

# THE ADVERTISER.

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OFFICIAL PAPER OF THE COUNTY

## THE LINK OF GOLD.

Lost—somewhere—a golden hour  
Of this glowing autumn day;  
Since the sunrise, ere the sun set,  
I have lost it on my way.

Was it when I sat and loitered—  
That short chain of such great cost  
Slipping idly through my fingers—  
That my golden hour was lost?

Was I talking of my neighbors,  
Weighing all their hopes and cares,  
And too full of idle gossip  
Well to mind my own affairs?

Did I fret away the minutes?  
Was I murmuring? Was I cross?  
Where could all my sense have flown to,  
That I met with such a loss?

For my hour was a jewel,  
And with sixty small ones set;  
Round each minute sixty seconds  
Made the radiance brighter yet.

They could buy me, oh, what riches!  
And what wisdom could they bring!  
Each was worth, in its true value,  
All the jewels of a King.

For the Lord would give me something,  
(If I went to Him for each;  
Oh, how precious those short lessons  
He can in a minute teach.

Oh, how grand those views of glory  
Which a second can make known!  
Oh, my hour! oh, my minutes!  
Nevermore, alas, my own.

Some I might have well invested,  
Other people's lives to bless;  
Those bright moments wisely traded,  
Purchase heading for distress.

Oh, has anybody seen it?  
Seen my precious hour of gold?  
I would go to buy another,  
But such treasures are not sold.

God prepared for me a number—  
Just how few I do not know;  
Did he give them for no purpose,  
But that I should lose them so?  
—Boston Transcript.

## MORE THAN CONQUEROR.

Winter in Russia is more emphatic than with us. There is a steely glitter in the ice, a barbed arrow in the hail. Eternal glaciers lie upon the hillsides; at least it seems as if blossom and leaf and fresh green grass were gone forever. The sky, sparkling, blue and cold as turquoise stone, has only snowdrifts of clouds floating here and there, illumined by a golden light called sunshine, but totally different from the life-giving radiance we hail with delight. Beneath such a sun we would imagine only snowflowers could bloom.

Yet a young man loiters along the frozen road as if summer zephyrs were wafting the subtle odors of fields of violets and roses to his senses. He is not muffled in costly furs, yet there is something within that makes life warm and ecstatic and full of rosy bloom, despite the desolate fields about him, where the snow lies pure and cold as a quarry of Carrara marble. He does not note the beauty of the scene, either; the delicate penciling of the bare branches against the luminous sky; the dainty snowflowers, pure bridal wreaths of white, that deck the trees for earth's winter festival; the glitter of the ice, with its cold opaline splendor where a sunbeam strikes it; the crystal sheathing of twig and brush flashing bravely like a coat of mail in the noontide light. He is a dreamer, and he is in love, so the present does not exist for him. It is nothing that he has never spoken to the lady of his dreams; that she is set far above him; that his love is like

"The desire of the moth for the star;  
Of the day for the morrow."

It is enough that he sees her every day—and he lives upon that—though her sky-blue eyes have never rested upon his face. By-and-by he will want more than a glance, and the torment of love will begin.

In the distance he can see a glimpse of the lordly structure that is her home, and in his mind he contrasts it with his own humble abode. But he is a soldier of fortune, and who can say what the future may have in store for him? Russia offers prizes to intellect and zeal. Why should he not gain one and make a name for himself; or, oh, ecstatic thought, for her—for Vera! That is her name—it sings itself to mystic music in his dreams—it is written on his soul.

Yet he has only seen her—whirling by him day after day in a sleigh fashioned like a white swan. Sometimes she drives herself, and he has been devising means to say some word to her, to make her look at him once and speak to him. Ah! if she is only alone to-day. It is coming now. He stops with a sudden flash of fire kindling his blood. A slim, girlish figure, in dark, wine-colored velvet skirt trimmed with sables. Her golden curls are streaming in the wind; her blue eyes are full of the sunshine of youth, that light that is clouded so soon; her lips are scarlet as a pomegranate-blossom; on her cheeks the keen wind has brought vivid roses.

Nicole loses his head at the sight. He does not see the thin, gray-haired old man at her side, half-buried in his furs, and shrinking from the icy blast. This man's face is cold and hard as if carved from stone; his lips are stern and compressed; no kindly light warms his pale eyes. A man with an iron will, you would say—no prayers or tears would avail with such an one. Nicole, blinded by the splendid vision of the girl, supreme in her young beauty, suddenly stepped forward and took off his hat.

An idea had come to him—a frenzy to hear her voice. She had a heart of heavenly pity, he knew, and so he would come as a mendicant. He felt, indeed, like one who was willing to kneel before her, if he could win one smile.

But he merely held his hat as one that asks for alms—and he looked poor

enough—like a poor scholar whose intellect is his only wealth, and who finds it is worth nothing in exchange for bread and butter.

The girl had no time to act. In a second her father had noted the movement on the part of the young man, and at the same instant the lash of the whip was laid across his face like a living line of fire. The Count Semiloff had stopped long enough for that, and to hurl a half dozen oaths at the young man's head, then the sleigh dashed on like the wind.

Nicole staggered back. He grew cold and sick from head to foot—cold as a stone; and with no life in him, save where the scarlet line on his face throbbled and beat like a wound. He slowly steadied himself at last, but he was deadly pale, save for the crimson band, and he shook from head to foot as if with the palsy. "Curse the aristocrat!" he gasped; "one day we will be quits for this. If I lived a hundred lives I would never forget this moment. Bah! fool that I was to forget for an instant that I am one of the people—that my hand is against such as he and his. He has brought me to my senses with a vengeance. That blow ought to kill my love—and it will. Henceforth I live for revenge, and when that day comes, Count Semiloff, I will remind you of this."

The sleigh, skimming along the frozen ground like a bird on the wing, was a mere speck in the distance by this time. Not a word had been spoken since the oaths that the Count had thundered forth with his blow. There was not a sound save a little gasp from the young girl, and afterwards a muffled sob.

"Vera, what do you mean?"—in a stern voice. "Look at me."

The girl unwillingly turned her face towards him—a sweet face, with the color gone, and lips that quivered a little, and eyes that met his own undauntedly, though they were as misty as the blue of showery skies.

"You have tears in your eyes, girl!" cried, stormily. "By 'he infernal legion, do you dare to whine about my just chastisement of that fellow's impudence?"

"He had a good face, papa, and looked poor and cold."

"Bah—the beggar! Well, I warned him a bit! Besides, I've a shrewd idea that he was a sham beggar, after all—not but what he would have been right served if he'd been genuine! There's work enough in the Empire for all. Only with this man I've happened to notice one thing—for the last month we have met him every day. I flatter myself we will not meet him again."

"But why should he sham beggary?" asked the girl, wonderingly.

She was very young, only sixteen, and she did not dream that it was her own sweet face that had made the poor youth mad and blind.

Her father gave her a penetrating glance. He would have been wise to have spared her, but he was too angry.

"I thought women were keen enough to see these things," he said, scornfully. "It's my idea that he wanted to attract your attention at any price! But if he comes in my way again, I'll set the dogs on him."

At these words a quick flush mounted to the fair face of the girl. It was the first time a thought of her power over any other heart had been projected into her mind, and she could not help thinking a little of this man—this first lover, who had dared so much for one look into her eyes. He must be very romantic, then, this poor young man; and her heart softened a little as she remembered his dark, eloquent eyes, with their appealing glance.

It was not strange that the thought of this young man took possession of her fancy for a few days. She longed to let him know that her father's barbarous blow had wounded her as well—to show him that her heart was not so hard—that she had not inherited the cruel prejudices of caste. She found out his name from her maid, who knew the people of the village; and she heard that he was educated and ambitious. Day by day she watched the roads as the sleigh skimmed along, but she never saw the face she half-fear, half-longed to see. After a time stern realities took her away from these dreams. Her ambitious father had a suitor for her—a contemporary of his own—against whom her whole soul revolted. Count Semiloff found to his surprise that his daughter had inherited one thing from him—namely, his iron will. She dared to rebel against parental authority—to vow that she would never say the fateful words of assent, even if she were dragged to the altar.

"You are my only child," said the Count, in his hardest voice; "but as sure as there is a God in Heaven I will cast you off—you shall be as a stranger—I will forget that you live—unless you obey me in this thing."

"So be it," answered Vera, with a white face, and eyes full as cold as his own.

He did not dream of the self-contained power in the girl. He had seen her among her flowers and birds, singing as carelessly as a bird herself, and so he had not fathomed the depths of being, the possibilities of passion and pain, of fortitude and high resolve, that were in her.

Only the next day, when they came and told him she was gone, no one knew where, it was a terrible shock to him. He had been quite capable of disowning her; but that she should be the first to cast off her allegiance was an inexplicable thing, and a terrible blow. All day the lonely old man sat silently as one who has been sore smitten. He wondered that his heart had such capacities of pain in it, and he was surprised at his utter desolation without Vera. Now that she was gone, he realized for the first time how much he loved her, and that life was an aimless thing

without her. He half-wondered at himself that he had been so ready to give away the only treasure of his life. How hard he had been to her—how seldom had he been softened into caresses or shown her his heart. If he had made her love him she could not have left him thus. So, after long weeks of loneliness, his life seemed to center into one object—to find her again. All his inquiries so far had been in vain; but he would go out himself, and what could elude a father's vigilance? He had waited with a vague hope that she would come back to him. A girl of eighteen only, how could she battle with life? But the slow days came and went, and she made no sign, and at last the Count Semiloff went forth with hope in his heart—a hope that failed day by day. For the days grew into months and the months to years—yes, four years—and he had not heard from her, not one word.

So as a balm for an aching heart, the Count threw himself into hard work. His old prejudices grew strong again, and with the vigor of a young man he took up a service for the Czar; a secret service that needed fidelity, courage and even recklessness of life. And who was so indifferent to life as the Count Semiloff, the last of his line save for the unnatural daughter who had forsaken him in his old age? What did the few remaining years hold for him, that he should be careful to preserve them. Nay, he was ready to fling them away, if by so doing he could render a service to his master. Therefore, he gave himself up to ferreting out the creatures who were plotting against the master's life, and the well-being of all Russia, according to his convictions.

It was with peculiar sensations of triumph, therefore, he read one day an anonymous note that some one had left for him:

"Whereas the Count Semiloff's vigilance for the Czar is well known, an opportunity is now offered for the defeat of a Nihilist plot of the first magnitude, and the arrest, among others, of a certain Sophie Posenski, who is a powerful member of the party. This woman has for two years been a leader and an influence in the band—the most subtle, the most dangerous to all lovers of peace and order. She has an infatuation, an insanity, it might be called, to redress wrongs; she is eloquent, and sways men's minds at will; she is beautiful, and she rules men's hearts; she is the most malignant enemy the Czar can find, and you can deliver her into his hands. Be at the Borsoff Warehouses tomorrow night at ten o'clock. The watchword is 'Public Safety'; the place a cellar under the first house."

The Count felt a sudden enthusiasm for his work—greater even than he had ever experienced before. Ah! if he could but seize this woman, of whom he had heard much, but whom he had never been able to see or trace before—if he could deliver her into the hands of justice, then, indeed, he might be able to say "Amen" to his weary life.

Somehow he had conceived an intense hatred against this Sophie Posenski—this arch-traitress, as he thought her, who led men into treason with smiles, and made them willing to cast their lives away for a word of praise. No stain had ever sullied her name, yet it pleased him to think of her as a Circe who lured men to their ruin—a Messalina—

"Whose hands were blood-stained, tho' as white  
As a carven snow or winter frost,  
Red with the souls deceived and lost."

And a thrill of triumph came over him as he thought that he was to be the instrument of delivering Russia from this curse. Siberia would be the place for this ardent, soaring soul. In the meantime the object of his wrath, unconscious of her danger, but knowing that she walked amid ceaseless dangers—traps and plots and pitfalls—was making ready for the meeting. Her toilet was simple, as befits a woman sworn to belong to the cause of the people—the poor, the downtrodden and oppressed—yet her beauty bloomed through all, as a rose might do in a neglected garden. Her hair was cut short, that no time might be wasted in its arrangement, but it disposed itself in bewitching little infantile curls all over her head, and low down on her broad, white forehead. The face was full of force, the mouth impressive—but it looked as if it might be eloquent of love and passion as well—and the dark-blue eyes that could flash in scorn at an ignoble action, or anger at a tyrannous act, were soft and limpid now with memories. Her room was plain and bare as a cell. She was one of the workers, and her slim fingers were hardened with toil; but she did not grieve over that. A strange enthusiasm filled her heart; she was living for a purpose, and that is the secret of happiness. Once in a while there came up before her suddenly, as if some one held up a portrait, the memory of a face she had seen at the meetings lately—a new member who seemed to hang upon her words, yet whose eyes betrayed a sort of animosity—she could find no other word for it. Sometimes it seemed as if hatred and love struggled together in their expression, and she felt a cold, creeping sensation as she caught the glance.

She had grown somehow to look for his coming, and his presence affected her in an inexplicable manner. It seemed to touch some chord of memory, too, and she vexed herself with attempts to understand it. To-night, as usual, her eyes sought him out, and then as she met his glance the hot blood surged into her face.

The next moment he was at her side, and with him a person whom she knew. "Let me introduce my friend Sergius," said her acquaintance, "and I will leave you together to talk. Two such ardent disciples must be friends."

"I have heard much of you," ex-

claimed Sergius, bowing, "and have longed, but scarcely dared, to be presented."

"Dared!" exclaimed Sophie, with a laugh; "it is our religion to dare!"

"But I am a novice. Perhaps I shall learn to dare everything in time."

There was a significance in the words which made the girl blush again.

"It is a long time since the cause of the people became the dearest thing to me." Then she said: "Some one used to send me Nihilist pamphlets, and I became a convert when I was a mere child. I wish I knew that person. I would like to meet him."

A peculiar smile came to the lips of her companion. "Are you grateful to him?"

"Yes; I look upon him as my apostle."

"Suppose I could point him out."

"You!"

"Yes, pardon me, I am the unknown. I owed your family a debt. I began payment in that way—but I shall not end there."

"Ah!" exclaimed the girl, "I fear they will not be as grateful as I. Hush! they are going to speak. It is Demetri. He is one of the bloodthirsty ones."

It was an odd crowd that was gathered together in the great damp, cobwebby cellar. Men, with fanatical faces and lurid eyes that seemed to peer into a wonderful future—when, all barriers burnt away, a new world should spring up on the ruins of the old—a world of free thought, free speech, free action, and, it must be confessed, free morals. There were women there in uncouth dresses, with clipped hair and strange bonnets—women who eschewed all the frivolities of fashion as sins against the great cause—who were ready to sacrifice their rank, their money, even their heart's idols, for their work. They had sworn to give all—even themselves—according to the mandates of this strange power.

Demetri, a muscular man with a passionate face and fiery eyes, was denouncing the tyranny of the Czar in burning words. Then he passed on to a vivid picture of Siberian exile. "We are in Dante's Inferno!" muttered Sergius to the young girl; "first a lake of fire, and then a sea of ice."

At that moment the doors sprang open and an old man entered. He did not seem at all bewildered by the noise, but took his place quietly and looked about him. Sergius drew nearer to him stealthily.

"How goes the cause, friend," he said at last.

The Count Semiloff smiled calmly. "Never better! Shall we have a speech from the renowned Sophie to-night?"

"I suppose so. She is cogitating it now, probably in the shadow of that wine cask!"

The Count's eyes followed his companion's.

"What, that girl?" he cried.

"Did you expect to see an old woman?"

"Excuse me. I come from the provinces," the Count stammered. "I must see her nearer."

The next moment his hand was on her shoulder. "Sophie Posenski, you are my prisoner!" he cried. "No escape, gentlemen, the place is surrounded!"

The girl turned, and the Count uttered a cry. "My God, Vera! my child!" he moaned, and staggered back, then fell heavily to the ground.

The lights were put out, and there was utter confusion. "Now's your chance, gentlemen," some one cried. "He is insensible; he has not made the signal."

Vera stood for a moment as if paralyzed; then, stooping, she lifted her father's head in her arms. There was a sound of retreating steps, then silence. Suddenly a torch flamed out on the scene. She looked up and saw Sergius standing near her.

"You have not escaped?" she asked.

"No! I told you I owed a debt to your family. I want to settle it now!" he said, with a strange smile.

The Count raised his head, faintly. "My girl, my poor child!" he moaned; "your father did not know; come! I have you at last. Let us fly. They shall not take you now, save over my dead body."

"Aha! Monsieur le Count. High treason, is it not?" exclaimed Sergius.

The Count stared. "Vera, my love, who is this man?"

"He is—a friend," stammered the girl.

"So you do not recognize me, most noble Count?" began Sergius, in a mocking tone. "I am Nicole Sergius, the man whom you lashed for pastime one fine day. O! I carried your autograph on my face for a long time, and then I carried it in my heart! I told your daughter I had a debt to pay to your family. Well! I pay it to-day. She will be sent to Siberia as a Nihilist; and you, Heaven knows what fate will be yours. But I have my revenge."

Vera sprang up with blazing eyes. "Coward," she cried, "what are you? Whatever my fate, you will not escape—you are one of us!"

He smiled, mockingly. "What am I? I am a spy! Yes, although I am your apostle, that was part of my game."

"Good God!" exclaimed Vera, hiding her eyes on her father's breast, "and I cared for this man?"

At these words the face of Sergius changed suddenly as if he had cast aside a hideous mask. His eyes were illumined by a strange fervor, and his mouth trembled.

"I have been a fiend!" he cried. "I have been possessed by a devil! Vera, my angel, you have cast it out. I loved you. I dared to love you, and it made me a fiend. I will die for you! Only say again that you cared for me, and I will go through flames straight into the jaws of death—into the mouth of hell for you!"

At that moment armed men burst in the doors, and all three were secured in a moment. Sergius was liberated as a spy, but the Count was convicted; traitorous papers had been found in his trunk. In vain Sergius confessed his plot; there was no pardon, even after he stated that he had introduced the damaging papers among the Count's effects. But when the exiles marched in line through the streets on their way to their living death, a man came out of the crowd and stood by Vera's side.

"I am going with you," he said, "and thus may I expiate my crime. Where you live, I will live. Where you die, I will die."—Frank Leslie's Newspaper.

## Food Equivalents.

It seems to me that the great majority of farmers need a good deal more knowledge, both practical and scientific, in the matter of the values of different kinds of food for stock. Such knowledge will enable the farmer to feed his stock with greater economy and at the same time keep them in better condition. The practice of farmers in feeding stock varies in different localities, and even in the same locality. One farmer will winter his cattle entirely on hay, and often, before spring, they will become so constipated that their excrement is voided in hard balls; they fall off greatly in flesh, and spring finds them in bad condition. I remember the time when it was a common practice to winter cattle at a straw stack, with no food except the straw to which they helped themselves. Cattle confined for a long time to a single article of diet which, like this, is deficient both in flesh formers and fat and heat producers, were generally in a terrible condition to endure the March winds. Many of them died, and many more were so run down that it took all the best part of the season to get them back to as good condition as they were in the previous fall. In the great corn-growing States many farmers run to the other extreme, and feed too lavishly of corn, which contains an excess of heat and fat-producing elements. I have known farmers to feed a horse thirty large ears of corn a day—equal to twelve or fifteen pounds of shelled corn—all through the winter when the teams were not working, and often they were not taken out of the stable for a week, except to water. We have seen men keep hogs shut up in a close pen or muddy yard, obliged to sleep on a dusty floor, and for months not feed a mouthful of anything except corn. It is little wonder that with such management our western horses break down early; or die of colic, or that cholera keeps our herds of swine out of existence. Common sense teaches that the more comfortable and contented our stock is kept, the better they will thrive and generally the more profitable they will be to us. An animal cannot be comfortable when suffering with hunger, or when gorged and clogged by too great a quantity of rich food. The animal wintered on straw or a poor quality of hay, will suffer both with hunger and cold; for there is not enough fat in the food to maintain vital heat, or enough of the flesh formers to replace the waste. The animal that is fed too much corn meal loses appetite, and all the digestive and assimilative organs become deranged. The knowledge which the farmer should have, and which science can help him to gain, will enable him to so combine the different articles of food as to make the proportions of flesh and fat formers what they should be. Millions of acres of corn-stalks, in our Western States, are left in the fields and fed off after the rains and winds have bleached them until they are nearly worthless, and the land is damaged by tramping more than all the food is worth. Straw stacks, by the thousand, are left to rot. All this material can be fed to stock profitably, and will be relished by them if combined with some of the richer foods.—Country Gentleman.

## Blind Men as Wooers.

As a rule a respectable blind man has no difficulty in getting a seeing wife, and very often with good looks to boot. And when we consider the delicacy of touch in the finger tips of the blind, the latter is not to be wondered at. Blind men, however, do not always marry wives who see. We know of many instances in which both husband and wife are blind, and have managed to rear families without the occurrence of any serious mishap either to themselves or the children. And the cases are rare in which the latter are defective in sight. Only lately the marriage took place of a blind couple somewhat advanced in years, she being his second wife, and he her third blind husband. The marriage was not wanting in the elements of romance, for in their young days they had courted and parted, blind in a double sense. We will conclude with a courtship, but in this case will not vouch for its truth. A blind man on several occasions met a widow, who was not, however, like himself, blind, and latterly concluded that she would make him a good wife. He resolved that he would "pop the question" without loss of time. Accordingly, one evening found him in the widow's house for that purpose, when his suit was entirely successful. But so elated was he with his success that, on leaving her door, he forgot he was up a flight of stairs. The staircase window being very low, and happening to be open, he felt the air on his heated brow, and at once stepped out without thinking where he was, and so fell into the court below. The widow, hearing the noise, ran down, greatly alarmed, but was fully reassured that no bones were broken by his remark, "Maggie, ye hae a big step to your door!"—Chambers' Journal.