinion, and we think we are doing God's services when we impose our egotism on others, particularly upon helpless youth.

Study the child, live with him, enter into his life and point of view, encourage him in what he wants to do; sympathize with him.—Exchange.

Modern Toys.

Modern toys for children are marvels of ingenuity. The latest is a model yacht, about three feet long, which runs by electricity. It has a motor and storage battery with a speed of 188 feet per minute. The motor is reversible, and it is steered from the wheel on the bridge. There are search lights and running lights, which are operated by a switch. Naturally there are no sails, and only one deck.

When a Public Official Goes Wrong.

"When a public servant gets caught doing something he ought not to, he always seems to derive a lot of satisfaction from pretending that his motives are misunderstood," says an Ohio paper. That isn't what he says. He says: "I have no desire to try my case in the newspapers."

900-Year-Old Church.

The nine hundredth anniversary of the opening for service of the Church of Greensted, Essex, built of oak trees split in half fifty-four years before the Norman conquest, occurred recently. A special celebration is proposed.—London Mail.

Pay Big Price for Water.

Water is sold by the ton at Pernambuco, Brazil. It is piped from springs eight miles out from the city, and is furnished to ships at eighty-cents a ton within the harbor.

His Line of Work.

"Sam, have you got a job now?" "Oh, yes, sah." "What are you doing, Sam?" "Why, I's gettin' my wife washin', boss."



QUEBEC A CITY OF THE PAST

Development of Canadian Dominion Goes Forward, but She Has Little Part in It.

Quebec herself rather endures being quaint than enjoys it, for in this day of Canadian development she has dreamed of the future after the fashion of those insistent towns further to the west. "It has not been pleasant for her," says Edward Hungerford in Harper's Weekly, "to drop from second place in Canadian commercial importance to fourth or fifth. She has had to sit back and see such cities as Winnipeg, for instance, increase from an Indian trading-place

to a metropolitan center two or three times her size, while her own wharves rot. It is a matter of keen humiliation to the town every time a big ocean liner goes sailing up the river to Montreal—her river, if you are to give ear to the protests of her citizens whom you meet along the Terrace of a late afternoon—without halting at her wharves, perhaps without even a respectful salute to the town, which has been known these many years as the Gibraltar of North America."

Exceptions.

"Stone walls do not a prison make." "Oh, yes, they do, if they're around a jail."