

DARKEST RUSSIA

BY H. GRATTAN DONNELLY.

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CHAPTER II.—Continued.

Beginning with a glass of vodka, which evidently sharpened his appetite, Radaloff enjoyed with apparent zest the viands set before him, and having lighted a cigar paid his bill and withdrew.

The restaurant he had just quitted was only an occasional resort, but a visit there was necessary because Radaloff had need to interview this waiter. The fact is that Radaloff and the waiter both served the same master, and drew their income from the same source, the secret service fund of the imperial police. There was one customer of this restaurant regarding whom it was essential to ascertain certain facts. It was this particular individual to whom the obliging and observant waiter referred in his brief conversation with Michael Radaloff.

Radaloff after leaving the restaurant hailed a second-class drosky. A drive of some twenty minutes sufficed to bring him to another point in his allotted pilgrimage. This time the drosky was driven up to the door, the driver paid and dismissed, and Radaloff entered with the confident step of a visitor on familiar ground. The place was a bookseller's shop. Indicating a fine edition of Tennyson which was conspicuously displayed, Radaloff signified a desire to examine it more closely. With a polite bow the proprietor, taking the work, begged his customer to examine it at his leisure, at the same time leading the way to a private office in the rear of the store. We will leave Monsieur Radaloff to the perusal of England's famous poet-laureate. It would be useless to await his exit from the private office. As a matter of fact, when he did leave the establishment it was by the door of a house round the corner in another street, there being a secret means of communication between the two. And when he did appear no one would have recognized in the scholarly-looking professor, with the package of books under his arm, the trusted and trained police agent, Michael Radaloff.

CHAPTER III.

The Nihilist Propaganda.

Nihilism, at the time of which we write, was manifesting itself in many ways and was sufficiently aggressive to cause his excellency, the minister of police, no small degree of anxiety. In all revolutionary movements there are to be found two classes, the extremists and the moderates. The revolutionary party of Russia at this time was perhaps as striking an example of divided councils as could have been found in history.

Among the large class of educated and intelligent Russians who believed that the time had come for the substitution of a constitutional government instead of an autocratic and despotic monarchy, the views of the extremists found little favor. Most of the ruling spirits of the time were too well informed not to perceive that the assassination of any one man—or of dozens of men, for that matter—never accomplished the regeneration of a people. Those who held this view were no common conspirators. Many of them held positions of power and influence.

The end they sought, they were convinced, could best be obtained by a propaganda of education—using the word in its best and truest sense. They were as courant with the development of political economy in most of the countries of the world, and their friends kept them well supplied with such publications as were essential to keep them in touch with the advanced thinkers of the day. The rigid censorship prevailing in Russia at the time made it somewhat difficult on occasions for the leaders of the movement to obtain interdicted literature; but in spite of all the vigilance of the government many forbidden

books and pamphlets had found their way into St. Petersburg; had been reproduced and scattered broadcast throughout the empire. It was the first discovery of this paper that Gorshakoff had summoned the minister of police. He had in no uncertain manner indicated that the perpetrators of this latest outrage against the peace and dignity of the czar must be discovered. It was then that he uttered the words still ringing in the ears of Constantine Karsicheff—"Do something." And it was in pursuance of his determination to "do something" that Karsicheff had sent Michael Radaloff on his mysterious mission.

Madame le Baroness von Rhineberg, widow of the banker Ferdinand von Rhineberg, of the great banking house of Von Rhineberg and Strauss, sat in her luxurious boudoir in her princely residence in the most fashionable quarter of the city. She was a true type of the upper class German, and although she had lived most of her life in Russia and spoke the language like a native, she had never entirely lost her national characteristics. Her pink and white complexion, light blue eyes and wealth of light golden hair, gave her somewhat the appearance of a great doll of the most approved pattern. A letter she had been reading had fallen from her hand and she sat, with a rather serious look upon her face, gazing out of the window.

"Poor child."

That was all; and having murmured the words, almost involuntarily, the baroness relapsed into her reverie. Alone in the world, for her marriage had been childless, the baroness found a certain degree of happiness in sharing other people's miseries. When Ferdinand von Rhineberg departed this life he left his disconsolate widow the possessor of a fortune which made her one of the richest women, in her own right, in St. Petersburg.

There was but one family, however, to whom she was always at home and in whose house she found congenial companionship. Strangely enough, the house was that of Constantine Karsicheff, minister of police. Not that between the cold, haughty and ambitious countess and the warm-hearted and affectionate German lady there could be much in common. The intercourse between the baroness and the Countess Karsicheff was confined to those social amenities and everyday courtesies that pass current in society, and are sometimes mistaken for friendship.

Between the baroness and Olga, however, there was a deep affection. Had they been mother and child it could not have been more profound and sincere. In fact, Olga Karsicheff, loving and gentle as she was by nature, had never felt for her own mother anything like the love she bestowed on the baroness. Nor is this to be wondered at. Katherine Karsicheff was neither of a loving nor a lovable nature, and the gentle Olga could recall the tears shed in childish sorrow at many a repulse of the girlish affection offered to her mother only to be refused. And so it happened that the baroness became the repository of Olga's childish affections.

Always earnest and thoughtful, Olga now seemed to be under the influence of a deeper feeling than usual. With affectionate concern the baroness could not fail to perceive that Olga was daily becoming more and more preoccupied with her own thoughts, and that on more than one occasion her reveries were ended by a sigh. She knew Olga's melancholy to be due to the odious position in which she was placed. She was merely used as a pawn in her mother's social game, and compelled to marry a man in the selection of whom she had neither voice nor choice.

"Olga," soliloquized the baroness as she again glanced over the letter, "has not seen Alexis for two years. She doubtless feels that the rough and stirring life of the camp may have changed him since they parted—since the time when she had been informed by her mother that she was destined for the wife of Alexis and forbidden to refer to the matter again in any way, other than to regard it as a fact, settled beyond controversy. Alexis," the baroness recalled, "had been urged by his father to propose as a matter of form, and Alexis had proposed in a perfunctory way, been accepted in a half-hearted, listless style as something that could not be helped, and then he went off to the wars to win the glory that had glided his career ever since."

The baroness sighed. Her mind went back some two and twenty years to another marriage of convenience—to another drama of high life in Europe in which she herself had played a part. Then there came across the vista of vanished years the memory of a young student.

A knock at the door interrupted the reverie.

"Come!"

Marie, the baroness' own maid, entered and presented a salver upon which was a card bearing the name:

"Prof. Nikolai Kasovitch,

"University of St. Petersburg."

"Herr Professor waits in the library," said the maid, "and begs the honor of a personal interview with Madame the Baroness."

"Very well. Say that I will come."

The great banker Von Rhineberg had been all his life a devoted bibliomaniac, and his reputation as a col-

lector of the rare and curious in books and prints was well known. Hence it was no uncommon thing for the possessor of choice literary treasures to call to dispose of works that possessed sufficient value to be deemed worthy a place in such illustrious company.

When the baroness entered, a tall man, bearing in his every appearance the marks of the student and scholar, arose and bowing respectfully said: "I have taken the liberty, Madame Baroness, of calling to ask your gracious inspection of this work"—laying a large book elegantly bound on the table. "It is a present to me from an English friend—Professor Muller of Oxford. My circumstances are such that I am obliged to part with it—for—for—for" and a suspicious buskiness in his voice gave evidence that some strong emotion was struggling for expression.

The baroness became interested at once. "Pray, sit down," she said kindly, pointing to a chair.

There was silence for a moment.

"You were about to say—" the baroness sympathetically suggested. Then waited.

"I need the money this work will



"IT IS A PRESENT TO ME."

bring to send to my brother who is—who is—" and the voice became lower—"a political exile in Siberia."

"Poor fellow!" The baroness sighed. "What is the value of the work?"

She had not even asked its name. The story—rather the manner in which it had been told, for the story was an old one—she had heard it a score of times—had touched her.

"That is for Madame le Baroness to decide."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed the baroness. "I could not think of such a thing. Besides," she added, "I am no judge of the value of rare books."

"We professors have heard differently, madame, and it would be difficult to make the literati of St. Petersburg believe it of the possessor of the finest library in the city."

"What is the book?"

"A volume of the poems of Alfred Tennyson, and the rarest and most valuable edition published. It is too great a treasure for an humble professor like myself to possess, however much I may appreciate it. And," he added, after a slight pause, "its value will enable me to be of service to my poor, poor brother."

A sudden impulse moved the baroness. "I will gladly give you the amount you desire for the work—and you can keep the book if you—"

The old professor rose to his feet. "Pardon, madame," he said, with a touch of sad dignity in his voice, "I am poor, but I am not asking—"

"Pray, don't mistake me," interrupted the baroness, "and believe me, I had no desire to hurt your feelings in the slightest degree. But since you decline to place a price on the work, of the value of which I am totally ignorant, what am I to do in order to serve you?"

The professor paused a moment.

(To be continued.)

Remarkable Game of Chess.

A game of chess under extraordinary conditions was played day or two ago at a fashionable London club by some ultra-smart men. Sixty-four squares were chalked out upon a billiard table, and the pieces were represented by bottles containing wines of various qualities. Champagne was the king, claret the queen, Burgundy the bishops, port the castles, Madeira the knights, while pint flasks of common Hungarian vintages stood for the humble but effective pawns. The most remarkable of the rules laid down for observance was that which rendered it obligatory upon every player making a move to empty his piece at a draught. Faithful compliance with this ordinance, however, was found upon experiment to interfere somewhat prematurely with the progress of the game, for by the time the opening moves had been executed upon strictly Bacchanalian principles the players were under the table.

Woes of Authorship.

Mr. William Dean Howells' daughter when a very little girl made a childish literary venture in the form of a book of verses. The lines were copied out in a round, unformed schoolgirl hand and the sheets sewn together, a labor of weeks. The volume was put on sale at a church fair. The day after the fair the little girl sought her father to tell her experience with heart-breaking sobs. She had stood all day watching the book. A few had glanced at it, but no one had bought it. Mr. Howells soothed her. "My dear," said the distinguished novelist compassionately, "you are becoming acquainted too early with the woes of authorship."

"Very well. Say that I will come." The great banker Von Rhineberg had been all his life a devoted bibliomaniac, and his reputation as a col-

WITH THE WORLD'S BEST WRITERS

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

OUR BAD COLLEGE SPELLING.

The Decalogue is as good a labor platform as any. Law has always failed to adjust wages. In practical religion we find the highest form of solution yet offered—Carroll D. Wright in a public address in New York.

It is an old thought that if employers, instead of thinking how low wages they could pay, would think how high wages they could get, if employees, instead of thinking how low wages they could get, would think how high wages they could take, there would be no room for dispute. Each side would then be doing its best for the other.

Human nature, however, is selfish, chiefly because all men think that they are better than other men. Therefore they demand larger shares of the earth's fruits and of their greater ability as men, but because they think they are better than other men as men.

Those who wish to live in the world, of course, have to keep on dealing with human nature as it is made by this universal delusion, at least until the millennium comes. As the millennium is universally deemed desirable, it is evident that the quickest way to bring it in is to endeavor to overcome this delusion by every man's doing his best to treat every other man as not inferior to himself, but as just a man like himself.

The "practical religion" which Dr. Wright, after years of study, finds "the highest form of solution yet offered" is merely the gospel of the Man of Nazareth.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

THE RUSSIAN PERIL.

Whenever Russia does wake up, then, indeed, beware of the Russian peril! Peasant France, freed, overran Europe, ignoring the boundaries of kingdoms as if they were chalk marks, and upsetting thrones as if they were toys on a nursery floor. In three years the revolutionists made more great generals "out of mud" than the monarchy had made out of porcelain in three centuries, and from their loins sprang Napoleon and his marshals.

To-day only a few thousand persons constitute Russia. No one else has anything to say or anything to do, except to pay the bills and carry the guns. But when the more than hundred million Russians each becomes an active unit in the nation, when their energies, pent up and denied for centuries, are loosed in the service of their country, Russia then will realize the great picture which Milton drew in these memorable lines:

"A noble and puissant nation, rousing herself like a strong man after sleep and shaking her invincible locks."—Boston Globe.

THE PRICE OF FAME.

When one considers how much the people love to be humbugged, it is surprising that there are not more people engaged professionally in the business. A man with a very brilliant mind may make a brilliant address before a brilliant audience, and there the brilliancy stops; but a man with a mind about the size of a shriveled walnut, may talk a lot of nonsense to an audience of no—or of average or unusual—intelligence, and immediately he becomes famous. An educator in a recent religious meeting told a fairly intelligent audience that dancing was the closest approach to Paradise, and to-day his name and theory is known from Maine to California. A University of Chicago professor tells wherein Rockefeller is superior to Shakespeare, and while the oil magnate modestly protests, the professor's mail is overwhelmed with requests for photographs and locks of his hair.

A Harvard professor, who teaches Slavic literature, and who is native of Russia, expresses the hope that his fatherland will be defeated in the Eastern war, and he gets half a column of attention, where his sensible utterances had never won him more than very moderate attention. And so, if a man must simply be foolish to become famous, is it any wonder that almost everybody to-day is famous?—Baltimore Herald.

PREPARATION FOR TRAVEL.

"There is one thing which is of great importance if one wishes to benefit by travel," says Rev. Minot J. Savage in the Four-Track News. "One should make sure what he is going to see before he leaves home. The story is told of Humboldt, the great and wonderful traveler, that on a certain occasion, he was talking to a friend who had just returned from Palestine. As the great scientist talked about the points of interest, mentioning buildings and streets and ruins in the most familiar way, his friend asked him when it was that he had been there. He replied that he had never been there, but on a certain occasion he had expected to go and had read up in regard to it by way of preparation.

In London, for example, or Paris, there are many streets, buildings, monuments, pictures, historic spots to be visited, that no man can expect to be otherwise than lost as in a wilderness, unless he has read and studied beforehand and knows what he wishes to see."

NOT A TEN-WORD SCOLD.

Angry Wife Needed More Than That to Do Subject Justice.

There were little red streaks in her face and a blaze in her eye as she came into the telegraph office and said:

"I want to telegraph to my husband."

"Yes, madam," responded the operator, handing her some blanks.

"How much will it be?" she inquired.

"Don't know!" she exclaimed.

"What are you here for?"

"To send and receive messages, madam."

"Well, why don't you know how much a telegram will cost?"

"Because, madam, I don't know where it is to be sent."

"Well, you needn't be so smart," she snapped. "It's to go to Chicago."

"Then it will cost 40 cents."

She made no further remarks, but took the blanks and in the course of time returned with about six pages of rather closely written matter.

"There" she said, laying four dimes down with the message, "send that."

"But, madam," explained the operator, "it is 40 cents for ten words."

"What?" she ejaculated, "you can only send ten words for 40 cents?" She looked him square in the face as she tried to suppress her feelings. "Are you a married man?" she asked.

"Yes, madam."

"Well, you must be very stupid if you don't know a woman can't give her husband a piece of her mind in ten words," and without waiting to hear anything more she glided out of the office, taking her message with her.

DEATHS FOLLOW DOG'S HOWL.

Tom Sawyer's Theory Vindicated by Strange Occurrences in Maine.

A black dog whose owner is unknown has been howling for two weeks around Elm street, Saco. He sits in front of a house with his head turned skyward and keeps up a continual unearthly howl, which can be heard within a radius of a quarter of a mile.

There have been an unusual number of deaths in this neighborhood recently, and it is claimed that this dog has howled in advance in front of every house in which a death has occurred. The superstition has held good in six instances, and Saturday the dog was dividing his time between two houses in which there is sickness, howling for a while before one of them and then taking his station before the other. Some people in the neighborhood are a good deal worked up about it.

Nobody has been able to get near enough to the dog to get a shot at him, and when driven off he soon returns. The superstition is as old as the hills. It is claimed that within a radius of 200 yards from a central point in that neighborhood twelve deaths have occurred within less than that number of months.—Bangor News.

The Ridiculous in Poetry.