Title: The Boy Nihilist
       or, Young America in Russia

Author: Allan Arnold

Release Date: October 20, 2007 [EBook #23094]

Language: English

Character set encoding: ASCII

Produced by Richard Halsey

PLUCK AND LUCK

STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

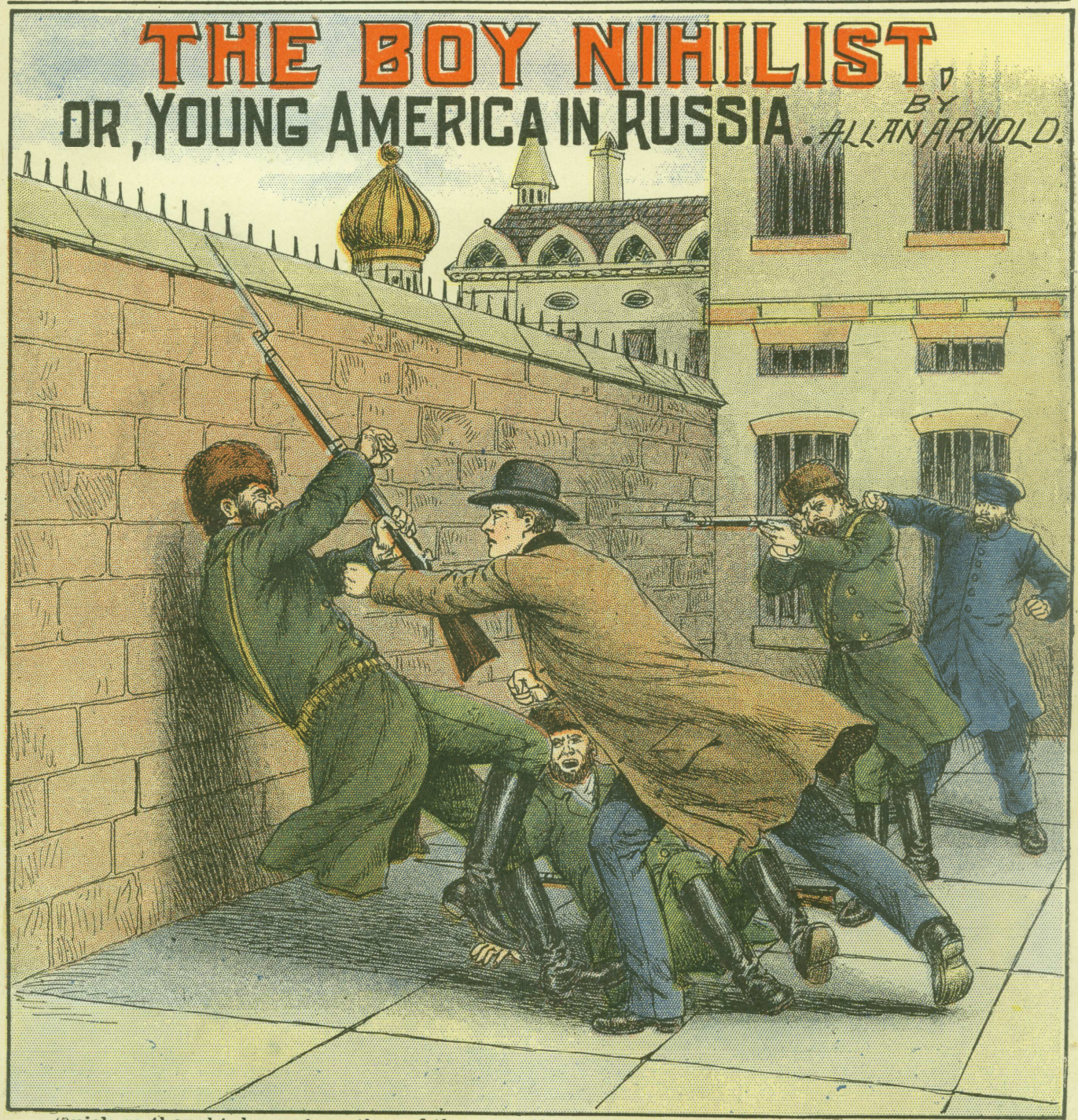
Issued Weekly—By Subscription $2.50 per year. Entered as Second-Class Matter at the New York Post Office, November 7, 1898, by Frank Tousey.

No. 576. NEW YORK, JUNE 16, 1909. Price 5 Cents.

THE BOY NIHILIST,

OR, YOUNG AMERICA IN RUSSIA.

BY ALLAN ARNOLD.



Quick as thought, he sent another of them toppling against the wall of a building. A third was on the point of firing at him with his musket when Tobasco dealt him a stinging blow from behind that sent him sprawling.

PLUCK AND LUCK

Stories of Adventure.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription $2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at the New York, N. Y., Post Office, November 7, 1898. Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1909, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C., by Frank Tousey, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.

No. 576. NEW YORK, JUNE 16, 1909. PRICE 5 CENTS.

THE BOY NIHILIST

OR,

Young America in Russia

By ALLAN ARNOLD.

CHAPTER I.

THE UNSUSPECTING TRAVELER.

The steamship Baltic was on the point of sailing from America to Europe.

The usual scenes were visible on the wharf—the rushing on board of belated freight and baggage—the crush of passengers and their friends on deck, or down in the cabins, where partings were being drunk in wine; the crowd of steerage passengers forward, trying to keep out of the way of the sailors, and at the same time to salute or converse with their friends on the dock; the rattle and bustle all around; the blow of steam from the impatient boilers; the sharp, brisk orders of the junior officers; the rush of carriages with passengers, and the shouting of draymen anxious to get their loads aboard—all these sights and sounds were both felt and visible as a bright-looking young man, distinctly American to all appearances, alighted from a cab and walked up the steamer's gangplank, followed by a porter and the driver with trunks and parcels.

He was indeed a bright-looking youth, such as you will find in New York oftener than anywhere else, and as he reached the deck his hand was grasped by several young and enthusiastic friends who had come aboard to see him off.

This was William Barnwell, a young New Yorker, slightly over twenty-one years of age, who had recently inherited quite a fortune from a deceased relative, and he was now on the point of starting on a tour which he intended should encompass the globe.

He was now alone in the world, so far as relations were concerned, although he had a large circle of friends to whom he was greatly attached, as they were to him.

From boyhood up he had always been an enthusiast in almost everything, but more especially in politics and revolution, as shown in national struggles, and the pride of his life was the history of the American Revolution, and the success of the patriots in that cause.

But outside of his being an enthusiast and a lover of liberty, he was not known, and had never taken any prominent part in any of the social or political movements of the day, beyond sympathizing with the struggles of the working men and women of the world in their struggles to better themselves.

These facts were not only known to his friends, but to many men belonging to the secret societies of Ireland, Germany, and Russia. That is to say, they knew him only as a bright young fellow, possessing brains and pluck, together with enthusiasm, which, if rightly directed, would make him a valuable member of any secret organization having the liberty of the people at heart. But beyond this nothing particular was known of him.

His friends gathered around and wished him a prosperous voyage and a happy return, and with refreshments and flowers they expressed themselves as only New Yorkers do on such occasions.

And as he stood there on deck, surrounded by his friends, he looked indeed like a representative American young gentleman.

He was light-complexioned, nearly six feet in height, and proportioned like an athlete; bright, smart, and intelligent.

And while the excitement of "sailing-day" was at its height, and young Barnwell was in the midst of his friends, a strange man approached and tapped him on the shoulder.

The young man turned to see who it was, but he did not know him.

"Can I speak a word with you?" the stranger asked, with a strong foreign accent.

"Certainly. Excuse me a moment, my friends. I will join you presently," said Barnwell, walking away with the stranger, a little way forward of the main hatch, out of the crowd.

"You are William Barnwell, I believe?" said the stranger.

"Yes, that is my name," said Will.

"I was sure of it. You are going abroad for pleasure, I understand?"

"Yes."

"You are an American?"

"I am proud to acknowledge it," said Will, drawing himself up to his full height.

"And let me tell you, young man, I know you thoroughly—know you for a thorough-bred American gentleman."

"Thank you."

"You would do almost anything in the cause of human liberty?"

"I would."

"I wish I had known you before."

"Why?"

"I might have bound you closer."

"To what?"

"The heart of human liberty."

"What do you mean?"

"I cannot tell you now. But when will you go to St. Petersburg, Russia?"

"Well, I did intend to go there at once, and from there visit the different capitals."

"And will you go to St. Petersburg?"

"Certainly."

"And will you do me a favor—will you do it in the cause of human liberty?" asked the stranger, catching hold of his hand.

"I will."

The stranger appeared like a Russian or a Polish Jew, but there was something about him that seemed to interest Barnwell.

"Can I trust you beyond a doubt?"

"I think you can in ordinary matters. Why do you ask?"

"For very good reasons. And when you know that the lives and liberty of hundreds of brave men and women depend upon your trust and faith, will you swear to be true?"

"I will swear, sir," said Barnwell, earnestly, for he was becoming more strongly interested.

The stranger appeared to hesitate as though not daring to trust the entire importance of the business to the young man. But he finally concluded what to do, evidently, and drawing Barnwell still further away from the throng, he took a large brown envelope from the breast-pocket of his coat.

"Everybody in St. Petersburg knows Prince Mastowix, and it will be an easy matter for you to find and approach him, seeing that you have your passport all right. Will you swear to me to place this envelope in his hand, allowing no one else to see or handle it?" asked the stranger, with great earnestness.

"I will swear to do so if you will tell me your name, and assure me that I shall not be breaking any law of my country by so doing."

"Paul Zobriskie is my name," said he, after hesitating an instant, and gazing sharply at the brave youth before him.

"I think I have heard the name before, in connection with socialistic matters," mused Will.

"Very likely; but keep that to yourself, for it will be better for you not to know me in Russia. As to the other, I assure you that you will break no law, social, moral, or political, in giving this to Prince Mastowix."

"Very well. On those conditions I will convey the packet to him," said he, taking it.

"Good; and the prince will be of great service to you during your stay in Russia, and perhaps furnish letters which will assist you in many other capitals."

"Thanks. That is just what I require, as I have no letters of introduction anywhere beyond my passport, and shall be a stranger everywhere," said Barnwell, evidently delighted with such a prospect.

"Good speed to you," said Zobriskie, shaking him cordially by the hand.

"Thank you," and they parted, Barnwell thrusting the envelope into his breast-pocket.

He returned to his waiting friends and apologized for his protracted absence.

"Do you know that man, Billy?" asked one of his friends.

"Well, not particularly. He wanted me to deliver a letter for him, that's all."

"Well, keep an eye on yourself."

"What for?"

"That man is an exiled Nihilist, and there may be danger in what you are doing," said he.

"Oh, I guess not. It is only to deliver a letter to a certain man in St. Petersburg," replied Barnwell, carelessly.

"Well, in these times, anything that is connected in the remotest way with the city of the Czar is suspicious. Have an eye to yourself, Billy," he added again.

"Oh, never fear. I shall at least do that. But come, I have some good cheer waiting for you in my cabin. Friends, follow me," said he, leading the way through the crowd to the cabin stairway.

And there they gathered to receive his cheer, and to wish him all the fortune and good luck that could wait on mortal man.

But while all this was going on there was a pair of small black eyes fastened upon him, as his own shadow might cling to him—fastened from the moment Paul Zobriskie drew him aside to converse.

Those eyes belonged to one Tobasco, a Russian detective, stationed in New York, and he knew his business thoroughly, having been intrusted with the duty of watching the Nihilists who were fermenting plans against the empire on this side of the Atlantic.

He had overheard but little that had passed between Paul Zobriskie and the unsuspicious young American, but while his eyes appeared directed in some other way, he saw the well-known Russian Nihilist deliver him a parcel, knowing him to be going to St. Petersburg (for this much he had overheard), and it at once became his duty to shadow this young man and asccertain the nature of his mission, even though he did not know it himself.

So he at once took measures to provide himself with a passage, and going on shore, he purchased a few necessaries which he had not time to get from his lodgings, and he wrote a letter to his landlord, informing him of his unexpected departure, together with instructions regarding his personal effects.

Only a few moments after his return to the steamer's deck, the cry "All ashore!" was heard, and young Barnwell came on deck with his companions to take a final leave of them, as dozens of others were doing with the groups of friends surrounding them.

It is at such a time as this that the feelings of friendship come out the strongest.

Those who have taken passage, even on ever so large and staunch a ship, seem like ants on a piece of driftwood, especially when the number of shipwrecks is considered, and that among the first-class steamships; and when friend parts with friend each understands the danger and uncertainty of ever meeting again, and consequently the partings are more pathetic, the handshakes more intense, embraces more fervent and sensational than they would be under other circumstances.

But those embraces were exchanged, those earnest handshakes indulged in, and everybody not going to Europe was ordered ashore. What partings, what expectations!

The gang-plank is finally drawn ashore, the last lines loosen-

ed from cleats and spiles, the engineer's bell rings, and the black hull of the Baltic moves slowly from her pier.

Friends on the dock give cheers to those on board, and they, in return, wave their handkerchiefs, kiss their hands—aye, from the cabin to the steerage-passengers, and the forecastle (those not employed), all waft their good-by greetings to those who are left behind, not knowing whether they may be the more fortunate or not.

William Barnwell stood on the after-deck waving his hat to the friends he had just parted with, and in spite of the dangers of the deep, of which he never thought, wondering how long it would be before they would meet again.

The secret police agent stood near the main-hatch, and watched him narrowly.

Darkness was just closing in when the gallant steamer, with her nose pointed to the southeast, passed the Sandy Hook light, and began to lay her course towards England.

CHAPTER II.

THE SPY AND THE VICTIM.

The noble steamer Baltic plowed her way through the buffeting bosoms of the blue Atlantic oceanward.

There was no land in sight, there was no moon to light the waves, but their own phosphorescence made the bounding billows visible to those who came on deck. The sky above was clear, and the stars twinkled in the blue above like diamonds in sapphire setting.

There were a goodly number of passengers on deck, both cabin and steerage, and the hum of voices could be heard above the "clang-clang" of the engines, the "whurr" of the propeller, and the long lines of foam which shot away to larboard and starboard like streaks of silver gave food for reflection and conversation.

Billy Barnwell was on deck, and in a very short time a conversation sprang up between him and an aged gentleman, by whose side sat a young lady with a veil over her face.

Her voice was full and sweet, and the old gentleman's voice was that of a man who was perfectly balanced, showing in all respects a person of more than ordinary conditions in life—a refined gentleman.

But in the uncertain light of the cabin skylights Barnwell could not see plainly enough to distinguish faces, although the voice of both the old man and the young lady were so impressed upon his mind that he could not forget them.

Tobasco was also on deck, as it was his province to be, and he watched young Barnwell, of course, and also the people with whom he was conversing.

Indeed, he seldom allowed them out of his sight during the entire voyage.

It seemed strange to them, but on meeting the next morning on deck, all three of them recognized each other at once, notwithstanding they had only met each other in the dim and uncertain light thrown into the darkness by the lights from the cabin skylights.

But neither of them seemed in the least surprised. The old gentleman was just such a person as young Barnwell judged him to be, and the young man was in no way different from what he had esteemed him. But to Barnwell's mind the young lady was far more beautiful and attractive than her voice had led him to think the night before.

She was about eighteen years of age, well-developed, bright and beautiful, and he was not long in learning that they held the relationship of father and daughter; and after a mutual introduction brought about in this sea-going way, it proved that the old gentleman, whose name was Clark, had been an old-time friend of Barnwell's father, and this brought them into very close relationship while on the voyage.

He was wealthy, a widower, and with his only child was going abroad for pleasure; and before their arrival at London the young couple had become more than ordinary friends, and parted there with an arranged meeting a month hence at Berlin, after which they were to travel in company.

The spy, Tobasco, meanwhile, never allowed Barnwell to escape his observation; and when he set out for St. Petersburg it was only because Barnwell was going there also.

He was one of the keenest spies in the employ of the prefect of police, and had been sent to America to watch the movements of Socialists, who were in active sympathy with the terrible Nihilists of Russia, under the leadership of Paul Zobriskie.

And watching this Nihilist so closely accounts for his being on board the steamer where we first met him, and of his sailing away in the manner he did. He had long suspected Prince Mastowix of infidelity to the Czar, notwithstanding the trust that was reposed in him; and overhearing Zobriskie mention his name in connection with the giving the letter to Barnwell, he suddenly determined to find out whether or not his suspicions were correct.

Arriving at St. Petersburg, Barnwell was driven to a good hotel, intending while there to finish his visit and deliver the letters meantime, that, however, being only of a slight consideration; for, although he understood that it was a message of importance, it, so far as he was concerned, was only a slight, friendly obligation in the delivering of it to Prince Mastowix, after which he would be free to do as he liked.

Indeed, his mind for the most part was filled with pleasant thoughts of beautiful Laura Clark, and the pleasure he should enjoy when they met at Berlin, never to part again if he could have his way about matters which agitated his heart, and to which he knew she was not at all indifferent, if she really were not quite as willing as he was.

Tobasco also took quarters at the same hotel, yet so guarded had he kept himself aloof during all the time, there was not the slightest danger of Barnwell's ever knowing that he had been a fellow-passenger, but he never relinquished his watchfulness for a moment, for if young Barnwell was in his apartments he knew it, and if he was abroad he was sure to be almost as near as his shadow.

The third day after his arrival, and after he had learned how to reach Prince Mastowix, he set out for his palace.

But how little the young man knew of the ways of Russian aristocracy!

Arriving at the prince's palace, he found it guarded at every point by police, and when he made known to them that he had private and important business with his highness, he at once became an object of more than ordinary interest, especially when it was learned that he was an American.

Tobasco, now in the disguise of a Russian peasant, was close at hand, watching everything, while pretending to be a subject for alms.

An officer took Barnwell's name in to the prince, and finally returned, saying that he was empowered to receive any communication the stranger might have for Prince Mastowix, and was astounded almost when the young American told him that he must see the prince in person.

In those Nihilistic days such a proceeding as that would never do, and after further consultation with the prince, the detectives and officers were ordered to search the stranger for concealed weapons.

"No, sir, I refuse," said Barnwell. "I am a simple American

citizen, with a message for Prince Mastowix, and if that is not sufficient I will retire."

This was unheard-of audacity; but one of the officers volunteered to say to the prince what the young American had said, all the while believing that the youngster would be ordered under arrest for his presumption.

Contrary to expectations, however, the prince ordered the stranger to be admitted to his presence, and he was accordingly conducted thither.

"Well?" said the prince, looking at him inquiringly.

"Are you the Prince Mastowix?" asked Barnwell, calmly.

"I am. Who are you?"

"William Barnwell, of New York, United States of America," said he proudly.

"Well, what have you to do or say to me?" asked the prince, haughtily.

"Only this, prince, and a very little. On the eve of leaving New York I was approached by one Paul Zobriskie——"

"Silence!" shouted the prince, and after waiting a moment, as though to recover himself, he waved his attendants from the room. Then, turning to Barnwell, he beckoned him to approach nearer. "What did you say?" he asked, in a lower key.

"Simply what I said, sir; and to finish the business between us, allow me to deliver you this letter," said he, presenting it to him, feeling somewhat aggrieved on account of the arrogant manner in which he was received both by the prince and his attendants.

The prince took the letter, and Barnwell was about to retire.

"Wait!" said the Prince, severely.

"My mission is fulfilled, sir."

"Wait until we see whether it is or not," replied the haughty aristocrat, and he proceeded to open the letter.

Whatever it contained, it suddenly made a change in the facial expression of the prince, who glanced from it to Barnwell.

"Do you know this Paul Zobriskie?" he asked, earnestly.

"No. I never met him until I saw him on the steamer, and he asked me to deliver this letter to you," said he.

"Are you sure of that?"

"I am."

"And know nothing about him?"

"Nothing further than hearing of him as a socialistic agitator."

"And you know nothing of the contents of this letter?"

"Nothing whatever. He told me nothing further than that it was important, and that I must give it to no one but you."

"What are you?"

"A simple American citizen, sir."

"Do you belong to any secret society?"

"No, sir."

The prince regarded him a moment, and then turned to read more of the letter, wondering at the same time why Zobriskie should have trusted such a fatal document to any but a tried and trusted Nihilist.

The conclusion he arrived at was that there was treachery somewhere, or that there was a possibility of such a contingency, and to guard himself he resolved to put the unsuspecting stranger under arrest.

Without a word further, he touched a bell, and in an instant three gendarmes presented themselves.

"This man is a prisoner; remove him to the castle for further disposition," said he.

Young Barnwell started in surprise. What did it mean?

The officers approached him, when he turned to the prince.

"What is the meaning of this, sir?" he demanded indignantly.

"State prisoners are not always allowed to know State reasons."

"But I am no State prisoner; I am an American citizen, and I demand to know why I am arrested."

"You may learn in time."

"I will appeal to the American Minister, to the Czar of Russia even."

"No, you will not. Away with him!" said the prince, determined above all things that he should make no such an appeal or have a chance to do so.

"Do you really mean this outrage?"

"Call it what you like, but wait and see," he replied, waving him away.

The officers knew nothing but duty, and in spite of young Barnwell's protests and struggles, he was overpowered and dragged away in the direction of the Bastile.

Tobasco followed closely after them. What he had seen and heard confirmed his suspicions that the prince was a traitor, and that he had ordered Barnwell's arrest through fear.

As for Barnwell, he, of course, saw that it was an outrage of the deepest dye, and he had no idea of submitting to it.

His American blood was up, and, knowing his own great strength, he watched his opportunity as the guards led him from the prince's quarters towards the Bastile. He suddenly wrenched himself away, and knocked one of them sprawling upon the courtyard flags.

Quick as thought almost, he sent another of them toppling against the wall of a building.

A third was on the point of firing at him with his musket, when Tobasco dealt him a stinging blow from behind, that sent him sprawling on top of his comrades.

"Quick, young man! Escape by the gate yonder, and fly to the American minister for protection," said Tobasco; and without waiting for an explanation he fled, and in an instant more was on the street, while Tobasco quickly secreted himself in a deep doorway, for his work was not done yet.

Recovering from their stunned condition, the gendarmes raised an alarm in the courtyard, which quickly brought out the prince's followers, and even the prince himself rushed from his room into the courtyard, to ascertain the cause of the alarm.

Flitting like a shadow almost, Tobasco ran from his hiding-place into the office that the prince had hurriedly left; and seeing the paper and envelope lying upon his table, hastily secured it and again returned to his hiding-place.

It did not take Prince Mastowix but a moment to find out that the young American had escaped from his guard, and he was wild with rage.

"After him, laggards! What are you standing here for? Retake him, or I'll have every rascal of you knouted!" he roared.

But this exhibition on his part only made the confusion greater for a moment.

Finally, without any attempt at order, a rush was made by servants and soldiers for the gate to join in the pursuit.

Tobasco, looking more like a peasant servant than anything else, mingled in the rush, shouting the loudest of any of them in urging the pursuit, and in this way escaped from the palace without exciting the least suspicion.

Once free from the palace-gate, young Barnwell had no idea whatever of the best way to go, but being determined to escape at all hazards, he shot off to the right and ran like a deer.

But he had only time to gain a block or so ahead before the mob of soldiers and retainers rushed out and caught sight of him.

Then the pace was quickened. Barnwell glanced over his shoulder, and saw them coming after in the shape of a howling mob, and he plunged onward at still greater speed, going he knew not where, nor caring either, so long as he got away, and could find direction to the American Minister's residence.

He asked several as he ran for direction, but no one seemed to understand his language, and the mob at his heels, augmented by the police and citizens, was growing larger and larger every moment.

But still he kept the lead, and paid no attention to several shots fired after him.

He was a stranger in the city, and not knowing which way to go, was finally captured, roughly taken in charge, and handcuffed.

In the meantime, Tobasco made his escape complete, but stopped to see the soldiers drag the young American back to the prison to which tyranny had consigned him.

The excitement among the populace ran high, and rumor had it that the authorities had captured an important Nihilist official; and this, of course, roused that numerous and much-dreaded body of secret destroyers to learn, if possible, through their agents, all the particulars of the case.

William Barnwell was thrown into a dark and loathsome dungeon, from whence the body of many a poor prisoner had been borne after death, produced by torture and starvation.

"Curses on my luck!" he muttered, after collecting his thoughts for a moment. "It must be that I have been betrayed by that Paul Zobriskie into the hands of the Russian authorities. But what could have been his motive, when I was an innocent stranger, and only did what I did to accommodate him? What will be the result if I cannot communicate with the American Minister? I am evidently taken for a Nihilist, and goodness only knows what the end of it all will be. Am I destined to die in this horrible place, without having a chance to communicate with my friends? The thought is dreadful! It must not, shall not be; but—stay. What has been the fate of other good men who have fallen into the hands of this despotic government? That fate may be mine, and I sent to Siberia without even a trial. Oh, the thought will drive me mad!" he cried, and bowed his head, as he sat there on the filthy straw of his unlighted dungeon.

CHAPTER III.

A FRIGHTENED AND ENRAGED RASCAL.

When Prince Mastowix returned to his room from ordering the guard to pursue and recapture William Barnwell, the first thing he did was to seek for the paper he had left upon his table when the alarm of escape rang out so startlingly in the courtyard, the very paper that the young American had placed in his hands only a few moments before, and which Tobasco, the secret spy of the government, had secured during the confusion incidental to Barnwell's escape, and in which he had acted a friendly part.

He started and looked wildly around. Then he felt in his pockets to see if he had not placed it there in his excitement. Then he looked hastily into several drawers where he possibly might have placed it in the moment of hurry, and even upon the floor, where it might have fallen.

But nowhere could he find it, and his excitement grew until it was almost uncontrollable.

Where was that fatal document?

Again and again he went through his pockets and drawers, but all to no purpose—the paper could not be found.

He struck a bell savagely, and a clerk came hastily from an inner room.

"Huon, has any person from your room been in here within the last few minutes?"

"No, Excellency, no one," replied the clerk.

"Are you certain of that?"

"I am, for I am seated by the door, and I never allow anyone to enter your Excellency's chamber unless you summon them."

"And have you seen any person here?"

"No one, Excellency."

"Will you swear to that, or shall I work the knout in order to bring out the truth?" demanded the prince.

"I swear it by my religion."

"Down on your knees and swear!" thundered the prince, and the trembling wretch obeyed like a true Russian slave.

"Return," added the tyrant, pointing the way, and the next instant he was alone.

"Perdition catch me, but this is dreadful. What can have become of that document?" he mused, as he threw himself into his chair. "Who could have taken it? I have only one person about me who can read English, and he is not here to-day," and again he began searching for the fatal paper.

All to no purpose, though, of course, and he finally convinced himself that it was neither in his office nor about his person.

"Curses on my luck, for if that correspondence is found out, it means death or Siberia to me. Could that American have regained it without my seeing him do it? Great Scott!" he suddenly exclaimed, and hurried to the Bastile.

The possibility of Barnwell's having secured the document did not make the prince's case any the better. Indeed, it was probably worse, for the captain of the Bastile may have searched him and secured it himself.

Such fears as these hurried him onward, until he reached the prison where Barnwell was confined, and he instantly summoned the captain.

"The prisoner I sent here but now?"

"He is in a cell down below."

"Did you search him?"

"I did."

"What did you find?" he asked, anxiously.

"A passport, a quantity of money, some jewelry, and letters."

"Let me see the papers," and they were promptly shown to him. He looked them over eagerly, but there was no trace of the fatal document from Zobriski.

"Are these all you took from him?"

"All, Excellency."

"Who searched him?"

"One of the guards."

"Did you see him do it?"

"It was done under my own eyes."

"And you will swear that these comprise all the papers he had on his person?"

"I swear it, Excellency."

The prince was more confused at this than he was before, for if he had not taken it at the time of his arrest who could have done so?

He dared make no explanation to the jailer, for he knew him to be a loyal man, and one of the fiercest persecutors of the Nihilists in the Czar's official household. And yet he half believed that he had secured the correspondence, and was withholding it for a purpose against him.

Finally he said:

"Conduct me to the prisoner's cell."

"This way, Excellency," and he led him to the stout and heavily-grated door.

"Now leave us," and the officer retired.

Prince Mastowix glanced up and down the dimly-lighted corridor to make sure that no one was in sight, and then he spoke.

"William Barnwell," and the young man quickly leaped to his feet and went to the bars.

"Who is it?" he asked, eagerly.

"The man who sent you here."

"Then you are a rascal," replied Barnwell; and it was fortunate for the tyrant that he was protected by the iron grating, or he would have been clutched by the throat.

"Careful, young man. I may have acted hastily in your case."

"Yes, and unjustly."

"Well, wrongs may be righted."

"Then let me out of this horrible dungeon."

"I will, on one condition."

"Name it."

"That you tell me whether you took that paper again which you brought me from New York."

"No, sir; I never saw it after I gave it to you," replied Barnwell. "You held it in your hand when I was dragged from your office."

The prince now remembered that this was true, and it made the mystery even greater than before.

He turned to go.

"But your promise?" said Barnwell.

"Bah!" was the only reply he received, and the next moment he was alone again.

A mocking laugh came from the opposite cell-door grating, and naturally the abandoned youth looked in the direction.

But the face he saw between the bars was hideous enough to make his blood almost curdle.

How old that face was, of what nationality, of what grade of intellect, he could not tell, for his face was in the shade of that dark place.

Again came the mocking laugh, as young Barnwell stood looking and wondering.

"Who are you?" he finally asked.

That laugh again, and Barnwell concluded that the person must be a lunatic, although he could but shudder at the thought that he might have been driven to madness by the very same imprisonment which enshackled him, and so turned away.

His own misery was quite enough for him, and just then he was in no humor to listen to another's.

"Ha, ha, ha! So you are in the trap, eh?" asked the mysterious prisoner.

"What trap?" asked Barnwell.

"The rat-trap of the great Russian Empire."

"I don't know. Who are you?"

"Nobody; for the moment a person gets into the great political rat-trap he loses his identity, and is simply known by a number. I am Number Nineteen; you are Number Twenty."

"How do you know?"

"I can see the number of your cell, as you can, of course, see mine."

"What were you brought here for?"

"For fancying that I was a man, and that I had rights in the world. I was thrown into this dungeon—it must be three months ago—for throwing down the horse of a nobleman who attempted to drive over me. I have had no trial, and expect none. I am as dead to the world as it is to me. I am simply Number Nineteen, and when this prison gets too full of the victims of tyranny, I shall be hustled off to Siberia, to make room for new victims."

"It is dreadful. But in my case I did nothing against the law. I simply brought a letter from America to Prince Mastowix, and he at once threw me into this place."

"Ah! he is the same who threw me into this dungeon, because I resented being run over."

"And for that you think you will be sent to Siberia?" asked Barnwell.

"I am sure of it."

"For so slight an offense?"

"Many a slighter one has consigned better men than I am to the mines of Siberia for life. As for you, you have somehow offended the tyrant."

"I cannot understand how. I brought a letter to him from a man in New York."

"What man?"

"One Paul Zobriskie."

"Paul Zobriskie!" exclaimed the man, clutching the bars that grated the window of his door. "Do you know him?"

"No; I was simply on the point of sailing for Europe when he approached and asked me to deliver a letter to Prince Mastowix. I did so, and you know the rest."

"Paul Zobriskie is the greatest terror that Russian tyranny knows. He is a bugbear; but why should he be in correspondence with Prince Mastowix?"

"I know nothing about it."

"There is a mystery somewhere," mused the man.

"If there is, I know nothing about it."

"Were I at liberty, I would take pains to find out what this mystery is."

"But how can they hold me?"

"By the right of might; just as they hold me. Once in their clutches, there is no escape. Even were you known to be innocent of any crime, it would make no difference. The innocent and the guilty are treated alike in Russia. There is no liberty—no justice in the land. But the time will come when the Nihilists will shake the tyranny out of the empire with dynamite!" said he, fiercely.

"Silence, slaves!" cried a rough voice near by, and the next instant the burly form of a keeper stood between them. "Nineteen, you have already made trouble enough. You must have the knout," and unlocking the door of his cell, he seized him by the hair of the head and dragged him out and down through the corridor.

Two minutes later the blood was almost curdled in Barnwell's veins by the shrieking of that same poor wretch, undergoing punishment.

But he was not brought back to his cell, and what became of him Barnwell never knew.

His thoughts, however, were soon turned from the wretched stranger to himself, and to wondering what his own fate would be.

One thing he felt certain of, and that was that Prince Mastowix would never assist him in regaining his liberty.

The letter he had so accommodatingly brought from New York undoubtedly contained something of great importance, but why he should suffer on account of it he could not see.

Could he but make his case known to the American minister, he would undoubtely be given his liberty, but this he could not do, and it was the prince who prevented him.

He had resolved that the young American should be sent to Siberia, even knowing that he was guilty of no wrong; and even Tobasco, with all the proofs of the prince's perfidy in his possession, paid no attention to Barnwell, although he knew him to be simply a victim. Liberty or life was nothing to him so long as he could make a point with the prefect of police and

secure unsuspected game. Such is the Russian sense of right and justice.

Day after day dragged its slow length along, and all the while Prince Mastowix was in a dreadful state of uncertainty. No trace had been found of the missing paper; and after preferring a charge of assault against William Barnwell, who was described as a spy of the Nihilists, a form of trial was gone through with, as with others who were not allowed to be present, and a verdict rendered up against him, condemning him to Siberia during the pleasure of the government.

That is the way the tyrants of Russia serve people, whether guilty or innocent, if they happen to incur their displeasure in any way.

Is it any wonder that they revolt, or that they resort to secret intrigue, to dynamite, and all other means, however bloody the unthinking world may regard them, to give back some of the terror which they have dealt out for centuries? No, it is no wonder at all.

Two weeks William Barnwell languished in the filthy cell of that Bastile, when he was finally marched out into the courtyard one day, in company with some fifty other wretches who had been sentenced to exile.

And what a change those two weeks had produced in that handsome American youth! Unwashed, unkempt, dazed by the light of day he had been kept from so long, his most intimate friends would not have known him.

The detail was ready, and outside of the prison were hundreds of loving ones, waiting to take a last farewell of fathers, brothers, lovers, whom they would probably never see again. But Barnwell had no one waiting for him, and it seemed that life, hope, ambition, everything was crushed out of him.

CHAPTER IV.

SWIFT RETRIBUTION.

Retribution does not always go with justice, however, as in this case, notably.

William Barnwell was hurried away to exile, for reasons the reader fully understands; but even then Prince Mastowix felt far from secure. The unaccountable absence of that correspondence haunted him day and night.

But not for long, however, for that treasonable document was in the hands of General Walisky, prefect of police, and by him presented to the Czar and his ministers, together with all the particulars in the case.

Action was at once taken and search made for the young American who had innocently acted as the messenger.

But the spirit of the fiend was soon shown, for Mastowix had destroyed every trace of the American's individuality, blending it with others who, like him, were simply known by numbers.

From the moment a political prisoner is thrown into prison in Russia, he loses his identity, although the authorities keep a secret roll containing the names and other particulars regarding the unfortunate wretches, but that roll is never seen by the outside world.

In the fortress-like Bastile over which Prince Mastowix held sway, he had charge of this fearful secret record; but the better to blot his existence out, should inquiries ever be made, he applied a false name to the "No. 20"; described him as a Russian, a Nihilist, who had been caught in holding correspondence with Paul Zobriskie, and who had also assaulted Prince Mastowix.

But he was arrested and taken before the tribunal, where, in the most defiant manner, he demanded to know why a person of his distinguished title and record as a servant of the czar was now a prisoner.

"Prince Mastowix," said the president of the tribunal, "it ill becomes a traitor to the State to exhibit such arrogance."

"Who dare say I am a traitor—who dare say it lies in his throat!" hissed Mastowix, although he felt in his heart that something dreadful was impending.

"Silence! Here is a document addressed to you from New York, by Paul Zobriskie, in which he addresses you in unmistakable terms of fraternity, and refers to other correspondence, together with certain other information which he had received, and which could never have reached him save through you. What have you to say?"

It required all the nerve the traitor had to prevent him from falling to the floor. The members of the tribunal watched him narrowly, and saw that he grew very pale.

But finally he found strength to speak.

"It is false both in matter and spirit," he said; but the next uppermost question in his thoughts was—what spy could have obtained possession of the document?

"And you plead?"

"Not guilty!" he replied, aggressively.

"Call Tobasco," said the president, and a guard soon produced the police spy, and he was sworn.

"Do you recognize that document?" the president asked, handing him Zobriskie's letter?"

"I do."

"Give us the history of it."

"I first saw it in New York, in the hands of Paul Zobriskie, on board the steamer Baltic, then about to sail. I was watching Zobriskie, and saw him approach a young man and ask him if he was going to St. Petersburg, and on being informed that he was, asked him if he would deliver this letter to Prince Mastowix, at the same time enjoining him to be very careful and not let it reach another's hands."

"It is false, vile spy!" roared the prince.

"Silence!" shouted the president. "Proceed!"

"The young American agreed to do as directed, and having had occasion to suspect that Prince Mastowix was a Nihilist leader in disguise, I resolved to follow the bearer of the letter, although I could not learn that he was a Nihilist. I did so, and watched him closely. I saw him visit the prince, and contrived to follow in the disguise of an attendant. I saw him give him the letter, and for doing so he was arrested. The boy struggled and finally escaped. During the confusion in the courtyard the prince ran out to learn what it was about, and I then contrived to steal the letter, which still lay upon his table, and to escape with it without detection. I took it to the prefect of police."

Mastowix was so completely staggered at this that he sat glaring wildly at the spy, unable to move or speak.

The members of the tribunal consulted for only a moment.

Finally the president spoke:

"Prince Mastowix that was, Peter Mastowix that is, this document and the evidence has been placed before our imperial master, the Czar, and by his orders you have been brought here for trial and condemnation. The tribunal adjudges you guilty of treason to the State, and sentences you to death. Remove the prisoner!"

Bowed and completely broken, the guilty wretch, the petty tyrant who had heaped wrong, misery and death upon so many others, was taken from the inquisition, crushed and broken.

Three days later he was led out into the yard of the very

prison over which he had long and cruelly held rule, and shot to death by the guard, the very men whom he commanded oft before.

There is neither justice nor pity among the Russian nobles, and no remorse in the hearts of the peasant soldiery who have been brutalized for a thousand years. So this guard shot their late commander as they would have fired upon a dog; indeed, if there was any feeling in their breasts, it was one of revenge for the many brutal wrongs they had suffered at his hands.

It was a severe blow to the Nihilists of Russia, this discovery and death of Mastowix, but as no cause was assigned for it, they were left to conjecture, although they feared the worst.

Mastowix was ambitious; he even had the hardihood to look to the extinction of the royal family at the hands of this powerful order, and trusted to chance to place himself high in power, if not on the very throne of a new dynasty.

And he was of great service to the Nihilists, for he could keep them well posted continually. But that fatal letter cut him off, while yet his hope was in the bud, as well as other prominent members of the order, for eight others whose names were mentioned by Zobriskie were also arrested and sentenced to exile in the terrible mines of Siberia.

CHAPTER V.

SIBERIA.

A glance at the map will show the geographical location of far-away Siberia, but no map, no book will tell you what a hell on earth this northernmost arm of the Russian Empire is.

But little is known of it in Russia itself, not even by the members of the autocratic political family, beyond the fact of its being a dreary, frozen land of political exile, a region without light or hope for the banished.

The people shudder at the mention of it, for they have heard much of it from the broken wretches who have been fortunate enough to escape, after years of toil and suffering. They know that the innocent as well as the guilty are liable to be sent there; that thousands upon thousands have died or been murdered there by the autocrat's petty tyrants, placed there to guard and work them, and that their bones molder or bleach upon the inhospitable shores, where wolves lay in wait for the bodies of victims which are thrown where they can reach them, and thus save the trouble of burial.

A large portion of the penal colony is honey-combed with mines, which the prisoners are forced to work for the benefit of the government that has exiled them there; and thousands of poor wretches, when once forced into them, never again see the light of day, but drag out a miserable existence hundreds of feet underground.

The serfs have been nominally freed; but slavery of the most horrible and degrading kinds is rampant in Russia to-day. The press is gagged and suppressed, and no man is free to speak his opinion regarding the tyrants and their doings.

Is it any wonder the people meet in secret conclave and resort to dynamite?

After a long and dreary passage, Wlliam Barnwell was landed, with his companions in misery, not one of whom could speak English, in Siberia, more dead than alive.

They had been treated worse than cattle during transportation, and now their fortunes were on the eve of being made even worse.

However guilty the others of his party may have been, his case was one of the grossest injustice, and one that the United States would have been quick to demand satisfaction for had there been an opportunity of finding it out.

As before stated, there is no such a thing in Russia as justice. All is selfish tyranny and inborn ingratitude.

They—the members of the secret tribunal—knew that the important letter whch enabled the government to arrest dangerous and wholly unsuspected enemies had been brought over by a young American gentleman, and also that his identity had been blotted out, and he sent to Siberia; but whether he was innocent or guilty, they never gave themselves the trouble to think, and so, virtually, that was the end of him, so far as they were concerned or cared; not even thanks enough for the result he had innocently brought about to inquire into his case at all.

On the first day of their arrival they were assigned to different gangs for different mines, and on the second, to give the newcomers an idea of what insubordination brought about, they were treated to the revolting sight of the punishing of prisoners with the knout.

There were nearly fifty of them, but what their crimes had been Barnwell had no means of knowing, as he could not understand the Russian language.

But the poor, miserable wretches were unmercifully flogged on their bare backs with that terrible weapon of torture, the knout; and while some of them sent up piteous cries as the cruel whip tore their flesh, others received their punishment in stolid silence, as though disdaining to let the tyrants know that they suffered, while still others paid back every lash with a curse.

It was one of the most terrible sights that young Barnwell had ever conceived of even, and being forced to witness it he became sick and faint at heart. He had read of such things but until now he never believed them possible. He could not believe that anything wearing the human form could be so fiendishly cruel. Indeed, it seemed to be a holiday treat to those bearded beasts who wielded the thongs, and whenever a particular case was administered upon they would look at the newcomer with mocking leers.

Finally to Barnwell's infinite horror a young Russian girl was brought out bared to the waist.

She could not have been above twenty years of age and under different circumstances would have been beautiful and evidently belonged to a grade higher than the peasants.

"Zera Vola!" he heard the governor's officer call as the girl was led out for punishment.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Barnwell, "are they going to flog her? I had rather die myself than see it!"

He looked around, but no one appeared to understand him, although he noted the horror and disgust on the faces of the new exiles.

The girl was blushing deeply at this forced exposition of her person, but she seemed otherwise firm and undaunted.

The wretch with the knout grinned, and made some insulting remarks, which his fellow-brutes appeared to enjoy very much.

Then she was placed in position and forced to bow her head so that her beautiful back might be rounded up for the cruel blows. And yet she did not flinch, and Barnwell saw red scars that told of previous castigations.

The grinning rascal raised his knout to strike her, when young Barnwell, mad with indignation, leaped into the arena.

With one powerful blow he felled the burly rascal like a log, and seizing his knout, placed his foot upon him and raised it as if to strike.

The movement was so sudden and so bold that the officers were for a moment paralyzed and stood looking at him.

"Wretches, to strike a woman! Flog me if you must vent your brutality, but if you claim to be men, don't harm that girl!" he cried.

She was the only one present who understood the English language.

"Oh, sir," said she, "they will kill you for this!"

"Let them; I had rather die than witness such horrible brutality."

The next instant he was seized, or an attempt was made to seize him, but before they succeeded in doing so, at least six of them felt his powerful blows and went down under them.

Quick orders were given, and his clothes were stripped from him, and he was held in position while the executioner rained blow after blow upon him to revenge the one he had received.

And then he was hurried away and thrust into a cold, damp dungeon, his lacerated flesh bleeding copiously, but with his heart still unbroken.

CHAPTER VI.

STRANGE ACQUAINTANCE.

William Barnwell suffered terribly during the next forty-eight hours after his terrible flogging, for having resented the punishment of a girl, for during all that time he was left without his clothes and without food.

But his clothes were finally thrown into his cell, together with half a loaf of black bread, dry and moldy.

He had never known what hunger was before, but now he seized that disgusting loaf and ate it with avidity, and while doing so he dressed himself, but without having a chance to wash his lacerations, the blood of which had dried upon his back.

But he had suffered much from the cold, and his clothes were welcome indeed.

What would be the next move?

He realized that he was a Russian victim, and that in all probability he would never leave Siberia alive, and that his friends would never know his fate.

Indeed, he understood now that exile to Siberia was like suddenly sinking into the earth or the sea, never to be seen or heard of again.

The particulars of his case were, however, reported to the secretary of the governor of Siberia, and through him to the governor, who, for some reason or other, became interested to such a degree that he ordered the presumptuous prisoner brought before him.

When taken from his loathsome cell, young Barnwell did not know, did not care what his fate was to be. He was so stiff that he could scarcely walk, and the doing so caused him great pain.

He was marched to the governor's palace by two armed guards, and presently taken into his presence.

But he was far from being the handsome-looking youth he was before he fell into the hands of Russian tyrants, although, in spite of his badly lacerated back, he still maintained his erect carriage and independent bearing.

The governor looked at him for a moment and then spoke to him in Russian, but Barnwell shook his head. Then he spoke German, but he did not understand that.

"English," said he.

"Oh, you are an Englishman—eh?" asked the governor, who appeared to be the master of many languages.

"No, sir; I am an American," replied Barnwell indignantly.

"What brings you here?"

"Fraud, deceit, and Russian tyranny."

"What did you do?"

"Simply brought a letter from New York, from Paul Zobriskie, without knowing what its contents were—simply to oblige a stranger—and this is my reward," said he bitterly.

"Paul Zobriskie! To whom directed?" the governor asked cautiously.

"Prince Mastowix."

"Ah! he has been lately executed."

"Thank God!" exclaimed Barnwell.

"And you knew nothing of the contents of the letter?"

"Nothing; but it is evident that he thought I did, and when I assured him that I was not a Nihilist, he ordered my arrest, and here I am in cursed Siberia."

"You speak too strongly."

"Because I have been outraged."

"You struck one of the guard."

"Yes; because he was about to strike a lady on her bare back with his cruel knout, which act my American blood revolted at," replied Barnwell.

"That is the way we punish refractory prisoners."

"Well, it is the way of brutes and fiends."

"You are altogether too outspoken, sir."

"Why should I not be? I owe no allegiance to the Czar," replied Barnwell, quickly.

"But you owe respect to me, sir."

"As the kid owes respect to the wolf in whose power it is."

"Be cautious, I advise you. If what you say of yourself is true, why did you not appeal to the American Minister at St. Petersburg?"

"I was not permitted to do so, sir, but was thrown into a dungeon."

"Did you know Zobriskie was a Nihilist?"

"I did not. He accosted me when on the eve of sailing, and asked me as a favor to hand the letter to Prince Mastowix. I did so without suspecting that I was in any danger."

"But it appears that you were in danger, and as I learn from St. Petersburg, that letter by some means or other got into the hands of the authorities, he was arrested, brought before the tribunal, proven to be a Nihilist in disguise, and executed. It is very strange," he added.

"But I am not to blame, and why should I suffer for the faults of others?"

"Well, you should not."

"Then send me back to St. Petersburg," said Barnwell, eagerly.

"That I cannot do without an imperial order. But I will forward the particulars of your case to the authorities, and then, if they see fit to act favorably towards you, I will send you back again with pleasure," replied the governor, who was not altogether bad at heart.

"How long will it take?"

"That I cannot say."

"And what of the money that was taken from me, and my passport, and not returned?"

"Well, sir, if you succeed in establishing your innocence, they will be restored to you. Was your passport franked by the American Minister?"

"Yes; and that should enable him to establish both my identity and my innocence."

"But it might take him a long time to show the Imperial Government that you are not an enemy to Russia."

"But it can be shown."

"We shall see."

"And in the meantime must I remain in that dungeon?"

"No, I will remand you to the guard-house until I can find employment for you."

"Thank you for this much, governor. I have lately inherited a fortune, and had just set out on a tour around the world, when this unexpected occurrence stopped me. I am also engaged to be married to a lovely girl, who knows nothing of me since I parted with her in London for the sole purpose of delivering this unfortunate letter, and if you can forward matters any, you will not only win a substantial reward, but the gratitude of loving hearts."

"I will see what can be done," said he, waving him away.

"Please do."

"Take him to the guard-house and treat him as a prisoner of the second class until you hear from me again," said the governor to the guard, speaking in Russian.

And William Barnwell was marched away by them with a somewhat lighter heart.

The governor of Siberia sat meditating for some time after being left alone.

He had been a schoolmate of Paul Mastowix, and well remembered that even as a boy his chief characteristic was hypocrisy, and even in after years he had many times suspected the loyalty of the man, and was not at all surprised to learn that he was an active Nihilist behind a mask of loyalty.

And it was so strange that the innocent cause of his sudden downfall should now come under his charge. The fact gave him an interest in the young man which he would not otherwise have had, for he evidently believed his story.

So he set to work to think of a place where he could put him until such time as he could make sure regarding him, and after consulting with the superintendent, he concluded to put him into the general reception-room, to act as an assistant in receiving new convicts sent to Siberia.

And the following day he was installed there. In the meantime, however, his wounds had been dressed by one of the surgeons—a rare condescension to a prisoner.

It was a strange place, but there was little to do, save when a new batch of prisoners arrived; and as he had already gone through with the prisoner part of the business, the place after all did not seem so strange to him.

There were altogether about a dozen men belonging to this department, and for the most part they were exiles for life, or long terms, who had become blunted and reconciled—men whose hopes and ambitions were gone, and who only lived because they could not die—men whose time had not yet come.

The employees in this department seldom spoke to each other. Some of them were old men, some actually tottering and evidently longing for the grave, and when young Barnwell was put among them he was not received with favor, hardly with prison civility.

"He is a spy," said one.

"Put here to watch us," said another.

"But what can he learn? We have no secrets, no desires but to die," remarked a third.

"Yet there must be some reason for this young man's being placed here; keep an eye on him," whispered a fourth.

"Bah!" was the general expression, for they knew there was no occasion to watch them, and if there was they would not be there, but down in the gold mines, hundreds of feet below, where they now suffered with the cold.

And so it passed into a matter of indifference with them. They regarded themselves as favored above the general run of exiles, and they would not, dared not, question the appearance of the newcomer.

As before stated, there was but little to do; in fact, it was little better than a hospital for favored or dying ones, and so they wondered for a little while, and then resolved themselves into the same idiotic company they had become to be.

Barnwell comprehended the situation, and resolved to fit himself to it, for he was buoyed up with a hope of release which the others might once have had, but which they did not have now.

He tried to speak with them, but not one of them appeared to understand English; and after his first day in this department he began to lose heart, and had it not been for the hope which buoyed him up, he might have fallen as low as any of the others there.

On the third day he was given the position of servant to the surgeon, and as he spoke some English, he found it comparatively easy to get along with him, although, of course, he had great difficulty in any position, on account of his not being able to speak the abominable Russian.

The hospital for dying or disabled exiles was a most barbarous place, more like a black hole than a hospital, its principal object being, it seemed, to hurry prisoners out of the world, after they had become incapacitated by age, sickness, or accident for working in the mines.

There were hundreds of those miserable wretches there, in all states of conditions, and dozens a week were carted away, and to whom death was a welcome change.

Barnwell was horrified by the sights which met his eyes, and the sounds which racked his ears; but the thought that he would not have to remain there long gave him strength to bear up and endure the pitiful sights.

The surgeon took quite a fancy to him, and did all he could to teach him the Russian language, so that he might be more useful. But not having the time to devote, he sent him to an old man by the name of Batavsky, who spoke both English and Russian.

"He will teach you if he likes you, but if not he will not speak a word," said he.

"Who and what is he?" asked Barnwell.

"Peter Batavsky has been here over thirty years—sent here for conspiracy against Czar Nicholas. He has worked in the mines until within the last fifteen months, since which time he has gone mad, and the governor ordered him here."

"Taking lessons of a madman!"

"Well, I am not certain he will give you any at all. He is rational enough at times to do so if he happens to take to you; if not, he will not notice you at all."

"It is a strange situation, but as I am anxious to learn the Russian language, why, I will take almost any chance to do it, and to oblige you, doctor."

And with this understanding Barnwell went to the cell of old Peter Batavsky.

He found him indeed a character, even if he was insane at times.

He was at least seventy years of age, bent and bowed by hard work and long imprisonment.

His thin hair was white, and his skin like old parchment, but his eyes were bright, and even in his age showed the fires of youth, as well as a high-born nature, all of which had not yet been crushed out of him by misfortune.

But in youth he must have been a magnificent specimen of physical manhood, standing at least six feet in height, and the surgeon had told him that he belonged to a wealthy and influential family up to the time of his apostacy.

He occupied a narrow cell, in which he secluded himself almost continually, holding no intercourse with his fellow-unfortunates.

To this cell young Barnwell made his way, armed with the surgeon's request, which he at once made known to him.

The old man looked him all over in the most scrutinizing manner, for his great hallucination was that he was beset with spies who were bound to bring him before the secret tribunal.

But there was something about the old lunatic which at-

tracted the young American, and there seemed to be a counter attraction between them.

CHAPTER VII.

STRANGE TUTOR OF RUSSIAN.

"And the surgeon wishes me to teach you the Russian language, does he?" asked old Batavsky, reclining on his miserable couch.

"Yes, sir, if you will be so good," replied Barnwell, politely.

"So good!"

"That is what he said, sir."

"You are English, eh?"

"I speak nothing but English, although I am an American."

"Oh, an American, eh? You must be the only American in Siberia."

"I certainly hope so, sir."

"And so do I; but he wants to have you learn it so as to become a more useful slave. How long have you been here?"

"I came with the last consignment."

"Are you a Nihilist?" asked the old man, after a moment's silence, during which he looked at him sharply.

"No, sir; but I think the Russian police authorities will drive me to being one."

The old man rose quickly to a sitting position.

"What were you sent here for?"

"I was sent here by the treachery of one who has since been executed."

"Who was it?"

"Prince Mastowix."

"Mastowix!" exclaimed Batavsky, and this time he tottered to his feet.

He was trembling violently, and his eyes, before half closed, were now wide open and glaring at Barnwell strangely.

"Prince Mastowix, did you say?"

"Yes, sir; the governor of the Bastile."

"Executed, did you say?"

"Yes, sir."

"Heaven be praised!" cried the old man, falling heavily upon his couch.

Barnwell watched him in surprise for two or three minutes, and then he spoke:

"Did you know him, sir?"

"Know him! Do my thirty-five years of exile, slavery, despair, know him? Yes, it was his treachery that consigned me here, and he was rewarded by Alexander with a title for his work. Oh, do I know him? And he is dead? Tell me all about it—he was executed—stay a moment. What is your name?" he asked excitedly.

"William Barnwell, sir."

"Good; now tell me all about it."

"It is a long story, sir."

"Give me every word of it, boy—every word!"

He seemed indeed like a maniac now, and under some circumstances Barnwell would have been afraid of him.

But it seemed the news he had brought had given him a favorable footing in the old man's estimation.

So he began with the story, first with his meeting Zobriskie on the steamer, and so on until he was landed in Siberia.

Batavsky listened with the utmost attention, and at points showed much excitement, trembling violently and scarcely able to restrain himself.

"And the villain Mastowix had become a Nihilist?" said he.

"It would seem so, sir."

"Then he did it to betray the society, provided he could not rise higher with it."

"Very likely, sir."

"Oh, I know him well! Oh, he was a very fiend! But he is dead?"

"Yes."

"Oh, my son, this barren waste, those deep-down mines yonder have been peopled by his victims. Aye, the very wolves have gnawed the bones of his victims until they have come to know him as a benefactor, I'll dare be sworn. But he is dead—he has been executed! Thank Heaven!" and with another wild laugh he sank upon his couch and buried his face in the straw.

Barnwell stood gazing at him with awe and wonder.

"What a terrible history must be his," he thought, as he regarded him.

It was some moments before the old man regained sufficient composure to command himself.

Barnwell could say nothing, and so he waited for the old man to resume.

Presently, with a sigh, he roused himself and sat upright on his couch.

"How is it with you, sir?"

"I—I hardly know, my son," he replied, after a pause, during which he looked earnestly at him. "I am supposed to—that is, the surgeon has been so good as to ask me to teach you the Russian language. You have been outraged."

"Yes, sir; but not to the extent that you have been," said Barnwell, taking his hand.

"My son, I like you," said he, returning the pressure of his hand. "There is something about you that fills a long vacant place in my heart. I will do all I can to teach you the Russian language, but at the same time, if I find you apt, I will teach you even more than that, for there is much more to be learned, my son."

"And I hope I may be found worthy, for I will admit that I like you much more than words can express. I was told something of the time you have slaved here, and also that you were now insane, but it does not seem so."

The old man was silent a moment.

"Well, my son, I will not say but you have been rightly informed, for there are times when I do not know myself, and it may be that I am then insane. But what would you or any man be, suffering all I have suffered?"

"It is a wonder that you are alive, my dear sir," said Barnwell.

"I wonder at it myself, but I have clung to life for the sake of revenge—for the hope I had of one day escaping from this frozen place and killing the villain whose treachery consigned me here. And now you come and tell me that other means have taken away my revenge! I—I feel a great change creeping over me. Yes, yes—but I will do all I can to teach you the Russian language."

"But, from what I have told you, you can understand that I have not long to remain here, and probably but little use for the language."

"Poor boy!" moaned the old man, shaking his bowed head sadly.

"Why do you so exclaim?"

"You hope to escape?"

"I do."

"Ah! do not lay that flattering unction to your immortal soul, my son."

"Why not? The governor assured me that he would present my case to the authorities."

"But he never will."

"What!"

"Or if he does it will never be acted upon. Oh, how many have I known in the thirty-five years that I have toiled and suffered here, who held hopes just as bright, and whose unredeemed and unclaimed bones now whiten on Siberian snows! I do not wish to dishearten you, nor do I wish to buoy you up with false hopes."

"But my case is different, my dear sir."

"It may be, as one-half differs from another; but remember that once a name is obliterated and the owner of it is transported to Siberia, there is no power on earth to reclaim him."

"But I am an American, and no criminal."

"True; but who is to find that out, and who bring it to the notice of those powerful enough to demand an investigation? No; when once a person is disposed of in Russia in this way, that closes his career."

"Do you really think so, sir?" asked Barnwell, feeling his heart sink within him.

"Have I not had evidence enough of it. The police are too busy at home to notice even the recommendations of the Governor of Siberia. The authorities send all here—they call none back under any circumstances."

"Is that so?"

"Yes; guilty or innocent."

"And you believe that I am destined to drag out my life here?"

"Yes, unless you escape."

"Escape?"

"Yes."

"Can it be done?"

"I don't know. It may have been done, although I could never do it. There have been several mysterious disappearances during my time here, but we could never learn whether they escaped or died, or were tortured to death."

"And would you have me abandon hope?"

"Yes, of pardon and reinstatement."

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Barnwell, bowing his head abjectly.

"I give you no false hopes. I would that I could be sure of your escape," he mused.

"Why?"

"That is, if I found you worthy."

"Of what?"

"Of the trust I would repose in some true heart," said the old man, sadly.

"You speak vaguely, sir."

"Well, I may be able to speak more plainly by and by. But in the meantime I will take particular pains to teach you the Russian language."

"I thank you, but mournfully, since you lead me to believe that my only use for it will be here in Siberia."

"I would not banish hope."

"Of what?"

"Of your ultimate escape from here."

"How?"

"That will be a future consideration."

"But do you believe there is a chance?"

"Yes. While the springs and muscles of youth are potent, there is always a chance—always a hope."

"I will dare anything; but I am a stranger here, and know not how to move."

"Then possess your soul in peace for a while. You have not the strength of a lion, but you may have the cunning of a fox. Assume to be contented with your lot, and learn all you can of your surroundings. Learn well the road away from here. It may take years, as it has in my case, and you may never succeed, as I have not, but it behooves a brave man to be always ready to take advantage of circumstances. You have not been sent here as a dangerous criminal, and will not be so closely guarded as I have always been, the proof of which is that the governor assigns you here for hospital duty. But the proof that there is a very remote probability of your ever being recalled by the powers that consigned you here is this wish on the surgeon's part for you to learn the Russian language so as to become more useful here."

"I will not learn it," said Barnwell, with a sudden burst of indignation.

"Wait a moment. Will you take me for a guide?"

"With all my heart I will."

"Then do all in your power to learn the language, and at the same time to appear to be reconciled. More follows."

"I will obey you, sir."

"I see you are both brave and sensible. Force does not work here, save to oppress. Be cunning, be sly, and, after you have mastered the language and the situation, then there will be more hope for you. And, when you are strong enough, I will tell you the story of my life."

"Strong enough?"

"Yes; for it will take more than ordinary strength to stand it. But I feel a great change since meeting you. The ambition and rage for revenge has been toned down, and now a relapse may follow it."

"How?"

"This hope of revenge on Mastowix has buoyed me up during all these years; but now that I find that you have been the innocent cause of bringing retribution upon him, I feel that my life's object, my object for living, no longer exists, and a relapse from that high excitement is coming on, and I may die at any moment; but, thank goodness, perfectly sane."

"Oh, do not talk so, please. You are the only friend I have in all this vast expanse of human misery. Do not think of dying, I beg of you," said Barnwell, greatly excited.

"Goodness knows how long the time may be; but do not leave me, my son, do not leave me. I have a premonition of death, and that must not be until I have transferred a great secret into some worthy hands."

"And you will trust me?"

"I will. I feel that I can. Come and see me again to-morrow to—mind you—to take still further lessons in the Russian language."

"I will come."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE AND A STORY.

The next day, and for several days, William Barnwell visited the cell of old Peter Batavsky for the purpose of receiving lessons in the Russian language.

The poor old exile was undoubtedly right when he said that the surgeon of the hospital wanted him to learn it so that he would become a more valuable slave.

But at the same time he had convinced him that it was best for him to learn it, and so he applied himself with all diligence, greatly to the delight of the hospital surgeon, who, having taken a fancy to the American youth, without stopping to think or to care about the cruel tyranny that had taken him there, wanted him to become even more useful, as he undoubtedly could be by learning to speak Russian.

And old Batavsky had learned to love him during the time.

But as his excitement over the death of Prince Mastowix subsided he became more and more rational.

His whole intent now seemed to be to teach Barnwell the language, and then to confide to him not only the story of his eventful life, but the pith of it, which covered a great secret.

And the young exile had also learned to have a most profound respect for Batavsky, whom he found to be a highly educated man of more than ordinary ability, and how he could be thus consigned to such a dreadful place for life was more than he could understand, knowing but little of the dark deeds and ways of Russian tyrants.

But in spite of what the old man had told him regarding the improbability of his ever being released, he still hoped that the governor would make good his word, and that his case would in time reach the American Minister at St. Petersburg, and that his government would interfere and demand his release.

And so he struggled on and hoped, learning rapidly all the while, and making himself more and more valuable to the chief surgeon. And, too, he was becoming hardened somewhat, and used to the suffering which he saw in the hospital, and which was so revolting to his nature at first.

Week after week, month after month, went by without bringing him any word of hope, and he was not permitted to see the governor for the purpose of asking him if he had sent his case back to St. Petersburg as he agreed.

He could do nothing but labor, wait and hope. Every month or so there would come a batch of prisoners from St. Petersburg or Moscow, and official dispatches, but nothing came for him; no word, no suggestion that he was even remembered in any way.

Hope began to die in his heart, where he had nursed it so long.

Was he, then, really doomed for life?

And what of the beautiful girl of whom he was so fond, and whom he promised to meet at Berlin?

Would she not forget and condemn him for failing to keep his word, not knowing why did did not keep it?

One day when he went to the cell occupied by old Batavsky, he found him unexpectedly low and evidently very ill; in fact, he was nearly unconscious.

Barnwell at once sprang to his side.

"Are you ill, sir? Speak to me."

The old man opened his eyes slowly when he caught him by the hand, but he did not speak, and Barnwell went at once and reported the case to the chief surgeon, and asked for some brandy for him.

"No; let him die! he cannot live much longer anyway," was the brutal reply.

"But I am getting along so nicely in learning the language of him——"

"Oh, well, take him some brandy, then."

Without losing a moment he hastened back to the old man with a cup of brandy.

"Here, sir, take some of this, and it will make you feel better," said he, raising his head tenderly, so as to enable him to do so.

Batavsky allowed him to place the cup to his lips, and he drank several swallows of the strong liquor, after which he lay down again.

"Thank you, my son."

"Do you feel better, sir?"

"Yes; it warms my old blood a trifle. It was very kind of you to get it for me, but I shall not tax your kindness much longer," he said, with a sigh.

"It is no tax to do a helpless person a kindness," replied the young man.

"True, but I am so unused to kindness. Yet I am glad you came to me to-day, for knowing I have but a short time to live, I wish to confide a secret to you."

"Are you strong enough to talk? Take another sip of the brandy."

"Thank you, my son; keep it, for it may enable me to tell my story through, but I could not do so without it. The secret I am about to transmit to your keeping has been my secret for nearly forty years. I have hoped and hoped for thirty-five of those years that I should escape in some way, but the hope is finally dead in me, and I transfer it to you, who are full of life, youth, strength, and hope.

"After I am dead, be it the ambition of your life to get away from this accursed place."

"Doubt not it shall be, sir."

"And should it be your misfortune not to be able to do so, promise me that before you die you will transmit the secret to some intelligent Nihilist, in the hope that he may succeed."

"I promise you, sir, and I will exact a like promise from him if you wish it."

"It shall be yours to judge, my son. As I have stated to you at different times, I was betrayed by Mastowix, with whom I was engaged with others in a plot against Nicholas, Czar of Russia. I was worth a million of rubles, and the whole of it I pledged to the cause of human liberty in Russia. Mastowix knew this, and he also knew that other members of the society had large sums thus pledged. After a while I half suspected him, and so secreted my gold in a place known only to myself."

"A million of rubles!" mused Barnwell.

"Yes, my son, gold rubles. Well, Mastowix, when he thought the time ripe for his villainy, betrayed us all, with the understanding that he was to have one-half of all the government could find belonging to us, together with an office in which he could rise to ennoblement. Nicholas accepted his proposition, and we were banished to Siberia. All of my companions are dead, and all these years Mastowix has reveled in their money and the smiles of the autocrats. But he failed to find my rubles, as I intended he should do, for no eye saw the spot where I secreted it. And all these long weary years I have waited and hoped to escape, so I might secure that money and put it to the use I originally dedicated it to. Now, my son, will you see that this money is recovered and turned against tyranny?"

"Yes, if I ever escape. Every ruble of it shall help crush a tyrant," said he resolutely.

"Spoken like the brave youth I know you are."

"But if I never succeed in escaping, then the money will molder and still be as useless as it has been during your long imprisonment," he replied sadly.

"True, but you must escape. You have youth on your side, and can afford to bide your time. Again, you have an advantage that I never had. You will probably never be sent into the mines where I have slaved my life away, never, but once a year, seeing the light of day, and this will give you opportunities for escape which I have never had. Play your cards so as to win the confidence of your superiors, and when the right time comes manage somehow to escape. How, I will not undertake to tell you. That you must work out yourself. But shape your course for the German frontier, and once across the border you will be safe."

"So far away?"

"Yes, for there is liberty and safety nowhere short of there. If you succeed, the money is yours, to do with as you like, only assure me that a portion of it shall eke your revenge, and mine."

"I promise you, sir."

"Good. If you live to reach Germany, make inquiries for the village of Mertz. Once there, become familiar with the place and its mountainous surroundings, after which this diagram will assist you in finding the cave where the gold is hidden," and he took from his breast, next to his poor old wrinkled flesh, a strip of folded parchment, which, when unfolded, was about eight inches square.

Barnwell took it with hands that trembled fully as much as the old man's did.

"On it is a map which you can easily study out and decipher, and which will surely lead you to the hidden treasure. It is a wild and uninhabited part of the town, only about five miles from the frontier border. That red dot there marks the spot where it is secreted, and you notice that all lines on the diagram lead to it. Mark the line leading up from the old post-road, and on it are marked the——"

At that instant a servant entered the cell and announced that the surgeon wanted "No. 1000," which was Barnwell; and remembering how long he had been absent, he hastily thrust the parchment under his shirt.

"I come," said he in Russian, and the slave went away. "I will see you again at the first opportunity. Drink the remainder of the brandy," and he almost pressed it to his thin lips.

"Be on your guard, my son; for from this hour your watchfulness must begin. Farewell."

"Farewell; and I shall hope to find you better when I come again," said Barnwell.

"But do not be surprised to find me dead."

"Cheer up, your time is not yet come, I hope; and, besides, I want further instructions."

He did not wait for a reply, but hurried to the surgeon's office.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DEAD EXILE.

On reaching the chief surgeon's quarters he found that irritable petty tyrant possessed of much temper on account of his long absence.

"If you don't pay more attention to your duties, I will have you sent into the mines."

"Pardon me, sir, but I found the old man very low, and tried to comfort him," said Barnwell, respectfully.

"Curse him, let him die. He only lingers from pure obstinacy to make trouble here. The wolves are waiting for his carcass. Go and bring my dinner!"

Barnwell hurried from the presence of the brute; but he could have choked the life out of him for what he had said.

But, brute that he was, he fell upon the food that was soon placed before him, and after gorging himself and washing it down with fiery Russian brandy, he showed more of his brute instincts by becoming more peaceable, and finally going to sleep in his chair.

Barnwell removed the wreck of the feast as noiselessly as possible, and left him alone, not daring, however, to go far away, for fear of again exciting his ire, knowing that he had the power to consign him to the underground mines, or even to kill him like a dog. And so he sat and waited his pleasure.

But his anxiety was hardly to be mastered, for he wanted a few more words with Batavsky regarding the solution of the diagram he had given him, not knowing whether he would be alive when he might see him next.

What new thoughts crowded themselves into his mind now!

And although his desire to escape was no greater than ever, yet the possibilities that would now attend it were overwhelming, almost.

But how was he to give force to all this—how could he escape from that closely-guarded colony, with armed sentinels at every turn, and trained bloodhounds ready to follow any scent, even if he escaped from the guards. He would be sure to be missed, and the guards knowing nothing of his whereabouts, let it be supposed, those savage brutes would be started out in every direction until they found his scent, and then run him down to death from their fangs or for an easy capture.

He had seen too much of it during the terrible year he had lived in Siberia. Many a wretch, ambitious to be free, he had known to set his life upon the hazard of a chance, and attempt to escape into the Ural mountains, only to be run to bay by those terrible hounds, and either killed by them or dragged back into the captivity sure to be made worse than before.

And he had seen men have their flesh stripped from their naked backs with the cruel knout, in the hands of unfeeling wretches.

And had he not been buoyed up by hope of one day escaping, he would surely have taken his own life as he had actually seen others do when hope failed them.

The situation was a dreadful one, even to a criminal; but what was it to an innocent man like William Barnwell? But, after all, it gave nerve to his heart.

While cogitating thus, Kanoffskie, the chief surgeon, awoke with a snort.

He glared wildly around the room in a startled way.

Barnwell looked at him inquiringly.

"Did you see anything?" he finally asked.

"Nothing unusual, sir."

"Did you hear anything?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Did I cry out in my sleep?"

"No, sir, not that I heard."

"It must have been a nightmare, but it was dreadful," mused Kanoffskie.

"They are sometimes very horrid, sir."

"Very strange. How is old Batavsky?"

"I have not seen him since, sir."

"I thought in my dream that he had me by the throat, and was strangling me with his bony fingers. And I thought he hissed in my ear that he was going to take me with him. I was powerless in his dreadful grasp, and I thought he dragged me down, down, through some huge volcano's crater, sulphurous and suffocating, growing hotter and hotter all the while as we plunged downward, until finally I saw the blue and yellow flames dart up as though to meet and welcome us, and heard the agonized cries of anguished beings far below! Anon I could see them writhing in their fiery torment, and I recognized many faces there that I had seen on earth. As I drew nearer they seemed to forget their agonies, and joined in a glad, wild chorus of imprecating welcome to me. Fiends came at me with blazing swords and fiery prongs, and in my extreme terror I awoke. Oh, it was dreadful!" he added, hiding his face in his hands.

"It surely must have been, sir, and I have read of such sleeping agonies. But, after all, it was but a dream," said Barnwell.

"Oh, but such a dream! Barnwell, I would not go through the agony of such a dream again for Alexander's crown. You are an educated, well-read man. Tell me, do you believe there is such an awful place?" he asked, and he seemed to have forgotten all his old hauteur.

"Our common religion teaches us that there is."

"Oh, Heaven, forgive and keep me from it," said he, bowing his head abjectly.

"My dear sir, you lay too much stress on an ugly dream. Remember that you went to sleep after eating a hearty dinner, and they often cause ugly dreams," said Barnwell, for he thought it would best serve his purpose to attribute it to what it might be, rather than to what it probably was—a warning of the future.

"Oh, if I could only think so I would abandon the sin of gluttony at once. But that terrible face, those bony fingers, which seemed to penetrate my neck like eagle's claws!" and involuntarily he placed his hand upon his neck, as if he really expected to find lacerations there, showing that he was indeed greatly frightened.

"Barnwell, go and see how Batavsky does," he added.

"I will, sir."

"And hurry to let me know."

Barnwell withdrew, and Kanoffskie bowed his head upon the table before him, repeating a simple prayer of the Greek Church which he had not quite forgotten.

The young man made haste to Batavsky's cell, but there lay the old exile, dead, with his eyes staring wide and glassy.

He had died alone, without a friendly hand to close his eyes with a prayer.

In truth, his death at any moment was not unexpected by Barnwell, but coming as it did at the very moment of Kanoffskie's dream, made it seem more strange and horrible.

Indeed, there seemed to be something horribly supernatural about it.

He stood for a moment gazing upon the rigid features of the poor old man, hardly daring to return and tell Kanoffskie of his death.

"But it serves him right," he thought; and covering the dead man's face with a blanket, he returned to the surgeon's office.

"Well?" he asked, with quick anxiety.

"The old man is dead, sir."

"Dead—dead, say you?" shrieked Kanoffskie, springing to his feet, trembling and pale.

"Yes, sir, he is dead."

"How—how long since, do you think?" he asked, in a choked voice.

"Probably fifteen or twenty minutes; he is scarcely cold yet."

"Heavens!" he exclaimed, and sank back in his chair.

"It might have been expected, sir."

"Yes, but in connection with my dream! Barnwell, my dream! It must have come simultaneously with it!" and the wretched man seemed scarcely able to sit in his chair, so greatly did he tremble, while great beads of perspiration stood out upon his forehead.

Barnwell hastened to set a glass of wine before him, which he tremblingly bore to his mouth and swallowed at a gulp.

"More!" he gasped, and Barnwell poured him out another.

"That will revive you, sir, I hope."

But the surgeon made no reply. He sat there glaring at vacancy for fully five minutes, and neither of them spoke a word.

Finally he pointed to the empty glass, and again Barnwell filled it with brandy, which he drank.

He was evidently trying to nerve himself up.

"What a strange coincidence, Barnwell."

"Very strange, indeed, sir; but do not let it weigh too heavily on your mind, I beg of you. Regard it as simply a strange coincidence, nothing more."

"Oh, Barnwell, it must be something more! I have ill-treated that man, and even his death may be laid to my door, and I have abused others even to death—those whose faces I saw in that deep-down, horrid hole—they who welcomed me with such fiendish and exultant shouts," said he, with his head bowed low.

There could be no doubt but that he spoke the truth, and this made it seem all the more strange. He had always been a tyrant in his office, and many a poor wretch had he sent to his long home after he became useless to the government.

He had never been credited with possessing either fear or a heart, but now he showed that he was a moral as well as a physical coward, and was racked by most agonizing fears.

"Barnwell," he finally said, "see that the old man is decently buried, and a prayer said over his grave. Yes, be sure and bury him decently in a coffin, and a grave so deep that the worms may not reach it, and then come to me again. But see that you bury him tenderly, and say nothing of this to any person living."

"You shall be obeyed, sir," said Barnwell, hurrying from the room, glad to carry out such an order in the dead old exile's behalf.

CHAPTER X.

BURIED DECENTLY.

It was a mournful pleasure to William Barnwell to be able to place the body of poor old Batavsky in a respectable coffin and see it given a Christian burial, instead of being thrown, like hundreds of others, into a ravine, for the wolves to devour and fight over.

And it caused no little comment and speculation among those employed about the hospital, for they had become so used to seeing the dead barbarously disposed of, that it was an event to see one given Christian burial.

Some said Batavsky was an exiled nobleman, and that he had been thus buried by order of the governor, but no one suspected for a moment that it was at the orders of the surgeon-in-chief, whose dream had frightened him into the semblance of a human being.

When all had been done, and the grave marked with Batavsky's prison number, Barnwell returned, as ordered, to Kanoffskie.

"Is he buried?" was his first question.

"He is, sir."

"And decently?"

"As a Christian should be buried, sir."

"And a prayer was said?"

"Yes, sir."

Kanoffskie vented a sigh of relief, but he was a frightened and an altered man.

He was pale and trembling, and he glared wildly about, as though expecting to see the ghosts of his victims, or the real return of Batavsky to drag him down, as he had done in that awful dream.

"Have you any further orders, sir?"

"No; but stay—come to me again just before dark—I may want you," said Kanoffskie, hesitatingly.

"Very well," replied Barnwell, bowing himself from the room.

He understood very well that the iron had entered the tyrant's heart, and he resolved to work upon it.

That terrible dream was not all for nothing, even though he did not believe in dreams, and the young American made up his mind to humor the man, and see what would come of it in the future.

Barnwell mingled with his fellow-servants in the hospital, and answered their questions regarding Batavsky.

Concluding that it was best to humor the prevailing idea, he half-way admitted that the old man belonged to a noble family, and that he had been given a Christian burial at the instigation of the Czar himself.

This, of course, produced food for comment and controversy for a long time, during which Barnwell, now able to speak the Russian language, was able to converse and to learn much.

The short days of Siberia give one but a moment's warning between daylight and total darkness, and although this is not known or felt away down in the gold-mines, where they work from four o'clock in the morning until ten o'clock at night—where night and day are all the same to the poor victims—those on the surface of the earth understand that when the sun goes down darkness follows, save when the Aurora Borealis comes with its weird light to illuminate the frozen world of Siberia.

Kanoffskie waited with impatience.

Somehow or other this young American had wormed himself into his cold and beastly nature, and even exercised more influence over him than he knew of.

Darkness came on, and Barnwell went to his master, as ordered.

He found him pacing his office in a highly nervous state.

"I am here, surgeon," said Barnwell.

"Stay here. Do not leave me," said the surgeon, with a sigh.

"I will do so, sir," replied Barnwell. "You seem nervous."

"No, well—you saw him decently buried?" he asked, stopping before Barnwell.

"Yes, sir."

"And there was a prayer said over him?"

"Yes, by the chaplain from the government house," said Barnwell.

"And you buried him deep?"

"Fully five feet underground."

"That is well. And a prayer was said?"

"Yes, sir."

Kanoffskie seemed entirely at sea.

"Will you retire, sir?"

"No, I shall remain here all night, and you will remain with me," replied Kanoffskie, timidly.

"But you will not sleep in your chair?"

"Yes, and so must you. But he had Christian burial?" he asked, anxiously.

"Yes, everything was all right."

"Thank goodness! But that dream troubles me, Barnwell," said he.

"Let it not, my dear sir—it was only a dream."

"But the coincidence!"

"True, it is a strange one; but only think, my dear sir, how many dreams you might have—many dreams you have had, or may have hereafter, in which there has been, and will be, no coincidence. It is merely a happen-so, my dear sir."

"No—no, Barnwell, I cannot believe it. But I feel better now that he has had a Christian burial, and you assure me that a holy prayer was said over his dead body."

"Rest assured on that point, sir."

"But it was such a dreadful dream."

"So I grant you, sir."

"And happening just at the moment of old Batavsky's death!"

"As I said before, simply a coincidence."

"Oh, if I could only think so! Light the lamps."

"Yes, sir," and he at once proceeded to light a chandelier of oil-lamps.

The gloom of coming night had weighed upon him, but now that there was light in the room, he felt better, and more composed, but still ill at ease.

Finally he fell asleep, but it was long past midnight, and after he had gone through with all sorts of mental misery, and then Barnwell ventured to sleep himself.

But it was a wild sleep that came to him, for all that he had passed through during the day had so wrought up his feelings that it was next to impossible for him to sleep.

But both of them got gradually quieted down, and slept, one an honest man, and the other a rascal, and for an hour or more they kept it up, until Kanoffskie again fell into a nightmare.

Barnwell was awakened.

"Help! help! Take him away!" cried Kanoffskie, in his sleep. "No, no! do not let him drag me down to that pit! I know it, I know it, but do not let him drag me down! I repent!"

And much more he said that Barnwell was perforce obliged to listen to, and of course he could not sleep.

But the night went on, and finally the doctor awoke.

He glared wildly around.

"Have you slept all night?" was the first question he asked, looking at Barnwell.

"No, doctor; you kept me awake."

"In what way?"

"You were talking in your sleep, sir."

"Indeed; what did I say?"

"Your mind seemed to be on old Batavsky."

"Did I mention his name?"

"No, sir, not directly; but you recalled portions of your horrible dream."

"Did I?" and he fell to musing.

Nothing further happened at this time, but the next day Kanoffskie visited the governor, who was startled by his altered appearance, and at once inquired the meaning of it.

"Your Excellency, I am not well. I am overworked, and have come to ask you to grant me a year's leave of absence," replied Kanoffskie.

"You certainly do look ill, doctor, but who can fill your place in the interim?"

"Waskoff is fully competent, sir."

"Very well, then; I will appoint him to fill your place for a year," replied the governor, writing the order.

"Thanks, your Excellency. And may I take a servant along with me, for I am not able to travel so far alone."

"Yes; but on arriving at St. Petersburg, report the fact and the servant's number to the Prefect of Police."

"I shall obey you, sir."

"When do you propose to set out?"

"By the next convoy."

"Very well, but let me see you again before you start, for I have several private commissions which I wish you to undertake for me."

"With the greatest pleasure, Excellency."

"And I trust you will return in better health, and well rested."

"I hope so, sir," replied Kanoffsky, bowing himself from the room.

He was indeed a changed man, and the governor did not fail to notice it, as did others who noticed him.

Some of the old hospital inmates whom he had abused at various times, as he had the dead Batavsky, said among themselves that the spirits of his dead victims were haunting him, which was pretty nearly the truth.

And to get away from them was, now that he had received leave of absence, what now urged him in the preparations.

He dared not encounter those horrible dreams again.

CHAPTER XI.

KANOFFSKIE AND HIS SERVANT.

"Barnwell, come here," said the miserable surgeon. "I have obtained leave of absence, and shall set out for St. Petersburg at once, taking with me a servant. Now make haste with my packing."

"Going to take a servant with you?" asked the young American, anxiously.

"Yes."

"Oh, will you take me?"

"Yes, I shall take you. But why do you manifest so much anxiety?"

"Well, sir, I think it only natural that I should do so. I abhor this place, as you must know, and even a temporary change would be agreeable, and make me more reconciled to my fate when I return with you."

"But I may not return at all."

"And, Providence keeping me, I will not," thought Barnwell.

"If I can get the ear of the Czar, and his favor, I shall never return to this accursed place," said Kanoffskie, shuddering.

"I do not blame you for not wishing to."

"But on arriving at St. Petersburg I must report to the Prefect of Police, and procure a permit from him to retain a convict as my servant."

"Yes."

"Your number and personal description will have to agree with your sentence and committment, and ever after that, while you remain, you will be under police surveillance."

"True, I dare say."

"So you must not become elated with the idea of liberty."

"No; but it will be such a change, my dear sir, and I am so thankful to you for taking me. I will be a true and faithful servant to you."

"Did I not think so I certainly should not take you, and any attempt on your part to escape would not only consign you to the mines for life, but very likely get me into serious trouble also."

"I shall not forget it, sir."

"Very well. Now, set at work without delay and get my effects boxed up," said Kanoffskie, going from the room.

Collecting Kanoffskie's effects took Barnwell to various places, and among others to the governor's palace.

Here he encountered Zora Vola, the girl whose knouting he had witnessed and resented.

It appeared that the governor had inquired into her case after the occurrence, and had taken her to the palace laundry.

The recognition was mutual and instant.

Just then she chanced to be alone, and she sprang joyfully towards him.

"Oh, sir, I am so glad of an opportunity to speak with you, and to thank you, as I have so often done in my prayers, for shielding me from those cruel thongs," said she earnestly.

"I would that I could do even more than that for you," said he, taking her hands.

"You are not a Russian?"

"No. I have learned the language because it may assist me, not because I love it," said he bitterly.

"Then you are not a Nihilist?"

"No, only in heart."

"How long were you sent here for?"

"Goodness only knows."

"And for what, pray?"

"For nothing wrong. I am an American, but was foolish enough, supposing I was doing no harm, to bring a letter from New York to St. Petersburg to Prince Mastowix."

"The wretch! I know him well," said she bitterly.

"But he was somehow caught in his own trap and afterwards executed, though not until he had sent me here, fearing, probably, that I knew the contents of the fatal letter."

"Good!"

"And what brings you here?" he asked.

"I am a Nihilist, and was betrayed with others by that same Mastowix, who claimed to be one of us, and here I am for life," she added.

"What a shame. The conduct of Russian tyrants produces the very enemies they try to exterminate."

"Yes, and we shall never get away from this frozen world until the Nihilists have their heels upon the tyrants' necks."

"It would seem so. But I am going to St. Petersburg tomorrow."

"To St. Petersburg?" she asked, eagerly.

"Yes. Dr. Kanoffskie is going on a leave of absence, and I am going with him as his valet."

"To dear old St. Petersburg! Oh, how I wish I could see it once more! Stay, will you take a letter to my brother there?"

"With pleasure."

"I have it here. It was written nearly a year ago, and I have carried it in my bosom, hoping to find some way of sending it to him. Tell him how it is with me here, and he will bless you for the message."

"But, come to think of it, would it not be better for both your brother and myself if I simply took a verbal message from you to him? I shall be under the police eye all the time, and the letter might be found and get us both into trouble."

"Yes, you are right," she said, after a moment's reflection, and then she told him the message she would have him deliver.

Then, receiving his address, he charged his mind with it, and started to go.

"One moment more; tell me your name, that I may remember and pray for you always," she said, appealingly.

"William Barnwell; and yours?"

"Zora Vola."

"I shall not forget it."

"As I shall never forget yours."

"I have hopes, Zora, and if I ever live to realize them, you shall benefit thereby."

"God bless and keep you, sir!"

"And may He give you heart and hope in your misery," replied he, again shaking her hands and returning to the hospital.

The next day Kanoffskie and his valet started with the government train that makes that terrible journey from St. Petersburg to Siberia twice every year, and at the end of three months they reached the capitol.

And, oh, what a relief it was to Barnwell, who had all but given up the hope of ever seeing a semblance of civilization again. How his heart thrilled as he nursed his hopes!

Kanoffsky seemed greatly altered, although for the past two months he had lost much of the nervousness produced by old Batavsky's death, as though from leaving the scene of it further and further behind.

His confidence in Barnwell seemed to grow stronger every day; but, on arriving at St. Petersburg, he obeyed the governor's instructions relative to reporting to the prefect of police, without an hour's loss of time.

This he did as a measure of personal safety as much as for his promptness in obeying orders, for he was determined to keep himself entirely above police suspicion.

Should he fail to do so, and it should come to the ears of

the authorities, it might not only annul his leave of absence, but get him into other difficulty.

He had made up his mind never to return to his post of duty, and if he could not bring influence enough to bear upon the minister of war to get him another assignment, he resolved to take advantage of his year's leave of absence and escape the empire.

He took lodgings in a respectable quarter; and Barnwell enacted the part of a valet there with even greater perfection than he had while journeying from Siberia.

But he was watching his opportunities, knowing that he was a marked man with the police, and known to every member of it.

The first thing to do was to insure confidence in Kanoffskie and the police, and this he exerted himself to do, feeling certain that the time would come before the year was up for him to carry out his plans.

With Kanoffskie it was an easy matter, and as he was a government officer against whom there was no suspicion, Barnwell was allowed greater latitude on that account.

So, one day, after they had been in St. Petersburg about a month, he managed, while carrying a message for Kanoffskie, to get near the official residence of the American minister, over which the Stars and Stripes of the great republic floated proudly. It thrilled him to the heart as he once more beheld that ensign of liberty, and, suddenly changing his direction, he rushed into the building and demanded to see the representative of the United States.

An attendant directed him to that officer's chamber, just as two officers of the police, who had observed his movements, entered the outer room.

"You, sir, are the American minister?" said Barnwell, rushing hurriedly into his presence.

"I am. What do you wish?"

"I claim the protection due to an outraged citizen of the United States."

"Who are you?"

"William Barnwell. My name is on your books, and you personally saw my passport."

At that moment the Russian officers entered.

"Ah! I defy you now! The Stars and Stripes once more wave above me!" shouted Barnwell, as the officers approached him.

CHAPTER XII.

A FREE MAN ONCE MORE.

"Stand aside, officers, until I investigate this case," said the American minister, in a tone of command that the tyrannical minions of the law knew too much to disobey, for at that time the United States and Russia were on exceedingly friendly terms.

"Now, what is your story?" he asked, turning to young Barnwell.

"It is this, sir," he answered, and thereupon he proceeded to give the representative of his native land the history of his case, so well known to the reader.

It was a startling story of cruel outrage, as we all know, and the recital of it made the minister very indignant.

Turning to the officers, he said:

"You can shadow this man if you think it your duty, but you must not arrest or interfere with him in any way while he is under the protection of the American flag. I shall take him at once before the prime minister," and without loss of time he proceeded to do so.

He was instantly admitted to the august presence of that high functionary, where the story was again told and verified.

The minister of state was astounded, both at the audacity of the outrage and the fact of his being a victim of Prince Mastowix, the very letter he had innocently brought being the one that sealed the traitor's fate.

The whole business was confirmed by Tobasco, the police spy, who secured the letter and gave it to the prefect of police.

Search was at once made for the passport asd money belonging to Barnwell, and after a deal of red tape had been unwound the property was found and restored to him.

And not only that, but the Russian prime minister ordered him to be paid five thousand rubles for indemnity, and the American minister rendered a most abject apology for the the outrage.

This was followed at once by orders from the prefect of police to all his subordinates touching Barnwell's case; espionage was withdrawn, his "Number" obliterated from the secret records, and in a short time he was one of the freest men in the Russian empire.

In justice to Surgeon Kanoffskie, he cleared him of all complicity in the matter, although he promptly withdrew, of course, from the menial attitude he had so long occupied towards him, and which had enabled him to escape.

Yes, he was a free man once more, and had, through the dictates of his country, been the recipient of an apology almost from the throne. Yet all this did not efface the cruel stripes left by the knout, or efface from his heart the wrong and misery he had endured.

Indeed, he felt quite as bitter towards the tyrannical government as ever, and there was awful bitterness in his heart.

A few days after regaining his rights, he remembered Zora Vola and the message he had agreed to carry to her brother, and without loss of time set about finding him, a task he soon found to be an exceedingly difficult one, on account of his being known to the police as an active and a dangerous Nihilist.

Nor was this all. After spending a whole week without finding him, he became convinced that he, as well as other Nihilists, had other names than their own, by which they were known only to undoubted and trusted ones of the mysterious brotherhood.

This discouraged him to such a degree that he was on the point of giving up the task and resuming his own greater one —that of securing the million rubies secreted so many years ago by Batavsky.

But so perfect and secret is the Nihilist organization in the larger cities of Russia, that they employ spy for spy with the government, and their enemies are watched as carefully as they are themselves, which, in a measure, accounts for their great success and the infrequency of their being detected.

In this way it became known to Vola that an American was seeking him under his real name, and a spy was at once put upon his track to learn about him.

This, of course, he did not know. Indeed, he had at one time made inquiries of this very same spy regarding the object of his search, but, although questioned closely, he would reveal nothing relating to his business.

Finally Vola, being convinced that the man seeking him was not an enemy, nor in any way employed by the authorities, met him purposely one day at his hotel—the very day, in fact, on which he had concluded to abandon the search.

He approached and addressed him in Russian, which by this time Barnwell understood quite well, as the reader must know, and asked him the direction to a certain street.

"I am a stranger here," replied Barnwell, "but would gladly

direct you if I could. Most likely the men at the hotel office can direct you," he added, politely.

"Ah, thank you; but I would not like to inquire of them for the person I am in search of," and looking around, as if to make sure that he was not likely to be observed or overheard, he lowered his voice, and added: "I am in search of a man by the name of Vola."

Barnwell leaped to his feet.

"Peter Vola?" he asked.

"Hush! The same. Do you know him?"

"Yes, if I could but find him. It is remarkable," mused Barnwell.

"What is remarkable?"

"Why, that I have been unsuccessfully searching for a man by that name for a week."

"Do you know him?"

"I do not."

"Have you business with him?"

"No; but I have a message for him."

"Indeed; from whom, pray?"

"Pardon me, that is my business and his."

"Pardon me also, for asking the question. But if I can find direction to the street I asked you about, I can present you to him," said the stranger, who was a distinguished-looking man, about fifty years of age.

"You would greatly oblige me by doing so."

"Wait a moment; perhaps that dismounted cossack can direct me," saying which, he followed the soldier into the cafe.

There was a crowd in there, and Barnwell would have been puzzled to see whether the stranger actually spoke with the soldier; but after a minute or so he returned.

"I have learned it. Follow me," said he, turning from the room.

Barnwell did as directed, and together they walked three or four squares, and then turned into a side street.

A short distance down it he found the number, and knocked upon the door in a curious sort of manner, and presently it was opened by an attendant.

"Show me Vola's chamber," said the man, in a low tone of voice, and the attendant conducted them to it.

"Remain here a moment, and I will bring him before you," said the stranger, pointing to a chair that stood in the plainly-furnished room.

Being left alone, Barnwell could but reflect upon the strangeness of the stranger's behavior, for, indeed, he did not seem like a stranger there at all.

At the expiration of five minutes the door opened, and, apparently, another person entered the room.

"I am told you are in search of one Peter Vola," said he, taking a seat in front of him.

"I am, and have been for several days," replied Barnwell.

"What do you wish with him?"

"That is his business and mine, sir."

"Indeed? Might I ask what it relates to?"

"You might, indeed, but I should not inform you unless you were Peter Vola."

"But do you not know that he is hunted by the police, and that it is positively dangerous on your part to be even inquiring for him?"

"I was not aware of it, sir."

"But it is a fact, nevertheless."

"I am sorry to know that. But I am a stranger here."

"I observe that you are not a Russian."

"No, I am an American just discharged from Siberia."

"Siberia!" exclaimed the man, starting.

"Yes; I agreed to deliver a letter, of which I knew nothing, to Prince Mastowix, from Paul Zobriskie, of New York."

"Paul Zobriskie?"

"Yes. He accosted me on the steamer as I was about to sail and asked me to deliver the letter, which I did, and fearing probably that because I was not a Nihilist that I might betray him, he had me arrested and sent to Siberia, where I suffered the tortures of the damned for more than a year, until chance took me here again as the valet of a surgeon on leave of absence, when I managed to escape long enough to reach the American minister, who quickly secured my liberation, together with an official apology and indemnity."

"You astonish me, sir."

"But I am telling you too much, perhaps."

"No, you are not, young man, for I am Peter Vola," said the man, leaping to his feet and extending his hand, "I am the same man who accosted and conducted you hither, for I have had a spy on your track ever since you imprudently inquired for me. But I feel that I can trust you."

"You can. I am not a Nihilist in form, but I am one at heart, and will yet make these despots feel what I have undeservedly felt," said he, vehemently.

"Good. We need you. But you spoke of a message you had for me."

"Yes."

"From Siberia?"

"Yes."

"And from——"

"Whom do you think?" asked Barnwell, resolved to put a final test to the man's identity.

"Perhaps from my poor sister, Zora."

"The same."

"Heaven be praised!"

"She had a letter written to send you, but I thought it might be unsafe to have on my person, both for you and myself."

"You were right."

"So I took her verbal message."

"Oh, tell me of my poor dear sister!" the man almost cried, and thereupon Barnwell related his acquaintance with her, together with the story of his life in Siberia, as already known to the reader.

Then he repeated the message Zora had intrusted him with, while tears streamed down the brother's face.

"Poor girl, what a fate is hers! But if she lives she shall yet be free. Oh, sir, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all your kindness to her and to me, and if we are never able to repay you, Heaven surely will do so," said Vola, greatly moved.

"I am amply repaid by being able to do someone a kindness. But my mission has not yet begun. I have a trust to keep of which I have not yet spoken. You, of course, know of Batavsky?"

"I have heard of him, but he worked and was exiled before my time almost—at least, before I began to work."

"Well, at his death I received from him a certain charge that may possibly enable me to benefit his compatriots in Russia; but he told me to become an active Nihilist, that I might be the better able to work successfully."

"And so you shall, my dear brother, for I feel that I may call you so," said Vola, at the same time embracing him. "Put yourself in my charge, and you shall be initiated into the Order of Liberty."

"I will do so, and there is my hand," said Barnwell, earnestly.

"Which I take in the name of humanity. But in our order one brother can initiate another. We have no lodge-meetings, no names, being simply known by numbers, and those numbers known only to a trusted few. Night shall not come upon

us before you shall know how to send and receive a communication—how to act, and how to avoid detection."

"Good! Just so soon as that is done I shall go to Germany, and most likely work altogether outside of Russia for the present."

"It shall be as you wish, for I see your heart is in the matter."

"Aye, my very soul!"

"Good!" and leading him into an inner room, he proceeded to initiate him into the mysteries of that mysterious order, known the world over as Nihilists.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE YOUNG NIHILIST.

A week from that time, and after William Barnwell had made himself thoroughly familiar with the secrets and the workings of this great and mysterious order, the order that has shaken thrones and hurled tyrants to their final account, he started for Germany.

The reader knows something of the cruel sufferings of our hero. Being a free-born American, a natural hater of tyranny in all its forms, and enduring it as he did, it is no wonder that he sought revenge, and that his heart should naturally go out in behalf of oppressed humanity, when he had tasted of that barbarian oppression himself.

With his identity thoroughly established, his passports all correct, and his heart full with the new doctrine that his initiation had developed in him, together with the mission which poor old Batavsky had intrusted him with, he bade good-by to Russia.

From St. Petersburg he went to Warsaw, and from there to Posen, Germany, where he felt for the first time since leaving his native land that he was in the domain of freedom.

Before leaving Russia he had sent home for his entire fortune, and at Berlin had it converted into German money, and it was so considerable that he soon became known as the rich cosmopolitan.

Gradually he made his way towards the little hamlet of Merz, near the border, and when the warm season began he went there with his servant, horses and carriage (one built to order for a special object), and took up his residence in a small town patronized almost entirely by the few travelers who find their way to this part of Germany.

He was now near the alleged hiding-place of Batavsky's rubles, and while seemingly only rambling over the wild country, he was studying the diagram that the old man had given him, and trying to locate the hiding-place by the aid of it.

The location most nearly agreeing with the diagram was about a mile from the little tavern, and every day he would visit it with his gun, or sometimes with a sketch-book, the better to enable him to throw off suspicion should he chance to encounter anyone—a very improbable thing, however, since it was a desolate, uninhabited region, without roads and with nothing to attract anyone save its cragged grandeur.

Indeed, it was so barren of game that the landlord advised him to go in any other direction when in search of it.

But day by day he visited it, and the oftener he did so the greater the fascination of the rugged hills became to him.

The thought that a million rubles lay hidden away somewhere in the vicinity was a fascination in itself, but the more he went the more he felt that the spirit of the old exile was hovering about the place.

Often and often he wished that he but possessed the means—which so many claim nowadays— of communicating with the departed, for the feeling grew upon him so that he could not resist its influence.

"Batavsky!" he said one day, involuntarily, and the echo of the word from half a dozen peaks and crags so startled him that he did not try it again.

But for some reason or other, the last of the echoes was the loudest, and the name came back to him as clearly as he had spoken it, from a hill of verdureless rocks some two thousand yards distant:

"Batavsky!"

"Goodness, how distinct!" he mused. "But why more distinct from that inaccessible hill than from the others? Was it the work of—ah, pshaw! I am allowing the absurdity of spiritualism to get the better of my reason. And yet, after all, who knows? There be more things in Heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy. But it was only echo."

He was seated on an opposite eminence, holding the worn old diagram in his hand, and trying to get at a certain point which would be the key to the location, but could not find it.

Finally, almost involuntarily, he started down the declivity and began slowly to make his way towards the forbidding pile of rocks which had sent back the echo so startlingly.

Why he sought the place he did not know. It was no more promising than other immediate locations, and besides, he had visited it a day or two before, although from another direction.

Slowly he approached and surveyed it, comparing it with his diagram. At length he saw a point that seemed to resemble the one he sought, and after studying it a moment, started to see if he could find the succeeding one.

Coming close to a dark opening, he was startled by fierce growls, and the next instant half a dozen fierce wolves sprang from it, and set upon him savagely.

CHAPTER XIV.

A VICTORY DEARLY BOUGHT.

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon, and the attack was so sudden and unexpected that Barnwell was completely off his guard at the moment.

One of the fiercest wolves, hungry, huge and gaunt, sprang at his throat and bore him to the earth.

Seizing the brute by the throat with both hands, he with almost superhuman strength dashed him away long enough to rise to his knees and to pull his revolver, the other wolves having by this time joined savagely in the attack.

Unable to get upon his feet, he poked the muzzle of his pistol straight into the mouth of the now risen wolf, as he again came towards him, and fired.

It was a fatal shot, and the wolf fell dead.

Still he was pinioned by others, and for a long time he was so placed that he could reach only one of them with his weapon, but this one he sent to the shades quickly.

Then one after another he dispatched them, although, unlike the generality of wolves, they fought until the last one was dead, being undoubtedly nearly starved.

Meantime his clothing and flesh had been dreadfully torn, and the blood was flowing from at least a dozen ragged

wounds, and he was so overcome with exhaustion that he could scarcely rise to his feet.

But the first thing he did was to refill the chambers of his trusty revolver, in case he might be attacked again.

His next thought was to attend to his wounds, but finding these required a surgeon, he made his way sorely back to the tavern, and dispatched his servant for one.

After relating the story of his adventure to the landlord while waiting the surgeon's coming, that individual said:

"I should have told you about it, sir, but you men of the world do not believe in such things."

"What things—wolves?" asked Barnwell, between his groans of agony.

"Well, sir, not that exactly. In fact, I hardly know how to explain myself to you, since I know nothing save by hearsay, and what mountaineers say."

"About what?"

"Well, it has become folklore in these parts that there is a cave somewhere in the Hardt Bergs, containing a vast amount of stolen gold, every coin of which is spotted with human blood, that is guarded by a pack of fierce wolves placed there by the devil. It has been said that desperate men have tried to reach the treasure, but that they have always been slain and eaten by the guardian wolves."

"Nonsense. Simply a story told in the twilight to frighten children, who after growing up come to believe it true."

The landlord shook his head.

"I see you also believe it. Well, I will not dispute or argue with you regarding the legend, but you must see that I did not come upon that particular cave, since I killed the wolves and am here with but a few scratches."

"Rather hard scratches, sir."

"But I shall survive them, and neither this nor the danger of coming upon the real devil-guarded cave will deter me from visiting the hills whenever I like."

"You are a brave man, sir."

"No; simply a sensible one. I am not superstitious, nor do I believe in such legends. I would be ashamed to do so."

"Well," replied the landlord, shrugging his shoulders, "you can afford to do as you please, but you are sure to have no company when you go hunting in that direction."

"And I want none—at least, not the company of persons who believe in such nonsense."

"Ah, the surgeon has come."

"Hurry him here, for my wounds pain me exceedingly," said Barnwell.

The surgeon was soon at his side, and proceeded to dress his wounds, exchanging only sufficient words to learn the cause of them, for he was a man of medicine, not words.

"When will you come again?" asked Barnwell.

"When your hurts need redressing."

"And that will be?"

"To-morrow."

"How long will I probably be laid up?"

"A week," and he went away.

Barnwell experienced great relief from the skillful dressing his wounds had received, and he was presently able to collect his thoughts.

And naturally enough they ran back to the wolf's den, where he had found the starting point that corresponded with Batavsky's diagram, and the legend which the landlord had told him of. What a startling coicidence it was, to say the least of it!

Of course, he did not for a moment believe the supernatural part of it, but it certainly was strange that he should have been met by a pack of hungry wolves just as it seemed that he was on the threshold of success.

But the more he thought the matter over, the more reasonable did it seem to him that, even if that were the location of Batavsky's buried treasure, it was only natural that wolves should rendezvous there. But how superstition should locate money there was more than he could understand.

Then the thought came to his mind—what if that gold had been discovered by someone and removed? In what other way could the legend of bloody gold have come into existence?

But speculation was not congenial to his temper just then. He had gone so far, and nothing short of success or failure would satisfy him now.

That night his wounds pained when he lay down, and he slept but little. Indeed, it was nearly morning before anything like sound slumber fell upon his eyelids.

And even then he dreamed wild, exciting dreams, occasioned, of course, by the events of the day before. But in one of them he thought he saw Batavsky, and he smiled upon him, and while uttering no word, encouraged him by his looks to persevere. With this he awoke, and the thread of the dream ran through his mind again.

"This will never do," said he, calling his servant to light a candle. "There is something in the very air of mountainous Germany that is not real, and that kindles superstition. I will read until morning."

But after reading awhile on a drowsy romance he fell asleep again, and the sun was shining in at the lattice when he awoke.

When the surgeon had dressed his wounds again that day, he felt so much better that he was assisted to a chair that stood under a broad linden-tree, where, a part of the time, he read and restudied Batavsky's queer diagram until it was fairly burned into his memory.

Then he would smoke, and make glad the landlord's heart by indulging in a bottle of wine, and again employ his servant in setting up targets for him to practice upon with his pistol.

Already he had become somewhat famous for his eccentricities, but when the landlord and his one or two guests saw with what ease he shot a hole through the Ace of Spades at fifty paces, they were unbounded in their applause.

Barnwell was indeed a wonderful shot, both with a rifle and a pistol, having won several prizes in shooting tournaments at home, and it seemed as though the experiences he had gone through during the previous two or three years had toughened his muscles and steadied his nerves to a remarkable degree.

And thus he employed his time for five days, all the while impatient at the delay, and on the sixth he was so far recovered that he could walk with the assistance of a cane, and he celebrated the event by telling his servant to hold a lighted cigar in his fingers at the distance of fifty paces, and from it he shot the ashes so deftly that the bullet scarcely raised a spark of fire.

This convinced him apparently that he was all right again, and in the afternoon he and his servant went out to ride.

This servant of his was a Russian, to whom he had been introduced by Vola, and he was a character for fidelity and secretiveness. His name was Ulrich, and Barnwell had saved him from going to prison by paying a fine that he would never have been able to pay, and he at once became attached to his new master by all the ties that bind a lesser intellect and fortune to the two degrees higher.

He never questioned, never told Barnwell's affairs, even if he knew them, and was ever quick to know his slightest wants.

He was a Nihilist, and knew in a general way that his master was one, from seeing him so much with Vola, and so he silently worked and waited, fully believing that he would in time do good work for the downtrodden of his native land.

On the afternoon of the sixth day Barnwell seemed to be almost wholly recovered, and Ulrich drove him out, going in the weird hills once more.

This time he was armed with two revolvers, and his rifle was ready to hand in the body of his wagon, the peculiarity in the build of which has been mentioned before, and which consisted principally in a strong iron box, incased by a fancy wooden one which was fashioned for a seat.

It was slightly odd in its build, but it was admired by everybody for the superiority of its make, and generally regarded simply as a tourist's carriage, made on purpose and in a superior manner.

Arriving at the end of the road that led up into the hills, they halted.

CHAPTER XV.

IN THE DEVIL'S CAVE.

"Remain here, Ulrich, until I return," said Barnwell, alighting.

"Yes, sir."

Armed for almost any encounter, young Barnwell started to find the cave in front of which he had had such a sanguinary struggle a week before.

He had no difficulty in finding it; but he was on his guard this time.

There lay the carcasses of the wolves he had slain, and the very fact of their not having been devoured was positive evidence that there were no other wolves in the neighborhood.

Glancing around, and listening for a moment, he became convinced that the cave was now tenantless, and so he passed on beyond the first point that he had before discovered, and began looking for the next.

Holding the diagram in one hand, and a revolver in the other, he was not long in finding it, and thus two points were gained that corresponded with it.

Again he consulted and compared.

Ten feet marked on the diagram, and then there was an index finger pointing east.

He paced the distance as accurately as he could, but by this time he had entered the cave so far that he could scarcely see about the place.

But he had come prepared for just such an emergency as this, and taking a candle and match from his game-bag, he proceeded to make a light.

He glanced cautiously around the dark and somber cave, and the first thing his eyes rested on were the forms of two dead wolf cubs, evidently belonging to one of the mothers he had slain the week before, and undoubtedly starved to death in consequence.

But this attracted his attention for only a moment.

Standing at the distance of ten feet from the last-discovered point, he held up a little compass that he wore as a charm to his watch chain, in order to ascertain in which direction east lay.

The tiny magnet finally stood still and pointed. The east lay to the right.

Again, by the aid of his candle, he searched for indications.

The walls were damp and seemingly solid.

Had he lost the lead? With the butt of his pistol he began rapping along the stone wall.

It seemed like original adamant.

Then he paused, and again consulted the diagram.

He seemed to have followed it correctly.

There were no further marks upon it, and he finally began to fear that he was on the wrong scent after all.

Again he went to the mouth of the cave, and retraced each point carefully.

There could be no mistake about it, provided he was in the right place; and if he was not, it was a strange coincidence that two such peculiar points should exist in more than one cave.

Once more he approached the side of the cave to which the index finger pointed, and made a still closer examination of it.

But it was as solid as granite could be, as indicated by sounds.

He was about to give up, with the idea that he was in the wrong cave, and began slowly to walk towards the opening.

Suddenly he remembered that in the Russian language "erweldt" signified west, a thing he had not thought of before.

With a glad cry he retraced his steps to the point indicated, and then began to examine the walls, which he found more broken than those on the other side.

There were faint indications of mosses in one or two places, and on sounding them he came upon one large rock that did not seem so firm as the others.

Holding his candle closer, he saw what might have been cement or something of the kind, and with a throbbing heart he drew a stout burglar's jimmy from his bag and began prying into a seam.

It was a powerful tool, worked by a powerful man, and soon the rock, which was fully two feet square, but of irregular shape, began to show signs of getting loose.

"Ah! this must be it," said he, as he saw bits of cement crumble and fall.

But it was no child's-play to move that stone, weighing, as it probably did, five hundred pounds, and held by the cement that had hardened for more than thirty years.

Little by little, however, he worked one end of it partially free, and saw that it stood out at least three inches beyond where it was, and in addition to this, the cement had now lost its hold, and with one powerful last effort the rock fell with an echoing thud some three feet to the bottom of the cave.

Within there was a rough chamber, five or six feet in irregular diameter every way; and if this was the Devil's Cave, as it was called, this one must surely have been his oven, so very like one was it.

Reaching in to allow his candle to light the place, he saw numerous bags, made of reindeer hide tanned without removing the hair.

"Thank heaven I have found it! Batavsky was as true as steel, and I will be true to his memory!" said Barnwell, holding the candle aloft.

It was fully a minute before he could summon sufficient courage to proceed further, so startled were his nerve over the sudden fruition of his hopes.

Then, mastering his emotions, he reached in and lifted one of the bags from its long resting-place.

It weighed fully ten pounds, and when he set it down upon the sill of the opening, there was a confused rattling and clinking inside of the hair-covered bag, a sound that only one coined metal in the world will emit—gold.

There was no need of opening it to make sure that the contents were genuine. The sound told that; and old Batavsky's truth, proved up to the point, was a further guarantee for it.

Taking out another one, he started with one in each hand for his wagon, by which Ulrich was waiting, like the patient, honest soul he was.

Nothing that Barnwell did surprised him. He honestly believed him to be more than an ordinary man, and capable of

doing anything short of raising the dead; and when he saw him approaching with those unique bags in his hand, his curiosity was not aroused sufficiently to make him ask any questions.

Barnwell understood and had faith in him of the strongest kind.

Setting down the bags by the side of the wagon, he wiped the perspiration from his brow, and then, taking a peculiar key from his pocket, he proceeded to throw back the fancy wagon-seat and to unlock the iron chest beneath it.

Now, Ulrich had never known that such a contrivance existed in the wagon before, although understanding that it was a very heavy vehicle; but he evinced no surprise, asked no questions.

Getting up into the wagon, Barnwell told him to hand the bags up to him, and without a word he did so.

Barnwell stowed them carefully away in the large iron box. Then closing it and locking it again, he motioned Ulrich to follow him.

The horses were securely fastened, and there was not a sound, even of birds, in that desolate locality, so all was safe.

Without exchanging a word, they went back to the cave and brought each two more of the bags, which were placed in the strong-box.

It was but little past noon when they began, and for two hours they robbed that golden cell of its treasures and transferred it to the wagon.

The bags were in an excellent state of preservation, for the place was perfectly dry, and besides, they had evidently been prepared with some unusual treatment which made them almost indestructible.

Finally the chamber was emptied, and Barnwell could but think of the toil and risk in transporting so much gold to such a far-off place. It seemed to him almost as marvelous as that it had remained there all those years without being discovered. But Batavsky was no ordinary man, and undoubtedly knew exactly what he was doing.

Ulrich's face was a study.

Had they been transporting bags of stones it could not have been more stolid.

He worshiped the young American, and for him it was to obey without a question, and this he readily did.

He often looked upon his position as an exalted one, as compared with what it would have been had Barnwell not saved him from a debtor's prison, which is only another name in Russia for a poor debtor's grave.

Well, when all the bags had been removed, it was found that the box was too full to admit of the last four, and these Barnwell placed at his feet after the seat had been returned to its place, showing nothing unusual.

"Now, then, back to the tavern, and not a word of this to anyone," said Barnwell.

"Sir, I am your slave," said Ulrich.

"Say not that. You are my servant, my companion and friend. We are both of us members of the same great order. You work in your way, I in mine. There are no slaves in our order, Ulrich."

"It must be so, sir, for you say it," he replied, turning the horses homeward.

This was conclusive.

The bags of gold made a heavy load, and bent the stout springs well down, but the horses and the wagon were strong, and these would have deceived almost anybody regarding the amount of weight they carried.

The roads being rough for some distance, they drove slowly, and just before getting out into the open they met a hunter with a good string of game.

Remembering that he had gone out to shoot, and that they had no game, Barnwell stopped the peasant and bought his choicest birds, after which they drove to the tavern.

Barnwell handed the game to a servant, who afterwards held the horses while he and Ulrich carried the four bags of gold to his room.

Then the wagon was carefully housed, as usual, and the horses taken care of, after which Barnwell strolled leisurely into the bar-room, where the landlord and his wife were examining the game.

"Good luck to-day, I see."

"Oh, yes, I've had very good luck to-day; and will you oblige me by having one of those pheasants cooked for my supper, together with a stew in your best German style made of one of those hares?"

"Certainly, sir," replied the landlady, at the same time bustling away with the game.

"I am tired and hungry, so let me have the best you can do."

"With all my heart, sir."

"And, landlord, bring me a bottle of your choicest Johannisberg out here on the porch, where I can enjoy it in the shade."

The landlord hastened to comply.

"What an appetite it gives, and how generous a good day's sport makes a man," he mused. "A few such customers as this one is would make us rich, and enable us to pay off the thousand marks due on our place."

He set the delicious wine before him, and Barnwell drank a hearty draught.

"Ah! nowhere in the world can such wine be found as in Germany."

"I am glad you think so, sir, for I hope you will stay long with us, and be so well pleased that you will come again."

"I shall certainly remain with you, if I ever come back again, for I like both you and your good frau. But to-morrow I must away to Berlin on business."

"So soon?"

"Yes. My life is made up of business and pleasure. Business must have an inning now."

"I am sorry, sir," said the old man, sadly.

"Oh, well; others will come."

"Visitors are rare here, sir. Now and then a poor artist stops here, and sometimes tourists wander this way; but it is a life-time rarity to meet with a rich cosmopolitan like yourself, who is willing to help us along a bit."

"But you must be well off in any event."

"No, sir; although we should be if the thousand marks' mortgage was paid off."

"When it is due?"

"Within a week."

"And how much have you towards it?"

"Five hundred."

"All right; keep the five hundred, and here are a thousand to free you from embarrassment," said Barnwell, counting out the bills.

The old landlord was so overcome that he fell upon his knees speechless, seeing which, his wife ran to him, thinking him ill.

"Oh, Gretchen! Look at him; the good American gentleman has saved us and our home!"

"Oh, sir, what induced you?"

"The idea of making somebody as happy as I am myself. Take it and be happy. All I ask in return is that you be good to the poor and unfortunate."

"Oh, sir, bless you!" cried the landlord.

"Amen! And you shall have just the nicest dinner you ever had in your life," said his wife, brushing the tears from her eyes and hurrying away.

CHAPTER XVI.

TRUE TO HIS TRUST.

That night, after all had retired, William Barnwell, in the privacy of his own chamber, untied one of the bags, and emptied its contents upon his bed, so that the noise of the jingle might be smothered.

He was a good judge of Russian gold, and this he found to be genuine, coined in double roubles, with dates mostly before and during the reign of Czar Nicholas, the tyrant par excellence of Russia, which is saying much.

He was a ruler who knew nothing of humanity or justice, who was quite as bad, save in form and outward show, as Catherine or her barbarian predecessors, always excepting Peter the Great.

It took England, France and Sardinia to teach him the rudiments of civilization, and even then he died a barbarian at heart, as he had always lived, leaving a conquered monarchy to his son, who tried to appease the world by abolishing serfdom, although he probably never would have done so had not the teachings of Batavsky and others taken root in the hearts of the Russian people, creating a diversion in favor of political liberty, which he thought to smother while freeing the serfs.

So much for history, but it had to come in, this being in nearly all respects a historical story.

"Slightly mildewed, but every one of them genuine," said Barnwell, after he had tested several thousand dollars' worth of them. "And if poor old Batavsky's spirit is hovering near to me, and to the yellow coin he devoted to the advancement of human liberty and equality, it shall see that I shall prove true to my trust. To-morrow I will away to Berlin, to place this to my credit, after which—well, after which, we shall see!"

Then he fell into a reverie. He dreamed a thousand things and considered a thousand possibilities, but as he pushed them away for future consideration, the form of the beautiful Laura Clark filled his mental vision.

What had become of her, and what did she think of his conduct?

Beautiful and rich, it would be strange, indeed, if she had not long ago found a mate, but he resolved to write to her father in New York, explaining the whole business, if only to clear himself of any blame that his mysterious disappearance had produced.

Yes; but not until after he had deposited this gold in the Royal Bank at Berlin.

The next morning he rode away with his golden freight, and at the first regular railroad station that he came upon he placed his wagon and horses in the hands of the Royal Express, engaging that the whole equipment should be delivered safely at the Royal Bank of Berlin, it being understood that his servant, Ulrich, should sleep in the car containing the horses and carriage until their safe delivery as agreed upon.

The journey occupied two days, but at the end of it Barnwell had the satisfaction of landing his gold in the vaults of the Royal Bank, and having his credit established there for an almost unlimited amount, although the old Russian coin, coming in such a strange way, excited much comment with the bank officials who counted and weighed it.

There was a mystery surrounding so much money, deposited all at once and in such a way, but the depositor proved himself all right so far as his papers and nationality were concerned; and in a very short time young Barnwell came to be known as the Fairies' Son, a man to whom they had given unlimited wealth, every rouble of which would double itself at their bidding.

This, of course, did not obtain with the officers of the bank. They simply looked at the gold, counted and weighed.

But Barnwell was pleased to be regarded as a Fairies' Son, for it would enable him to work more effectually.

And it was not long before he became known to the Nihilists residing in Berlin, and, naturally enough, he soon became a leading man among them.

He took modest lodgings, supporting only his servant, but in spite of all precautions, he was shadowed by Russian police agents, who seem to be everywhere.

It is one of the most perfect and far-reaching police systems in the world, and before Barnwell had been there a month they learned all about him.

And this, of course, showed them all he had so unjustly suffered, and they could well understand then why he associated with well-known Nihilists, having undoubtedly become one himself for revenge.

But they could not penetrate the mystery of his enormous wealth, unless, indeed, he were one of those famous American bonanza kings, or at least the son of one, and obtained his wealth directly from America.

Try their best, however, they could not entrap him so that the German authorities would molest him, for in a very short time he was surrounded by as faithful a set of detectives as those employed by the Russian police, and the game soon became diamond cut diamond.

But while all these moves were being made—one to find out what the other was doing—other and unsuspected moves were being made which were to astound the world.

Suddenly, and without any visible or traceable reason, the spirit of Russian Nihilism began to flame again, and with greater fierceness than ever before.

Nihilist papers and documents, printed both in the Russian and Polish languages, were scattered broadcast, and in such a secret manner that the police were wholly at fault, and the despots of Russia began to tremble as they had never done before.

Money seemed to be plentiful, and a more perfect organization effected than were the Russian police.

Day by day it grew, and a dread uncertainty pervaded the society of the aristocrats, and the utmost precautions were taken to protect the life of the Czar Alexander and the royal family.

Now and then the police would discover Nihilists at work;

but all the branches worked independently, and the detection of one could not lead to what the others were doing.

But what astonished and bothered the Russian police was the simple perfection to which the Nihilists had been reduced in their way of working, showing unmistakably that a skillful organizer was at their head.

The great mystery surroundng everything completely baffled the Russian police, and though they half suspected Barnwell, they were not able to bring anything home to him, and he all the while maintained the appearance of a rich cosmopolitan, and if they followed him in his many journeyings they were unable to see that he was doing more than traveling for pleasure.

One day, while riding in "Unter Linden," who should he meet but Mr. Clark and his beautiful daughter riding in the opposite direction, but he was so changed that neither of them recognized him, although looking directly at him.

Laura Clark was also somewhat changed, but by her being in her father's company, Barnwell came to the conclusion that she was yet unmarried, and had most likely proved true to their betrothal, nearly three years before.

He was determined to present himself, and so ordered his coachman to turn about and follow their carriage.

In a few moments it stopped in front of a fashionable hotel, which they entered, and were soon lost to sight.

Calling a servant, he told him to take his card to Mr. Clark, and quietly waited in the parlor for a reply.

Presently that gentleman came down with the card in his hand, and a look of inquiry on his face.

"Mr. Clark, you do not recognize me," said he, rising.

"No, not as a young American gentleman, bearing the name of William Barnwell, whom I met some three or four years ago," said the old man.

"Well, sir, I am the same individual."

"Indeed, but you have greatly changed."

There was an unmistakable coolness visible in Mr. Clark's conduct towards him, but he readily understood why it was so, for after betrothing himself to his daughter he had disappeared mysteriously, and given no sign.

"Well, sir, when you learn what I have been through since last we met, you will not wonder at the change in me. Is Laura well?"

Mr. Clark looked at him a moment without making any reply, then beckoning him to follow, led the way to their parlors.

"Are you sure she will welcome me, sir?"

"That will depend; Laura, please come this way a moment," he called.

"Yes, papa, dear, what is it?" she asked, as she came from her chamber, and her sweet voice thrilled him just as it used to.

"Do you know this gentleman?"

She gazed at Barnwell a moment, and then sat down in a chair without speaking.

"Do you not recognize me, Miss Clark?"

"It is barely possible that you are Mr. Barnwell, but if so, you are greatly changed," she said, calmly.

"Yes, I am William Barnwell; there is good cause for the change you see in me. I saw you driving out, but now, and resolved to see you both, if for no other reason than to explain my conduct to you."

Then he proceeded to relate the story of his life since parting with them, the story that the reader knows so well, holding them spellbound for an hour or more with it, after which he was forgiven, and their old relations resumed, greatly to the delight of all three, and especially of Mr. Clark, who had noticed that his daughter was becoming more and more low-spirited as the time grew longer, and Barnwell not heard from.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DEATH OF AN EMPEROR.

One thing, however, Barnwell did not tell Mr. Clark or his daughter; and that was how he was making use of the vast amount of money that had been given him by Batavsky. That was always to remain a secret within his own breast.

He felt that he was simply fulfilling a sacred trust, and gaining revenge for his own terrible sufferings.

He loved his beautiful countrywoman, and as soon as he had finished his work he would make her his wife, and resume the travels he had set out upon years before.

Naturally he was much in her company after their reunion, and this again threw the detectives from the scent, for before long it became known to them that they were to be married, and start for France and other countries of Europe.

And yet the Nihilists in Russia and in Poland continued to be more active and aggressive, and the police authorities made but little, if any, headway in arresting them.

At length the aristocracy of St. Petersburg, Warsaw, Moscow, and other large centers became almost panicstricken—not even daring to trust their oldest servants.

This feeling was increased when the Czar found a note on his dressing-bureau, which read as follows:

"Alexander.—My life was as good as that of your tyrant father, Nicholas. He murdered me. My spirit will murder you.—Batavsky."

That the note was placed there by some bold Nihilist, a member of the emperor's household, there could be no doubt, and although his personal staff and ministers advised him to take no notice of it, it struck terror to his heart.

Every member of his household was taken in hand by the police and questioned, and each one made to give a sample of his handwriting, but nothing could be found out.

Extra precautions were taken, however, and the Czar never ventured forth without a double guard, and even the streets were guarded by the police to insure his safety.

But another warning came, as if to show him that even those who guarded him needed guards for themselves, when one day

the prefect of police was killed on the steps of his official residence, and no clew of the assassin could be found, although lying near his body was found a paper with the simple name of Batavsky written upon it in Russian.

Then the Czar began to question who this Batavsky was, and it was finally ascertained that an influential man by that name had been transported to Siberia by the Emperor Nicholas for engaging in a revolution—in fact, that he was one of the first Nihilists of Russia, and was supposed to be enormously rich.

But those riches were never found, and the old revolutionist had died in Siberia, and so nothing came of the inquiry save a deeper mystery.

Two or three attempts upon the Czar's life were made and failed. Those who were caught or suspected were put to death, but so soon as one was taken from the work two more were ready to fill his place.

And while in this terror, the Czar and his official household instead of doing anything towards relieving the burdens under which the people groaned, and which drove them to these bitter acts of revenge and reprisal, took all means possible to bind their chains closer yet, and to stamp out Nihilism with an iron heel.

"Laura, you know I told you of poor old Batavsky in Siberia?" he asked of Miss Clark one day.

"Yes, Will, I remember," she replied.

"Well, I dreamed of him last night, and have a presentiment that his presence will soon be felt on earth."

"Oh, Will, you are such a dreamer, you are. Let us talk of something else:."

"As you please. I merely mentioned it; so let's wait and see have arranged everything."

"Oh, that will be so nice! You are so good!"

"As I should be, to one who has waited for me so faithfully and so long. But the dark clouds are rolling by, Laura, and after a little I shall be my own master again."

"And are you not so now?" she asked.

"Not wholly. I have had a sacred duty to perform, and it will soon be finished."

Of course both were busy with their preparations for departure, and she paid but little attention to what he said, as it was upon a subject she knew nothing of, and yet her woman's wit and insight told her that her lover was engaged in something of a mysterious nature, and she hailed with delight the prospect of getting out of Germany and back to America.

The following day the whole world was startled and monarchs trembled at a dynamite explosion in St. Petersburg.

The Czar Alexander was riding along in a carriage, closely guarded by soldiers and mounted police, when, without an instant's warning, a cartridge exploded directly under his carriage, killing everybody and everything within a radius of fifty yards, producing the greatest havoc and devastation.

"Quick—the czar!" cried those who had escaped the terrible explosion.

And a rush was made to the scene of the wreck, where lay mangled horses and human beings, and out of that chaos of desolation they dragged the mangled body of the Czar of all the Russias!

Panic and consternation seized St. Petersburg, seized all Russia—the whole world, in fact.

Instant search was made for those who perpetrated the terrible deed.

One or two suspected individuals were put to the sword without judge or jury, yet they were innocent of the deed.

Detectives and secret service officers took possession of the spot and examined everything—every shovelful of snow even.

Out of the ruin wrought by the terrific explosion one of the officers pulled a small metal plate, crooked and bent by the concussion.

The dead emperor had been borne tenderly to the palace, and all Russia was in tears, either of joy or sorrow.

The officers read an inscription on the plate they had found. It was graven deep and clear in pure Russian. It read:

"The spirit of Peter Batavsky, raging for revenge, calls for the Czar, the son of his murderer! Long live the Russian people!"

That was all, but it amazed those who read it, for it bore the same name that had so terrified the Czar on another occasion.

Never before had such a shock been given to the world, not even the assassination of Julius Cæsar was a comparison to it.

But while the excitement was at its burning height,. William Barnwell and his affianced left Berlin for London.

"Batavsky, you are terribly avenged!" said he, as they sped from German soil.

* * * * * * * *

This story naturally ends here.

But a few words more need be said.

Marriage, happiness, wealth became the portion of the Boy Nihilist, and here falls the curtain on this strange and romantic drama.

THE END.

Read "LUCKY DICK GOLDEN; or, THE BOY MINERS OF PLACER CREEK," by An Old Scout, which will be the next number (577) of "Pluck and Luck."

Missing two advertising pages.

PLUCK AND LUCK.

32 PAGES Contains All Sorts of Stories Beautifully Colored Covers PRICE 5 CENTS

LATEST ISSUES:

507 The Doomed City; or, The Hidden Foe of Plummerdale. By Howard Austin.
508 The Pride of the Volunteers; or, Burke Halliday, the Boy Fireman. By Ex-Fire-Chief Warden.
509 The Boy Mutineers; or, Slavery or Death. By Capt. Thos. H. Wilson.
510 Always Ready; or, The Best Engineer on the Road. By Jas. C. Merritt.
511 Branded a Deserter; or, Boy Rivals in Love and War. By Gen'l Jas. A. Gordon.
512 A Scout at 16; or, A Boy's Wild Life on the Frontier. By An Old Scout.
513 Diamond Dave, the Waif; or, The Search for the Great Blue Stone. By Richard R. Montgomery.
514 The Little Corsican; or, The Boy of the Barricades. By Allan Arnold.
515 Headlight Tom, the Boy Engineer. By Jas. C. Merritt.
516 The Sealed Despatch; or, The Blind Boy of Moscow. By Allan Arnold.
517 The Swamp Rats; or, The Boys Who Fought for Washington. By Gen'l Jas. A. Gordon.
518 Nino, the Wonder of the Air. A Story of Circus Life. By Berton Bertrew.
519 A Fireman at Sixteen; or, Through Flame and Smoke. By Ex-Fire-Chief Warden.
520 100 Feet Above the Housetops; or, The Mystery of the Old Church Steeple. By Allyn Draper.
521 The Boy Explorers; or, Abandoned in the Land of Ice. By Capt. Thos. H. Wilson.
522 The Mystery of the Volcano. A True Story of Mexico. By Howard Austin.
523 Fighting with Washington; or, The Boy Regiment of the Revolution. By Gen'l. Jas. A. Gordon.
524 The Smartest Boy in Philadelphia; or, Dick Rollins' Fight for a Living. By Allyn Draper.
525 The White Boy Chief; or, The Terror of the North Platte. By An Old Scout.
526 The Boy Senator; or, How He Won His Toga. By Allan Arnold.
527 Napoleon's Boy Guardsman; or, A Hero at Eighteen. By Richard R. Montgomery.
528 Driven Adrift; or, The Trip of the Daisy. By Capt. Thos. H. Wilson.
529 Bob the Waif. A Story of Life in New York. By Howard Austin.
530 The Wildest Boy in New York; or, Saved at the Brink. (A True Temperance Story.) By H. K. Shackleford.
531 Bushwhacker Ben; or, The Union Boys of Tennessee. By Col. Ralph Fenton.
532 The Night Riders of Ravenswood. (A Strange Story of Arizona.) by Allan Arnold.
533 Phil, the Boy Fireman; or, Through Flames to Victory. By Ex-Fire-Chief Warden.
534 The Boy Slave; or, A Young New Yorker in Central America. By Howard Austin.
535 Dunning & Co.; the Boy Brokers. (A Story of Wall Street.) By A Retired Broker.
536 Daniel Boone's Best Shot; or, The Perils of the Kentucky Pioneers. By An Old Scout.
537 Ollie, the Office Boy; or, The Struggles of a Poor Waif. By Allyn Draper.
538 The Two Boy Stowaways; or, A Strange Voyage on a Doomed Ship. By Capt. Thos. H. Wilson.
539 Columbia; or, The Young Firemen of Glendale. By Ex-Fire-Chief Warden.
540 Paddling on the Amazon; or, Three Boy Canoeists in South America. By Richard R. Montgomery.
541 Happy Jack, the Daring Spy. A Story of the Great Rebellion. By Gen'l Jas. A. Gordon.
542 Nameless Nat; or, A Millionaire in Rags. By Allyn Draper.
543 The Boy Mail-Carrier; or, Government Service in Minnesota. By An Old Scout.
544 The Boy Messenger of Russia; or, The Czar's Secret Despatch Bearer. By Allan Arnold.
545 Monte Cristo, Jr.; or, The Diamonds of the Borgias. By Howard Austin.
546 The Boy Privateer Captain; or, Lost on a Nameless Sea. By Capt. Thos. H. Wilson.
547 The Boys in Blue; or, The Football Champions of Cherryville. By Allan Arnold.
548 From Bootblack to Broker; or, The Luck of a Wall Street Boy. By a Retired Broker.
549 The Block House Boys; or, The Young Pioneers of the Great Lakes. By An Old Scout.
550 The White Boy Slaves; or, The Student Exiles of Siberia. By Richard R. Montgomery.
551 A Coral Prison; or, The Two Boy Hermits of the Indian Ocean. By Capt. Thos. H. Wilson.
552 Dick "I will!"; or, The Plucky Fight of a Boy Orphan. By Allyn Draper.
553 Larry of the Lantern; or, The Smugglers of the Irish Coast. By Berton Bertrew.
554 My Chum Charlie; or, The Strange Adventures of Two New York Boys. By Howard Austin.
555 The Boyhood Days of "Pawnee Bill"; or, From the Schoolroom to the Frontier. By An Old Scout.
556 The Young Deserters; or, The Mystery of Ramsey Island. By Capt. Thos. H. Wilson.
557 The Bowery Prince; or, A Bootblack's Road to Fame. By Howard Austin.
558 Jack Mosby, the Guerilla King; or, Riding and Raiding in the Rebellion. By Gen'l. Jas. A. Gordon.
559 A Lawyer at 17, and the Fee that Made His Fortune. By Richard R. Montgomery.
560 The Houseboat Boys; or, Stirring Adventures in the Northwest. By Allyn Draper.
561 The Dark Sons of Ireland; or, Plotting Under the Shannon Water. By Allan Arnold.
562 Young Karl Kruger; or, The Richest Boy in the Transvaal. By Berton Bertrew.
563 The Phantom Fireman; or, The Mystery of Mark Howland's Life. By Ex-Fire-Chief Warden.
564 Ben Brevier; or, The Romance of a Young Printer. By Allyn Draper.
565 The Signal Service Boys; or, Fighting Above the Clouds. By Gen'l Jas. A. Gordon.
566 The Red Privateer; or, The First to Float the Stars and Stripes. By Capt. Thos. H. Wilson.
567 The Iron Spirit; or, The Mystery of the Plains. By An Old Scout.
568 The Sons of the Sword; or, The Watchers From the Rhine. By Richard R. Montgomery.
569 The Lost Island; or, A Romance of a Forgotten World. By Howard Austin.
570 The White Wolf of the Galtees; or, A Mystery of the Mountain. By Allan Arnold.
571 The Senator's Secretary; or, The Brightest Boy in Washington. By Allyn Draper.
572 Whirlwind Jack; or, Captain Heald's Boy Messenger. By Gen'l Jas. A. Gordon.
573 The Gypsy's Son; or, The Double Life. By Howard Austin.
574 The Transient Island; or, Cast Away in the South Sea. By Capt. Thos. H. Wilson.
575 The Boys of Black Bay; or, The Young Lumber King of the North Woods. By Berton Bertrew.
576 The Boy Nihilist; or, Young America in Russia. By Allan Arnold.

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 5 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps, by

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.

IF YOU WANT ANY BACK NUMBERS

of our Weeklies and cannot procure them from newsdealers, they can be obtained from this office direct. Cut out and fill in the following Order Blank and send it to us with the price of the weeklies you want and we will send them to you by return mail. POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY.

.....

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York. 190

DEAR SIR—Enclosed find.....cents for which please send me:

....copies of WORK AND WIN, Nos.....
.... " " WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " WILD WEST WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76, Nos.....
.... " " PLUCK AND LUCK, Nos.....
.... " " SECRET SERVICE, Nos.....
.... " " Ten-Cent Hand Books, Nos.....

Name.....Street and No.....Town.....State.....

terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. "Project Gutenberg" is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation ("the Foundation" or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is in the public domain in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg-tm mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg-tm works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg-tm name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg-tm License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg-tm work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country outside the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg-tm License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg-tm work (any work on which the phrase "Project Gutenberg" appears, or with which the phrase "Project Gutenberg" is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg-tm electronic work is derived from the public domain (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase "Project Gutenberg" associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1

through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg-tm trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg-tm electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg-tm License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg-tm License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg-tm.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg-tm License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg-tm work in a format other than "Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg-tm web site (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original "Plain Vanilla ASCII" or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg-tm License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg-tm works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works provided that

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg-tm works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg-tm trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, "Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation."

- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg-tm License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of

Project Gutenberg-tm works.

- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.

- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg-tm works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg-tm electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from both the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and Michael Hart, the owner of the Project Gutenberg-tm trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread public domain works in creating the Project Gutenberg-tm collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain "Defects," such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the "Right of Replacement or Refund" described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg-tm trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg-tm electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH F3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS' WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO

WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTIBILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg-tm work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg-tm work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg-tm

Project Gutenberg-tm is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need, is critical to reaching Project Gutenberg-tm's goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg-tm collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg-tm and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation web page at http://www.pglaf.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Its 501(c)(3) letter is posted at http://pglaf.org/fundraising. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's principal office is located at 4557 Melan Dr. S. Fairbanks, AK, 99712., but its volunteers and employees are scattered throughout numerous locations. Its business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887, email business@pglaf.org. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's web site and official page at http://pglaf.org

For additional contact information:
Dr. Gregory B. Newby
Chief Executive and Director
gbnewby@pglaf.org

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg-tm depends upon and cannot survive without wide spread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations ($1 to $5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit http://pglaf.org

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg Web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: http://pglaf.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg-tm electronic works.

Professor Michael S. Hart is the originator of the Project Gutenberg-tm concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For thirty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg-tm eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg-tm eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as Public Domain in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our Web site which has the main PG search facility:

http://www.gutenberg.org

This Web site includes information about Project Gutenberg-tm, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.