# The Short Stories of Leo Tolstoy - Part 2

Leo Tolstoy

# Contents

# My Dream

Translated by C. Hagberg Wright 1912

# Chapter 1

"As a daughter she no longer exists for me. Can't you understand? She simply doesn't exist. Still, I cannot possibly leave her to the charity of strangers. I will arrange things so that she can live as she pleases, but I do not wish to hear of her. Who would ever have thought . . . the horror of it, the horror of it."

He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, and raised his eyes. These words were spoken by Prince Michael Ivanovich to his brother Peter, who was governor of a province in Central Russia. Prince Peter was a man of fifty, Michael's junior by ten years.

On discovering that his daughter, who had left his house a year before, had settled here with her child, the elder brother had come from St. Petersburg to the provincial town, where the above conversation took place.

Prince Michael Ivanovich was a tall, handsome, white-haired, fresh coloured man, proud and attractive in appearance and bearing. His family consisted of a vulgar, irritable wife, who wrangled with him continually over every petty detail, a son, a ne'er-do-well, spendthrift and roue — yet a "gentleman," according to his father's code, two daughters, of whom the elder had married well, and was living in St. Petersburg; and the younger, Lisa — his favourite, who had disappeared from home a year before. Only a short while ago he had found her with her child in this provincial town.

Prince Peter wanted to ask his brother how, and under what circumstances, Lisa had left home, and who could possibly be the father of her child. But he could not make up his mind to inquire.

That very morning, when his wife had attempted to condole with her brother-in-law, Prince Peter had observed a look of pain on his brother's face. The look had at once been masked by an expression of unapproachable pride, and he had begun to question her about their flat, and the price she paid. At luncheon, before the family and guests, he had been witty and sarcastic as usual. Towards every one, excepting the children, whom he treated with almost reverent tenderness, he adopted an attitude of distant hauteur. And yet it was so natural to him that every one somehow acknowledged his right to be haughty.

In the evening his brother arranged a game of whist. When he retired to the room which had been made ready for him, and was just beginning to take out his artificial teeth, some one tapped lightly on the door with two fingers.

"Who is that?"

"C'est moi, Michael."

Prince Michael Ivanovich recognised the voice of his sister-in-law, frowned, replaced his teeth, and said to himself, "What does she want?" Aloud he said, "Entrez."

His sister-in-law was a quiet, gentle creature, who bowed in submission to her husband's will. But to many she seemed a crank, and some did not hesitate to call her a

fool. She was pretty, but her hair was always carelessly dressed, and she herself was untidy and absent-minded. She had, also, the strangest, most unaristocratic ideas, by no means fitting in the wife of a high official. These ideas she would express most unexpectedly, to everybody's astonishment, her husband's no less than her friends'.

"Fous pouvez me renvoyer, mais je ne m'en irai pas, je vous le dis d'avance," she began, in her characteristic, indifferent way.

"Dieu preserve," answered her brother-in-law, with his usual somewhat exaggerated politeness, and brought forward a chair for her.

"Ca ne vous derange pas?" she asked, taking out a cigarette. "I'm not going to say anything unpleasant, Michael. I only wanted to say something about Lisochka."

Michael Ivanovich sighed — the word pained him; but mastering himself at once, he answered with a tired smile. "Our conversation can only be on one subject, and that is the subject you wish to discuss." He spoke without looking at her, and avoided even naming the subject. But his plump, pretty little sister-in-law was unabashed. She continued to regard him with the same gentle, imploring look in her blue eyes, sighing even more deeply.

"Michael, mon bon ami, have pity on her. She is only human."

"I never doubted that," said Michael Ivanovich with a bitter smile.

"She is your daughter."

"She was — but my dear Aline, why talk about this?"

"Michael, dear, won't you see her? I only wanted to say, that the one who is to blame— "

Prince Michael Ivanovich flushed; his face became cruel.

"For heaven's sake, let us stop. I have suffered enough. I have now but one desire, and that is to put her in such a position that she will be independent of others, and that she shall have no further need of communicating with me. Then she can live her own life, and my family and I need know nothing more about her. That is all I can do."

"Michael, you say nothing but 'I'! She, too, is 'I.'"

"No doubt; but, dear Aline, please let us drop the matter. I feel it too deeply."

Alexandra Dmitrievna remained silent for a few moments, shaking her head. "And Masha, your wife, thinks as you do?"

"Yes, quite."

Alexandra Dmitrievna made an inarticulate sound.

"Brisons la dessus et bonne nuit," said he. But she did not go. She stood silent a moment. Then,— "Peter tells me you intend to leave the money with the woman where she lives. Have you the address?"

"I have."

"Don't leave it with the woman, Michael! Go yourself. Just see how she lives. If you don't want to see her, you need not. HE isn't there; there is no one there."

Michael Ivanovich shuddered violently.

"Why do you torture me so? It's a sin against hospitality!"

Alexandra Dmitrievna rose, and almost in tears, being touched by her own pleading, said, "She is so miserable, but she is such a dear."

He got up, and stood waiting for her to finish. She held out her hand.

"Michael, you do wrong," said she, and left him.

For a long while after she had gone Michael Ivanovich walked to and fro on the square of carpet. He frowned and shivered, and exclaimed, "Oh, oh!" And then the sound of his own voice frightened him, and he was silent.

His wounded pride tortured him. His daughter — his — brought up in the house of her mother, the famous Avdotia Borisovna, whom the Empress honoured with her visits, and acquaintance with whom was an honour for all the world! His daughter — ; and he had lived his life as a knight of old, knowing neither fear nor blame. The fact that he had a natural son born of a Frenchwoman, whom he had settled abroad, did not lower his own self-esteem. And now this daughter, for whom he had not only done everything that a father could and should do; this daughter to whom he had given a splendid education and every opportunity to make a match in the best Russian society — this daughter to whom he had not only given all that a girl could desire, but whom he had really LOVED; whom he had admired, been proud of — this daughter had repaid him with such disgrace, that he was ashamed and could not face the eyes of men!

He recalled the time when she was not merely his child, and a member of his family, but his darling, his joy and his pride. He saw her again, a little thing of eight or nine, bright, intelligent, lively, impetuous, graceful, with brilliant black eyes and flowing auburn hair. He remembered how she used to jump up on his knees and hug him, and tickle his neck; and how she would laugh, regardless of his protests, and continue to tickle him, and kiss his lips, his eyes, and his cheeks. He was naturally opposed to all demonstration, but this impetuous love moved him, and he often submitted to her petting. He remembered also how sweet it was to caress her. To remember all this, when that sweet child had become what she now was, a creature of whom he could not think without loathing.

He also recalled the time when she was growing into womanhood, and the curious feeling of fear and anger that he experienced when he became aware that men regarded her as a woman. He thought of his jealous love when she came coquettishly to him dressed for a ball, and knowing that she was pretty. He dreaded the passionate glances which fell upon her, that she not only did not understand but rejoiced in. "Yes," thought he, "that superstition of woman's purity! Quite the contrary, they do not know shame — they lack this sense." He remembered how, quite inexplicably to him, she had refused two very good suitors. She had become more and more fascinated by her own success in the round of gaieties she lived in.

But this success could not last long. A year passed, then two, then three. She was a familiar figure, beautiful — but her first youth had passed, and she had become somehow part of the ball-room furniture. Michael Ivanovich remembered how he had realised that she was on the road to spinsterhood, and desired but one thing for her.

He must get her married off as quickly as possible, perhaps not quite so well as might have been arranged earlier, but still a respectable match.

But it seemed to him she had behaved with a pride that bordered on insolence. Remembering this, his anger rose more and more fiercely against her. To think of her refusing so many decent men, only to end in this disgrace. "Oh, oh!" he groaned again.

Then stopping, he lit a cigarette, and tried to think of other things. He would send her money, without ever letting her see him. But memories came again. He remembered — it was not so very long ago, for she was more than twenty then — her beginning a flirtation with a boy of fourteen, a cadet of the Corps of Pages who had been staying with them in the country. She had driven the boy half crazy; he had wept in his distraction. Then how she had rebuked her father severely, coldly, and even rudely, when, to put an end to this stupid affair, he had sent the boy away. She seemed somehow to consider herself insulted. Since then father and daughter had drifted into undisguised hostility.

"I was right," he said to himself. "She is a wicked and shameless woman."

And then, as a last ghastly memory, there was the letter from Moscow, in which she wrote that she could not return home; that she was a miserable, abandoned woman, asking only to be forgiven and forgotten. Then the horrid recollection of the scene with his wife came to him; their surmises and their suspicions, which became a certainty. The calamity had happened in Finland, where they had let her visit her aunt; and the culprit was an insignificant Swede, a student, an empty-headed, worthless creature — and married.

All this came back to him now as he paced backwards and forwards on the bedroom carpet, recollecting his former love for her, his pride in her. He recoiled with terror before the incomprehensible fact of her downfall, and he hated her for the agony she was causing him. He remembered the conversation with his sister-in-law, and tried to imagine how he might forgive her. But as soon as the thought of "him" arose, there surged up in his heart horror, disgust, and wounded pride. He groaned aloud, and tried to think of something else.

"No, it is impossible; I will hand over the money to Peter to give her monthly. And as for me, I have no longer a daughter."

And again a curious feeling overpowered him: a mixture of self-pity at the recollection of his love for her, and of fury against her for causing him this anguish.

# Chapter 2

DURING the last year Lisa had without doubt lived through more than in all the preceding twenty-five. Suddenly she had realised the emptiness of her whole life. It rose before her, base and sordid — this life at home and among the rich set in St. Petersburg — this animal existence that never sounded the depths, but only touched the shallows of life.

It was well enough for a year or two, or perhaps even three. But when it went on for seven or eight years, with its parties, balls, concerts, and suppers; with its costumes and coiffures to display the charms of the body; with its adorers old and young, all alike seemingly possessed of some unaccountable right to have everything, to laugh at everything; and with its summer months spent in the same way, everything yielding but a superficial pleasure, even music and reading merely touching upon life's problems, but never solving them — all this holding out no promise of change, and losing its charm more and more — she began to despair. She had desperate moods when she longed to die.

Her friends directed her thoughts to charity. On the one hand, she saw poverty which was real and repulsive, and a sham poverty even more repulsive and pitiable; on the other, she saw the terrible indifference of the lady patronesses who came in carriages and gowns worth thousands. Life became to her more and more unbearable. She yearned for something real, for life itself — not this playing at living, not this skimming life of its cream. Of real life there was none. The best of her memories was her love for the little cadet Koko. That had been a good, honest, straight-forward impulse, and now there was nothing like it. There could not be. She grew more and more depressed, and in this gloomy mood she went to visit an aunt in Finland. The fresh scenery and surroundings, the people strangely different to her own, appealed to her at any rate as a new experience.

How and when it all began she could not clearly remember. Her aunt had another guest, a Swede. He talked of his work, his people, the latest Swedish novel. Somehow, she herself did not know how that terrible fascination of glances and smiles began, the meaning of which cannot be put into words.

These smiles and glances seemed to reveal to each, not only the soul of the other, but some vital and universal mystery. Every word they spoke was invested by these smiles with a profound and wonderful significance. Music, too, when they were listening together, or when they sang duets, became full of the same deep meaning. So, also, the words in the books they read aloud. Sometimes they would argue, but the moment their eyes met, or a smile flashed between them, the discussion remained far behind. They soared beyond it to some higher plane consecrated to themselves.

How it had come about, how and when the devil, who had seized hold of them both, first appeared behind these smiles and glances, she could not say. But, when terror first seized her, the invisible threads that bound them were already so interwoven that she had no power to tear herself free. She could only count on him and on his honour. She hoped that he would not make use of his power; yet all the while she vaguely desired it.

Her weakness was the greater, because she had nothing to support her in the struggle. She was weary of society life and she had no affection for her mother. Her father, so she thought, had cast her away from him, and she longed passionately to live and to have done with play. Love, the perfect love of a woman for a man, held the promise of life for her. Her strong, passionate nature, too, was dragging her thither. In the tall,

strong figure of this man, with his fair hair and light upturned moustache, under which shone a smile attractive and compelling, she saw the promise of that life for which she longed. And then the smiles and glances, the hope of something so incredibly beautiful, led, as they were bound to lead, to that which she feared but unconsciously awaited.

Suddenly all that was beautiful, joyous, spiritual, and full of promise for the future, became animal and sordid, sad and despairing.

She looked into his eyes and tried to smile, pretending that she feared nothing, that everything was as it should be; but deep down in her soul she knew it was all over. She understood that she had not found in him what she had sought; that which she had once known in herself and in Koko. She told him that he must write to her father asking her hand in marriage. This he promised to do; but when she met him next he said it was impossible for him to write just then. She saw something vague and furtive in his eyes, and her distrust of him grew. The following day he wrote to her, telling her that he was already married, though his wife had left him long since; that he knew she would despise him for the wrong he had done her, and implored her forgiveness. She made him come to see her. She said she loved him; that she felt herself bound to him for ever whether he was married or not, and would never leave him. The next time they met he told her that he and his parents were so poor that he could only offer her the meanest existence. She answered that she needed nothing, and was ready to go with him at once wherever he wished. He endeavoured to dissuade her, advising her to wait; and so she waited. But to live on with this secret, with occasional meetings, and merely corresponding with him, all hidden from her family, was agonising, and she insisted again that he must take her away. At first, when she returned to St. Petersburg, be wrote promising to come, and then letters ceased and she knew no more of him.

She tried to lead her old life, but it was impossible. She fell ill, and the efforts of the doctors were unavailing; in her hopelessness she resolved to kill herself. But how was she to do this, so that her death might seem natural? She really desired to take her life, and imagined that she had irrevocably decided on the step. So, obtaining some poison, she poured it into a glass, and in another instant would have drunk it, had not her sister's little son of five at that very moment run in to show her a toy his grandmother had given him. She caressed the child, and, suddenly stopping short, burst into tears.

The thought overpowered her that she, too, might have been a mother had he not been married, and this vision of motherhood made her look into her own soul for the first time. She began to think not of what others would say of her, but of her own life. To kill oneself because of what the world might say was easy; but the moment she saw her own life dissociated from the world, to take that life was out of the question. She threw away the poison, and ceased to think of suicide.

Then her life within began. It was real life, and despite the torture of it, had the possibility been given her, she would not have turned back from it. She began to pray, but there was no comfort in prayer; and her suffering was less for herself than for her father, whose grief she foresaw and understood.

Thus months dragged along, and then something happened which entirely transformed her life. One day, when she was at work upon a quilt, she suddenly experienced a strange sensation. No — it seemed impossible. Motionless she sat with her work in hand. Was it possible that this was IT. Forgetting everything, his baseness and deceit, her mother's querulousness, and her father's sorrow, she smiled. She shuddered at the recollection that she was on the point of killing it, together with herself.

She now directed all her thoughts to getting away — somewhere where she could bear her child — and become a miserable, pitiful mother, but a mother withal. Somehow she planned and arranged it all, leaving her home and settling in a distant provincial town, where no one could find her, and where she thought she would be far from her people. But, unfortunately, her father's brother received an appointment there, a thing she could not possibly foresee. For four months she had been living in the house of a midwife — one Maria Ivanovna; and, on learning that her uncle had come to the town, she was preparing to fly to a still remoter hiding-place.

# Chapter 3

MICHAEL IVANOVICH awoke early next morning. He entered his brother's study, and handed him the cheque, filled in for a sum which he asked him to pay in monthly instalments to his daughter. He inquired when the express left for St. Petersburg. The train left at seven in the evening, giving him time for an early dinner before leaving. He breakfasted with his sister-in-law, who refrained from mentioning the subject which was so painful to him, but only looked at him timidly; and after breakfast he went out for his regular morning walk.

Alexandra Dmitrievna followed him into the hall.

"Go into the public gardens, Michael — it is very charming there, and quite near to Everything," said she, meeting his sombre looks with a pathetic glance.

Michael Ivanovich followed her advice and went to the public gardens, which were so near to Everything, and meditated with annoyance on the stupidity, the obstinacy, and heartlessness of women.

"She is not in the very least sorry for me," he thought of his sister-in-law. "She cannot even understand my sorrow. And what of her?" He was thinking of his daughter. "She knows what all this means to me — the torture. What a blow in one's old age! My days will be shortened by it! But I'd rather have it over than endure this agony. And all that 'pour les beaux yeux d'un chenapan' — oh!" he moaned; and a wave of hatred and fury arose in him as he thought of what would be said in the town when every one knew. (And no doubt every one knew already.) Such a feeling of rage possessed him that he would have liked to beat it into her head, and make her understand what she had done. These women never understand. "It is quite near Everything," suddenly came to his mind, and getting out his notebook, he found her address. Vera Ivanovna

Silvestrova, Kukonskaya Street, Abromov's house. She was living under this name. He left the gardens and called a cab.

"Whom do you wish to see, sir?" asked the midwife, Maria Ivanovna, when he stepped on the narrow landing of the steep, stuffy staircase.

"Does Madame Silvestrova live here?"

"Vera Ivanovna? Yes; please come in. She has gone out; she's gone to the shop round the corner. But she'll be back in a minute."

Michael Ivanovich followed the stout figure of Maria Ivanovna into a tiny parlour, and from the next room came the screams of a baby, sounding cross and peevish, which filled him with disgust. They cut him like a knife.

Maria Ivanovna apologised, and went into the room, and he could hear her soothing the child. The child became quiet, and she returned.

"That is her baby; she'll be back in a minute. You are a friend of hers, I suppose?"

"Yes — a friend — but I think I had better come back later on," said Michael Ivanovich, preparing to go. It was too unbearable, this preparation to meet her, and any explanation seemed impossible.

He had just turned to leave, when he heard quick, light steps on the stairs, and he recognised Lisa's voice.

"Maria Ivanovna-has he been crying while I've been gone-I was-"

Then she saw her father. The parcel she was carrying fell from her hands.

"Father!" she cried, and stopped in the doorway, white and trembling.

He remained motionless, staring at her. She had grown so thin. Her eyes were larger, her nose sharper, her hands worn and bony. He neither knew what to do, nor what to say. He forgot all his grief about his dishonour. He only felt sorrow, infinite sorrow for her; sorrow for her thinness, and for her miserable rough clothing; and most of all, for her pitiful face and imploring eyes.

"Father — forgive," she said, moving towards him.

"Forgive — forgive me," he murmured; and he began to sob like a child, kissing her face and hands, and wetting them with his tears.

In his pity for her he understood himself. And when he saw himself as he was, he realised how he had wronged her, how guilty he had been in his pride, in his coldness, even in his anger towards her. He was glad that it was he who was guilty, and that he had nothing to forgive, but that he himself needed forgiveness. She took him to her tiny room, and told him how she lived; but she did not show him the child, nor did she mention the past, knowing how painful it would be to him.

He told her that she must live differently.

"Yes; if I could only live in the country," said she.

"We will talk it over," he said. Suddenly the child began to wail and to scream. She opened her eyes very wide; and, not taking them from her father's face, remained hesitating and motionless.

"Well-I suppose you must feed him," said Michael Ivanovich, and frowned with the obvious effort.

She got up, and suddenly the wild idea seized her to show him whom she loved so deeply the thing she now loved best of all in the world. But first she looked at her father's face. Would he be angry or not? His face revealed no anger, only suffering.

"Yes, go, go," said he; "God bless you. Yes. I'll come again to-morrow, and we will decide. Good-bye, my darling-good-bye." Again he found it hard to swallow the lump in his throat.

When Michael Ivanovich returned to his brother's house, Alexandra Dmitrievna immediately rushed to him.

"Well?"

"Well? Nothing."

"Have you seen?" she asked, guessing from his expression that something had happened.

"Yes," he answered shortly, and began to cry. "I'm getting old and stupid," said he, mastering his emotion.

"No; you are growing wise-very wise."

# There Are No Guilty People

Translated by C. Hagberg Wright 1912

# Chapter 1

MINE is a strange and wonderful lot! The chances are that there is not a single wretched beggar suffering under the luxury and oppression of the rich who feels anything like as keenly as I do either the injustice, the cruelty, and the horror of their oppression of and contempt for the poor; or the grinding humiliation and misery which befall the great majority of the workers, the real producers of all that makes life possible. I have felt this for a long time, and as the years have passed by the feeling has grown and grown, until recently it reached its climax. Although I feel all this so vividly, I still live on amid the depravity and sins of rich society; and I cannot leave it, because I have neither the knowledge nor the strength to do so. I cannot. I do not know how to change my life so that my physical needs — food, sleep, clothing, my going to and fro — may be satisfied without a sense of shame and wrongdoing in the position which I fill.

There was a time when I tried to change my position, which was not in harmony with my conscience; but the conditions created by the past, by my family and its claims upon me, were so complicated that they would not let me out of their grasp, or rather, I did not know how to free myself. I had not the strength. Now that I am over eighty and have become feeble, I have given up trying to free myself; and, strange to say, as my feebleness increases I realise more and more strongly the wrongfulness of my position, and it grows more and more intolerable to me.

It has occurred to me that I do not occupy this position for nothing: that Providence intended that I should lay bare the truth of my feelings, so that I might atone for all that causes my suffering, and might perhaps open the eyes of those — or at least of some of those — who are still blind to what I see so clearly, and thus might lighten the burden of that vast majority who, under existing conditions, are subjected to bodily and spiritual suffering by those who deceive them and also deceive themselves. Indeed, it may be that the position which I occupy gives me special facilities for revealing the artificial and criminal relations which exist between men — for telling the whole truth in regard to that position without confusing the issue by attempting to vindicate myself, and without rousing the envy of the rich and feelings of oppression in the hearts of the poor and downtrodden. I am so placed that I not only have no desire to vindicate myself; but, on the contrary, I find it necessary to make an effort lest I should exaggerate the wickedness of the great among whom I live, of whose society I am ashamed, whose attitude towards their fellow-men I detest with my whole soul, though I find it impossible to separate my lot from theirs. But I must also avoid the error of those democrats and others who, in defending the oppressed and the enslaved, do not see their failings and mistakes, and who do not make sufficient allowance for

the difficulties created, the mistakes inherited from the past, which in a degree lessens the responsibility of the upper classes.

Free from desire for self-vindication, free from fear of an emancipated people, free from that envy and hatred which the oppressed feel for their oppressors, I am in the best possible position to see the truth and to tell it. Perhaps that is why Providence placed me in such a position. I will do my best to turn it to account.

# Chapter 2

Alexander Ivanovich Volgin, a bachelor and a clerk in a Moscow bank at a salary of eight thousand roubles a year, a man much respected in his own set, was staying in a country-house. His host was a wealthy landowner, owning some twenty-five hundred acres, and had married his guest's cousin. Volgin, tired after an evening spent in playing vint* for small stakes with [* A game of cards similar to auction bridge.] members of the family, went to his room and placed his watch, silver cigarette-case, pocket-book, big leather purse, and pocket-brush and comb on a small table covered with a white cloth, and then, taking off his coat, waistcoat, shirt, trousers, and underclothes, his silk socks and English boots, put on his nightshirt and dressing-gown. His watch pointed to midnight. Volgin smoked a cigarette, lay on his face for about five minutes reviewing the day's impressions; then, blowing out his candle, he turned over on his side and fell asleep about one o'clock, in spite of a good deal of restlessness. Awaking next morning at eight he put on his slippers and dressing-gown, and rang the bell.

The old butler, Stephen, the father of a family and the grandfather of six grandchildren, who had served in that house for thirty years, entered the room hurriedly, with bent legs, carrying in the newly blackened boots which Volgin had taken off the night before, a well-brushed suit, and a clean shirt. The guest thanked him, and then asked what the weather was like (the blinds were drawn so that the sun should not prevent any one from sleeping till eleven o'clock if he were so inclined), and whether his hosts had slept well. He glanced at his watch — it was still early — and began to wash and dress. His water was ready, and everything on the washing-stand and dressing-table was ready for use and properly laid out — his soap, his tooth and hair brushes, his nail scissors and files. He washed his hands and face in a leisurely fashion, cleaned and manicured his nails, pushed back the skin with the towel, and sponged his stout white body from head to foot. Then he began to brush his hair. Standing in front of the mirror, he first brushed his curly beard, which was beginning to turn grey, with two English brushes, parting it down the middle. Then he combed his hair, which was already showing signs of getting thin, with a large tortoise-shell comb. Putting on his underlinen, his socks, his boots, his trousers — which were held up by elegant braces — and his waistcoat, he sat down coatless in an easy chair to rest after dressing, lit a cigarette, and began to think where he should go for a walk that morning — to the park or to Littleports (what a funny name for a wood!). He thought he would go

to Littleports. Then he must answer Simon Nicholaevich's letter; but there was time enough for that. Getting up with an air of resolution, he took out his watch. It was already five minutes to nine. He put his watch into his waistcoat pocket, and his purse — with all that was left of the hundred and eighty roubles he had taken for his journey, and for the incidental expenses of his fortnight's stay with his cousin — and then he placed into his trouser pocket his cigarette-case and electric cigarette-lighter, and two clean handkerchiefs into his coat pockets, and went out of the room, leaving as usual the mess and confusion which he had made to be cleared up by Stephen, an old man of over fifty. Stephen expected Volgin to "remunerate" him, as he said, being so accustomed to the work that he did not feel the slightest repugnance for it. Glancing at a mirror, and feeling satisfied with his appearance, Volgin went into the dining-room.

There, thanks to the efforts of the housekeeper, the footman, and under-butler — the latter had risen at dawn in order to run home to sharpen his son's scythe — breakfast was ready. On a spotless white cloth stood a boiling, shiny, silver samovar (at least it looked like silver), a coffee-pot, hot milk, cream, butter, and all sorts of fancy white bread and biscuits. The only persons at table were the second son of the house, his tutor (a student), and the secretary. The host, who was an active member of the Zemstvo and a great farmer, had already left the house, having gone at eight o'clock to attend to his work. Volgin, while drinking his coffee, talked to the student and the secretary about the weather, and yesterday's vint, and discussed Theodorite's peculiar behaviour the night before, as he had been very rude to his father without the slightest cause. Theodorite was the grown-up son of the house, and a ne'er-do-well. His name was Theodore, but some one had once called him Theodorite either as a joke or to tease him; and, as it seemed funny, the name stuck to him, although his doings were no longer in the least amusing. So it was now. He had been to the university, but left it in his second year, and joined a regiment of horse guards; but he gave that up also, and was now living in the country, doing nothing, finding fault, and feeling discontented with everything. Theodorite was still in bed: so were the other members of the household — Anna Mikhailovna, its mistress; her sister, the widow of a general; and a landscape painter who lived with the family.

Volgin took his panama hat from the hall table (it had cost twenty roubles) and his cane with its carved ivory handle, and went out. Crossing the veranda, gay with flowers, he walked through the flower garden, in the centre of which was a raised round bed, with rings of red, white, and blue flowers, and the initials of the mistress of the house done in carpet bedding in the centre. Leaving the flower garden Volgin entered the avenue of lime trees, hundreds of years old, which peasant girls were tidying and sweeping with spades and brooms. The gardener was busy measuring, and a boy was bringing something in a cart. Passing these Volgin went into the park of at least a hundred and twenty-five acres, filled with fine old trees, and intersected by a network of well-kept walks. Smoking as he strolled Volgin took his favourite path past the summer-house into the fields beyond. It was pleasant in the park, but it was still nicer in the fields. On the right some women who were digging potatoes formed a mass of

bright red and white colour; on the left were wheat fields, meadows, and grazing cattle; and in the foreground, slightly to the right, were the dark, dark oaks of Littleports. Volgin took a deep breath, and felt glad that he was alive, especially here in his cousin's home, where he was so thoroughly enjoying the rest from his work at the bank.

"Lucky people to live in the country," he thought. "True, what with his farming and his Zemstvo, the owner of the estate has very little peace even in the country, but that is his own lookout." Volgin shook his head, lit another cigarette, and, stepping out firmly with his powerful feet clad in his thick English boots, began to think of the heavy winter's work in the bank that was in front of him. "I shall be there every day from ten to two, sometimes even till five. And the board meetings . . . And private interviews with clients. . . . Then the Duma. Whereas here. . . . It is delightful. It may be a little dull, but it is not for long." He smiled. After a stroll in Littleports he turned back, going straight across a fallow field which was being ploughed. A herd of cows, calves, sheep, and pigs, which belonged to the village community, was grazing there. The shortest way to the park was to pass through the herd. He frightened the sheep, which ran away one after another, and were followed by the pigs, of which two little ones stared solemnly at him. The shepherd boy called to the sheep and cracked his whip. "How far behind Europe we are," thought Volgin, recalling his frequent holidays abroad. "You would not find a single cow like that anywhere in Europe." Then, wanting to find out where the path which branched off from the one he was on led to and who was the owner of the herd, he called to the boy.

"Whose herd is it?"

The boy was so filled with wonder, verging on terror, when he gazed at the hat, the well-brushed beard, and above all the gold-rimmed eyeglasses, that he could not reply at once. When Volgin repeated his question the boy pulled himself together, and said, "Ours." "But whose is 'ours'?" said Volgin, shaking his head and smiling. The boy was wearing shoes of plaited birch bark, bands of linen round his legs, a dirty, unbleached shirt ragged at the shoulder, and a cap the peak of which had been torn.

"Whose is 'ours'?"

"The Pirogov village herd."

"How old are you?

"I don't know."

"Can you read?"

"No, I can't."

"Didn't you go to school?"

"Yes, I did."

"Couldn't you learn to read?"

"No."

"Where does that path lead?"

The boy told him, and Volgin went on towards the house, thinking how he would chaff Nicholas Petrovich about the deplorable condition of the village schools in spite of all his efforts.

On approaching the house Volgin looked at his watch, and saw that it was already past eleven. He remembered that Nicholas Petrovich was going to drive to the nearest town, and that he had meant to give him a letter to post to Moscow; but the letter was not written. The letter was a very important one to a friend, asking him to bid for him for a picture of the Madonna which was to be offered for sale at an auction. As he reached the house he saw at the door four big, well-fed, well-groomed, thoroughbred horses harnessed to a carriage, the black lacquer of which glistened in the sun. The coachman was seated on the box in a kaftan, with a silver belt, and the horses were jingling their silver bells from time to time.

A bare-headed, barefooted peasant in a ragged kaftan stood at the front door. He bowed. Volgin asked what he wanted.

"I have come to see Nicholas Petrovich."

"What about?"

"Because I am in distress — my horse has died."

Volgin began to question him. The peasant told him how he was situated. He had five children, and this had been his only horse. Now it was gone. He wept.

"What are you going to do?"

"To beg." And he knelt down, and remained kneeling in spite of Volgin's expostulations.

"What is your name?"

"Mitri Sudarikov," answered the peasant, still kneeling.

Volgin took three roubles from his purse and gave them to the peasant, who showed his gratitude by touching the ground with his forehead, and then went into the house. His host was standing in the hall.

"Where is your letter?" he asked, approaching Volgin; "I am just off."

"I'm awfully sorry, I'll write it this minute, if you will let me. I forgot all about it. It's so pleasant here that one can forget anything."

"All right, but do be quick. The horses have already been standing a quarter of an hour, and the flies are biting viciously. Can you wait, Arsenty?" he asked the coachman.

"Why not?" said the coachman, thinking to himself, "why do they order the horses when they aren't ready? The rush the grooms and I had — just to stand here and feed the flies."

"Directly, directly," Volgin went towards his room, but turned back to ask Nicholas Petrovich about the begging peasant.

"Did you see him? — He's a drunkard, but still he is to be pitied. Do be quick!"

Volgin got out his case, with all the requisites for writing, wrote the letter, made out a cheque for a hundred and eighty roubles, and, sealing down the envelope, took it to Nicholas Petrovich.

"Good-bye."

Volgin read the newspapers till luncheon. He only read the Liberal papers: The Russian Gazette, Speech, sometimes The Russian Word — but he would not touch The New Times, to which his host subscribed.

While he was scanning at his ease the political news, the Tsar's doings, the doings of President, and ministers and decisions in the Duma, and was just about to pass on to the general news, theatres, science, murders and cholera, he heard the luncheon bell ring.

Thanks to the efforts of upwards of ten human beings — counting laundresses, gardeners, cooks, kitchen-maids, butlers and footmen — the table was sumptuously laid for eight, with silver waterjugs, decanters, kvass, wine, mineral waters, cut glass, and fine table linen, while two men-servants were continually hurrying to and fro, bringing in and serving, and then clearing away the hors d'oeuvre and the various hot and cold courses.

The hostess talked incessantly about everything that she had been doing, thinking, and saying; and she evidently considered that everything that she thought, said, or did was perfect, and that it would please every one except those who were fools. Volgin felt and knew that everything she said was stupid, but it would never do to let it be seen, and so he kept up the conversation. Theodorite was glum and silent; the student occasionally exchanged a few words with the widow. Now and again there was a pause in the conversation, and then Theodorite interposed, and every one became miserably depressed. At such moments the hostess ordered some dish that had not been served, and the footman hurried off to the kitchen, or to the housekeeper, and hurried back again. Nobody felt inclined either to talk or to eat. But they all forced themselves to eat and to talk, and so luncheon went on.

The peasant who had been begging because his horse had died was named Mitri Sudarikov. He had spent the whole day before he went to the squire over his dead horse. First of all he went to the knacker, Sanin, who lived in a village near. The knacker was out, but he waited for him, and it was dinner-time when he had finished bargaining over the price of the skin. Then he borrowed a neighbour's horse to take his own to a field to be buried, as it is forbidden to bury dead animals near a village. Adrian would not lend his horse because he was getting in his potatoes, but Stephen took pity on Mitri and gave way to his persuasion. He even lent a hand in lifting the dead horse into the cart. Mitri tore off the shoes from the forelegs and gave them to his wife. One was broken, but the other one was whole. While he was digging the grave with a spade which was very blunt, the knacker appeared and took off the skin; and the carcass was then thrown into the hole and covered up. Mitri felt tired, and went into Matrena's hut, where he drank half a bottle of vodka with Sanin to console himself. Then he went home, quarrelled with his wife, and lay down to sleep on the hay. He did not undress, but slept just as he was, with a ragged coat for a coverlet. His wife was in the hut with the girls — there were four of them, and the youngest was only five weeks old. Mitri woke up before dawn as usual. He groaned as the memory of the day before broke in upon him — how the horse had struggled and struggled, and then fallen down. Now there was no horse, and all he had was the price of the skin, four roubles and eighty kopeks. Getting up he arranged the linen bands on his legs, and went through the yard

into the hut. His wife was putting straw into the stove with one hand, with the other she was holding a baby girl to her breast, which was hanging out of her dirty chemise.

Mitri crossed himself three times, turning towards the corner in which the ikons hung, and repeated some utterly meaningless words, which he called prayers, to the Trinity and the Virgin, the Creed and our Father.

"Isn't there any water?"

"The girl's gone for it. I've got some tea. Will you go up to the squire?"

"Yes, I'd better." The smoke from the stove made him cough. He took a rag off the wooden bench and went into the porch. The girl had just come back with the water. Mitri filled his mouth with water from the pail and squirted it out on his hands, took some more in his mouth to wash his face, dried himself with the rag, then parted and smoothed his curly hair with his fingers and went out. A little girl of about ten, with nothing on but a dirty shirt, came towards him. "Good-morning, Uncle Mitri," she said; "you are to come and thrash." "All right, I'll come," replied Mitri. He understood that he was expected to return the help given the week before by Kumushkir, a man as poor as he was himself, when he was thrashing his own corn with a horse-driven machine.

"Tell them I'll come — I'll come at lunch time. I've got to go to Ugrumi." Mitri went back to the hut, and changing his birch-bark shoes and the linen bands on his legs, started off to see the squire. After he had got three roubles from Volgin, and the same sum from Nicholas Petrovich, he returned to his house, gave the money to his wife, and went to his neighbour's. The thrashing machine was humming, and the driver was shouting. The lean horses were going slowly round him, straining at their traces. The driver was shouting to them in a monotone, "Now, there, my dears." Some women were unbinding sheaves, others were raking up the scattered straw and ears, and others again were gathering great armfuls of corn and handing them to the men to feed the machine. The work was in full swing. In the kitchen garden, which Mitri had to pass, a girl, clad only in a long shirt, was digging potatoes which she put into a basket.

"Where's your grandfather?" asked Mitri. "He's in the barn." Mitri went to the barn and set to work at once. The old man of eighty knew of Mitri's trouble. After greeting him, he gave him his place to feed the machine.

Mitri took off his ragged coat, laid it out of the way near the fence, and then began to work vigorously, raking the corn together and throwing it into the machine. The work went on without interruption until the dinner-hour. The cocks had crowed two or three times, but no one paid any attention to them; not because the workers did not believe them, but because they were scarcely heard for the noise of the work and the talk about it. At last the whistle of the squire's steam thrasher sounded three miles away, and then the owner came into the barn. He was a straight old man of eighty. "It's time to stop," he said; "it's dinner-time." Those at work seemed to redouble their efforts. In a moment the straw was cleared away; the grain that had been thrashed was separated from the chaff and brought in, and then the workers went into the hut.

The hut was smoke-begrimed, as its stove had no chimney, but it had been tidied up, and benches stood round the table, making room for all those who had been working, of whom there were nine, not counting the owners. Bread, soup, boiled potatoes, and kvass were placed on the table.

An old one-armed beggar, with a bag slung over his shoulder, came in with a crutch during the meal.

"Peace be to this house. A good appetite to you. For Christ's sake give me something."

"God will give it to you," said the mistress, already an old woman, and the daughter-in-law of the master. "Don't be angry with us." An old man, who was still standing near the door, said, "Give him some bread, Martha. How can you?"

"I am only wondering whether we shall have enough." "Oh, it is wrong, Martha. God tells us to help the poor. Cut him a slice."

Martha obeyed. The beggar went away. The man in charge of the thrashing-machine got up, said grace, thanked his hosts, and went away to rest.

Mitri did not lie down, but ran to the shop to buy some tobacco. He was longing for a smoke. While he smoked he chatted to a man from Demensk, asking the price of cattle, as he saw that he would not be able to manage without selling a cow. When he returned to the others, they were already back at work again; and so it went on till the evening.

Among these downtrodden, duped, and defrauded men, who are becoming demoralised by overwork, and being gradually done to death by underfeeding, there are men living who consider themselves Christians; and others so enlightened that they feel no further need for Christianity or for any religion, so superior do they appear in their own esteem. And yet their hideous, lazy lives are supported by the degrading, excessive labour of these slaves, not to mention the labour of millions of other slaves, toiling in factories to produce samovars, silver, carriages, machines, and the like for their use. They live among these horrors, seeing them and yet not seeing them, although often kind at heart — old men and women, young men and maidens, mothers and children — poor children who are being vitiated and trained into moral blindness.

Here is a bachelor grown old, the owner of thousands of acres, who has lived a life of idleness, greed, and over-indulgence, who reads The New Times, and is astonished that the government can be so unwise as to permit Jews to enter the university. There is his guest, formerly the governor of a province, now a senator with a big salary, who reads with satisfaction that a congress of lawyers has passed a resolution in favor of capital punishment. Their political enemy, N. P., reads a liberal paper, and cannot understand the blindness of the government in allowing the union of Russian men to exist.

Here is a kind, gentle mother of a little girl reading a story to her about Fox, a dog that lamed some rabbits. And here is this little girl. During her walks she sees other children, barefooted, hungry, hunting for green apples that have fallen from the trees; and, so accustomed is she to the sight, that these children do not seem to her

to be children such as she is, but only part of the usual surroundings — the familiar landscape.

Why is this?

# Young Tsar, the

Translated by C. Hagberg Wright 1912

# Chapter 1

young Tsar had just ascended the throne. For five weeks he had worked without ceasing, in the way that Tsars are accustomed to work. He had been attending to reports, signing papers, receiving ambassadors and high officials who came to be presented to him, and reviewing troops. He was tired, and as a traveller exhausted by heat and thirst longs for a draught of water and for rest, so he longed for a respite of just one day at least from receptions, from speeches, from parades — a few free hours to spend like an ordinary human being with his young, clever, and beautiful wife, to whom he had been married only a month before.

It was Christmas Eve. The young Tsar had arranged to have a complete rest that evening. The night before he had worked till very late at documents which his ministers of state had left for him to examine. In the morning he was present at the Te Deum, and then at a military service. In the afternoon he received official visitors; and later he had been obliged to listen to the reports of three ministers of state, and had given his assent to many important matters. In his conference with the Minister of Finance he had agreed to an increase of duties on imported goods, which should in the future add many millions to the State revenues. Then he sanctioned the sale of brandy by the Crown in various parts of the country, and signed a decree permitting the sale of alcohol in villages having markets. This was also calculated to increase the principal revenue to the State, which was derived from the sale of spirits. He had also approved of the issuing of a new gold loan required for a financial negotiation. The Minister of justice having reported on the complicated case of the succession of the Baron Snyders, the young Tsar confirmed the decision by his signature; and also approved the new rules relating to the application of Article 1830 of the penal code, providing for the punishment of tramps. In his conference with the Minister of the Interior he ratified the order concerning the collection of taxes in arrears, signed the order settling what measures should be taken in regard to the persecution of religious dissenters, and also one providing for the continuance of martial law in those provinces where it had already been established. With the Minister of War he arranged for the nomination of a new Corps Commander for the raising of recruits, and for punishment of breach of discipline. These things kept him occupied till dinner-time, and even then his freedom was not complete. A number of high officials had been invited to dinner, and he was obliged to talk to them: not in the way he felt disposed to do, but according to what he was expected to say. At last the tiresome dinner was over, and the guests departed.

The young Tsar heaved a sigh of relief, stretched himself and retired to his apartments to take off his uniform with the decorations on it, and to don the jacket he used to wear before his accession to the throne. His young wife had also retired to take off her dinner-dress, remarking that she would join him presently.

When he had passed the row of footmen who were standing erect before him, and reached his room; when he had thrown off his heavy uniform and put on his jacket, the young Tsar felt glad to be free from work; and his heart was filled with a tender emotion which sprang from the consciousness of his freedom, of his joyous, robust young life, and of his love. He threw himself on the sofa, stretched out his legs upon it, leaned his head on his hand, fixed his gaze on the dull glass shade of the lamp, and then a sensation which he had not experienced since his childhood, — the pleasure of going to sleep, and a drowsiness that was irresistible — suddenly came over him.

"My wife will be here presently and will find me asleep. No, I must not go to sleep," he thought. He let his elbow drop down, laid his cheek in the palm of his hand, made himself comfortable, and was so utterly happy that he only felt a desire not to be aroused from this delightful state.

And then what happens to all of us every day happened to him — he fell asleep without knowing himself when or how. He passed from one state into another without his will having any share in it, without even desiring it, and without regretting the state out of which he had passed. He fell into a heavy sleep which was like death. How long he had slept he did not know, but he was suddenly aroused by the soft touch of a hand upon his shoulder.

"It is my darling, it is she," he thought. "What a shame to have dozed off!"

But it was not she. Before his eyes, which were wide open and blinking at the light, she, that charming and beautiful creature whom he was expecting, did not stand, but he stood. Who he was the young Tsar did not know, but somehow it did not strike him that he was a stranger whom he had never seen before. It seemed as if he had known him for a long time and was fond of him, and as if he trusted him as he would trust himself. He had expected his beloved wife, but in her stead that man whom he had never seen before had come. Yet to the young Tsar, who was far from feeling regret or astonishment, it seemed not only a most natural, but also a necessary thing to happen.

"Come!" said the stranger.

"Yes, let us go," said the young Tsar, not knowing where he was to go, but quite aware that he could not help submitting to the command of the stranger. "But how shall we go?" he asked.

"In this way."

The stranger laid his hand on the Tsar's head, and the Tsar for a moment lost consciousness. He could not tell whether he had been unconscious a long or a short time, but when he recovered his senses he found himself in a strange place. The first thing he was aware of was a strong and stifling smell of sewage. The place in which he stood was a broad passage lit by the red glow of two dim lamps. Running along one side of the passage was a thick wall with windows protected by iron gratings. On the other side were doors secured with locks. In the passage stood a soldier, leaning up against the wall, asleep. Through the doors the young Tsar heard the muffled sound of living human beings: not of one alone, but of many. He was standing at the side of the young Tsar, and pressing his shoulder slightly with his soft hand, pushed him to

the first door, unmindful of the sentry. The young Tsar felt he could not do otherwise than yield, and approached the door. To his amazement the sentry looked straight at him, evidently without seeing him, as he neither straightened himself up nor saluted, but yawned loudly and, lifting his hand, scratched the back of his neck. The door had a small hole, and in obedience to the pressure of the hand that pushed him, the young Tsar approached a step nearer and put his eye to the small opening. Close to the door, the foul smell that stifled him was stronger, and the young Tsar hesitated to go nearer, but the hand pushed him on. He leaned forward, put his eye close to the opening, and suddenly ceased to perceive the odour. The sight he saw deadened his sense of smell. In a large room, about ten yards long and six yards wide, there walked unceasingly from one end to the other, six men in long grey coats, some in felt boots, some barefoot. There were over twenty men in all in the room, but in that first moment the young Tsar only saw those who were walking with quick, even, silent steps. It was a horrid sight to watch the continual, quick, aimless movements of the men who passed and overtook each other, turning sharply when they reached the wall, never looking at one another, and evidently concentrated each on his own thoughts. The young Tsar had observed a similar sight one day when he was watching a tiger in a menagerie pacing rapidly with noiseless tread from one end of his cage to the other, waving its tail, silently turning when it reached the bars, and looking at nobody. Of these men one, apparently a young peasant, with curly hair, would have been handsome were it not for the unnatural pallor of his face, and the concentrated, wicked, scarcely human, look in his eyes. Another was a Jew, hairy and gloomy. The third was a lean old man, bald, with a beard that had been shaven and had since grown like bristles. The fourth was extraordinarily heavily built, with well-developed muscles, a low receding forehead and a flat nose. The fifth was hardly more than a boy, long, thin, obviously consumptive. The sixth was small and dark, with nervous, convulsive movements. He walked as if he were skipping, and muttered continuously to himself. They were all walking rapidly backwards and forwards past the hole through which the young Tsar was looking. He watched their faces and their gait with keen interest. Having examined them closely, he presently became aware of a number of other men at the back of the room, standing round, or lying on the shelf that served as a bed. Standing close to the door he also saw the pail which caused such an unbearable stench. On the shelf about ten men, entirely covered with their cloaks, were sleeping. A red-haired man with a huge beard was sitting sideways on the shelf, with his shirt off. He was examining it, lifting it up to the light, and evidently catching the vermin on it. Another man, aged and white as snow, stood with his profile turned towards the door. He was praying, crossing himself, and bowing low, apparently so absorbed in his devotions as to be oblivious of all around him.

"I see — this is a prison," thought the young Tsar. "They certainly deserve pity. It is a dreadful life. But it cannot be helped. It is their own fault."

But this thought had hardly come into his head before he, who was his guide, replied to it.

"They are all here under lock and key by your order. They have all been sentenced in your name. But far from meriting their present condition which is due to your human judgment, the greater part of them are far better than you or those who were their judges and who keep them here. This one" — he pointed to the handsome, curly-headed fellow— "is a murderer. I do not consider him more guilty than those who kill in war or in duelling, and are rewarded for their deeds. He had neither education nor moral guidance, and his life had been cast among thieves and drunkards. This lessens his guilt, but he has done wrong, nevertheless, in being a murderer. He killed a merchant, to rob him. The other man, the Jew, is a thief, one of a gang of thieves. That uncommonly strong fellow is a horse-stealer, and guilty also, but compared with others not as culpable. Look!" — and suddenly the young Tsar found himself in an open field on a vast frontier. On the right were potato fields; the plants had been rooted out, and were lying in heaps, blackened by the frost; in alternate streaks were rows of winter corn. In the distance a little village with its tiled roofs was visible; on the left were fields of winter corn, and fields of stubble. No one was to be seen on any side, save a black human figure in front at the border-line, a gun slung on his back, and at his feet a dog. On the spot where the young Tsar stood, sitting beside him, almost at his feet, was a young Russian soldier with a green band on his cap, and with his rifle slung over his shoulders, who was rolling up a paper to make a cigarette. The soldier was obviously unaware of the presence of the young Tsar and his companion, and had not heard them. He did now turn round when the Tsar, who was standing directly over the soldier, asked, "Where are we?" "On the Prussian frontier," his guide answered. Suddenly, far away in front of them, a shot was fired. The soldier jumped to his feet, and seeing two men running, bent low to the ground, hastily put his tobacco into his pocket, and ran after one of them. "Stop, or I'll shoot!" cried the soldier. The fugitive, without stopping, turned his head and called out something evidently abusive or blasphemous.

"Damn you!" shouted the soldier, who put one foot a little forward and stopped, after which, bending his head over his rifle, and raising his right hand, he rapidly adjusted something, took aim, and, pointing the gun in the direction of the fugitive, probably fired, although no sound was heard. "Smokeless powder, no doubt," thought the young Tsar, and looking after the fleeing man saw him take a few hurried steps, and bending lower and lower, fall to the ground and crawl on his hands and knees. At last he remained lying and did not move. The other fugitive, who was ahead of him, turned round and ran back to the man who was lying on the ground. He did something for him and then resumed his flight.

"What does all this mean? " asked the Tsar.

"These are the guards on the frontier, enforcing the revenue laws. That man was killed to protect the revenues of the State."

"Has he actually been killed? "

The guide again laid his hand upon the head of the young Tsar, and again the Tsar lost consciousness. When he had recovered his senses he found himself in a small room

— the customs office. The dead body of a man, with a thin grizzled beard, an aquiline nose, and big eyes with the eyelids closed, was lying on the floor. His arms were thrown asunder, his feet bare, and his thick, dirty toes were turned up at right angles and stuck out straight. He had a wound in his side, and on his ragged cloth jacket, as well as on his blue shirt, were stains of clotted blood, which had turned black save for a few red spots here and there. A woman stood close to the wall, so wrapped up in shawls that her face could scarcely be seen. Motionless she gazed at the aquiline nose, the upturned feet, and the protruding eyeballs; sobbing and sighing, and drying her tears at long, regular intervals. A pretty girl of thirteen was standing at her mother's side, with her eyes and mouth wide open. A boy of eight clung to his mother's skirt, and looked intensely at his dead father without blinking.

From a door near them an official, an officer, a doctor, and a clerk with documents, entered. After them came a soldier, the one who had shot the man. He stepped briskly along behind his superiors, but the instant he saw the corpse he went suddenly pale, and quivered; and dropping his head stood still. When the official asked him whether that was the man who was escaping across the frontier, and at whom he had fired, he was unable to answer. His lips trembled, and his face twitched. "The s — s — s— " he began, but could not get out the words which he wanted to say. "The same, your excellency." The officials looked at each other and wrote something down.

"You see the beneficial results of that same system!"

In a room of sumptuous vulgarity two men sat drinking wine. One of them was old and grey, the other a young Jew. The young Jew was holding a roll of bank-notes in his hand, and was bargaining with the old man. He was buying smuggled goods.

"You've got 'em cheap," he said, smiling.

"Yes — but the risk— "

"This is indeed terrible," said the young Tsar; but it cannot be avoided. Such proceedings are necessary."

His companion made no response, saying merely, "Let us move on," and laid his hand again on the head of the Tsar. When the Tsar recovered consciousness, he was standing in a small room lit by a shaded lamp. A woman was sitting at the table sewing. A boy of eight was bending over the table, drawing, with his feet doubled up under him in the armchair. A student was reading aloud. The father and daughter of the family entered the room noisily.

"You signed the order concerning the sale of spirits," said the guide to the Tsar.

"Well?" said the woman.

"He's not likely to live."

"What's the matter with him?"

"They've kept him drunk all the time."

"It's not possible!" exclaimed the wife.

"It's true. And the boy's only nine years old, that Vania Moroshkine."

"What did you do to try to save him?" asked the wife.

"I tried everything that could be done. I gave him an emetic and put a mustard-plaster on him. He has every symptom of delirium tremens."

"It's no wonder — the whole family are drunkards. Annisia is only a little better than the rest, and even she is generally more or less drunk," said the daughter.

"And what about your temperance society?" the student asked his sister.

"What can we do when they are given every opportunity of drinking? Father tried to have the public-house shut up, but the law is against him. And, besides, when I was trying to convince Vasily Ermiline that it was disgraceful to keep a public-house and ruin the people with drink, he answered very haughtily, and indeed got the better of me before the crowd: 'But I have a license with the Imperial eagle on it. If there was anything wrong in my business, the Tsar wouldn't have issued a decree authorising it.' Isn't it terrible? The whole village has been drunk for the last three days. And as for feastdays, it is simply horrible to think of! It has been proved conclusively that alcohol does no good in any case, but invariably does harm, and it has been demonstrated to be an absolute poison. Then, ninety-nine per cent. of the crimes in the world are committed through its influence. We all know how the standard of morality and the general welfare improved at once in all the countries where drinking has been suppressed — like Sweden and Finland, and we know that it can be suppressed by exercising a moral influence over the masses. But in our country the class which could exert that influence — the Government, the Tsar and his officials — simply encourage drink. Their main revenues are drawn from the continual drunkenness of the people. They drink themselves — they are always drinking the health of somebody: 'Gentlemen, the Regiment!' The preachers drink, the bishops drink— "

Again the guide touched the head of the young Tsar, who again lost consciousness. This time he found himself in a peasant's cottage. The peasant — a man of forty, with red face and blood-shot eyes — was furiously striking the face of an old man, who tried in vain to protect himself from the blows. The younger peasant seized the beard of the old man and held it fast.

"For shame! To strike your father — !"

"I don't care, I'll kill him! Let them send me to Siberia, I don't care!"

The women were screaming. Drunken officials rushed into the cottage and separated father and son. The father had an arm broken and the son's beard was torn out. In the doorway a drunken girl was making violent love to an old besotted peasant.

"They are beasts!" said the young Tsar.

Another touch of his guide's hand and the young Tsar awoke in a new place. It was the office of the justice of the peace. A fat, bald-headed man, with a double chin and a chain round his neck, had just risen from his seat, and was reading the sentence in a loud voice, while a crowd of peasants stood behind the grating. There was a woman in rags in the crowd who did not rise. The guard gave her a push.

"Asleep! I tell you to stand up!" The woman rose.

"According to the decree of his Imperial Majesty— " the judge began reading the sentence. The case concerned that very woman. She had taken away half a bundle of

oats as she was passing the thrashing-floor of a landowner. The justice of the peace sentenced her to two months' imprisonment. The landowner whose oats had been stolen was among the audience. When the judge adjourned the court the landowner approached, and shook hands, and the judge entered into conversation with him. The next case was about a stolen samovar. Then there was a trial about some timber which had been cut, to the detriment of the landowner. Some peasants were being tried for having assaulted the constable of the district.

When the young Tsar again lost consciousness, he awoke to find himself in the middle of a village, where he saw hungry, half-frozen children and the wife of the man who had assaulted the constable broken down from overwork.

Then came a new scene. In Siberia, a tramp is being flogged with the lash, the direct result of an order issued by the Minister of justice. Again oblivion, and another scene. The family of a Jewish watchmaker is evicted for being too poor. The children are crying, and the Jew, Isaaks, is greatly distressed. At last they come to an arrangement, and he is allowed to stay on in the lodgings.

The chief of police takes a bribe. The governor of the province also secretly accepts a bribe. Taxes are being collected. In the village, while a cow is sold for payment, the police inspector is bribed by a factory owner, who thus escapes taxes altogether. And again a village court scene, and a sentence carried into execution — the lash!

"Ilia Vasilievich, could you not spare me that?"

"No."

The peasant burst into tears. "Well, of course, Christ suffered, and He bids us suffer too."

Then other scenes. The Stundists — a sect — being broken up and dispersed; the clergy refusing first to marry, then to bury a Protestant. Orders given concerning the passage of the Imperial railway train. Soldiers kept sitting in the mud — cold, hungry, and cursing. Decrees issued relating to the educational institutions of the Empress Mary Department. Corruption rampant in the foundling homes. An undeserved monument. Thieving among the clergy. The reinforcement of the political police. A woman being searched. A prison for convicts who are sentenced to be deported. A man being hanged for murdering a shop assistant.

Then the result of military discipline: soldiers wearing uniform and scoffing at it. A gipsy encampment. The son of a millionaire exempted from military duty, while the only support of a large family is forced to serve. The university: a teacher relieved of military service, while the most gifted musicians are compelled to perform it. Soldiers and their debauchery — and the spreading of disease.

Then a soldier who has made an attempt to desert. He is being tried. Another is on trial for striking an officer who has insulted his mother. He is put to death. Others, again, are tried for having refused to shoot. The runaway soldier sent to a disciplinary battalion and flogged to death. Another, who is guiltless, flogged, and his wounds sprinkled with salt till he dies. One of the superior officers stealing money belonging

to the soldiers. Nothing but drunkenness, debauchery, gambling, and arrogance on the part of the authorities.

What is the general condition of the people: the children are half-starving and degenerate; the houses are full of vermin; an everlasting dull round of labour, of submission, and of sadness. On the other hand: ministers, governors of provinces, covetous, ambitious, full of vanity, and anxious to inspire fear.

"But where are men with human feelings?"

"I will show you where they are."

Here is the cell of a woman in solitary confinement at Schlusselburg. She is going mad. Here is another woman — a girl — indisposed, violated by soldiers. A man in exile, alone, embittered, half-dead. A prison for convicts condemned to hard labour, and women flogged. They are many.

Tens of thousands of the best people. Some shut up in prisons, others ruined by false education, by the vain desire to bring them up as we wish. But not succeeding in this, whatever might have been is ruined as well, for it is made impossible. It is as if we were trying to make buckwheat out of corn sprouts by splitting the ears. One may spoil the corn, but one could never change it to buckwheat. Thus all the youth of the world, the entire younger generation, is being ruined.

But woe to those who destroy one of these little ones, woe to you if you destroy even one of them. On your soul, however, are hosts of them, who have been ruined in your name, all of those over whom your power extends.

"But what can I do?" exclaimed the Tsar in despair. "I do not wish to torture, to flog, to corrupt, to kill any one! I only want the welfare of all. Just as I yearn for happiness myself, so I want the world to be happy as well. Am I actually responsible for everything that is done in my name? What can I do? What am I to do to rid myself of such a responsibility? What can I do? I do not admit that the responsibility for all this is mine. If I felt myself responsible for one-hundredth part of it, I would shoot myself on the spot. It would not be possible to live if that were true. But how can I put an end, to all this evil? It is bound up with the very existence of the State. I am the head of the State! What am I to do? Kill myself? Or abdicate? But that would mean renouncing my duty. O God, O God, God, help me!" He burst into tears and awoke.

"How glad I am that it was only a dream," was his first thought. But when he began to recollect what he had seen in his dream, and to compare it with actuality, he realised that the problem propounded to him in dream remained just as important and as insoluble now that he was awake. For the first time the young Tsar became aware of the heavy responsibility weighing on him, and was aghast. His thoughts no longer turned to the young Queen and to the happiness he had anticipated for that evening, but became centred on the unanswerable question which hung over him: "What was to be done?"

In a state of great agitation he arose and went into the next room. An old courtier, a co-worker and friend of his father's, was standing there in the middle of the room

in conversation with the young Queen, who was on her way to join her husband. The young Tsar approached them, and addressing his conversation principally to the old courtier, told him what he had seen in his dream and what doubts the dream had left in his mind.

"That is a noble idea. It proves the rare nobility of your spirit," said the old man. "But forgive me for speaking frankly — you are too kind to be an emperor, and you exaggerate your responsibility. In the first place, the state of things is not as you imagine it to be. The people are not poor. They are well-to-do. Those who are poor are poor through their own fault. Only the guilty are punished, and if an unavoidable mistake does sometimes occur, it is like a thunder-bolt — an accident, or the will of God. You have but one responsibility: to fulfil your task courageously and to retain the power that is given to you. You wish the best for your people and God sees that. As for the errors which you have committed unwittingly, you can pray for forgiveness, and God will guide you and pardon you. All the more because you have done nothing that demands forgiveness, and there never have been and never will be men possessed of such extraordinary qualities as you and your father. Therefore all we implore you to do is to live, and to reward our endless devotion and love with your favour, and every one, save scoundrels who deserve no happiness, will be happy."

"What do you think about that?" the young Tsar asked his wife.

"I have a different opinion," said the clever young woman, who had been brought up in a free country. "I am glad you had that dream, and I agree with you that there are grave responsibilities resting upon you. I have often thought about it with great anxiety, and I think there is a simple means of casting off a part of the responsibility you are unable to bear, if not all of it. A large proportion of the power which is too heavy for you, you should delegate to the people, to its representatives, reserving for yourself only the supreme control, that is, the general direction of the affairs of State."

The Queen had hardly ceased to expound her views, when the old courtier began eagerly to refute her arguments, and they started a polite but very heated discussion.

For a time the young Tsar followed their arguments, but presently he ceased to be aware of what they said, listening only to the voice of him who had been his guide in the dream, and who was now speaking audibly in his heart.

"You are not only the Tsar," said the voice, "but more. You are a human being, who only yesterday came into this world, and will perchance to-morrow depart out of it. Apart from your duties as a Tsar, of which that old man is now speaking, you have more immediate duties not by any means to be disregarded; human duties, not the duties of a Tsar towards his subjects, which are only accidental, but an eternal duty, the duty of a man in his relation to God, the duty toward your own soul, which is to save it, and also, to serve God in establishing his kingdom on earth. You are not to be guarded in your actions either by what has been or what will be, but only by what it is your own duty to do.

...

He opened his eyes — his wife was awakening him. Which of the three courses the young Tsar chose, will be told in fifty years.

GODSON, THE

Translated by Louise and Aylmer Maude 1906

'Ye have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil.' — Matt. v. 38, 39.

'Vengeance is mine; I will repay.' — Rom. xii. 19.

I

A SON was born to a poor peasant. He was glad and went to his neighbour to ask him to stand godfather to the boy. The neighbour refused — he did not like standing godfather to a poor man's child.

The peasant asked another neighbour, but he too refused, and after that the poor father went to every house in the village, but found no one willing to be godfather to his son. So he set off to another village, and on the way he met a man who stopped and said:

'Good-day, my good man; where are you off to?'

'God has given me a child,' said the peasant, 'to rejoice my eyes in youth, to comfort my old age, and to pray for my soul after death. But I am poor, and no one in our village will stand godfather to him, so I am now on my way to seek a godfather for him elsewhere.'

'Let me be godfather,' said the stranger.

The peasant was glad, and thanked him, but added: 'And whom shall I ask to be godmother?'

'Go to the town,' replied the stranger, 'and, in the square, you will see a stone house with shop-windows in the front. At the entrance you will find the tradesman to whom it belongs. Ask him to let his daughter stand godmother to your child.'

The peasant hesitated.

'How can I ask a rich tradesman?' said he. 'He will despise me, and will not let his daughter come.'

'Don't trouble about that. Go and ask. Get everything ready by to-morrow morning, and I will come to the christening.'

The poor peasant returned home, and then drove to the town to find the tradesman. He had hardly taken his horse into the yard, when the tradesman himself came out.

'What do you want?' said he.

'Why, sir,' said the peasant, 'you see God has given me a son to rejoice my eyes in youth, to comfort my old age, and to pray for my soul after death. Be so kind as to let your daughter stand godmother to him.

'And when is the christening?' said the tradesman.

'To-morrow morning.'

'Very well. Go in peace. She shall be with you at Mass to-morrow morning.'

The next day the godmother came, and the godfather also, and the infant was baptized. Immediately after the christening the godfather went away. They did not know who he was, and never saw him again.

## Chapter 2

The child grew up to be a joy to his parents. He was strong, willing to work, clever and obedient. When he was ten years old his parents sent him to school to learn to read and write. What others learnt in five years, he learnt in one, and soon there was nothing more they could teach him.

Easter came round, and the boy went to see his godmother, to give her his Easter greeting.

'Father and mother,' said he when he got home again, 'where does my godfather live? I should like to give him my Easter greeting, too.'

And his father answered:

'We know nothing about your godfather, dear son. We often regret it ourselves. Since the day you were christened we have never seen him, nor had any news of him. We do not know where he lives, or even whether he is still alive.'

The son bowed to his parents.

'Father and mother,' said he, 'let me go and look for my godfather. I must find him and give him my Easter greeting.

So his father and mother let him go, and the boy set off to find his godfather.

## Chapter 3

The boy left the house and set out along the road. He had been walking for several hours when he met a stranger who stopped him and said:

'Good-day to you, my boy. Where are you going?'

And the boy answered:

'I went to see my godmother and to give her my Easter greeting, and when I got home I asked my parents where my godfather lives, that I might go and greet him also. They told me they did not know. They said he went away as soon as I was christened, and they know nothing about him, not even if he be still alive. But I wished to see my godfather, and so I have set out to look for him.'

Then the stranger said: 'I am your godfather.'

The boy was glad to hear this. After kissing his godfather three times for an Easter greeting, he asked him:

'Which way are you going now, godfather? If you are coming our way, please come to our house; but if you are going home, I will go with you.'

'I have no time now,' replied his godfather, 'to come to your house. I have business in several villages; but I shall return home again to-morrow. Come and see me then.'

'But how shall I find you, godfather?'

'When you leave home, go straight towards the rising sun, and you will come to a forest; going through the forest you will come to a glade. When you reach this glade sit down and rest awhile, and look around you and see what happens. On the further side of the forest you will find a garden, and in it a house with a golden roof. That is my home. Go up to the gate, and I will myself be there to meet you.'

And having said this the godfather disappeared from his godson's sight.

## Chapter 4

The boy did as his godfather had told him. He walked eastward until he reached a forest, and there he came to a glade, and in the midst of the glade he saw a pine tree to a branch of which was tied a rope supporting a heavy log of oak. Close under this log stood a wooden trough filled with honey. Hardly had the boy had time to wonder why the honey was placed there, and why the log hung above it, when he heard a crackling in the wood, and saw some bears approaching; a she-bear, followed by a yearling and three tiny cubs. The she-bear, sniffing the air, went straight to the trough, the cubs following her. She thrust her muzzle into the honey, and called the cubs to do the same. They scampered up and began to eat. As they did so, the log, which the she-bear had moved aside with her head, swung away a little and, returning, gave the cubs a push. Seeing this the she-bear shoved the log away with her paw. It swung further out and returned more forcibly, striking one cub on the back and another on the head. The cubs ran away howling with pain, and the mother, with a growl, caught the log in her fore paws and, raising it above her head flung it away. The log flew high in the air and the yearling, rushing to the trough, pushed his muzzle into the honey and began to suck noisily. The others also drew near, but they had not reached the trough when the log, flying back, struck the yearling on the head and killed him. The mother growled louder than before and, seizing the log, flung it from her with all her might. It flew higher than the branch it was tied to; so high that the rope slackened; and the she-bear returned to the trough, and the little cubs after her. The log flew higher and higher, then stopped, and began to fall. The nearer it came the faster it swung, and at last, at full speed, it crashed down on her head. The she-bear rolled over, her legs jerked and she died! The cubs ran away into the forest.

The boy watched all this in surprise, and then continued his way. Leaving the forest, he came upon a large garden in the midst of which stood a lofty palace with a golden roof. At the gate stood his godfather, smiling. He welcomed his godson, and led him through the gateway into the garden. The boy had never dreamed of such beauty and delight as surrounded him in that place.

Then his godfather led him into the palace, which was even more beautiful inside than outside. The godfather showed the boy through all the rooms: each brighter and finer than the other, but at last they came to one door that was sealed up.

'You see this door,' said he. 'It is not locked, but only sealed. It can be opened, but I forbid you to open it. You may live here, and go where you please and enjoy all the delights of the place. My only command is — do not open that door! But should you ever do so, remember what you saw in the forest.'

Having said this the godfather went away. The godson remained in the palace, and life there was so bright and joyful that he thought he had only been there three hours, when he had really lived there thirty years. When thirty years had gone by, the godson happened to be passing the sealed door one day, and he wondered why his godfather had forbidden him to enter that room.

'I'll just look in and see what is there,' thought he, and he gave the door a push. The seals gave way, the door opened, and the godson entering saw a hall more lofty and beautiful than all the others, and in the midst of it a throne. He wandered about the hall for a while, and then mounted the steps and seated himself upon the throne. As he sat there he noticed a sceptre leaning against the throne, and took it in his hand. Hardly had he done so when the four walls of the hall suddenly disappeared. The godson looked around, and saw the whole world, and all that men were doing in it. He looked in front, and saw the sea with ships sailing on it. He looked to the right, and saw where strange heathen people lived. He looked to the left, and saw where men who were Christians, but not Russians, lived. He looked round, and on the fourth side, he saw Russian people, like himself.

'I will look,' said he, 'and see what is happening at home, and whether the harvest is good.'

He looked towards his father's fields and saw the sheaves standing in stooks. He began counting them to see whether there was much corn, when he noticed a peasant driving in a cart. It was night, and the godson thought it was his father coming to cart the corn by night. But as he looked he recognized Vasíly Koudryashóf, the thief, driving into the field and beginning to load the sheaves on to his cart. This made the godson angry, and he called out:

'Father, the sheaves are being stolen from our field!'

His father, who was out with the horses in the night-pasture, woke up.

'I dreamt the sheaves were being stolen,' said he. 'I will just ride down and see.'

So he got on a horse and rode out to the field. Finding Vasíly there, he called together other peasants to help him, and Vasíly was beaten, bound, and taken to prison.

Then the godson looked at the town, where his godmother lived. He saw that she was now married to a tradesman. She lay asleep, and her husband rose and went to his mistress. The godson shouted to her:

'Get up, get up, your husband has taken to evil ways.'

The godmother jumped up and dressed, and finding out where her husband was, she shamed and beat his mistress, and drove him away.

Then the godson looked for his mother, and saw her lying asleep in her cottage. And a thief crept into the cottage and began to break open the chest in which she kept her things. The mother awoke and screamed, and the robber seizing an axe, swung it over his head to kill her.

The godson could not refrain from hurling the sceptre at the robber. It struck him upon the temple, and killed him on the spot.

## Chapter 6

As soon as the godson had killed the robber, the walls closed and the hall became just as it had been before.

Then the door opened and the godfather entered, and coming up to his godson he took him by the hand and led him down from the throne.

'You have not obeyed my command,' said he. 'You did one wrong thing, when you opened the forbidden door; another, when you mounted the throne and took my sceptre into your hands; and you have now done a third wrong, which has much increased the evil in the world. Had you sat here an hour longer, you would have ruined half mankind.'

Then the godfather led his godson back to the throne, and took the sceptre in his hand; and again the walls fell asunder and all things became visible. And the godfather said:

'See what you have done to your father. Vasíly has now been a year in prison, and has come out having learnt every kind of wickedness, and has become quite incorrigible. See, he has stolen two of your father's horses, and he is now setting fire to his barn. All this you have brought upon your father.'

The godson saw his father's barn breaking into flames, but his godfather shut off the sight from him, and told him to look another way.

'Here is your godmother's husband,' he said. 'It is a year since he left his wife, and now he goes after other women. His former mistress has sunk to still lower depths. Sorrow has driven his wife to drink. That's what you have done to your godmother.'

The godfather shut off this also, and showed the godson his father's house. There he saw his mother weeping for her sins, repenting, and saying:

'It would have been better had the robber killed me that night. I should not have sinned so heavily.'

'That,' said the godfather, 'is what you have done to your mother.'

He shut this off also, and pointed downwards; and the godson saw two warders holding the robber in front of a prison-house.

And the godfather said:

'This man had murdered ten men. He should have expiated his sins himself, but by killing him you have taken his sins on yourself. Now you must answer for all his sins. That is what you have done to yourself. The she-bear pushed the log aside once, and disturbed her cubs; she pushed it again, and killed her yearling; she pushed it a third time, and was killed herself. You have done the same. Now I give you thirty years to go into the world and atone for the robber's sins. If you do not atone for them, you will have to take his place.'

'How am I to atone for his sins?' asked the godson.

And the godfather answered:

'When you have rid the world of as much evil as you have brought into it, you will have atoned both for your own sins and for those of the robber.'

'How can I destroy evil in the world?' the godson asked.

'Go out,' replied the godfather, 'and walk straight towards the rising sun. After a time you will come to a field with some men in it. Notice what they are doing, and teach them what you know. Then go on and note what you see. On the fourth day you will come to a forest. In the midst of the forest is a cell and in the cell lives a hermit. Tell him all that has happened. He will teach you what to do. When you have done all he tells you, you will have atoned for your own and the robber's sins.'

And, having said this, the godfather led his godson out of the gate.

# Chapter 7

The godson went his way, and as he went he thought: How am I to destroy evil in the world? Evil is destroyed by banishing evil men, keeping them in prison, or putting them to death. How then am I to destroy evil without taking the sins of others upon myself?'

The godson pondered over it for a long time, but could come to no conclusion. He went on until he came to a field where corn was growing thick and good and ready for the reapers. The godson saw that a little calf had got in among the corn. Some men who were at hand saw it, and mounting their horses they chased it backwards and forwards through the corn. Each time the calf was about to come out of the corn some one rode up and the calf got frightened and turned back again, and they all galloped after it, trampling down the corn. On the road stood a woman crying.

'They will chase my calf to death,' she said.

And the godson said to the peasants:

'What are you doing? Come out of the cornfield all of you, and let the woman call her calf.'

The men did so; and the woman came to the edge of the cornfield and called to the calf. 'Come along browney, come along,' said she. The calf pricked up its ears, listened a while, and then ran towards the woman of its own accord, and hid its head in her

skirts, almost knocking her over. The men were glad the woman was glad, and so was the little calf.

The godson went on, and he thought:

'Now I see that evil spreads evil. The more people try to drive away evil, the more the evil grows. Evil, it seems, cannot be destroyed by evil; but in what way it can be destroyed, I do not know. The calf obeyed its mistress and so all went well; but if it had not obeyed her, how could we have got it out of the field?'

The godson pondered again, but came to no conclusion, and continued his way.

## Chapter 8

He went on until he came to a village. At the furthest end he stopped and asked leave to stay the night. The woman of the house was there alone, house-cleaning, and she let him in. The godson entered, and taking his seat upon the brick oven he watched what the woman was doing. He saw her finish scrubbing the room and begin scrubbing the table. Having done this, she began wiping the table with a dirty cloth. She wiped it from side to side — but it did not come clean. The soiled cloth left streaks of dirt. Then she wiped it the other way. The first streaks disappeared, but others came in their place. Then she wiped it from one end to the other, but again the same thing happened. The soiled cloth messed the table; when one streak was wiped off another was left on. The godson watched for awhile in silence, and then said:

'What are you doing, mistress?'

'Don't you see I'm cleaning up for the holiday. Only I can't manage this table, it won't come clean. I'm quite tired out.'

'You should rinse your cloth,' said the godson, 'before you wipe the table with it.'

The woman did so, and soon had the table clean.

'Thank you for telling me,' said she.

In the morning he took leave of the woman and went on his way. After walking a good while, he came to the edge of a forest. There he saw some peasants who were making wheel-rims of bent wood. Coming nearer, the godson saw that the men were going round and round, but could not bend the wood.

He stood and looked on, and noticed that the block, to which the piece of wood was fastened, was not fixed, but as the men moved round it went round too. Then the godson said:

'What are you doing, friends?'

'Why, don't you see, we are making wheel rims. We have twice steamed the wood, and are quite tired out, but the wood will not bend.'

'You should fix the block, friends,' said the godson, 'or else it goes round when you do.'

The peasants took his advice and fixed the block, and then the work went on merrily.

The godson spent the night with them, and then went on. He walked all day and all night, and just before dawn he came upon some drovers encamped for the night, and lay down beside them. He saw that they had got all their cattle settled, and were trying to light a fire. They had taken dry twigs and lighted them, but before the twigs had time to burn up, they smothered them with damp brushwood. The brushwood hissed and the fire smouldered and went out. Then the drovers brought more dry wood, lit it, and again put on the brushwood — and again the fire went out. They struggled with it for a long time, but could not get the fire to burn. Then the godson said:

'Do not be in such a hurry to put on the brushwood. Let the dry wood burn up properly before you put any on. When the fire is well alight you can put on as much as you please.'

The drovers followed his advice. They let the fire burn up fiercely before adding the brushwood, which then flared up so that they soon had a roaring fire.

The godson remained with them for a while, and then continued his way. He went on, wondering what the three things he had seen might mean; but he could not fathom them.

## Chapter 9

The godson walked the whole of that day, and in the evening came to another forest. There he found a hermit's cell, at which he knocked.

'Who is there?' asked a voice from within.

'A great sinner,' replied the godson. I must atone for another's sins as well as for my own.

The hermit hearing this came out.

'What sins are those that you have to bear for another?'

The godson told him everything: about his godfather; about the she-bear with the cubs; about the throne in the sealed room; about the commands his godfather had given him, as well as about the peasants he had seen trampling down the corn, and the calf that ran out when its mistress called it.

'I have seen that one cannot destroy evil by evil,' said he, 'but I cannot understand how it is to be destroyed. Teach me how it can be done.

'Tell me,' replied the hermit, 'what else you have seen on your way.'

The godson told him about the woman washing the table, and the men making cart-wheels, and the drovers fighting their fire.

The hermit listened to it all, and then went back to his cell and brought out an old jagged axe.

'Come with me,' said he.

When they had gone some way, the hermit pointed to a tree.

'Cut it down,' he said.

The godson felled the tree.

'Now chop it into three,' said the hermit.

The godson chopped the tree into three pieces. Then the hermit went back to his cell, and brought out some blazing sticks.

'Burn those three logs,' said he.

So the godson made a fire, and burnt the three logs till only three charred stumps remained.

'Now plant them half in the ground, like this.'

The godson did so.

'You see that river at the foot of the hill. Bring water from there in your mouth, and water these stumps. Water this stump, as you taught the woman: this one as you taught the wheel-wrights: and this one, as you taught the drovers. When all three have taken root and from these charred stumps apple-trees have sprung you will know how to destroy evil in men, and will have atoned for all your sins.'

Having said this, the hermit returned to his cell. The godson pondered for a long time, but could not understand what the hermit meant. Nevertheless he set to work to do as he had been told.

The godson went down to the river, filled his mouth with water, and returning, emptied it on to one of the charred stumps. This he did again and again, and watered all three-stumps. When he was hungry and quite tired out, he went to the cell to ask the old hermit for some food. He opened the door, and there upon a bench he saw the old man lying dead. The godson looked round for food, and he found some dried bread and ate a little of it. Then he took a spade and set to work to dig the hermit's grave. During the night he carried water and watered the stumps, and in the day he dug the grave. He had hardly finished the grave and was about to bury the corpse, when some people from the village came, bringing food for the old man.

The people heard that the old hermit was dead, and that he had given the godson his blessing, and left him in his place. So they buried the old man, gave the bread they had brought to the godson, and promising to bring him some more, they went away.

The godson remained in the old man's place. There he lived, eating the food people brought him, and doing as he had been told: carrying water from the river in his mouth and watering the charred stumps.

He lived thus for a year, and many people visited him. His fame spread abroad, as a holy man who lived in the forest and brought water from the bottom of a hill in his mouth to water charred stumps for the salvation of his soul. People flocked to see him. Rich merchants drove up bringing him presents, but he kept only the barest necessaries for himself, and gave the rest away to the poor.

And so the godson lived: carrying water in his mouth and watering the stumps half the day, and resting and receiving people the other half. And he began to think that this was the way he had been told to live, in order to destroy evil and atone for his sins.

He spent two years in this manner, not omitting for a single day to water the stumps. But still not one of them sprouted.

One day, as he sat in his cell, he heard a man ride past, singing as he went. The godson came out to see what sort of a man it was. He saw a strong young fellow, well dressed, and mounted on a handsome, well-saddled horse.

The godson stopped him, and asked him who he was, and where he was going.

'I am a robber,' the man answered, drawing rein. 'I ride about the highways killing people; and the more I kill, the merrier are the songs I sing.'

The godson was horror-struck, and thought:

'How can the evil be destroyed in such a man as this? It is easy to speak to those who come to me of their own accord and confess their sins. But this one boasts of the evil he does.'

So he said nothing, and turned away, thinking: 'What am I to do now? This robber may take to riding about here, and he will frighten away the people. They will leave off coming to me. It will be a loss to them, and I shall not know how to live.'

So the godson turned back, and said to the robber:

'People come to me here, not to boast of their sins, but to repent, and to pray for forgiveness. Repent of your sins, if you fear God; but if there is no repentance in your heart, then go away and never come here again. Do not trouble me, and do not frighten people away from me. If you do not hearken, God will punish you.'

The robber laughed:

'I am not afraid of God, and I will not listen to you. You are not my master,' said he. 'You live by your piety, and I by my robbery. We all must live. You may teach the old women who come to you, but you have nothing to teach me. And because you have reminded me of God, I will kill two more men tomorrow. I would kill you, but I do not want to soil my hands just now. See that in future you keep out of my way!'

Having uttered this threat, the robber rode away. He did not come again, and the godson lived in peace, as before, for eight more years.

## Chapter 11

One night the godson watered his stumps, and, after returning to his cell, he sat down to rest, and watched the footpath, wondering if some one would soon come. But no one came at all that day. He sat alone till evening, feeling lonely and dull, and he thought about his past life. He remembered how the robber had reproached him for living by his piety; and he reflected on his way of life. 'I am not living as the hermit commanded me to,' thought he. 'The hermit laid a penance upon me, and I have made both a living and fame out of it; and have been so tempted by it, that now I feel dull when people do not come to me; and when they do come, I only rejoice because they praise my holiness. That is not how one should live. I have been led astray by love of praise. I have not atoned for my past sins, but have added fresh ones. I will go to another part of the forest where people will not find me; and I will live so as to atone for my old sins and commit no fresh ones.'

Having come to this conclusion the godson filled a bag with dried bread and, taking a spade, left the cell and started for a ravine he knew of in a lonely spot, where he could dig himself a cave and hide from the people.

As he was going along with his bag and his spade he saw the robber riding towards him. The godson was frightened, and started to run away, but the robber overtook him.

'Where are you going?' asked the robber.

The godson told him he wished to get away from the people and live somewhere where no one would come to him. This surprised the robber.

'What will you live on, if people do not come to see you?' asked he.

The godson had not even thought of this, but the robber's question reminded him that food would be necessary.

'On what God pleases to give me,' he replied.

The robber said nothing, and rode away.

'Why did I not say anything to him about his way of life?' thought the godson. 'He might repent now. To-day he seems in a gentler mood, and has not threatened to kill me.' And he shouted to the robber:

'You have still to repent of your sins. You cannot escape from God.'

The robber turned his horse, and drawing a knife from his girdle threatened the hermit with it. The latter was alarmed, and ran away further into the forest.

The robber did not follow him, but only shouted:

'Twice I have let you off, old man, but next time you come in my way I will kill you!'

Having said this, he rode away. In the evening when the godson went to water his stumps — one of them was sprouting! A little apple tree was growing out of it.

## Chapter 12

After hiding himself from everybody, the godson lived all alone. When his supply of bread was exhausted, he thought: 'Now I must go and look for some roots to eat.' He had not gone far, however, before he saw a bag of dried bread hanging on a branch. He took it down, and as long as it lasted he lived upon that.

When he had eaten it all, he found another bagful on the same branch. So he lived on, his only trouble being his fear of the robber. Whenever he heard the robber passing he hid thinking:

'He may kill me before I have had time to atone for my sins.'

In this way he lived for ten more years. The one apple-tree continued to grow, but the other two stumps remained exactly as they were.

One morning the godson rose early and went to his work. By the time he had thoroughly moistened the ground round the stumps, he was tired out and sat down to rest. As he sat there he thought to himself:

'I have sinned, and have become afraid of death. It may be God's will that I should redeem my sins by death.'

Hardly had this thought crossed his mind when he heard the robber riding up, swearing at something. When the godson heard this, he thought:

'No evil and no good can befall me from any one but from God.'

And he went to meet the robber. He saw the robber was not alone, but behind him on the saddle sat another man, gagged, and bound hand and foot. The man was doing nothing, but the robber was abusing him violently. The godson went up and stood in front of the horse.

'Where are you taking this man?' he asked.

'Into the forest,' replied the robber. 'He is a merchant's son, and will not tell me where his father's money is hidden. I am going to flog him till he tells me.'

And the robber spurred on his horse, but the godson caught hold of his bridle, and would not let him pass.

'Let this man go!' he said.

The robber grew angry, and raised his arm to strike.

'Would you like a taste of what I am going to give this man? Have I not promised to kill you? Let go!'

The godson was not afraid.

'You shall not go,' said he. 'I do not fear you. I fear no one but God, and He wills that I should not let you pass. Set this man free!'

The robber frowned, and snatching out his knife, cut the ropes with which the merchant's son was bound, and set him free.

'Get away both of you,' he said, 'and beware hour you cross my path again.'

The merchant's son jumped down and ran away. The robber was about to ride on, but the godson stopped him again, and again spoke to him about giving up his evil life. The robber heard him to the end in silence, and then rode away without a word.

The next morning the godson went to water his stumps and lo! the second stump was sprouting. A second young apple-tree had begun to grow.

## Chapter 13

Another ten years had gone by. The godson was sitting quietly one day, desiring nothing, fearing nothing, and with a heart full of joy.

'What blessings God showers on men!' thought he. 'Yet how needlessly they torment themselves. What prevents them from living happily?'

And remembering all the evil in men, and the troubles they bring upon themselves, his heart filled with pity.

'It is wrong of me to live as I do,' he said to himself. 'I must go and teach others what I have myself learnt.'

Hardly had he thought this, when he heard the robber approaching. He let him pass, thinking:

'It is no good talking to him, he will not understand.'

That was his first thought, but ho changed his mind and went out into the road. He saw that the robber was gloomy, and was riding with downcast eyes. The godson looked at him, pitied him, and running up to him laid his hand upon his knee.

'Brother, dear,' said he, 'have some pity on your own soul! In you lives the spirit of God. You suffer, and torment others, and lay up more and more suffering for the future. Yet God loves you, and has prepared such blessings for you. Do not ruin yourself utterly. Change your life!'

The robber frowned and turned away.

'Leave me alone!' said he.

But the godson held the robber still faster, and began to weep.

Then the robber lifted his eyes and looked at the godson. He looked at him for a long time, and alighting from his horse, fell on his knees at the godson's feet.

'You have overcome me, old man,' said he. 'For twenty years I have resisted you, but now you have conquered me. Do what you will with me, for I have no more power over myself. When you first tried to persuade me, it only angered me more. Only when you hid yourself from men did I begin to consider your words: for I saw then that you asked nothing of them for yourself. Since that day I have brought food for you, hanging it upon the tree.'

Then the godson remembered that the woman got her table clean only after she had rinsed her cloth. In the same way, it was only when he ceased caring about himself, and cleansed his own heart, that he was able to cleanse the hearts of others.

The robber went on.

'When I saw that you did not fear death, my heart turned.'

Then the godson remembered that the wheel-wrights could not bend the rims until they had fixed their block. So, not till he had cast away the fear of death and made his life fast in God, could he subdue this man's unruly heart.

'But my heart did not quite melt,' continued the robber, 'until you pitied me and wept for me.'

The godson, full of joy, led the robber to the place where the stumps were. And when they got there, they saw that from the third stump an apple-tree had begun to sprout. And the godson remembered that the drovers had not been able to light the damp wood until the fire had burnt up well. So it was only when his own heart burnt warmly, that another's heart had been kindled by it.

And the godson was full of joy that he had at last atoned for his sins.

He told all this to the robber, and died. The robber buried him, and lived as the godson had commanded him, teaching to others what the godson had taught him.

GREAT BEAR, THE

Translated Rochelle S. Townsend 1916

A LONG, long time ago there was a big drought on the earth. All the rivers dried up and the streams and wells, and the trees withered and the bushes and grass, and men and beasts died of thirst.

One night a little girl went out with a pitcher to find some water for her sick mother. She wandered and wandered everywhere, but could find no water, and she grew so tired that she lay down on the grass and fell asleep. When she awoke and took up the pitcher she nearly upset the water it contained. The pitcher was full of clear, fresh water. The little girl was glad and was about to put it to her lips, but she remembered her mother and ran home with the pitcher as fast as she could. She hurried so much that she did not notice a little dog in her path ; she stumbled over it and dropped the pitcher. The dog whined pitifully ; the little girl seized the pitcher.

She thought the water would have been upset, but the pitcher stood upright and the water was there as before. She poured a little into the palm of her hand and the dog lapped it and was comforted. When the little girl again took up the pitcher, it had turned from common wood to silver. She took the pitcher home and gave it to her mother.

The mother said, " I shall die just the same ; you had better drink it,' : and she handed the pitcher to the child. In that moment the pitcher turned from silver to gold. The little girl could no longer contain herself and was about to put the pitcher to her lips, when the door opened and a stranger entered who begged for a drink. The little girl swallowed her saliva and gave the pitcher to him. And suddenly seven large diamonds sprang out of the pitcher and a stream of clear, fresh water flowed from it. And the seven diamonds began to rise, and they rose higher and higher till they reached the sky and became the Great Bear.

# Ilyás

Translated by Louise and Aylmer Maude 1906

THERE ONCE LIVED, in the Government of Oufá a Bashkír named Ilyás. His father, who died a year after he had found his son a wife, did not leave him much property. Ilyás then had only seven mares, two cows, and about a score of sheep. He was a good manager, however, and soon began to acquire more. He and his wife worked from morn till night; rising earlier than others and going later to bed; and his possessions increased year by year. Living in this way, Ilyás little by little acquired great wealth. At the end of thirty-five years he had 200 horses, 150 head of cattle, and 1,200 sheep. Hired labourers tended his flocks and herds, and hired women milked his mares and cows, and made kumiss (Kumiss (or more properly koumys) is a fermented drink prepared from mare's milk), butter and cheese. Ilyás had abundance of everything, and every one in the district envied him. They said of him:

'Ilyás is a fortunate man: he has plenty of everything. This world must be a pleasant place for him.'

People of position heard of Ilyás and sought his acquaintance. Visitors came to him from afar; and he welcomed every one, and gave them food and drink. Whoever might come, there was always kumiss, tea, sherbet, and mutton to set before them. Whenever visitors arrived a sheep would be killed, or sometimes two; and if many guests came he would even slaughter a mare for them.

Ilyás had three children: two sons and a daughter; and he married them all off. While he was poor, his sons worked with him, and looked after the flocks and herds themselves; but when he grew rich they got spoiled and one of them took to drink. The eldest was killed in a brawl; and the younger, who had married a self-willed woman, ceased to obey his father, and they could not live together any more.

So they parted, and Ilyás gave his son a house and some of the cattle; and this diminished his wealth. Soon after that, a disease broke out among Ilyás's sheep, and many died. Then followed a bad harvest, and the hay crop failed; and many cattle died that winter. Then the Kirghíz captured his best herd of horses; and Ilyás's property dwindled away. It became smaller and smaller, while at the same time his strength grew less; till, by the time he was seventy years old, he had begun to sell his furs, carpets, saddles, and tents. At last he had to part with his remaining cattle, and found himself face to face with want. Before he knew how it had happened, he had lost everything, and in their old age he and his wife had to go into service. Ilyás had nothing left, except the clothes on his back, a fur cloak, a cup, his indoor shoes and overshoes, and his wife, Sham-Shemagi, who also was old by this time. The son who had parted from him had gone into a far country, and his daughter was dead, so that there was no one to help the old couple.

Their neighbour, Muhammad-Shah, took pity on them. Muhammad-Shah was neither rich nor poor, but lived comfortably, and was a good man. He remembered Ilyás's hospitality, and pitying him, said:

'Come and live with me, Ilyás, you and your old woman. In summer you can work in my melon-garden as much as your strength allows, and in winter feed my cattle;

and Sham-Shemagi shall milk my mares and make kumiss. I will feed and clothe you both. When you need anything, tell me, and you shall have it.'

Ilyás thanked his neighbour, and he and his wife took service with Muhammad-Shah as labourers. At first the position seemed hard to them, but they got used to it, and lived on, working as much as their strength allowed.

Muhammad-Shah found it was to his advantage to keep such people, because, having been masters themselves, they knew how to manage and were not lazy, but did all the work they could. Yet it grieved Muhammad-Shah to see people brought so low who had been of such high standing.

It happened once that some of Muhammad-Shah's relatives came from a great distance to visit him, and a Mullah came too. Muhammad-Shah told Ilyás to catch a sheep and kill it. Ilyás skinned the sheep, and boiled it, and sent it in to the guests. The guests ate the mutton, had some tea, and then began drinking kumiss. As they were sitting with their host on down cushions on a carpet, conversing and sipping kumiss from their cups, Ilyás, having finished his work passed by the open door. Muhammad-Shah, seeing him pass, said to one of the guests:

'Did you notice that old man who passed just now?'

'Yes,' said the visitor, 'what is there remarkable about him?'

'Only this — that he was once the richest man among us,' replied the host. 'His name is Ilyás. You may have heard of him.'

'Of course I have heard of him,' the guest answered 'I never saw him before, but his fame has spread far and wide.'

'Yes, and now he has nothing left,' said Muhammad-Shah, 'and he lives with me as my labourer, and his old woman is here too — she milks the mares.'

The guest was astonished: he clicked with his tongue, shook his head, and said:

'Fortune turns like a wheel. One man it lifts, another it sets down! Does not the old man grieve over all he has lost?'

'Who can tell. He lives quietly and peacefully, and works well.'

'May I speak to him?' asked the guest. 'I should like to ask him about his life.'

'Why not?' replied the master, and he called from the kibítka (A kibitk is a movable dwelling, made up of detachable wooden frames, forming a round, and covered over with felt) in which they were sitting:

'Babay;' (which in the Bashkir tongue means 'Grandfather ') 'come in and have a cup of kumiss with us, and call your wife here also.'

Ilyás entered with his wife; and after exchanging greetings with his master and the guests, he repeated a prayer, and seated himself near the door. His wife passed in behind the curtain and sat down with her mistress.

A Cap of kumiss was handed to Ilyás; he wished the guests and his master good health, bowed, drank a little, and put down the cup.

'Well, Daddy,' said the guest who had wished to speak to him, 'I suppose you feel rather sad at the sight of us. It must remind you of your former prosperity, and of your present sorrows.'

Ilyás smiled, and said:

'If I were to tell you what is happiness and what is misfortune, you would not believe me. You had better ask my wife. She is a woman, and what is in her heart is on her tongue. She will tell you the whole truth.'

The guest turned towards the curtain.

'Well, Granny,' he cried, 'tell me how your former happiness compares with your present misfortune.'

And Sham-Shemagi answered from behind the curtain:

'This is what I think about it: My old man and I lived for fifty years seeking happiness and not finding it; and it is only now, these last two years, since we had nothing left and have lived as labourers, that we have found real happiness, and we wish for nothing better than our present lot.'

The guests were astonished, and so was the master; he even rose and drew the curtain back, so as to see the old woman's face. There she stood with her arms folded, looking at her old husband, and smiling; and he smiled back at her. The old woman went on:

'I speak the truth and do not jest. For half a century we sought for happiness, and as long as we were rich we never found it. Now that we have nothing left, and have taken service as labourers, we have found such happiness that we want nothing better.'

'But in what does your happiness consist?' asked the guest.

'Why, in this,' she replied, 'when we were rich my husband and I had so many cares that we had no time to talk to one another, or to think of our souls, or to pray to God. Now we had visitors, and had to consider what food to set before them, and what presents to give them, lest they should speak ill of us. When they left, we had to look after our labourers who were always trying to shirk work and get the best food, while we wanted to get all we could out of them. So we sinned. Then we were in fear lest a wolf should kill a foal or a calf, or thieves steal our horses. We lay awake at night, worrying lest the ewes should overlie their lambs, and we got up again and again to see that all was well. One thing attended to, another care would spring up: how, for instance, to get enough fodder for the winter. And besides that, my old man and I used to disagree. He would say we must do so and so, and I would differ from him; and then we disputed — sinning again. So we passed from one trouble to another, from one sin to another, and found no happiness.'

'Well, and now?'

'Now, when my husband and I wake in the morning, we always have a loving word for one another and we live peacefully, having nothing to quarrel about. We have no care but how best to serve our master. We work as much as our strength allows and do it with a will, that our master may not lose but profit by us. When we come in, dinner or supper is ready and there is kumiss to drink. We have fuel to burn when it is cold and we have our fur cloak. And we have time to talk, time to think of our souls, and time to pray. For fifty years we sought happiness, but only now at last have we found it.'

The guests laughed.

But Ilyás said:

'Do not laugh, friends. It is not a matter for jesting — it is the truth of life. We also were foolish at first, and wept at the loss of our wealth; but now God has shown us the truth, and we tell it, not for our own consolation, but for your good.'

And the Mullah said:

'That is a wise speech. Ilyás has spoken the exact truth. The same is said in Holy Writ.'

And the guests ceased laughing and became thoughtful.

# Imp and the Crust, the

Translated by Louise and Aylmer Maude 1906

A POOR peasant set out early one morning to plough, taking with him for his breakfast a crust of bread. He got his plough ready, wrapped the bread in his coat, put it under a bush, and set to work. After a while when his horse was tired and he was hungry, the peasant fixed the plough, let the horse loose to graze and went to get his coat and his breakfast.

He lifted the coat, but the bread was gone! He looked and looked, turned the coat over, shook it out — but the bread was gone. The peasant could not make this out at all.

'That's strange,' thought he; 'I saw no one, but all the same some one has been here and has taken the bread!'

It was an imp who had stolen the bread while the peasant was ploughing, and at that moment he was sitting behind the bush, waiting to hear the peasant swear and call on the Devil.

The peasant was sorry to lose his breakfast, but 'It can't be helped,' said he. 'After all, I shan't die of hunger! No doubt whoever took the bread needed it. May it do him good!'

And he went to the well, had a drink of water, and rested a bit. Then he caught his horse, harnessed it, and began ploughing again.

The imp was crestfallen at not having made the peasant sin, and he went to report what had happened to the Devil, his master.

He came to the Devil and told how he had taken the peasant's bread, and how the peasant instead of cursing had said, 'May it do him good!'

The Devil was angry, and replied: 'If the man got the better of you, it was your own fault — you don't understand your business! If the peasants, and their wives after them, take to that sort of thing, it will be all up with us. The matter can't be left like that! Go back at once,' said he, 'and put things right. If in three years you don't get the better of that peasant, I'll have you ducked in holy water!'

The imp was frightened. He scampered back to earth, thinking how he could redeem his fault. He thought and thought, and at last hit upon a good plan.

He turned himself into a labouring man, and went and took service with the poor peasant. The first year he advised the peasant to sow corn in a marshy place. The peasant took his advice, and sowed in the marsh. The year turned out a very dry one, and the crops of the other peasants were all scorched by the sun, but the poor peasant's corn grew thick and tall and full-eared. Not only had he grain enough to last him for the whole year, but he had much left over besides.

The next year the imp advised the peasant to sow on the hill; and it turned out a wet summer. Other people's corn was beaten down and rotted and the ears did not fill; but the peasant's crop, up on the hill, was a fine one. He had more grain left over than before, so that he did not know what to do with it all.

Then the imp showed the peasant how he could mash the grain and distil spirit from it; and the peasant made strong drink, and began to drink it himself and to give it to his friends.

So the imp went to the Devil, his master, and boasted that he had made up for his failure. The Devil said that he would come and see for himself how the case stood.

He came to the peasant's house, and saw that the peasant had invited his well-to-do neighbours and was treating them to drink. His wife was offering the drink to the guests, and as she handed it round she tumbled against the table and spilt a glassful.

The peasant was angry, and scolded his wife: 'What do you mean, you slut? Do you think it's ditchwater, you cripple, that you must go pouring good stuff like that over the floor?'

The imp nudged the Devil, his master, with his elbow: 'See,' said he, 'that's the man who did not grudge his last crust!'

The peasant, still railing at his wife, began to carry the drink round himself. Just then a poor peasant returning from work came in uninvited. He greeted the company, sat down, and saw that they were drinking. Tired with his day's work he felt that he too would like a drop. He sat and sat, and his mouth kept watering, but the host instead of offering him any only muttered: 'I can't find drink for every one who comes along.'

This pleased the Devil; but the imp chuckled and said, 'Wait a bit, there's more to come yet!'

The rich peasants drank, and their host drank too. And they began to make false, oily speeches to one another.

The Devil listened and listened, and praised the imp.

'If,' said he, 'the drink makes them so foxy that they begin to cheat each other, they will soon all be in our hands.'

'Wait for what's coming,' said the imp. 'Let them have another glass all round. Now they are like foxes, wagging their tails and trying to get round one another; but presently you will see them like savage wolves.'

The peasants had another glass each, and their talk became wilder and rougher. Instead of oily speeches they began to abuse and snarl at one another. Soon they took to fighting, and punched one another's noses. And the host joined in the fight, and he too got well beaten.

The Devil looked on and was much pleased at all this. 'This is first-rate!' said he.

But the imp replied: 'Wait a bit — the best is yet to come. Wait till they have had a third glass. Now they are raging like wolves, but let them have one more glass, and they will be like swine.'

The peasants had their third glass, and became quite like brutes. They muttered and shouted, not knowing why, and not listening to one another.

Then the party began to break up. Some went alone, some in twos, and some in threes, all staggering down the street. The host went out to speed his guests, but he

fell on his nose into a puddle, smeared himself from top to toe, and lay there grunting like a hog.

This pleased the Devil still more.

'Well,' said he, 'you have hit on a first-rate drink, and have quite made up for your blunder about the bread. But now tell me how this drink is made. You must first have put in fox's blood: that was what made the peasants sly as foxes. Then, I suppose, you added wolf's blood: that is what made them fierce like wolves. And you must have finished off with swine's blood, to make them behave like swine.'

'No,' said the imp, 'that was not the way I did it. All I did was to see that the peasant had more corn than he needed. The blood of the beasts is always in man; but as long as he has only enough corn for his needs, it is kept in bounds. While that was the case, the peasant did not grudge his last crust. But when he had corn left over, he looked for ways of getting pleasure out of it. And I showed him a pleasure — drinking! And when he began to turn God's good gifts into spirits for his own pleasure — the fox's, wolf's and swine's blood in him all came out. If only he goes on drinking, he will always be a beast!'

The Devil praised the imp, forgave him for his former blunder, and advanced him to a post of high honour.

# God Sees the Truth, But Waits

Translated by Nathan Haskell Dole 1888

In the town of Vladimir lived a young merchant named Ivan Dmitrich Aksionov. He had two shops and a house of his own.

Aksionov was a handsome, fair-haired, curly-headed fellow, full of fun, and very fond of singing. When quite a young man he had been given to drink, and was riotous when he had had too much; but after he married he gave up drinking, except now and then.

One summer Aksionov was going to the Nizhny Fair, and as he bade good-bye to his family, his wife said to him, "Ivan Dmitrich, do not start to-day; I have had a bad dream about you."

Aksionov laughed, and said, "You are afraid that when I get to the fair I shall go on a spree."

His wife replied: "I do not know what I am afraid of; all I know is that I had a bad dream. I dreamt you returned from the town, and when you took off your cap I saw that your hair was quite gray."

Aksionov laughed. "That's a lucky sign," said he. "See if I don't sell out all my goods, and bring you some presents from the fair."

So he said good-bye to his family, and drove away.

When he had traveled half-way, he met a merchant whom he knew, and they put up at the same inn for the night. They had some tea together, and then went to bed in adjoining rooms.

It was not Aksionov's habit to sleep late, and wishing to travel while it was still cool, he aroused his driver before dawn, and told him to put in the horses.

Then he made his way across to the landlord of the inn (who lived in a cottage at the back), paid his bill, and continued his journey.

When he had gone about twenty-five miles, he stopped for the horses to be fed. Aksionov rested awhile in the passage of the inn, then he stepped out into the porch, and, ordering a samovar to be heated, got out his guitar and began to play.

Suddenly a troika drove up with tinkling bells and an official alighted, followed by two soldiers. He came to Aksionov and began to question him asking him who he was and whence he came. Aksionov answered him, fully, and said, "Won't you have some tea with me?" But the official went on cross-questioning him and asking him, "Where did you spend last night? Were you alone, or with a fellow-merchant? Did you see the other merchant this morning? Why did you leave the inn before dawn?"

Aksionov wondered why he was asked all these questions, but he described all that had happened, and then added, "Why do you cross-question me as if I were a thief or a robber? I am traveling on business of my own, and there is no need to question me."

Then the official, calling the soldiers, said, "I am the police-officer of this district, and I question you because the merchant with whom you spent last night has been found with his throat cut. We must search your things."

They entered the house. The soldiers and the police-officer unstrapped Aksionov's luggage and searched it. Suddenly the officer drew a knife out of a bag, crying, "Whose knife is this?"

Aksionov looked, and seeing a blood-stained knife taken from his bag, he was frightened.

"How is it there is blood on this knife?"

Aksionov tried to answer, but could hardly utter a word, and only stammered: "I — don't know — not mine."

# A Lost Opportunity

Translated by Benjamin R Tucker 1890

"Then came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?"...

"So likewise shall My heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." — ST. MATTHEW xviii., 21-35.

In a certain village there lived a peasant by the name of Ivan Scherbakoff. He was prosperous, strong, and vigorous, and was considered the hardest worker in the whole village. He had three sons, who supported themselves by their own labor. The eldest was married, the second about to be married, and the youngest took care of the horses and occasionally attended to the plowing.

The peasant's wife, Ivanovna, was intelligent and industrious, while her daughter-in-law was a simple, quiet soul, but a hard worker.

There was only one idle person in the household, and that was Ivan's father, a very old man who for seven years had suffered from asthma, and who spent the greater part of his time lying on the brick oven.

Ivan had plenty of everything — three horses, with one colt, a cow with calf, and fifteen sheep. The women made the men's clothes, and in addition to performing all the necessary household labor, also worked in the field; while the men's industry was confined altogether to the farm.

What was left of the previous year's supply of provisions was ample for their needs, and they sold a quantity of oats sufficient to pay their taxes and other expenses.

Thus life went smoothly for Ivan.

The peasant's next-door neighbor was a son of Gordey Ivanoff, called "Gavryl the Lame." It once happened that Ivan had a quarrel with him; but while old man Gordey was yet alive, and Ivan's father was the head of the household, the two peasants lived as good neighbors should. If the women of one house required the use of a sieve or pail, they borrowed it from the inmates of the other house. The same condition of affairs existed between the men. They lived more like one family, the one dividing his possessions with the other, and perfect harmony reigned between the two families.

If a stray calf or cow invaded the garden of one of the farmers, the other willingly drove it away, saying: "Be careful, neighbor, that your stock does not again stray into my garden; we should put a fence up." In the same way they had no secrets from each other. The doors of their houses and barns had neither bolts nor locks, so sure were they of each other's honesty. Not a shadow of suspicion darkened their daily intercourse.

Thus lived the old people.

In time the younger members of the two households started farming. It soon became apparent that they would not get along as peacefully as the old people had done, for they began quarrelling without the slightest provocation.

A hen belonging to Ivan's daughter-in-law commenced laying eggs, which the young woman collected each morning, intending to keep them for the Easter holidays. She made daily visits to the barn, where, under an old wagon, she was sure to find the precious egg.

One day the children frightened the hen and she flew over their neighbor's fence and laid her egg in their garden.

Ivan's daughter-in-law heard the hen cackling, but said: "I am very busy just at present, for this is the eve of a holy day, and I must clean and arrange this room. I will go for the egg later on."

When evening came, and she had finished her task, she went to the barn, and as usual looked under the old wagon, expecting to find an egg. But, alas! no egg was visible in the accustomed place.

Greatly disappointed, she returned to the house and inquired of her mother-in-law and the other members of the family if they had taken it. "No," they said, "we know nothing of it."

Taraska, the youngest brother-in-law, coming in soon after, she also inquired of him if he knew anything about the missing egg. "Yes," he replied; "your pretty, crested hen laid her egg in our neighbors' garden, and after she had finished cackling she flew back again over the fence."

The young woman, greatly surprised on hearing this, turned and looked long and seriously at the hen, which was sitting with closed eyes beside the rooster in the chimney-corner. She asked the hen where it laid the egg. At the sound of her voice it simply opened and closed its eyes, but could make no answer.

She then went to the neighbors' house, where she was met by an old woman, who said: "What do you want, young woman?"

Ivan's daughter-in-law replied: "You see, babushka [grandmother], my hen flew into your yard this morning. Did she not lay an egg there?"

"We did not see any," the old woman replied; "we have our own hens — God be praised! — and they have been laying for this long time. We hunt only for the eggs our own hens lay, and have no use for the eggs other people's hens lay. Another thing I want to tell you, young woman: we do not go into other people's yards to look for eggs."

Now this speech greatly angered the young woman, and she replied in the same spirit in which she had been spoken to, only using much stronger language and speaking at greater length.

The neighbor replied in the same angry manner, and finally the women began to abuse each other and call vile names. It happened that old Ivan's wife, on her way to the well for water, heard the dispute, and joined the others, taking her daughter-in-law's part.

Gavryl's housekeeper, hearing the noise, could not resist the temptation to join the rest and to make her voice heard. As soon as she appeared on the scene, she, too, began to abuse her neighbor, reminding her of many disagreeable things which had happened (and many which had not happened) between them. She became so infuriated during her denunciations that she lost all control of herself, and ran around like some mad creature.

Then all the women began to shout at the same time, each trying to say two words to another's one, and using the vilest language in the quarreller's vocabulary.

"You are such and such," shouted one of the women. "You are a thief, a schlukha [a mean, dirty, low creature]; your father-in-law is even now starving, and you have no shame. You beggar, you borrowed my sieve and broke it. You made a large hole in it, and did not buy me another."

"You have our scale-beam," cried another woman, "and must give it back to me;" whereupon she seized the scale-beam and tried to remove it from the shoulders of Ivan's wife.

In the melee which followed they upset the pails of water. They tore the covering from each other's head, and a general fight ensued.

Gavryl's wife had by this time joined in the fracas, and he, crossing the field and seeing the trouble, came to her rescue.

Ivan and his son, seeing that their womenfolk were being badly used, jumped into the midst of the fray, and a fearful fight followed.

Ivan was the most powerful peasant in all the country round, and it did not take him long to disperse the crowd, for they flew in all directions. During the progress of the fight Ivan tore out a large quantity of Gavryl's beard.

By this time a large crowd of peasants had collected, and it was with the greatest difficulty that they persuaded the two families to stop quarrelling.

This was the beginning.

Gavryl took the portion of his beard which Ivan had torn out, and, wrapping it in a paper, went to the volostnoye (moujiks' court) and entered a complaint against Ivan.

Holding up the hair, he said, "I did not grow this for that bear Ivan to tear out!"

Gavryl's wife went round among the neighbors, telling them that they must not repeat what she told them, but that she and her husband were going to get the best of Ivan, and that he was to be sent to Siberia.

And so the quarrelling went on.

The poor old grandfather, sick with asthma and lying on the brick oven all the time, tried from the first to dissuade them from quarrelling, and begged of them to live in peace; but they would not listen to his good advice. He said to them: "You children are making a great fuss and much trouble about nothing. I beg of you to stop and think of what a little thing has caused all this trouble. It has arisen from only one egg. If our neighbors' children picked it up, it is all right. God bless them! One egg is of but little value, and without it God will supply sufficient for all our needs."

Ivan's daughter-in-law here interposed and said, "But they called us vile names."

The old grandfather again spoke, saying: "Well, even if they did call you bad names, it would have been better to return good for evil, and by your example show them how to speak better. Such conduct on your part would have been best for all concerned." He continued: "Well, you had a fight, you wicked people. Such things sometimes happen, but it would be better if you went afterward and asked forgiveness and buried your

grievances out of sight. Scatter them to the four winds of heaven, for if you do not do so it will be the worse for you in the end."

The younger members of the family, still obstinate, refused to profit by the old man's advice, and declared he was not right, and that he only liked to grumble in his old-fashioned way.

Ivan refused to go to his neighbor, as the grandfather wished, saying: "I did not tear out Gavryl's beard. He did it himself, and his son tore my shirt and trousers into shreds."

Ivan entered suit against Gavryl. He first went to the village justice, and not getting satisfaction from him he carried his case to the village court.

While the neighbors were wrangling over the affair, each suing the other, it happened that a perch-bolt from Gavryl's wagon was lost; and the women of Gavryl's household accused Ivan's son of stealing it.

They said: "We saw him in the night-time pass by our window, on his way to where the wagon was standing." "And my kumushka [sponsor]," said one of them, "told me that Ivan's son had offered it for sale at the kabak [tavern]."

This accusation caused them again to go into court for a settlement of their grievances.

While the heads of the families were trying to have their troubles settled in court, their home quarrels were constant, and frequently resulted in hand-to-hand encounters. Even the little children followed the example of their elders and quarrelled incessantly.

The women, when they met on the riverbank to do the family washing, instead of attending to their work passed the time in abusing each other, and not infrequently they came to blows.

At first the male members of the families were content with accusing each other of various crimes, such as stealing and like meannesses. But the trouble in this mild form did not last long.

They soon resorted to other measures. They began to appropriate one another's things without asking permission, while various articles disappeared from both houses and could not be found. This was done out of revenge.

This example being set by the men, the women and children also followed, and life soon became a burden to all who took part in the strife.

Ivan Scherbakoff and "Gavryl the Lame" at last laid their trouble before the mir (village meeting), in addition to having been in court and calling on the justice of the peace. Both of the latter had grown tired of them and their incessant wrangling. One time Gavryl would succeed in having Ivan fined, and if he was not able to pay it he would be locked up in the cold dreary prison for days. Then it would be Ivan's turn to get Gavryl punished in like manner, and the greater the injury the one could do the other the more delight he took in it.

The success of either in having the other punished only served to increase their rage against each other, until they were like mad dogs in their warfare.

If anything went wrong with one of them he immediately accused his adversary of conspiring to ruin him, and sought revenge without stopping to inquire into the rights of the case.

When the peasants went into court, and had each other fined and imprisoned, it did not soften their hearts in the least. They would only taunt one another on such occasions, saying: "Never mind; I will repay you for all this."

This state of affairs lasted for six years.

Ivan's father, the sick old man, constantly repeated his good advice. He would try to arouse their conscience by saying: "What are you doing, my children? Can you not throw off all these troubles, pay more attention to your business, and suppress your anger against your neighbors? There is no use in your continuing to live in this way, for the more enraged you become against each other the worse it is for you."

Again was the wise advice of the old man rejected.

At the beginning of the seventh year of the existence of the feud it happened that a daughter-in-law of Ivan's was present at a marriage. At the wedding feast she openly accused Gavryl of stealing a horse. Gavryl was intoxicated at the time and was in no mood to stand the insult, so in retaliation he struck the woman a terrific blow, which confined her to her bed for more than a week. The woman being in delicate health, the worst results were feared.

Ivan, glad of a fresh opportunity to harass his neighbor, lodged a formal complaint before the district-attorney, hoping to rid himself forever of Gavryl by having him sent to Siberia.

On examining the complaint the district-attorney would not consider it, as by that time the injured woman was walking about and as well as ever.

Thus again Ivan was disappointed in obtaining his revenge, and, not being satisfied with the district-attorney's decision, had the case transferred to the court, where he used all possible means to push his suit. To secure the favor of the starshina (village mayor) he made him a present of half a gallon of sweet vodki; and to the mayor's pisar (secretary) also he gave presents. By this means he succeeded in securing a verdict against Gavryl. The sentence was that Gavryl was to receive twenty lashes on his bare back, and the punishment was to be administered in the yard which surrounded the court-house.

When Ivan heard the sentence read he looked triumphantly at Gavryl to see what effect it would produce on him. Gavryl turned very white on hearing that he was to be treated with such indignity, and turning his back on the assembly left the room without uttering a word.

Ivan followed him out, and as he reached his horse he heard Gavryl saying: "Very well; my spine will burn from the lashes, but something will burn with greater fierceness in Ivan's household before long."

Ivan, on hearing these words, instantly returned to the court, and going up to the judges said: "Oh! just judges, he threatens to burn my house and all it contains."

A messenger was immediately sent in search of Gavryl, who was soon found and again brought into the presence of the judges.

"Is it true," they asked, "that you said you would burn Ivan's house and all it contained?"

Gavryl replied: "I did not say anything of the kind. You may give me as many lashes as you please — that is, if you have the power to do so. It seems to me that I alone have to suffer for the truth, while he," pointing to Ivan, "is allowed to do and say what he pleases." Gavryl wished to say something more, but his lips trembled, and the words refused to come; so in silence he turned his face toward the wall.

The sight of so much suffering moved even the judges to pity, and, becoming alarmed at Gavryl's continued silence, they said, "He may do both his neighbor and himself some frightful injury."

"See here, my brothers," said one feeble old judge, looking at Ivan and Gavryl as he spoke, "I think you had better try to arrange this matter peaceably. You, brother Gavryl, did wrong to strike a woman who was in delicate health. It was a lucky thing for you that God had mercy on you and that the woman did not die, for if she had I know not what dire misfortune might have overtaken you! It will not do either of you any good to go on living as you are at present. Go, Gavryl, and make friends with Ivan; I am sure he will forgive you, and we will set aside the verdict just given."

The secretary on hearing this said: "It is impossible to do this on the present case. According to Article 117 this matter has gone too far to be settled peaceably now, as the verdict has been rendered and must be enforced."

But the judges would not listen to the secretary, saying to him: "You talk altogether too much. You must remember that the first thing is to fulfill God's command to 'Love thy neighbor as thyself,' and all will be well with you."

Thus with kind words the judges tried to reconcile the two peasants. Their words fell on stony ground, however, for Gavryl would not listen to them.

"I am fifty years old," said Gavryl, "and have a son married, and never from my birth has the lash been applied to my back; but now this bear Ivan has secured a verdict against me which condemns me to receive twenty lashes, and I am forced to bow to this decision and suffer the shame of a public beating. Well, he will have cause to remember this."

At this Gavryl's voice trembled and he stopped speaking, and turning his back on the judges took his departure.

It was about ten versts' distance from the court to the homes of the neighbors, and this Ivan travelled late. The women had already gone out for the cattle. He unharnessed his horse and put everything in its place, and then went into the izba (room), but found no one there.

The men had not yet returned from their work in the field and the women had gone to look for the cattle, so that all about the place was quiet. Going into the room, Ivan seated himself on a wooden bench and soon became lost in thought. He remembered

how, when Gavryl first heard the sentence which had been passed upon him, he grew very pale, and turned his face to the wall, all the while remaining silent.

Ivan's heart ached when he thought of the disgrace which he had been the means of bring-ing upon Gavryl, and he wondered how he would feel if the same sentence had been passed upon him. His thoughts were interrupted by the coughing of his father, who was lying on the oven.

The old man, on seeing Ivan, came down off the oven, and slowly approaching his son seated himself on the bench beside him, looking at him as though ashamed. He continued to cough as he leaned on the table and said, "Well, did they sentence him?"

"Yes, they sentenced him to receive twenty lashes," replied Ivan.

On hearing this the old man sorrowfully shook his head, and said: "This is very bad, Ivan, and what is the meaning of it all? It is indeed very bad, but not so bad for Gavryl as for yourself. Well, suppose his sentence IS carried out, and he gets the twenty lashes, what will it benefit you?"

"He will not again strike a woman," Ivan replied.

"What is it he will not do? He does not do anything worse than what you are constantly doing!"

This conversation enraged Ivan, and he shouted: "Well, what did he do? He beat a woman nearly to death, and even now he threatens to burn my house! Must I bow to him for all this?"

The old man sighed deeply as he said: "You, Ivan, are strong and free to go wherever you please, while I have been lying for years on the oven. You think that you know everything and that I do not know anything. No! you are still a child, and as such you cannot see that a kind of madness controls your actions and blinds your sight. The sins of others are ever before you, while you resolutely keep your own behind your back. I know that what Gavryl did was wrong, but if he alone should do wrong there would be no evil in the world. Do you think that all the evil in the world is the work of one man alone? No! it requires two persons to work much evil in the world. You see only the bad in Gavryl's character, but you are blind to the evil that is in your own nature. If he alone were bad and you good, then there would be no wrong."

The old man, after a pause, continued: "Who tore Gavryl's beard? Who destroyed his heaps of rye? Who dragged him into court? — and yet you try to put all the blame on his shoulders. You are behaving very badly yourself, and for that reason you are wrong. I did not act in such a manner, and certainly I never taught you to do so. I lived in peace with Gavryl's father all the time we were neighbors. We were always the best of friends. If he was without flour his wife would come to me and say, 'Diadia Frol [Grandfather], we need flour.' I would then say: 'My good woman, go to the warehouse and take as much as you want.' If he had no one to care for his horses I would say, 'Go, Ivanushka [diminutive of Ivan], and help him to care for them.' If I required anything I would go to him and say, 'Grandfather Gordey, I need this or that,' and he would always reply, 'Take just whatever you want.' By this means we passed an easy and peaceful life. But what is your life compared with it? As the soldiers fought

at Plevna, so are you and Gavryl fighting all the time, only that your battles are far more disgraceful than that fought at Plevna."

The old man went on: "And you call this living! and what a sin it all is! You are a peasant, and the head of the house; therefore, the responsibility of the trouble rests with you. What an example you set your wife and children by constantly quarrelling with your neighbor! Only a short time since your little boy, Taraska, was cursing his aunt Arina, and his mother only laughed at it, saying, 'What a bright child he is!' Is that right? You are to blame for all this. You should think of the salvation of your soul. Is that the way to do it? You say one unkind word to me and I will reply with two. You will give me one slap in the face, and I will retaliate with two slaps. No, my son; Christ did not teach us foolish people to act in such a way. If any one should say an unkind word to you it is better not to answer at all; but if you do reply do it kindly, and his conscience will accuse him, and he will regret his unkindness to you. This is the way Christ taught us to live. He tells us that if a person smite us on the one cheek we should offer unto him the other. That is Christ's command to us, and we should follow it. You should therefore subdue your pride. Am I not right?"

Ivan remained silent, but his father's words had sunk deep into his heart.

The old man coughed and continued: "Do you think Christ thought us wicked? Did he not die that we might be saved? Now you think only of this earthly life. Are you better or worse for thinking alone of it? Are you better or worse for having begun that Plevna battle? Think of your expense at court and the time lost in going back and forth, and what have you gained? Your sons have reached manhood, and are able now to work for you. You are therefore at liberty to enjoy life and be happy. With the assistance of your children you could reach a high state of prosperity. But now your property instead of increasing is gradually growing less, and why? It is the result of your pride. When it becomes necessary for you and your boys to go to the field to work, your enemy instead summons you to appear at court or before some kind of judicial person. If you do not plow at the proper time and sow at the proper time mother earth will not yield up her products, and you and your children will be left destitute. Why did your oats fail this year? When did you sow them? Were you not quarrelling with your neighbor instead of attending to your work? You have just now returned from the town, where you have been the means of having your neighbor humiliated. You have succeeded in getting him sentenced, but in the end the punishment will fall on your own shoulders. Oh! my child, it would be better for you to attend to your work on the farm and train your boys to become good farmers and honest men. If any one offend you forgive him for Christ's sake, and then prosperity will smile on your work and a light and happy feeling will fill your heart."

Ivan still remained silent.

The old father in a pleading voice continued: "Take an old man's advice. Go and harness your horse, drive back to the court, and withdraw all these complaints against your neighbor. To-morrow go to him, offer to make peace in Christ's name, and invite him to your house. It will be a holy day (the birth of the Virgin Mary). Get out

the samovar and have some vodki, and over both forgive and forget each other's sins, promising not to transgress in the future, and advise your women and children to do the same."

Ivan heaved a deep sigh but felt easier in his heart, as he thought: "The old man speaks the truth;" yet he was in doubt as to how he would put his father's advice into practice.

The old man, surmising his uncertainty, said to Ivan: "Go, Ivanushka; do not delay. Extinguish the fire in the beginning, before it grows large, for then it may be impossible."

Ivan's father wished to say more to him, but was prevented by the arrival of the women, who came into the room chattering like so many magpies. They had already heard of Gavryl's sentence, and of how he threatened to set fire to Ivan's house. They found out all about it, and in telling it to their neighbors added their own versions of the story, with the usual exaggeration. Meeting in the pasture-ground, they proceeded to quarrel with Gavryl's women. They related how the latter's daughter-in-law had threatened to secure the influence of the manager of a certain noble's estate in behalf of his friend Gavryl; also that the school-teacher was writing a petition to the Czar himself against Ivan, explaining in detail his theft of the perchbolt and partial destruction of Gavryl's garden — declaring that half of Ivan's land was to be given to them.

Ivan listened calmly to their stories, but his anger was soon aroused once more, when he abandoned his intention of making peace with Gavryl.

As Ivan was always busy about the household, he did not stop to speak to the wrangling women, but immediately left the room, directing his steps toward the barn. Before getting through with his work the sun had set and the boys had returned from their plowing. Ivan met them and asked about their work, helping them to put things in order and leaving the broken horse-collar aside to be repaired. He intended to perform some other duties, but it became too dark and he was obliged to leave them till the next day. He fed the cattle, however, and opened the gate that Taraska might take his horses to pasture for the night, after which he closed it again and went into the house for his supper.

By this time he had forgotten all about Gavryl and what his father had said to him. Yet, just as he touched the door-knob, he heard sounds of quarrelling proceeding from his neighbor's house.

"What do I want with that devil?" shouted Gavryl to some one. "He deserves to be killed!"

Ivan stopped and listened for a moment, when he shook his head threateningly and entered the room. When he came in, the apartment was already lighted. His daughter-in-law was working with her loom, while the old woman was preparing the supper. The eldest son was twining strings for his lapti (peasant's shoes made of strips of bark from the linden-tree). The other son was sitting by the table reading a book. The room presented a pleasant appearance, everything being in order and the inmates apparently

gay and happy — the only dark shadow being that cast over the household by Ivan's trouble with his neighbor.

Ivan came in very cross, and, angrily throwing aside a cat which lay sleeping on the bench, cursed the women for having misplaced a pail. He looked very sad and serious, and, seating himself in a corner of the room, proceeded to repair the horse-collar. He could not forget Gavryl, however — the threatening words he had used in the court-room and those which Ivan had just heard.

Presently Taraska came in, and after having his supper, put on his sheepskin coat, and, taking some bread with him, returned to watch over his horses for the night. His eldest brother wished to accompany him, but Ivan himself arose and went with him as far as the porch. The night was dark and cloudy and a strong wind was blowing, which produced a peculiar whistling sound that was most unpleasant to the ear. Ivan helped his son to mount his horse, which, followed by a colt, started off on a gallop.

Ivan stood for a few moments looking around him and listening to the clatter of the horse's hoofs as Taraska rode down the village street. He heard him meet other boys on horseback, who rode quite as well as Taraska, and soon all were lost in the darkness.

Ivan remained standing by the gate in a gloomy mood, as he was unable to banish from his mind the harassing thoughts of Gavryl, which the latter's menacing words had inspired: "Something will burn with greater fierceness in Ivan's household before long."

"He is so desperate," thought Ivan, "that he may set fire to my house regardless of the danger to his own. At present everything is dry, and as the wind is so high he may sneak from the back of his own building, start a fire, and get away unseen by any of us.

He may burn and steal without being found out, and thus go unpunished. I wish I could catch him."

This thought so worried Ivan that he decided not to return to his house, but went out and stood on the street-corner.

"I guess," thought Ivan to himself, "I will take a walk around the premises and examine everything carefully, for who knows what he may be tempted to do?"

Ivan moved very cautiously round to the back of his buildings, not making the slightest noise, and scarcely daring to breathe. Just as he reached a corner of the house he looked toward the fence, and it seemed to him that he saw something moving, and that it was slowly creeping toward the corner of the house opposite to where he was standing. He stepped back quickly and hid himself in the shadow of the building. Ivan stood and listened, but all was quiet. Not a sound could be heard but the moaning of the wind through the branches of the trees, and the rustling of the leaves as it caught them up and whirled them in all directions. So dense was the darkness that it was at first impossible for Ivan to see more than a few feet beyond where he stood.

After a time, however, his sight becoming accustomed to the gloom, he was enabled to see for a considerable distance. The plow and his other farming implements stood just where he had placed them. He could see also the opposite corner of the house.

He looked in every direction, but no one was in sight, and he thought to himself that his imagination must have played him some trick, leading him to believe that some one was moving when there really was no one there.

Still, Ivan was not satisfied, and decided to make a further examination of the premises. As on the previous occasion, he moved so very cautiously that he could not hear even the sound of his own footsteps. He had taken the precaution to remove his shoes, that he might step the more noiselessly. When he reached the corner of the barn it again seemed to him that he saw something moving, this time near the plow; but it quickly disappeared. By this time Ivan's heart was beating very fast, and he was standing in a listening attitude when a sudden flash of light illumined the spot, and he could distinctly see the figure of a man seated on his haunches with his back turned toward him, and in the act of lighting a bunch of straw which he held in his hand! Ivan's heart began to beat yet faster, and he became terribly excited, walking up and down with rapid strides, but without making a noise.

Ivan said: "Well, now, he cannot get away, for he will be caught in the very act."

Ivan had taken a few more steps when suddenly a bright light flamed up, but not in the same spot in which he had seen the figure of the man sitting. Gavryl had lighted the straw, and running to the barn held it under the edge of the roof, which began to burn fiercely; and by the light of the fire he could distinctly see his neighbor standing.

As an eagle springs at a skylark, so sprang Ivan at Gavryl, saying: "I will tear you into pieces! You shall not get away from me this time!"

But "Gavryl the Lame," hearing footsteps, wrenched himself free from Ivan's grasp and ran like a hare past the buildings.

Ivan, now terribly excited, shouted, "You shall not escape me!" and started in pursuit; but just as he reached him and was about to grasp the collar of his coat, Gavryl succeeded in jumping to one side, and Ivan's coat became entangled in something and he was thrown violently to the ground. Jumping quickly to his feet he shouted, "Karaool! derji!"(watch! catch!)

While Ivan was regaining his feet Gavryl succeeded in reaching his house, but Ivan followed so quickly that he caught up with him before he could enter. Just as he was about to grasp him he was struck on the head with some hard substance. He had been hit on the temple as with a stone. The blow was struck by Gavryl, who had picked up an oaken stave, and with it gave Ivan a terrible blow on the head.

Ivan was stunned, and bright sparks danced before his eyes, while he swayed from side to side like a drunken man, until finally all became dark and he sank to the ground unconscious.

When he recovered his senses, Gavryl was nowhere to be seen, but all around him was as light as day. Strange sounds proceeded from the direction of his house, and turning his face that way he saw that his barns were on fire. The rear parts of both

were already destroyed, and the flames were leaping toward the front. Fire, smoke, and bits of burning straw were being rapidly whirled by the high wind over to where his house stood, and he expected every moment to see it burst into flames.

"What is this, brother?" Ivan cried out, as he beat his thighs with his hands. "I should have stopped to snatch the bunch of burning straw, and, throwing it on the ground, should have extinguished it with my feet!"

Ivan tried to cry out and arouse his people, but his lips refused to utter a word. He next tried to run, but he could not move his feet, and his legs seemed to twist themselves around each other. After several attempts he succeeded in taking one or two steps, when he again began to stagger and gasp for breath. It was some moments before he made another attempt to move, but after considerable exertion he finally reached the barn, the rear of which was by this time entirely consumed; and the corner of his house had already caught fire. Dense volumes of smoke began to pour out of the room, which made it difficult to approach.

A crowd of peasants had by this time gathered, but they found it impossible to save their homes, so they carried everything which they could to a place of safety. The cattle they drove into neighboring pastures and left some one to care for them.

The wind carried the sparks from Ivan's house to Gavryl's, and it, too, took fire and was consumed. The wind continued to increase with great fury, and the flames spread to both sides of the street, until in a very short time more than half the village was burned.

The members of Ivan's household had great difficulty in getting out of the burning building, but the neighbors rescued the old man and carried him to a place of safety, while the women escaped in only their night-clothes. Everything was burned, including the cattle and all the farm implements. The women lost their trunks, which were filled with quantities of clothing, the accumulation of years. The storehouse and all the provisions perished in the flames, not even the chickens being saved.

Gavryl, however, more fortunate than Ivan, saved his cattle and a few other things.

The village was burning all night.

Ivan stood near his home, gazing sadly at the burning building, and he kept constantly repeating to himself: "I should have taken away the bunch of burning straw, and have stamped out the fire with my feet."

But when he saw his home fall in a smouldering heap, in spite of the terrible heat he sprang into the midst of it and carried out a charred log. The women seeing him, and fearing that he would lose his life, called to him to come back, but he would not pay any attention to them and went a second time to get a log. Still weak from the terrible blow which Gavryl had given him, he was overcome by the heat, and fell into the midst of the burning mass. Fortunately, his eldest son saw him fall, and rushing into the fire succeeded in getting hold of him and carrying him out of it. Ivan's hair, beard, and clothing were burned entirely off. His hands were also frightfully injured, but he seemed indifferent to pain.

"Grief drove him crazy," the people said.

The fire was growing less, but Ivan still stood where he could see it, and kept repeating to himself, "I should have taken," etc.

The morning after the fire the starosta (village elder) sent his son to Ivan to tell him that the old man, his father, was dying, and wanted to see him to bid him good-bye.

In his grief Ivan had forgotten all about his father, and could not understand what was being said to him. In a dazed way he asked: "What father? Whom does he want?"

The elder's son again repeated his father's message to Ivan. "Your aged parent is at our house dying, and he wants to see you and bid you good-bye. Won't you go now, uncle Ivan?" the boy said.

Finally Ivan understood, and followed the elder's son.

When Ivan's father was carried from the oven, he was slightly injured by a big bunch of burning straw falling on him just as he reached the street. To insure his safety he was removed to the elder's house, which stood a considerable distance from his late home, and where it was not likely that the fire would reach it.

When Ivan arrived at the elder's home he found only the latter's wife and children, who were all seated on the brick oven. The old man was lying on a bench holding a lighted candle in his hand (a Russian custom when a person is dying). Hearing a noise, he turned his face toward the door, and when he saw it was his son he tried to move. He motioned for Ivan to come nearer, and when he did so he whispered in a trembling voice: "Well, Ivanushka, did I not tell you before what would be the result of this sad affair? Who set the village on fire?"

"He, he, batiushka [little father]; he did it. I caught him. He placed the bunch of burning straw to the barn in my presence. Instead of running after him, I should have snatched the bunch of burning straw and throwing it on the ground have stamped it out with my feet; and then there would have been no fire."

"Ivan," said the old man, "death is fast approaching me, and remember that you also will have to die. Who did this dreadful thing? Whose is the sin?"

Ivan gazed at the noble face of his dying father and was silent. His heart was too full for utterance.

"In the presence of God," the old man continued, "whose is the sin?"

It was only now that the truth began to dawn upon Ivan's mind, and that he realized how foolish he had acted. He sobbed bitterly, and fell on his knees before his father, and, crying like a child, said:

"My dear father, forgive me, for Christ's sake, for I am guilty before God and before you!"

The old man transferred the lighted candle from his right hand to the left, and, raising the former to his forehead, tried to make the sign of the cross, but owing to weakness was unable to do so.

"Glory to Thee, O Lord! Glory to Thee!" he exclaimed; and turning his dim eyes toward his son, he said: "See here, Ivanushka! Ivanushka, my dear son!"

"What, my dear father?" Ivan asked.

"What are you going to do," replied the old man, "now that you have no home?"

Ivan cried and said: "I do not know how we shall live now."

The old man closed his eyes and made a movement with his lips, as if gathering his feeble strength for a final effort. Slowly opening his eyes, he whispered:

"Should you live according to God's commands you will be happy and prosperous again."

The old man was now silent for awhile and then, smiling sadly, he continued:

"See here, Ivanushka, keep silent concerning this trouble, and do not tell who set the village on fire. Forgive one sin of your neighbor's, and God will forgive two of yours."

Grasping the candle with both hands, Ivan's father heaved a deep sigh, and, stretching himself out on his back, yielded up the ghost.

* * *

Ivan for once accepted his father's advice. He did not betray Gavryl, and no one ever learned the origin of the fire.

Ivan's heart became more kindly disposed toward his old enemy, feeling that much of the fault in connection with this sad affair rested with himself.

Gavryl was greatly surprised that Ivan did not denounce him before all the villagers, and at first he stood in much fear of him, but he soon afterward overcame this feeling.

The two peasants ceased to quarrel, and their families followed their example. While they were building new houses, both families lived beneath the same roof, and when they moved into their respective homes, Ivan and Gavryl lived on as good terms as their fathers had done before them.

Ivan remembered his dying father's command, and took deeply to heart the evident warning of God that A FIRE SHOULD BE EXTINGUISHED IN THE BEGINNING. If any one wronged him he did not seek revenge, but instead made every effort to settle the matter peaceably. If any one spoke to him unkindly, he did not answer in the same way, but replied softly, and tried to persuade the person not to speak evil. He taught the women and children of his household to do the same.

Ivan Scherbakoff was now a reformed man.

He lived well and peacefully, and again became prosperous.

Let us, therefore, have peace, live in brotherly love and kindness, and we will be happy.

AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE

Translated by Nathan Haskell Dole 1887

Our division had been out in the field. The work in hand was accomplished: we had cut a way through the forest, and each day we were expecting from headquarters orders for our return to the fort. Our division of fieldpieces was stationed at the top of a steep mountain-crest which was terminated by the swift mountain-river Mechik, and had to command the plain that stretched before us. Here and there on this picturesque plain, out of the reach of gunshot, now and then, especially at evening, groups of mounted mountaineers showed themselves, attracted by curiosity to ride up and view the Russian camp.

The evening was clear, mild, and fresh, as it is apt to be in December in the Caucasus; the sun was setting behind the steep chain of the mountains at the left, and threw rosy rays upon the tents scattered over the slope, upon the soldiers moving about, and upon our two guns, which seemed to crane their necks as they rested motionless on the earthwork two paces from us. The infantry picket, stationed on the knoll at the left, stood in perfect silhouette against the light of the sunset; no less distinct were the stacks of muskets, the form of the sentry, the groups of soldiers, and the smoke of the smouldering camp-fire.

At the right and left of the slope, on the black, sodden earth, the tents gleamed white; and behind the tents, black, stood the bare trunks of the platane forest, which rang with the incessant sound of axes, the crackling of the bonfires, and the crashing of the trees as they fell under the axes. The bluish smoke arose from tobacco-pipes on all sides, and vanished in the transparent blue of the frosty sky. By the tents and on the lower ground around the arms rushed the Cossacks, dragoons, and artillerists, with great galloping and snorting of horses as they returned from getting water. It began to freeze; all sounds were heard with extraordinary distinctness, and one could see an immense distance across the plain through the clear, rare atmosphere. The groups of the enemy, their curiosity at seeing the soldiers satisfied, quietly galloped off across the fields, still yellow with the golden corn-stubble, toward their auls, or villages, which were visible beyond the forest, with the tall posts of the cemeteries and the smoke rising in the air.

Our tent was pitched not far from the guns on a place high and dry, from which we had a remarkably extended view. Near the tent, on a cleared space, around the battery itself, we had our games of skittles, or chushki. The obliging soldiers had made for us rustic benches and tables. On account of all these amusements, the artillery officers, our comrades, and a few infantry men liked to gather of an evening around our battery, and the place came to be called the club.

As the evening was fine, the best players had come, and we were amusing ourselves with skittles. Ensign D., Lieutenant O., and myself had played two games in succession; and to the common satisfaction and amusement of all the spectators, officers, soldiers, and servants who were watching us from their tents, we had twice carried the winning party on our backs from one end of the ground to the other. Especially droll was the situation of the huge fat Captain S., who, puffing and smiling good-naturedly, with legs dragging on the ground, rode pickaback on the feeble little Lieutenant O.

When it grew somewhat later, the servants brought three glasses of tea for the six men of us, and not a spoon; and we who had finished our game came to the plaited settees.

There was standing near them a small bow-legged man, a stranger to us, in a sheepskin jacket, and a papakha, or Circassian cap, with a long overhanging white crown. As soon as we came near where he stood, he took a few irresolute steps, and put on his cap; and several times he seemed to make up his mind to come to meet us, and then stopped again. But after deciding, probably, that it was impossible to remain

irresolute, the stranger took off his cap, and, going in a circuit around us, approached Captain S.

"Ah, Guskantinli, how is it, old man?" said S., still smiling good-naturedly, under the influence of his ride.

Guskantni, as S. called him, instantly replaced his cap, and made a motion as though to thrust his hands into the pockets of his jacket; [Footnote: Polushubok, little half shuba, or fur cloak.] but on the side toward me there was no pocket in the jacket, and his small red hand fell into an awkward position. I felt a strong desire to make out who this man was (was he a yunker, or a degraded officer?), and, not realizing that my gaze (that is, the gaze of a strange officer) disconcerted him, I continued to stare at his dress and appearance.

I judged that he was about thirty. His small, round, gray eyes had a sleepy expression, and at the same time gazed calmly out from under the dirty white lambskin of his cap, which hung down over his face. His thick, irregular nose, standing out between his sunken cheeks, gave evidence of emaciation that was the result of illness, and not natural. His restless lips, barely covered by a sparse, soft, whitish moustache, were constantly changing their shape as though they were trying to assume now one expression, now another. But all these expressions seemed to be endless, and his face retained one predominating expression of timidity and fright. Around his thin neck, where the veins stood out, was tied a green woollen scarf tucked into his jacket, his fur jacket, or polushubok, was worn bare, short, and had dog-fur sewed on the collar and on the false pockets. The trousers were checkered, of ash-gray color, and his sapogi had short, unblacked military bootlegs.

"I beg of you, do not disturb yourself," said I when he for the second time, timidly glancing at me, had taken off his cap.

He bowed to me with an expression of gratitude, replaced his hat, and, drawing from his pocket a dirty chintz tobacco-pouch with lacings, began to roll a cigarette.

I myself had not been long a yunker, an elderly yunker; and as I was incapable, as yet, of being good-naturedly serviceable to my younger comrades, and without means, I well knew all the moral difficulties of this situation for a proud man no longer young, and I sympathized with all men who found themselves in such a situation, and I endeavored to make clear to myself their character and rank, and the tendencies of their intellectual peculiarities, in order to judge of the degree of their moral sufferings. This yunker or degraded officer, judging by his restless eyes and that intentionally constant variation of expression which I noticed in him, was a man very far from stupid, and extremely egotistical, and therefore much to be pitied.

Captain S. invited us to play another game of skittles, with the stakes to consist, not only of the usual pickaback ride of the winning party, but also of a few bottles of red wine, rum, sugar, cinnamon, and cloves for the mulled wine which that winter, on account of the cold, was greatly popular in our division.

Guskantini, as S. again called him, was also invited to take part; but before the game began, the man, struggling between gratification because he had been invited

and a certain timidity, drew Captain S. aside, and began to say something in a whisper. The good-natured captain punched him in the ribs with his big, fat hand, and replied, loud enough to be heard:

"Not at all, old fellow , I assure you."

When the game was over, and that side in which the stranger whose rank was so low had taken part, had come out winners, and it fell to his lot to ride on one of our officers, Ensign D., the ensign grew red in the face: he went to the little divan and offered the stranger a cigarette by way of a compromise.

While they were ordering the mulled wine, and in the steward's tent were heard assiduous preparations on the part of Nikita, who had sent an orderly for cinnamon and cloves, and the shadow of his back was alternately lengthening and shortening on the dingy sides of the tent, we men, seven in all, sat around on the benches; and while we took turns in drinking tea from the three glasses, and gazed out over the plain, which was now beginning to glow in the twilight, we talked and laughed over the various incidents of the game.

The stranger in the fur jacket took no share in the conversation, obstinately refused to drink the tea which I several times offered him, and as he sat there on the ground in Tartar fashion, occupied himself in making cigarettes of fine-cut tobacco, and smoking them one after another, evidently not so much for his own satisfaction as to give himself the appearance of a man with something to do. When it was remarked that the summons to return was expected on the morrow, and that there might be an engagement, he lifted himself on his knees, and, addressing Captain B. only, said that he had been at the adjutant's, and had himself written the order for the return on the next day. We all said nothing while he was speaking; and notwithstanding the fact that he was so bashful, we begged him to repeat this most interesting piece of news. He repeated what he had said, adding only that he had been staying at the adjutant's (since he made it his home there) when the order came.

"Look here, old fellow, if you are not telling us false, I shall have to go to my company and give some orders for to-morrow," said Captain S.

"No . . . why . . . it may be, I am sure," . . . stammered the stranger, but suddenly stopped, and, apparently feeling himself affronted, contracted his brows, and, muttering something between his teeth, again began to roll a cigarette. But the fine-cut tobacco in his chintz pouch began to show signs of giving out, and he asked S. to lend him a little cigarette.

We kept on for a considerable time with that monotonous military chatter which every one who has ever been on an expedition will appreciate; all of us, with one and the same expression, complaining of the dullness and length of the expedition, in one and the same fashion sitting in judgment on our superiors, and all of us likewise, as we had done many times before, praising one comrade, pitying another, wondering how much this one had gained, how much that one had lost, and so on, and so on.

"Here, fellows, this adjutant of ours is completely broken up," said Captain S. "At headquarters he was everlastingly on the winning side; no matter whom he sat down

with, he'd rake in everything: but now for two months past he has been losing all the time. The present expedition hasn't been lucky for him. I think he has got away with two thousand silver rubles and five hundred rubles' worth of articles, — the carpet that he won at Mukhin's, Nikitin's pistols, Sada's gold watch which Vorontsof gave him. He has lost it all."

"The truth of the matter in his case," said Lieutenant O., "was that he used to cheat everybody; it was impossible to play with him."

"He cheated every one, but now it's all gone up in his pipe;" and here Captain S. laughed good-naturedly. "Our friend Guskof here lives with him. He hasn't quite lost HIM yet: that's so, isn't it, old fellow?" he asked, addressing Guskof.

Guskof tried to laugh. It was a melancholy, sickly laugh, which completely changed the expression of his countenance. Till this moment it had seemed to me that I had seen and known this man before; and, besides the name Guskof, by which Captain S. called him, was familiar to me; but how and when I had seen and known him, I actually could not remember.

"Yes," said Guskof, incessantly putting his hand to his moustaches, but instantly dropping it again without touching them. "Pavel Dmitrievitch's luck has been against him in this expedition, such a veine de malheur" he added in a careful but pure French pronunciation, again giving me to think that I had seen him, and seen him often, somewhere. "I know Pavel Dmitrievitch very well. He has great confidence in me," he proceeded to say; "he and I are old friends; that is, he is fond of me," he explained, evidently fearing that it might be taken as presumption for him to claim old friendship with the adjutant. "Pavel Dmitrievitch plays admirably; but now, strange as it may seem, it's all up with him, he is just about perfectly ruined; la chance a tourne," he added, addressing himself particularly to me.

At first we had listened to Guskof with condescending attention; but as soon as he made use of that second French phrase, we all involuntarily turned from him.

"I have played with him a thousand times, and we agreed then that it was strange," said Lieutenant O., with peculiar emphasis on the word STRANGE . "I never once won a ruble from him. Why was it, when I used to win of others?"

"Pavel Dmitrievitch plays admirably: I have known him for a long time," said I. In fact, I had known the adjutant for several years; more than once I had seen him in the full swing of a game, surrounded by officers, and I had remarked his handsome, rather gloomy and always passionless calm face, his deliberate Malo-Russian pronunciation, his handsome belongings and horses, his bold, manly figure, and above all his skill and self-restraint in carrying on the game accurately and agreeably. More than once, I am sorry to say, as I looked at his plump white hands with a diamond ring on the index-finger, passing out one card after another, I grew angry with that ring, with his white hands, with the whole of the adjutant's person, and evil thoughts on his account arose in my mind. But as I afterwards reconsidered the matter coolly, I persuaded myself that he played more skilfully than all with whom he happened to play: the more so, because as I heard his general observations concerning the game, — how one

ought not to back out when one had laid the smallest stake, how one ought not to leave off in certain cases as the first rule for honest men, and so forth, and so forth, — it was evident that he was always on the winning side merely from the fact that he played more sagaciously and coolly than the rest of us. And now it seemed that this self-reliant, careful player had been stripped not only of his money but of his effects, which marks the lowest depths of loss for an officer.

"He always had devilish good luck with me," said Lieutenant O. "I made a vow never to play with him again."

"What a marvel you are, old fellow!" said S., nodding at me, and addressing O. "You lost three hundred silver rubles, that's what you lost to him."

"More than that," said the lieutenant savagely.

"And now you have come to your senses; it is rather late in the day, old man, for the rest of us have known for a long time that he was the cheat of the regiment," said S., with difficulty restraining his laughter, and feeling very well satisfied with his fabrication. "Here is Guskof right here, — he FIXES his cards for him. That's the reason of the friendship between them, old man" . . . and Captain S., shaking all over, burst out into such a hearty "ha, ha, ha!" that he spilt the glass of mulled wine which he was holding in his hand. On Guskof's pale emaciated face there showed something like a color; he opened his mouth several times, raised his hands to his moustaches, and once more dropped them to his side where the pockets should have been, stood up, and then sat down again, and finally in an unnatural voice said to S.:

"It's no joke, Nikolai Ivanovitch, for you to say such things before people who don't know me and who see me in this unlined jacket . . . because— " His voice failed him, and again his small red hands with their dirty nails went from his jacket to his face, touching his moustache, his hair, his nose, rubbing his eyes, or needlessly scratching his cheek.

"As to saying that, everybody knows it, old fellow," continued S., thoroughly satisfied with his jest, and not heeding Guskof's complaint. Guskof was still trying to say something; and placing the palm of his right hand on his left knee in a most unnatural position, and gazing at S., he had an appearance of smiling contemptuously.

"No," said I to myself, as I noticed that smile of his, "I have not only seen him, but have spoken with him somewhere."

"You and I have met somewhere," said I to him when, under the influence of the common silence, S.'s laughter began to calm down. Guskof's mobile face suddenly lighted up, and his eyes, for the first time with a truly joyous expression, rested upon me.

"Why, I recognized you immediately," he replied in French. "In '48 I had the pleasure of meeting you quite frequently in Moscow at my sister's."

I had to apologize for not recognizing him at first in that costume and in that new garb. He arose, came to me, and with his moist hand irresolutely and weakly seized my hand, and sat down by me. Instead of looking at me, though he apparently seemed so glad to see me, he gazed with an expression of unfriendly bravado at the officers.

Either because I recognized in him a man whom I had met a few years before in a dresscoat in a parlor, or because he was suddenly raised in his own opinion by the fact of being recognized, — at all events it seemed to me that his face and even his motions completely changed: they now expressed lively intelligence, a childish self-satisfaction in the consciousness of such intelligence, and a certain contemptuous indifference; so that I confess, notwithstanding the pitiable position in which he found himself, my old acquaintance did not so much excite sympathy in me as it did a sort of unfavorable sentiment.

I now vividly remembered our first meeting. In 1848, while I was staying at Moscow, I frequently went to the house of Ivashin, who from childhood had been an old friend of mine. His wife was an agreeable hostess, a charming woman, as everybody said; but she never pleased me. . . . The winter that I knew her, she often spoke with hardly concealed pride of her brother, who had shortly before completed his course, and promised to be one of the most fashionable and popular young men in the best society of Petersburg. As I knew by reputation the father of the Guskofs, who was very rich and had a distinguished position, and as I knew also the sister's ways, I felt some prejudice against meeting the young man. One evening when I was at Ivashin's, I saw a short, thoroughly pleasant-looking young man, in a black coat, white vest and necktie. My host hastened to make me acquainted with him. The young man, evidently dressed for a ball, with his cap in his hand, was standing before Ivashin, and was eagerly but politely arguing with him about a common friend of ours, who had distinguished himself at the time of the Hungarian campaign. He said that this acquaintance was not at all a hero or a man born for war, as was said of him, but was simply a clever and cultivated man. I recollect, I took part in the argument against Guskof, and went to the extreme of declaring also that intellect and cultivation always bore an inverse relation to bravery; and I recollect how Guskof pleasantly and cleverly pointed out to me that bravery was necessarily the result of intellect and a decided degree of development, — a statement which I, who considered myself an intellectual and cultivated man, could not in my heart of hearts agree with.

I recollect that towards the close of our conversation Madame Ivashina introduced me to her brother; and he, with a condescending smile, offered me his little hand on which he had not yet had time to draw his kid gloves, and weakly and irresolutely pressed my hand as he did now. Though I had been prejudiced against Guskof, I could not help granting that he was in the right, and agreeing with his sister that he was really a clever and agreeable young man, who ought to have great success in society. He was extraordinarily neat, beautifully dressed, and fresh, and had affectedly modest manners, and a thoroughly youthful, almost childish appearance, on account of which you could not help excusing his expression of self-sufficiency, though it modified the impression of his high-mightiness caused by his intellectual face and especially his smile. It is said that he had great success that winter with the high-born ladies of Moscow. As I saw him at his sister's I could only infer how far this was true by the feeling of pleasure and contentment constantly excited in me by his youthful appearance and

by his sometimes indiscreet anecdotes. He and I met half a dozen times, and talked a good deal; or, rather, he talked a good deal, and I listened. He spoke for the most part in French, always with a good accent, very fluently and ornately; and he had the skill of drawing others gently and politely into the conversation. As a general thing, he behaved toward all, and toward me, in a somewhat supercilious manner, and I felt that he was perfectly right in this way of treating people. I always feel that way in regard to men who are firmly convinced that they ought to treat me superciliously, and who are comparative strangers to me.

Now, as he sat with me, and gave me his hand, I keenly recalled in him that same old haughtiness of expression; and it seemed to me that he did not properly appreciate his position of official inferiority, as, in the presence of the officers, he asked me what I had been doing in all that time, and how I happened to be there. In spite of the fact that I invariably made my replies in Russian, he kept putting his questions in French, expressing himself as before in remarkably correct language. About himself he said fluently that after his unhappy, wretched story (what the story was, I did not know, and he had not yet told me), he had been three months under arrest, and then had been sent to the Caucasus to the N. regiment, and now had been serving three years as a soldier in that regiment.

"You would not believe," said he to me in French, "how much I have to suffer in these regiments from the society of the officers. Still it is a pleasure to me, that I used to know the adjutant of whom we were just speaking: he is a good man — it's a fact," he remarked condescendingly. "I live with him, and that's something of a relief for me. Yes, my dear, the days fly by, but they aren't all alike," he added; and suddenly hesitated, reddened, and stood up, as he caught sight of the adjutant himself coming toward us.

"It is such a pleasure to meet such a man as you," said Guskof to me in a whisper as he turned from me. "I should like very, very much, to have a long talk with you."

I said that I should be very happy to talk with him, but in reality I confess that Guskof excited in me a sort of dull pity that was not akin to sympathy.

I had a presentiment that I should feel a constraint in a private conversation with him; but still I was anxious to learn from him several things, and, above all, why it was, when his father had been so rich, that he was in poverty, as was evident by his dress and appearance.

The adjutant greeted us all, including Guskof, and sat down by me in the seat which the cashiered officer had just vacated. Pavel Dmitrievitch, who had always been calm and leisurely, a genuine gambler, and a man of means, was now very different from what he had been in the flowery days of his success; he seemed to be in haste to go somewhere, kept constantly glancing at everybody, and it was not five minutes before he proposed to Lieutenant O., who had sworn off from playing, to set up a small faro-bank. Lieutenant O. refused, under the pretext of having to attend to his duties, but in reality because, as he knew that the adjutant had few possessions and little

money left, he did not feel himself justified in risking his three hundred rubles against a hundred or even less which the adjutant might stake.

"Well, Pavel Dmitrievitch," said the lieutenant, anxious to avoid a repetition of the invitation, "is it true, what they tell us, that we return to-morrow?"

"I don't know," replied the adjutant. "Orders came to be in readiness; but if it's true, then you'd better play a game. I would wager my Kabarda cloak."

"No, to-day already" . . .

"It's a gray one, never been worn; but if you prefer, play for money. How is that?"

"Yes, but . . . I should be willing — pray don't think that" . . . said Lieutenant O., answering the implied suspicion; "but as there may be a raid or some movement, I must go to bed early."

The adjutant stood up, and, thrusting his hands into his pockets, started to go across the grounds. His face assumed its ordinary expression of coldness and pride, which I admired in him.

"Won't you have a glass of mulled wine?" I asked him.

"That might be acceptable," and he came back to me; but Guskof politely took the glass from me, and handed it to the adjutant, striving at the same time not to look at him. But as he did not notice the tent-rope, he stumbled over it, and fell on his hand, dropping the glass.

"What a bungler!" exclaimed the adjutant, still holding out his hand for the glass. Everybody burst out laughing, not excepting Guskof, who was rubbing his hand on his sore knee, which he had somehow struck as he fell. "That's the way the bear waited on the hermit," continued the adjutant. "It's the way he waits on me every day. He has pulled up all the tent-pins; he's always tripping up."

Guskof, not hearing him, apologized to us, and glanced toward me with a smile of almost noticeable melancholy, as though saying that I alone could understand him. He was pitiable to see; but the adjutant, his protector, seemed, on that very account, to be severe on his messmate, and did not try to put him at his ease.

"Well, you're a graceful lad! Where did you think you were going?"

"Well, who can help tripping over these pins, Pavel Dmitrievitch?" said Guskof. "You tripped over them yourself the other day."

"I, old man, [Footnote: batiushka] — I am not of the rank and file, and such gracefulness is not expected of me."

"He can be lazy," said Captain S., keeping the ball rolling, "but low-rank men have to make their legs fly."

"Ill-timed jest," said Guskof, almost in a whisper, and casting down his eyes. The adjutant was evidently vexed with his messmate; he listened with inquisitive attention to every word that he said.

"He'll have to be sent out into ambuscade again," said he, addressing S., and pointing to the cashiered officer.

"Well, there'll be some more tears," said S., laughing. Guskof no longer looked at me, but acted as though he were going to take some tobacco from his pouch, though there had been none there for some time.

"Get ready for the ambuscade, old man," said S., addressing him with shouts of laughter. "To-day the scouts have brought the news, there'll be an attack on the camp to-night, so it's necessary to designate the trusty lads." Guskof's face showed a fleeting smile as though he were preparing to make some reply, but several times he cast a supplicating look at S.

"Well, you know I have been, and I'm ready to go again if I am sent," he said hastily.

"Then you'll be sent."

"Well, I'll go. Isn't that all right?"

"Yes, as at Arguna, you deserted the ambuscade and threw away your gun," said the adjutant; and turning from him he began to tell us the orders for the next day.

As a matter of fact, we expected from the enemy a cannonade of the camp that night, and the next day some sort of diversion. While we were still chatting about various subjects of general interest, the adjutant, as though from a sudden and unexpected impulse, proposed to Lieutenant O. to have a little game. The lieutenant most unexpectedly consented; and, together with S. and the ensign, they went off to the adjutant's tent, where there was a folding green table with cards on it. The captain, the commander of our division, went to our tent to sleep; the other gentlemen also separated, and Guskof and I were left alone. I was not mistaken, it was really very uncomfortable for me to have a tete-a-tete with him; I arose involuntarily, and began to promenade up and down on the battery. Guskof walked in silence by my side, hastily and awkwardly wheeling around so as not to delay or incommode me.

"I do not annoy you?" he asked in a soft, mournful voice. So far as I could see his face in the dim light, it seemed to me deeply thoughtful and melancholy.

"Not at all," I replied; but as he did not immediately begin to speak, and as I did not know what to say to him, we walked in silence a considerably long time.

The twilight had now absolutely changed into dark night; over the black profile of the mountains gleamed the bright evening heat-lightning; over our heads in the light-blue frosty sky twinkled the little stars; on all sides gleamed the ruddy flames of the smoking watch-fires; near us, the white tents stood out in contrast to the frowning blackness of our earth-works. The light from the nearest watch-fire, around which our servants, engaged in quiet conversation, were warming themselves, occasionally flashed on the brass of our heavy guns, and fell on the form of the sentry, who, wrapped in his cloak, paced with measured tread along the battery.

"You cannot imagine what a delight it is for me to talk with such a man as you are," said Guskof, although as yet he had not spoken a word to me. "Only one who had been in my position could appreciate it."

I did not know how to reply to him, and we again relapsed into silence, although it was evident that he was anxious to talk and have me listen to him.

"Why were you . . . why did you suffer this?" I inquired at last, not being able to invent any better way of breaking the ice.

"Why, didn't you hear about this wretched business from Metenin?"

"Yes, a duel, I believe; I did not hear much about it," I replied. "You see, I have been for some time in the Caucasus."

"No, it wasn't a duel, but it was a stupid and horrid story. I will tell you all about it, if you don't know. It happened that the same year that I met you at my sister's I was living at Petersburg. I must tell you I had then what they call une position dans le monde, — a position good enough if it was not brilliant. Mon pere me donnait ten thousand par an. In '49 I was promised a place in the embassy at Turin; my uncle on my mother's side had influence, and was always ready to do a great deal for me. That sort of thing is all past now. J'etais recu dans la meilleure societe de Petersburg; I might have aspired to any girl in the city. I was well educated, as we all are who come from the school, but was not especially cultivated; to be sure, I read a good deal afterwards, mais j'avais surtout, you know, ce jargon du monde, and, however it came about, I was looked upon as a leading light among the young men of Petersburg. What raised me more than all in common estimation, c'est cette liaison avec Madame D., about which a great deal was said in Petersburg; but I was frightfully young at that time, and did not prize these advantages very highly. I was simply young and stupid. What more did I need? Just then that Metenin had some notoriety— "

And Guskof went on in the same fashion to relate to me the history of his misfortunes, which I will omit, as it would not be at all interesting.

"Two months I remained under arrest," he continued, "absolutely alone; and what thoughts did I not have during that time? But, you know, when it was all over, as though every tie had been broken with the past, then it became easier for me. Mon pere, — you have heard tell of him, of course, a man of iron will and strong convictions, — il m'a desherite, and broken off all intercourse with me. According to his convictions he had to do as he did, and I don't blame him at all. He was consistent. Consequently, I have not taken a step to induce him to change his mind. My sister was abroad. Madame D. is the only one who wrote to me when I was released, and she sent me assistance; but you understand that I could not accept it, so that I had none of those little things which make one's position a little easier, you know, — books, linen, food, nothing at all. At this time I thought things over and over, and began to look at life with different eyes. For instance, this noise, this society gossip about me in Petersburg, did not interest me, did not flatter me; it all seemed to me ridiculous. I felt that I myself had been to blame; I was young and indiscreet; I had spoiled my career, and I only thought how I might get into the right track again. And I felt that I had strength and energy enough for it. After my arrest, as I told you, I was sent here to the Caucasus to the N. regiment.

"I thought," he went on to say, all the time becoming more and more animated,— "I thought that here in the Caucasus, la vie de camp, the simple, honest men with whom I should associate, and war and danger, would all admirably agree with my mental

state, so that I might begin a new life. They will see me under fire. I shall make myself liked; I shall be respected for my real self, — the cross — non-commissioned officer; they will relieve me of my fine; and I shall get up again, et vous savez avec ce prestige du malheur! But, quel desenchantement! You can't imagine how I have been deceived! You know what sort of men the officers of our regiment are."

He did not speak for some little time, waiting, as it appeared, for me to tell him that I knew the society of our officers here was bad; but I made him no reply. It went against my grain that he should expect me, because I knew French, forsooth, to be obliged to take issue with the society of the officers, which, during my long residence in the Caucasus, I had had time enough to appreciate fully, and for which I had far higher respect than for the society from which Mr. Guskof had sprung. I wanted to tell him so, but his position constrained me.

"In the N. regiment the society of the officers is a thousand times worse than it is here," he continued. "I hope that it is saying a good deal; J'ESPERE QUE C'EST BEAUCOUP DIRE; that is, you cannot imagine what it is. I am not speaking of the yunkers and the soldiers. That is horrible, it is so bad. At first they received me very kindly, that is absolutely the truth; but when they saw that I could not help despising them, you know, in these inconceivably small circumstances, they saw that I was a man absolutely different, standing far above them, they got angry with me, and began to put various little humiliations on me. You haven't an idea what I had to suffer. Then this forced relationship with the yunkers, and especially with the small means that I had — I lacked everything; [Footnote: AVEC LES PETITS MOYENS QUE J'AVAIS, JE MANQUAIS DE TOUT] I had only what my sister used to send me. And here's a proof for you! As much as it made me suffer, I with my character, AVEC MA FIERTE J'AI ECRIS A MON PERE, begged him to send me something. I understand how living four years of such a life may make a man like our cashiered Dromof who drinks with soldiers, and writes notes to all the officers asking them to loan him three rubles, and signing it, TOUT A VOUS, DROMOF. One must have such a character as I have, not to be mired in the least by such a horrible position."

For some time he walked in silence by my side.

"Have you a cigarette?" he asked me.

"And so I stayed right where I was? Yes. I could not endure it physically, because, though we were wretched, cold, and ill-fed, I lived like a common soldier, but still the officers had some sort of consideration for me. I had still some prestige that they regarded. I wasn't sent out on guard nor for drill. I could not have stood that. But morally my sufferings were frightful; and especially because I didn't see any escape from my position. I wrote my uncle, begged him to get me transferred to my present regiment, which, at least, sees some service; and I thought that here Pavel Dmitrievitch, qui est le fils de l'intendant de mon pere, might be of some use to me. My uncle did this for me; I was transferred. After that regiment this one seemed to me a collection of chamberlains. Then Pavel Dmitrievitch was here; he knew who I was, and I was splendidly received. At my uncle's request — a Guskof, vous savez; but I forgot that

with these men without cultivation and undeveloped, — they can't appreciate a man, and show him marks of esteem, unless he has that aureole of wealth, of friends; and I noticed how, little by little, when they saw that I was poor, their behavior to me showed more and more indifference until they have come almost to despise me. It is horrible, but it is absolutely the truth.

"Here I have been in action, I have fought, they have seen me under fire," he continued; "but when will it all end? I think, never. And my strength and energy have already begun to flag. Then I had imagined la guerre, la vie de camp; but it isn't at all what I see, in a sheepskin jacket, dirty linen, soldier's boots, and you go out in ambuscade, and the whole night long lie in the ditch with some Antonof reduced to the ranks for drunkenness, and any minute from behind the bush may come a rifle-shot and hit you or Antonof, — it's all the same which. That is not bravery; it's horrible, c'est affreux, it's killing!"

"Well, you can be promoted a non-commissioned officer for this campaign, and next year an ensign," said I.

"Yes, it may be: they promised me that in two years, and it's not up yet. What would those two years amount to, if I knew any one! You can imagine this life with Pavel Dmitrievitch; cards, low jokes, drinking all the time; if you wish to tell anything that is weighing on your mind, you would not be understood, or you would be laughed at: they talk with you, not for the sake of sharing a thought, but to get something funny out of you. Yes, and so it has gone — in a brutal, beastly way, and you are always conscious that you belong to the rank and file; they always make you feel that. Hence you can't realize what an enjoyment it is to talk a coeur ouvert to such a man as you are."

I had never imagined what kind of a man I was, and consequently I did not know what answer to make him.

"Will you have your lunch now?" asked Nikita at this juncture, approaching me unseen in the darkness, and, as I could perceive, vexed at the presence of a guest. "Nothing but curd dumplings, there's none of the roast beef left."

"Has the captain had his lunch yet?"

"He went to bed long ago," replied Nikita, gruffly, "According to my directions, I was to bring you lunch here and your brandy." He muttered something else discontentedly, and sauntered off to his tent. After loitering a while longer, he brought us, nevertheless, a lunch-case; he placed a candle on the lunch-case, and shielded it from the wind with a sheet of paper. He brought a saucepan, some mustard in a jar, a tin dipper with a handle, and a bottle of absinthe. After arranging these things, Nikita lingered around us for some moments, and looked on as Guskof and I were drinking the liquor, and it was evidently very distasteful to him. By the feeble light shed by the candle through the paper, amid the encircling darkness, could be seen the seal-skin cover of the lunch-case, the supper arranged upon it, Guskof's sheepskin jacket, his face, and his small red hands which he used in lifting the patties from the pan. Everything around us was black; and only by straining the sight could be seen the dark battery, the dark form of

the sentry moving along the breastwork, on all sides the watch-fires, and on high the ruddy stars.

Guskof wore a melancholy, almost guilty smile as though it were awkward for him to look into my face after his confession. He drank still another glass of liquor, and ate ravenously, emptying the saucepan.

"Yes; for you it must be a relief all the same," said I, for the sake of saying something,— "your acquaintance with the adjutant. He is a very good man, I have heard."

"Yes," replied the cashiered officer, "he is a kind man; but he can't help being what he is, with his education, and it is useless to expect it."

A flush seemed suddenly to cross his face. "You remarked his coarse jest this evening about the ambuscade;" and Guskof, though I tried several times to interrupt him, began to justify himself before me, and to show that he had not run away from the ambuscade, and that he was not a coward as the adjutant and Capt. S. tried to make him out.

"As I was telling you," he went on to say, wiping his hands on his jacket, "such people can't show any delicacy toward a man, a common soldier, who hasn't much money either. That's beyond their strength. And here recently, while I haven't received anything at all from my sister, I have been conscious that they have changed toward me. This sheepskin jacket, which I bought of a soldier, and which hasn't any warmth in it, because it's all worn off" (and here he showed me where the wool was gone from the inside), "it doesn't arouse in him any sympathy or consideration for my unhappiness, but scorn, which he does not take pains to hide. Whatever my necessities may be, as now when I have nothing to eat except soldiers' gruel, and nothing to wear," he continued, casting down his eyes, and pouring out for himself still another glass of liquor, "he does not even offer to lend me some money, though he knows perfectly well that I would give it back to him; but he waits till I am obliged to ask him for it. But you appreciate how it is for me to go to him. In your case I should say, square and fair, vous etes audessus de cela, mon cher, je n'ai pas le sou. And you know," said he, looking straight into my eyes with an expression of desperation, "I am going to tell you, square and fair, I am in a terrible situation: pouvez-vous me preter dix rubles argent? My sister ought to send me some by the mail, et mon pere— "

"Why, most willingly," said I, although, on the contrary, it was trying and unpleasant, especially because the evening before, having lost at cards, I had left only about five rubles in Nikita's care. "In a moment," said I, arising, "I will go and get it at the tent."

"No, by and by: ne vous derangez pas."

Nevertheless, not heeding him, I hastened to the closed tent, where stood my bed, and where the captain was sleeping.

"Aleksei Ivanuitch, let me have ten rubles, please, for rations," said I to the captain, shaking him.

"What! have you been losing again? But this very evening, you were not going to play any more," murmured the captain, still half asleep.

"No, I have not been playing; but I want the money; let me have it, please."

"Makatiuk!" shouted the captain to his servant, "hand me my bag with the money."

"Hush, hush!" said I, hearing Guskof's measured steps near the tent.

"What? Why hush?"

"Because that cashiered fellow has asked to borrow it of me. He's right there."

"Well, if you knew him, you wouldn't let him have it," remarked the captain. "I have heard about him. He's a dirty, low-lived fellow."

Nevertheless, the captain gave me the money, ordered his man to put away the bag, pulled the flap of the tent neatly to, and, again saying, "If you only knew him, you wouldn't let him have it," drew his head down under the coverlet. "Now you owe me thirty-two, remember," he shouted after me.

When I came out of the tent, Guskof was walking near the settees; and his slight figure, with his crooked legs, his shapeless cap, his long white hair, kept appearing and disappearing in the darkness, as he passed in and out of the light of the candles. He made believe not to see me.

I handed him the money. He said "Merci," and, crumpling the bank-bill, thrust it into his trousers pocket.

"Now I suppose the game is in full swing at the adjutant's," he began immediately after this.

"Yes, I suppose so."

"He's a wonderful player, always bold, and never backs out. When he's in luck, it's fine; but when it does not go well with him, he can lose frightfully. He has given proof of that. During this expedition, if you reckon his valuables, he has lost more than fifteen hundred rubles. But, as he played discreetly before, that officer of yours seemed to have some doubts about his honor."

"Well, that's because he . . . Nikita, haven't we any of that red Kavkas wine left?" I asked, very much enlivened by Guskof's conversational talent. Nikita still kept muttering; but he brought us the red wine, and again looked on angrily as Guskof drained his glass. In Guskof's behavior was noticeable his old freedom from constraint. I wished that he would go as soon as possible; it seemed as if his only reason for not going was because he did not wish to go immediately after receiving the money. I said nothing.

"How could you, who have means, and were under no necessity, simply de gaiete de coeur, make up your mind to come and serve in the Caucasus? That's what I don't understand," said he to me.

I endeavored to explain this act of renunciation, which seemed so strange to him.

"I can imagine how disagreeable the society of those officers — men without any comprehension of culture — must be for you. You could not understand each other. You see, you might live ten years, and not see anything, and not hear about anything, except cards, wine, and gossip about rewards and campaigns."

It was unpleasant for me, that he wished me to put myself on a par with him in his position; and, with absolute honesty, I assured him that I was very fond of cards and wine, and gossip about campaigns, and that I did not care to have any better comrades than those with whom I was associated. But he would not believe me.

"Well, you may say so," he continued; "but the lack of women's society, — I mean, of course, FEMMES COMME IL FAUT, — is that not a terrible deprivation? I don't know what I would give now to go into a parlor, if only for a moment, and to have a look at a pretty woman, even though it were through a crack."

He said nothing for a little, and drank still another glass of the red wine.

"Oh, my God, my God! If it only might be our fate to meet again, somewhere in Petersburg, to live and move among men, among ladies!"

He drank up the dregs of the wine still left in the bottle, and when he had finished it he said: "AKH! PARDON, maybe you wanted some more. It was horribly careless of me. However, I suppose I must have taken too much, and my head isn't very strong. [Footnote: ET JE N'AI PAS LA TETE FORTE.] There was a time when I lived on Morskaia Street, AU REZ-DE-CHAUSSEE, and had marvellous apartments, furniture, you know, and I was able to arrange it all beautifully, not so very expensively though; my father, to be sure, gave me porcelains, flowers, and silver — a wonderful lot. Le matin je sortais, visits, 5 heures regulierement. I used to go and dine with her; often she was alone. Il faut avouer que c'etait une femme ravissante! You didn't know her at all, did you?"

"No."

"You see, there was such high degree of womanliness in her, and such tenderness, and what love! Lord! I did not know how to appreciate my happiness then. We would return after the theatre, and have a little supper together. It was never dull where she was, toujours gaie, toujours aimante. Yes, and I had never imagined what rare happiness it was. Et j'ai beaucoup a me reprocher in regard to her. Je l'ai fait souffrir et souvent. I was outrageous. AKH! What a marvellous time that was! Do I bore you?"

"No, not at all."

"Then I will tell you about our evenings. I used to go — that stairway, every flower-pot I knew, — the door-handle, all was so lovely, so familiar; then the vestibule, her room. . . . No, it will never, never come back to me again! Even now she writes to me: if you will let me, I will show you her letters. But I am not what I was; I am ruined; I am no longer worthy of her. . . . Yes, I am ruined for ever. Je suis casse. There's no energy in me, no pride, nothing — nor even any rank. . . . [Footnote: Blagorodstva, noble birth, nobility.] Yes, I am ruined; and no one will ever appreciate my sufferings. Every one is indifferent. I am a lost man. Never any chance for me to rise, because I have fallen morally . . . into the mire — I have fallen. . . ."

At this moment there was evident in his words a genuine, deep despair: he did not look at me, but sat motionless.

"Why are you in such despair?" I asked.

"Because I am abominable. This life has degraded me, all that was in me, all is crushed out. It is not by pride that I hold out, but by abjectness: there's no dignite dans le malheur. I am humiliated every moment; I endure it all; I got myself into this abasement. This mire has soiled me. I myself have become coarse; I have forgotten what I used to know; I can't speak French any more; I am conscious that I am base

and low. I cannot tear myself away from these surroundings, indeed I cannot. I might have been a hero: give me a regiment, gold epaulets, a trumpeter, but to march in the ranks with some wild Anton Bondarenko or the like, and feel that between me and him there was no difference at all — that he might be killed or I might be killed — all the same, that thought is maddening. You understand how horrible it is to think that some ragamuffin may kill me, a man who has thoughts and feelings, and that it would make no difference if alongside of me some Antonof were killed, — a being not different from an animal — and that it might easily happen that I and not this Antonof were killed, which is always UNE FATALITE for every lofty and good man. I know that they call me a coward: grant that I am a coward, I certainly am a coward, and can't be anything else. Not only am I a coward, but I am in my way a low and despicable man. Here I have just been borrowing money of you, and you have the right to despise me. No, take back your money." And he held out to me the crumpled bank-bill. "I want you to have a good opinion of me." He covered his face with his hands, and burst into tears. I really did not know what to say or do.

"Calm yourself," I said to him. "You are too sensitive; don't take everything so to heart; don't indulge in self-analysis, look at things more simply. You yourself say that you have character. Keep up good heart, you won't have long to wait," I said to him, but not very consistently, because I was much stirred both by a feeling of sympathy and a feeling of repentance, because I had allowed myself mentally to sin in my judgment of a man truly and deeply unhappy.

"Yes," he began, "if I had heard even once, at the time when I was in that hell, one single word of sympathy, of advice, of friendship — one humane word such as you have just spoken, perhaps I might have calmly endured all; perhaps I might have struggled, and been a soldier. But now this is horrible. . . . When I think soberly, I long for death. Why should I love my despicable life and my own self, now that I am ruined for all that is worth while in the world? And at the least danger, I suddenly, in spite of myself, begin to pray for my miserable life, and to watch over it as though it were precious, and I cannot, je ne puis pas, control myself. That is, I could," he continued again after a minute's silence, "but this is too hard work for me, a monstrous work, when I am alone. With others, under special circumstances, when you are going into action, I am brave, j'ai fait mes epreuves, because I am vain and proud: that is my failing, and in presence of others. . . . Do you know, let me spend the night with you: with us, they will play all night long; it makes no difference, anywhere, on the ground."

While Nikita was making the bed, we got up, and once more began to walk up and down in the darkness on the battery. Certainly Guskof's head must have been very weak, because two glasses of liquor and two of wine made him dizzy. As we got up and moved away from the candles, I noticed that he again thrust the ten-ruble bill into his pocket, trying to do so without my seeing it. During all the foregoing conversation, he had held it in his hand. He continued to reiterate how he felt that he might regain his old station if he had a man such as I were to take some interest in him.

We were just going into the tent to go to bed when suddenly a cannon-ball whistled over us, and buried itself in the ground not far from us. So strange it was, — that peacefully sleeping camp, our conversation, and suddenly the hostile cannon-ball which flew from God knows where, the midst of our tents, — so strange that it was some time before I could realize what it was. Our sentinel, Andreief, walking up and down on the battery, moved toward me.

"Ha! he's crept up to us. It was the fire here that he aimed at," said he.

"We must rouse the captain," said I, and gazed at Guskof.

He stood cowering close to the ground, and stammered, trying to say, "Th-that's th-the ene-my's . . . f-f-fire — th-that's — hidi — ." Further he could not say a word, and I did not see how and where he disappeared so instantaneously.

In the captain's tent a candle gleamed; his cough, which always troubled him when he was awake, was heard; and he himself soon appeared, asking for a linstock to light his little pipe.

"What does this mean, old man?" he asked with a smile. "Aren't they willing to give me a little sleep to-night? First it's you with your cashiered friend, and then it's Shamyl. What shall we do, answer him or not? There was nothing about this in the instructions, was there?"

"Nothing at all. There he goes again," said I. "Two of them!"

Indeed, in the darkness, directly in front of us, flashed two fires, like two eyes; and quickly over our heads flew one cannon-ball and one heavy shell. It must have been meant for us, coming with a loud and penetrating hum. From the neighboring tents the soldiers hastened. You could hear them hawking and talking and stretching themselves.

"Hist! the fuse sings like a nightingale," was the remark of the artillerist.

"Send for Nikita," said the captain with his perpetually benevolent smile. "Nikita, don't hide yourself, but listen to the mountain nightingales."

"Well, your honor," said Nikita, who was standing near the captain, "I have seen them — these nightingales. I am not afraid of 'em; but here was that stranger who was here, he was drinking up your red wine. When he heard how that shot dashed by our tents, and the shell rolled by, he cowered down like some wild beast."

"However, we must send to the commander of the artillery," said the captain to me, in a serious tone of authority, "and ask whether we shall reply to the fire or not. It will probably be nothing at all, but still it may. Have the goodness to go and ask him. Have a horse saddled. Do it as quickly as possible, even if you take my Polkan."

In five minutes they brought me a horse, and I galloped off to the commander of the artillery. "Look you, return on foot," whispered the punctilious captain, "else they won't let you through the lines."

It was half a verst to the artillery commander's, the whole road ran between the tents. As soon as I rode away from our fire, it became so black that I could not see even the horse's ears, but only the watch-fires, now seeming very near, now very far off, as they gleamed into my eyes. After I had ridden some distance, trusting to the intelligence of the horse whom I allowed free rein, I began to distinguish the white

four-cornered tents and then the black tracks of the road. After a half-hour, having asked my way three times, and twice stumbled over the tent-stakes, causing each time a volley of curses from the tents, and twice been detained by the sentinels, I reached the artillery commander's. While I was on the way, I heard two more cannon shot in the direction of our camp; but the projectiles did not reach to the place where the headquarters were. The artillery commander ordered not to reply to the firing, the more as the enemy did not remain in the same place; and I went back, leading the horse by the bridle, making my way on foot between the infantry tents. More than once I delayed my steps, as I went by some soldier's tent where a light was shining, and some merry-andrew was telling a story; or I listened to some educated soldier reading from some book while the whole division overflowed the tent, or hung around it, sometimes interrupting the reading with various remarks; or I simply listened to the talk about the expedition, about the fatherland, or about their chiefs.

As I came around one of the tents of the third battalion, I heard Guskof's rough voice: he was speaking hilariously and rapidly. Young voices replied to him, not those of soldiers, but of gay gentlemen. It was evidently the tent of some yunker or sergeant-major. I stopped short.

"I've known him a long time," Guskof was saying. "When I lived in Petersburg, he used to come to my house often; and I went to his. He moved in the best society."

"Whom are you talking about?" asked the drunken voice.

"About the prince," said Guskof. "We were relatives, you see, but, more than all, we were old friends. It's a mighty good thing, you know, gentlemen, to have such an acquaintance. You see he's fearfully rich. To him a hundred silver rubles is a mere bagatelle. Here, I just got a little money out of him, enough to last me till my sister sends."

"Let's have some."

"Right away. — Savelitch, my dear," said Guskof, coming to the door of the tent, "here's ten rubles for you: go to the sutler, get two bottles of Kakhetinski. Anything else, gentlemen? What do you say?" and Guskof, with unsteady gait, with dishevelled hair, without his hat, came out of the tent. Throwing open his jacket, and thrusting his hands into the pockets of his trousers, he stood at the door of the tent. Though he was in the light, and I in darkness; I trembled with fear lest he should see me, and I went on, trying to make no noise.

"Who goes there?" shouted Guskof after me in a thoroughly drunken voice. Apparently, the cold took hold of him. "Who the devil is going off with that horse?"

I made no answer, and silently went on my way.

# Scenes From Commonlife

# Chapter 1: Willow

ONE Easter a peasant went to see whether the frost was out of the ground.

He went to his vegetable garden and poked into the ground with a stake. The soil was soft.

The peasant went into the forest. In the woods the catkins on a young willow were already beginning to swell. And the peasant said to himself :

" Let me plant young willows around my garden ; they will grow and make a hedge."

He took his ax, cut down a dozen young sprouts, trimmed down the butts into points, and planted them in the ground.

All the willow sticks put forth sprouts and green foliage above ; and below, underground, they sent out similar sprouts in place of roots, and some of them took hold of the earth and strengthened themselves ; but others did not take hold of the earth with their roots, and these died and toppled over.

When autumn came, the peasant was delighted with his willows ; six of them had taken root. The next spring some sheep girdled four of them, and thus only two were left.

The following spring, sheep girdled these also. One died away entirely, but the other took new lease of life, sent down deeper roots, and became a tree. Every spring the bees hummed on in the branches. Oftentimes they would swarm there, and the peasants would gather them into hives.

Peasants and their wives often came to lunch and nap under the tree, and their children climbed up its trunk and broke off its twigs.

. The peasant the one who had set out the slip had died long ago, and still the willow grew.

His eldest son twice trimmed off its branches and used them for fuel.

And still the willow grew. They cut the branches all round and made a cone of it, and when spring came, it still again put forth new branches, though they were small, but twice as many as before, like the mane of a colt.

And the eldest son ceased to be master of the house, and the village was removed to another place, but still the willow grew in the bare field.

Other peasants came and cut it down, and still it grew. The lightning struck the tree ; it sent out fresh branches from the sides, and still it grew and bloomed.

One peasant wanted to cut it down to a block, and actually felled it ; but it was badly rotted. The tree fell over and held only by one side, but still it kept growing, and every year the bees flew to it to gather pollen from its flowers.

Once, early in the spring, the children gathered to-gether to tend the horses under the tree.

They thought that it was rather cold, and they began to make a fire, and they collected stubble, mugwort, and twigs. One boy climbed the willow and broke off branches. They piled all their tinder in the hollow of the willow and set it on fire.

The willow began to hiss ; the sap in its wood boiled, the smoke poured forth, and then it began to blaze ; all the inside turned black. The young sprouts crumpled up ; the blossoms wilted.

The children drove their horses home. The burned willow remained alone in the field. A black crow flew up to it, perched on it, and cried :

" So the old poker is dead ; it was time long ago ! "

## Chapter 2: Gray Hare

A GRAY hare lived during the winter near a village. When night came, he would prick up one ear and listen, then he would prick up the other, jerk his whiskers, snuff, and sit up on his hind legs.

Then he would give one leap, two leaps, through the deep snow, and sit up again, on his hind legs and look all around.

On all sides nothing was to be seen except snow. The snow lay in billows and glittered white as sugar. Above the hare was frosty vapor, and through this vapor glis-tened the big bright stars.

The hare was obliged to make a long circuit across the highway to reach his favorite granary. On the highway he could hear the creaking of sledges, the whinnying of horses, the groaning of the seats in the sledges.

Once more the hare paused near the road. The peas-ants were walking alongside of their sledges, with their kaftan collars turned up. Their faces were scarcely visible. Their beards, their mustaches, their eyebrows, were white. Steam came from their mouths and noses.

Their horses were covered with sweat, and the sweat grew white with hoar-frost. The horses strained on their collars, plunged into the hollows and came up out of them again. The peasants urged them along and lashed them with their knouts. Two old men were walking side by side, and one was telling the other how a horse had been stolen from him.

As soon as the teams had passed, the hare crossed the road, and leaped uncon-cernedly toward the threshing-floor. A little dog belonging to the teams caught sight of the hare. He began to bark, and darted after him.

The hare made for the threshing-floor, across the snowdrifts ; but the depth of the snow impeded the hare, and even the dog, after a dozen leaps, sank deep in the snow and gave up the chase.

The hare also stopped, sat up on his hind legs, and then proceeded at his leisure toward the threshing-floor.

On the way across the field he fell in with two other hares. They were nibbling and playing. The gray hare joined his mates, helped them clear away the icy snow, ate a few seeds of winter wheat, and then went on his way.

In the village it was all quiet ; the fires were out ; the only sound on the street was an infant crying in a cottage, and the framework of the houses creaking under the frost.

The hare hastened to the threshing-floor, and there he found some of his mates. He played with them on the well-swept floor, ate some oats from the tub on which they had already begun, mounted the snow-covered roof into the granary, and then went through the hedge back to his hole.

In the east the dawn was already beginning to redden, the stars dwindled, and the frosty vapor grew thicker over the face of the earth. In the neighboring village the women woke up and went out after water ; the peas-ants began carrying fodder from the granaries ; children were shouting and crying ; along the highway more and more teams passed by, and the peasants talked in louder tones.

The hare leaped across the road, went to his old hole, selected a place a little higher up, dug away the snow, curled up in the depths of his new hole, stretched his ears along his back, and went to sleep with eyes wide open.

## Chapter 3: Foundling

A POOR woman had a daughter, Masha. Masha one morning, in going after water, saw something lying on the door-step, wrapped up in rags.

Masha set down her pail and undid the rags. When she had opened the bundle, there came forth a cry from out the rags, ua! ua! ua !

Masha bent over and saw that it was a pretty little baby. He was crying lustily, ua! ua! ua! Masha took him up in her arms and carried him into the house, and tried to give him some milk with a spoon.

The mother said :

“ What have you brought in ? “

Masha said :

“ A baby ; I found it at our door.”

The mother said :

“ We are so poor, how can we get food for another child ? I am going to the police and tell them to take it away.”

Masha wept, and said :

“ Matushka, he will not eat much ; do keep him ! Just see what pretty little dimpled hands and fingers he has.”

The mother looked, and she had compassion on the child. She decided to keep him. Masha fed him and swaddled him, and she sang cradle songs to him when she put him to sleep.

## Chapter 4: Peasant and the Cucumbers

ONCE upon a time a peasant went to steal some cu-cumbers of a gardener. He crept down among the cucumbers, and said to himself :

" Let me just get away with a bag of cucumbers ; then I will sell them. With the money I will buy me a hen. The hen will lay some eggs, and will hatch them out, and I shall have a lot of chickens. I will feed up the chickens, and sell them, and buy a shoat a nice little pig. In time she will farrow, and I shall have a litter of pigs. I will sell the little pigs and buy a mare ; the mare will foal, and I shall have a colt. I will raise the colt and sell it ; then I will buy a house and start a garden ; I will have a garden and raise cucumbers ; but [ won't let them be stolen, I will keep a strict watch. I will hire watchmen, and will station them among the cucumbers, and often I, myself, will come unexpectedly among them, and I will shout, ' Hollo, there! keep a closer watch.' "

As these words came into his head he shouted them at the top of his voice. The guards heard him, ran out, and belabored him with their sticks.

## Chapter 5: Fire

IT was harvest-time, and the men and women 1 had gone out to work.

Only the very old and the very young stayed in the village.

A grandmother and three of her grandchildren were left in one cottage. 2 The grandmother kindled a fire in the oven, and lay down for a nap. The flies lighted on her and annoyed her with their biting. She covered up her head with a towel and went to sleep.

One of the grandchildren, Masha, she was three years old, opened the oven, shoveled out some of the coals into a dish, and ran out into the entry. Now in the entry lay some sheaves. 3 The women had been preparing these sheaves for bands.

Masha brought the coals, emptied them under the sheaves, and began to blow. When the straw took fire, she was delighted; she ran into the sitting-room, and seized her little brother, Kiriushka, he was eighteen months old, and was only just beginning to walk, and she said, " Look, Kiliuska ! see what a nice fire I have started ! "

The sheaves were already flaming and cracking.

When Masha saw the entry full of smoke, she was frightened and hastened back into the hut. Kiriushka stumbled on the threshold and bumped his nose, and set up a cry. His sister dragged him into the room, and both of them hid under the bench. The grandmother heard nothing, as she was asleep.

The oldest brother, Vanya, he was eight, was in the street. When he saw that smoke was pouring from the entry, he ran indoors, bounded through the smoke into the hut, and tried to waken the grandmother ; but the grandmother, who was only half awake, was dazed, and, forgetting all about the children, leaped up and ran about the village after help.

Meantime Masha was crouching under the bench ; but the little one cried because he had hurt his nose so badly. Vanya heard him crying, looked under the bench, and called to Masha, " Run quick ! you will be burnt up ! "

Masha ran to the entry ; but it was impossible for her to pass, on account of the smoke and fire.

She came back. Then Vanya opened the window and told her to crawl out. When she had crawled out, Vanya seized his little brother and tried to drag him along.

But the little fellow was heavy and would not let his brother help him. He screamed, and struck Vanya. Twice Vanya fell while he was dragging him to the window ; and by this time the door of the hut was on fire,

Vanya thrust the baby boy's head up to the window, and tried to push him through, but the little fellow, who was very much frightened, clung with his hands, and would not let go. Then Vanya cried to Masha, " Pull him by the head ! " and he himself pushed from behind. And thus they dragged him through the window out-of-doors.

## Chapter 6: Treasure Trove

AN old woman and her granddaughter lived in a village. They were very poor and had nothing to eat. Easter Sunday came. The people were full of rejoicing. All made their purchases for the great feast, but the old woman and her granddaughter had nothing to make merry with. They shed tears, and began to pray God to help them.

Then the old woman remembered that long ago, in the time of the Frenchman^ the peasants used to hide their money in the ground. And the old woman said to her granddaughter :

" Granddaughter, take your shovel and go over to the site of the old village, ask God's help, and dig into the ground ; perhaps God will send us something."

And the granddaughter said to herself: "It is impos-sible that I should find anything. Still, I will do as grandma 2 bade me."

She took the shovel and went. After she had dug a hole, she began to think :

" I have dug long enough ; I am going home now."

She was just going to take out the shovel when she heard it knock against something. She leaned over, and saw a large jug. She shook it ; something jingled. She threw down her shovel, and ran to her grandma, crying, " Babushka, I have found a treasure !"

"They opened the jug and found it full of silver coins. And the grandmother and granddaughter were able to have an Easter feast, and they bought a cow, and thanked God because He had heard their prayer.

# Chapter 7: Bird

IT was Serozha's birthday, and he received many different gifts, peg-tops and hobby-horses and pictures. But Serozha's uncle gave him a gift which he prized above all the rest : it was a trap for snaring birds. The trap was constructed in such a way that a board was fitted on the frame and shut down upon the top. If seed were scattered on the board, and it was put out in the yard, the little bird would fly down, hop upon the board, the board would give way, and the trap would shut with a clap.

Serozha was delighted and he ran to his mother to show her the trap.

His mother said :

" It is not a good plaything. What do you want to do with birds ? Why do you want to torture them ? "

" I am going to put them in a cage. They will sing, and I will feed them."

Serozha got some seed, scattered it on the board, and set the trap in the garden. And he stood by and expected the birds to fly down. But the birds were afraid of him, and did not come near the cage. Serozha ran in to get something to eat, and left the cage.

After dinner he went to look at it ; the cage had shut, and in it a little bird was beating against the bars.

Serozha was delighted, took up the bird, and carried it into the house.

" Mamma, I have caught a bird ; I think it is a night-ingale ; and how its heart beats ! "

His mother said it was a canary.

" Be careful ! don't hurt it ; you would better let it

go."

" No ; I am going to give it something to eat and drink."

Serozha put the canary in a cage, and for two days gave him seed and water and cleaned the cage. But on the third day he forgot all about the canary, and did not change the water.

And his mother said :

" See here : you have forgotten your bird ; you would better let it go."

" No ; I will not forget it again ; I will immediately give it fresh water and clean its cage."

Serozha thrust his hand into the cage and .began to clean it, but the little bird was frightened and fluttered. After Serozha had cleaned the cage, he went to get some water. His mother perceived that he had for-gotten to shut the cage door, and she called after him :

" Serozha, shut up your cage, else your bird will fly out and hurt itself."

She had hardly spoken these words, when the bird found the door, was delighted, spread its wings, and flew around the room toward the window. But it did not see the glass, and struck against it and fell back on the window-sill. Serozha came running in, picked up the bird, and put it back in the cage. The bird was still alive, but it lay on

its breast, with its wings spread out, and breathed heavily. Serozha looked and looked, and began to cry :

" Mamma, what can I do now ? "

"You can do nothing now."

.Serozha did not leave the cage all day, but gazed at the canary, and all the time the bird lay on its breast and breathed hard and fast.

When Serozha went to bed, the bird was dead. Sero-zha could not get to sleep for a long time ; every time that he shut his eyes he seemed to see the bird still lying and sighing.

In the morning, when Serozha went to his cage, he saw the bird lying on his back, with his legs crossed, and all stiff.

After that Serozha never again tried to snare birds.

## Chapter 8: How Uncle Semyon Told About His Adventure in the Woods

ONE time in winter I had gone into the woods after timber. I had cut down three trees, and lopped off the limbs, and was hewing them, when I looked up and saw that it was getting late ; that it was time to go home. But the weather was bad ; it was snowing and blowing. I said to myself :

" The night is coming on, and you don't know the way."

I whipped up the horse and drove on ; still there was no sign of outlet. Forest all around.

I thought how thin my shuba was ; I was in danger of freezing to death.

I still pushed on ; it grew dark, and I was entirely off the road.

I was just going to unyoke the sled and protect myself under it, when I heard not far away the jingle of bells. I went in the direction of the bells, and saw a troika of roan horses, their manes tied with ribbons ! their bells were jingling, and two young men were in the sleigh.

"Good evening, brothers."

" Good evening, peasant."

" Where is the road, brothers ? "

" Here we are right on the road."

I went to them, and I saw that strangely enough the road was unbroken, all drifted over.

" Follow us," said they, and they whipped up their horses.

My wretched mare could not keep up with them. I began to shout :

" Hold on, brothers ! "

They waited for me, laughing.

"Get in with us," said they; "it will be easier for your horse without a load."

“ Thank you,” said I.

I cLmbed into their sledge. It was handsome well lined. As soon as I sat down, how they spurred on the horses ! “ Now then, my darlings / “

The roan horses dashed away, making the snow fly in clouds.

What a wonderful thing ! It grew lighter and lighter, and the road became as glare as ice, and we flew so fast that it took away my breath, and the twigs lashed my face. It began to be painful.

I looked ahead ; there was a steep mountain, a very steep mountain, and at the foot of the mountain a ravine. The roans were flying straight for the ravine.

I was frightened, and cried :

“Heavens and earth! slow up, you, slow up; you will kill us ! “

But the men only laughed, and urged on the horses the more. I saw there was no saving us ; the ravine was under our very runners. But I saw a bough right over my head.

“ Well,” I said to myself, “you may go over alone.”

I stood up and seized the bough, and there I hung !

As I caught it I shouted :

“ Hold on ! “ And then I heard women shouting :

“ Uncle Semyon ! what is the matter ? Start up the fire, you women ! Something is wrong with Uncle Semyon ! he is screaming ! Stir up the fire ! “

I woke up, and there I was in my cottage, clinging to the loft, and screaming at the top of my voice. And all that I had seen had been a dream !

## Chapter 9: Cow

widow Mary a lived with her mother and six children. Their means of life were small. But they used their last money in the purchase of a red cow, so as to have milk for the children. The eldest children pastured Brownie 1 in the field, and gave her slops at home.

One-time while the mother was away from home, the oldest son, Misha, in climbing on the shelf after bread, knocked over a tumbler and broke it.

Misha was afraid that his mother would chide him. So he gathered up the large pieces of broken glass, carried them into the yard, and buried them in the dung-heap, but the little pieces he threw into the basin. The mother missed the glass, and made in-quiries ; but Misha said nothing, and so the matter rested.

On the next day, after dinner, when the mother went to give Brownie the swill from the basin, she found that Brownie was ailing and would not eat her food. They tried to give her medicine, and they called the babka. 2 The babka said that the cow would not live ; it was best to slaughter her for beef.

They called a peasant and proceeded to slaughter the cow. The children heard Brownie lowing in the yard ; they all climbed upon the oven and began to weep.

After they had slaughtered Brownie, they took off the hide and cut the carcass in pieces, and there, in the throat, they found a piece of glass. And so they knew that her death was caused by her swallowing the glass in the slops.

When Misha heard this he began to weep bitterly, and confessed to his mother that he broke the glass. The mother said nothing, but also wept. Then she said :

" We have killed our Brownie, and have nothing to get another cow with. How will the little ones live without milk ? "

Misha kept howling louder and louder, and would not come down from the oven when they ate the jelly made from the cow's head. Every time when he went to sleep, he saw in his dreams how Uncle Vasili brought the red cow by the horns, Brownie, with her wide eyes and beautiful neck.

From that time the children had no more milk. Only on holidays they had milk, for then Marya asked her neighbor for a mug of it.

It happened that the lady of that estate needed a child's nurse. And the grandmother said to the daughter :

" Let me go ; I will take the place as nurse, and maybe God will let you get along with the children alone. And if God spares me, I can earn enough in a year to buy a cow."

Thus they did. The grandmother went to the lady ; but it grew still more hard for Marya and the children. The children lived a whole year without having milk. They had nothing but kisel jelly and tiuria l to eat and they grew thin and pale.

After the year was over, the grandmother came home, bringing twenty rubles.

" Well, daughter," says she, " now we will buy a cow."

Marya was delighted ; all the children were delighted. Marya and the grandmother went to market to buy their cow. They asked a neighbor to stay with the children, and they asked another neighbor, Uncle Zakhar, to go with them and help them to select the cow.

After saying their prayers they went to town. In the afternoon the children kept running into the street to see if they could see the cow. They amused them-selves guessing what kind of a cow she would be red or black. They kept telling one another how they would feed her. All day long they waited and waited. They walked a verst to meet the cow, but as it was already growing dark, they turned back.

Suddenly they saw coming along the road a cart, and in it sat their grandmother, and beside the hind wheel walked a brindle cow tied by the horn, and their mother was walking behind urging her on with a dry stick.

The children ran to them and began to examine the cow. They brought bread and grass and tried to feed her. The mother went into the cottage, changed her clothes, and went out with her towel and milk-pail. She sat down under the cow and began to wipe the udder. The Lord be praised ! The cow gave milk, and the children stood around and watched the milk straining into the pail, and listened to its sound under the mother's fingers. When the mother had milked the pail half full, she carried it down cellar, and each of the children had a mug for supper.

# Chapter 10: Filipok

ONCE there was a little boy whose name was Filipp. All the children were going to school. Filipp took his hat and wanted to go too.

But his mother said to him :

“ Where are you going, Filipok ? “

“ To school.”

“ You are too small ; you can’t go,” and his mother kept him at home.

The children went off to school. Their father had gone early in the morning to the woods ; the mother was engaged in her daily work.

Filipok and his grandmother were left in the cottage, on the oven. Filipok began to feel lonely ; his grand-mother was asleep, and he began to search for his hat. When he could not find his own, he took an old one, made of sheepskin, and started for school.

School was kept at the village church. When Filipp walked along his own street, 1 the dogs did not meddle with him, for they knew him ; but when he reached the street in the next estate, a black dog 2 came bounding out and barking, and behind this dog came another still bigger, named Wolfie, 3 and Filipp started to run, the dogs after him.

Filipok began to cry ; then he stubbed his toe and fell. A peasant came out and called off the dogs, and asked :

“ Where are you going all sole alone, you little rascal? “

Filipok made no answer, pulled up his skirt, and started to run with all his might. He ran to the school. There was no one on the steps, but in school the voices of the children could be heard in a confused murmur.

Filipp was now filled with fear :

“ Suppose the teacher should drive me away ? “

And he began to consider what he should do. If he should go back, the dogs might bite him ; but if he went into school, he was afraid of the teacher.

A peasant woman passed the school, with a pail, and she said :

“ All the rest are studying, and what are you standing there for?”

So Filipok went into school. In the entry he took off his cap and opened the door. The room was full of children. All were talking at once, and the teacher, in a red scarf, was walking up and down in the midst of them.

“ Who are you ? “ he demanded of Filipok.

Filipok clutched his cap and said nothing.

“Who are you?”

Filipok said never a word.

“Are you dumb?”

Filipok was so scared that he could not speak.

“Well, then, go home if you can’t speak.”

Now Filipok would have been glad to say something, but his throat was all parched with terror.

He looked at the teacher and burst into tears.

Then the teacher felt sorry for him. He caressed his head, and inquired of the children who the little fellow was.

"This is Filipok, Kostiushka's l brother; he has been wanting for a long time to go to school, but his mother would not let him, and he must have run away to school."

" Well, sit down on the bench next your brother, and I will ask your mother to let you come to school."

The teacher began to teach Filipok his letters ; but

Filipok already knew them, and could even read a little. " Very well ; spell your name, then." Filipok said, " Khve-i, khvi le-i, li peok, pok." Everybody laughed.

"Bravo!" said the teacher ; "who taught you to read?" Filipok summoned courage, and said : " Kostiushka. I am mischievous. I learned them

all at once. I am terribly smart! " The teacher laughed, and asked : " And do you know your prayer ? " Filipok said yes, and began to repeat the Ave Maria:

but he did not get every word quite correct. The teacher interrupted him, and said : "You must not boast. I will teach you." After this Filipok began to go to school regularly with the children.

# Stories From Botany

Translated by Nathan Haskell Dole 1888

# Chapter 1: My Apple Trees

I SET out two hundred young apple trees, and for three years, in the spring and autumn, I dug around them, and when winter came, I wrapped them around with straw as a protection against rabbits.

On the fourth year, when the snow had gone, I went out to examine my apple trees. They had grown dur-ing the winter, their bark was smooth and full of sap, the branches were all perfect, and on all the extremities of the twigs were the buds of flowers, as round as little peas.

Here and there, where the buds had already burst, the edges of the petals could be seen.

I knew that all the buds would become flowers and fruit, and I was full of gladness as I watched my apple trees.

But when I came to strip off the straw from the first tree, I noticed that at its foot, just below the level of the soil, the bark of the tree had been nibbled around, down to the rind, just like a white ring.

The mice had done it.

I stripped the next tree, and on the next tree it was just the same. Out of two hundred apple trees not one was untouched. I smeared the injured places with pitch and wax ; but as soon as the apple trees bloomed, the flowers immediately fell to the ground. Little leaves came out, but they faded and dried up. The bark grew rough and black.

Out of my two hundred trees only nine were saved.

The bark of these nine apple trees had not been en-tirely girdled, but in the white rings there was left a band of bark. At the juncture of these bands with the bark warts grew ; but though the trees were badly in-jured, still they survived. All the rest were lost, save that below the girdled place little sprouts came up ; but they were wild.

The bark on trees is the same as the veins in man ; the blood flows through a man's veins, and through the bark the sap flows over the tree and provides it with branches, leaves, and flowers. The whole inside of a tree may be removed, as often happens with old willows, and if only the bark is alive, the tree will live ; but if the bark is destroyed, the tree is destroyed. If a man's veins are cut, the man dies : in the first place, because the blood runs out of them ; and in the second place, because then the blood cannot be distributed over the body.

And in the same way the birch tree perishes when children make a hole in it to drink the sap ; all the sap runs out.

And in the same way my apple trees perished be-cause the mice entirely girdled the bark so that there was no way for the sap from the roots to reach the branches, the leaves, and the blossoms.

## Chapter 2: Old Poplar

OUR park had been neglected for five years. I en-gaged workmen with axes and shovels, and I myself began to work with them in my park. We cut down and lopped off dead and wild growths and superfluous thickets and trees.

More abundantly and luxuriantly than anything else had grown the poplar and bird cherry. The poplar starts from roots, and it is impossible to pull it up ; but you have to cut the roots out of the ground.

Behind the pond stood a monstrous poplar, two spans in circumference. On all sides of it was a field, and this field was overgrown with young poplar shoots. I ordered the men to cut them down : I wanted to make the place more cheerful; but, above all, I wanted to make it easier for the old poplar, because I thought that all these young trees came from it and robbed it of sap.

As we were cutting down the young poplars, I some-times felt a pang of regret to see the roots full of sap hacked in pieces underground. Sometimes four of us tried to pull up the roots of some young poplar that had been cut down, and found it impossible. It would re-sist with all its might, and would not die. I said to myself :

" Evidently it ought to live, if it clings so stoutly to life."

But it was essential to cut them down ; and I per-sisted in having them destroyed. But afterward, when it was too late, I learned that I ought not to have de-stroyed them.

I supposed that the saplings drew the sap from the old poplar, but it proved to be quite the reverse. By the time I had cut them down, the old poplar was also beginning to die. When it put forth leaves, I saw that one of its halves it grew in two great branches was bare, and that same summer it dried up. It had been long dying, and was conscious of it, and had been giving its life to its shoots.

That was the reason that they had grown so rapidly, and I, who had wished to help it, had killed all its children.

## Chapter 3: Bird Cherry Tree

A BIRD cherry l had taken root on the path through the hazelnut grove, and was beginning to choke off the hazel bushes.

For some time I queried whether to cut it or not to cut it ; I felt sorry to do so. This bird cherry did not grow in a clump, but in a tree more than five inches l in diam-eter, and twenty-eight feet high, full of branches, bushy, and wholly covered with bright, white, fragrant blos-soms. The perfume from it was wafted a long distance.

I certainly should not have cut it down, but one of the workmen I had given him orders before to cut down every bird cherry began to fell it in my absence. When I came he had already cut halfway into it, and the sap was dripping down under the ax as he let it fall into the gash.

“ There ‘s no help for it,” I said to myself ; “ evidently it is its fate.”

So I myself took the ax, and began to help the peasant cut it down.

It is delightful to work at all sorts of work; it is delightful even to cut wood. It is delightful to sink the ax deep in the wood, with a slanting stroke, and then to cut it in straight, and thus to advance deeper and deeper into the tree.

I entirely forgot about the bird cherry tree, and thought only about getting it cut down as quickly as possible.

When I got out of breath, I laid down the ax, and the peasant and I leaned against the tree, and tried to push it over. We pushed hard ; the tree shook its foliage and sprinkled us with drops of dew, and strewed all around the white, fragrant petals of its blossoms.

At this instant something shrieked ; there was a sharp, crackling sound in the center of the tree, and the tree began to fall.

It broke off near the gash, and, slowly wavering, toppled over on the grass, with all its leaves and blossoms. The branches and blossoms trembled for a moment after it fell, and then grew motionless.

“ Ekh ! what a splendid piece ! “ said the peasant ; “it’s a real shame ! “

As for me, I felt so sorry that I hastened off to look after other work.

1 Three vershoks, 5.25 inches.

## Chapter 4: How Trees Walk

ONCE we were clearing an overgrown path on the hillside, near the pond. We had cut down many briers, willows, and poplars, and at last we came to a bird cherry.

It was growing on the path itself, and it was so old and thick that it seemed as if it must have been there at least ten years. And yet I knew that only five years before the park had been cleared.

I could not understand how such a mature cherry tree could have sprung up there.

We cut it down and went on. A little farther away, in another thicket, there was another bird cherry tree like the first, only even more dense.

I examined its root, and found that it sprang from under an old linden. The linden had been smothering it with its shade, and the cherry had run under the ground for a distance of a dozen feet, 1 with a straight stem ; and when it came out into the light, it had raised its head and begun to flourish.

I cut it up by the root, and was amazed to see how light-colored and rotten the root was. After I had cut it off, the peasants and I tried to pull up the tree ; but in spite of all our best efforts we could not stir it ; it seemed to be fastened to the ground.

I said :

“ Look and see if we have not failed to cut it entirely off.”

One of the workmen crawled down under it, and cried :

“Yes, there ‘s another root ; there it is under the path.”

I went to him, and found that this was the case.

The cherry tree, in order not to be choked off by the linden, had crept from under the linden to the path, seven feet from its original root. Then the root which I had cut off was rotten and dried up, but the new one was alive. It had evidently felt that it would not live under the linden, had stretched itself out, had taken hold of the soil with its branch, had made a root out of the branch, and then abandoned the old root.

Then I began to understand how the first bird cherry had grown up in the path. It had evidently done the same thing, but had succeeded in so thoroughly ridding itself of its old root that I could not find it.

# Stories From Physics

Translated by Nathan Haskell Dole 1888

# Chapter 1: The Magnet

IN days of old there was a shepherd whose name was Magnis. One of Magnis's sheep went astray. He went to the mountains to search for it.

He reached a spot where there were only bare rocks. As he walked over these rocks he began to be conscious that his boots were adhering to them. He felt of them with his hand ; the rocks were dry, and did not stick to his hands. He started to walk on again ; still his boots stuck fast.

He sat down, took off one of his boots, and holding it in his hands, began to touch the rocks with it.

When he touched them with the leather or the sole, it did not adhere ; but when he touched them with the nails, then it adhered.

Magnis had a crook with an iron point. He touched the stones with the wood, it did not adhere ; but when he touched it with the iron, it clung so powerfully that he had to pull it away by main force.

When Magnis examined the stone, he' saw that it was like iron, and he carried some of the pieces of rock home with him. From that time they understood this stone, and called it lodestone, or magnet.

Magnets are found in the ground, together with iron ore. The best iron is found when the ore contains lodestone.

If a piece of iron is put on the magnet, then the iron also begins to attract other pieces of iron. And if a steel needle is laid on a magnet and kept there for some time, then the needle itself becomes a magnet, and is able to attract iron to itself.

If two magnets are laid side by side, two of the ends or poles will repel each other ; the other two will attract each other. If a magnetic needle be broken in two, then again each half will attract at one pole and repel at the other. And if it be broken again, the same thing will happen ; and no matter how many times it is broken, it will be always the same like poles repelling one another, unlike poles attracting one another ; just as if the magnet pushed with one end and pulled with the other.

And, however often you break it, one pole will always push and the other draw.

It is exactly like a pine cone : no matter where it is broken off, one end is always convex, the other hollow. And if they are put end to end, the convex fits into the hollow ; but the convex will not fit the convex, nor the cup the cup.

If a needle is magnetized by being left some time in contact with a magnet, and is balanced on a point in such a way that it will move freely on the point, then no matter in which direction the magnetic needle is turned, as soon as it is set free, it will come to rest with one pole pointing to the south, the other pointing to the north.

Before the magnet was discovered men did not dare to sail very far out on the sea. Whenever they sailed out of sight of land, then they could judge only by the sun and

the stars where they were going. But if it was stormy, and the sun and stars were hid, then they had no way of telling where their course lay ; and the vessel would drift before the wind, and be dashed on the rocks and go to pieces.

Until the discovery of the magnet they did not sail on the ocean far from land ; but after it was discovered, then they made use of the magnetic needle balanced on the point so as to turn freely. By means of this needle they could tell in which direction they were sailing. With the magnetic needle they began to make long voyages far from land, and afterward they discovered many new countries.

There is always on board ship a magnetic needle, called the compass, and they have a measuring-line with knots, at the stern of the ship. And the cord is so constructed that it uncoils and tells how fast the vessel is sailing.

Thus it is that, when they sail a ship, they always know where they are at any given time, and whether they are far from land, and in what direction they are going.

## Chapter 2: Humidity

WHY does the spider sometimes make a closely spun web and sit in the very center of its nest, and why does it sometimes come out of its nest and spin a new web ?

The spider makes its web according as the weather is at the time, and as it is going to be. By examining its web one can predict what the weather will be ; if the spider hides itself away deep down in its nest and does not come out, it means rain. If it emerges from its nest and spins new threads, it means that it will be fine.

How can the spider tell in advance what the weather will be ?

Its sensibilities are so delicate that as soon as the atmosphere begins to have greater humidity, even though this humidity is not perceptible to us, and to us the weather is still clear, the spider perceives that rain is coming. Just as a man feels the dampness when he is undressed, but does not feel it when he is dressed, so the rain is perceptible to the spider when for us it is only preparing to rain.

Why is it that in winter doors swell and refuse to shut, but in summer they dry up and shrink ?

Because in autumn and winter the wood absorbs moisture like a sponge, and swells ; but in summer the water evaporates and the wood shrinks.

Why does a soft wood like poplar swell more than oak, for example ?

Because in the hard wood, in the oak, there are less empty spaces, and less room for the water to sink in ; while in the soft wood, in the poplar, there are more empty spaces and more room for the water. In decay-ing wood there is still more room and therefore decayed wood swells more than any other kind and sinks sooner.

Beehives are made of the softest wood or of rotten wood ; the best hives are made of rotten willow. Why ? Because the air penetrates the rotten stump, and bees like the air in this kind of a hive.

Why do boards warp ?

Because they dry unevenly. If you put a damp board into an oven, the water exudes from one side, and the board gets dry on that side and makes the other side yield to it. It is impossible to shrink the damp side be-cause there is water in it and the whole board bends.

In order to keep floors from warping, they cut out pieces of dry wood and plunge them into boiling water. When the water has been wholly boiled away the pieces are glued together and will not warp, and this kind of inlaid floor is called parket.

## Chapter 3: Different Degrees of Coherence

WHY is it that the bolsters under a wagon are made of oak while the naves of the wheels are turned out of birch ?

It is necessary to have the bolsters and naves strong, but oak is not more expensive than birch. It is because oak splits lengthwise, while birch* is not easily split, but is made of tough filaments.

Accordingly, though oak has a closer texture than birch, it is so constituted that it splits, while birch is not easily split.

Why are the rims of the wheels and the bounds bent from oak or elm, but never out of birch or linden ?

Because oak and elm, when soaked and softened, become elastic and do not break, while birch and linden splinter on all sides.

All this is due to the fact that the coherence of parti-cles in oak and birch wood differs in degree.

## Chapter 4: Crystals

IF salt is stirred up in water the particles of the salt are diffused through it and become invisible, but if more and more salt is added then at last the salt ceases to dissolve, and, however much you stir it, the salt remains like a white powder at the bottom. The water had dis-solved the salt to the point of saturation and could take no more. But if the water be heated it will dissolve more ; and the salt which refused to melt in the cold water will dissolve away. But if still more salt be added, then not even boiling water will dissolve it. Now, if you still continue to boil the water, the water itself will evaporate in the form of steam, and the salt will be left.

So it is of everything which water dissolves : the water has a limit beyond which it cease* to dissolve sub-stances. Everything is more readily dissolved by hot water than by cold water ; but, nevertheless, when the hot water is saturated, it ceases to dissolve any more. The substance remains unchanged but the water may pass off as steam.

If powdered saltpeter is dissolved in water and then more saltpeter is added, and if the whole is heated and allowed to cool without being stirred, then the super-fluous

saltpeter will not settle on the bottom in the form of a powder, but will form in clustering hexagonal prisms on the bottom and on the sides. If powdered saltpeter is dissolved in water and then put in a warm place, then the water will evaporate and the residuum of saltpeter will be precipitated in the form of hexagonal crystals.

If common salt is dissolved in water and the water is heated and allowed to evaporate, then the residuum of salt is precipitated also, not in the form of a powder, but in cubes. If saltpeter and salt are dissolved to-gether, the residuum of the two substances do not com-bine, but each is precipitated in its own form : the salt-peter in prisms, the salt in cubes.

If lime or any other salt or any other substance is dissolved in water and the water is evaporated, each substance is precipitated in its own peculiar way : one in triangular prisms, another in octagonal, another in brick-like forms, another in stars each in its own way. These figures are different in all solid substances. Sometimes they are large and are found like stones in the ground ; sometimes they are so small that they are invisible to the naked eye ; but still each substance has its own form.

If, when water is saturated with saltpeter and the figures begin to form, the edges of the figure are broken with a needle, then again in the same place there will be deposited new atoms of the saltpeter, and the broken edge will be repaired just exactly in its own proper form in hexagonal prisms. It is the same with salt and with everything else. All the infinitesimal atoms move and take their places where they are needed.

When water becomes ice, the same phenomenon takes place. A snowflake comes flying down ; no figure can be seen in it. But as soon as it lights on anything moist and cold, on a pane of glass, or on fur, its form may be discerned. You can see a little star or a little plate. On the window-panes the vapor does not freeze at haphazard, but as soon as it begins to freeze it instantly branches out into star shapes.

What is ice ? It is cold solid water. When water turns from a liquid to a solid it forms figures and liberates heat. The same thing takes place with salt-peter when it changes from a liquid to a solid form : heat is liberated. The same with salt, the same with cast-iron, when it cools down from its melted to its solid form.

When anything turns from a liquid to a solid, it liberates heat and begins to form crystals. But when it changes from a solid to a liquid then it absorbs heat ; its coldness disappears and its crystals melt.

Take melted iron and let it cool ; take hot dough and let it cool ; take slaked lime and let it cool heat is pro-duced. Take ice and melt it cold is produced. Take saltpeter, salt, or anything else which is soluble, and put it into water cold is produced. So that when you want to make ice-cream, you melt salt and water.

# Chapter 5: Bad Air

ONE festive day, at the village of Nikolskoye, the people had gone to mass. On the estate 1 were left the cattle-woman, the village elder, 2 and the hostler.

The cattle-woman went to the well after water. The well was in the yard itself. She was drawing up the bucket, but failed to hold it. The bucket slipped from her, struck against the side of the well, and broke the rope.

The cattle-woman returned to her cottage, and said to the elder :

" Aleksandr, come, little father, to the well ; I have dropped the bucket"

Aleksandr replied :

" You dropped it, and you must get it out."

The cattle-woman replied that she was going to climb down into the well, only she wanted him to hold her.

The elder said :

"Very well, then; let us go; you have been fasting lately, so I can hold you ; but if you had had dinner, it would be impossible."

The elder fastened a stake to the rope, and the woman sat astride of it, clinging to the rope, and she began to descend into the well, and the elder unwound the rope by means of the windlass. The well was about fourteen feet 1 deep, and there was a third of a fathom of water in it.

The elder kept turning back the windlass slowly, and shouting to the woman :

" Is that enough ? "

And the cattle-woman kept crying :

"Just a little more."

Suddenly the elder felt the rope slacken ; he shouted to the woman, but she gave no answer. The elder looked down into the well, and saw that the woman was lying with her head in the water and her feet in the air.

The elder began to shout and call the people, but there was no one to come. Only the hostler came running.

The elder bade him hold the windlass, and he himself pulled up the rope, got astride of the stake, and de-scended into the well.

As soon as the hostler let the elder down to the water's edge, the same thing happened. He let go of the rope, and fell head-first down on the cattle-woman.

The hostler began to cry for help ; then he ran to the church for the people. Mass was over, and the people were returning from church. All the peasant men and women hastened to the well. They all stood around the curb, and each offered advice, but no one knew what to do.

A young carpenter forced his way through the throng, up to the well, seized the rope, sat on the stake, and told them to let him down. But Ivan took the precaution to fasten the rope to his waist. Two men let him down, and all the rest looked into the well to see what would happen to Ivan.

As soon as he reached the level of the water, he let go of the rope with his hands, and would have fallen in head-first, but for the fact of the girdle holding him.

All cried :

"Pull him back!"

And they lifted Ivan to the top.

He hung on the rope like a dead weight. His head hung down and thumped against the edge of the well.

His face was bluish purple. They seized him, un-fastened the rope, and laid him on the ground. They thought that he was dead ; but he suddenly drew a deep sigh, began to clear his throat, and came to.

Then still others proposed to go down ; but an old peasant said that it was impossible to go down into the well, for there was bad air in it, and this bad air was death to men.

Then the men ran to get gaffs, and they attempted to hook up the elder and the woman. The elder's wife and mother were shrieking near the well; the others were trying to calm them.

Then the peasants brought the gaffs to the well, and began to grapple for the two victims. Twice they lifted the elder, by means of his clothes, halfway up the well, to the well-curb ; but he was heavy, his clothes tore, and he fell back. At last they hooked him with two gaffs and brought him to the surface. Then they brought up the cattle-woman in the same way.

Both were stone dead, and could not be brought to life.

Then, when an investigation of the well was made, they found that the bottom of the well was full of bad air.

This sort of air is so heavy, that no man can live in it nor any living thing exist in it.

They let a cat down into the well, and as soon as it reached the place where the bad air was, it immediately died.

Not only can no living thing live in it, but a candle cannot burn in it.

They let down a candle, and as soon as it reached the same place, it was immediately extinguished.

There are places under the earth where this bad air accumulates ; and if you should go into them, you would immediately perish. Hence in mines they have lamps, and before a man goes into such a place they let a lamp down first.

If the lamp goes out, then it is impossible for a man to enter. So they send down a supply of fresh air until the lamp will burn. Near the city of Naples there is such a grotto. In it the bad air always stands to a height of an arshin l above the ground, and above that the air is pure. A man can walk through this grotto and receive no harm ; but as soon as a dog enters, he chokes to death.

Whence comes this bad air ?

It is made out of the same good air which we breathe. If many people are collected in one room, and all the doors and windows are shut so that no fresh air can get in, then the atmosphere becomes the same as in the well, and the people perish.

A hundred years ago the Hindus shut one hundred and forty-six Englishmen into a dungeon, and locked them up in an underground hole, where the air could not get to them.

The imprisoned Englishmen, after they had been there a few hours, began to choke, and at the end of the night one hundred and twenty-three of them were dead, and the rest were taken out barely alive, and ill.

At first the air had been pure in the dungeon ; but when the prisoners had breathed up all the good air, and it was impossible to get any fresh supply, it became bad, like that in the well, and they died.

How is it that bad air is made out of good air, when many people are together ?

Because when people breathe, the good air is taken into the lungs, and breathed out as bad air.

## Chapter 6: How Air Balloons Are Made

IF you take an inflated bladder and immerse it in water and then let go of it, the bladder rises to the top and begins to float. In exactly the same way if you boil water in a kettle, you will see on the bottom, over the fire, how the water becomes volatile, becomes a gas ; and when a little of this aqueous gas collects it immedi-ately rises to the top in the form of bubbles. First, one bubble flies up, then another, and when the water is thoroughly heated, then the bubbles rise unceasingly ; then the water boils.

Just exactly as the bubbles filled with steam fly up to the top because they are lighter than water so up through the atmosphere will rise a balloon inflated with hydrogen gas or with heated air, because heated air is lighter than cold air, and hydrogen is the lightest of all gases.

Air balloons are made of hydrogen or of heated air. This is the way they are made of hydrogen. A large bag is made and attached by ropes to stakes, and then it is rilled with hydrogen gas. As soon as the ropes are cut, the balloon rises and floats until it escapes from the atmosphere that is heavier than hydrogen. But when it reaches a rarer part of the atmosphere, the balloon stops rising and then it floats along like a bubble on the top of the water.

Balloons are made of heated air in this manner: a large empty bag is made with a wide mouth below like a pitcher upside down, and in the mouth is placed a bunch of cotton which is soaked with ether and then set on fire. The air in the balloon is heated by the fire and becomes lighter than the cold air outside, and the balloon rises like a bubble in water, and it floats up in the air until it reaches atmosphere so rare as to be lighter than the heated air.

Almost a century ago some Frenchmen the Mont-golfier brothers 1 invented the hot air balloon. They made a bag of cloth and paper and filled it with hot air ; it floated. Then they made another still larger, attached a ram, a cock, and a duck to it and sent it up. The balloon ascended and returned successfully. Then they attached a small boat to it, and a man took his place in the boat. The balloon went up so high that it was lost to sight; it floated off and then came down without injury. Then they invented

the method of inflating balloons with hydrogen, and they kept going higher and more rapidly.

In order to make a balloon ascension a basket is attached to the bag, and two, three, and even as many as eight men accommodate themselves in it, taking with them food and drink.

In order to regulate the movements of the balloon up and down at will, a valve is constructed in the balloon, and the aeronaut 2 can open it or shut it at his own pleasure. If the balloon rises too high, and the aeronaut wishes to descend, he opens the valve, the gas escapes, the balloon contracts, and begins to sink. Moreover, he always carries bags of sand. If a bag is thrown out, the balloon becomes lighter, and it rises. If the aero-naut wishes to come down, and sees that it is not a fit place for landing, on account of a river or a forest, then he empties out some sand, and the balloon becomes lighter and rises again.

## Chapter 7: Galvanism

ONCE there was a learned Italian named Galvani. He had an electrical machine and he was showing his pupils what electricity was. He rubbed glass vigorously with oiled silk, and then he approached to the glass a copper knob with a glass handle, and instantly a spark leaped from the glass to the copper knob. He told them that a similar spark would be elicited by sealing-wax and am-ber. He showed how feathers and pieces of paper are sometimes attracted by electricity, sometimes repelled, and why this is. He performed many different experi-ments with electricity and showed them to his pupils.

Once it happened that his wife was taken ill. He summoned the doctor and asked him how to cure her. The doctor ordered him to have made for her a frog soup. Galvani sent out to get some edible frogs. They were caught, killed, and laid on the table.

The cook did not come to get the frogs, and Galvani went on to show his pupils his experiment with the electrical machine, and produced sparks.

Suddenly he noticed that the dead frogs lying on the table moved their legs. He began to study them and discovered that each time he elicited a spark from the electrical machine the frogs kicked.

Galvani procured some more frogs and began a series of experiments. Each time it proved that whenever he produced a spark the dead frogs acted as if they were alive. And so it occurred to Galvani that living frogs might move their legs from this cause, that electricity might pass through them.

But Galvani knew that electricity is in the atmos-phere ; that while it is more noticeable in sealing-wax, amber, and glass, still it is in the air, and that thunder and lightning are produced by atmospheric electricity.

So he began to make experiments whether dead frogs would move their legs ‘under the influence of atmospheric electricity. For this purpose he took some frogs, skinned

them, cut off their heads and fore paws, and attached them by copper hooks to the roof, under an iron gutter. He thought that if a thunder-shower came up and the atmosphere was full of electricity, then the electricity would be brought to the frogs through the copper wire, and they would begin to kick.

But though several thunder-showers came up, the frogs did not move. Galvani proceeded to take them down, and while he was doing so, he touched the leg of one of the frogs to the gutter and the leg kicked ! Galvani then took the frogs and began to make the following experi-ment : he attached iron wire to the copper hook and then touched the frog's leg with the wire the leg kicked.

Here Galvani came to the conclusion that all animals are alive only because they have electricity in them, and that electricity leaps from the brain into the flesh and thus animals move.

No one had at that time gone very thoroughly into the study of this matter, and as nothing was known about it, every one put faith in Galvani's explanation.

But about this time another scientist, Volta, began to experiment for himself, and proved conclusively that Galvani was mistaken. He tried touching the frogs, not as Galvani had done with a copper hook and an iron wire, but first with a copper hook and a copper wire and then with an iron hook and an iron wire and the frogs did not stir. They moved only when Volta touched them with an iron wire attached to copper.

So Volta came to the conclusion that the electricity was not in the dead frog, but in the iron and copper. He continued to make his tests, and this was the result : As soon as he placed iron and copper together, electri-city was produced, and the electricity caused the dead frogs to kick. Then Volta began to try how to make electricity in a different way from what had been done before. He tried putting together various metals like the iron and copper, and he reached the conclusion that only from the contact of such metals as silver, platinum, zinc, tin, iron, he could produce electric sparks.

After Volta, new methods were invented for getting a stronger current of electricity by putting the metals into various liquids, water, and acids. By the use of these liquids electricity acquired so much more energy that it was no longer necessary to rub, as had been done be-fore ; all that was required was to place in a single dish pieces of different metals and pour on them the liquid, and electricity would be created and sparks would be elicited.

As soon as this kind of electricity was discovered, methods were invented for putting it to use ; they could cover objects with gold and silver by means of electricity, and by means of electricity they could transmit signals from one distant place to another.

To do this, pieces of different metals are placed in glass jars, and liquids are poured over them. The electricity is produced in these jars, and this electricity is conveyed by means of a wire to any desired place, and from that place is led into the earth. The electricity in the earth runs back again to the jars and is conducted into them by means of another wire. Thus this elec-tricity keeps going in a circuit, as in a ring by the wire to the earth and back by the earth and again by the wire and again by the earth. Electricity can go in either direction, according as you may wish : it may go first

by the wire and return by the earth, or go first by the earth and return by the wire. Over the wire, in the place where the signals are given, is placed a mag-netic needle, and this needle points in one direction if the electric current comes by the wire and returns by the earth, and in the other if the electric current comes by the earth and returns by the wire. By this needle sig-nals are given, and by means of these signals telegraphic messages are sent from one place to another.

## Chapter 8: Solar Heat

ON a clear, frosty day in winter, if you happen to be in a field or in the forest, and look around you and lis-ten, you see the snow everywhere, the rivers are frozen across, the dry grass sticks out from the snow, the trees stand bare ; there is not a sound.

Then look in the summer : the rivers are running and murmuring ; in every little pond the frogs are calling and croaking ; l the birds are flying about and singing and whistling ; flies and gnats are humming and buzz-ing ; 2 the trees and the grass are growing and waving. Freeze a kettle of water, it grows as hard as stone. Place the frozen kettle on the fire ; the ice begins to crack, to melt, to move. The water begins to tremble and to send up bubbles ; then when it begins to boil, it tosses and is agitated. The same phenomenon happens all over the world by the action of heat. When there is no heat, everything is dead. When there is heat, everything lives and moves. Little heat little motion ; more heat more motion; much heat much motion; great heat great motion.

Whence comes the heat to the world ?

It comes from the sun.

In winter the sun runs low, its rays do not warm the earth, and nothing stirs. The little sun begins to go higher above our heads ; it begins to send its light down directly on the earth everything grows warm, and life and motion increase.

The snow begins to melt, the ice on the rivers begins to break up, the brooks come leaping down from the hills, the vapor from the waters rises into the sky and becomes clouds, and the showers fall.

What does all this ?

The sun.

Seeds are sown, the germs sprout, the roots catch hold of the soil, from the old roots new runners strike out ; the trees and grasses begin to grow.

What does all this ?

The sun.

The moles and bears come out of their lairs, flies and bees grow lively, gnats abound, fishes come out from their eggs into the warmth.

What does all that ?

The sun.

In one place the air grows warm, begins to rise, and into its place flows a colder air there is a wind.

What does that ?

The sun.

The clouds come up, they roll up and they separate, then there is lightning.

What makes those flashes ?

The sun.

Herbs, grain, fruits, trees grow. Animals feed on them, human beings make their sustenance of them, and store them up for fodder and fuel against the winter ; men build houses, railways, and cities.

What furnishes the material ?

The sun.

A man builds himself a house. What does he make it out of? Of lumber. The lumber is sawed out of trees, the sun made the trees grow.

You heat a stove with fuel.

What produced the fuel ?

The sun.

A man eats bread and potatoes.

What produced them ?

The sun.

A man eats meat. W 7 hat fed the animals, the birds ? Grass, but the sun produced the grass. A man builds a stone house with brick and mortar. The brick and mortar were burnt with fuel. The sun produced the fuel.

Everything needed by man, everything that comes directly into use, is due to the sun, and^ much of the sun's heat goes into everything. Grain is necessary to all men because the sun makes it grow and there is much solar heat stored away in it. Grain warms who-ever eats it.

Fuel and lumber are useful because there is much heat in them. Whoever buys fuel for winter's use, buys solar heat. And in winter you can burn your fuel when-ever you please and liberate the solar heat into your room.

And when there is heat there is also motion. What-ever motion there is, it all comes from heat either di-rectly from the sun's heat or from heat stored away by the sun in coal, in firewood, in grain, and in grass. Horses and cattle draw loads, men work; what moves them ? Heat. But whence comes the heat ? From food. But the food was produced by the sun.

Water-mills and windmills are set in motion and grind. What moves them ? Wind and water. But what drives the wind ? Heat. And what drives the water? Heat, to be sure. It raises the water in the form of vapor into the sky, and if it were not for heat the water would not fall.

A machine does work. Steam moves it. What makes the steam ? Fuel ; and in the fuel is the sun's heat.

Out of heat comes motion, and out of motion comes heat. And both the heat and the motion are due to the sun.

# Stories From the New Speller

Translated by Nathan Haskell Dole 1888

# 1. The Wolf and the Kids

A GO AT was going to the field after provender, and she shut up her Kids in the barn, with injunctions

not to let any one in. Said she :

" But when you hear my voice then open the door." A Wolf overheard, crept up to the barn, and sang

after the manner of the Goat :

" Little children, open the door ; your mother has

come with some food for you."

The Kids peered out of the window, and said :

" The voice is our mamma's, but the legs are those of

a wolf. We cannot let you in."

# 2. The Farmer's Wife and the Cat

A FARMER'S wife was annoyed by mice eating up the tallow in her cellar. She shut the cat into the cellar, so that the cat might catch the mice.

But the cat ate up, not only the tallow, but the milk and the meat also.

# 3. The Crow and the Eagle

sheep went out to pasture.

Suddenly an Eagle appeared, swooped down from the sky, caught a little lamb with its claws, and bore him away.

A Crow saw it, and felt also an inclination to dine on meat. She said :

" That was not a very bright performance. Now I am going to do it, but in better style. The Eagle was stupid ; he carried off a little lamb, but I am going to take that fat ram yonder."

The Crow buried her claws deep in the ram's fleece, and tried to fly off with him ; but all in vain. And she was not able to extricate her claws from the wool.

The shepherd came along, freed the ram from the Crow's claws, and killed the Crow, and flung it away.

## 4: The Mouse and the Frog

A MOUSE went to visit a Frog. The Frog met the Mouse on the bank, and urged him to visit his chamber under the water.

The Mouse climbed down to the water's edge, took a taste of it, and then climbed back again.

"Never," said he, "will I make visits to people of alien race."

## 5: The Vainglorious Cockerel

Two Cockerels fought on a dungheap.

One Cockerel was the stronger : he vanquished the other and drove him from the dungheap.

All the Hens gathered around the Cockerel, and began to laud him. The Cockerel wanted his strength and glory to be known in the next yard. He flew on top of the barn, flapped his wings, and crowed in a loud voice :

" Look at me, all of you. I am a victorious Cockerel. No other Cockerel in the world has such strength as I."

The Cockerel had not finished his paean, when an Eagle killed him, seized him in his claws, and carried him to his nest.

## 6: The Ass and the Lion

ONCE upon a time a Lion went out to hunt, and he took with him an Ass. And he said to him :

" Ass, now you go into the woods, and roar as loud as you can; you have a capacious throat. The prey that run away from your roaring will fall into my clutches."

And so he did. The Ass brayed, and the timid creatures of the wood fled in all directions, and the Lion caught them.

After the hunting was over, the Lion said to the Ass :

" Now I will praise you. You roared splendidly."

And since that time the Ass is always braying, and always expects to be praised.

## 7: The Fool and His Knife

A FOOL had an excellent knife.

With this knife the fool tried to cut a nail. The knife would not cut the nail.

Then the fool said :

" My knife is mean," and he tried to cut some soft kisel jelly with his knife. Wherever the knife went through the jelly the liquid closed together again.

The fool said, “ Miserable knife ! it won’t cut kisel, either,” and he threw away his good knife.

## 8: The Boy Driver

A PEASANT was returning from market with his son Vanka. 1 The peasant went to sleep in his cart, and Vanka held the reins and cracked the whip. They happened to meet another team. Vanka shouted :

“ Turn out to the right ! I shall run over you ! “ .

And the peasant with the team said :

“ It is not a big cricket, but it chirps so as to be heard ! “

## 9: Life Dull Without Song

IN the upper part of a house lived a rich barin, and on the floor below lived a poor tailor. The tailor was always singing songs at his work, and prevented the barin from sleeping.

The barin gave the tailor a purse full of money not to sing. The tailor became rich, and took good care of his money, and refrained from singing.

But it grew tiresome to him ; he took the money and returned it to the barin, saying :

“ Take back your money and let me sing my songs again, or I shall die of melancholy.”

## 10: The Squirrel and the Wolf

A SQUIRREL was leaping from limb to limb, and fell directly upon a sleeping Wolf. The Wolf jumped up, and was going to devour him. But the Squirrel begged the Wolf to let him go. .

The Wolf said :-^

“ All right ; I will let you go on condition that you tell me why it is that you squirrels are always so happy. I am always melancholy ; but I see you playing and leaping all the time in the trees.”

The Squirrel said :

“ Let me go first, and then I will tell you ; but now I am afraid of you.”

The Wolf let him go, and the Squirrel leaped up into a tree, and from there it said :

“ You are melancholy because you are bad. Wicked-ness consumes your heart. But we are happy because we are good, and do no one any harm.”

## 11: Uncle Mitya's Horse

UNCLE MITYA had a very fine bay horse.

Some thieves heard about the bay horse, and laid their plans to steal it. They came after it was dark, and crept into the yard.

Now it happened that a peasant who had a bear with him came to spend the night at Uncle Mitya's. Uncle Mitya took the peasant into the cottage, let out the bay horse into the yard, and put the bear into the inclosure where the bay horse was.

The thieves came in the dark into the inclosure, and began to grope around. The bear got on his hind legs, and seized one of the thieves, who was so frightened that he bawled with all his might.

Uncle Mitya came out and caught the thieves.

## 12: The Book

Two men together found a book in the street, and began to dispute as to the ownership of it.

A third happened along, and asked :

" Which of you can read ? "

" Neither of us."

" Then why do you want the book ? Your quarrel reminds me of two bald men who fought for possession of a comb, when neither had any hair on his head."

## 13: The Wolf and the Fox

A WOLF was running from the dogs, and wanted to hide in a cleft. But a Fox was lying in the cleft ; she showed her teeth at the Wolf, and said :

" You cannot come in here ; this is my place."

The Wolf did not stop to dispute the matter, but merely said :

"If the dogs were not so near, I would teach you whose place it is ; but now the right is on your side."

## 14: The Peasant and His Horse

SOME soldiers made a foray into hostile territory. A peasant ran out into the field where his horse was, and tried to catch it. But the horse would not come to the peasant.

And the peasant said to him :-

" Stupid, if you don't let me catch you, the enemy will carry you off."

The Horse asked :

" What would the enemy do with me ? "

The peasant replied :

“ Of course they would make you carry burdens.”

And the Horse rejoined :

“ Well, don’t I carry burdens for you ? So then it is all the same to me whether I work for you or your enemies.”

## 15: The Eagle and the Sow

AN Eagle built a nest on a tree, and hatched out some eaglets. And a wild Sow brought her litter under the tree.

The Eagle used to fly off after her prey, and bring it back to her young. And the Sow rooted around the tree and hunted in the woods, and when night came she would bring her young something to eat.

And the Eagle and the Sow lived in neighborly fashion.

And a Grimalkin laid his plans to destroy the eaglets and the little sucking pigs. He went to the Eagle, and said :

“ Eagle, you had better not fly very far away. Be-ware of the Sow ; she is planning an evil design. She is going to undermine the roots of the tree. You see she is rooting all the time.”

Then the Grimalkin went to the Sow and said :

“ Sow, you have not a good neighbor. Last evening I heard the Eagle saying to her eaglets : ‘ My dear little eaglets, I am going to treat you to a nice little pig. Just as soon as the Sow is gone, I will bring you a little young sucking pig.’ ‘

From that time the Eagle ceased to fly out after prey, and the Sow did not go any more into the forest. The eaglets and the young pigs perished of starvation, and Grimalkin feasted on them.

## 16: The Load

AFTER the French had left Moscow, two peasants went out to search for treasures. One was wise, the other stupid.

They went together to the burnt part of the city, and found some scorched wool. . They said, “ That will be useful at home.”

They gathered up as much as they could carry, and started home with it.

On the way they saw lying in the street a lot of cloth. The wise peasant threw down the wool, seized as much of the cloth as he could carry, and put it on his shoulders. The stupid one said :

“ Why throw away the wool ? It is nicely tied up, and nicely fastened on.” And so he did not take any of the cloth.

They went farther, and saw lying in the street some ready-made clothes that had been thrown away. The wise peasant unloaded the cloth, picked up the clothes, and put them on his shoulders. The stupid one said :

" Why should I throw away the wool ? It is nicely tied up and securely fastened on my back."

They went on their way, and saw silver plate scattered about. The wise peasant threw down the clothes, and gathered up as much of the silver as he could, and started off with it ; but the stupid one did not give up his wool, because it was nicely tied up and securely tied on.

Going still farther, they saw gold lying on the road. The wise peasant threw down his silver and picked up the gold ; but the stupid one said :

" What is the good of taking off the wool ? It is nicely tied up and securely fastened to my back."

And they went home. On the way a rain set in, and the wool became water-soaked, so that the stupid man had to throw it away, and thus reached home empty-handed ; but the wise peasant kept his gold and became rich.

## 17: The Big Oven

ONCE upon a time a man had a big house, and in the house there was a big oven ; but this man's family was small only himself and his wife.

When winter came, the man tried to keep his oven going ; and in one month he burnt up all his firewood. He had nothing to feed the fire, and it was cold.

Then the man began to break up his fences, and use the boards for fuel. When he had burnt up all of his fences, the house, now without any protection against the wind, was colder than ever, and still they had no firewood.

Then the man began to tear down the ceiling of his house, and burn that in the oven.

A neighbor noticed that he was tearing down his ceiling, and said to him :

" Why, neighbor, have you lost your mind ? pulling down your ceiling in winter. You and your wife will freeze to death!"

But the man said :

" No, brother ; you see I am pulling down my ceiling so as to have something to heat my oven with. We have such a curious one ; the more I heat it up, the colder we are ! "

The neighbor laughed, and said :

"Well, then, after you have burnt up your ceiling, then you will be tearing down your house. You won't have anywhere to live ; only the oven will be left, and even that will be cold ! "

"Well, that is my misfortune," said the man. "All my neighbors have firewood enough for all winter ; but I have already burnt up my fences and the ceiling of my house, and have nothing left."

The neighbor replied :

" All you need is to have your oven rebuilt"

But the man said :

" I know well that you are jealous of my house and my oven because they are larger than yours, and so you advise me to rebuild it."

And he turned a deaf ear to his neighbor's advice, and burnt up his ceiling, and burnt up his whole house, and had to go and live with strangers.

# Stories of My Dogs

Translated by Nathan Haskell Dole 1888

# Chapter 1: Bulka

I HAD a bulldog, and his name was Bulka. He was perfectly black, except for the paws of his fore legs, which were white. All bulldogs have the lower jaw longer than the upper, and the upper teeth set into the lower ; but in the case of Bulka the lower jaw was pushed so far forward that the finger could be inserted between the upper and lower teeth.

Bulka had a broad face and big, black, brilliant eyes. And his teeth and white tusks were always uncovered. He was like a negro.

Bulka had a gentle disposition and he would not bite ; but he was very powerful and tenacious. Whenever he took hold of anything, he set his teeth together and hung on like a rag, and it was impossible to make him let go ; he was like a pair of pincers.

One time he was set on a bear, and he seized the bear by the ear, and hung on like a bloodsucker. The bear pounded him with his paws, hugged him, shook him from side to side, but he could not get rid of him ; then he stood on his head in his attempts to crush him, but Bulka hung on until they could dash cold water over him.

I took him when he was a puppy, and reared him myself. When I went to the Caucasus, I did not care to take him with me, and I went away noiselessly, and gave orders to keep him chained up.

At the first post-station I was just going to start off with a fresh team, when suddenly I saw something black and bright dashing along the road.

It was Bulka in his brass collar. He flew with all his might toward the station. He leaped up on me, licked my hand, and then stretched himself out in the shadow of the telyega. His tongue lolled out at full length. He kept drawing it back, swallowing the spittle, and then thrusting it out again. He was all panting ; he could not get his breath; his sides actually labored. He twisted from side to side, and pounded the ground with his tail.

I learned afterward that, when he found I had gone, he broke his chain, and jumped out of the window, and dashed over the road after my trail, and had thus run twenty versts in the heat of the day.

# Chapter 2: Bulka and the Wild Boar

ONE time in the Caucasus we went boar hunting, and Bulka ran to go with me. As soon as the boar-hounds got to work, Bulka dashed off in the direction of their music and disappeared in the woods.

This was in the month of November ; at that time the wild boars and pigs are usually very fat. In the forests of the Caucasus, frequented by wild boars, grow all man-ner

of fruits, wild grapes, cones, apples, pears, black-berries, acorns, and rose-apples. And when all these fruits get ripe, and the frost loosens them, the wild swine feed on them and fatten.

At this time of the year the wild boar becomes so fat that he cannot run far when pursued by the dogs. When they have chased him for two hours, he strikes into a thicket and comes to bay there.

Then the hunters run to the place where he is at bay and shoot him. By the barking of the dogs one can tell whether the boar has taken to cover or is still running. If he is running, then the dogs bark with a yelp, as if some one were beating them ; but if he has taken to cover, then they bay with a long howl, as if at a man.

In this expedition I had been running a long time through the forest, but without once coming across the track of a boar. At last I heard the protracted howl and whine of the hounds, and I turned my steps in that direction.

I was already near the boar. I could hear a crashing in the thicket. This was made by the boar, pursued by the dogs. But I could tell by their barking that they had not yet brought him to bay, but were only chasing around him.

Suddenly I heard something rushing behind me, and looking around, I saw Bulka. He had evidently lost track of the boar-hounds in the forest, and had become confused ; but now he had heard their baying, and also, like myself, was in full tilt in their direction.

He was running across a clearing through the tall grass, and all I could see of him was his black head, and his tongue lolling out between his white teeth.

I called him, but he did not look around ; he dashed by me, and was lost to sight in the thicket. I hurried after him, but the farther I went, the denser became the underbrush. The branches knocked off my hat and whipped my face ; the thorns of the briers clutched my coat. By this time I was very near the barking dogs, but I could not see anything.

Suddenly I heard the dogs barking louder ; there was a tremendous crash, and the boar, which was trying to break his way through, began to squeal. And this made me think that now Bulka had reached the scene and was attacking him.

I put forth all my strength, and made my way through the underbrush to the spot.

Here, in the very thickest of the woods, I caught a glimpse of a spotted boar-hound. He was barking and howling without stirring from one spot. Three paces from him I saw something black struggling.

When I came nearer I perceived that it was the boar, and I heard Bulka whining piteously. The boar was grunting and charging the hound, which, with his tail between his legs, was backing away from him. I had a fair shot at the side and the head of the boar. I aimed at his side and fired ; I could see that my shot took effect. The boar uttered a squeal, and turning from me dashed into the thicket. The dogs ran bark-ing and yelping on his trail. I broke my way through the thicket after them.

Suddenly I heard and saw something under my very feet. It was Bulka. He was lying on his side and whining. Under him was a pool of blood. I said to myself, " My dog is ruined ; " but now I had something else to attend to, and I rushed on.

Soon I saw the boar. The dogs were attacking him from behind, and he was snapping first to one side, then to the other. When the boar saw me, he made a dash at me. I fired for the second time, with the gun almost touching him, so that his bristles were singed. The boar gave one last grunt, stumbled, and fell with all his weight on the ground.

When I reached him, he was already dead ; only here and there his body twitched, or purled up a little.

But the dogs, with bristling hair, were tearing at his belly and his legs, and others were licking the blood from where he was wounded.

That reminded me of Bulka, and I hastened back to find him. He crawled to meet me, and groaned. I went to him, knelt down, and examined his wound. His belly was torn open, and a whole mass of his bowels protruded and lay upon the dry leaves.

When my comrades joined me, we replaced Bulka's intestines, and sewed up his belly. While we were sew-ing up his belly and puncturing the skin, he kept lick-ing my hand.

They fastened the boar to a horse's tail, so as to bring it from the woods, and we put Bulka on a horse's back, and thus we brought him home. Bulka was an invalid for six weeks, but he got well at last.

## Chapter 3: Pheasants

IN the Caucasus woodcock are called fazamii, or pheasants. They are so abundant that they are cheaper than domestic fowl. Pheasants are hunted with the kobuilka} with the podsada, or by means of the dog.

This is the method of hunting with the kobuilka : You take canvas and stretch it over a frame ; in the middle of the frame you put a joist, and make a hole in the canvas. This canvas-covered frame is called a kobuilka. With this kobuilka and a gun you go out into the forest just after sunrise. You carry the kobuilka in front of you, and through the hole you keep a lookout for pheasants. The pheasants in the early morning go out in search of food. Sometimes you come across a whole family ; sometimes the hen with the chicks ; sometimes the cock with his hen ; sometimes several cocks together.

The pheasants see no man, and they are not afraid of the canvas, and they let any one approach very near. Then the hunter sets down his kobuilka, puts the muzzle of his musket out through the hole, and shoots at his leisure.

The following is the method of hunting with the podsada: You let loose in the woods a little common house-dog, and follow after him. When the dog starts up a pheasant, he chases it. The pheasant flies into a tree, and then the whelp begins to yelp. The hunts-man goes in the direction of the barking, and shoots the pheasant in the tree.

This mode of hunting would be easy if the pheasant would fly into an isolated tree, or would sit on an exposed branch so as to be in full sight. But the pheasants always choose a tree in the densest part of the thicket, and when they see the huntsman they hide behind the branches.

It is not only hard to make your way through the thicket to the tree where the pheasant is perched, but it is hard, also, to get sight of him. When it is only a dog barking under the tree, the pheasant is not afraid ; he sits on the limb, and cocks 1 his head at him, and flaps his wings. But the instant he sees a man, he stretches himself out along the limb, so that only an experienced sportsman would be likely to perceive him, while an inexperienced man would stand underneath and see nothing.

When the Cossacks steal out against pheasants, they always hide their faces behind their caps, and don't look up, because the pheasant is afraid of a man with a musket, but is most of all afraid of his eyes.

Pheasants are hunted by means of the dog 2 in this manner: They take a setter and follow him into the woods. The setter catches the scent where early in the morning the pheasants have been out feeding, and he begins to follow the trail. No matter how many times the pheasants have crossed their tracks, a good setter will always pick out the last one, leading from the place where they had been feeding.

The farther the dog gets on the track, the stronger the scent becomes, and thus he reaches the very place where the pheasant has stopped for the day to rest or walk in the grass. When he comes near, his scent tells him that the pheasant is directly in front of him, and he now begins to go more cautiously, so as not to scare the bird, and then he stops to make the leap and seize it. When the dog is very near to the bird, then the pheasant flies up, and the sportsman shoots him.

## Chapter 4: Milton and Bulka

I GOT a setter for pheasants. This dog's name was Milton. He was tall, thin, gray, with spots, and with long lips and ears, and very strong and intelligent.

He and Bulka never quarreled. Never did dog dare to pick a quarrel with Bulka. All he had to do was once to show his teeth, and other dogs would put their tails between their legs and flee.

One time I was going with Milton out after pheasants. Suddenly Bulka came bounding along to overtake me, after I had reached the woods. I tried to drive him back, but in vain. And it was a long way to go home for the sake of getting rid of him.

I came to the conclusion that he would not interfere, and went on my way ; but as soon as Milton scented a pheasant in the grass and started on the trail, Bulka would dash ahead and begin to hunt about on all sides.

He was anxious to get the pheasant before Milton. If he heard anything in the grass, he would leap and jump about ; but his scent was not keen, and he could not keep to

the trail, and so he would watch Milton, and follow wherever Milton went. As soon as Milton found a trail, Bulka would dash ahead.

I tried to call Bulka back, I whipped him ; but I could do nothing with him.

As soon as Milton found a trail, he would dash ahead and spoil all.

I began to think seriously of going home, because I felt that my hunting was spoiled ; but Milton knew better than I did how to throw Bulka off the track. This was the way he did it : As soon as Bulka ran ahead of him, Milton would quit the scent, turn to one side, and pretend that he was hunting for it. Bulka would then run back where Milton was pointing, and Milton, glancing at me, would wag his tail, and again set out on the right track.

Then once more Bulka would dash ahead of Milton, and once more the setter Milton would purposely run ten feet aside from the right trail for the purpose of de-ceiving Bulka, and then lead me straight on again, so that throughout the whole hunt he kept deceiving Bulka, and did not let him spoil my sport.

## Chapter V: The Turtle

ONE time I went out hunting with Milton. Just as we reached the forest he began to get a scent. He stretched out his tail, pricked up his ears, and began to sniff.

I got my musket ready and started after him. I sup-posed that he was on the track of a partridge, or a pheas-ant, or a hare. But Milton did not turn off into the woods, but into a field. I followed him and looked ahead.

Suddenly I caught sight of what he was after. In front of him a little turtle was making its way it was of the size of a hat. Its bald, dark gray head and long neck were thrust out like a pistil. The turtle was mov-ing along by the aid of its bare feet, and its back was wholly covered by its shell.

As soon as it saw the dog, it drew in its legs and head and flattened itself down into the grass, so that only its shell was visible.

Milton grabbed it and tried to bite it ; but he could not set his teeth through it, because the turtle has over its belly the same sort of crust as over its back, with mere openings in front, on the side, and at the back for putting out its head, legs, and tail.

I rescued the turtle from Milton, and examined how its back was marked, and how its shell was constructed, and how it managed to hide itself away. When you hold one in your hands and look under the shell, then, only, can you see something within, black and living.

I laid the turtle down on the grass and went on, but Milton was loath to leave it ; he seized it in his teeth and followed me. .

Suddenly Milton whined and dropped it. The turtle in his mouth had extended a claw and scratched his lips. He was so indignant against it on account of this that he began to bark, and again picked it up and trotted after me.

I told him to drop it again, but Milton would not heed me. Then I took the turtle from him and threw it away.

But he would not give it up. He began in all haste to scratch up a hole with his paws, and then with his paws he pushed the turtle into the hole and covered it up with earth.

Turtles live both on land and in the water, like adders and frogs. They produce their young from eggs, and they lay the eggs in the ground ; they do not sit on them, however, but the eggs themselves hatch out like fishes' spawn and become turtles.

Turtles are often small not larger than a saucer; and then, again, they are big, reaching a length of seven feet and a weight of seven hundred and twenty pounds. The great turtles inhabit the sea.

One single female turtle in the spring will lay hun-dreds of eggs.

The shell of the turtle is its ribs. In men and other animals the ribs are each separate, but in the case of the turtle the ribs form the shell. It is also a peculiarity that in all animals the ribs are underneath the flesh, but in the case of the turtle, the ribs are outside, and the flesh is underneath them.

## Chapter 6: Bulka and the Wolf

AT the time when I was about to leave the Caucasus, war was still in progress, and it was hazardous traveling by night without an escort.

I was anxious to start as early as possible in the morning, and therefore I did not go to bed at all.

A friend of mine came to keep me company, and we spent the whole evening and night sitting in front of my khata, or hut, on the street of the stanitsa, or Cossack outpost.

It was a misty, moonlight night, and so light that one could see to read, though the moon itself was invisible.

At midnight we suddenly heard a little pig squealing in a yard on the other side of the street. One of us cried :

"There 's a wolf throttling a young pig."

I ran into my khata, seized my loaded musket, and hastened out into the street. All were standing at the gates of the yard where the young pig was squealing, and they shouted to me, " Here ! here ! "

Milton came leaping after me, evidently thinking that as I had my gun I was going hunting; and Bulka pricked up his short ears and bounded from side to side, as if inquiring what it was that he should grip.

As I was running toward the wattled hedge, I saw a wild animal coming directly for me from the other side of the yard.

It was the wolf.

He was running toward the hedge, and gave a leap at it. I retreated before him and got my musket ready.

As soon as the wolf leaped down from the hedge on my side, I leveled the gun at him, almost touching him, and pulled the trigger; but the gun only gave a "chik" and missed fire.

The wolf did not stop, but darted down the street. Milton and Bulka set out in pursuit. Milton was near the wolf, but evidently did not dare to seize him ; while Bulka, though he put forth all the strength of his short legs, could not catch up with him.

We ran as fast as we could after the wolf, but wolf and dogs were now out of sight.

But we soon heard near the ditch at the corner of the stanitsa a barking and whining, and we could make out through the moonlit mist that something was kicking up a dust, and that the dogs had tackled the wolf.

When we reached the ditch, the wolf was gone, and both the dogs returned to us with tails erect and excited faces. Bulka growled and rubbed his head against me ; he evidently wanted to tell me about it, but was not able.

We examined the dogs and discovered that there was a small bite on Bulka's head. He had probably overtaken the wolf in front of the ditch, but had not dared to tackle him, and the wolf had snapped at him and made off. The wound was small, so that we had no apprehension in regard to it.

We returned to the khata, sat down, and talked over what had happened. I was vexed enough that my musket had missed fire, and I could not help thinking that, if it had gone off, the wolf would have fallen on the spot. My friend was surprised that a wolf had ven-tured to make its way into the yard.

An old Cossack declared that there was nothing wonderful about it ; that it was not a wolf, but a witch, and that she had cast a spell over my gun !

Thus we sat and talked.

Suddenly the dogs sprang up, and we saw in the middle of the street, right in front of us, the very same wolf ; but this time he made off so swiftly at the sound of our voices that the dogs could not overtake him.

The old Cossack after this was entirely convinced that it was no wolf, but a witch ; but it occurred to me whether it was not a mad wolf, because I had never heard or known of a wolf returning among men after once he had been chased.

At all events, I scattered gunpowder over Bulka's wound and set it on fire. The powder blazed up and cauterized the sore place.

I cauterized the wound with powder so as to consume the mad virus, in case it had not yet had time to reach the blood.

In case of the spittle being poisonous and reaching the blood, I knew that it would spread all over his body, and then there would be no means of curing him.

# Chapter 7: What Happened to Bulka at Pyetigorsk

FROM the stanitsa, I did not return directly to Russia, but stopped at Pyetigorsk, and there I spent two months. I gave Milton to the old Cossack hunter, but Bulka I took with me to Pyetigorsk.

Pyetigorsk, or Five Mountain, is so called because it is built on Mount Besh-Tau. Besh in the Tartar language means five ; and Tau, mountain.

From this mountain flows a sulphur hot spring. The water boils like a kettle, and over the spot where the waters spring from the mountain steam always rises, just as it does from a samovar.

The whole region where the city is built is very charm-ing. The hot springs flow down from the mountains ; at their feet flows the little river Podkumok. The hill-sides are clothed with forests ; in all directions are fields, and on the horizon rise the mighty mountains of the Cau-casus. The snow on these mountains never melts, and they are always as white as sugar.

One mighty mountain is Elbrus, like a white sugar-loaf ; and it can be seen from every point when the weather is clear.

People come to these hot springs for medical treatment, and over the springs summer-houses and canopies are built, and gardens and paths are laid out all around. In the morning the band plays, and the people drink the water, or take the baths, and promenade.

The city itself stands on the mountain, and below the city is the suburb.

I lodged in a little house in this suburb. The house stood in a yard, 1 and there was a little garden in front of the windows, and in the garden were arranged my landlord's bees, not in hollow tree-trunks as in Russia, but in round basket-hives. The bees there were so peaceable that always in the forenoon Bulka and I used to sit out in the garden, among the hives. Bulka used to run among the hives, and wonder at the bees, and smell, and listen to their buzzing; but he moved among them so carefully that the bees did not interfere with him and did not touch him.

One morning I came home from the waters and sat drinking my coffee in the latticed garden. Bulka began to scratch himself behind the ears and to rattle his collar. This noise disturbed the bees, and I removed the collar from Bulka's neck.

After a little while I heard in the direction of the city on the mountain a strange and terrible uproar. Dogs were barking, yelping, and howling, men were yelling, and this tumult came down from the mountain and seemed to come nearer and nearer to our suburb.

Bulka had ceased scratching himself, and had laid his broad head between his white fore paws, and with his white teeth exposed and his tongue lolling out, as his habit was, was lying peaceably beside me. When he heard the uproar, he seemed to understand what it was all about; he pricked up his ears, showed his teeth, jumped up, and began to growl.

The tumult came nearer. It seemed as if all the dogs from the whole city were yelping, whining, and barking. I went out to the gate to look, and my landlady joined me there.

I asked :

"What is that?"

She replied :

" Prisoners from the jail coming to kill dogs. Many dogs are running loose, and the city authorities have ordered all dogs in the city to be killed."

"What ! would they kill Bulka if they saw him ? "

" No ; they are ordered to kill only those without collars."

Just as I was speaking, the prisoners were already on their way toward our yard.

In front marched soldiers, followed by four convicts in chains. Two of the convicts had long iron hooks in their hands, and the other two had clubs. When they came in front of our gate, one of the prisoners with a hook caught a cur of low degree, dragged him into the middle of the street, and the other prisoner began to maul him with his club. The whelp yelped horribly, and the convicts shouted something and roared with laughter. The convict with the hook turned the little dog over, and when he saw that he was dead, he pulled back his crook and began to look about for other victims.

At this moment Bulka leaped headlong at the convict, just as he had at the bear. I remembered that he was without a collar, and I cried, " Back, Bulka," and I shouted to the convicts not to kill my dog.

But the convict saw Bulka, guffawed, and skilfully speared at him with his hook, and caught him under the thigh.

Bulka tried to break away, but the convict pulled him toward him, and shouted to the other, " Kill him ! "

The other was already swinging his club, and Bulka would have been surely killed, but he struggled, the skin on his haunch gave way, and, putting his tail between his legs, and with a frightful wound in his thigh, he dashed at full speed through the gate, into the house, and hid under my bed.

What saved him was the fact that the skin on the place where the hook seized him tore out entirely.

## Chapter 8. The End of Bulka and Milton

BULKA and Milton met their death about the same time. The old Cossack did not understand how to treat Milton. Instead of taking him with him only when he went after birds, he tried to make a boar-hunter of him.

That same autumn a sekatch l boar gored him. No one knew how to sew up the wound, and Milton died.

Bulka also did not live long after his rescue from the convicts. Soon after his rescue from the convicts, he began to mope and to lick everything that came in his way. He

would lick my hand, but not as in former days when he meant to caress me. He licked long, and energetically thrust out his tongue, and then he began to seize things with his teeth.

Evidently he felt the impulse to bite the hand, but tried to refrain. I did not like to let him have my hand.

Then he began to lick my boot and the table leg, and then to bite the boot or the table leg.

This lasted two days, and on the third day he disap-peared, and no one ever saw him or heard of him again.

It was impossible for him to have been stolen, and he could not have run away from me.

Now this happened to be about six weeks after the wolf had bitten him. It must have been that the wolf was quite rabid. Bulka also became rabid and went off. He was afflicted with what hunters call stetchka the first stage of madness. It is said that madness is first shown by spasms in the throat. Rabid animals desire to drink, but are unable, because water makes the spasms more violent. Then they get beside themselves with pain and thirst, and begin to bite.

Probably these spasms were just beginning with Bulka, when he showed such a disposition to lick everything, and then to bite my boot and the table leg.

I traveled over the whole region and made inquiries about Bulka, but I could learn nothing about where he had gone or how he died.

If he had run mad and bitten any one as mad dogs usually do, I should have heard from him. But probably he went out somewhere into the thick woods, and died there alone.

Huntsmen declare that when an intelligent dog is at-tacked by madness, he runs off into the field or woods, and there finds the herb which he needs, rolls over in the dew, and cures himself.

Evidently Bulka did not get well. He never returned, and he disappeared forever.

# Tales From Zoology

Translated by Nathan Haskell Dole 1888

# 1. Owl and the Hare

IT was growing dark. The owls began to fly in the forest, over the ravine, in search of their prey.

A big gray hare was bounding over the field, and began to smooth his fur.

An old owl, as she sat on the bough, was watching the gray hare ; and a young owl said, " Why don't you pounce down on the hare ? "

The old one replied :

" I am not strong enough. The hare is large. If you should clutch him, he would carry you off into the thicket."

But the young owl said :

" Why, I could hold him with one claw, and with the other I could cling to the tree."

And the young owl swooped down on the hare, clutched his back with his claw in such a way that all the nails sank into the fur, and he was going to cling to the tree with the other claw ; and he said to him-self :

" He will not escape."

But the hare darted himself away, and pulled the owl in two. One claw remained in the tree ; the other in the hare's back.

The next year a sportsman killed this hare, and was surprised to find on his back the talons of a full-grown owl.

# 2. How Wolves Teach Their Cubs

I WAS riding along the road, when I heard some one shouting behind me. It was a young shepherd. He was running across a field, and pointing at something.

I looked, and saw two wolves running across the field. One was full grown ; the other was a cub. The cub had on his back a lamb which had just been killed, and he had the leg in his mouth.

The old wolf was running behind.

As soon as I saw the wolves, I joined the shepherd, and we started in pursuit, setting up a shout.

When they heard our shout, some peasants started out also in pursuit, with their dogs.

.As soon as the old wolf caught sight of the dogs and the men, he ran to the young one, snatched the lamb from him, jerked it over his own back, and both wolves increased their pace and were soon lost from view.

Then the lad began to relate how it had happened. The big wolf had sprung out from the ravine, seized the lamb, killed it, and carried it off. The cub came to meet

him, and threw himself on the lamb. The old wolf allowed the young wolf to carry the lamb, but kept running a short distance behind.

But as soon as there was danger, the old one ceased giving the lesson, and seized the lamb for himself.

## Chapter 3: Hares and Wolves

HARES feed at night on the bark of trees ; field-hares, on seeds and grass ; barn-hares, on grains of wheat on the threshing-floors.

In the night-time hares leave on the snow a deep, noticeable trail. Men and dogs and foxes and crows and eagles delight in hunting hares.

If a hare went in a straight line without doubling, then in the morning there would be no trouble in fol-lowing his trail and catching him ; but God has endowed the hare with timidity, and this timidity is his salvation.

At night the hare runs over the fields and woods with-out fear and leaves a straight track; but as soon as morning comes, and his foes awake, then the hare begins to listen, now for the barking of dogs, now for the creaking of sledges, now for the voices of peasants, now for the noise of wolves in the woods, and so he leaps first to one side and then to the other.

He darts ahead, and something frightens him, and so he doubles on his track. Then he hears something else, and with all his might he leaps to one side and makes away from his former track. Again something startles him, and the hare turns back and again jumps to one side. When it is daylight, he is in his hole.

In the morning, when the sportsmen begin to track the hare, they become confused in this maze of double tracks and long leaps, and they marvel at the hare's shrewdness.

But the hare had no thought of being shrewd : he was merely afraid of everything.

## Chapter 4: Scent

A MAN sees with his eyes, hears with his ears, smells with his nose, tastes with his tongue, and feels with his fingers. Some men have more serviceable eyes. Some men have less serviceable eyes than others. One man has keen sense of hearing, another is deaf. One man has a more delicate sense of smell than another, and he perceives an odor from a long distance, while another will not notice the stench from a bad egg. One person recognizes an object by touching it, while another can do nothing of the sort, and is unable to distinguish wood from paper by the touch. One no sooner puts a substance into his mouth than he tells it is sweet, while another swallows it and cannot make out whether it is sweet or bitter.

In the same way wild animals have various senses in various degrees of power. But all wild animals have a keener scent than man has. When a man wants to tell what an

object is, he examines it, he listens when it makes a noise, sometimes he smells of it and tastes it ; but more than all, if a man wants to be sure what an object is, he must feel of it.

But in the case of almost all wild animals, their chief dependence is on smelling the object. The horse, the wolf, the dog, the cow, the bear, do not recognize sub-stances until they test them by smelling.

When a horse is afraid of anything, it snorts ; in other words, it clears its nose so as to smell better, and its fear does not disappear until it has scented the object. A dog will often follow its master by its scent, and when it sees its master it is afraid, it does not recognize him, and it keeps on barking until it smells him, and recognizes that what seemed terrible to his eyes is really his master. Cattle see other cattle killed, they hear other cattle bellow in the abattoir, and yet they have no comprehension of what is taking place. But if the cow or the ox happens to find a place where the blood of cattle has been shed and catches the scent of it, then the creature understands, begins to low, kicks, and resists being driven from the place.

An old man had a sick wife ; he himself went to milk the cow. The cow lowed ; she knew it was not her mistress, and she would not give any milk. The man's wife 1 told him to wear her cloak and put her kerchief on his head ; and when he did so the cow let herself be milked. But when the old man threw off these garments, the cow smelt him and again held back her milk.

Hounds when they track a wild animal often run, not on the trail itself, but at one side, even as far as twenty paces. When an inexperienced huntsman wants to set his dog on the trail of an animal, and touches the dog's nose to the trail itself, the dog always goes to one side. The trail smells so strong to the dog that it cannot make the proper distinctions by the trail itself, and cannot tell whether the animal was running one way or the other. It goes to one side and then only it tells by its sense of smell in which direction the scent increases, and so runs after the animal.

It does what we do when any one speaks too loudly in our ear : we move away, and then at a proper dis-tance we distinguish what is said. Or when we are looking at any object which is too near us, we hold it farther from our eyes, and then we look at it.

Dogs recognize one another and communicate with one another by means of smells.

Still more delicate is the sense of smell in insects. The bee flies straight to the flower which it needs. The worm crawls to its leaf. The bug, the flea, the gnat, smell a man distant a hundred thousand times its own length away.

If the atoms emanating from substances and penetrat-ing our nostrils are minute, how infinitesimal must be the particles which affect the smellers of insects !

## Chapter 5: Touch and Sight

TWIST the index finger with the middle finger and place between these fingers intertwined a small ball in such a way that it touches both, and then shut your eyes.

It will seem to you that you are holding two balls. Open your eyes and you will see that it is only one. Your fingers have deceived you, and your eyes have corrected the impression.

Look best of all a little sidewise at a good, clear mirror, it will seem to you that it is a window or a door, and that there is something behind it. Touch it with your fingers and you will assure yourself that it is a mirror. Your eyes deceived you, but your fingers cor-rected the impression.

## Chapter 6: Silkworm

IN my garden there were some old mulberry trees. They had been set out long ago by my grandfather.

One autumn I was given a quantity 1 of silkworm eggs, and advised to raise the worms and make silk.

These eggs were dark gray and so small that in my zolotnik I counted five thousand eight hundred and thirty-five of them. They were smaller than the heads of the smallest pins. They were perfectly inert ; only, when they were crushed, they made a crackling sound.

I heaped them up on my table and had forgotten all about them.

But when spring came, I went one day out into my garden and noticed that the mulberry buds were swelling, and were even in leaf where the sun got to them. Then I remembered about my silkworm eggs, and as soon as I went into the house I began to ex-amine them and scatter them over a wider surface.

The larger part of them were no longer of a dark gray as before, but some had turned into a light gray color, while others were still brighter, with milky shades. The next morning I went early to look at the eggs, and saw that the worms had already crept out of some of them, and that others were swollen and filled up. They had evidently become conscious in their shells that their nutriment was ready for them.

The little worms were black and hairy, and so small that it was difficult to see them. I examined them with a magnifying glass, and could see that in the egg they lay curled up in little rings, and when they emerged they straightened themselves out.

I went out into the garden to my mulberry tree, gath-ered three handf uls of leaves, and laid them by themselves on the table, and went to make a place for them, as I had been told to do.

While I was getting ready the paper, the worms per-ceived the presence of the leaves on the table, and crawled over to them. I moved the leaves away and tried to attract the worms along, and they, just like dogs attracted by a piece of meat, crept in pursuit of the leaves over the table-cloth, across the pencils, pen-knives, and papers.

Then I cut out a sheet of paper and riddled it with holes made with a knife. I spread the leaves on the paper and laid the paper with the leaves over the worms. The worms

crept through the holes ; they all mounted on the leaves and immediately set to work feeding.

In the same way I laid a paper covered with leaves over the other worms, and they likewise, as soon as they were hatched, immediately crept through the holes and began to feed.

All the worms on each sheet of paper gathered together and ate the leaves, beginning at the edge. Then, when they had stripped them clean, they began to crawl over the paper in search of new food. Then I would spread over them fresh sheets of perforated paper covered with mulberry leaves, and they would crawl through to the new food.

They lay in my room on a shelf, and when there were no leaves, they would crawl over the shelf, reach-ing the very edge; but they never fell to the floor, although they were blind.

As soon as a worm would come to the abyss, before letting himself down, he would put out of his mouth a little thread and fasten it to the edge, then let himself down, hang suspended, make investigations, and if it pleased him to let himself down, he would let him-self down ; but if he wanted to return, then he would pull himself back by means of his web.

During all the twenty-four hours of the day the worms did nothing else but feed ; and it was necessary to give them mulberry leaves in greater and greater quantities. When fresh leaves were brought, and they were crawling over them, then there would be a rustling sound, like the noise of rain on foliage. This was made by them as they began to eat.

In this way the old worms lived five days. By this time they had grown enormously, and would eat ten times as much as at first.

I knew that on the fifth day it was time for them to roll themselves up, and I was on the watch for this to begin. In the evening of the fifth day one of the old worms stretched himself out on the paper and ceased to eat or to move.

During the next twenty-four hours I watched him for a long time. I knew that the worms shed their skins a number of times, when they have grown so large that their shells are too small for them, and then they put on new ones.

One of my companions took turns with me in watch-ing the process. In the evening he cried :

“ Come ; he is beginning to undress ! “

I went over to the shelf, and was just in time to see that this worm had fastened his old shell to the paper and had made a rent near his mouth, was thrusting out his head, and was struggling and twisting so as to get out ; but his old shirt would not let him go.

I looked at him for a long time struggling there and unable to extricate himself, and I felt a desire to help him.

I tried to pick him out by means of my finger-nail, but instantly saw that I had done a foolish thing. A sort of liquid gushed over my finger-nail, and the worm died.

I thought that it was his blood ; but then I saw that the worm had under his skin a watery juice for the pur-pose of facilitating the process of slipping out of the shirt. My finger-nail had evidently disturbed the forma-tion of the new shirt, for the worm, though he was loosened, speedily perished.

I did not touch any of the others, and in the same way they all came out of their shirts. A few of them, however, died ; but all of them, after a long and pain-ful struggle, at last emerged from their old shirts.

After they had moulted, the worms began to eat more voraciously than ever, and I had to bring them still more mulberry leaves. In the course of four days they went to sleep again, and again went through the change of skin.

Then they ate still more leaves, and they measured as much as an eighth of a vershok x in length.

Then at the end of six days they again went to sleep, and once more the transfor-mation from old shells into new ones took place, and they began to be very large and fat, and we had really considerable trouble to keep them supplied with leaves.

On the ninth day the old worms entirely ceased to feed, and they went crawling up on the shelf and the supports. I caught some of them and gave them fresh leaves, but they turned their heads away from the leaves and crawled off again.

I then recollected that the silkworms, when they are about to spin their cocoons, 2 absolutely cease to feed, and go to climbing.

I put them back, and began to watch what they would do.

Some of the old ones crawled up on the ceiling, took up positions apart, each by himself, crawled around a little, and then began to fasten a web in various directions.

I watched one in particular. He went into a corner, extended a half-dozen threads at a distance of a vershok from him in every direction ; then he hung himself to them, doubled himself almost in two, like a horseshoe, and began to move his head round and round, and to send out a silken web in such a way that the web began to whip itself around him.

By evening he was, as it were, in a mist of his own weaving. He could be scarcely seen, and on the next day he was entirely invisible in his cocoon. He was entirely enwrapped in silk, and yet he still kept spin-ning. At the end of three days he ceased to spin, and died.

Afterward I learned how long a thread he had spun in those three days. If the whole cocoon be unwound, it will sometimes give a thread more than a verst 1 in length, and rarely less ; and it is easy to reckon how many times the worm has to turn his head during these three days to spin such a thread ; it will be not less than three hundred thousand times. In other words, he turns his head round without ceasing once every second for seventy-two hours. We noticed also after this labor was finished, when we took a few of the cocoons and cut them open, that the worms were perfectly dry and white as wax.

I was aware that from these cocoons, with their dry, white, wax-like insides, butterflies would come forth ; but as I looked at them, I could not believe it. Still, on the twentieth day, I began to watch what would happen to those that I had left.

I knew that on the twentieth day the change would take place. As yet nothing was to be seen, and I even began to think that there was some mistake about it, when suddenly I noticed that the end of one of the cocoons had grown dark and moist. I was even in-clined to believe that it was spoiled, and was inclined to throw it away.

But then I thought, " May it not be the beginning of the change ? " And so I kept watching it to see what would happen.

And, in fact, from the moist spot something moved. For a long time I could not make out what it was. But then something appeared like a head with feelers.

( The feelers moved. Then I perceived that a leg was thrust through the hole, then another, and the leg was clinging hold and trying to get loose from the cocoon. Something came out farther and farther, and at last I perceived a moist butterfly.

When all its six legs were freed, the tail followed; when it was entirely out, it sat there. When the butter-fly became dry, it was white ; it spread its wings, flew up, circled around, and lighted on the window-pane.

At the end of two days the butterfly laid its eggs on the window-sill, and fastened them together. The eggs were yellowish in color. Twenty-five butterflies laid their eggs : I collected five thousand of them.

The next year I raised still more silkworms, and spun off still more silk.

# Three Parables

Translated by Nathan Haskell Dole 1895

# Parable the First

A WEED had spread over a beautiful meadow. And in order to get rid of it the tenants of the meadow mowed it, but the weed only increased in consequence. And now the kind, wise master came to visit the tenants of the meadow, and among the other good counsels which he gave them, he told them they ought not to mow the weed, since that only made it grow the more luxuriantly, but that they must pull it up by the roots.

But either because the tenants of the meadow did not, amongst the other prescriptions of the good master, take heed of his advice not to mow down the weed, but to pull it up, or because they did not understand him, or because, according to their calculations, it seemed foolish to obey, the result was that his advice not to mow the weed but to pull it up was not followed, just as if he had never proffered it, and the men went on mowing the weed and spreading it.

And although, during the succeeding years, there were men that reminded the tenants of the meadow of the advice of the kind, wise master, they did not heed them, and continued to do as before, so that mowing of the weed as soon as it began to appear became not only a custom but even a sacred tradition, and the meadow grew more and more infested. And the matter went so far that the meadow grew nothing but weeds, and men lamented this and invented all kinds of means to correct the evil ; but the only one they did not use was that which had long ago been prescribed by their kind, wise master.

And now, as time went on, it occurred to one man who saw the wretched condition into which the meadow had fallen, and who found among the master's forgotten prescriptions the rule not to mow the weed, but to pull it up by the root it occurred to the man, I say, to remind the tenants of the meadow that they were acting foolishly, and that their folly had long ago been pointed out by the kind, wise master.

But what do you think instead of putting credence in the correctness of this man's recollections, and in case they proved to be reliable ceasing to mow the weed, and in case he were mistaken proving to him the incorrectness of his recollections, or stigmatizing the good, wise master's recommendations as impracticable and not obligatory upon them, the tenants of the meadow did nothing' of the sort ; but they took exception to this man's recollections and began to abuse him. Some called him a conceited fool who imagined that he was the only one to understand the master's regulations ; others called him a malicious false interpreter and slanderer; still others, forgetting that he was not giving them his own opinions, but was only reminding them of the prescriptions of the wise master whom they all revered, called him a dangerous man because he wished to pull up the weed and deprive them of their meadow. " He says we ought not to mow the meadow," said they, purposely suppressing the fact that the

man did not say that it was not necessary to destroy the weed, but said that they should pull it up by the roots instead of mowing it, "but if we do not destroy the weed, then it will spread and wholly ruin our meadow. And why was the meadow granted to us if we must train the weed in it ? "

And the general impression that this man was either a fool or a false interpreter, or had the purpose of injuring the people, became so deeply grounded that every one cast reproaches and ridicule upon him. And however earnestly he asseverated that he not only did not desire to spread the weed, but on the contrary considered that the destruction of the weed was one of the chief duties of the agriculturist, just as it was meant by the good, wise master whose words he merely repeated, still they would not listen to him because they had definitely made up their minds that he was either a conceited fool misinterpreting the good, wise master's words, or a villain trying to induce men not to destroy the weeds but to protect and spread them more widely.

The same thing took place in my own case when I pointed out the injunction of the evangelical teaching about the non-resistance of evil by violence. This rule was laid down by Christ and after Him in all times by all His true disciples. But either because they did not notice this rule, or because they did not understand it, or because its fulfilment seemed to them too difficult, as time went the more completely this rule was forgotten, the farther the manner of men's lives departed from this rule ; and finally it came to the pass to which it has now come that this rule has already begun to seem to people something new, strange, unheard-of, and even foolish. And I, also, have the same experience as the man had who reminded men of the good, wise master's prescription to refrain from mowing the weed, but to pull it up by the roots.

As the tenants of the meadow purposely shut their eyes to the fact that the counsel was not to give up destroying the weed, but to destroy it by a different method, and said, " We will not listen to this man, he is a fool ; he forbids us to mow down the weeds and tells us to pull them up " so in reply to my reminder that according to Christ's teaching in order to annihilate evil we must not employ violence against it, but must destroy it from the root with love, men said : " We will not listen to him, he is a fool ; he advises not to oppose evil to evil so that evil may overwhelm us."

I said that, according to Christ's teaching, evil cannot be eradicated by evil ; that all resistance of evil by violence only intensifies the evil, that according to Christ's teaching evil is eradicated by good. Bless them that curse you, pray for them that abuse you, do good to them that hate you, love your enemies, and you will have no enemies!

I said that, according to Christ's teaching, the whole life of man is a battle with evil, a resistance of evil by reason and love, but that out of all the methods of resisting evil Christ excepted only the one unreasonable method of resisting evil with violence, which is equivalent to fighting evil with evil.

And I was misunderstood as saying that Christ taught that we must not resist evil. And all those whose lives were based on violence, and to whom in consequence violence was dear, were glad to take such a misconstruction of my words, and at the same time

of Christ's words, and it was avowed that the teaching of non-resistance of evil was incredible, stupid, godless, and dangerous. And men calmly continue under the guise of destroying evil to make it more widely spread.

## Parable the Second

MEN were trafficking in flour, butter, milk, and all kinds of food-stuffs. And as each one was desirous of receiving the greatest profit and becoming rich as soon as possible, all these men got more and more into the habit of adulterating their goods with cheap and injurious mixtures : with the flour they mixed bran and lime, they put oleomargarin into their butter, they put water and chalk into their milk. And until these goods reached the consumers all went well : the wholesale traders sold them to the retailers, and the retailers distributed them in small quantities.

There were many stores and shops, and the wares, it seemed, went off very rapidly. And the tradesmen were satisfied. But the city consumers, those that did not raise their own produce and were therefore obliged to buy it, found it very harmful and disagreeable. The flour was bad, the butter and milk were bad, but as there were no other wares except those adulterated to be had in the city markets, the city consumers continued to buy them, and they complained because the food tasted bad and was unwholesome ; they blamed themselves, and ascribed it to the wretched way in which the food was prepared. Meantime the tradespeople continued more and more flagrantly to adulterate their food-stuffs with cheap foreign ingredients. Thus passed a sufficiently long time. The city people were all suffering, and no one had the resolution to express his dissatisfaction.

And it happened that a housekeeper who had always given her family food and drink of her own make came to the city. This woman had spent her whole life in the preparation of food, and though she was not a famous cook, still she knew very well how to bake bread and to cook good dinners.

This woman bought various articles in the city and began to bake and cook. Her loaves did not rise, but fell. Her cakes, owing to the oleomargarin butter, seemed tasteless. She set her milk, but there was no cream. The housekeeper instantly came to the conclusion that her purchases were poor. She examined them, and her surmises were confirmed. She found lime in the flour, oleomargarin in the butter, chalk in the milk. Finding that all the materials she had bought were adulterated, the housekeeper went to the bazaars and began in a loud voice to accuse the tradesmen, and to demand that they should either stock their shops with good, nutritious, unadulterated articles, or else cease to trade, and shut up shop.

But the tradesmen paid no attention to the housekeeper, but told her that their goods were first class, that the whole city had been buying of them for so many years, and that they even had medals, and they showed her their medals on their signs. But the housekeeper did not give in.

"I don't need any medals," said she, "but wholesome food, so that I and my children may not have stomach troubles from it."

"Apparently, my good woman, you have never seen genuine flour and butter," said the tradesmen, showing her the white, pure-looking flour in varnished bins, the wretched imitation of butter lying in neat dishes, and the white fluid in glittering transparent jars.

"Of course I know them," replied the housekeeper, " because all my life long I have had to do with them, and I have cooked with them and have eaten them, I and my children. Your goods are adulterated. Here is the proof of it," said she, displaying the spoilt bread, the oleomargarin in the cakes, and the sediment in the milk. " You ought to throw all this stuff of yours into the river or burn it, and get unadulterated goods instead."

And the woman, standing in front of the shops, kept incessantly crying her one message to the purchasers who came by, and the purchasers began to be troubled.

Then perceiving that this audacious housekeeper was likely to injure their wares, the tradesmen said to the purchasers :

" Look here, gentlemen, what a lunatic this woman is ! She wants people to perish of starvation. She insists on our burning up and destroying all our provisions. What would you have to eat if we should heed her and refuse to sell you our goods ? Do not listen to her, she is a coarse countrywoman, and she is no judge of provisions, and it is nothing but envy which makes her attack us. She is poor, and wants every one else to be as poor as she is."

Thus spoke the tradesmen to the gathering throng, purposely blinking the fact that the woman wanted, not that all provisions should be destroyed, but that good ones should be substituted for bad.

And thereupon the throng fell upon the woman and began to beat her. And though she assured them all that she had no wish to destroy the food-stuffs, that, on the contrary, she had all her life been occupied in feeding others and herself, but that she only wanted that those men that took upon themselves the feeding of the people should not poison them with deleterious adulterations pretending to be edible. Though she pleaded her cause eloquently, they refused to hear her because their minds were made up that she wanted to deprive people of the food which they needed.

The same thing has happened to me in regard to the art and science of our day.

All my life long I have been fed on this food, and to the best of my ability I have attempted to feed others on it. And as this for me is a food and not an object of traffic or luxury, I know beyond a question when food is food and when it is only a counterfeit. And now when I made trial of the food which in our time began to be offered for sale in the intellectual bazaar under the guise of art and science, and attempted to feed those dear to me with it, I discovered that a large part of this food was not genuine. And when I declared that the art and the science on sale in the intellectual bazaar are margarined or at least contain great mixtures of what is foreign to true art and true science, and that I know this because the produce I have bought in the intellectual

bazaar has been proved to be, not merely disadvantageous to me and those near and dear to me, but positively deleterious, then I was hooted at and abused, and it was insinuated that I did this because I was untrained and could not properly treat of such lofty objects.

When I began to show that the dealers themselves in these intellectual wares were all the time charging one another of cheating, when I called to mind that in all times under the name of art and science much that was bad and harmful was offered to men, and that consequently in our time also the same danger was threatening, that this was no joke, that the poison for the soul was many times more dangerous than a poison for the body, and that therefore these spiritual products ought to be examined with the greatest attention when they are offered to us. in the form of food, and everything counterfeit and deleterious ought to be rejected, when I began to say this, no one, no one, not a single man in a single article or book made reply to these arguments, but from all the shops there was a chorus of cries against me as against the woman : " He is a fool ! He wants to destroy art and science which we live by ! Beware of him and do not heed him ! Hear us, hear us ! We have the very latest foreign wares ! "

## Parable the Third

TRAVELERS were making a journey. And they happened to lose their way, so that they found themselves proceeding, not on a smooth road, but across a bog, among clumps of bushes, briers, and fallen trees, which blocked their progress, and even to move grew more and more difficult.

Then the travelers divided into two parties ; one decided not to stop, but to keep going in the direction that they had been going, assuring themselves and the others that they had not wandered from the right road, and were sure to reach their journey's end.

The other party decided that, as the direction in which they were now going was evidently not the right one otherwise they would long ago have reached the journey's end it was necessary to find the road, and in order to find it, it was requisite that without delay they should move as rapidly as possible in all directions. All the travelers were divided between these two opinions : some decided to keep going straight ahead, the others decided to make trials in all directions ; but there was one man who, without sharing either opinion, declared that before continuing in the direction in which they had been going, or beginning to move rapidly in all directions, hoping that by this means they might find the right way, it was necessary first of all to pause and deliberate on their situation, and then after due deliberation to decide on one thing or the other.

But the travelers were so excited by the disturbance, were so alarmed at their situation, they were so desirous of flattering themselves with the hope that they had not lost their way, but had only temporarily wandered from the road, and would soon find it again, and, above all, they had such a desire to forget their terror by moving

about, that this opinion was met with universal indignation, with reproaches, and with the ridicule of those of both parties.

" It is the advice of weakness, cowardice, sloth," they said.

" It is a fine way to reach the end of our journey, sitting down and not moving from the place ! " cried others.

" For this are we men, and for this is strength given us, to struggle and labor, conquering obstacles, and not pusillanimously giving in to them," exclaimed still others.

And in spite of what was said by the man that differed from the rest, " how if we proceeded in a wrong direction without changing it, we should never attain our goal, but go farther from it, and how we should never attain it either if we kept flying from one direction to another, and how the only means of attaining our goal was by taking observation from the sun or the stars and thus finding what direction we must take to reach it, and having chosen it to stick to it and how to do this it was necessary first of all to halt, and to halt not for the purpose of stopping, but to find the right way and then unfalteringly to go in it, and how for either case it was necessary to stop and consider" in spite of all this argument, they refused to heed him.

And the first division of the travelers went off in the direction in which they had been going, and the second division kept changing their course ; but neither division succeeded in attaining their journey's end, but up to the present time, moreover, they have not yet escaped from the bushes and the briers, but are still lost.

Exactly the same thing happened to me when I attempted to express my doubts as to whether the road which we have taken through the dark forest of the labor question and through the all-swallowing bog of the endless armament of the nations is exactly the right route by which we ought to go, that it is very possible that we have lost our way, and that, therefore, it might be well for us for a time to stop moving in that direction which is evidently wrong, and first of all to consider, by means of the universal and eternal laws of truth revealed to us, what the direction is by which we intend to go.

No one replied to this, not a person said, " We are not mistaken in our direction and we are not gone astray ; we are sure of this for this reason and for that."

Not a person said, " Possibly we are mistaken, but we have an infallible means of correcting our error without ceasing to move."

No one said either the one thing or the other. But all were indignant, took offense, and hastened to quench my solitary voice with a simultaneous outburst.

" We are so indolent and backward ! And this is the advice of indolence, sluggishness, inefficiency ! "

Some even went so far as to add :

" It 's all nonsense ! Don't listen to him. Follow us."

And they shouted like those that reckon that salvation is to be found in unchangedly traveling a once selected road, whatever it may have been ; like those also that expect to find salvation in flying about in all directions.

"Why wait? Why consider? Push forward! Everything will come out of itself ! "

Men have lost their way and are suffering in consequence. It would seem that the first main application of energy which should be put forth ought to be directed, not to the confirmation of the movement that has seduced us into the false position where we are, but to the cessation of it. It would seem clear that as soon as we stopped we might, in a measure, comprehend our situation, and discover the direction in which we ought to go in order to attain true happiness, not for one man, not for one class of men, but that general good of humanity toward which all men are striving and every human heart by itself. But how is it ? Men invent everything possible, but do not hit upon the one thing that might prove their salvation, or if it did not do that, might at least ameliorate their condition ; I mean, that they should pause for a moment and not go on increasing their misfortunes by their fallacious activity. Men are conscious of the wretchedness of their condition, and are doing all they can to avoid it, but the one thing that would assuredly ameliorate it they are unwilling to do, and the advice given them to do it, more than anything else, rouses their indignation.

If there were any possibility of doubting the fact that we have gone astray, then this treatment of the advice to " think it over " proves more distinctly than anything else how hopelessly astray we have gone and how great is our despair.

# Two Brothers and the Gold, the

Translated by R. Nesbit Bain 1903

Once upon a time, in the days long since gone by, there dwelt at Jerusalem two brothers; the name of the elder was Athanasius, the name of the younger John. They dwelt on a hill not far from the town, and lived upon what people gave to them. Every day the brothers went out to work. They worked not for themselves, but for the poor. Wherever the overworked, the sick were to be found — wherever there were widows and orphans, thither went the brothers, and there they worked and spent their time, taking no payment. Thus the brothers went about separately the whole week, and only met together in the evening of the Sabbath at their own dwelling. Only on Sunday did they remain at home, praying and conversing together. And the Angel of the Lord came down to them and blessed them. On the Monday they separated again, each going his own way. Thus did the brothers live for many years, and every week the Angel of the Lord came down to them and blessed them.

One Monday, when the brothers had gone forth to work, and had parted their several ways, the elder brother, Athanasius, felt sorry at having had to part from his beloved brother, and he stood still and glanced after him. John was walking with bent head, and he did not look back. But suddenly John also stopped as if he perceived something and continued to gaze fixedly at it. Presently he drew near to that which he had been looking upon, and then suddenly leaped aside, and, not stopping for another instant, ran towards the mountain and up the mountain, right away from the place, just as if some savage beast were pursuing him. Athanasius was astonished, and turned back to the place to find out what his brother had been so afraid of. At last he approached the spot, and then he saw something glistening in the sun. He drew nearer — on the grass, as if poured out from a measure, lay a heap of gold. And Athanasius was still more astonished, both at the sight of the gold and at the leaping aside of his brother.

"What was he afraid of, and what did he run away from?" thought Athanasius. "There is no sin in gold, sin is in man. You may do ill with gold, but you may also do good. How many widows and orphans might not be fed therewith, how many naked ones might not be clothed, how many poor and sick might not be cared for and cured by means of this gold? Now, indeed, we minister to people, but our ministration is but little, because our power is small, and with this gold we might minister to people much more than we do now." Thus thought Athanasius, and would have said so to his brother, but John was by this time out of hearing, and looked no bigger than a cockchafer on the further mountain.

And Athanasius took off his garment, shovelled as much gold into it as he was able to carry, threw it over his shoulder, and went into the town. He went to an inn, gave the gold to the innkeeper, and then went off to fetch the rest of it And when he had brought in all the gold he went to the merchants, bought land in that town, bought stones, wood, hired labourers, and set about building three houses. And Athanasius abode in the town three months, and built the three houses in that town; one of the houses was an asylum for widows and orphans, the second house was a hospital for the sick, the third house was a hospice for the poor and for pilgrims. And

Athanasius sought him out three God-fearing elders, and the first elder he placed over the refuge, the second over the hospital, and the third over the hospice for pilgrims. And Athanasius had three thousand gold pieces still left. And he gave a thousand to each of the elders that they might have wherewith to distribute among the poor. And all three houses began to be filled with people, and the people began to praise Athanasius for all that he had done. And Athanasius rejoiced thereat, so that he had no desire to depart from the town. But Athanasius loved his brother, and, taking leave of the people, and not keeping for himself a single coin of all this money, he went back to his dwelling in the selfsame old garment in which he had come to town.

Athanasius was drawing near to his mountain, and he thought to himself: "My brother judged wrongly when he leaped aside from the gold and ran away from it. Haven't I done much better?"

And Athanasius had no sooner thought this than suddenly he beheld standing in his path the Angel who had been sent to bless them, but now looked threateningly upon him. And Athanasius was aghast and could only say:

"Wherefore, my Lord?"

And the Angel opened his mouth and said:

"Depart from hence! Thou art not worthy to dwell with thy brother. That one leap aside of thy brother's was worth more than all that thou hast done with thy gold."

Athanasius began to talk of how many poor and how many pilgrims he had fed, and of how many orphans he had cared for.

And the Angel said to him:

"That same Devil who placed the gold there in order to corrupt thee, hath also put these big words into thy mouth.

And then the conscience of Athanasius upbraided him, and he understood that what he had done was not done for God, and he wept and began to repent.

Then the Angel stepped aside from the road, and left free for him the path in which John was already standing awaiting his brother. And from thenceforth Athanasius yielded no more to the wiles of the Devil who had strewn the gold in his path, and he understood that not by gold, but by good works only, could he render service to God and his fellow-man.

And the brethren dwelt together as before.

# Neglect the Fire

# And You Cannot Put It Out

Translated by Louise and Aylmer Maude 1906

Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?

And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses. (Matt. xviii. 21-35.)

There lived in a village a peasant, by the name of Iván Shcherbakóv. He lived well; he was himself in full strength, the first worker in the village, and he had three sons, — all of them on their legs: one was married, the second about to marry, and the third a grown-up lad who drove horses and was beginning to plough. Iván's wife was a clever woman and a good housekeeper, and his daughter-in-law turned out to be a quiet person and a good worker. There was no reason why Iván should not have led a good life with his family. The only idle mouth on the farm was his old, ailing father (he had been lying on the oven for seven years, sick with the asthma).

Iván had plenty of everything, three horses and a colt, a cow and a yearling calf, and fifteen sheep. The women made the shoes and the clothes for the men and worked in the field; the men worked on their farms.

They had enough grain until the next crop. From the oats they paid their taxes and met all their obligations. An easy life, indeed, might Iván have led with his children. But next door to him he had a neighbour, Gavrílo the Lame, Gordyéy Ivánov's son. And there was an enmity between him and Iván.

So long as old man Gordyéy was alive, and Iván's father ran the farm, the peasants lived in neighbourly fashion. If the women needed a sieve or a vat, or the men had to get another axle or wheel for a time, they sent from one farm to another, and helped each other out in a neighbourly way. If a calf ran into the yard of the threshing-floor, they drove it out and only said: "Don't let it out, for the heap has not yet been put away." And it was not their custom to put it away and lock it up in the threshing-floor or in a shed, or to revile each other.

Thus they lived so long as the old men were alive. But when the young people began to farm, things went quite differently.

The whole thing began from a mere nothing. A hen of Iván's daughter-in-law started laying early. The young woman gathered the eggs for Passion week. Every day she went to the shed to pick up an egg from the wagon-box. But, it seems, the boys scared away the hen, and she flew across the wicker fence to the neighbour's yard, and laid an egg there. The young woman heard the hen cackle, so she thought:

"I have no time now, I must get the hut in order for the holiday; I will go there later to get it."

In the evening she went to the wagon-box under the shed, to fetch the egg, but it was not there. The young woman asked her mother-in-law and her brother-in-law if they had taken it; but Taráska, her youngest brother-in-law, said:

"Your hen laid an egg in the neighbour's yard, for she cackled there and flew out from that yard."

The young woman went to look at her hen, and found her sitting with the cock on the perch; she had closed her eyes and was getting ready to sleep. The woman would have liked to ask her where she laid the egg, but she would not have given her any answer. Then the young woman went to her neighbour. The old woman met her.

"What do you want, young woman?"

"Granny, my hen has been in your yard to-day, — did she not lay an egg there?"

"I have not set eyes on her. We have hens of our own, thank God, and they have been laying for quite awhile. We have gathered our own eggs, and we do not need other people's eggs. Young woman, we do not go to other people's yards to gather eggs."

The young woman was offended. She said a word too much, the neighbour answered with two, and the women began to scold. Iván's wife was carrying water, and she, too, took a hand in it. Gavrílo's wife jumped out, and began to rebuke her neighbour. She reminded her of things that had happened, and mentioned things that had not happened at all. And the tongue-lashing began. All yelled together, trying to say two words at the same time. And they used bad words.

"You are such and such a one; you are a thief, a sneak; you are simply starving your father-in-law; you are a tramp."

"And you are a beggar: you have torn my sieve; and you have our shoulder-yoke. Give me back the yoke!"

They grabbed the yoke, spilled the water, tore off their kerchiefs, and began to fight. Gavrílo drove up from the field, and he took his wife's part. Iván jumped out with his son, and they all fell in a heap. Iván was a sturdy peasant, and he scattered them all. He yanked out a piece of Gavrílo's beard. People ran up to them, and they were with difficulty pulled apart.

That's the way it began.

Gavrílo wrapped the piece of his beard in a petition and went to the township court to enter a complaint.

"I did not raise a beard for freckled Iván to pull it out."

In the meantime his wife bragged to the neighbours that they would now get Iván sentenced and would have him sent to Siberia, and the feud began.

The old man on the oven tried to persuade them to stop the first day they started to quarrel, but the young people paid no attention to him. He said to them:

"Children, you are doing a foolish thing, and for a foolish thing have you started a feud. Think of it, — the whole affair began from an egg. The children picked up the egg, — well, God be with them! There is no profit in one egg. With God's aid there will be enough for everybody. Well, you have said a bad word, so correct it, show her how to use better words! Well, you have had a fight, — you are sinful people. That, too, happens. Well, go and make peace, and let there be an end to it! If you keep it up, it will only be worse."

The young people did not obey the old man; they thought that he was not using sense, but just babbling in old man's fashion.

Iván did not give in to his neighbour.

"I did not pull his beard," he said. "He jerked it out himself; but his son has yanked off my shirt-button and has torn my whole shirt. Here it is."

And Iván, too, took the matter to court. The case was heard before a justice of the peace, and in the township court. While they were suing each other, Gavrílo lost a coupling-pin out of his cart. The women in Gavrílo's house accused Iván's son of having taken it.

"We saw him in the night," they said, "making his way under the window to the cart, and the gossip says that he went to the dram-shop and asked the dram-shopkeeper to take the pin from him."

Again they started a suit. But at home not a day passed but that they quarrelled, nay, even fought. The children cursed one another, — they learned this from their elders, — and when the women met at the brook, they did not so much strike the beetles as let loose their tongues, and to no good.

At first the men just accused each other, but later they began to snatch up things that lay about loose. And they taught the women and children to do the same. Their life grew worse and worse. Iván Shcherbakóv and Gavrílo the Lame kept suing one another at the meetings of the Commune, and in the township court, and before the

justices of the peace, and all the judges were tired of them. Now Gavrílo got Iván to pay a fine, or he sent him to the lockup, and now Iván did the same to Gavrílo. And the more they did each other harm, the more furious they grew. When dogs make for each other, they get more enraged the more they fight. You strike a dog from behind, and he thinks that the other dog is biting him, and gets only madder than ever. Just so it was with these peasants: when they went to court, one or the other was punished, either by being made to pay a fine, or by being thrown into prison, and that only made their rage flame up more and more toward one another.

"Just wait, I will pay you back for it!"

And thus it went on for six years. The old man on the oven kept repeating the same advice. He would say to them:

"What are you doing, my children? Drop all your accounts, stick to your work, don't show such malice toward others, and it will be better. The more you rage, the worse will it be."

They paid no attention to the old man.

In the seventh year the matter went so far that Iván's daughter-in-law at a wedding accused Gavrílo before people of having been caught with horses. Gavrílo was drunk, and he did not hold back his anger, but struck the woman and hurt her so that she lay sick for a week, for she was heavy with child. Iván rejoiced, and went with a petition to the prosecuting magistrate.

"Now," he thought, "I will get even with my neighbour: he shall not escape the penitentiary or Siberia."

Again Iván was not successful. The magistrate did not accept the petition: they examined the woman, but she was up and there were no marks upon her. Iván went to the justice of the peace; but the justice sent the case to the township court. Iván bestirred himself in the township office, filled the elder and the scribe with half a bucket of sweet liquor, and got them to sentence Gavrílo to having his back flogged. The sentence was read to Gavrílo in the court.

The scribe read:

"The court has decreed that the peasant Gavrílo Gordyéy receive twenty blows with rods in the township office."

Iván listened to the decree and looked at Gavrílo, wondering what he would do. Gavrílo, too, heard the decree, and he became as pale as a sheet, and turned away and walked out into the vestibule. Iván followed him out and wanted to go to his horse, when he heard Gavrílo say:

"Very well, he will beat my back, and it will burn, but something of his may burn worse than that."

When Iván heard these words, he returned to the judges.

"Righteous judges! He threatens to set fire to my house. Listen, he said it in the presence of witnesses."

Gavrílo was called in.

"Is it true that you said so?"

"I said nothing. Flog me, if you please. Evidently I must suffer for my truth, while he may do anything he wishes."

Gavrílo wanted to say something more, but his lips and cheeks trembled. He turned away toward the wall. Even the judges were frightened as they looked at him.

"It would not be surprising," they thought, "if he actually did some harm to his neighbour or to himself."

And an old judge said to them:

"Listen, friends! You had better make peace with each other. Did you do right, brother Gavrílo, to strike a pregnant woman? Luckily God was merciful to you, but think what crime you might have committed! Is that good? Confess your guilt and beg his pardon! And he will pardon you. Then we shall change the decree."

The scribe heard that, and said:

"That is impossible, because on the basis of Article 117 there has taken place no reconciliation, but the decree of the court has been handed down, and the decree has to be executed."

But the judge paid no attention to the scribe.

"Stop currycombing your tongue. The first article, my friend, is to remember God, and God has commanded me to make peace."

And the judge began once more to talk to the peasants, but he could not persuade them. Gavrílo would not listen to him.

"I am fifty years old less one," he said, "and I have a married son. I have not been beaten in all my life, and now freckled Iván has brought me to being beaten with rods, and am I to beg his forgiveness? Well, he will — Iván will remember me!"

Gavrílo's voice trembled again. He could not talk. He turned around and went out.

From the township office to the village was a distance of ten versts, and Iván returned home late. The women had already gone out to meet the cattle. He unhitched his horse, put it away, and entered the hut. The room was empty. The children had not yet returned from the field, and the women were out to meet the cattle. Iván went in, sat down on a bench, and began to think. He recalled how the decision was announced to Gavrílo, and how he grew pale, and turned to the wall. And his heart was pinched. He thought of how he should feel if he were condemned to be flogged. He felt sorry for Gavrílo. He heard the old man coughing on the oven. The old man turned around, let down his legs, and sat up. He pulled himself with difficulty up to the bench, and coughed and coughed, until he cleared his throat, and leaned against the table, and said:

"Well, have they condemned him?"

Iván said:

"He has been sentenced to twenty strokes with the rods."

The old man shook his head.

"Iván, you are not doing right. It's wrong, not wrong to him, but to yourself. Well, will it make you feel easier, if they flog him?"

"He will never do it again," said Iván.

"Why not? In what way is he doing worse than you?"

"What, he has not harmed me?" exclaimed Iván. "He might have killed the woman; and he even now threatens to set fire to my house. Well, shall I bow to him for it?"

The old man heaved a sigh, and said:

"You, Iván, walk and drive wherever you please in the free world, and I have passed many years on the oven, and so you think that you see everything, while I see nothing. No, my son, you see nothing, — malice has dimmed your eyes. Another man's sins are in front of you, but your own are behind your back. You say that he has done wrong. If he alone had done wrong, there would be no harm. Does evil between people arise from one man only? Evil arises between two. You see his badness, but you do not see your own. If he himself were bad, and you good, there would be no evil. Who pulled out his beard? Who blasted the rick which was at halves? Who is dragging him to the courts? And yet you put it always on him. You yourself live badly, that's why it is bad. Not thus did I live, and no such thing, my dear, did I teach you. Did I and the old man, his father, live this way? How did we live? In neighbourly fashion. If his flour gave out, and the woman came: 'Uncle Frol, I need some flour.'— 'Go, young woman, into the granary, and take as much as you need.' If he had nobody to send out with the horses,— 'Go, Iván, and look after his horses!' And if I was short of anything, I used to go to him. 'Uncle Gordyéy, I need this and that.' And how is it now? The other day a soldier was talking about Plévna. Why, your war is worse than what they did at Plévna. Do you call this living? It is a sin! You are a peasant, a head of a house. You will be responsible. What are you teaching your women and your children? To curse. The other day Taráska, that dirty nose, cursed Aunt Arína, and his mother only laughed at him. Is that good? You will be responsible for it. Think of your soul. Is that right? You say a word to me, and I answer with two; you box my ears, and I box you twice. No, my son, Christ walked over the earth and taught us fools something quite different. If a word is said to you, — keep quiet, and let conscience smite him. That's what he, my son, has taught us. If they box your ears, you turn the other cheek to them: 'Here, strike it if I deserve it.' His own conscience will prick him. He will be pacified and will do as you wish. That's what he has commanded us to do, and not to crow. Why are you silent? Do I tell you right?"

Iván was silent, and he listened.

The old man coughed again, and with difficulty coughed up the phlegm, and began to speak again:

"Do you think Christ has taught us anything bad? He has taught us for our own good. Think of your earthly life: are you better off, or worse, since that Plévna of yours was started? Figure out how much you have spent on these courts, how much you have spent in travelling and in feeding yourself on the way? See what eagles of sons you have! You ought to live, and live well, and go up, but your property is growing less. Why? For the same reason. From your pride. You ought to be ploughing with the boys in the field and attend to your sowing, but the fiend carries you to court or to some pettifogger. You do not plough in time and do not sow in time, and mother earth does

not bring forth anything. Why did the oats not do well this year? When did you sow them? When you came back from the city. And what did you gain from the court? Only trouble for yourself. Oh, son, stick to your business, and attend to your field and your house, and if any one has offended you, forgive him in godly fashion, and things will go better with you, and you will feel easier at heart."

Iván kept silence.

"Listen, Iván! Pay attention to me, an old man. Go and hitch the gray horse, and drive straight back to the office: squash there the whole business, and in the morning go to Gavrílo, make peace with him in godly fashion, and invite him to the holiday" (it was before Lady-day), "have the samovár prepared, get a half bottle, and make an end to all sins, so that may never happen again, and command the women and children to live in peace."

Iván heaved a sigh, and thought: "The old man is speaking the truth," and his heart melted. The only thing he did not know was how to manage things so as to make peace with his neighbour.

And the old man, as though guessing what he had in mind, began once more:

"Go, Iván, do not put it off! Put out the fire at the start, for when it burns up, you can't control it."

The old man wanted to say something else, but did not finish, for the women entered the room and began to prattle like magpies. The news had already reached them about how Gavrílo had been sentenced to be flogged, and how he had threatened to set fire to the house. They had found out everything, and had had time in the pasture to exchange words with the women of Gavrílo's house. They said that Gavrílo's daughter-in-law had threatened them with the examining magistrate. The magistrate, they said, was receiving gifts from Gavrílo. He would now upset the whole case, and the teacher had already written another petition to the Tsar about Iván, and that petition mentioned all the affairs, about the coupling-pin, and about the garden, — and half of the estate would go back to him. Iván listened to their talk, and his heart was chilled again, and he changed his mind about making peace with Gavrílo.

In a farmer's yard there is always much to do. Iván did not stop to talk with the women, but got up and went out of the house, and walked over to the threshing-floor and the shed. Before he fixed everything and started back again, the sun went down, and the boys returned from the field. They had been ploughing up the field for the winter crop. Iván met them, and asked them about their work and helped them to put up the horses. He laid aside the torn collar and was about to put some poles under the shed, when it grew quite dark. Iván left the poles until the morrow; instead he threw some fodder down to the cattle, opened the gate, let Taráska out with the horses into the street, to go to the night pasture, and again closed the gate and put down the gate board.

"Now to supper and to bed," thought Iván. He took the torn collar and went into the house. He had entirely forgotten about Gavrílo, and about what his father had

told him. As he took hold of the ring and was about to enter the vestibule, he heard his neighbour on the other side of the wicker fence scolding some one in a hoarse voice.

"The devil take him!" Gavrílo was crying to some one. "He ought to be killed."

These words made all the old anger toward his neighbour burst forth in Iván. He stood awhile and listened to Gavrílo's scolding. Then Gavrílo grew quiet, and Iván went into the house.

He entered the room. Fire was burning within. The young woman was sitting in the corner behind the spinning-wheel; the old woman was getting supper ready; the eldest son was making laces for the bast shoes, the second was at the table with a book, and Taráska was getting ready to go to the night pasture.

In the house everything was good and merry, if it were not for that curse, — a bad neighbour.

Iván was angry when he entered the room. He knocked the cat down from the bench and scolded the women because the vat was not in the right place. Iván felt out of humour. He sat down, frowning, and began to mend the collar. He could not forget Gavrílo's words, with which he had threatened him in court, and how he had said about somebody, speaking in a hoarse voice: "He ought to be killed."

The old woman got Taráska something to eat. When he was through with his supper, he put on a fur coat and a caftan, girded himself, took a piece of bread, and went out to the horses. The eldest brother wanted to see him off, but Iván himself got up and went out on the porch. It was pitch-dark outside, the sky was clouded, and a wind had risen. Iván stepped down from the porch, helped his little son to get on a horse, frightened a colt behind him, and stood looking and listening while Taráska rode down the village, where he met other children, and until they all rode out of hearing. Iván stood and stood at the gate, and could not get Gavrílo's words out of his head, "Something of yours may burn worse."

"He will not consider himself," thought Iván. "It is dry, and a wind is blowing. He will enter somewhere from behind, the scoundrel, and will set the house on fire, and he will go free. If I could catch him, he would not get away from me."

This thought troubled Iván so much that he did not go back to the porch, but walked straight into the street and through the gate, around the corner of the house.

"I will examine the yard, — who knows?"

And Iván walked softly down along the gate. He had just turned around the corner and looked up the fence, when it seemed to him that something stirred at the other end, as though it got up and sat down again. Iván stopped and stood still, — he listened and looked: everything was quiet, only the wind rustled the leaves in the willow-tree and crackled through the straw. It was pitch-dark, but his eyes got used to the darkness: Iván could see the whole corner and the plough and the penthouse. He stood and looked, but there was no one there.

"It must have only seemed so to me," thought Iván, "but I will, nevertheless, go and see," and he stole up along the shed. Iván stepped softly in his bast shoes, so that he did not hear his own steps. He came to the corner, when, behold, something flashed

by near the plough, and disappeared again. Iván felt as though something hit him in the heart, and he stopped. As he stopped he could see something flashing up, and he could see clearly some one in a cap squatting down with his back toward him, and setting fire to a bunch of straw in his hands. He stood stock-still.

"Now," he thought, "he will not get away from me. I will catch him on the spot."

Before Iván had walked two lengths of the fence it grew quite bright, and no longer in the former place, nor was it a small fire, but the flame licked up in the straw of the penthouse and was going toward the roof, and there stood Gavrílo so that the whole of him could be seen.

As a hawk swoops down on a lark, so Iván rushed up against Gavrílo the Lame.

"I will twist him up," he thought, "and he will not get away from me."

But Gavrílo the Lame evidently heard his steps and ran along the shed with as much speed as a hare.

"You will not get away," shouted Iván, swooping down on him.

He wanted to grab him by the collar, but Gavrílo got away from him, and Iván caught him by the skirt of his coat. The skirt tore off, and Iván fell down.

Iván jumped up.

"Help! Hold him!" and again he ran.

As he was getting up, Gavrílo was already near his yard, but Iván caught up with him. He was just going to take hold of him, when something stunned him, as though a stone had come down on his head. Gavrílo had picked up an oak post near his house and hit Iván with all his might on the head, when he ran up to him.

Iván staggered, sparks flew from his eyes, then all grew dark, and he fell down. When he came to his senses, Gavrílo was gone. It was as light as day, and from his yard came a sound as though an engine were working, and it roared and crackled there. Iván turned around and saw that his back shed was all on fire and the side shed was beginning to burn; the fire, and the smoke, and the burning straw were being carried toward the house.

"What is this? Friend!" cried Iván. He raised his hands and brought them down on his calves. "If I could only pull it out from the penthouse, and put it out! What is this? Friends!" he repeated. He wanted to shout, but he nearly strangled, — he had no voice. He wanted to run, but his feet would not move, — they tripped each other up. He tried to walk slowly, but he staggered, and he nearly strangled. He stood still again and drew breath, and started to walk. Before he came to the shed and reached the fire, the side shed was all on fire, and he could not get into the yard. People came running up, but nothing could be done. The neighbours dragged their own things out of their houses, and drove the cattle out. After Iván's house, Gavrílo's caught fire; a wind rose and carried the fire across the street. Half the village burned down.

All they saved from Iván's house was the old man, who was pulled out, and everybody jumped out in just what they had on. Everything else was burned, except the horses in the pasture: the cattle were burned, the chickens on their roosts, the carts,

the ploughs, the harrows, the women's chests, the grain in the granary, — everything was burned.

Gavrílo's cattle were saved, and they dragged a few things out of his house.

It burned for a long time, all night long. Iván stood near his yard, and kept looking at it, and saying:

"What is this? Friends! If I could just pull it out and put it out!"

But when the ceiling in the hut fell down, he jumped into the hottest place, took hold of a brand, and wanted to pull it out. The women saw him and began to call him back, but he pulled out one log and started for another: he staggered and fell on the fire. Then his son rushed after him and dragged him out. Iván had his hair and beard singed and his garments burnt and his hands blistered, but he did not feel anything.

"His sorrow has bereft him of his senses," people said.

The fire died down, but Iván was still standing there, and saying:

"Friends, what is this? If I could only pull it out."

In the morning the elder sent his son to Iván.

"Uncle Iván, your father is dying: he has sent for you, to bid you good-bye."

Iván had forgotten about his father, and did not understand what they were saying to him.

"What father?" he said. "Send for whom?"

"He has sent for you, to bid you good-bye. He is dying in our house. Come, Uncle Iván!" said the elder's son, pulling him by his arm.

Iván followed the elder's son.

When the old man, was carried out, burning straw fell on him and scorched him. He was taken to the elder's house in a distant part of the village. This part did not burn.

When Iván came to his father, only the elder's wife was there, and the children on the oven. The rest were all at the fire. The old man was lying on a bench, with a taper in his hand, and looking toward the door. When his son entered, he stirred a little. The old woman went up to him and said that his son had come. He told her to have him come closer to him. Iván went up, and then the old man said:

"What have I told you, Iván? Who has burned the village?"

"He, father," said Iván, "he, — I caught him at it. He put the fire to the roof while I was standing near. If I could only have caught the burning bunch of straw and put it out, there would not have been anything."

"Iván," said the old man, "my death has come, and you, too, will die. Whose sin is it?"

Iván stared at his father and kept silence; he could not say a word.

"Speak before God: whose sin is it? What have I told you?"

It was only then that Iván came to his senses, and understood everything. And he snuffled, and said:

"Mine, father." And he knelt before his father, and wept, and said: "Forgive me, father! I am guilty toward you and toward God."

The old man moved his hands, took the taper in his left hand, and was moving his right hand toward his brow, to make the sign of the cross, but he did not get it so far, and he stopped.

"Glory be to thee, O Lord! Glory be to thee, O Lord!" he said, and his eyes were again turned toward his son.

"Iván! Oh, Iván!"

"What is it, father?"

"What is to be done now?"

Iván was weeping.

"I do not know, father," he said. "How am I to live now, father?"

The old man closed his eyes and lisped something, as though gathering all his strength, and he once more opened his eyes and said:

"You will get along. With God's aid will you get along." The old man was silent awhile, and he smiled and said:

"Remember, Iván, you must not tell who started the fire. Cover up another man's sin! God will forgive two sins."

And the old man took the taper into both hands, folded them over his heart, heaved a sigh, stretched himself, and died.

Iván did not tell on Gavrílo, and nobody found out how the fire had been started.

And Iván's heart was softened toward Gavrílo, and Gavrílo marvelled at Iván, because he did not tell anybody. At first Gavrílo was afraid of him, but later he got used to him. The peasants stopped quarrelling, and so did their families. While they rebuilt their homes, the two families lived in one house, and when the village was built again, and the farmhouses were built farther apart, Iván and Gavrílo again were neighbours, living in the same block.

And Iván and Gavrílo lived neighbourly together, just as their fathers had lived. Iván Shcherbakóv remembered his father's injunction and God's command to put out the fire in the beginning. And if a person did him some harm, he did not try to have his revenge on the man, but to mend matters; and if a person called him a bad name, he did not try to answer with worse words still, but to teach him not to speak badly. And thus he taught, also the women folk and the children. And Iván Shcherbakóv improved and began to live better than ever.

# Two Old Men

Translated by Louise and Aylmer Maude 1906

'The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. . . . But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth: for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers.'

— John iv. 19-21, 23.

# Chapter 1

THERE were once two old men who decided to go on a pilgrimage to worship God at Jerusalem. One of them was a well-to-do peasant named Efím Tarásitch Shevélef. The other, Elisha Bódrof, was not so well off.

Efím was a staid man, serious and firm. He neither drank nor smoked nor took snuff, and had never used bad language in his life. He had twice served as village Elder, and when he left office his accounts were in good order. He had a large family: two sons and a married grandson, all living with him. He was hale, long-bearded and erect, and it was only when he was past sixty that a little grey began to show itself in his beard.

Elisha was neither rich nor poor. He had formerly gone out carpentering, but now that he was growing old he stayed at home and kept bees. One of his sons had gone away to find work, the other was living at home. Elisha was a kindly and cheerful old man. It is true he drank sometimes, and he took snuff, and was fond of singing, but he was a peaceable man, and lived on good terms with his family and with his neighbours. He was short and dark, with a curly beard, and, like his patron saint Elisha, he was quite bald-headed.

The two old men had taken a vow long since and had arranged to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem together: but Efím could never spare the time; he always had so much business on hand; as soon as one thing was finished he started another. First he had to arrange his grandson's marriage; then to wait for his youngest son's return from the army, and after that he began building a new hut.

One holiday the two old men met outside the hut and, sitting down on some timber, began to talk.

'Well,' asked Elisha, 'when are we to fulfil our vow?'

Efím made a wry face.

'We must wait,' he said. 'This year has turned out a hard one for me. I started building this hut thinking it would cost me something over a hundred roubles, but now it's getting on for three hundred and it's still not finished. We shall have to wait tin the summer. In summer, God willing, we will go without fail.'

'It seems to me we ought not to put it off, but should go at once,' said Elisha. 'Spring is the best time.'

'The time's right enough, but what about my building? How can I leave that?'

'As if you had no one to leave in charge! Your son can look after it.'

'But how? My eldest son is not trustworthy — he sometimes takes a glass too much.'

'Ah, neighbour, when we die they'll get on without us. Let your son begin now to get some experience.'

'That's true enough, but somehow when one begins a thing one likes to see it done.'

'Eh, friend, we can never get through all we have to do. The other day the womenfolk at home were washing and house cleaning for Easter. Here something needed doing, there something else, and they could not get everything done. So my eldest daughter-in-law, who's a sensible woman, says: 'We may be thankful the holiday comes without waiting for us, or however hard we worked we should never be ready for it.'

Efím became thoughtful.

'I've spent a lot of money on this building,' he said 'and one can't start on the journey with empty pockets. We shall want a hundred roubles apiece — and it's no small sum.'

Elisha laughed.

'Now, come, come, old friend!' he said, 'you have ten times as much as I, and yet you talk about money. Only say when we are to start, and though I have nothing now I shall have enough by then.'

Efím also smiled.

'Dear me, I did not know you were so rich!' said he. 'Why, where will you get it from?'

'I can scrape some together at home, and if that's not enough, I'll sell half a score of hives to my neighbour. He's long been wanting to buy them.'

'If they swarm well this year, you'll regret it.'

'Regret it! Not I, neighbour! I never regretted anything in my life, except my sins. There's nothing more precious than the soul.'

'That's so; still it's not right to neglect things at home.'

'But what if our souls are neglected? That's worse. We took the vow, so let us go! Now, seriously, let us go!'

## Chapter 2

Elisha succeeded in persuading his comrade. In the morning, after thinking it well over, Efím came to Elisha.

'You are right,' said he, 'let us go. Life and death are in God's hands. We must go now, while we are still alive and have the strength.'

A week later the old men were ready to start. Efím had money enough at hand. He took a hundred roubles himself, and left two hundred with his wife.

Elisha, too, got ready. He sold ten hives to his neighbour, with any new swarms that might come from them before the summer. He took seventy roubles for the lot.

The rest of the hundred roubles he scraped together from the other members of his household, fairly clearing them all out. His wife gave him all she had been saving up for her funeral; and his daughter-in-law also gave him what she had.

Efím gave his eldest son definite orders about every thing: when and how much grass to mow, where to cart the manure, and how to finish off and roof the cottage. He thought out everything, and gave his orders accordingly. Elisha, on the other hand, only explained to his wife that she was to keep separate the swarms from the hives he had sold, and to be sure to let the neighbour have them all, without any tricks. As to household affairs, he did not even mention them.

'You will see what to do and how to do it, as the needs arise,' he said. 'You are the masters, and will know how to do what's best for yourselves.'

So the old men got ready. Their people baked them cakes, and made bags for them, and cut them linen for leg-bands (Worn by Russian peasants instead of stockings) They put on new leather shoes, and took with them spare shoes of platted bark. Their families went with them to the end of the village and there took leave of them, and the old men started on their pilgrimage.

Elisha left home in a cheerful mood, and as soon as he was out of the village forgot all his home affairs. His only care was how to please his comrade, how to avoid saying a rude word to any one, how to get to his destination and home again in peace and love. Walking along the road, Elisha would either whisper some prayer to himself or go over in his mind such of the lives of the saints as he was able to remember. When he came across any one on the road, or turned in anywhere for the night, he tried to behave as gently as possible and to say a godly word. So he journeyed on, rejoicing. One thing only he could not do, he could not give up taking snuff. Though he had left his snuff-box behind, he hankered after it. Then a man he met on the road gave him some snuff; and every now and then he would lag behind (not to lead his comrade into temptation) and would take a pinch of snuff.

Efím too walked well and firmly; doing no wrong and speaking no vain words, but his heart was not so light. Household cares weighed on his mind. He kept worrying about what was going on at home. Had he not forgotten to give his son this or that order? Would his son do things properly? If he happened to see potatoes being planted or manure carted, as he went along, he wondered if his son was doing as he had been told. And he almost wanted to turn back and show him how to do things, or even do them himself.

# Chapter 3

The old men had been walking for five weeks, they had worn out their home-made bark shoes, and had to begin buying new ones when they reached Little Russia (Little Russia is situated in the south-western part of Russia, and consists of the Governments of Kief, Poltava, Tchernigof, and part of Kharkof and Kherson) From the time they

left home they had had to pay for their food and for their night's lodging, but when they reached Little Russia the people vied with one another in asking them into their huts. They took them in and fed them, and would accept no payment; and more than that, they put bread or even cakes into their bags for them to eat on the road.

The old men travelled some five hundred miles in this manner free of expense, but after they had crossed the next province, they came to a district where the harvest had failed. The peasants still gave them free lodging at night, but no longer fed them for nothing. Sometimes, even, they could get no bread: they offered to pay for it, but there was none to be had. The people said the harvest had completely failed the year before. Those who had been rich were ruined and had had to sell all they possessed; those of moderate means were left destitute, and those of the poor who had not left those parts, wandered about begging, or starved at home in utter want. In the winter they had had to eat husks and goosefoot.

One night the old men stopped in a small village; they bought fifteen pounds of bread, slept there, and started before sunrise, to get well on their way before the heat of the day. When they had gone some eight miles, on coming to a stream they sat down, and, filling a bowl with water, they steeped some bread in it, and ate it. Then they changed their leg-bands, and rested for a while. Elisha took out his snuff-box. Efím shook his head at him.

'How is it you don't give up that nasty habit?' said he.

Elisha waved his hand. 'The evil habit is stronger than I,' he said.

Presently they got up and went on. After walking for nearly another eight miles, they came to a large village and passed right through it. It had now grown hot. Elisha was tired out and wanted to rest and have a drink, but Efím did not stop. Efím was the better walker of the two, and Elisha found it hard to keep up with him.

'If I could only have a drink,' said he.

'Well, have a drink,' said Efím. 'I don't want any.'

Elisha stopped.

'You go on,' he said, 'but I'll just run in to the little hut there. I will catch you up in a moment.'

'All right,' said Efím, and he went on along the high road alone, while Elisha turned back to the hut.

It was a small hut plastered with clay, the bottom a dark colour, the top white-washed; but the clay had crumbled away. Evidently it was long since it had been re-plastered, and the thatch was off the roof on one side. The entrance to the hut was through the yard. Elisha entered the yard, and saw, lying close to a bank of earth that ran round the hut, a gaunt, beardless man with his shirt tucked into his trousers, as is the custom in Little Russia (In Great Russia the peasants let their shirt hang outside their trousers). The man must have lain down in the shade, but the sun had come round and now shone full on him. Though not asleep, he still lay there. Elisha called to him, and asked for a drink, but the man gave no answer.

'He is either ill or unfriendly,' thought Elisha; and going to the door he heard a child crying in the hut. He took hold of the ring that served as a door-handle, and knocked with it.

'Hey, masters!' he called. No answer. He knocked again with his staff.

'Hey, Christians!' Nothing stirred.

'Hey, servants of God!' Still no reply.

Elisha was about to turn away, when he thought ho heard a groan the other side of the door.

'Dear me, some misfortune must have happened to the people? I had better have a look.'

And Elisha entered the hut.

# Chapter 4

Elisha turned the ring; the door was not fastened. He opened it and went along up the narrow passage. The door into the dwelling-room was open. To the left was a brick oven; in front against the wall was an icon-stand (An icon (properly ikón) is a representation of God, Christ, an angel, or a saint, usually painted, enamelled, or embossed) and a table before it, by the table was a bench on which sat an old woman, bareheaded and wearing only a single garment. There she sat with her head resting on the table, and near her was a thin, wax-coloured boy, with a protruding stomach. He was asking for something, pulling at her sleeve, and crying bitterly. Elisha entered. The air in the hut was very foul. He looked round, and saw a woman lying on the floor behind the oven: she lay flat on the ground with her eyes closed and her throat rattling, now stretching out a leg, now dragging it in, tossing from side to side; and the foul smell came from her. Evidently she could do nothing for herself and no one had been attending to her needs. The old woman lifted her head, and saw the stranger.

'What do you want?' said she.' What do you want man? We have nothing.'

Elisha understood her, though she spoke in the Little-Russian dialect.

'I came in for a drink of water, servant of God,' he said.

'There's no one — no one — we have nothing to fetch it in. Go your way.'

Then Elisha asked:

'Is there no one among you, then, well enough to attend to that woman?'

'No, we have no one. My son is dying outside, and we are dying in here.'

The little boy had ceased crying when he saw the stranger, but when the old woman began to speak, he began again, and clutching hold of her sleeve cried:

'Bread, Granny, bread.'

Elisha was about to question the old woman, when the man staggered into the hut. He came along the passage, clinging to the wall, but as he was entering the dwelling-room he fell in the corner near the threshold, and without trying to get up again to

reach the bench, he began to speak in broken words. He brought out a word at a time, stopping to draw breath, and gasping.

'Illness has seized us . . . ,' said he, 'and famine. He is dying . . . of hunger.'

And he motioned towards the boy, and began to sob.

Elisha jerked up the sack behind his shoulder and pulling the straps off his arms, put it on the floor. Then he lifted it on to the bench, and untied the strings. Having opened the sack, he took out a loaf of bread, and, cutting off a piece with his knife, handed it to the man. The man would not take it, but pointed to the little boy and to a little girl crouching behind the oven, as if to say:

'Give it to them.'

Elisha held it out to the boy. When the boy smelt bread, he stretched out his arms, and seizing the slice with both his little hands, bit into it so that his nose disappeared in the chunk. The little girl came out from behind the oven and fixed her eyes on the bread. Elisha gave her also a slice. Then he cut off another piece and gave it to the old woman, and she too began munching it.

'If only some water could be brought,' she said, 'their mouths are parched. I tried to fetch some water yesterday — or was it to-day — I can't remember, but I fell down and could go no further, and the pail has remained there, unless some one has taken it.'

Elisha asked where the well was. The old woman told him. Elisha went out, found the pail, brought some water, and gave the people a drink. The children and the old woman ate some more bread with the water, but the man would not eat.

'I cannot eat,' he said.

All this time the younger woman did not show any consciousness, but continued to toss from side to side. Presently Elisha went to the village shop and bought some millet, salt, flour, and oil. He found an axe, chopped some wood, and made a fire. The little girl came and helped him. Then he boiled some soup, and gave the starving people a meal.

The man ate a little, the old woman had some too, and the little girl and boy licked the bowl clean, and then curled up and fell fast asleep in one another's arms.

The man and the old woman then began telling Elisha how they had sunk to their present state.

'We were poor enough before?' said they, 'but when the crops failed, what we gathered hardly lasted us through the autumn. We had nothing left by the time winter came, and had to beg from the neighbours and from any one we could. At first they gave, then they began to refuse. Some would have been glad enough to help us, but had nothing to give. And we were ashamed of asking: we were in debt all round, and owed money, and flour, and bread.'

'I went to look for work,' the man said, 'but could find none. Everywhere people were offering to work merely for their own keep. One day you'd get a short job, and then you might spend two days looking for work. Then the old woman and the girl went begging, further away. But they got very little; bread was so scarce. Still we scraped

food together somehow, and hoped to struggle through till next harvest, but towards spring people ceased to give anything. And then this illness seized us. Things became worse and worse. One day we might have something to eat, and then nothing for two days. We began eating grass. Whether it was the grass, or what, made my wife ill, I don't know. She could not keep on her legs, and I had no strength left, and there was nothing to help us to recovery.'

'I struggled on alone for a while,' said the old woman, 'but at last I broke down too for want of food, and grew quite weak. The girl also grew weak and timid. I told her to go to the neighbours — she would not leave the hut, but crept into a corner and sat there. The day before yesterday a neighbour looked in, but seeing that we were ill and hungry she turned away and left us. Her husband has had to go away, and she has nothing for her own little ones to eat. And so we lay, waiting for death.'

Having heard their story, Elisha gave up the thought of overtaking his comrade that day, and remained with them all night. In the morning he got up and began doing the housework, just as if it were his own home. He kneaded the bread with the old woman's help, and lit the fire. Then he went with the little girl to the neighbours to get the most necessary things, for there was nothing in the hut: everything had been sold for bread — cooking utensils, clothing, and all. So Elisha began replacing what was necessary, making some things himself, and buying some. He remained there one day, then another, and then a third. The little boy picked up strength and, whenever Elisha sat down, crept along the bench and nestled up to him. The little girl brightened up and helped in all the work, running after Elisha and calling,

'Daddy, daddy.'

The old woman grew stronger, and managed to go out to see a neighbour. The man too improved, and was able to get about, holding on to the wall. Only the wife could not get up, but even she regained consciousness on the third day, and asked for food.

'Well,' thought Elisha, 'I never expected to waste so much time on the way. Now I must be getting on.'

# Chapter 6

The fourth day was the feast day after the summer fast, and Elisha thought:

'I will stay and break the fast with these people. I'll go and buy them something, and keep the feast with them, and to-morrow evening I will start.'

So Elisha went into the village, bought milk, wheat-flour and dripping, and helped the old woman to boil and bake for the morrow. On the feast day Elisha went to church, and then broke the fast with his friends at the hut. That day the wife got up, and managed to move about a bit. The husband had shaved and put on a clean shirt, which the old woman had washed for him; and he went to beg for mercy of a rich peasant in the village to whom his ploughland and meadow were mortgaged. He went to beg the rich peasant to grant him the use of the meadow and field till after the harvest; but in

the evening he came back very sad, and began to weep. The rich peasant had shown no mercy, but had said: 'Bring me the money.'

Elisha again grew thoughtful. 'How are they to live now?' thought he to himself. 'Other people will go haymaking, but there will be nothing for these to mow, their grass land is mortgaged. The rye will ripen. Others will reap (and what a fine crop mother-earth is giving this year), but they have nothing to look forward to. Their three acres are pledged to the rich peasant. When I am gone, they'll drift back into the state I found them in.'

Elisha was in two minds, but finally decided not to leave that evening, but to wait until the morrow. He went out into the yard to sleep. He said his prayers, and lay down; but he could not sleep. On the one hand he felt he ought to be going, for he had spent too much time and money as it was; on the other hand he felt sorry for the people.

'There seems to be no end to it, he said. 'First I only meant to bring them a little water and give them each a slice of bread: and just see where it has landed me. It's a case of redeeming the meadow and the cornfield. And when I have done that, I shall have to buy a cow for them, and a horse for the man to cart his sheaves. A nice coil you've got yourself into, brother Elisha! You've slipped your cables and lost your reckoning!'

Elisha got up, lifted his coat which he had been using for a pillow, unfolded it, got out his snuff-box and took a pinch, thinking that it might perhaps clear his thoughts.

But no! He thought and thought, and came to no conclusion. He ought to be going; and yet pity held him back. He did not know what to do. He refolded his coat and put it under his head again. He lay thus for a long time, till the cocks had already crowed once: then he was quite drowsy. And suddenly it seemed as if some one had roused him. He saw that he was dressed for the journey, with the sack on his back and the staff in his hand, and the gate stood ajar so that he could just squeeze through. He was about to pass out, when his sack caught against the fence on one side: he tried to free it, but then his leg-band caught on the other side and came undone. He pulled at the sack, and saw that it had not caught on the fence, but that the little girl was holding it and crying,

'Bread, daddy, bread!'

He looked at his foot, and there was the tiny boy holding him by the leg-band, while the master of the hut and the old woman were looking at him through the window.

Elisha awoke, and said to himself in an audible voice:

'To-morrow I will redeem their cornfield, and will buy them a horse, and flour to last till the harvest, and a cow for the little ones; or else while I go to seek the Lord beyond the sea, I may lose Him in myself.'

Then Elisha fell asleep, and slept till morning. He awoke early, and going to the rich peasant, redeemed both the cornfield and the meadow land. He bought a scythe (for that also had been sold) and brought it back with him. Then he sent the man to mow, and himself went into the village. He heard that there was a horse and cart for

sale at the public-house, and he struck a bargain with the owner, and bought them. Then he bought a sack of flour, put it in the cart, and went to see about a cow. As he was going along he overtook two women talking as they went. Though they spake the Little-Russian dialect, he understood what they were saying.

'At first, it seems, they did not know him; they thought he was just an ordinary man. He came in to ask for a drink of water, and then he remained. Just think of the things he has bought for them! Why they say he bought a horse and cart for them at the publican's, only this morning! There are not many such men in the world. It's worth while going to have a look at him.'

Elisha heard and understood that he was being praised, and he did not go to buy the cow, but returned to the inn, paid for the horse, harnessed it, drove up to the hut, and got out. The people in the hut were astonished when they saw the horse. They thought it might be for them, but dared not ask. The man came out to open the gate.

'Where did you get a horse from, grandfather,' he asked.

'Why, I bought it,' said Elisha. 'It was going cheap. Go and cut some grass and put it in the manger for it to eat during the night. And take in the sack.'

The man unharnessed the horse, and carried the sack into the barn. Then he mowed some grass and put it in the manger. Everybody lay down to sleep. Elisha went outside and lay by the roadside. That evening he took his bag out with him. When every one was asleep, he got up, packed and fastened his bag, wrapped the linen bands round his legs, put on his shoes and coat, and set off to follow Efím.

## Chapter 7

When Elisha had walked rather more than three miles it began to grow light. He sat down under a tree, opened his bag, counted his money, and found he had only seventeen roubles and twenty kopeks left.

'Well,' thought he, 'it is no use trying to cross the sea with this. If I beg my way it may be worse than not going at all. Friend Efím will get to Jerusalem without me, and will place a candle at the shrines in my name. As for me, I'm afraid I shall never fulfil my vow in this life. I must be thankful it was made to a merciful Master, and to one who pardons sinners.'

Elisha rose, jerked his bag well up on his shoulders, and turned back. Not wishing to be recognized by any one, he made a circuit to avoid the village, and walked briskly homeward. Coming from home the way had seemed difficult to him, and he had found it hard to keep up with Efím, but now on his return journey, God helped him to get over the ground so that he hardly felt fatigue. Walking seemed like child's play. He went along swinging his staff, and did his forty to fifty miles a day.

When Elisha reached home the harvest was over. His family were delighted to see him again, and all wanted to know what had happened: Why and how he had been

left behind? And why he had returned without reaching Jerusalem? But Elisha did not tell them.

'It was not God's will that I should get there,' said he. 'I lost my money on the way, and lagged behind my companion. Forgive me, for the Lord's sake!'

Elisha gave his old wife what money he had left. Then he questioned them about home affairs. Everything was going on well; all the work had been done, nothing neglected, and all were living in peace and concord.

Efím's family heard of his return the same day, and came for news of their old man; and to them Elisha gave the same answers.

'Efím is a fast walker. We parted three days before St. Peter's day, and I meant to catch him up again, but all sorts of things happened. I lost my money, and had no means to get any further, so I turned back.'

The folks were astonished that so sensible a man should have acted so foolishly: should have started and not got to his destination, and should have squandered all his money. They wondered at it for a while, and then forgot all about it, and Elisha forgot it too. He set to work again on his homestead. With his son's help he cut wood for fuel for the winter. He and the women threshed the corn. Then he mended the thatch on the outhouses, put the bees under cover, and handed over to his neighbour the ten hives he had sold him in spring, and all the swarms that had come from them. His wife tried not to tell how many swarms there had been from these hives, but Elisha knew well enough from which there had been swarms and from which not. And instead of ten, he handed over seventeen swarms to his neighbour. Having got everything ready for the winter, Elisha sent his son away to find work, while he himself took to platting shoes of bark, and hollowing out logs for hives.

## Chapter 8

All that day while Elisha stopped behind in the hut with the sick people, Efím waited for him. He only went on a little way before he sat down. He waited and waited, had a nap, woke up again, and again sat waiting; but his comrade did not come. He gazed till his eyes ached. The sun was already sinking behind a tree, and still no Elisha was to be seen.

'Perhaps he has passed me,' thought Efím, 'or perhaps some one gave him a lift and he drove by while I slept, and did not see me. But how could he help seeing me? One can see so far here in the steppe. Shall I go back? Suppose he is on in front, we shall then miss each other completely and it will be still worse. I had better go on, and we shall be sure to meet where we put up for the night.'

He came to a village, and told the watchman, if an old man of a certain description came along, to bring him to the hut where Efím stopped. But Elisha did not turn up that night. Efím went on, asking all he met whether they had not seen a little,

bald-headed, old man? No one had seen such a traveller. Efím wondered, but went on alone, saying:

'We shall be sure to meet in Odessa, or on board the ship,' and he did not trouble more about it.

On the way, he came across a pilgrim wearing a priest's coat, with long hair and a skull-cap such as priests wear. This pilgrim had been to Mount Athos, and was now going to Jerusalem for the second time. They both stopped at the same place one night, and, having met, they travelled on together.

They got safely to Odessa, and there had to wait three days for a ship. Many pilgrims from many different parts were in the same case. Again Efím asked about Elisha, but no one had seen him.

Efím got himself a foreign passport, which cost him five roubles. He paid forty roubles for a return ticket to Jerusalem, and bought a supply of bread and herrings for the voyage.

The pilgrim began explaining to Efím how he might get on to the ship without paying his fare; but Efím would not listen. 'No, I came prepared to pay, and I shall pay,' said he.

The ship was freighted, and the pilgrims went on board, Efím and his new comrade among them. The anchors were weighed, and the ship put out to sea.

All day they sailed smoothly, but towards night a wind arose, rain came on, and the vessel tossed about and shipped water. The people were frightened: the women wailed and screamed, and some of the weaker men ran about the ship looking for shelter. Efím too was frightened, but he would not show it, and remained at the place on deck where he had settled down when first he came on board, beside some old men from Tambóf. There they sat silent, all night and all next day, holding on to their sacks. On the third day it grew calm, and on the fifth day they anchored at Constantinople. Some of the pilgrims went on shore to visit the Church of St. Sophia, now held by the Turks. Efím remained on the ship, and only bought some white bread. They lay there for twenty-four hours, and then put to sea again. At Smyrna they stopped again; and at Alexandria; but at last they arrived safely at Jaffa, where all the pilgrims had to disembark. From there still it was more than forty miles by road to Jerusalem. When disembarking the people were again much frightened. The ship was high, and the people were dropped into boats, which rocked so much that it was easy to miss them and fall into the water. A couple of men did get a wetting, but at last all were safely landed.

They went on on foot, and at noon on the third day reached Jerusalem. They stopped outside the town, at the Russian inn, where their passports were indorsed. Then, after dinner, Efím visited the Holy Places with his companion, the pilgrim. It was not the time when they could be admitted to the Holy Sepulchre, but they went to the Patriarchate. All the pilgrims assembled there. The women were separated from the men, who were all told to sit in a circle, barefoot. Then a monk came in with a towel to wash their feet. He washed, wiped, and then kissed their feet, and did this

to every one in the circle. Efím's feet were washed and kissed, with the rest. He stood through vespers and matins, prayed, placed candles at the shrines, handed in booklets inscribed with his parents, names, that they might be mentioned in the church prayers. Here at the Patriarchate food and wine were given them. Next morning they went to the cell of Mary of Egypt, where she had lived doing penance. Here too they placed candles and had prayers read. From there they went to Abraham's Monastery, and saw the place where Abraham intended to slay his son as an offering to God. Then they visited the spot where Christ appeared to Mary Magdalene, and the Church of James, the Lord's brother. The pilgrim showed Efím all these places, and told him how much money to give at each place. At mid-day they returned to the inn and had dinner. As they were preparing to lie down and rest, the pilgrim cried out, and began to search his clothes, feeling them all over.

'My purse has been stolen, there were twenty-three roubles in it,' said he, 'two ten-rouble notes and the rest in change.'

He sighed and lamented a great deal, but as there was no help for it, they lay down to sleep.

## Chapter 9

As Efím lay there, he was assailed by temptation.

'No one has stolen any money from this pilgrim,' thought he, 'I do not believe he had any. He gave none away anywhere, though he made me give, and even borrowed a rouble of me.'

This thought had no sooner crossed his mind, than Efím rebuked himself, saying: 'What right have I to judge a man? It is a sin. I will think no more about it.' But as soon as his thoughts began to wander, they turned again to the pilgrim: how interested he seemed to be in money, and how unlikely it sounded when he declared that his purse had been stolen.

'He never had any money,' thought Efím. 'It's all an invention.'

Towards evening they got up, and went to midnight Mass at the great Church of the Resurrection, where the Lord's Sepulchre is. The pilgrim kept close to Efím and went with him everywhere. They came to the Church; a great many pilgrims were there; some Russians and some of other nationalities: Greeks, Armenians, Turks, and Syrians. Efím entered the Holy Gates with the crowd. A monk led them past the Turkish sentinels, to the place where the Saviour was taken down from the cross and anointed, and where candles were burning in nine great candlesticks. The monk showed and explained everything. Efím offered a candle there. Then the monk led Efím to the right, up the steps to Golgotha, to the place where the cross had stood. Efím prayed there. Then they showed him the cleft where the ground had been rent asunder to its nethermost depths; then the place where Christ's hands and feet were nailed to the cross; then Adam's tomb, where the blood of Christ had dripped on to Adam's bones.

Then they showed him the stone on which Christ sat when the crown of thorns was placed on His head; then the post to which Christ was bound when He was scourged. Then Efím saw the stone with two holes for Christ's feet. They were going to show him something else, but there was a stir in the crowd, and the people all hurried to the church of the Lord's Sepulchre itself. The Latin Mass had just finished there, and the Russian Mass was beginning. And Efím went with the crowd to the tomb cut in the rock.

He tried to get rid of the pilgrim, against whom he was still sinning in his mind, but the pilgrim would not leave him, but went with him to the Mass at the Holy Sepulchre. They tried to get to the front, but were too late. There was such a crowd that it was impossible to move either backwards or forwards. Efím stood looking in front of him, praying, and every now and then feeling for his purse. He was in two minds: sometimes he thought that the pilgrim was deceiving him, and then again he thought that if the pilgrim spoke the truth and his purse had really been stolen, the same thing might happen to himself.

Efím stood there gazing into the little chapel in which was the Holy Sepulchre itself with thirty-six lamps burning above it. As he stood looking over the people's heads, he saw something that surprised him. Just beneath the lamps in which the sacred fire burns and in front of every one, Efím saw an old man in a grey coat, whose bald, shining head was just like Elisha Bódrof.

'It is like him,' thought Efím, 'but it cannot be Elisha. He could not have got ahead of me. The ship before ours started a week sooner. He could not have caught that; and he was not on ours, for I saw every pilgrim on board.'

Hardly had Efím thought this, when the little old man began to pray, and bowed three times: once forwards to God, then once on each side — to the brethren. And as he turned his head to the right, Efím recognized him. It was Elisha Bódrof himself with his dark, curly beard turning grey at the cheeks, with his brows, his eyes and nose, and his expression of face. Yes, it was he!

Efím was very pleased to have found his comrade again, and wondered how Elisha had got ahead of him.

'Well done, Elisha!' thought he. 'See how he has pushed ahead. He must have come across some one who showed him the way. When we get out, I will find him, get rid of this fellow in the skull-cap, and keep to Elisha. Perhaps he will show me how to get to the front also.'

Efím kept looking out, so as not to lose sight of Elisha. But when the Mass was over, the crowd began to sway, pushing forward to kiss the tomb, and pushed Efím aside. He was again seized with fear lest his purse should be stolen. Pressing it with his hand, he began elbowing through the crowd, anxious only to get out. When he reached the open, he went about for a long time searching for Elisha both outside and in the Church itself. In the cells of the Church he saw many people of all kinds, eating, and drinking wine, and reading and sleeping there. But Elisha was nowhere to be seen. So Efím returned to the inn without having found his comrade. That evening the pilgrim

in the skull-cap did not turn up. He had gone off without repaying the rouble, and Efím was left alone.

The next day Efím went to the Holy Sepulchre again, with an old man from Tambóf, whom he had met on the ship. He tried to get to the front, but was again pressed back; so he stood by a pillar and prayed. He looked before him, and there in the foremost place under the lamps, close to the very Sepulchre of the Lord, stood Elisha, with his arms spread out like a priest at the altar, and with his bald head all shining.

'Well, now,' thought Efím, 'I won't lose him!'

He pushed forward to the front, but when he got there, there was no Elisha: he had evidently gone away.

Again on the third day Efím looked, and saw at the Sepulchre, in the holiest place, Elisha standing in the sight of all men, his arms outspread, and his eyes gazing upwards as if he saw something above. And his bald head was all shining.

'Well, this time,' thought Efím, 'he shall not escape me! I will go and stand at the door, then we can't miss one another!'

Efím went out and stood by the door till past noon. Every one had passed out, but still Elisha did not appear.

Efím remained six weeks in Jerusalem, and went everywhere: to Bethlehem, and to Bethany, and to the Jordan. He had a new shirt sealed at the Holy Sepulchre for his burial, and he took a bottle of water from the Jordan, and some holy earth, and bought candles that had been lit at the sacred flame. In eight places he inscribed names to be prayed for, and he spent all his money, except just enough to get home with. Then he started homeward. He walked to Jaffa, sailed thence to Odessa, and walked home from there on foot.

## Chapter 11

Efím travelled the same road he had come by; and as he drew nearer home his former anxiety returned as to how affairs were getting on in his absence. 'Much water flows away in a year,' the proverb says. It takes a lifetime to build up a homestead, but not long to ruin it, thought he. And he wondered how his son had managed without him, what sort of spring they were having, how the cattle had wintered, and whether the cottage was well finished. When Efím came to the district where he had parted from Elisha the summer before, he could hardly believe that the people living there were the same. The year before they had been starving, but now they were living in comfort. The harvest had been good, and the people had recovered and had forgotten their former misery.

One evening Efím reached the very place where Elisha had remained behind; and as he entered the village, a little girl in a white smock ran out of a hut.

Daddy, daddy, come to our house!'

Efím meant to pass on, but the little girl would not let him. She took hold of his coat, laughing, and pulled him towards the hut, where a woman with a small boy came out into the porch and beckoned to him.

'Come in, grandfather,' she said. 'Have supper and spend the night with us.'

So Efím went in.

'I may as well ask about Elisha,' he thought. 'I fancy this is the very hut he went to for a drink of water.'

The woman helped him off with the bag he carried, and gave him water to wash his face. Then she made him sit down to table, and set milk, curd-cakes and porridge before him. Efím thanked her, and praised her for her kindness to a pilgrim. The woman shook her head.

'We have good reason to welcome pilgrims,' she said. 'It was a pilgrim who showed us what life is. We were living forgetful of God, and God punished us almost to death. We reached such a pass last summer, that we all lay ill and helpless with nothing to eat. And we should have died, but that God sent an old man to help us — just such a one as you. He came in one day to ask for a drink of water, saw the state we were in, took pity on us, and remained with us. He gave us food and drink, and set us on our feet again; and he redeemed our land, and bought a cart and horse and gave them to us.'

Here the old woman entering the hut, interrupted the younger one and said:

'We don't know whether it was a man, or an angel from God. He loved us all, pitied us all, and went away without telling us his name, so that we don't even know whom to pray for. I can see it all before me now! There I lay waiting for death, when in comes a bald-headed old man. He was not anything much to look at, and he asked for a drink of water. I, sinner that I am, thought to myself: "What does he come prowling about here for?" And just think what he did! As soon as he saw us, he let down his bag, on this very spot, and untied it.'

Here the little girl joined in.

'No, Granny,' said she, 'first he put it down here in the middle of the hut, and then he lifted it on to the bench.'

And they began discussing and recalling all he had said and done, where he sat and slept, and what he had said to each of them.

At night the peasant himself came home on his horse, and he too began to tell about Elisha and how he had lived with them.

'Had he not come we should all have died in our sins. We were dying in despair, murmuring against God and man. But he set us on our feet again; and through him we learned to know God, and to believe that there is good in man. May the Lord bless him! We used to live like animals; he made human beings of us.

After giving Efím food and drink, they showed him where he was to sleep; and lay down to sleep themselves.

But though Efím lay down, he could not sleep. He could not get Elisha out of his mind, but remembered how he had seen him three times at Jerusalem, standing in the foremost place.

'So that is how he got ahead of me,' thought Efím. 'God may or may not have accepted my pilgrimage but He has certainly accepted his!'

Next morning Efím bade farewell to the people, who put some patties in his sack before they went to their work, and he continued his journey.

## Chapter 12

Efím had been away just a year, and it was spring again when he reached home one evening. His son was not at home, but had gone to the public-house and when he came back, he had had a drop too much. Efím began questioning him. Everything showed that the young fellow had been unsteady during his father's absence. The money had all been wrongly spent, and the work had been neglected. The father began to upbraid the son; and the son answered rudely.

'Why didn't you stay and look after it yourself?' he said. 'You go off, taking the money with you and now you demand it of me!'

The old man grew angry, and struck his son.

In the morning Efím went to the village Elder to complain of his son's conduct. As he was passing Elisha's house, his friend's wife greeted him from the porch.

'How do you do, neighbour,' she said. 'How do you do, dear friend? Did you get to Jerusalem safely?'

Efím stopped.

'Yes, thank God,' he said. 'I have been there. I lost sight of your old man, but I hear he got home safely.'

The old woman was fond of talking:

'Yes, neighbour, he has come back,' said she. 'He's been back a long time. Soon after Assumption, I think it was, he returned. And we were glad the Lord had sent him back to us! We were dull without him. We can't expect much work from him any more, his years for work are past; but still he is the head of the household and it's more cheerful when he's at home. And how glad our lad was! He said, "It's like being without sunlight, when father's away!" It was dull without him, dear friend. We're fond of him, and take good care of him.'

'Is he at home now?'

'He is, dear friend. He is with his bees. He is hiving the swarms. He says they are swarming well this year. The Lord has given such strength to the bees that my husband doesn't remember the like. "The Lord is not rewarding us according to our sins," he says. Come in, dear neighbour, he will be so glad to see you again.'

Efím passed through the passage into the yard and to the apiary, to see Elisha. There was Elisha in his grey coat, without any face-net or gloves, standing, under the

birch trees, looking upwards, his arms stretched out and his bald head shining, as Efím had seen him at the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem: and above him the sunlight shone through the birches as the flames of fire had done in the holy place, and the golden bees flew round his head like a halo, and did not sting him.

Efím stopped. The old woman called to her husband.

'Here's your friend come,' she cried.

Elisha looked round with a pleased face, and came towards Efím, gently picking bees out of his own beard.

'Good day, neighbour, good-day, dear friend. Did you get there safely?'

'My feet walked there, and I have brought you some water from the river Jordan. You must come to my house for it. But whether the Lord accepted my efforts. . . .'

'Well the Lord be thanked! May Christ bless you!' said Elisha.

Efím was silent for a while, and then added:

'My feet have been there, but whether my soul, or another's, has been there more truly . . .'

'That's God's business, neighbour, God's business,' interrupted Elisha.

'On my return journey I stopped at the hut where you remained behind. . . .'

Elisha was alarmed, and said hurriedly:

'God's business, neighbour, God's business! Come into the cottage, I'll give you some of our honey.' And Elisha changed the conversation, and talked of home affairs.

Efím sighed, and did not speak to Elisha of the people in the hut, nor of how he had seen him in Jerusalem. But he now understood that the best way to keep one's vows to God and to do His will, is for each man while he lives to show love and do good to others.

# Yermak, the Conqueror of Siberia

AT the time of the Tsar Ivan the Terrible, 1 the Strogonofs were rich merchants, and lived in Perm, on the river Kama.

They had heard that on the river Kama, for a hundred and forty versts around, there was rich land ; the soil had not been plowed for a century ; the black forest for a century had not been felled. In the forests were many wild animals, and along the river were lakes full of fish, and no one lived in this land except wandering Tartars.

So the Strogonofs wrote a letter to the Tsar :

" Grant us this land, and we ourselves will found cities, and we will gather men together and establish them, and we will not allow the Tartars to pass through it."

The Tsar consented, and granted them the land. The Strogonofs sent out agents to collect people. And there came to them many people who were out of work. The Strogonofs assigned lands and forest to all who came, gave cattle to each, and agreed not to tax them during their lives, and only required of them that if it were necessary they should go to fight the Tartars.

Thus this land was settled with a Russian population.

Twenty years passed. The Strogonof merchants grew richer and richer, and this territory of one hun-dred and forty versts became too small for them. They wanted still more land. Now there were lofty moun-tains a hundred versts distant, the Urals, and they heard that beyond these Urals was excellent land. The ruler

1 loann Vasilyevitch " Groznui," 1530-1584.

of this land, which was boundless, was a petty Siberian prince named Kuchum.

In former times Kuchum had given his allegiance to the Russian Tsar, but since then he had revolted, and he was threatening to destroy the Strogonof colonies.

And again the Strogonof s wrote to the Tsar :

" You granted us land, and we have brought it under your sway ; now the thievish little Tsar 1 Kuchum has revolted from you, and he wants to take this land away and destroy us. Bid us take the territory that lies beyond the Ural Mountains; we will conquer Kuchum and bring all his land under your sway."

The Tsar consented, and replied :

" If you have the power, get possession of Kuchum's land. But do not take many men away from Russia."

As soon as the Strogonofs received this missive from the Tsar they sent their agents to collect still more people. And they gave them orders above all to get Cossacks from the Volga and the Don.

Now at this time there were many Cossacks wander-ing along the Volga and the Don. They formed bands numbering two hundred, three hundred, or six hundred men, elected their atamans, or leaders, and sailed up and down in bateaux, seizing and plundering merchant boats, and wintering in a stronghold on the banks.

The Strogonofs' agents came to the Volga and began to make inquiries:

" Who are the most famous Cossacks here ? "

And it was said in reply :

“ There are many Cossacks. And they make life unendurable. There is Mishka the Circassian, 2 there is Sarui-Azman...but there is no one uglier than Yermak Timofeftch, the ataman. He has an army of a thousand men, and not only the people and the merchants fear him, but even the Tsar’s army dares not engage with him.”

And the agents went to the ataman Yermak and tried to persuade him to take service with the Strogonofs.

1 Tsarek.

2 Cherkashenin ; Mishka is the diminutive of Mikhail Michael.

Yermak received the agents, listened to their words, and agreed to come with his army about the time of the Assumption.

At the time of the Feast of the Assumption six hun-dred Cossacks, with their ataman Yermak, the son of Timofe’f, came to the Strogonofs. At first Strogonof sent them out against the neighboring Tartars. The Cossacks defeated them. Then when there was nothing further to do, the Cossacks began to wander about and pillage. Strogonof summoned Yermak, and said :

“ I am not going to keep you any longer, if you act so lawlessly.”

And Yermak replied :

“ I myself am sorry. But it is not so easy to manage my men; they are wild fellows. Give us something to do.”

And Strogonof said :

“ Go beyond the Urals, and fight with Kuchum and master his land. Even the Tsar will reward you.”

And he read to Yermak the Tsar’s missive, and Yermak was delighted ; he called together his Cossacks, and said :

“ You scandalize me before the master here. You are always up to some lawlessness. If you don’t behave, he will dismiss you, and then where will you go ? On the Volga the Tsar has a great army ; they will take you prisoners, and it will go hard with you on account of the deeds that you have done. But if you find it dull here, we must find some work for you to do.”

And he showed them the Tsar’s missive permitting Strogonof to conquer the land beyond the Urals. The Cossacks talked it over and agreed to go.

Yermak returned to Strogonof, and the two began to consult together how best to make the expedition.

They decided how many bateaux would be needed, how much grain, powder, lead ; how many cattle, fire-arms ; how many Tartar prisoners for interpreters ; how many German gunsmiths.

Strogonof said to himself :

“ Though this is going to cost me dear, still I must give him all he asks, or otherwise they will settle down here and ruin me.”

So Strogonof agreed, got everything together, and fitted out Yermak and his Cossacks.

On the tenth of September, Yermak and his Cossacks started to row up the river Chusovaya in thirty-two bateaux, each bateau carrying a score of men.

For four days they rowed up-stream and entered the Silver River. 1 This was as far as they could go by boat.

They made inquiries of the interpreters, and learned that they would be obliged to go from that point over the mountains, two hundred versts by land, and then they would come to other rivers.

The Cossacks disembarked here; they built a city and unloaded all their belongings, and they threw aside their bateaux, and constructed carts, loaded them up, and set out on their journey across the mountains. The whole region was forest, and no one lived there.

For ten days they went across the country, and reached the Zharovnya River. There again they halted, and set to work to build bateaux. After they were built they started on their voyage down the river. They sailed down for five days, and reached regions still more delightful, fields, forests, lakes. And there was abundance of fish and game, and the game was not afraid of them.

They sailed down one day more, and sailed into the Tura River.

There on the Tura River they began to fall in with inhabitants, and saw Tartar towns.

Yermak sent some Cossacks to investigate one town, bidding them find out what kind of a town it was, and whether it had many defenders.

Twenty men went on this expedition ; they threw all the Tartars into a panic, and captured the whole town, and captured all their cattle. Some of the Tartars they killed, and some they took as prisoners.

Yermak, through an interpreter, asked the Tartars

1 The Serebrannaya.

what people they were, and under whose sway they lived.

The Tartars replied that they belonged to the Tsardom of Siberia, and their Tsar was Kuchum.

Yermak let the Tartars go, except three of the most intelligent, whom he retained to act as guides.

They sailed farther. The farther they sailed, the bigger grew the river all the time, and the country grew better and better.

And they kept encountering more and more people. But the inhabitants were not powerful, and the Cossacks captured all the towns along the river.

In one town they made a great number of Tartars prisoners, and one person of authority, an old Tartar.

They began to ask the Tartar who he was. And he said : “I am Tauzik, and I am a servant of my Tsar Kuchum, and I am his head man in this city.”

Yermak proceeded to ask Tauzik about his Tsar. “Was his city of Sibir far distant? Had Kuchum a large army ? had he great wealth ? “

Tauzik told him all about it.

“ Kuchum is the very first Tsar in all the world. His city of Sibir is the biggest city in the world. In this city,” said he, “there are as many men and cattle as there are stars in the sky. The Tsar Kuchum’s army is beyond number ; all the other tsars banded together could not vanquish him.”

And Yermak said :

“ We Russians have come here to vanquish your Tsar Kuchum, and to take his city, and to bring him under the sway of the Russian Tsar. And we have a great army. Those who have come with me are only the vanguard, but those who follow us in bateaux are be-yond number, and they all have guns. And our guns will shoot through a tree, and are not like your bows and arrows. Just look here ! “

And Yermak shot at a tree and split it, and the Cos-sacks from all sides began to fire off their guns.

Tauzik fell on his knees with fright, and Yermak said to him :

“ Now do you hasten to your Tsar Kuchum and tell him what you have seen. Let him submit to us ; but if he does not submit, then we will bring him to destruction.”

And he let Tauzik go.

The Cossacks sailed farther. They entered into the great river Tobol, and all the time they were drawing nearer and nearer to the city of Sibir. They came to the moutn of the little river Babasan, and behold ! on the bank stands a town, and around the town are many Tartars.

An interpreter was sent to the Tartars to inquire who those men were. The interpreter came back with the answer :

“ This army has been collected by Kuchum. And the general who commands the army is Kuchum’s own son-in-law, Mametkul. He sent me, and commanded me to say to you, ‘ Go back, or else he will cut you in pieces.’ “

Yermak collected his Cossacks, went on shore, and began to fire at the Tartars. As soon as the Tartars heard the noise of the firing they fled. The Cossacks set out in pursuit of them, and some they killed, and some they captured. Mametkul himself barely escaped.

The Cossacks sailed farther. They came out upon a broad, swift river, the Irtuish. They sailed down this river a whole day ; and they arrived at a handsome town, and there they stopped.

The Cossacks marched against the town. As soon as they reached it, the Tartars began to shoot arrows at them, and they wounded three Cossacks.

Yermak sent his interpreter to say to the Tartars :

“.Give up your city, or else we will cut you in pieces.”

The interpreter returned, saying :

“ Here lives Kuchum’s servant, Atik Murza Kachara. He has a great army, and he declares that he will not surrender the town.”

Yermak gathered his Cossacks, and said :

“ Now, boys, if we do not take this town, the Tartars will hold us back and will not let us pass. And, there-fore, the more speedily we inspire them with fear, the better it will be for us. All of you come on ! Fling yourselves on them all at once ! “

And thus they did.

There were many Tartars there, and brave fellows ! As the Cossacks rushed forward, the Tartars began to shoot with their bows. They overwhelmed the Cossacks with their arrows. Some of them they killed, and others they wounded. And the Cossacks were filled with fury, and rushed against the Tartars, and all whom they fell upon they killed.

In this town the Cossacks found many treasures, cattle, rugs, many furs, and much mead. After they had buried the dead and rested, they took their plunder and went on.

They had not sailed very far when, behold ! on the bank there stood something like a city, and there was an army that seemed to stretch as far as the eye could see; and the whole army was surrounded by a ditch, and the ditch was protected by a palisade.

The Cossacks came to a pause. They began to feel dubious. Yermak called a council.

“ Well, boys, what shall be done ? “

The Cossacks were disheartened. Some said :

“ We must sail by.” Others said :

“We must go back.”

And they grew desperate, and blamed Yermak, saying :

“ Why did you bring us hither ? Already they have killed so many of us, and wounded still more, and here we shall all perish.”

And they began to shed tears.

And Yermak said to his sub-ataman, Ivan Koltso :

“ Well, now, Vanya, what do you think about it ? “

And Koltso replied :

“What do I think about it? If we are not killed to-day, then we shall be to-morrow, and if not to-morrow, then we shall die ingloriously in our beds. My advice is, leap on shore and make straight for the Tartars and God will decide.”

And Yermak exclaimed :

“AY! brave fellow, Vanya ! That is what we must do! Ekh! you boys! You aren’t Cossacks, but old women! Of course it was to catch sturgeon and to scare Tartar women; simply for that that I brought you hither. Don’t you yourselves see ? If we go back we shall be killed ! If we row by, we shall be killed ! If we stay here, we shall be killed ! Where, then, shall we betake ourselves ? First labor, then rest ! Boys, you are like a healthy mare that my father had. When she was going downhill she would draw, and on level ground she would draw ; but when it came to going up-hill, she would balk and back and try to find something easier. Then my father took a stake, beat her and beat her with the stake. And the mare jumped around, and kicked and tipped over the cart. Then father took her out of the thills and put her through the

mill. Now, if she had pulled, she would not have got the thrashing. So it is with you, boys. There 's only one thing left for us, to go straight for the Tartars." ...

The Cossacks laughed, and said :

" It is plain that you are wiser than we are, Timo-fei'tch. We fools have no right to give advice. Take us wherever you wish. We can't die twice, but we must die once."

And Yermak said :

" Now listen, boys. This is the way that we must do it. They have n't yet seen the whole of us. We will divide ourselves into three bands. Those in the middle will march straight at them, and the other two divisions will make a flank movement to the right and left. Now when the middle division begins to engage them, they will think that we are all there they will come out. And then we will give it to them from the flanks. That 's the way, boys. And if we beat these, there will be nothing left to fear. We shall be tsars ourselves."

That was the way that they did.

As soon as the middle division went forward under Yermak, the Tartars began to yell and rushed out.

Then the wings joined battle, the right under Ivan Koltso, the left under the ataman Meshcheryak.

The Tartars were panic-stricken, and took to their heels. The Cossacks slaughtered them. And no one at all dared to oppose Yermak any longer. And thus they made their entrance into the very city of Sibir. And there Yermak took up his abode exactly as if he had been Tsar.

The neighboring princes l began to come to Yermak with salutations, and the Tartars came back and began to settle down in Sibir. Kuchum and his son-in-law, however, dared not make a direct attack on Yermak, but wandered round and round, and laid their plans to capture him.

In the spring, at the time for the freshets, some Tar-tars came to Yermak, saying :

" Mametkul is coming against you again, and he has collected a great army, and is now on the Vagaya River."

Yermak hastened over rivers, swamps, streams, and forests, crept up with his Cossacks, fell on Mametkul, and killed many of the Tartars, and took Mametkul him-self prisoner and brought him back to Sibir. And now there remained few Tartars who were not subdued, and that summer Yermak marched against those that would not submit, and_ on the Irtuish and on the Obi rivers Yermak brought so much land under subjection that you could not go around it in two months.

After he had conquered all this land, he sent a mes-senger to the Strogonof s with a letter, in which he said :

" I have taken Kuchum's city, and have Mametkul in captivity, and I have brought all the people round about under my sway. But it has cost me many Cossacks. Send us people, so that we may be more lively. And the wealth in this land is limitless in extent."

And he sent also costly furs, foxskins and martens and sable.

After this two years passed. Yermak still held Sibir,

1 Tsar'ki, petty tsar; it is a moot question whether the word tsar is de-rived from the Latin Caesar, or whether Coesar may not itself be an Oriental title of similar derivation. The spelling of " czar " is not Russian.

but no reinforcements arrived from Russia, and Yermak's Russian forces were growing small.

One time the Tartar Kachara sent a messenger to Yermak, saying :

"We have submitted to your sway, but the Nogai are harassing us ; let some of your braves come to our aid. We will conquer the Nogai' together. And we give you our oath that we will do no manner of harm to your braves."

Yermak had faith in their oath, and he sent to them Ivan Koltso with forty men. As soon as these forty men came to them, the Tartars fell on them and killed them ; and this still further reduced the Cossacks.

Another time some Bukhara traders sent word to Yermak that they were on their way with merchandise which they wished to give him in his city of Sibir, but that Kuchum and his army were in their way, and would not let them pass.

Yermak took fifty men and went out to clear the road for the Bukharians. But when he reached the Irtuish River he did not find any merchants. So they prepared to bivouac there.

The night was dark and rainy. No sooner had the Cossacks lain down for the night, than the Tartars rushed in from every side, threw themselves on the sleeping Cossacks, and began to hew them down. Yer-mak leaped up and began to fight. He was wounded in the arm by a knife. Then he ran to the river and threw himself into it the Tartars after him. He was already in the water. But he was never seen again, and his body was never found, and no one knows how he died.

Leo Tolstoy
The Short Stories of Leo Tolstoy - Part 2