

THE GUNMAKER OF MOSCOW.

By SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

CHAPTER XVII.

THWARTED, BUT NOT SURPRISED.

It was long after midnight, and yet the Widow Nevel had not sought her bed. She was now pacing to and fro across her kitchen, and the boy Paul sat nodding in his chair. Suddenly the woman stopped, and Paul started up.

for the life of him he could not tell whether they were good or bad. Once he dreamed that he was a duke himself and that he had a wife whose face he had never seen. She would not raise her veil until the ceremony was performed. Then she removed the obstruction, and Ruric started on beholding the face of Vladimir, the monk! And then Vladimir seemed to say, "All this I have done for thee. Do you like it?" And Ruric dared not object, because Vladimir had done so much for him.

"Not yet, Savotano. I must have your help within a very short time. By the true God, I swear that the Countess Rosalind Valdai shall be my wife within the present week. I'll place the seal of fact upon that matter at once. Fear not, for I know my influence over the emperor will shield you from all harm. Why, Peter would sooner lose his right hand than lose me."

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