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CONTINUED FROM SECOND PAGE

pled that the winter had been hard and fuel scarce, that his wife was dead and his children stricken with influenza.

"But you have had relief. Our good friend the starosta?"  
"Does what he can," grumbled John, "but he dare not do much. The barons will not let him. The nobles want all the money for themselves. The emperor is living in his palace, where there are fountains of wine. We pay for that with our taxes. You see my hand. I cannot work, but I must pay the taxes or else we shall be turned out into the street."

"But the winter is over now. You are mistaken about the nobles. They do what they can. The emperor pays for the relief that you have had all these months. It is foolish to talk as you do."

"I only tell the truth," replied the man. "We know now why it is that we are all so poor."

"Why?" asked Paul, pouring some lotion over a wad of lint and speaking indifferently.

"Because the nobles"—began the man. And some one nudged him from behind, urging him to silence.

"You need not be afraid of me," said Paul. "I tell no tales, and I take no money."

"Then why do you come?" asked a voice in the background. "Some one pays you. Who is it?"

"Ah, Tula!" said Paul without looking up. "You are there, are you? The great Tula! There is a hardworking, sober man, my little father, who never beats his wife and never drinks and never borrows money."

There was a little laugh. But Paul, who knew these people, was quite alive to the difference of feeling toward himself. They still accepted his care, his help, his medicine, but they were beginning to doubt him.

"There is your own prince," he went on fearlessly to the man whose hand he was binding up. "He will help you when there is real distress."

An ominous silence greeted this observation.

Paul raised his head and looked round. In the dim light of the two smoky lamps he saw a ring of wild faces—men with shaggy beards and hair all entangled and unkempt, with fierce eyes and lowering glances; women with faces that unsexed them. There were despair and desperation and utter recklessness in the air, in the attitude, in the hearts, of these people. And Paul had worked among them for years. The slight would have been heartbreaking had Paul Howard Alex been the sort of man to admit the possibility of a broken heart. All that he had done had been frustrated by the wall of heartless bureaucracy against which he had pitched his single strength. There was no visible progress.

Paul knew that this little room was only a specimen of the whole of Russia. Each of these poor peasants represented a million, equally hopeless, equally powerless to contend with an impossible taxation.

He could not give them money, because the tax collector had them all under his thumb and would exact the last kopeck. The question was far above his single handed reach, and he did not dare to meet it openly and seek the assistance of the few fellow nobles who faced the position without fear.

He could not see in the brutal faces before him one spark of intelligence, one little gleam of independence and self respect which could be attributed to his endeavor, which the most sanguine construction could take as resulting from his time and money given to a hopeless cause.

"Well," he said. "Have you nothing to tell me of your prince?"

"You know him," answered the man who had spoken from the safe background. "We need not tell you."

"Yes," answered Paul, "I know him." He would not defend himself.

"There," he went on, addressing the man whose hand was now bandaged, "you will do. Keep clean and sober, and it will heal. Get drunk and go dirty, and you will die. Do you understand, Ivan Ivanovitch?"

The man grunted sullenly and moved away to give place to a woman with a baby in her arms.

She drew back the shawl that covered her child with a faint, faroff gleam of pride in her eyes. There was something horribly pathetic in the whole picture. The child mother, her rough, unlovely face lighted for a moment with that gleam from paradise which men never know; the huge man bending over her, and between them the wizened, disease stricken little waif of humanity.

"When he was born he was a very fine child," said the mother.

Paul glanced at her. She was quite serious. She was looking at him with a strange pride on her face. Paul nodded and drew aside the shawl. The baby was staring at him with wise, grave eyes, as if it could have told him a thing or two if it had only been gifted with the necessary speech. Paul knew that look. It meant starvation.

"What is it?" asked the child mother. "It is only some little illness, is it not?"

"Yes; it is only a little illness." He did not add that no great illness is required to kill a small child. He was already writing something in his pocketbook. He tore the leaf out and gave it to her.

"This," he said, "is for you—yourself, you understand? Take that each day to the starosta, and he will give you what I have written down. If you do not eat all that he gives you and drink what there is in the bottle as he directs you, the baby will die—you understand? You must give nothing away, nothing even to your husband."

The next patient was the man whose voice had been heard from the safe retreat of the background. His dominant

malady was obvious. A shaky hand, an unsteady eye and a bloated countenance spoke for themselves. But he had other diseases more or less developed.

"So you have no good to tell of your prince," said Paul, looking into the man's face.

"Our prince, excellency! He is not our prince. His forefathers seized this land; that is all."

"Ah, who has been telling you that?" "No one," grumbled the man. "We know it; that is all."

"But you were his father's serfs before the freedom. Let me see your tongue. Yes; you have been drinking—all the winter. Ah, is not that so, little father? Your parents were serfs before the freedom."

"Freedom!" growled the man. "A pretty freedom! We were better off before."

"Yes; but the world interfered with serfdom, because it got its necessary touch of sentiment. There is no sentiment in starvation."

The man did not understand. He grunted acquiescence nevertheless. The



There was something horribly pathetic in the whole picture.

true son of the people is always ready to grunt acquiescence to all that sounds like abuse.

"And what is this prince like? Have you seen him?" went on Paul.

"No, I have not seen him. If I saw him I would kick his head to pieces."

"Ah, just open your mouth a little wider. Yes, you have a nasty throat there. You have had diphtheria. So you would kick his head to pieces? Why?"

"He is a technovnik—a government spy. He lives on the taxes. But it will not be for long. There is a time coming!"

"Ah! What sort of a time? Now you must take this to the starosta. He will give you a bottle. It is not to drink. It is to wash your throat with. Remember that and do not give it to your wife by way of a tonic, as you did last time. So there are changes coming, are there?"

"There is a change coming for the prince—for all the princes," replied the man in the usual taproom jargon; "for the emperor too. The poor man has had enough of it. God made the world for the poor man as well as for the rich. Riches should be equally divided. They are going to be. The country is going to be governed by a mir. There will be no taxes. The mir makes no taxes. It is the technovniks who make the taxes and live on them."

The next comer was afflicted with a wound that would not heal, a common trouble in cold countries. While attending to this sickening sore Paul continued his conversation with the last patient.

"You must tell me," he said, "when these changes are about to come. I should like to be there to see. It will be interesting."

The man laughed mysteriously. "So the government is to be by a mir, is it?" went on Paul.

"Yes; the poor man is to have a say in it."

"That will be interesting. But at the mir every one talks at once, and no one listens. Is it not so?"

The man made no reply.

"Is the change coming soon?" asked Paul coolly.

But there was no reply. After this there was a sullen silence, which Paul could not charm away, charm he never so wisely.

When his patients had at last ebbed away he lighted a cigarette and walked thoughtfully back to the castle. There was danger in the air, and this was one of those men upon whom danger acts as a pleasant stimulant.

### CHAPTER XXIX.

DURING the days following Paul's visit to the village the ladies did not see much male society. Paul and Steinmetz usually left the castle immediately after breakfast and did not return till nightfall.

"Is there anything wrong?" Maggie asked Steinmetz on the evening of the second day.

Steinmetz had just come into the vast drawing room dressed for dinner, stout, placid and very clean looking. They were alone in the room.

"Nothing, my dear young lady—yet," he answered, coming forward and rubbing his broad palms slowly together.

"Because," she said, "if there is you need not be afraid of telling me."

"To have that fear would be to offer you an insult," replied Steinmetz. "Paul and I are investigating matters; that is all. The plain truth is, my dear young lady, is that we know ourselves what is in the air. We only know there is something. You are a horsewoman; you know the feeling of a restive horse. One knows that he is only waiting for an excuse to shy

or to kick or to rear, one feels it thrilling in him. Paul and I have that feeling in regard to the peasants. We are going the round of the outlying villages steadily and carefully; we are seeking for the fly on the horse's body. You understand?"

"Yes, I understand."

She gave a little nod. She had not lost color, but there was an anxious look in her eyes.

"Some people would have sent to Tver for the soldiers," Steinmetz went on, "but Paul is not that sort of man. He will not do it yet. You remember our conversation at the charity ball in London?"

"Yes."

"I did not want you to come then. I am sorry you have come now."

Maggie laid aside her newspaper, with a little laugh.

"But, Herr Steinmetz," she said, "I am not afraid. Please remember that I have absolute faith in you—and in Paul."

It may not have been entirely by chance that Claude de Chauville drove over to Osterno to pay his respects the next day and expressed himself desolated at hearing that the prince had gone out with Herr Steinmetz in a sleigh to a distant corner of the estate.

"My horses must rest," said the Frenchman, calmly taking off his fur gloves. "Perhaps the princess will see me."

A few minutes later he was shown into the morning room.

"Did I see Mlle. Delafield on snowshoes in the forest as I came along?" De Chauville asked the servant in perfect Russian before the man left the room.

"Doubtless, excellency. She went out on her snowshoes half an hour ago."

When Etta opened the door a minute later he bowed low without speaking. There was a suggestion of triumph in his attitude.

"Well?" said the princess, without acknowledging his salutation.

De Chauville raised his eyebrows with the resigned surprise of a man to whom no feminine humor is new. He brought forward a chair.

"Will you sit?" he said, with exaggerated courtesy. "I have much to say to you. I have the good fortune to find you alone."

"So you have informed me," she replied coolly.

De Chauville leaned against the mantelpiece and looked down at her thoughtfully.

"At the bear hunt the other day I had the misfortune to—well, to fall out with the prince. We were not quite at one on a question of etiquette. He thought that I ought to have fired. I did not fire; I was not ready. It appears that the prince considered himself to be in danger. He was nervous—furious."

"You are not always artistic in your untruths," interrupted Etta. "I know nothing of the incident to which you refer, but in lying you should always endeavor to be consistent. I am sure Paul was not nervous or furious."

De Chauville smiled imperturbably. His end was gained. Etta obviously knew nothing of his attempt to murder Paul at the bear hunt.

"It was nothing," he went on. "We did not come to words. But we have never been much in sympathy. The coldness is intensified; that is all. So I took the opportunity of calling when I knew he was away."

"How did you know he was away?"

"Ah, madame, I know more than I am credited with."

Etta gave a little laugh and shrugged her shoulders.

"You do not care for Osterno?" suggested De Chauville.

"I hate it!"

"Precisely, and I am here to help you to get away from Russia once for all. Ah, you may shake your head. Some day perhaps I shall succeed in convincing you that I have only your interests at heart. I am here, princess, to make a little arrangement with you—a final arrangement, I hope."

He paused, looking at her with a sudden gleam in his eyes.

"Not the last of all," he added in a different tone. "That will make you my wife."

Etta allowed this statement to pass unchallenged. Her courage and energy were not exhausted. She was learning to nurse her forces.

"Your husband," went on De Chauville after he had sufficiently enjoyed the savor of his own words, "is a brave man. To frighten him it is necessary to resort to strong measures. The last and the strongest measure in the diplomat's scale is the people. The people, madame, will take no denial. It is a game I have played before—a dangerous game, but I am not afraid."

"You need not trouble to be theatrical with me," put in Etta scornfully.

"A man who plays for a high stake," went on the Frenchman in a quieter voice, "must be content to throw his all on the table time after time. A week tonight—Thursday—the peasants will make a demonstration. You know as well as I do—as well as Prince Pavlo does, despite his imperturbable face—that the whole country is a volcano which may break forth at any moment. But the control is strong, and therefore there is never a large eruption—a grumble here, a gleam of fire there, a sullen heat everywhere. But a little eruption is enough to wipe out one man if he be standing on the spot."

"Go on," said Etta quietly—too quietly, De Chauville might have thought had he been calmer.

"I want you," he went on, "to assist me. We shall be ready on Thursday. I shall not appear in the matter at all. I have strong colleagues at my back. Starvation and misery, properly handled, are strong incentives."

"And how do you propose to handle them?" asked Etta in the same quiet voice.

"The peasants will make a demon-

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### Real Estate Transfers.

The following real estate filings have been made in the county clerk's office since last Thursday evening:

Smith Bros. Loan & Trust to C. Deitshler wd to sw qr 1-1-29..... \$2,400 00  
E. M. Eskoy to F. B. Duckworth wd to lots 13 and 14, blk 23, Indianola..... 1,000 00  
G. W. Burt to G. F. Burt wd to pt of 18-3-27..... 100 00  
E. L. Means to J. F. Cordell qd to n hf sw qr 18-2-30..... 1 00  
United States to D. Creager pat to e hf nw qr 8-1-29.....  
United States to L. Sommers pat to w hf sw qr 4 and w hf nw qr 4-3-30.....  
United States to W. L. Cople pat to w hf sw qr 8-1-29.....  
W. H. Carnahan to V. Franklin rec d to w hf nw qr and n hf sw qr 18-3-28..... 1,450 00  
J. F. Richardson to H. H. Condon wd to ne qr 8-1-29..... 200 00  
C. H. Angell to W. H. Bryant wd to ne qr 11-2-29..... 1,000 00  
V. Francisco to S. Schaffer wd to lot 6, blk 10, 2nd McCook..... 1,000 00  
E. W. DeMortimer to P. F. McKenna ne qr 34-2-30..... 525 00  
P. F. McKenna to C. H. Boyle wd to ne qr 34-2-30..... 525 00  
G. R. Jones to L. Jones wd to se qr 11-4-27..... 2,500 00  
G. W. Jones to L. Jennings qd to lot 21, blk 62, Bartley..... 50 00  
J. N. Clarke to H. Barbazette and J. E. Kelley rec. d to lots 7, 8 and 9, blk 15, McCook..... 6,000 00

Last Saturday evening closed the series of lectures to non-Catholics which were given last week by Rev. Edw. Mullaly, a Paulist brother from Chicago. The lecture, Saturday evening, though mainly a resume of the preceding ones, made a splendid climax and was, perhaps, the most impressive of the entire week. At the close of his address, Father Mullaly sang, "Lead Kindly Light" in such a simple way, yet so full of expression, that it must have gone straight to the hearts of the listeners. Father Mullaly made many friends during his stay here, though they may be mostly unknown to him, by his kindly ways, his deep faith in his religion, and the spirit of true christianity he showed to all whether of his own faith or not. His mission is one of peace, and may heaven's blessing rest upon his work.—Indianola Reporter.

Pain may go by the name of rheumatism, neuralgia, lumbago, pleurisy. No matter what name the pains are called, Hollister's Rocky Mountain Tea will drive them away. 35 cents.  
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