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VOLUME XXXIX.

DENISON, IOWA, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1903.

NO. 17

A Fine Assortment of Silverware at CHAMBERLIN'S.

THE MYSTERY OF GRASLOV

By Ashley Towne

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"Alas, yes. It was so pretty, a noble woman, perhaps even a princess," said Papa Paulpoff.

Tears came into his eyes now at the remembrance of it. "I will buy this. How much do you ask for it?" he asked of Vladimir.

"On second thoughts, it is not for sale," Vladimir answered.

"I do not wonder," he said. "It is a beautiful face. We do not have them in this part of Russia. In St. Petersburg, perhaps."

He shot a glance at Papa Paulpoff as he spoke, but the old man was bending down putting the hot shoe on the horse's hoof.

The job finished, there remained nothing but to pay the Paulpoffs and depart. The prince did this, bade them a pleasant farewell, mounted his steed and rode away.

"Explain the mystery!" cried Vladimir. "You have not lost the picture! You commanded me never to lose it! Why the lie about the fire?"

"The picture," replied Papa Paulpoff, turning white under his thick beard, "is that of a noble lady who was a friend of my family and whom we as children worshiped as a saint. I do



"Who is this—it is a beautiful woman—but her name?"

not want to lose it. That prince seemed to know who she was, and I did not want him to get the picture, so I lied. Old woman, what about that dinner?" "It awaits," said Mamma Paulpoff.

"Then come, I am famished. If one speaks to me to disturb me eating, I will use my foot."

Once at the table, Papa Paulpoff attacked the meal with the rude manners of the uneducated Russian, and the old woman sat with downcast eyes eating her own meal.

Vladimir, though devoured by curiosity, knew the peculiarities of the old man and ate in silence.

CHAPTER III. VLADIMIR SENT TO SIBERIA.

ATTACHED to the police of the government of Perm was an inspector named Ignatz Jansky. He was ambitious to rise and was of that mental and physical caliber that makes a man successful when he bends all his energies, regardless of all scruples, to the attainment of his goal.

Inspector Jansky, having received a message from Prince Neslerov, hastened to obey, for he knew the power of Neslerov, and if there should chance to be promotion in his path at any time Neslerov, as a wealthy noble of Graslov, could further his possibilities.

Inspector Jansky entered the palace of the prince with a humility that would have charmed the poor devils whom his eagerness had sent to Siberia.

"Sit down," said the prince, and the inspector sat down with a suddenness that proved his desire to please his sponsor. "I sent for you."

"You did, your excellency. I received your message and made all haste to obey."

"I trust it did not inconvenience you to a great extent," said the prince, who was quite familiar with the peculiarities of the inspector's nature.

"Not at all, your excellency—that is, not so much but what it gave me pleasure to obey. I am always busy, as you know."

"Yes, you are assiduous. Well, I have news for you. But first I should be pleased to receive from you an answer to a question. What do you wish for the most?"

Jansky hesitated. His servile mind saw far into the future, as a rule, but it could not fathom the meaning of this strange question. What did it matter to the prince what he wanted most unless the prince was disposed to grant it?

"I should like promotion, your excellency. Of course, I make no claim. You have befriended me. You have made me what I am. I have in my humble way endeavored to so acquit myself that you would not be displeased. I would not ask you for more. But, since you ask my dearest wish, it is promotion."

"It is a possibility," the prince replied. Having said this, he deliberately lighted a cigar, leaving the inspector on needles, wondering if the possibility were to materialize into a fact.

"As I said before, it is a possibility," said Neslerov and relapsed into silence. "I suppose it is always a possibility to one so powerful as your excellency," said Jansky, who had a fine talent for flattery.

"At this particular moment it is more easily accomplished than at any other time."

"If your excellency will explain—if anything is expected of me, I would"—"Duty, only duty," broke in the prince. "But I will explain. You are already aware that when you were made inspector of police in Perm the field of police activity extended but little farther east. The Cossack guards and the Tartar cavalry composed the police over the border. But this new railway

is revolutionizing all that. In each government through which this line of travel passes or is to pass a department of police is to be established. There will be new cities develop. There will be railway stations. The population of Siberia will increase and, though complex enough at all times, will now present a far greater variety than ever before. The entrance of foreigners, of conspirators, will have to be made less difficult. The escape of a convict will now be almost a mere act of stepping upon a train and saying farewell to his guards.

"It will be, therefore, quite necessary to establish a system of police with officers of more ability and shrewdness than the Cossacks who now command the rude guards who stand sentinels over the czar's great dominion in Asia. Such a department of police has already been established in Tobolsk, through which the railway is now completed. It is time now for us to think of such a department in Tomsk."

As the prince and governor paused the inspector's breath came short and fast.

"And, your excellency, in the goodness of your heart you have thought of me?"

"I have been thinking—of several. I have befriended you. I desire to do so again. But there are difficulties which we must consider. Your present position, while not a low one, still is so low that the leap from it to the position of superintendent of police of the government of Tomsk would excite the imaginations of certain people at St. Petersburg."

"Superintendent of police of Tomsk?" Jansky cried.

"Certainly. That is the position for which I intend you. I have watched your career. You are eager, ambitious and resourceful. What better man could I have in such a position? It is upon you whom I must rely to prevent the encroachments of our enemies. It will be the superintendent of my police who will be my closest confidant. Who could be more acceptable to me than you?"

"I thank you, your excellency. I thank you."

"Wait. Think me with deeds when we succeed. As I said before, there are difficulties. One cannot leap too great a distance at once without a cause. We must find a cause."

"A cause, your excellency?"

"What I mean is some potent reason for this great promotion. The chief of the Tomsk police will have a palace, a large income and will be second only to myself in power. To obtain that one must do something worthy."

"Oh, if I could but win that distinction!"

"What have these poor men done, your excellency?"

"I think it even now within your power."

"You have discovered something?"

"Yes—a very nesting place for nihilists."

"Good! Give me an idea where this place is, your excellency. There will be no more nesting."

"Do you know a forge on the forest road leading out of Perm to the south?"

"A forge? A horseshoeing place?"

"Well, that and all ironworking. It is kept by a man named Paulpoff."

"Paulpoff, the giant who breaks horse-shoes with his thumbs and forefingers? The simple minded son of old Michael? What has he to do with nihilists?"

"He is their leader," Neslerov said quietly.

Jansky turned white, whether from surprise or horror at the devilish plot he scented we do not know. But he sat there waiting. The police of Tomsk needed a chief. The chief would have a palace and a large salary.

"Yes," continued Neslerov, "this Paulpoff, as I accidentally discovered, is the leader of a band of nihilists who meet there in the shops. I chanced to pass there yesterday and overheard a bit of conversation between the son and the old man. It seems there is to be a meeting in a few nights."

"A meeting of nihilists in the shops of Paulpoff?"

"Yes. Now, it has long been suspected that there were many nihilists at Perm, but the police have not been able to uncover them. Let me advise you. Keep this to yourself—a secret between you and me. We will go to the forge and arrest these Paulpoffs. If we find proof that they are nihilists, they will go across the border and you will be mentioned for promotion. Then the opportunity will come to me to speak to the minister of justice for you, and undoubtedly you will be given to me as the chief of the Tomsk police."

Jansky nodded. It was not for him to ask questions now.

"I am ready," he said.

"Then tomorrow, I will make still further investigations in my own way, and we shall be ready to act. We must both go to Perm from here."

Jansky, not being asked to remain longer, took his departure. And then suddenly from his repose the prince became a man of quick action. He called from his estate four men in whom he knew he could place the most implicit confidence. He spent some time at his desk writing. To each of the four he gave a letter, unsealed, unstamped, but addressed to each and apparently having been delivered by the hand of a private messenger.

"Go with me, do what I bid you, and you will have gold rubles for a year's pleasure," he said.

Inspector Jansky, happy and yet agitated at the result of the conference with the prince, sat in his office in Perm on the following afternoon. It was growing late, and he had looked hours for Prince Neslerov.

"He was mistaken or he has failed," he said. "He would have come if there was a possibility of success."

As he spoke the prince's horse galloped to the door.

"Good! Then success is possible!" said Jansky, grasping the hand of his noble benefactor.

"Possible! It is certain. Come with me."

Jansky's horse was soon by the side of the steed ridden by the prince.

"I made it my business to ride past the shops of Paulpoff," said the prince. "I met there, just leaving, a man who was, to say the least, discreditable in appearance. I spoke to him, and he was frightened. I saw him crumple a paper in his hand. I snatched it from him. It was a message addressed to 'Number Five' of some mysterious circle, calling upon the person bearing that name to come to the shops at a certain hour tonight. We shall be in time. Let us ride."

It had so chanced that a number of accidents to horses had taken place that day on the forest road. When the inspector of police and Neslerov arrived, four men were within the shop, their horses standing outside, and all were apparently in the greatest eagerness to have their horses shod. Papa Paulpoff was visibly disturbed by this sudden influx of the horseshoeing business, but the giant Vladimir, who never refused a request if he could help a human being, was beginning to make the shoes. The men did not apparently know one another, and each gazed continually at the others for being there.

Neslerov, upon arriving at the shop, whispered to the inspector, and both leaped from their horses.

"Seize the old man and the son!" said Neslerov. "I will search these fellows."

Poor old Papa Paulpoff turned white and sank in horror to the ground, suspecting what was coming, but Vladimir, in whose innocent mind there was no suspicion, stood gaping at the newcomers.

"It is the prince!" he exclaimed. "What have these poor men done, your excellency?"

Neslerov did not answer him. He turned to the nearest of the four, wrestled with him a short time, while the others showed evidences of terror, and then pulled from his pocket a letter.

"See!" he cried, waving it in the air and then showing it to the inspector. "It is a message to 'Number Three'! We have here the five constituting the circle."

"Let me read," said the inspector, while Vladimir still looked on unconscious of the tragedy that was being played with himself as its center.

The letter simply commanded "Number Three" to attend a meeting of the circle at the shops at that hour.

The name of Vladimir Paulpoff was signed.

"It is enough!" cried Jansky. Paulpoff, I make you my prisoner in the name of the czar!"

The young ironworker could, had he exerted his strength, have thrust the entire shameless crew from the place and crashed their skulls together. But even now he did not realize the enormity of the thing with which he was charged.

"Attend, Paulpoffs!" commanded Jansky, while the prince went through the pockets of the other three of the circle.

"Oh, have mercy!" cried Papa Paulpoff, falling upon his knees and clasping the legs of the prince. "We are innocent, I swear it! Some enemy has done this thing! The name is not in the writing of my son, I am certain! Oh, let me see the letters!"

Neslerov made a movement as if to hand the letters to the old man when



"See!" he cried. "It is a message to 'Number Three'!"

one of the wretches who had brought them there sprang forward, seized them and rushed unhindered from the place.

"The letters! The proof is gone!" howled Jansky.

"We have seen them. It is enough," said Neslerov calmly.

At this point Mamma Paulpoff came in. In consternation and helpless horror she saw her husband in the grasp of an inspector of police.

"What is this?" she cried.

"It is nothing, mother," said Vladimir. "These men have found some letters, but I did not write them. Have peace. We shall soon set ourselves free."

The three Paulpoffs were thrust into a dungeon. The prince and the inspector told their stories—clear, lucid, convincing—to the governor of Perm. The word of a prince and governor and of an inspector of police was not to be doubted. There was no trial, no hearing—nothing but a report to the minister of justice at St. Petersburg.

In three days the Paulpoffs—old man, old woman and the unresisting giant—were on the way to Siberia on the railway which Gordon had helped to build.

CHAPTER IV. THE MEETING AT THE FORGE.

IT was characteristic of Frances Gordon that, no matter how great the stress of social or other duties, her mind never lost room for such favorite schemes as were closest to her heart.

It was by reason of this characteristic that, while her busy father was deep in the mysteries and intricacies of the Moscow conference, the subtleties of which increased as the time for separation and departure drew nearer, Frances bethought her of a fitting opportunity to make good a promise she had made to Vladimir Paulpoff, the blacksmith.

During a conversation held several weeks before Vladimir had expressed a desire to study certain books which were apparently beyond his reach. Frances promised to obtain the books, and she did so. These made quite a respectable package, and a drosky was called to convey her to the railway station.

It was nothing new for Frances to travel alone as far as from Moscow to Perm, but on this occasion her father, with some sort of premonition, begged her to send the books by messenger.

Constable Is in Charge. St. Louis, Feb. 11.—The office fixtures and all visible assets of the John J. Ryan Turf investment company were attached by a constable of Justice Kleiber's court. The attachment is the result of a suit brought by Miss Mable Quinn for \$200, which, she alleges, she gave to the Ryan company for investment and which the company refused to return on demand. Ryan's officers were crowded all morning with investors.

To Abolish Capital Punishment. Jefferson City, Mo., Feb. 11.—Capital punishment for murder may be abolished in Missouri. A committee of the house yesterday decided to recommend a bill making the penalty for murder in the first degree a penitentiary offense, at the discretion of the jury.

EXCURSIONISTS IN PERIL

Spend Night With Waves Washing Over Steamer.

VESEL STRIKES BERMUDA REEF

Tug Finally Rescues Passengers and Crew of Madiana After Much Trouble With Heavy Seas and Succeeds in Saving Even Baggage.

Hamilton, Bermuda, Feb. 11.—The Quebec Steamship company's steamer Madiana, Captain Frazer, which sailed from New York last Saturday with a party of excursionists for a special cruise around the Caribbean islands, went ashore on the reef off this island at 3 a. m. The passengers had a thrilling experience. The ship is a total loss, but all on board were rescued and brought safely to land after a perilous trip in life boats from the wreck to a tug standing a mile off. The mails and the passengers' baggage also were saved.

All the passengers were in their bunks when the Madiana struck the rocks, but the shock of the impact awakened them and they rushed on deck, the majority of them without attempting to dress. Considerable alarm, although not a panic, prevailed among the passengers when they found that the vessel was hard on the rocks, but the officers went among them and calmed them, although a number did not venture below again to seek their clothing.

A part of the crew did not share the coolness of the officers, but the latter soon restored order among the troublesome seamen.

Signals of distress were sent up and the passengers passed an anxious time during the later part of the night. The Madiana listed heavily after a time and when morning broke, lay broadside to the wind. The passengers were huddled together on the hurricane deck and the sea breaking over the steamer drenched them to the skin.

As soon as the news of the wreck became known here government and other tugs proceeded to the scene to endeavor to render assistance. A heavy sea, however, was running and they dared not approach too closely to the reef on which the Madiana was pounding. For some time no communication with the Madiana was possible. The tug Gladisfen stood about a mile off awaiting an opportunity to assist, but it was not until 11 o'clock this morning that it became possible to effect a rescue. The crew of the Madiana launched a boat, but it could not live in the sea then running and was dashed to pieces against the steamer's side. A second and more successful attempt was made a little later and some of the passengers were lowered into it, and after much exertion it succeeded in reaching the Gladisfen. The Madiana's other life boats were then launched in succession and the remainder of the passengers and the captain and crew gained the salvage tug in safety.

NORTHWESTERN HAS ELKHORN. Will Operate Road Under Lease at Present and Later Purchase It.

Chicago, Feb. 11.—Stockholders of the Chicago and Northwestern railway held a special meeting yesterday and voted to increase the capital stock of the company to \$100,000,000. The directors were authorized to issue common stock from time to time in such amounts as they may determine and for any purpose followed by law, whether authorized at this meeting or previously.

It was further determined to lease the railroad franchises and property of the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley road and later to purchase its franchises and property of all kinds. The latter road will hereafter be operated as an integral part of the Northwestern system.

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BRITISH PROTOCOL SIGNED

Bowen Disposes of First Document in Venezuelan Case.

OTHER ALLIES NOT YET READY.

Italy and Germany Still Unable to Frame Proposals Satisfactory to Castro's Envoy, but Are Expected to Do So Soon.

Washington, Feb. 11.—Great Britain's protocol has been formally accepted by Mr. Bowen for Venezuela. The German and Italian conventions are still undergoing revision, but assurances are given that they eventually will be made to conform in all essential respects to that of the British ambassador. Owing to the illness of the British ambassador, Mr. Bowen called at the embassy yesterday and personally signified to these ambassadors his approval of the agreement. He then presented his formal note of acceptance, and it has been cabled to the London foreign office. It appears that the insertion in the German protocol of the provision for advance payment of the original \$380,000 demanded of President Castro in the German ultimatum was the result of a misunderstanding on the part of the German foreign office on certain steps in the negotiations here. Through the activity of the German minister, Sternburg, this point is being cleared up.

The Italian ambassador's instructions are such that he can make little headway until he knows what is contained in the German protocol.

Mr. Bowen has done everything possible to conclude these negotiations with dispatch, in order that the blockade might be raised, and he last night expressed his belief that he was receiving in this effort the sincere support of all the negotiators. If a serious hitch shall occur at the eleventh hour Mr. Bowen is confident that it will be through no fault of anyone of the representatives of the allies here.

Should the protocols of Germany and Italy when presented to him contain provisions not in line with the British protocol the negotiations must be prolonged until a satisfactory arrangement can be reached.

BRITISH ARMY OFFICERS BRUTAL

Subalterns in Royal Guards Flogged Without Mercy for Slight Offenses.

London, Feb. 11.—Rear Admiral Basil Cochrane, in a letter published by the Times, makes astounding revelations regarding the "barbarous system" prevailing among the guards regiments for the punishment of subalterns who are found guilty of social or military offenses. According to Rear Admiral Cochrane, the colonel of one battalion has been in the habit of handing over offenders to the senior subalterns, the latter summons a court-martial, at which the attendance of all the subalterns is exacted, and the sentence is almost invariably flogging. This is administered on the bare back, after the removal of all the clothing, and from six to forty blows are given with such severity that the lower number is sufficient to draw blood. All the officers present, even the most intimate friends of the victim, are compelled to administer their share of blows.

To Round Up Hostiles. Manila, Feb. 11.—The government is preparing to thoroughly round-up the disorderly elements in Bulacan and Rizal provinces, where the constabulary, in accordance with orders received from the war department, will be reinforced by several companies of native scouts. The rumors from the disaffected provinces are believed to exaggerate the number of hostiles, of whom it is said there are 2,000 in the field. More trustworthy reports say there are not over 500 natives under arms and that the bulk of these scattered after Sunday's fight. It is believed that the chief difficulty will be in cornering them. There is little doubt that the hostiles will be speedily suppressed.

Labor Troubles in Spain. Madrid, Feb. 11.—The strike situation in Barcelona and Cadiz is regarded as very grave. The impartial demands that martial law be declared in Barcelona, where, it asserts, many hundreds of refugee anarchists have joined the large body of resident anarchists. Serious disturbances are reported from Barcelona, where the government has ordered the suspension of the labor federations and the arrest of all their committees. The disturbances also occurred in Cadiz yesterday. Eight thousand strikers marched through the streets, cheering for the social revolution. The civil guards charged and dispersed them.