

# DARKEST RUSSIA

BY H. GRATTAN DONNELLY.

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## CHAPTER X.—Continued.

"Now, by my father's blood!" he exclaimed, "this is indeed a find. Hold!" he shouted, as he averted a blow aimed at the prostrate and helpless Alexis by Hery—a blow with an ax, which, had it been delivered with all the strength intended, would have ended its victims life then and there. "Hold—wait—wait! Who, think you, is this?"

"Who? Speak! Who?" was demanded on all sides.

"Why, Nazimoff, the cruel, cowardly—"

Oraminsky got no further. With a howl of rage the conspirators sprang toward their victim—"Coward, dog, woman beater, your end is near." And Alexis would have been torn to pieces by his infuriated enemies but for Oraminsky's interference.

"Hold!" he shouted, with an oath, "don't act hastily. We must find out what we can."

"But he must die!" yelled Hery. "By me!" "By my hand!" "I'll deal the blow!" said others, crowding forward.

"Wait—the avenger has been selected. Ivan drew the red rouble." Alexis heard every word.

"But Ivan is not here; give me the right. I never killed a noble," shouted Hery. "I will have blood. I love blood. Give me the right to kill him here and now!" And as she spoke she would have carried her desire into execution but for the fact that two or three of her companions restrained her by force, awaiting the words of Oraminsky.

"The right best belongs to Iida herself!"

Alexis Nazimoff closed his eyes. It was true, then, Iida was one of this vile gang of murderers.

"Yes, Iida! Iida! Where is Iida?" was the shout.

Even as they spoke, Iida Barosky, entering and pushing her way through the center of the mass, came front and stood face to face with Oraminsky.

"What is the matter?" she asked hurriedly; "has anything happened to Ivan? Has—"

"We have caught a spy," said Oraminsky, "the accused—"

"Nazimoff!" said the crowd with one voice, "and there he lies."

"Nazimoff!" exclaimed Iida. The recollection of the terrible ordeal through which she had passed, the memory of the uplifted whip, the thought of her humiliation and of Nazimoff's cowardice—all these flashed into her mind, and a wild desire for instant vengeance on her foe filled her in a moment. With compressed lips and flashing eyes she turned, her hands clenched, and with the words, "the cowardly Nazimoff!" she sprang toward the helpless figure bound to the bench on which he lay. "You coward!" she exclaimed, as she raised her hand, and with a cry of terror and dismay she staggered back and would have fallen.

She had recognized Alexis.

Her face turned deathly white, the blood left her lips, and it was only by a supreme effort that she kept herself from falling by a convulsive grasp of the table.

"See! See!" said Hery, "she dares not shed blood. She is weak. I am strong—let me deal the blow. Now, now, now!" and she rushed forward.

Iida threw herself before the maddened woman. Twice she essayed to speak, but in vain. Her lips moved, but she uttered no sound. She could only gaze into the face of the infuriated woman and motion her to stand back.

"No, I will kill him!" yelled Hery. "Wait a moment; wait, for God's sake, wait!" came in gasping accents from the lips of Iida. She breathed heavily a moment, and then made another effort. "It—it is a mistake—"



"It is Nazimoff; Oraminsky found his papers." The words came in a perfect howl from the vengeful victors, who were thirsting for the blood of their conquered and helpless enemy. "Kill him now!"

The crowd made a simultaneous movement to advance.

Iida sprang before Nazimoff. The moment's respite in her speech had been of service. She was once more able to command her voice. Stretch-

ing both hands toward the conspirators, with a mute pathos which arrested them for a moment, even if it did not alter their purpose, Iida spoke again: "Wait—a moment—more; wait, and—and—listen." The voice was broken with emotion, but she gained strength as she went on.

She felt that now, if ever, she must succeed in swerving them from their purpose. "Listen, dear brothers—sisters of the people—listen to me—to Iida—to the sister of Ivan; listen one moment more—for God's sake hear me—hear me to the end. There, tonight, among—among all that throng of nobles there was but—but one to protect me. It was—it was—this—this young officer. Believe me, for God's sake; for dear God's sake, believe me! He was my—my defender—my rescuer. Do not—do not harm him! Have pity on me! I—I—oh, brothers and sisters, he is no spy! I know it; be merciful, for me, to him; spare him, and let him go!"

"No, no, he is a spy! he is Nazimoff! He is here to betray us; he must die!"

The words rang in the ears of Iida. There was no hope for Alexis; he would be murdered before her eyes.

Hery had waited for a chance. She had laid aside the hatchet and had grasped a knife—a murderous weapon—and with a fendish look she sprang forward with it uplifted.

With a cry of mingled anguish and despair, but with the strength of a lioness, Iida sprang between the murderer and her victim, and, wrenching the knife from her grasp, fairly hurled Hery back a dozen feet into the arms of her companions.

"Back, murderers! Stand back, all of you!"

The words rang out in startling contrast to the tremulous tones in which her appeal had been uttered a moment before, as Iida Barosky, standing in front of the prostrate Alexis, her eyes fairly ablaze with the courage of despair, met without quailing the maddened looks of the surprised and astonished conspirators. The weak, pleading, helpless woman of a moment before had given place to the desperate, courageous and unflinching heroine, who, standing majestically alone, with the knife held in her uplifted hand, looked the incarnation of sublime defiance to the murderous gang who sought the life of Alexis.

To say that they were amazed at the transformation but faintly describes the effect Iida's words and actions produced. They looked one to the other and then again at the young girl who stood before them. There was not one of them who did not know that Alexis Nazimoff could only be reached over the dead body of his defender, and that Iida would fight to the death.

There was a hurried whispering, and Kirshkin moved to the front.

Suddenly he made a spring for Iida.

But not too quickly for her not to detect his object. The knife descended, and Kirshkin, the blood streaming from his breast, was borne back.

"Oh, wretches, cowards that you are! I was weak but a moment since, now I am strong. More of you will die. Stand back!" This as another movement was made. "Stand back! for I swear by the soul of the mother who bore me, the first one of you to touch him dies by my hand. More—I swear to denounce you, to deliver you to the gallows, cutthroats and assassins as you are!"

As Iida spoke she moved backward, and with a rapid movement passed her hand behind her. It was but the work of an instant for Alexis Nazimoff to run the cords which bound his hands against the keen edge of the weapon. In another moment he had unloosed the cord which bound his feet, and springing erect, grasped the sword which had fallen when he was overborne.

"Brave Iida! you have saved me. Stand by my side—we are more than a match for the cowardly dogs."

"Alexis, we will live or die together!"

"They are but two; are you cowards?" cried Oraminsky. "If they escape we are betrayed; perhaps even now—"

He spoke no more.

The sound of a hurried advance toward the door on the outside—a quick, metallic sound of a key as it touched the lock—arrested the attention of all. To the fevered minds of the conspirators the sound suggested the police—the metallic ring fetters, the hurried footsteps a surprise. That panicky feeling which spreads instantly took possession of them. Their bloodthirsty expressions changed to one of fear, and as Oraminsky turned they interpreted his movement as the signal for flight.

"We are trapped!" Someone in subject terror uttered the words.

It was enough.

With one movement the conspirators, actuated by a common and uncontrollable impulse of self-preservation, ranged themselves alongside the wall with the celerity and regularity due to their practice for such emergencies; the concealed mechanism which worked the doors leading to the secret hiding places was touched; the doors opened slowly and revolved as if by magic, and the conspirators had disappeared!

## CHAPTER XI.

In the Name of the Czar.

With a sigh of infinite relief from

the terrible strain, Iida, as the last of the conspirators disappeared, felt her overtaxed strength relax; her eyes became dim, she swayed to and fro for a moment and would have fainted in the arms of Alexis had not the rush of cold air from the door above, which now opened, revived her.

Looking up she exclaimed, "Ivan!"

Ivan entered, and with him a woman heavily veiled. But there could be no doubt in the mind of Alexis as he caught sight of the figure. "By heaven!" he exclaimed, "it is Olga Karsicheff."

Then turning to Iida, Alexis pressed her to his heart. He spoke no word, but there was all of the passionate devotion and affection in his nature expressed and understood.

Ivan came forward; his companion was Olga.

"I have kept my word," he said, "Olga is here. Why, what has happened? What does this mean?" he added hurriedly, as taking Iida from the arms of Alexis he gazed with alarm at her pallid face.

"Your sister has saved my life—she can tell you all," said Alexis, as he grasped both the hands which Olga held to him.

Olga, trembling and agitated, suffered Alexis to lead her to a seat



some distance from where Ivan was listening with horrified amazement to the recital by Iida of the attack by Oraminsky and his companions.

Alexis, after the trembling girl had become somewhat composed, listened to her story. It differed in no material particulars to that which he had already heard from Ivan, and as Olga concluded, and with tear-stained face besought his forgiveness, Alexis was deeply touched by her appeal. "I thought of all—of my father's anger, my mother's hatred—for she will hate me when she discovers all!" said Olga, as she approached the conclusion, "but, oh! Alexis! I could not help it, for I love him so, I love him so!"

Alexis was silent for a moment.

Then taking the hand of Olga within his own he said: "Olga, there is a power within the human heart which is stronger than duty, stronger than interest, stronger sometimes even than honor, stronger oftentimes than life itself. It is the power of love. It has changed the destinies of us both. It has brought us together in this strange place to-night. It was to be. Your love has been given to Ivan Barosky as mine has been to his sister Iida. But what of the future? I am a man, and can bear the consequences of what my father and the world will call my folly, with a man's fortitude and patience. But you are a woman—what does this step mean to you? Have you thought of the future? Dear Olga, trust me freely—as a brother. Command me in any way to make your life brighter, happier, and believe me, there is nothing I will not do to aid you," and Alexis with some emotion laid his hand protectively on her shoulder.

(To be continued.)

## DID NOT ENJOY CORNET.

Indignant Protest Unfortunately Mistaken for Applause.

A. H. Kirkland, the Boston entomologist, who has shown the toad to be one of the farmer's best friends, said recently:

"The toad has been misunderstood in the past—as much misunderstood as a certain friend of mine.

"This chap was making a walking tour, and one night he put up at a little hotel in Florida. Next morning, at breakfast, the landlady said to him: 'Did you enjoy the cornet playing in the room next to yours last night?'"

"Enjoy it?" my friend shouted savagely. "I should think not. Why, I spent half the night pounding on the wall to make it stop."

"It must have been a misunderstanding," said the landlady, gently. "The cornet player told me that the person in the next room applauded him so heartily that he went over every piece he knew three times."

## The Cipher Too Much.

While Secretary Hay was in the country one summer, an important piece of official business was pending, and he arranged with Washington that any news that might arrive about the matter should be telegraphed to him in cipher.

Day after day he waited, but no telegram came. One morning, happening to go to the lonely little telegraph office, he said to the operator: "I suppose you have received no dispatch for me?"

"Why, yes, sir," the operator replied, "there was a dispatch for you the other day, but it was all twisted and confused. I couldn't make head or tail of it, so I didn't think it was any use to send it up to you."

## FROM W. J. BRYAN

WHAT HE SAYS ABOUT THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM.

## IT IS REALLY A GOOD THING

Some Planks He Regards as Stronger Than Others—Imperialism, He Thinks, Will Be the Leading Campaign Issue.

LINCOLN—W. J. Bryan on Thursday made public the following statement relating to the democratic platform adopted at St. Louis:

The plank on imperialism is positive, strong and satisfactory to the entire party and this question becomes the paramount issue of the campaign.

The tariff plank is good, but it was made so on a close vote in the committee and largely against the opposition of Mr. Parker's adherents. The

plank which was voted down favored a wise, conservative and business-like revision, made "with due regard to existing conditions." The committee thought that these qualifying words emasculated the plank and left it so weak as to give no hope to tariff reformers.

The anti-trust plank is a good one. It demands the enforcement of the criminal law against the trusts; it demands the abolition of rebates and discriminations, and it demands the withdrawal of interstate commerce privileges from the trusts when once convicted. The plank is infinitely superior to the republican plank, and with a president who desired to destroy the trusts would be a sufficient plank, but as this trust plank was also substituted by the full committee there is reason to fear that it may not be in keeping with the ideas of the candidate.

The labor plank is all that could be desired. It declares against government by injunction; it favors arbitration and the eight-hour day, and denounces the methods that have been resorted to in the Colorado strike, but as these planks were added in the full committee some uncertainty exists as to the candidate's position.

The platform declares in favor of the reduction of the army. Upon this the committee was unanimous. The sub-committee reported a plank in favor of an increase of the navy, but this was stricken out in the full committee.

The platform has a plank in favor of the enlargement of the scope of the interstate commerce commission and in favor of irrigation.

On the whole the platform is good. From a western standpoint its greatest defect is that it makes no mention of the money question. An attempt was made to secure a plank opposing the melting of the silver dollar, opposing the asset currency and branch banks, and expressing a preference for the United States note (ordinarily known as the greenback), but, having refused to put in a gold plank, the committee was not willing to have any phase of the money question alluded to. While the motion to reaffirm the Kansas City platform was voted down there was a considerable vote in favor of its reaffirmation and the western members of the committee, together with a few from the south, stood together and secured enough changes in the platform to make it a presentable document and worthy of the support of the party.

## Kansas Corn Crop Poor.

TOPEKA, Kan.—F. D. Coburn, secretary of the Kansas board of agriculture, Friday made public a report regarding the condition of Kansas corn. Mr. Coburn has received a report from every county in the state. He says that on account of the backward spring, cold weather and floods the corn is in a ragged, uneven and imperfect condition. Under the most favorable conditions for the remainder of the season, says Mr. Coburn, the yield in the aggregate will be far below the usual.

## DIG STRIKE IS ON.

Thousands of Employes Drop Work and Walk Out.

CHICAGO—As the result of a disagreement, one of the most extensive strikes in the history of the meat packing industry in the United States began Tuesday in Chicago, Omaha, Kansas City, St. Joseph, Mo., and other cities where large packing plants are located. If prolonged, the strike is expected to cause widespread inconveniences, possibly equaling the anthracite coal famine of two years ago. The unanimity of the strike was complete, and more than 45,000 employes are directly involved. In Chicago alone 18,000 men are on strike.

The effect of the strike on the food supply of the country and the price of meats is being earnestly discussed, notwithstanding the announcement Monday night that the packing houses, contrary to somewhat general expectations, will continue operations without any close down, employing what-

ever help may be obtainable. How much alleviation in the furnishing of supplies to the public this course may afford is a matter of wide variation of opinion.

The packers declare that hundreds of men who could not be provided with places have been applying daily for work. The walkout here was started by the employes of the killing departments at the various packing houses. The killers were followed by the workers in other departments as fast as the current of work left by the slaughterers could be cleaned up. Thus as the workers in each department disposed of their part of the work they threw off their aprons and departed.

This consideration was shown the packers, the labor officials stated, because it was not the desire of the men to cause the employers any financial loss as the result of neglecting meat that was on hand to be dressed. Watched by cordons of police, the strikers filed briskly out of the packing houses, carrying overalls, rubber boots and knives, cleavers and steels.

The strikers were greeted by crowds of women and children, many of whom joined hands with the workmen on the outward march. There was absolutely no sign of disorder.

"How long do you think it will last?" inquired one man, looking quite serious.

"Dunno," replied the striker, "except that President Donnelly says that the men managed to hold out fifteen months in Buffalo, and I guess we can do as much."

In South Omaha, at noon, 4,000 employes of the four packing houses in South Omaha, Armour's, Cudahy's, Swift's and the Omaha, laid down their tools, quit work and went on strike.

This action was the result of an order received by Stephen Vail, second vice president, from Michael Donnelly, president of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen's Association of North America.

## Fraud at Exposition Gates.

ST. LOUIS, Mo.—William H. Ellis, Charles H. Stiller, Henry Miller and Edward Kieley, all of St. Louis, employes of the admission department of the World's fair, have been arrested and taken to the World's fair police station, where they will be held pending an investigation of what is believed to be a gigantic conspiracy to rob the exposition company by ticket irregularities.

## Strike Felt in London.

LONDON—The strike of the employes of the big packing houses in the United States has given rise to the apprehension that the British consumer will soon have to pay more for his meat. In an interview on Wednesday the London manager of Swift & Co. said that unless a settlement of the strike should be reached shortly the price of meat would be bound to rise considerably in Great Britain, adding: "You can hardly stop the supply of a commodity without the markets being affected."



Refused to Listen.

"Pardon me, sir," began the feminine victim of hard luck, who was forced to solicit aims, as she approached the crusty old bachelor's desk, "but I am a poor lone widow, and—"

"You may as well break it off right there," interrupted the heartless o. b. "I can't use any leap-year proposals in my business."

No, He Wasn't Henpecked.



Mr. Scrapper—Marla, I—I— Mrs. Scrapper—Take that, you brute, and don't let me ever hear you say that you are henpecked again.— Philadelphia Telegraph.

## A Different Kind.

Johnny—What does conscience mean?

Teacher—It is something inside of you that tells you when you have done wrong.

Johnny—Ma said I didn't have no conscience. But I knew I had. Only, when I felt that way the other day, doctor said it was green apples.— Brooklyn Life.

## One Man's Grief.

Smithkins—I met Enpeck downtown to-day. He told me his wife had left him last week.

Mrs. Smithkins—Poor man! I suppose he's all broke up over it, isn't he?

Smithkins—I guess so. When I congratulated him he insisted on opening a small bottle.

## Cause and Effect.

Wife—John, do you know that you swore in your sleep last night?

Husband—Did I? It must have been when I had that horrid dream.

Wife—What did you dream?

Husband—I dreamt I was smoking one of those cigars you gave me on my birthday.

## She Was O. K.



Mr. Knox (3 a. m.)—My dearsh-hic-don't be-hic-cross. I've had a hard tug of it.

Mrs. Knox—I should think it would be a hard tug to carry the load you've got.

## Too Sanguine.

Edna—And after our marriage I am going to keep a cook.

Belle—You are too reckless, my dear.

Edna—Reckless?

Belle—Yes. You should say you are going to try to keep a cook.

## Practice Makes Perfect.

Shoe Clerk—I'm afraid you can't get these shoes on, madam. Suppose you try a size larger.

Mrs. O'Riley—Niver do yez mind, young man. O'll be able t' git thim on after Oi wear thim a toim or two.

## Plausible Theory.

Myer—Who was it that originated the saying "the unexpected always happens"?

Gyer—Don't know. Some fellow connected with the weather bureau, I imagine.

## Reason Why.

"But you Americans," protested the Englishman, "have no ancestors to whom you can point with pride."

"Well, that is our misfortune rather than our fault," replied the American girl. "Most of our ancestors came from England, you know."