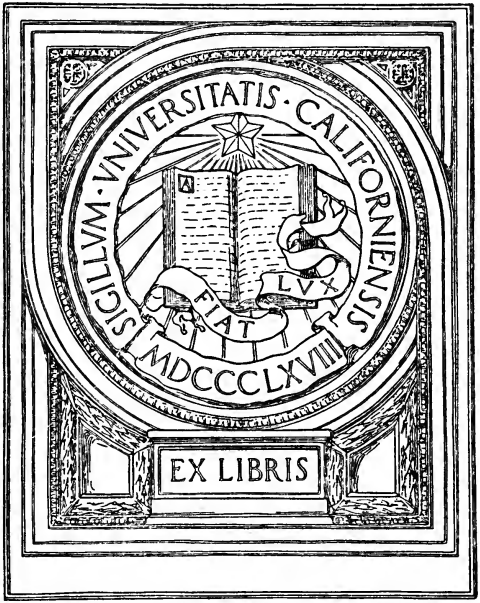
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LEISURE HOUR SERIES

ON THE EVE

A TALE

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN BY

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CHAPTER XXXV.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ON THE EVE.

CHAPTER I.

THE TWO FRIENDS.

ON one of the hottest days in the summer of 1853, two young men were lolling beneath the branches of a lofty lime tree that grew on the banks of the river Moscow, not far from Koontsoff. One of them, seemingly about twenty-three, tall and swarthy, with a sharp and slightly curved nose, lofty forehead, and a quiet smile perpetually playing on his thick lips, lay on his back, musingly gazing into the distance, as he half closed his small grey eyes. The other lay on his breast, his head propped up with both his hands, and, like his friend, gazing at the scene that stretched before him. He was three years older than his companion, though he looked much younger; his moustache had only just begun to sprout, and his chin was slightly covered with a fine down. There was something of the prettiness of a child about him, a kind of pleasing elegance in the youthful features of his plump, fresh face, in his soft brown eyes, his ruddy

pouting lips and delicate white hands. His whole appearance spoke of that joyous health and careless self-confidence and self-indulgence which form the charm of youth. He glanced about him, smiled, and coquettishly propped up his head in the way that boys who know that they are pleasant to look at, are wont to do. He was dressed in a plain white paletot, made in the shape of a blouse, a blue handkerchief was tied loosely round his neck, and a crushed straw hat lay on the grass by his side.

In comparison with him his companion looked an old man, and no one who observed his position could ever have imagined that he was enjoying himself, and was thoroughly at his ease. He was lying in the most awkward of postures: his head, which was broad at the top, but gradually sharpened towards the chin, sat awkwardly on his long neck: there was an awkwardness in the way he dangled his hands, in his huge body tightly squeezed into a short black surtout, in his long feet and gawky legs, which were exactly like the hind-legs of a dragon-fly. And yet with all this he bore about him the signs of an educated man; there was an air of gentlemanliness in his very awkwardness, and his face, though far from handsome, and even somewhat comical, wore the expression of thought and of goodness. His name was Andrew Petrovitch Bersieneff; that of his companion, the light-haired young man, was Paul Jakovlevitch Shoubine.

"Why don't you lie on your breast, as I do?"

asked Shoubine; "it is much better so, particularly if you bring your legs together, and knock your heels against each other, this way. Put your nose down to the grass,—you get tired of gazing at the landscape,—and watch that frightened maybug—see how it crawls along this blade of grass—or that ant there which is so full of business. Really, it is much better to lie like this. But you, oh, you have put on quite the pseudo-classical pose, like a ballet-girl as she leans over a pasteboard crag. You should recollect that you have now a full right to breathe at your ease. Is it nothing that you have come out third in the class-list? Rest, sir! leave off your fine attitudes, and stretch your legs!"

Shoubine delivered this speech through his nose, in a half-idle, half-mocking tone,—spoiled children talk in this way to friends who bring them sweetmeats; and without waiting for an answer went on—

"What strikes me most in ants, beetles, and others of the insect gentry, is their extraordinary seriousness. They run backwards and forwards with as much importance as if their lives were of the slightest value. And then, at the very moment when man, the lord of creation and paragon of creatures, is looking down upon them from his lofty eminence, a tiny gnat will settle on the nose of this same lord of creation, and make use of it for purposes of nourishment. There is rank offence in all this. And yet, pray, in what is their life worse than ours? And why may they not give

themselves airs like ourselves? Ah philosopher, solve me that question. What! are you silent?"

"What were you saying?" muttered Bersieneff, rousing himself from his doze.

"What was I saying?" repeated Shoubine; "your friend talks philosophy to you, and you don't even listen to him."

"I was admiring the view. Look, with what a warm glow those fields glisten in the sun." Bersieneff lisped a little when he spoke.

"The great thing is colour," said Shoubine. "In one word, colour is—nature!"

"You ought to be more enthusiastic about all that than I: it is in your line—you are an artist."

"No, it is not at all in my line," answered Shoubine, as he put his hat on the back of his head. "I am a mere butcher; my business is entirely in flesh, to mould flesh, shoulders, arms, legs: but there is no form in all that, no harmony — mere dismembering and hacking."

"No; even in that there is beauty," remarked Bersieneff. "By the way, did you finish that statuette?"

"Which?"

"The child and goat."

"Sent it to the devil, to the devil," exclaimed Shoubine, in a drawling tone. "I compared it with nature, with the old masters, with the antique, and broke my rubbish to pieces. You show me this view,

and say, *There is real beauty.* Of course there is beauty in everything, there is even beauty in your nose, so there is no overlooking any beauty. The old masters—they never hunted after it; it came of itself into their compositions, God knows whence, from heaven or elsewhere. The whole world belonged to them; but we are unable to clasp its broad space; our arms are too short. We throw out our miserable little fishing-rod towards one point, provided it is near at hand, and wait—there is a nibble, bravo! but if there is no nibble——"

Shoubine pushed out his tongue as he spoke.

"Peace, peace," Bersieneff answered. "All that is mere paradox. If you have no feeling for beauty, do not love her in every form, wherever you may find her, beauty will be forever a stranger to you and your art. If a lovely landscape or lovely music suggest nothing to your soul, I would rather say, if you do not feel with them——"

"Oh, you co-feeler!" * Shoubine cried out, smiling at the new word he had coined, though Bersieneff continued thoughtful. "No, brother," Shoubine rattled on, you are a *savant*, a philosopher, third in the Moscow University class-list; and for me, a poor devil of a student who never took any degree at all, to dispute with you is absurd and presumptuous; but I

* In the original Russian Bersieneff has used the word *sotchuvitviesh* (you sympathise with), upon which Shoubine is made to coin the substantive *sotchuvstuick.*

tell you what, except in art, I love beauty only in woman, in a young girl, and that only since——"

He turned over on his back, and put his hands under his head. There was a short silence. The quiet of the sultry noon lay heavy on the glaring drowsy landscape.

"Talking of women," Shoubine began again, "how is it that nobody takes Stachoff in hand? You saw him when you were in Moscow?"

"No."

"The old man has grown a regular fool. The whole day he sits coddling his Augustina: it is dull work even for him, but there he sits. They look at one another—so stupidly. Is it not wonderful? Providence might have blessed him with the very best of wives; no matter, it would have been all thrown away on him, unless he had his dear Augustina into the bargain. I know nothing more hideous than her duck face. A few days ago I took a caricature of her in plaster, in the Dantesque style. It didn't come out badly: I will show it you."

"And Ellen's bust is getting on?" asked Bersieneff.

"No, brother; it has come to a stand-still. That is a face to drive one to despair. You see, its traits are so fine, regular, and severe, that you fancy they are not difficult to catch. But it is just the contrary: it is a face you can't take. Have you observed her well when she is listening? Not a single feature but is

immovable, only the expression of her glance is perpetually changing, and with that her whole face changes. What can you expect a sculptor, and a poor one in the bargain, to do with a face like that? A charming creature, a strange being," he added after a short pause.

"Yes, she is a strange girl," repeated Bersieneff.

"And she to be the daughter of Nicholas Stachoff! After that, don't talk of blood and race. And what makes it more absurd is that she really is his daughter, like him, and like her mother. I respect Anne Vasilievna with all my heart; she has been very good to me, but she is for ever whining. Whence did Ellen inherit that soul of hers? who lighted up its fire? Well, my dear philosopher, there is another problem for you to solve."

But the "philosopher" again failed to give any answer. In general, Bersieneff was not addicted to much chattering, and when he did speak, expressed himself with difficulty and hesitation, without the slightest gesticulation: but just now a peculiar fit of taciturnity had come over him, a mood of quietness that seemed to spring from weariness or from grief. He had not long quitted Moscow, after a long course of studies which had occupied him many hours every day. His present inactivity, the pure luscious air of the country, the knowledge of having successfully terminated his University career, the whimsical and unceasing chatter of his friend, the sudden mention of one who was dear to him—all these varied, but at the same time concur-

rent, circumstances served to produce in him one common feeling that made him at once listless, agitated, and helpless. He was, moreover, naturally of an extremely nervous temperament.

It was cool and quiet beneath the lime tree: the very flies and bees that were fluttering about in its shadows seemed to buzz more quietly than elsewhere: there was no breeze to stir the thin blades of grass with their silver tints: the high stalks reared immovably as though they were enchanted; while on the lower branches of the lime tree hung, as if entranced in death, tiny clusters of yellow blossoms. At each breath one inhaled the sweet fragrance of the flowers that grew in rich abundance on every side. In the distance, beyond the river, as far as the horizon stretched, everything was glittering beneath a burning sun; at rare intervals a light breeze would put into motion and multiply the sparkling beams of light; a radiant vapor hung tremulously over the earth. Not a bird was to be heard; they were all hushed in the sultriness of the noon; but the crickets kept chirping in harmonious unison; and it was pleasant, sitting there in the quiet cool, to hear those sharp, lively notes which invited one to sleep and dreamy musing.

"Have you ever noticed," began Bersieneff again, "what a strange feeling Nature awakens in us? All in Nature is full, clear, or rather self-sustained, and this we easily understand, for it is thereby she wins our love; and yet at the same time she inspires us, or

at least it is so with me, with a feeling of disquiet, alarm, even anguish. Why is this? Is it that in her we are driven to recognize our own emptiness, or that we find no satisfaction in that which delights her, having need of something over and beyond what she can afford us?"

"Hem!" replied Shoubine, "I will tell you whence it proceeds. You have described the feeling of a man who does not live, but only observes, and thereby grows callous. Observe what? Live for yourself and be young! knock as long as you like at Nature's door, she will never give you an intelligible answer—for the best of all reasons, she is dumb. There may be a screech, perhaps a discord, but no melody is to be got out of her chords. A living soul, that is responsive; and above all, a woman's soul. And that is why, my good brother, I advise you to fall in love: all these anxious feelings will vanish at once. That is your *need*, to use your own expression. All your anguish and disquiet—all that is merely hunger after your kind. Give the stomach its natural food, and everything is in order. So give up idealising; be a body, my good friend. And then what is nature; of what use to us? Listen yourself: Love—what a mighty burning word! Nature—what a cold formal expression! And so *to your health fair Mary*," sang Shoubine. "Oh, no," he quickly added, "not Mary: but that is all one. *Vous me comprenez.*"

Bersieneff slightly raised himself, and rested his

chin on his hands. "What is there to laugh at?" he muttered, without looking at his companion; "why that bantering tone? Yes, you are right: love is a grand word; but what kind of love do you mean?"

Shoubine also raised himself up a little. "What kind of love? Any you like, only let it be for a pretty face! I confess, I don't believe in different kinds of love. If you were only in love——"

"With all my soul," interrupted Bersieneff.

"Well, that is understood: the soul is not an apple—you can't cut it into halves. If you were but in love, all would be right with you. Not that I meant to joke. My heart is filled with such tenderness—it is so soft. I only wished to explain why Nature acts on us as you say she does. It is because she awakens in us the need of love, but is unable of herself to satisfy that need. She gently pushes us to other, living arms; but we do not understand her design, and wait idly for something to come from herself. Ah, Andrew, Andrew, that sun above us is beautiful, that sky—all, all around us is beautiful, and yet you are sad. But if at this moment you were resting your hand in the hand of a woman you loved, if that hand and that woman were wholly, solely yours, if you gazed with her eyes, felt not your own but her feelings,—then Nature would no longer awaken in you sadness or disquiet; Nature herself would be glad, and sing for very joy, would echo your hymn, since

you yourself would give to her, who is dumb, a tongue!"'

Shoubine in his enthusiasm sprang to his feet, and walked backwards and forwards, as he spoke; but Bersieneff lowered his head, and his face became tinged with a passing blush.

"I do not quite agree with you," he said; "Nature does not always inspire us with—love;" he brought out the word hesitatingly: "she also threatens, she reminds us of awful, yes, inscrutable mysteries. Is she not destined to absorb us? will she not hereafter absorb us forever? In her is life and death; in her, death speaks no less distinctly than life."

"And in love, too, is life and death," interrupted Shoubine.

"And then," continued Bersieneff, "when, for instance, I am standing on an autumn day in some forest or green wood, and hear the romantic sounds of Oberon's enchanted hour"—Bersieneff seemed to be ashamed as he brought out this elegant phrase—"is that too really——"

"Thirst for love, thirst for happiness — nothing else," Shoubine chimed in. "I too know those sounds, I too know the sensation of longing that comes over the soul as one lies in the shade of some wood, or of an evening in the open field, when the sun has already gone down, and a hot vapour hangs over the stream that flows by. But from forest, from stream, from earth, from sky, from each flying cloud, from every

blade of grass, I long to get happiness, and in all I recognize its presence, and hear its invocation. *My god, my joyous god, and gay:* I should like to begin a poem in that way; confess, it would make an excellent opening line: the only difficulty would be to find a second to match it. Happiness! happiness! let that be our aim whilst life is ours, strength remains, and trouble has not yet come upon us. Confound it!" continued Shoubine, with sudden energy, "we are young, not greybeards nor fools; we will conquer happiness for ourselves."

He pushed back his hair, and with a look of confidence, almost of defiance, gazed upwards towards the sky. Bersieneff looked quietly at his friend.

"Is there no higher good than happiness?" he asked in a low tone.

"As what for example?" was Shoubine's rejoinder.

"Well, we are both, as you say, fine young fellows—granted; and each of us is seeking happiness for himself. But is this word *happiness* one of those that can ever inspire us with good, make men united, friends, and fellow-helpers? Is it not an egotistical word? does it not tend to separate and divide?"

"And do you know any that conciliate and unite?"

"Many, and so do you."

"As what, pray?"

"Why, I might mention art—and do not forget

you are an artist; there is also fatherland, liberty, justice."

"And love?" asked Shoubine.

"Love, too, is a word that serves to knit men together; but not the kind you are thirsting for, not that love which is mere enjoyment, but love that is a sacrifice of self."

Shoubine frowned at this. "That is all very well for German philosophers," he said; "for my part, I wish to love for my own enjoyment; I must always be number one."

"Number one," repeated Bersieneff. "But it seems to me that to make one's self number two is the real object of life."

"If all were to follow your advice," muttered Shoubine, with a sour grimace, "no one would eat pine-apples; every one would be for giving them to his neighbor."

"That simply proves pine-apples to be superfluities: but do not fear; there will always be people ready enough to snatch the very bread from a neighbor's mouth."

The two friends were silent for a while.

"A few days ago I came across Insaroff again," Bersieneff began; "I asked him to come and see me. I should like to introduce him to you and to the Stachoffs."

"Who is Insaroff? Ah, that Servian or Bulgarian of whom you spoke to me once; that patriot of yours!

Is it not he who has imbued you with all these fine philosophical ideas?"

"Perhaps."

"There is something extraordinary about him eh?"

"Yes."

"He is learned? a genius?"

"Learned?—yes. A genius?—I don't know, I think not."

"No? What, then, is there remarkable in him?"

"You will see: but it is time to be going, I think. Anne Vasilievna will be waiting for us. What o'clock is it."

"Three. Let us be off. How sultry it is! This talk of ours has put my blood into a heat. And there was a moment, when you also—I am not an artist for nothing, I notice everything. Now, confess, you are not insensible to a woman's charms?"

Shoubine tried to catch a glimpse of his friend's face; but Bersieneff turned aside as he came from under the lime tree. Shoubine followed with a carelessly graceful saunter. There was no ease in Bersieneff's movements: he carried his shoulders far too high, and stretched out his neck in a most ungainly fashion. But in spite of this, he appeared more *comme il faut* than Shoubine,—we had said, more gentlemanly, but this word has been so terribly hackneyed of late by us Russians.

CHAPTER II.

"BEWITCHING ZOE."

THE young men proceeded along the bank of the river Moscow. A fresh breeze blew from the river, and there was a pleasant sound in the soft ripple of its stream.

"I should like to have a bath," said Shoubine, "but am afraid of being late. Just look at the stream; does it not seem as if it were beckoning us to plunge in? The ancient Greeks would have made it the haunt of a nymph. But we are no Greeks, O nymph, we are only thick-skinned Scythians."

"We, too, have our water-naiads," interrupted Bersieneff.

"Away with you and your naiads! of what use to me, a sculptor, are these sorry offsprings of an ill-cultured northern fancy, these hideous figures born in the suffocating heat of an *isbah*,* worthy types of our dark winter nights? Give me only light, space. Ah! when shall I be able to go to Italy? When——"

"You wish to say when you were in Little Russia.

* *Isbah:* a peasant's hut.

"It is a shame, Andrew, to reproach me with my thoughtless stupidity, for which, without your reproofs, I am heartily sorry. Yes, I acted like a fool: that good soul, Anne Vasilievna, gave me my passage-money to Italy, and I must needs set off to Cochlam, eat dumplings there, and——"

"Spare us the rest of your confessions, I pray," interrupted Bersieneff.

"And yet, believe me, the money was not altogether ill-spent. I saw there such types, particularly among the women. Of course, I know that out of Italy there is no salvation."

"You will go to Italy," continued Bersieneff, "and there you will—do nothing. You will flutter a little, try your wings; but as to flying, we know you too well to expect that."

"Stavasseur, however, succeeded in flying; nor was he the only one. And if I don't fly, why that only proves me to be a sea-penguin without wings. Here I am stifled; I long for Italy," continued Shoubine; "there is sun, there is beauty."

At this moment a young girl, in a broad-brimmed straw hat, was to be seen coming along the path on which the two friends were walking.

"But what do I see? Even here beauty comes to meet us! Bewitching Zoe approaches to welcome the humble artist!" cried Shoubine, as he waved his hat with a theatrical air.

The young girl, whose appearance had called

forth this tirade, stood still, held up her fore-finger threateningly, and beckoning to the young men, said, in a shrill, almost squeaky, voice, "Why don't you come to dinner? The cloth is laid."

"What do I hear?" exclaimed Shoubine, clasping his hands: "is it possible that in the heat like this you have condescended to seek us out? Is this the import of your gracious speech? Answer; or rather, say not a word, lest shame at our unworthiness slay me instantly."

"Leave off your fooling, Paul," replied the girl, in a vexed tone; "why is it that you can never speak to me sensibly? I am very angry?" she continued with an affected coquetry, and bit her lips.

"You cannot be angry with me, heavenly Zoe: you cannot wish to thrust me down the murky abyss of dull despair. To speak seriously is not in my power; there is nothing serious about me."

The girl shrugged her shoulders, and turned to Bersieneff. "He is always so: he treats me as if I were a child, whilst I am already in my nineteenth year. I am now a grown-up woman."

"Oh, heavens!" groaned Shoubine, and cast his eyes to the ground, while Bersieneff smiled silently.

The girl stamped her foot with impatience. "Paul, I really am angry!" and then she went on, "Ellen started with me, but she stopped in the garden: she found it too hot; but I don't care for the heat. Let us be going."

She went forward along the path, and there was something graceful in her movement as she pushed back the long soft locks from her face with her pretty little hand, on which she wore a black mitten.

The two friends followed,—Shoubine now pressing his hands to his heart, now raising them above his head, and after a few minutes' walk stopped before one of the many cottages that are to be found in the neighborhood of Koontsoff. It was a small wooden house, with a story built on the roof, and painted rose-color, standing in the midst of a garden, and peeping out as it were with a naïve look from among the green trees. Zoe was the first to arrive at the wicket, opened it, and running into the garden, cried out, "I have brought the rovers home." A young girl with a pale but expressive countenance rose up from a bench that was placed by the side of the path, and on the steps leading up to the house there appeared a lady in a lilac silk dress and with a cambric handkerchief thrown over her head to protect her from the heat, who received the party with a languid smile.

CHAPTER III.

NICHOLAS ARTEMVITCH STACHOFF.

ANNE VASILIEVNA STACHOFF, whose maiden name was Shoubine, when in her seventeenth year, was left an orphan, and heiress to a considerable estate. She had two relatives, the one on her father's side as poor as the other on her mother's side was rich: Senator Volgine and Prince Tchikurasoff. The Prince was appointed her guardian, placed her in one of the best schools at Moscow, and when she had finished her education, received her into his own house. She lived in grand style, and during the winter gave numerous balls. Anne Vasilievna's future husband, Nicholas Artemvitch Stachoff, won her heart at one of these balls, where she was dressed "in a delicious rose-colored robe with a sweet *coiffure* of small roses." This *coiffure* was ever afterwards carefully preserved. Nicholas Artemvitch Stachoff, the son of a retired captain who upon being wounded when only nineteen, had obtained a tolerably lucrative situation at St. Petersburg, was admitted, in

his sixteenth year, into the cadet school, and subsequently entered the Guards. He was a handsome well-made youth, and considered to be one of the best partners that could be secured at the balls to which his friends, who were all of the middle class, gladly invited him; his position not being such as to secure him admittance to the highest society. From his youth he had two ambitions—to become aide-de-camp to the Emperor, and to marry well. The first of these dreams he soon abandoned, but its surrender only made him hold the more obstinately to the second. It was with this view that he spent each winter in Moscow. He spoke French with tolerable fluency, and not being addicted to a wild life, passed for a philosopher. Though only an ensign, he was wont to discuss with no little gravity and assurance such deep questions as, whether a man in the course of his life could go round the whole world, or obtain a knowledge of what transpires in the depths of the ocean,—and invariably decided these questions in the negative.

Nicholas Artemvitch was in his twenty-sixth year when he "made a good catch," married Anne Vasilievena, and left the service to undertake the management of her estate. He soon grew tired of country life, and removed to Moscow, where he lived in a house that belonged to his wife. In his youth he had never cared for cards, but he now began to

have a liking for loto, or, if that failed, put up with *eralasch*.* Home-life became dull to him, so he struck up an intimacy with a widow of German extraction, and passed nearly all his time with her. The summer of 1853, when our story opens, he did not spend at Koontsoff, under the pretext of profiting by the mineral waters at Moscow, but in reality because he could not tear himself away from the fair widow. Not that his conversation with her was, as a rule, of a loving kind: with her too he would generally debate learned questions, such as the possibility of foretelling the weather. Some of his friends had given him the name of *le frondeur*, which pleased him immensely. "Yes," he muttered to himself with a complacent smirk and a shrug of the shoulders, "I am not easily satisfied; you can't cheat me." His only claim to the title consisted in this, that when for example, he heard the word "nerves," he would grandly exclaim, "And what are nerves?" or upon being reminded of the discoveries of astronomy, would ask, "And do you believe in astronomy?" But if he wished to settle an antagonist completely, he invariably answered him with "Yes, all that is mere declamation!" It must be confessed that there were, and still are, many who regarded a sentence of this kind as irrefutable, but the feeling was not

* A game at cards much affected in Russia; it is very similar to our own English whist, only played without trumps.

universal; and Nicholas Artemvitch little suspected that, in her letters to her cousin Theodoline, Augustina constantly styled him, "My little simpleton."

His wife was a little thin woman, with delicate features, much given to caprices and to melancholy. Whilst at school, she devoted herself to music and reading novels, then gave up both; next took to dress, but soon abandoned that whim; afterwards occupied herself with the education of her daughter, but growing tired of that, handed her over to the care of a governess; and later did nothing but whine and mope. The birth of Ellen so shattered her constitution, that all hopes of being a mother again were put an end to: a circumstance to which Nicholas Artemvitch would often allude in justification of his intimacy with Augustina. Her husband's infidelity was a source of bitter grief to the poor wife, and she was particularly hurt when on one occasion he took a pair of grey horses out of her own stable and made a present of them to the German widow. In his presence she never uttered a word of reproach, but in secret would complain of his faithlessness to every one in the house, not even excepting her daughter. She hated visiting, and her chief pleasure was to receive friends, with whom she could have long gossips, solitude being insupportable to her. Hers was a loving and tender heart, but the roughness of life soon broke what little courage she ever possessed.

Paul Jakovlevitch Shoubine was her second cousin.

His father served in Moscow. His brothers entered the Military school; but he was the youngest, of a delicate constitution and his mother's darling, and consequently remained at home. Later his parents wished to send him to the university, but his health was so weak that he was scarcely able to finish the gymnasium-course. From his youth he had exhibited a talent for sculpture; and Senator Volgine, on seeing one of his statuettes at his aunt's—he was then only sixteen—declared it to be his intention to foster the young genius. The sudden death of Paul's father was near changing the youth's future career. The senator, in his character of patron of genius, made him a present of a plaster bust of Homer, and then withdrew his protection; but Anne Vasilievna gave him some money, and, though it went somewhat against the grain, he was persuaded to enter the university as a student in the faculty of medicine. Paul did not feel the slightest inclination to the study of medicine, or, in fact, to any of the sciences; but circumstances forbade his entering any other class, and he had moreover, a vague hope of learning anatomy in this way; but even this he did not succeed in accomplishing, was plucked at his examination, and in disgust left the university with the resolution to devote himself exclusively to his "calling." He worked heartily at his profession, but too much by fits; hung about the environs of Moscow; modelled and drew the portraits of many of the peasant girls; made sev-

eral friends, chiefly among the moneyless classes, such as Italian models and Russian artists; would not hear of the Academy, and openly laughed at its professors. He possessed a certain amount of talent, and soon became known at Moscow. His mother, a Parisienne by birth, of good family, an excellent and a clever woman, fussed and busied herself about his future career, being immensely proud of him; but she died while still young, of consumption, and on her death-bed prayed Anne Vasilievna to take him under her care. He was then in his twenty-second year. Anne fulfilled her friend's last prayer, and he occupied a small room in a wing of the house.

CHAPTER IV.

AN ARTIST'S ASPIRATIONS.

"LET us go to dinner," said the mistress of the house, in a fretful tone. "You sit next to me, Zoe," she continued when they had entered the dining-room: "and you, Ellen, attend to our guests; and as to you, Paul, no nonsense or teasing of Zoe, for my head aches terribly to-day."

Shoubine once more turned his eyes upwards, and Zoe answered his grimace with a faint smile. This Zoe, or to give her name in full, Zoe Nikitischna Müller, was a pretty, slight-made Russian-German girl, with thin red lips, of a bland complexion, and slightly freckled. She sang a few Russian songs very creditably, played two or three sentimental pieces on the piano with tolerable accuracy, dressed with taste, though rather too demurely and in a childish fashion. Anne Vasilievna had engaged her as companion to her daughter, and she almost lived in the house. Ellen made no objection to this arrangement, though it must be confessed she did not listen with much attention to the edifying remarks which Zoe considered it her duty to make whenever they were alone.

Dinner lasted a rather long time. Bersieneff chatted with Ellen about university life, his plans and hopes for the future: Shoubine, who ate with a great relish all that was put before him, listened in silence, now and then casting at Zoe a comical glance, to which her only answer was her habitual phlegmatic smile. After dinner, Ellen, accompanied by Bersieneff and Shoubine, went into the garden: Zoe watched them as they left the room, and then, with a slight shrug of the shoulders, sat down to the piano. "Why do you not go out and have a stroll too?" asked Anne Vasilievna; but she did not wait for a reply, and continued, "Play some melancholy air."

"La Dernière Pensée de Weber?" asked Zoe.

"Ah, yes, Weber!" murmured Anne Vasilievna, as she sank back in her chair, and languidly squeezed out a tear or two.

In the meantime Ellen led the two friends to an arbor of acacias, with a wooden table in the centre, and benches placed all around. Shoubine fidgeted about for a while, and then whispering to them to wait, turned back, and ran to his room, but soon reappeared with a lump of clay, and at once began modelling Zoe's face, turning his head about, muttering to himself, and laughing during the operation.

"At your old tricks again," said Ellen, glancing over his shoulder at his work; and then turning to Bersieneff, continued the conversation they had begun at the dinner-table.

"Old tricks," repeated Shoubine. "The subject is painful and inexhaustible. To-day particularly she put me quite out of patience."

"What do you mean?" asked Ellen. "Recollect, you are not speaking of a horrid disagreeable old woman. A pretty young girl."

"Certainly," interrupted Shoubine. "She is pretty, very pretty. I am sure every man who looks at her thinks, Ah! there is a splendid girl to—dance a polka with; and I am equally sure she knows it, and is proud of it too. What else are those prudish grimaces for, that affected modesty? But you know as well as I do what I mean," he muttered between his teeth; "and besides, you are otherwise occupied now."

"As he spoke, he threw the model to the ground, and began eagerly and with an air of vexation to mould and crumble the clay between his fingers.

"And so you would like to be a philosopher?" Ellen said to Bersieneff.

"Yes," he replied, rubbing his red hands between his knees. "That is my fondest dream. Of course, I know what is required of me, before I can be worthy of such a noble—— I mean, I am ill-prepared; but I hope to go abroad, stay three or four years, as long as is necessary, and then——"

He stopped short, cast his eyes down to the ground, but quickly raising them again, smiled awkwardly as he began pushing back his hair. When-

ever Bersieneff talked with a woman, he hesitated even more than usual in his speech, and his lisp became more strongly marked.

"You wish to be professor of history?" asked Ellen.

"Yes, or philosophy;" and then he added in a lower tone, "if that were only possible."

"He is already a tremendous swell in philosophy," remarked Shoubine, making a deep cut in the clay with his nail; "what on earth does he want to go abroad for?"

"And you will be quite content with your position?" asked Ellen, touching him on the arm, and looking straight into his face.

"Thoroughly, Ellen Nicholaevna,* thoroughly. What other profession could be preferable? Think only, to follow in the steps of my father. The mere thought of embracing such a profession fills me with joy but with trepidation too, a trepidation that—that arises from a consciousness of my feebleness and my ignorance. My dear father, in giving me his last blessing, bade me adopt that career. I shall never forget his dying words."

"Your father died this winter?"

"Yes, Ellen Nicholaevna, last February."

"I have heard," she continued, "that he left be-

* The Russians use the patronymic as we use the prefixes "Mr," "Miss," etc.

hind him a remarkable work in manuscript; is it true?"

"It is. He was an extraordinary man. You would have liked him, had you known him."

"That I am sure of. But what is the subject of his work?"

"It would be difficult, Ellen Nicholaevna, to explain its subject to you in a few words. My father was a very learned man, a Schellingist, and his style is not always the easiest to understand."

"Andrew Petrovitch, excuse my ignorant question," interrupted Ellen, "but what is a Schellingist?"

Bersieneff could not help smiling. "A Schellingist? That means a follower of Schelling, a German philosopher; but in what consists the peculiar doctrine——"

"For mercy's sake, Andrew Petrovitch," cried Shoubine, "You are never going to give Ellen Nicholaevna a lesson on Schelling; do be a little considerate, if you please."

"Don't fear, I did not mean to give a lesson," muttered Bersieneff, and blushed; "I only wished—"

"And why not a lesson?" exclaimed Ellen. "I am sure we are both of us very ignorant."

Shoubine looked at her, and burst out laughing.

"What are you laughing at?" she asked in a cold and almost severe tone.

Shoubine was silenced; but after a few moments he said, "Well, don't be angry: I was wrong to laugh.

But you will allow it was a queer fancy on a hot day like this to give an open-air lecture on philosophy. Far better talk of nightingales, roses, or women's eyes."

"Oh, certainly, and French novels or the newest fashion," said Ellen.

"Why not, if it is only pretty?" asked Shoubine.

"As you like. But suppose we don't care to talk about dress? You claim for yourself freedom in art, why not allow it to others? And, tell me, if these are your tastes, how is it you do not get on with Zoe? Dress, roses, fashion, and so on, are exactly what she likes to talk about."

Shoubine at once flared up, sprang from his seat, and cried out in an angry tone, "So; I understand your hints—you want to send me off to her; in other words, I am one too many here."

"I never thought of sending you away."

"You mean," continued Shoubine, passionately, "that I am not fit for any other company; that I am her equal, as empty, silly, and shallow as that mealy-mouthed German girl; that is what you mean?"

Ellen was evidently displeased. "You did not always speak of her in this way, Paul."

"Now for reproaches, reproaches," continued Shoubine. "Oh, I don't deny that there was a moment, just one moment, when that fair-faced cunning coquette—But suppose I were inclined to pay you

back in your own coin, and reproach you with—But no, I won't battle."

And angrily striking the clay which he had just moulded into the shape of a head, he rushed out of the arbor, and shut himself up in his own room.

"What a child!" muttered Ellen, as she looked after him.

"An artist!" said Bersieneff, with a quiet smile. "They are all alike. We must pardon their outbreaks: it is one of their rights to be capricious."

"Perhaps," answered Ellen; "but it is a right Paul has no claim to; what has he done up to the present moment? But give me your arm, and let us go along that alley. He only hindered us; now we can talk quietly of your father's book."

Bersieneff gave his arm to Ellen, and they strolled about the garden; but the conversation, which had been so unseasonably interrupted, was not renewed. Bersieneff again began to explain his ideas of a professor's duties and calling, and spoke of his own future career. As he walked with Ellen, he would at one moment awkwardly take her arm, and then as awkwardly let it go again, not seldom jostling clumsily against her; but not once during the stroll did he venture to look in her face. He spoke slowly, and if not with perfect freedom, he at least expressed himself clearly and openly; whilst in his eyes, which were now fixed on the trunk of a tree, now on the gravel path, and now on the grass, as well as in the

even tone of his voice, there was to be discerned that feeling of quiet contentment which a man only experiences when speaking to one who is dear to him. Ellen listened with eager interest, and, half-turning towards him, did not take her eyes from his slightly flushed face, but gazed earnestly into those soft, gentle eyes of his, which were forever seeking to avoid her glance. Her soul was opened, and a feeling of love, truth, and goodness flowed into her heart, and took deep root there.

CHAPTER V.

DISAPPOINTED HOPES.

SHOUBINE did not leave his room till the evening was far advanced. It was already twilight, the full moon stood high in the heavens, the milky way was bright and clear, and innumerable stars were glittering in the sky, when Bersieneff, having taken leave of Anne Vasilievna, Ellen and Zoe, came to the door of his room. He found it locked, and began knocking.

"Who is there?" cried Shoubine from within.

"I," answered Bersieneff.

"What do you want?"

"Let me in: enough of your tempers! are you not ashamed?"

"I am in no temper: let me get to sleep again, and dream of Zoe."

"Leave off your nonsense, and open the door. You are not a child. I have something to tell you."

"What, are you and Ellen already tired of cooing."

"Leave off, I say, and let me in!"

"Shoubine's only answer to this was an unmistakable snore. Bersieneff shrugged his shoulders,

and set off homewards. The night was warm and unusually quiet, so quiet that the least noise was distinctly audible; and Bersieneff, as he slowly made his way along the dark road, would frequently stop and listen. The light motion of the leaves in the topmost branches of the trees sounded like the rustling of a woman's dress, and awoke in him a feeling that was at once tender and soothing—the feeling of incipient love. A flush of joy spread over his face, his eyes filled with tears, and an overpowering longing possessed him to flee away unseen by any one, to hide himself, to be alone. A sudden gust of wind blew from an opening in the trees—he shuddered, and with a frightened look glanced behind him; a sluggish beetle fell with a light noise from a branch to the ground—he gave a cry of surprise, and again stood still. But he began thinking of Ellen, and all these momentary fears left him: there remained only the vivid recollection of their long walk in the cool of the evening, and his whole soul was filled with the young girl's image. He went onward, his head bent down, repeating to himself her words, her questions. The noise of hurried steps was heard behind him. He listened: some one was running after, and quickly gaining upon, him; he could hear the runner's broken breathing, and suddenly, from the dark shadow that was cast by a lofty tree, came forth Shoubine, without a hat, his hair streaming in the wind, all pale and wan in the ghastly light of the moon.

"I am glad you came by this path," he said with difficulty. "I could not have slept a wink the whole night, if I had not caught up with you. Give me your hand. You are going home, it seems."

"I am."

"I will go with you."

"How can you without a hat?"

"That doesn't matter. I will tie my handkerchief over my head;—there, now I am quite warm."

They went on for a short distance without exchanging a word.

"Didn't I make a fool of myself this evening?" Shoubine suddenly asked.

"Well, to tell the truth, you did. I could not make out what was the matter with you. To be angry, and such nonsense."

"Ah," cried Shoubine, "that is your way of putting things; but to me it was no nonsense. You see," he went on, "I ought to explain to you that I—that I—think what you will of me—I—well, there!—I love Ellen!"

"You love Ellen!" repeated Bersieneff, as he came to full stand still.

"Yes," continued Shoubine, with affected indifference. "You are surprised? But I will tell you more. Till this evening I had hoped that in time she might return my love. To-day, however, has taught me how foolish it is to hope any longer. She loves another."

"Another? whom?"

"Whom? why you!" cried Shoubine, as he hit Bersieneff on the shoulder.

"Me?"

"You!" repeated Shoubine.

Bersieneff fell back a step or two, and remained motionless. Shoubine looked at him with a strange eager look.

"And you are astonished at my news? Modest youth! Yes she loves you—of that you may be quite sure."

"What nonsense are you talking?" at last said Bersieneff, in a tone of vexation.

"It is no nonsense. But why are we standing still? Let us go on: it is easier to talk walking. I have known her for years, known her well. I can't be mistaken. You have touched her heart. There was a time when I did not altogether displease her; but I am too thoughtless, whilst you are a serious fellow; you have everything in your favor, morally and physically—stop, I have not done yet—you are a conscientious but moderate enthusiast, a true representative of those teachers of science in which—no, not in which, but—in whom the middle class of Russian society take so just a pride. And then, a few days ago, she caught me kissing Zoe's hand!"

"Zoe's?"

"Yes, Zoe's. What can you expect when a girl has such pretty shoulders?"

"Shoulders?"

"Why yes, hand, shoulders, isn't it all the same? Ellen found me expressing my love in a way that is only natural after dinner, though just before dinner I had been scolding Zoe in her very presence. It is a pity Ellen can't understand these little inconstancies, which mean nothing. Then you appeared upon the scene—you are an idealist, you believe—by the way, what is it you believe?—you blush, get nervous, talk about Schiller, Schelling, or somebody—she likes talking about remarkable people—and of course you come off victor; whilst I, poor devil, try to be funny, and—and—and in the meanwhile——"

Shoubine burst into tears, went aside, and throwing himself down on the ground, hid his face in his hands.

Bersieneff came softly up to him.

"Paul," he began, "what is all this? What ails you to-day? or what idle fancy is this you have got into your head? And these tears,—are you really only funning?"

Shoubine shook his head. Tears were still glistening on his cheeks in the rays of the moon, as he looked up, but there was a smile on his face.

"Andrew Petrovitch, do not think harshly of me; this of course is a mere fit of hysterics. But, by God, I love Ellen, and Ellen loves—you! But I forget, I promised to see you home, and I will keep my word."

He rose up.

"What a lovely night! quiet, fresh, and full of shadows! How delightful for those who love and are loved! How pleasant to lie awake and think of *her!* Shall you sleep to-night, Andrew Petrovitch?"

Bersieneff did not answer, but began walking quickly.

"Where are you hurrying to?" continued Shoubine. "Believe me, there will never be such another glorious night as this in all your life; and then, only Schelling awaits you at home. It is true he did you a good service to-day: but still there is no occasion for hurrying. Sing, sing as loud as you can, or if you can't sing, take off your hat, throw back your head, and smile up at the stars! They are all looking down upon you, upon you alone; that is their only business, to smile upon lovers, and that is why they are so beautiful. So, you are in love, Andrew Petrovitch? You don't answer—why don't you answer? Oh, if you feel yourself to be happy, keep silent, keep silent. I merely chatter on because I am a poor wretch whom nobody loves. I am a poor painter, a dauber, an artist; but what glorious strains of melody could I pour forth to the silent night beneath those shining stars, did I but know that there was one in the wide world who loved me. Bersieneff, tell me, are you happy?"

Bersieneff maintained his former silence, but proceeded along the level road with quickened steps. A

little farther on, from amidst the trees gleamed the lights and fires of the village where he lived. It comprised in all but ten small cottages. At its entrance, on the right hand of the road, sheltered by two wide-spreading beeches, stood a retail shop ; the windows were all closed, but through the open door a broad streak of light gleamed forth on the down-trodden grass, glancing upward to the trees, and making white and ghostly the under surface of their thickly clustered leaves. A young girl, apparently a chambermaid, was standing in the shop, and chatting with the shopkeeper: from under the kerchief which she had thrown over her head, and was holding with her bare hand beneath her chin, but little could be seen of her roundish face or well formed neck. As they passed, Shoubine chanced to look into the shop, stood still, and cried out, "Annette." The girl quickly turned round ; there was something pleasing in her fresh face, though it was perhaps somewhat too large to be beautiful, in her sparkling brown eyes, and in her black eyebrows. "Annette!" cried Shoubine a second time. The girl looked at him, shrank back as if in fear, blushed a deep crimson, and, without waiting to take up her purchases, rushed down the steps, pushed roughly by the two friends, and, with one hurried glance backward, flew across the road. The shopkeeper, who, like most of his class in the provinces, was fat and phlegmatic, gave a low whistle, and then yawned; but Shoubine turned

to Bersieneff, and said, "This—this, you see—there is a family here I know—they have—do not fancy——" and, without finishing his incoherent explanation, ran after the girl.

"At any rate, wipe your tears away first," Bersieneff cried laughingly after him. But when he had reached his home, there was no longer an expression of gayety on his countenance, and he was no longer smiling. Not for a moment did he credit what Shoubine had told him; but for all that, his words had made a deep impression. "Paul has only been fooling me," he thought; "but at some time or other she will love,—whom will it be?"

In his room there stood a small and rather old piano, but with a tone soft and pleasing, though by no means pure. Bersieneff sat down to it, and carelessly struck a few notes. Like all well-born Russians, he had in his youth learned music, and, also like all well-born Russians, he played very badly. He was, however, passionately fond of music, though, to speak correctly, it was not the art, or the form in which the art expressed itself, that he loved, but its melody. Sonatas, symphonies, and even operas, made him weary: but he loved music for the feelings, restless yet soothing, indefinable, yet wide-embracing, which the harmony or sweet discord of sounds never fails to produce in the soul. More than an hour passed, and he still remained at the piano, striking over and over again the same notes, or clum-

sily trying to make out new chords, and letting the sounds die away gradually and faintly. His heart was touched, and his eyes not seldom overflowed with tears. He was neither ashamed of them, nor did he seek to check them, and there was none to ridicule his sensibility. "Paul was right," he murmured to himself, "in my whole life there will be no such second night as this." At last he got up, lighted a candle, put on his dressing-gown, took down from his bookcase the second volume of Raumer's *History of Hohenstauffen*, and with a heavy sigh began reading that learned work.

CHAPTER VI.

ELLEN'S CHARACTERISTIC SINGULARITY.

IN the mean time Ellen had retired to her room, and leaning her head on her hand sat down by the open window. It was a habit with her to sit thus by the window every evening for a quarter of an hour or so. It was her time of self-communion, when she was wont to take account of the day that had just passed. She had already reached her twentieth year. She was tall in stature, of a pale-olive complexion, and slightly freckled, with a regularly formed nose and forehead, a mouth somewhat drawn in, and a pointed chin. Her light-brown hair fell in rich curls over her thin neck. In her whole figure, in the expression of her face, which was at once observant and timid, in her keen but variable glance, in her seemingly forced smile, in the low hesitating tone of her voice, there was a nervousness, an abruptness, a precipitancy which could not please everybody, and which must have been repellant to many. Her hands were narrow and rosy, her fingers long and tapering, her feet small; her walk was hurried, almost impetuous, and as she moved she bent forward. She was oddly changeable in her affections: at one

time she idolized her father, then was passionately attached to her mother, and would afterwards treat both, but particularly her father, with cold indifference. Of late she had behaved to her mother as one would to an invalid grandmother. Her father, who had formerly taken pride in her strange ways whilst she was a child, began to be afraid of her now that she was grown up, and spoke of her as a capricious enthusiast. Any exhibition of weakness irritated her, stupidity made her angry, a lie she could never be brought to pardon, nothing could move her when once she had formed a resolution, and in her mode of proffering a request there was an implied reproach. Did a man once forfeit her good opinion—and she was extremely ready in pronouncing her judgment of others—he ceased to exist so far as she was concerned. She was easily moved, and, young as she was, her life had not been of the most tranquil kind.

The governess whom Anne Vasilievna had engaged to finish her daughter's education—an education with which, by the way, that melancholy lady had never concerned herself—was a Russian, of a very sentimental, worthy, but fickle character, the daughter of a ruined gambler. She was much given to falling in love, and when Ellen had just reached her tenth year, she married an officer who soon afterwards abandoned her. She was very fond of literature, and even wrote verses herself. She thus im-

bued Ellen with a taste for reading; but mere reading did not satisfy her pupil, who longed to put her knowledge into practice, and was ever eager for opportunities of active goodness. The sight of a poor or famished person was a misery and a worrying anxiety to her, disturbed her rest, nor was she content till she had relieved his necessities and enlisted the sympathy of all around her in his favor. She administered her alms with the most scrupulous care, and with an instinctive seriousness that gave a solemnity to her most trivial act of charity. Any ill-used animal, stray dogs, kittens condemned to an early death, swallows fallen from their nest, even worms and insects, found a friend and protector in Ellen, who, so far from regarding them with any feeling of aversion, would nourish and feed them. Her mother let her have her way: but her father was perpetually grumbling at what he called his daughter's stupid sentimentality, and declared that what with her cats and her dogs, there was no moving about in the house. "Ah, Nell," he would cry out, "come here directly; there's a spider just going to pounce on a fly." Ellen, all trembling with emotion, would rush to the spot, rescue the fly, and carefully wipe its wings and legs. "And now," the father would add jeeringly, "let the spider eat you, since you have robbed it of its food:" but she paid no attention to his banter. In her eleventh year, Ellen became acquainted with a poor girl, named Kate,

whom she used to meet secretly in the garden, bringing with her sweets or cakes, sometimes a present of money or dress; for Kate never accepted toys. They used to sit for hours together on the dry ground beneath a hedge, and while contentedly munching her bit of stale bread, Kate would tell her friend the story of her life. She had an ill-tempered aunt, who was constantly beating her; Kate not unnaturally hated her, and liked to talk of how some day she would run away, and "trust to God for food and health." It was with a feeling of secret reverence and fear that Ellen heard this, to her, novel and strange expression; she looked at Kate attentively, and at that moment everything about her friend—her eyes black, sparkling, and almost savage, her sunburnt hands, her low voice, and even her tattered dress—seemed to Ellen to bear an imprint of sanctity. She returned home in a thoughtful mood, pondered long over those words, "Trust to God for food and health," and resolved to cut a good stout stick for herself, run away with Kate, and get her livelihood by selling bouquets of violets. She began at this time to avoid her relations, and to have fits of misanthropy. Once, having gone to meet Kate during a shower, she came back with her dress dirty and wet; her father remarked it, and called her a slut. She did not say a word in reply, but her heart swelled with a strange feeling of anger and discontent. Kate often sang to her one of the common soldier-songs, and

Ellen learned the words. On one occasion her mother chanced to overhear her singing it, and angrily asked, "Where did you pick up that vulgar pothouse song?" Ellen only looked at her mother, and did not answer a word: she felt that she would rather be torn in pieces than betray her secret; and again her heart swelled with a strange feeling of angry discontent. But her friendship for Kate was fated to come to an abrupt and tragical end; the poor girl caught a fever, and, after a few days' illness, died. Ellen was bitterly grieved at this her great loss, and for several nights was unable to sleep. Those solemn words of the poor girl were incessantly ringing in her ears, and the dead seemed to be calling her to join her.

Thus years went by; and Ellen's youth, like the waters beneath a frozen stream, flowed on silently and quickly, in outward inactivity, but in inward uneasiness and strife. She had no friends, nor was there one among all that visited the Stachoffs with whom she became intimate. Her parents had never had much authority or influence over her, and from her sixteenth year Ellen became almost independent, living a life of her own, solitary and apart. In solitude her soul by fitful turns expanded and contracted, beating its wings like a bird in its cage, though there was none that cared to confine or restrain her movements. But in spite of this freedom she was none the less disquieted and uneasy. At times she

could not understand the reason of the turbulent feelings which possessed her, and even grew afraid of herself. The life that surrounded her seemed at its best trifling and unbearable. "How live without love? to love no one!" she thought, and her heart was filled with a strange and indefinable desire. When eighteen, she nearly died of a fever, and it was long before her constitution, naturally robust and healthy, regained its original strength. At length all traces of this severe illness disappeared, though her father, not without a little irritation, would still complain of her nervous temperament. At times she would be oppressed with a vague longing for something, she knew not what, something that none before her had ever wished for, something that none in all Russia had ever imagined. And then she grew quieter, laughed at her own simplicity, passed a few days in careless ease, when suddenly the indefinite longing returned with a force that resisted all her efforts to repel it, and once more the storm passed over, leaving her weary, feebly beating her wings against the cage. These passionate yearnings, however much she might try to conceal them from others, could not but exercise a powerful influence upon her disposition and her health; and her parents, as they remarked her "strange ways," were more than once justified in shrugging their shoulders, and declaring they could not make her out.

On the day when our story opens, Ellen sat

longer than usual by the window. She thought much of Bersieneff and of their conversation. He pleased her: she believed in the warmth of his feelings, in the purity of his intentions. Never before had he spoken with her as he spoke that evening. She understood the meaning of his timid glances, his smile,—and smiled herself, and fell into a train of thought, but no longer of him. She gazed wistfully into the night, gazed long on the dark lowering sky; then rose up, pushed back her hair from her face, and, without knowing why she did so, stretched out toward the sky her bare cold hands. A few minutes passed, and she abruptly let them fall, threw herself on her knees by the side of her bed, and, hiding her face on the pillow, in spite of all her efforts to restrain them, burst into a flood of warm passionate tears.

CHAPTER VII.

BERSIENEFF'S INTERVIEW WITH INSAROFF.

AT twelve o'clock on the next day Bersieneff set out for Moscow. He had to receive some money through the post, as well as to buy a few books; besides which, he wished to see his friend Insaroff. During his late conversation with Shoubine the idea had come into his head of inviting Insaroff to spend the summer with him at Koontsoff. For a long time he could not find him: he had removed from his old lodging, and it was no easy task to discover his new one. At last he learned that he now lived in the back courtyard of a large stone house built after the fashion of the St. Petersburg houses. In vain he mounted one staircase after another, and equally useless were his inquiries of the *dvornick** or of any chance passer-by. In Petersburg, it is true, dvornicks have a knack of avoiding all inquirers, and in Moscow this habit is fast becoming general. No one paid the slightest attention to him;

* *Dvornick* in Russian answers to the French *concièrge*, only much dirtier in his dress, and, if possible, more uncivil in his manners.

a tailor, in his shirt-sleeves, and with a skein of thread thrown over his shoulders, looked out of his window, but, having satisfied his curiosity, drew his swarthy unshaven face in again, and, crossing his legs on his board, resumed his work. At last a woman in an old cloak, and with shoes horridly trodden down at the heels, took pity on Bersieneff, whom she had been watching for some time in silence, and directed him to Insaroff's room. It formed a part of that same tailor's lodging who had so quietly watched Bersieneff from his window: a large room, almost bare of furniture, with a dark-green paper on the walls, three square windows, a tiny bed in one corner, and a leather-covered sofa in another, and a huge cage, formerly the home of a nightingale long since dead, hanging from the centre of the ceiling. Insaroff rose up to meet his friend before he had well crossed the threshold; but, instead of crying out, "Ah, that is you!" "What good fortune brings you here?" or even "How do you do?" he simply gave him his hand, and led him to the only chair there was in the room.

"Take the chair," he said, himself sitting down on the edge of the table; "you see, I am scarcely in order," he continued, pointing to a heap of papers and books that lay on the floor; "I have still to buy a little furniture, and ought to have done so long ago, but have had no time."

Insaroff spoke Russian with fluency and correct-

ness, pronouncing each word distinctly and accurately; but the guttural tone of his voice showed that he was no Russian, whilst his figure and appearance still more clearly indicated his foreign extraction. He was a young man of about twenty-five, thin and muscular in shape, with a hollow chest and horny hands. His features were sharp and well defined; his nose was slightly curved; his hair of a light chestnut color; his eyes small, keen and sunken; his forehead small but prominent; his teeth of a beautiful whiteness; but in his thin lips there was an expression of hardness and self-reliance. He was dressed in a surtout, rather the worse for wear, and closely buttoned up to the chin.

"Why did you leave your old lodging?" Bersieneff asked him.

"It is cheaper here, and nearer to the university."

"But now it is vacation. And what is your fancy for living in town during the summer? When you were moving, you should have taken a little house in the country."

Insaroff made no answer to this, but offered his visitor a pipe, saying, "You must excuse my having no cigars or cigarettes to give you."

Bersieneff took the pipe and began smoking. "I have taken a small house for the summer," he added, "near Koontsoff. It is very cheap and comfortable. There is a spare room, too, in the top story."

Still Insaroff made no answer.

"I had thought that if I could only find some one I should like," continued Bersieneff, as he puffed out a huge cloud of smoke—"you, for example—who would consent to live with me in the room up-stairs—ah! how glorious it would be! What do you say to it, Demetrius Nikanorovitch?"

Insaroff looked at his friend inquiringly. "You propose that I should live with you at Koontsoff?"

"Just so: there is a small spare room in the top story."

"It is very kind of you, Andrew Petrovitch; but I must tell you frankly my means won't allow me to accept your offer."

"How won't allow you?"

"To live with you in the country: I can't afford to keep two lodgings, one here and another there."

"Well, but I meant," began Bersieneff, and then stopped. "It would cause you no extra expense," he continued. "You can easily get them to keep this lodging for you till the winter; and then, everything is so cheap there; besides, we might manage to dine together."

Insaroff was silent, and Bersieneff began to feel ill at ease.

"At least, you must promise to come and see me now and then," he said. "A few steps from my house there lives a family with whom I should like to make you acquainted. Ah! if you only knew, Insaroff, what a splendid girl there is there! And a very

near friend of mine, a first-rate artist, lives with the family; I am sure you would get on with him. So, it is agreed, you will come. Or, better still, come and stay there altogether. You could work and read there as much as you like. And, you know, I am now getting up my history and philosophy—just the subjects that interest you—and I have brought plenty of books down with me."

Insaroff got off the table, and began walking about the room. "Do you mind telling me," he at last asked Bersieneff, "what rent you pay?"

"A hundred roubles."

"And how many rooms are there?"

"Five."

"For one room, then, that would make twenty roubles."

"But I tell you, I don't want it all; it is merely standing empty."

"Very likely," Insaroff answered in a friendly but firm tone; but you must know that I can only accept your offer on condition that I pay my share of the rent. Twenty roubles I can afford, the more so, as you say living is cheap there."

"Be it so: though, really, I am ashamed to take money for a room that is of no use to me."

"I can't come otherwise, Andrew Petrovitch."

"As you like; but what an obstinate fellow you are!"

It only remained to fix the day on which Insaroff

should move into the country. The landlord was accordingly summoned: but he first sent his daughter, a girl seven years old, with a large flaunting handkerchief tied over her head, who listened with a sort of timid attention to all Insaroff had to say, and then went away without a word. A few minutes later his wife was sent up. She, too, had a handkerchief on her head, but it was fortunately neither so capacious nor so exasperatingly flaunting. Insaroff informed her of his intention, at the same time telling her that she was to keep the lodging for him, and to see that his things were not disturbed. The good woman heard all he had to say, and then left him without vouchsafing a word in reply. Last of all, the tailor himself made his appearance. He too required all to be explained to him; and when, after a long time, he was made to understand, he went down stairs muttering to himself, "Near Koontsoff;" but quickly returned, and, opening the door, cried out, "The lodging is to be kept for you, eh?" Insaroff satisfied him on this point. "Because, you know, one must be sure," rejoined the worthy, and finally disappeared.

Bersieneff returned home very much pleased with his success. Insaroff accompanied him down-stairs with a politeness that is not usually practised by Russians, and soon after his friend's departure was busily engaged in packing his books and papers.

CHAPTER VIII.

YOUTHFUL IMPROPRIETY.

ON the evening of the same day Anne Vasilievna was sitting in her drawing-room, in a most lachrymose humor, and ready to burst into tears at any moment. Besides her there was in the same room her husband and a certain Urban Ivanovitch Stachoff, a cousin-german of Nicholas, a retired cornet, about sixty years old, so fat that he could hardly move, with a puffy face, pale, thick lips, and yellowish sleepy eyes. Since his retirement from the service he lived constantly at Moscow on the interest of a small property that had been left him by his wife. He never did anything, and probably never thought, or if he did, he carefully kept his thoughts to himself. Only once in his life was he ever known to have been excited, and to have shown something like activity, and it happened thus: he read in the papers of a new instrument at the Great Exhibition in London, called the "contrabombardon," and at once desired to get one for himself, and even went so far as to make inquiries where he could order one, and how he could remit the money. Urban Ivanovitch generally wore

a snuff-colored coat and an equally capacious white neckerchief; he ate frequently and heartily; and in moments of embarrassment, that is, whenever he was called upon to express an opinion, gave a slow flourish with his hand in the air, raising in succession each separate finger, first beginning with the large finger and ending with the little one, then repeating the operation *vice versâ*, and finally delivering himself with difficulty of these words: "It may be necessary — somehow—so to say."

Urban Ivanovitch was sitting near the window in an arm-chair, thinking deeply. Nicholas Artemvitch was pacing up and down the room, his hands plunged deep in his trowser-pockets, with an expression of dissatisfaction on his face.

At last he came to a stand-still, and gravely shook his head. "Yes," he began, "in my time young people were brought up differently; they never allowed themselves to *manquer* in respect to their elders"—he pronounced the syllable *man* through the nose, quite in the French manner—"but now, when I look around me, I am lost in wonder. Perhaps *I* am wrong, and they are right; it may be so. But still I have my way of looking at things, I was not born a fool. What may be your opinion, Urban Ivanovitch?"

Urban Ivanovitch only looked at him, and went through his usual finger pantomime.

"There's Ellen Nicholaevna, for example," continued Nicholas Artemvitch; "I don't understand her,

I really don't. I am not fine enough for her. Her heart is so large that it can sympathize with all nature, down to the tiniest beetle or ugliest frog—all, in a word, except her own father. Well, very good, I recognize the fact, and am silent. You see, these fine sensations, this learning, these lofty soarings to heaven are not in my nature. But that Mr. Shoubine, who, I allow, is an excellent artist, a man of unusual genius—that I don't dispute—should also fail in showing proper respect to his elders, to a man to whom, I may say, he owes very much, is a thing which I confess, *dans mon gros bon sens*, I cannot allow. I am not at all exacting by nature—far from it; but there is a limit to every thing."

Anne Vasilievna rang a bell with some impatience. A young Cossack servant entered the room.

"Should not Paul Jakovlevitch be sent for?" she said: "may I ask him to come?"

Nicholas Artemvitch shrugged his shoulders. "Why, pray, do you wish to ask him to come here? I do not demand his presence in any way, do not at all desire it."

"Why not, Nicholas Artemvitch? He has put you out, and when you are undergoing medical treatment. I wish to have an explanation with him. I should like to know how he dared to vex you."

"I repeat that I do not demand any explanation. And, then, what bad taste—*devant les domestiques*—"

Anne Vasilievna slightly blushed. "You are not

justified in saying that, Nicholas Artemvitch. I never *—devant—les domestiques.* You may go, Theodosius, but ask Paul Jakovlevitch to come here directly."

The servant went out.

"It is altogether unnecessary," muttered Nicholas Artemvitch, as he began again to prance up and down the room. "It was not with that object I introduced the subject."

"But of course Paul must excuse himself to you."

"What do I care for his excuses? And what does that mean, to excuse one's self? It is merely a fine phrase."

"It may be so; but he must be made to explain his conduct."

"Make him do that yourself. He is more likely to listen to you. I have no authority over him."

"No, Nicholas Artemvitch, you are quite out of sorts to-day. Indeed, I have noticed lately that you are getting thin. I am afraid that the treatment you are undergoing is only doing you harm."

"It is absolutely necessary that I should continue the treatment," Nicholas Artemvitch answered: "my liver is quite out of order."

At this moment Shoubine entered. There was an expression of weariness about his looks, but at the same time an almost imperceptible smile on his face.

"You wanted to see me, Anne Vasilievna?" he inquired.

"Yes I did. Really, Paul, it is too bad. I am

altogether displeased with you. How could you be so disrespectful to Nicolas Artemvitch?"

"Has Nicholas Artemvitch been complaining to you of me?" asked Shoubine, as with an ill-suppressed smile he turned to Stachoff. But the latter turned aside, and kept his eyes fixed on the ground.

"Yes, he has. I do not know in what you have offended him, but you ought at once to excuse yourself, because his health is just now very delicate; and besides, we young people cannot be too respectful."

"Feminine logic," thought Shoubine to himself; and then, turning to Stachoff, said aloud, with a polite bow, "I am quite willing, Nicholas Artemvitch, to ask your pardon, if I have really offended you in any way."

"I did not at all wish for this," exclaimed Nicholas Artemvitch, still avoiding Shoubine's glance. "For the rest, I gladly accept your excuses, for, as you well know, I am not exacting by nature."

"Oh, that admits of no doubt!" added Shoubine. "But might I be so curious as to ask whether Anne Vasilievna knows what my offence you have just pardoned is?"

"No, I know nothing," said Anne Vasilievna, stretching out her neck.

"Good heavens!" hastily cried Nicholas Artemvitch, "how many times have I not begged and prayed, how many times have I not told you that all these explanations and scenes are hateful to me!

You come home, no matter when, longing for quiet and repose—do they not talk about the family circle, *intérieur*, the domestic hearth?——and directly there are scenes, unpleasantnesses. Not a minute's quiet. You are driven away to your club or—or somewhere else. Man is a creature whose physical nature has its special wants, but here——"

And without staying to finish his speech, Nicholas Artemvitch hurriedly left the room, banging the door noisily after him. "To the club?" muttered Anne Vasilievna, in a bitter tone, as she looked in the direction of the door; "it is not to the club you go, inconsistent one! There is no one in the club to whom you would give a pair of horses,—and the grey ones too, my favorite color. No, no," she continued, raising her voice, "it is not to the club you go. And you, Paul," she went on, getting up from her chair, "are you not ashamed of yourself? You are not a boy, you know. Ah! now my head begins to ache. Where is Zoe? can't you tell me?"

"I suppose she is upstairs. In such weather a wise fox always makes for his hole."

"Enough, enough!" Anne Vasilievna looked around her. "Have you not seen my glass of bitters? Paul, for the future, be so kind as not to irritate me."

"How have I vexed you, aunt! Well, let me kiss your hand. As to the bitters, I saw your glass on the table in the study."

"Dorothy is always leaving it somewhere or other," grumbled Anne Vasilievna, as she left the room, her silk dress rustling behind her.

Shoubine was about to go out after her, but was arrested by the meditative voice of Urban Ivanovitch.

"May you not have acted like a simpleton?" said the ex-cornet, bringing out his words by jerks and intervals.

Shoubine came up to him. "And pray, worthy Urban Ivanovitch, how should I act?"

"How? you are young: so, respect: yes."

"Respect whom?"

"Whom? you know: why pretend you don't?"

"You see," replied Shoubine, "he is no younker, is a nobleman, and yet what a child in credulity and simple faith! Respect! And do you know why Nicholas Artemvitch is angry with me? Well, I spent the whole morning with him at his German friend's: we sang a trio, *Do not, do not leave me;* a pity you were not there, it just suits your voice. So we sang, my dear sir, and sang, till I began to grow quite weary; and I saw it was a hopeless affair, an enormous amount of loving. I began making fun of them both: and got on swimmingly. At first she was angry with me, then with him; and next he got in a rage with her, and told her that he was only happy at home, that his home was his paradise; and she replied that he had no manners; whereupon I suggested no German man-

ners: and he went off in a huff, but I stayed behind; he came here, that is, to his paradise, but even his paradise has no delights for him. That is why he was seized with a fit of grumbling. And now which of us do you think is to blame?"

"Of course, you are," answered Urban Ivanovitch.

Shoubine came close up to him. "May I venture to ask you, my excellent chevalier," he said in a tone of mock deference, "whether you have condescended to pronounce these enigmatical words with the wish to try the extent of your thinking faculties, or merely under the influence of a momentary desire to give your tongue an airing?"

"Don't be satirical," sighed Urban Ivanovitch.

Shoubine gave a laugh, and quitted the room. A quarter of an hour after Urban Ivanovitch was to be heard crying out, "Eh, you there, bring me a glass of cognac."

The young Cossack brought the cognac and some schnapps on a waiter. Urban Ivanovitch took the wine-glass from the tray very deliberately, and looked at it for a long while with deep attention, as though he were not quite sure what it was he had in his hand. Then he gazed at the Cossack, and asked him whether Basil was not calling him. He then put on a mournful expression, drank off the cognac, and began very slowly taking his handkerchief out of his pocket. But the Cossack had already put by the tray and liquor

bottle, eaten what remained of the schnapps, and succeeded in falling asleep, whilst Urban Ivanovitch was still fumbling for his handkerchief, and gazing with the same fixed stare at the window, then at the floor, and finally at the wall.

CHAPTER IX.

A HOPELESS CASE.

SHOUBINE proceeded at once to his room, and sat down to read. One of the servants of Nicholas Artemvitch came cautiously in, and seeing that he was alone gave him a small three-cornered note, sealed with a large heraldic seal. The note read as follows: "I hope that you, as an honorable man, will not allow yourself to hint to anyone by a single word what you happened to hear this morning in reference to a certain bill of exchange. My position is known to you, the trifling nature of the sum, and other circumstances: besides, it is a family secret that has a right to be respected; and the peace of a family is a thing so sacred that none but *êtres sans cœur*, in which class I do not include yourself, would ever dare to disturb it. Please to return this note. N. S."

Shoubine scrawled these words underneath in pencil: "Don't be afraid: mum is the word," gave the note back to the servant, and took up his book again. But he soon let it fall listlessly from his hand. He gazed on the red sky, on two hardy firs, which grew quite apart from the other trees, and thinking to him

self, " In the day firs are blue, but in the evening what a magnificent green they have ! " went out into the garden, with the secret hope of meeting Ellen there. He was not disappointed. Straight before him, along the path that ran between some bushes, was to be seen the shimmer of her dress. He overtook her, and as he came up to her side, he muttered, " Don't look this way ; I am not worth it."

She gave a quick glance at him, and with a low laugh hurried foward toward the centre of the garden. Shoubine followed her.

" I ask you not to look at me," he began, " and yet I talk to you, which is slightly inconsistent. But it is all the same, it is not the first time I am so. I have just recollected that I have not yet, as I ought to have done, begged your pardon for my stupid behavior yesterday. You are not angry with me, Ellen Nicholaevna ?"

She stood still, but did not answer him at first, not that she was angry, but her thoughts were elsewhere.

" No," she said at length, " I am not in the least angry."

" What a preoccupied, and yet what a quiet expres sion !" thought Shoubine, and then continued aloud, " Ellen Nicholaevna let me tell you a little story. I once had a friend, and this friend had in his turn another friend who for a while conducted himself as a respectable man should, but at last took to drinking

Once early in the morning my friend met him in the street—you understand they were already friends—but perceiving he was drunk, turned aside from him as though he had not seen him. Whereupon the latter came up to him and said, 'I should not have been angry at your bowing to me; but why turn aside from me? Is it that I cause you shame? Peace to my ashes!" Shoubine was silent.

"And is that all?" Ellen asked. "I do not understand you. What do you mean? You only just now told me that I was not to look at you."

"Yes, and now I tell you how ill it is to turn aside."

"And did I really—" began Ellen.

"Did you not?"

Ellen blushed slightly, and stretched out her hand to Shoubine. He pressed it warmly.

"You have caught me not in the best of humors," said Ellen; "but your suspicions are not just. I never wished to be cold to you."

"Granted, granted. But confess that you have at this moment a thousand thoughts flitting through your head, not one of which you would consent to confide to me? Well, is it not true what I say?"

"Perhaps it is."

"But why? But why?"

"My thoughts are not quite clear to myself," answered Ellen.

"Then confide them to another," replied Shoubine.

"But I will tell you what it is; you have a bad opinion of me."

"I?"

"Yes, you. You fancy that everything about me is half-shame, because I am an artist; that I am not good for anything—perhaps you are right there—not even capable of a sincere deep feeling; that I can feel no real grief; that I am but a *farceur* and a player: and all because I am an artist. Are we not unfortunate, God-forsaken creatures? You, I would swear, you don't believe in my contrition."

"No, Paul Jakovlevitch, I believe in your repentance, and I believe in your grief; but I think that your very repentance, and your grief too, amuse you."

Shoubine shuddered. "So, I see, it is, as the doctors say, a hopeless case, *casus incurabilis*. There is nothing to be done but to bow the head and submit. And yet, heavens, is it really so, that I must live completely isolated, whilst close beside me breathes a soul so pure? And to know that I can never fathom that soul, never come to know what it is that afflicts it, why it rejoices, in what fancies it indulges, what are its desires, or what its aspirations. But tell me," he added after a short silence, "you never, not for anything, under no circumstances, could be brought to love an artist."

Ellen looked straight in his eyes as she answered, "I do not think I could, Paul Jakovlevitch."

"*Quod erat demonstrandum*," replied Shoubine,

with a comical smile. "And now, I suppose, I have no right to disturb your solitary walk. A professor, to be sure, might ask on what grounds you gave that answer, *No.* But I am no professor, a mere child in your opinion; but even from children do not turn aside, remember that. Good-bye. Peace to my ashes!"

Ellen wished to retain him; but after a moment's reflection said merely, "Good-bye."

Shoubine hurried out of the garden, but had not gone far when he met Bersieneff. "Andrew Petrovitch!" cried Shoubine. The latter stopped. "Go on, go on," continued Shoubine; "I only spoke so; I won't keep you: go on, as quickly as you can, into the garden; Ellen is there—apparently she is waiting for you; at least, she is waiting for somebody. You understand: she is waiting! Ah, my friend, what a strange history! Imagine, for these two years I have been living with her in the same house, loved her, and only now, this very minute, understanding nothing, saw her,—saw her, and parted. Do not despise me, I pray, with that would-be sarcastic smile which sits but ill upon you; yes, I understand, you mean to remind me of Annette. What then? I don't make pretensions. Annettes are below our great friend. So hail to Annette and Zoe; ah, and even Augustina! You go now to Ellen, she is in the garden; and I—you think I am going to Annette's? No, my good friend, much worse, to Prince Tchikurasoff: he is a kind of Mecænas among the Tartars of Kayan. You see this

invitation from the Prince, these mystic letters R. S. V. P. ? There is no rest even in the country."

Bersieneff listened to Shoubine's tirade in silence, though not without confusion; and then set off in the direction of the Stachoffs' garden. Shoubine did actually go to see Prince Tchikurasoff, and talked with him in the most familiar style, and with something like caustic insolence. The Tartar Mecænas laughed, his guests ventured to smile, all were equally dull, and before they separated every one was alike irritated. In the same way, should two loving acquaintances meet on the Nevsky, they directly begin showing their teeth to one another, and smirk away with all their might; but no sooner have they passed one another than each resumes his equally serious expression of countenance.

CHAPTER X.

A BULGARIAN'S WRONGS.

ELLEN received Bersieneff in a most friendly manner; not in the garden, however, but in the drawing-room, and at once, with something like impatience, went back to the subject of yesterday's conversation. She was alone: Nicholas Artemvitch had quietly gone off, no one knew whither; Anne Vasilievna was lying up stairs, with a wet towel round her head; Zoe was sitting by her, supposed to be repairing a petticoat, but with her hands idly crossed on her knees; Urban Ivanovitch was reposing in the garret on a broad comfortable sofa, which from its enormous size had been baptized the Samson sofa. Bersieneff again began talking of his father; nothing could be more touching than his religious reverence for all that concerned his father. We too will take this opportunity of saying a few words about him.

The proprietor of eighty-two serfs, whom he freed before his death, one of the *illuminati*, an old student of Göttingen University, and author of a manuscript composition, entitled *Antitypes, or Emblems of*

the Soul in the Physical World, in which there was a quaint mixture of Hegelism, Swedenborgianism, and Republicanism, Bersieneff's father took him to Moscow whilst he was still a mere boy, immediately after his mother's death, and superintended his education himself. He assisted him in his preparation for every lesson, was never tired of working with him, and yet all his labors were fruitless; for he was a dreamer, a book-worm, a mystic, had no fluency of speech, expressed himself darkly and ambiguously, indulged in strange comparisons and similitudes, and thus estranged his son, in spite of his passionate love for him. The boy only went to sleep over his lessons, and made no progress in any one of his studies. The old man—he was about fifty, and had married late in life—at last perceived that things were not going on favorably, and placed his son Andrew at a school. Andrew began to study for himself, but was not released from his father's surveillance; the old man was for ever paying him visits, worried the poor schoolmaster to death with his advice and suggestions; the ushers too were pestered by their uninvited guest, who was constantly bringing them some valuable book on education. The very pupils were ashamed of the old man's swarthy, wrinkled face, his lank figure, and his eternal grey coat that hung about him like a sack. Little did these same pupils suspect that this same serious, smileless old man, with his stork-like gait and long nose, fretted and worried over

the welfare and success of each of them as though they were his own sons. Once he determined to make a speech to them about Washington. "My young children," he began; but at the first sounds of his cracked voice all his young children scampered off. The worthy Göttingen professor did not live on a bed of roses, but was being perpetually nonplussed by the march of events, bothered by new questions and new theroies. When young Bersieneff entered the university, the father religiously attended all the lectures; but his health was already beginning to give way. The events of 1848 fairly killed him, his whole book required rewriting! and he died in the winter of his fifty-third year, before his son had finished his university career, but still able to congratulate him on his candidate's degree, and to dedicate him solemnly to the study of the sciences. "I hand over to you the lamp of knowledge," were his dying words; "I have guarded it as long as was permitted me: see that you keep it faithfully to the end."

Long did Bersieneff speak to Ellen of his father. The awkward shyness he had before felt in her presence gradually disappeared, nor did he lisp so much in his speech. The conversation turned upon his university career.

"Tell me," Ellen asked him, "were there any remarkable men up in your time?"

Bersieneff thought of Shoubine again.

"No, Ellen Nicholaevna; to tell you the truth,

we had not one remarkable man amongst us. And then how could it be otherwise? They say there was a time when Moscow University was worthy of its title. But it is no longer so. Now it is only a school,—no university at all. I found no pleasure in my fellow-students," he continued in a lower tone.

"No pleasure?" murmured Ellen.

"And yet," continued Bersieneff, "I must correct myself. I know one student,—it is true, he is not of the same standing as myself,—who is really a remarkable man."

"And what is his name?" eagerly asked Ellen.

"Insaroff, Demetrius Nikanorovitch. He is a Bulgarian."

"Not a Russian?"

"No, not a Russian."

"Why then does he live at Moscow?"

"He went there in order to study. And do you know with what aim he is studying? He has but one idea, the freedom of his country. And his history is an extraordinary one. His father, a merchant sufficiently well-to-do in the world, was born at Ternoff. Ternoff is now a little town, but it was once the capital city of Bulgaria, when Bulgaria was still an independent kingdom. He carried on trade in Sophia, and had business transactions in Russia: his sister, Insaroff's aunt, lives at the present moment at Kieff, having married an old teacher of history in one of the schools there. In 1835, that is just eighteen years

ago, a terrible crime was committed: Insaroff's mother disappeared suddenly leaving no trace behind her, and within a week her dead body was discovered, the throat cut from ear to ear."

Ellen trembled with fright, and Bersieneff stopped short.

"Go on! Go on!" she whispered.

"It was currently reported that the Turkish *Aga* had first violated and then murdered her; her husband, Insaroff's father, discovered that it really was so, and resolved to be revenged, but only succeeded in wounding the *Aga* with a dagger. He was immediately shot."

"Shot? without a trial?"

"Yes. Insaroff was then in his eighth year. He was given into the charge of a neighbor. But when his father's sister learned what a terrible tragedy had been enacted in her brother's family, she begged to be allowed to bring up her nephew. He was accordingly removed to Odessa, and thence to Kieff. In Kieff he lived altogether twenty years. That is why he speaks Russian so well."

"He speaks Russian?"

"As well as you or I. When he had attained his twentieth year—that was in the beginning of 1848—he wished to return to his fatherland. He went to Sophia, to Ternoff, and travelled all over Bulgaria, spending two years there, and thus learned his native language again. He suffered a great deal of persecu-

tion at the hands of the Turkish government, and must during those two years have often been in great danger. I once remarked on his neck a broad cicatrice, evidently the trace of a severe wound: but he does not like to talk of all this. He is naturally very taciturn. I have tried to get the whole story out of him, but never succeeded, as he invariably answered in some vague way. He is terribly self-willed. In 1850 he went to Moscow, with the intention of completing his studies, and in order to become united with the Russians, but when he has finished his university career——"

"What will he do then?" interrupted Ellen.

"What God wills. It takes a wise man to divine the future."

Ellen looked earnestly and long at Bersieneff. "You have interested me very much by your story," she said; "what kind of man is he, this friend of yours? how did you call him—Insaroff?"

"I scarcely know what to say: in my opinion, not a bad fellow. But you will see him, and can judge for yourself."

"How is that?"

I will bring him over to see you. He is coming the day after to-morrow, and will live with me the rest of the summer."

"Really! But will he care about coming to see us?"

"Why not! He will be very glad."

"He is not proud?"

"Proud? Yes, a little; that is, if you like, he is proud, but not in the sense you mean. For example, he will never borrow a penny from any one."

"He is poor then?"

"Well, he is not rich. When he went to Bulgaria, he got together the little that remained of his father's property, and his aunt helped him; but he has not much wealth to boast of."

"He must have a great deal of character," Ellen said.

"Yes, he is a man of iron will. And yet, together with all his self-reliance and reserve, there is a great deal of childish openness about him. True, he is not open after the manner of our people, who are very open, because they have nothing worth hiding. But I will bring him to see you, only wait a little."

"And he is not shy?" Ellen asked again.

"Certainly not. Only selfish people are shy."

"Are you selfish then?"

Bersieneff smiled as he began playing with his fingers.

"You have excited my curiosity," continued Ellen. "But, tell me, he never revenged himself on the Turkish *Aga*?"

"Vengeance is all very well in novels, Ellen Nicholaevna; and, besides, it is most likely that the *Aga* died in the course of those twenty years."

"But Mr. Insaroff never spoke to you about it?"

"Never."

"Why did he go to Sophia?"

"His father had lived there."

Ellen was lost in thought. "To free one's country!" she murmured. "These words have a magic ring in them; they are noble words."

At this moment Anne Vasilievna came into the room, and the conversation was interrupted.

Strange feelings possessed Bersieneff as he returned home that evening. He did not repent of his promise to make Ellen acquainted with Insaroff; he found the deep impression which his stories about the young Bulgarian had produced on her to be but natural,—nay, had he not himself done his best to strengthen this impression? But there was a secret ill-defined feeling of anger in his heart; he was oppressed with a heaviness of spirit, though he scarce knew why. But this melancholy did not prevent his sitting down to the *History of Hochenstauffen*, and he began reading from the page where he had left off the night before.

CHAPTER XI.

INSAROFF'S WORK.

TWO days later Insaroff arrived at Koontsoff with a very small amount of luggage. He had no servant, but without making any ado at once set about putting his room in order, arranged the furniture, dusted it all, and then swept the floor. His greatest trouble was with the writing-table, which for a long while refused to settle down in the corner assigned for it; but Insaroff, with the patient persistence natural to him, finaly succeeded in overcoming its obstinacy. When all was arranged, he enclosed to Bersieneff ten roubles in advance; and then, arming himself with a stout stick, set out to reconnoitre the environs of his new dwelling. He returned in about three hours' time, and in reply to Bersieneff's proposal that they should keep common table, accepted the invitation to dinner for that day, but informed him that he had already made arrangements with the landlady of the house, who had agreed to supply him with his meals.

"My good fellow," cried Bersieneff, "you will fare very badly. The old woman has not the remot-

est idea of cooking. Why don't you dine with me? We might divide the expenses."

"My means don't allow me to dine as you are accustomed to do," answered Insaroff, with a quiet smile.

There was something in this smile which forbade any further discussion, and Bersieneff said no more. After dinner he proposed that they should call upon the Stachoffs; but Insaroff declared his intention to devote the whole evening to letter-writing, and begged Bersieneff to postpone the visit till another day. The inflexibility of Insaroff was well known to Bersieneff; but now that they were living under one roof he might reasonably have been offended at this precision in matters of the most trifling import. To Bersieneff, a genuine Russian, this more than German accuracy at first appeared to be a violation of good manners, and even somewhat ridiculous; but he soon accustomed himself to it; and if he could not justify it on the score of politeness, grew reconciled as to an inevitable thing.

On the second day after his arrival, Insaroff got up at four o'clock, took a tremendous walk, had a bath in the river, and after a draught of good fresh milk returned home, and sat down to work. His work was of the most varied kind; he was learning Russian history, law, and political economy, was translating some of the Bulgarian songs and chronicles, was collecting materials in reference to the Eastern

question, and was engaged on a Russian grammar for Bulgarians, and a Bulgarian grammar for Russians. Bersieneff came in, and began talking about Feuerbach. Insaroff listened attentively to what he said, answered little, but to the point; and from his replies it was evident that he was already cogitating the problem whether it was necessary for him to occupy himself with Feuerbach, or whether he could do without him. Bersieneff then turned the conversation on what he was working at, and asked him to show him some of his manuscripts. Insaroff read to him the translation of two or three Bulgarian songs, and begged his judgment of their merits. Bersieneff found the version to be correct, but cold and lifeless; and Insaroff made a note of the corrections he suggested. From the songs Bersieneff went on to speak of the present position of Bulgaria, and then for the first time remarked what a change came over Insaroff at the mere mention of his country: not that his countenance lighted up or that his voice was raised, —no! but his whole being as it were grew into something rugged and impassive; there was a stern inexorable firmness in the tight compression of his lips, and in his eyes there glowed a dull unquenchable fire. Insaroff did not like to talk of his own journey to Sophia, but was ready to speak with any one of Bulgaria. He spoke, but quietly, of the Turks, of their oppression, of the wrongs and sufferings his countrymen had had to endure, and of their hopes for a hap-

pier future. The concentrated force of one idea and of one passionate desire was to be heard in his every word.

"I much suspect," thought Bersieneff, as he listened to him, "that the Turkish *Aga* was made to pay dearly for the murder of my friend's father and mother."

Insaroff had scarcely finished speaking, when the door opened, and Shoubine appeared on the threshold. There was a jauntiness and an excess of ease in his manner of entering the room which at once told Bersieneff, who knew him thoroughly, that something was agitating him.

"I will introduce myself without any of the usual formalities," he began in a jocular tone. "My name is Shoubine, and I am a friend of this young man's (he pointed to Bersieneff); and you are Mr. Insaroff, are you not?"

"I am."

"Then give me your hand, and let us be friends. I don't know whether Bersieneff has ever spoken to you of me, but he has scores of times talked to me about you. So you have taken up your quarters here? Nothing could be better. Don't be angry if I look at you rather fixedly. I am a sculptor by trade, and I warn you beforehand, I shall ask your permission ere long to take a model of your head."

"My head is at your service," replied Insaroff.

"What is to be done to-day eh?" continued Shou-

bine, sitting down on a low chair, and lolling forward as he spoke. What say you, Andrew Petrovitch, has your honor formed any plan for to-day? The weather is magnificent, and to sniff the hay and fresh fruit were very rapture. We really must make up some pleasure trip. Let us show Koontsoff's new inhabitant all its many beauties." ("What is it that he is suffering from?" Bersieneff still continued to ask himself.) "Well, why do you keep silent, my friend Horatio? Open those oracular lips of yours. Shall we amuse ourselves, or not?"

"I don't know," observed Bersieneff; "better ask Insaroff; I rather fancy he wants to work."

Shoubine turned round on his chair. "Ah you want to work?" he asked in something like a peevish voice.

"No," answered Insaroff; "I am quite ready to give up to-day to a long walk."

"Now that's excellent," cried Shoubine. "Come, my dear Andrew, cover that wise head with your cap, and let us go as far as our legs will carry us. They are young legs, and will probably take us a long way. I know of a wretched inn, where they'll give us an atrocious dinner: but never mind, we shall enjoy ourselves. Let's be going."

Half an hour later they were all three walking along the bank of the river Moscow. Shoubine was in ecstasies at the shape and color of the travelling-cap which Insaroff wore. Insaroff walked at a slow

pace, frequently stopping to examine some plant, and conversed with his friends in a low, quiet tone. "Just the way good boys walk on a Sunday," Shoubine whispered in Bersieneff's ear. As for Shoubine, he was childish in his frolics, now running in advance, now putting himself in some classical pose, now pirouetting on the grass; and the more serious Insaroff was, the more extravagant were his antics.

"How can you be so flighty, you Frenchman?" asked Bersieneff more than once.

"Yes, I am a Frenchman, at least, half French; but you can keep the medium between sport and earnest," answered Shoubine.

The young men at length leaving the river proceeded by a narrow and descending path lined on either side by luxuriant golden rye: a light-blue shadow was cast on them from its lofty stalks, and the rays of the sun played along its topmost ears; the larks were singing above them, and the chant of birds was to be heard all around; green meadows stretched before them; a warm wind gently ruffled the leaves of the trees, and softly bent the heads of the flowers. Thus strolling, resting, and frolicking (Shoubine at one time tried to have a game at leapfrog with an old toothless peasant they chanced to overtake, who only grinned at the "gentlefolks' tricks") they arrived at the wretched inn for which they were bound. The waiter nearly upset them in his eagerness to serve them, and certainly gave them a most execrable din-

ner, with some kind of outlandish wine, which, however, did not prevent their being very merry, as Shoubine had predicted ; he being the merriest, and at the same time the least gay, of the party. He drank noisily to the health of the long forgotten, but once illustrious, Venelin ; to the health of the Bulgarian King Kruma, Chuma, or Chroma, who lived somewhere in the Adamic period, as he informed the company.

"In the ninth century," quietly observed Insaroff.

"In the ninth century!" exclaimed Shoubine. "Happy fate!"

Bersieneff noticed that amidst all his pranks, sallies, and jokes, Shoubine was attentively observing Insaroff as if he would probe and examine him thoroughly: but as for Insaroff, he preserved from first to last the same quiet and equable demeanor.

At last they turned homeward, then changed their dress, and, that the day might end as it had begun, resolved to pay a visit to the Stachoffs in the evening; Shoubine running on before them to announce their arrival.

CHAPTER XII.

THE HERO INSAROFF.

"THE hero Insaroff is on his way here!" he triumphantly exclaimed, as he burst into the drawing-room, where at that moment Ellen and Zoe were sitting alone.

"*Wer?*" asked Zoe, in German. Whenever she was taken unawares, Zoe always spoke in her mother-tongue. Ellen drew herself up. Shoubine looked at her with an ironical smile. She was vexed. but did not say a word.

"You heard," he repeated, "Mr. Insaroff will be here directly."

"I heard," she answered, "and heard how you called him. I am surprised at your folly. Mr. Insaroff has not yet set foot in our house, but you must needs make him your butt."

Shoubine at once became serious.

"You are right, you are always right, Ellen Nicholaevna," he said; "but it is only my way. We have been walking with him the whole day, and, I assure you, he is an excellent fellow."

"I have never asked you what kind of man he is," answered Ellen, as she rose from her seat.

"Is Mr. Insaroff young?" asked Zoe.

"Just turned one hundred and forty years," answered Shoubine, in a mocking tone.

A servant announced the arrival of the two friends. They came in, and Bersieneff introduced Insaroff. Ellen asked them to take a seat, and sat down herself; but Zoe left the room to go up-stairs and tell Anne Vasilievna that visitors were come. A conversation was commenced, and, like all first conversations, it turned on trivial matters. Shoubine watched the others from his corner, but what he saw was not very satisfactory. In Ellen he could not but remark a feeling of ill-suppressed displeasure towards himself. As he glanced at Bersieneff and Insaroff, he, like a true sculptor, compared their faces. He found that neither was actually handsome; the face of the Bulgarian was strongly marked, and admirably suited for a statue, especially when, as then, it was animated and bright; whereas the face of the Russian was fitter subject for the painter, it had no well-defined lines, but great expression: and he was obliged to confess that one or the other was alike capable of inspiring love. She was not yet in love with either, but it would be with Bersieneff: this he quite settled in his own mind. Anne Vasilievna now came into the drawing-room, and the conversation at once took a country-lodging tone,—eminently a country-lodging, as

distinguished from a *bonâ fide* country, tone. The subjects of conversation were excessively varied, but short awkward pauses brought it to a stop every three minutes. During one of these pauses Anne Vasilievna gave Zoe a look. Shoubine understood what the look meant, and made a wry mouth; but Zoe sat down to the piano, and played and sang through all her pieces. Urban Ivanovitch half opened the door; but, seeing that visitors were there, played hopelessly with his fingers, and quickly withdrew. Then tea was served, and after tea the whole company adjourned to the garden, where they strolled and chatted till it grew dark, when the guests departed.

Ellen was not so much struck with Insaroff as she had expected, or, to speak more accurately, he produced on her an impression different from that which she had anticipated. His straight-forwardness and simple manners pleased her, and she was not less attracted by his general appearance: but the whole bearing of Insaroff, which had a quiet heaviness and every-day commonness about it, was different from the fancy picture she had drawn of him after her conversation with Bersieneff. She had unconsciously expected to find in him something of the "gloomy" type. But, she thought to herself, it is true that he spoke very little to-day, and I am to blame for not having put him more at his ease; perhaps, another time—but his eyes are expressive, they are honest eyes. Much to her dissatisfaction, she felt that she

could pay him no homage; she could be friendly with him, and that was all; for he was not what she had fancied people like Insaroff must be: he was no "hero." And this word reminded her of what Shoubine had said, and she at once grew red and angry.

"How do you like your new acquaintances?" Bersieneff asked Insaroff on their road homewards.

"They pleased me very much," Insaroff replied, "particularly the daughter. She must be an excellent creature;—rather enthusiastic, but it is an honest enthusiasm."

"You must go and see them oftener," said Bersieneff.

"Certainly we must," observed Insaroff: and nothing more was said during their walk home. He at once shut himself up in his room, but through the window could be seen the light of a candle burning late into the night.

Bersieneff had not read a page of Raumer when a handful of sand thrown against his window suddenly aroused him from his studies. He involuntarily gave a start, opened the window, and beheld Shoubine pale as a sheet.

"Ah! you restless spirit! you bird of the night!" began Bersieneff.

"Hush!" interrupted Shoubine; "I have come to you stealthily, like Max to Agatha. I have two words to say to you in secret."

"All right; come into the room."

"No, that is not necessary," answered Shoubine, leaning on the window-sill: "this way is more lively, quite like Spain. And first I congratulate you; your shares have gone up. Your much bepraised extraordinary man has fallen through; that I can guarantee. And to show you how impartial I am in the matter, here is a precise catalogue of the moral and intellectual qualities of Mr. Insaroff: Talents, none at all; poetry, deuced little; capacity for hard work, enormous; memory, almost as enormous; mind, neither discursive nor deep, but healthy and quick; speech, dry, energetic, and even eloquent when he gets upon his—between ourselves we may say—stupid Bulgaria. What do you say? am I not right? But further, you will never be on such a footing with him as to say *thou*, and no one ever was: I, of course, as artist, can be no favorite of his, and I am proud that I cannot. Cold-hearted, cold-hearted, and capable of grinding us all to powder! He is attached to his country; not like our empty-heads who merely flatter the common people; but he tries to unite the whole nation in one common work. Thus his task is both more easy and more intelligible; to drive out the Turks, that is all, that is the work to which he dedicates himself. But, thank God, all these fine qualities do not take with women. There is nothing attractive, no charm about him; he is not like either of us."

"Why do you drag me in?" muttered Bersieneff. "And as to the rest, you are all wrong: you are not in

the least disliked by him, and with his fellow-countrymen he is on the most friendly and familiar footing, I know."

"That is another thing, in their eyes he is a hero, though I confess my ideal hero is quite a different creature: a true hero is never eloquent—he bellows like an ox, and rushes at you with his horns, makes the very walls tremble and totter. And then he should not know why he is so furious, but simply be furious. However, it may be that our age requires heroes of a different stamp."

"Why are you so interested in Insaroff?" asked Bersieneff. "Have you really come all this way and at this hour merely to describe his character to me?"

"I came here," began Shoubine, "because it was intolerable to remain alone at home."

"Absurd! you surely do not mean to have another crying fit."

"You may laugh! I came here because I am bursting with envy, vexation, jealousy——"

"Jealous—of whom?"

"You, him, her, everybody. I am maddened with the mere thought that I would have understood her earlier, if I had but acted in a different spirit. But what profits it now to talk? It has all come to this, that I am only fit to play the fool, to joke and laugh, as she herself has told me: far better let me go and hang myself."

"You had better not try, because you will not succeed," observed Bersieneff.

"Of course not on such a night as this; I am only waiting till the autumn. Though people do die even on nights like this, but then it is from excess of happiness. Ah, happiness! There is not a shadow that falls across the road from the trees, but it seems to whisper, 'I know where happiness is to be found. Shall I tell thee?' I would ask you to come and have a walk, but you are just now so stupidly prosaic. Better go to bed, and in your dreams have glorious visions of mathematical figures! As for me, my heart is breaking. You think all is well with a man merely because he jokes; you fancy a man can't suffer merely because he talks absurdly. Well, God be with you!"

Shoubine turned himself away from the window. For a moment Bersieneff was tempted to cry "Annette!" after him, but there was a something in Shoubine's look that restrained him. A few minutes later and a strange melancholy came over Bersieneff; he rose up and opened the window; all outside was still, save that now and then could be heard from the distance the drawling voice of some peasant, singing as he trudged along beside his cart.

CHAPTER XIII.

DISAPPEARANCE.

DURING the first two weeks after Insaroff's arrival in the village of Koontsoff, he did not pay more than three or four visits to the Stachoffs, though Bersieneff was wont to call upon them at least every other day. Ellen was always glad to see him and they invariably chatted together in a lively and animated manner; but he not seldom returned home from these interviews in a low and dejected mood. Shoubine was now rarely to be seen; a feverish fit of industry had come over him, and he would shut himself up in his room, leaving it only for a minute or so, and then all besmeared with plaster; or else go for a few days to Moscow, where he had a studio, and pass his time in the company of pretty models and Italian sculptors, his friends and teachers. Not once had Ellen spoken with Insaroff as she wished to speak: in his absence she could prepare questions about much she longed to ask him; but when he came, the consciousness of their having been prepared prevented her putting them. There was a quietness about Insaroff which intimidated her; it seemed to her that she had no right to

try and make him speak, and resolved to wait; and yet she felt that, however trivial might be the words exchanged between them, each time she saw him he attracted her more and more: but they had not happened once to be left alone,—and to become intimate with a man it is necessary, if but once, to speak with him when none are by to shame his confidence. She often spoke of him to Bersieneff. The latter perceived that Insaroff had produced a favorable impression on Ellen, and was glad that, contrary to Shoubine's assertion, his friend had not "fallen through;" he related to her, down to the most trivial details, all he knew of his history;—very often when we wish to please another we talk at length and with enthusiasm of some one of our friends, never suspecting that all the while we are but praising ourselves;—and an uneasy feeling of pain filled his breast when he remarked how the pale cheeks of Ellen were suffused with a flush, and how her eyes sparkled with eager interest, as she listened to his story.

One morning Bersieneff came to the Stachoffs at a much earlier hour than usual, and soon after his arrival Ellen made her appearance in the drawing-room.

"Only fancy," he began with a forced smile, "our friend Insaroff has disappeared."

"How disappeared?" asked Ellen.

"Disappeared completely: the day before yesterday he left the house in the evening, and since then has not been seen."

"Did he not tell you where he was going?"

"Not a word."

Ellen sank down into a chair.

"He has probably only gone to Moscow," she muttered trying to look indifferent, and at the same time surprised at herself that she should be thus trying to assume a tone of indifference.

"I do not think so," observed Bersieneff. "He did not go alone."

"With whom, then?"

"Two men called upon him the day before yesterday, just before dinner; I do not know who they were, but they must have been compatriots of his."

"Bulgarians? What makes you think so?"

"Because, so far as I could catch anything of their conversation, they spoke with him in a dialect unknown to me, but it certainly was Slavonic. You know yourself, Ellen Nicholaevna, that ordinarily there is nothing concealed about Insaroff; then why such a mystery about this visit of theirs? You see, they came to him, and began vociferating and quarrelling, like a set of angry savages,—he too crying out as loud as either of the two."

"He too?"

"Yes, he too. He bawled at them, and they seemed to be bitterly reproaching one another. And if you only could have seen these gentlemen! with their swarthy visages, long hair, beak noses, shabby clothes, covered with dust and grease; seemingly

tradesmen, and yet they were no more tradesmen than gentlemen—God knows who they were!"

"And he went away with them?"

"Just so; gave them something to eat, and then went off with them. The landlady told me that those two alone ate up a large potful of porridge. She declares it was a race between them which could gulp it down the fastest, as they gobbled it up like a couple of wolves."

"You see," she said faintly smiling, "after all, this grand mystery is a very common and prosaic event."

"God grant it be so! Though you are wrong to use the word prosaic. In Insaroff there is nothing prosaic, notwithstanding that Shoubine declares——"

"Shoubine!" interrupted Ellen, with a shrug of her shoulders; "but still you must confess that these two men swallowing and choking over their porridge——"

"But Themistocles ate on the eve of Salamis," laughingly interrupted Bersieneff.

"True, but on the next day the battle did take place. At any rate, you will let me know when he returns," Ellen said, and then tried to change the subject; but their conversation was interrupted by Zoe, who came into the room on tiptoe, thereby giving them to understand that Anne Vasilievna had not yet awakened from her nap. A minute later, Bersieneff took his departure.

On the evening of the same day she received the

following note from him: "He has come back, hot and dusty up to the brows; but why he left, or where he went to, I do not know—probably you do."

"Probably I do," Ellen repeated to herself; "as if he would take me into his confidence!"

CHAPTER XIV.

INSAROFF'S INTERVIEW WITH ELLEN.

ON the next day, in the afternoon, about two o'clock, Ellen was standing in the garden before a small kennel, feeding her two pet dogs. The gardener had found them one evening under a hedge, and had brought them to the young lady, at the advice of the laundress, who assured him that her mistress would be only glad to keep them. Nor was he wrong in his reckoning, but got a shilling for his humanity. Ellen was looking into the kennel to convince herself that her young pets were alive and well, and that their straw was fresh and dry, when she started back with a cry of surprise on perceiving Insaroff, who was coming towards her along the path that led from the house.

"Good morning," he said, as he came up to her and took off his cap. She remarked that during the last three days he had become quite sunburnt. "I asked Andrew Petrovitch to accompany me, but he was busy; so I came alone. But I found no one in the house—all asleep or out walking—so I came to look for you here."

"You seem to be excusing yourself," answered Ellen; "there is no occasion for that. We are always very glad to see you. Let us sit down on that bench there, in the shade."

She sat down, and Insaroff took a seat by her side.

"You have not been at home these few days, I think?" she began.

"No, I have been away," he replied: "Andrew Petrovitch told you?"

There was a twinkle in his eye, and a slight pouting outwards of the lip, whenever he smiled, which gave a pleasing expression to his countenance.

"Andrew Petrovitch most probably told you also that I went away with some—not the most polished of men," he continued, still smiling.

Ellen was slightly confused, but instinctively felt that with Insaroff it was better to speak the truth.

"Just so," she said unhesitatingly.

"And what did you think of me?" he asked abruptly.

"I thought," she replied in a low tone, "I thought that you know best what you should do, and that you would never do anything that was wrong."

"Thanks for your good opinion. You see, Ellen Nicholaevna," he went on as he drew nearer to her in a friendly manner, "we are but few here, and amongst those few still fewer that are civilized; but we are all devoted to a common cause. Unhappily quarrels

will arise, and I am known and trusted by all, and that is why I was called away to arrange a dispute. Thank God, I was enabled to settle it."

"Was it far from here?"

"About sixty *versts*,* to Trinity borough. Some of our people are settled there. At any rate, I was not disturbed for nothing: the matter is all arranged."

"But it was difficult for you?"

"Yes, very. One of them was so obstinate. He refused for a long time to pay."

"How? Was the quarrel about money?"

"Yes, and not a small sum either. Why, what did you think it was about?"

"And for such a trifle you made a journey of sixty versts, and lost three days?"

"Nothing is a trifle, Ellen Nicholaevna, which concerns our fellow-countrymen. In such a case to refuse one's service were a sin. Why, you, I see, do not refuse your succor even to a dog, and I praise you for it. And as to the loss of time, that is no great harm; I am well rewarded for it. Our time does not belong to us."

"To whom, then?"

"To all who have need of it. I have told you all this, little as it can interest you, because I prize your good opinion, and I fancy that my departure surprised you."

* A *verst* is equal to three-fourths of an English mile.

"You value my good opinion," repeated Ellen, in a low voice: "and why?"

"Why? because you are a real lady, and no mistake—that is why."

A short silence ensued.

"Demetrius Nikanorovitch," said Ellen, "do you know that it is for the first time you are so open with me?"

"How so? I thought I had always spoken to you without reserve, exactly what I thought."

"No, it is for the first time, and I thank you for your frankness: I too wish to be unreserved with you. May I?"

"You may," replied Insaroff, laughing.

"I warn you beforehand, I am very inquisitive."

"Never mind; speak on."

"Andrew Petrovitch has told me much of your past history, of your youth. So it is that I know of one circumstance, one terrible circumstance. I know that after it happened you went home to your own country. Do not answer me, I pray you, if my question is too importunate; but one thought tortures me. Tell me, did you ever meet with that man——"

Ellen was unable to continue. She was covered with confusion and shame at her own boldness. Insaroff looked earnestly at her; but there was a dimness in his eyes, and a nervous twitching of the mouth, that showed how strong was the emotion he was trying to subdue.

"Ellen Nicholaevna," he at length replied, and his voice was so low that its very quietness alarmed her, "I understand of what man you spoke just now. I never came across him, thank God, thank God! I never tried to find him, because I felt I had no right to slay him. I could without the least reproach have killed him; but there was no room for private revenge when the question was how to avenge—or no, that is not the word—how to free an entire people. The one could only hinder the other. But in its good time it will come—it will come," he repeated, nodding his head.

Ellen looked at him askance. "You love your country dearly?" she asked timidly.

"As yet I cannot say," he answered. "Only when a man has died for his country can you truly say he loved it."

"So, had you not the hope one day to return to Bulgaria," resumed Ellen, "you would find Russia insupportable?"

"Perhaps," answered Insaroff, with his eyes fixed on the ground, "it were as well not to answer that question."

"Tell me," Ellen began again, "is it difficult to learn Bulgarian?"

"Not in the least. It is a shame for a Russian not to know Bulgarian. A Russian ought to know all the Sclavonic dialects. If you like, I will bring you some Bulgarian books. You will see how easy the

language is. And then, what songs we have! equal to the Serbian. Just listen, I will translate one of them to you. It refers to—I suppose you know something of our history?"

"Not a bit; I know nothing of it," answered Ellen.

"Well, I will bring you a little book from which you can learn the outlines of our history. But listen to the song—or, perhaps, it will be better to give you a written translation. I am sure you will love us: you love all that are sufferers. If you only knew what a fertile glorious country ours is! And all this while those filthy Turks trample it under foot, harass us, rob us of our every possession, our churches, our laws, our lands, our rights, drive us forth like beasts, shoot us like dogs, and——"

"Demetrius Nikanorovitch," cried Ellen.

He stopped short. "Pardon me. I cannot speak of it coldly. You yourself but just now asked me whether I loved my country. What else on earth is there worth loving? What else is there that never changes, of which you never doubt, in which, next to God, you never cease to believe? And when she, your own country, has need of you—note well, the veriest peasant, the lowest beggar in Bulgaria, not one whit less than I myself, awaits one and the same thing; we have all but one and the same end in view—and think what strength, what assurance, this unity of aim must give us!"

Insaroff was silent for a moment, and then began

again to speak of Bulgaria. Ellen listened with a deep and lively but saddened interest. When he had finished, she once more asked him, "And so for nothing in the world would you remain in Russia?"

When he left her, she looked after him long and thoughtfully. That conversation had made him in her eyes another man from what he was but two short hours before.

From that day his visits to the Stachoffs grew more and more frequent, but Bersieneff came much seldomer than formerly. Between the two friends there rose up a strange and undefined feeling of aversion, which both felt acutely, but which neither cared to explain. And thus passed a whole month.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PICNIC.

ANNE VASILIEVNA, as the reader already knows, generally liked to shut herself up at home; but now and then, when least expected, she would be seized with an overwhelming desire to do something out of the way, arrange some extraordinary *partie de plaisir*; and the more difficult it was to get up this same *partie de plaisir*, the more trouble involved in its preparation, and the more perplexity and excitement it caused her, the better she was pleased. Did the freak come upon her in the winter, she invariably engaged two or three adjoining boxes, sent out half a dozen invitations, and went in a party to the theatre, or, better still, to a masquerade: if it were summer-time, she contented herself with a picnic. Of course, on the morrow she was laid up with a terrible headache, and kept her bed for a week; but two months would not pass before she was again busily arranging a fresh *partie*. It was so now. Some one had spoken to her of the beautiful view at Czaritchina, and at once Anne Vasilievna fixed the day for a picnic to that place. The whole house was thrown into a state of

worry and confusion; a courier was despatched to Moscow to beg Nicholas Artemvitch to return immediately; the steward was hurried off to purchase the wine, patties, and other necessary comestibles; Shoubine was requested to engage the stage-coach, the Stachoffs' carriage being too small, and to see that a relay of horses was kept in readiness; Bersieneff and Insaroff received two separate invitations written in French and in Russian by the fair Zoe; whilst Anne Vasilievna herself undertook to prepare the ladies' dresses. In the meanwhile the *partie de plaisir* very nearly came to grief: Nicholas Artemvitch arrived from Moscow in a sadly fretful and cross humor—something had evidently put him out at Augustina's—and when told of the plan, positively refused to go; that to be jolted first from Koontsoff to Moscow, then from Moscow to Czaritchina, and afterward from Czaritchina to Moscow, and again from Moscow to Koontsoff, was absurd; and further declared that he would only go on condition that they first proved to him that it would be more lively to be thus shaken to pieces than to stay quietly at home. On this point no one could satisfy him, and in despair of securing a trusty cavalier, Anne Vasilievna was on the point of giving up the expedition, when she suddenly thought of Urban Ivanovitch; but though she invited him to join the party, she confessed to herself that she was but acting like the drowning man who clutched at a straw. So a servant was sent to awake him; after some time he

made his appearance, heard all that Anne Vasilievna had to say, played nervously with his fingers, and finally, to the astonishment of everybody, consented to go. Anne Vasilievna kissed him rapturously on the cheek, and called him "a dear;" Nicholas Artemvitch smiled sarcastically, and muttered "*quell bourde!*"—he was very fond of occasionally using French slang—and on the following morning, at seven o'clock, the carriage and stage-coach, laden well with hampers and baskets, drew up at the gates of the Stachoffs' house. The carriage was occupied by the ladies, the housemaid, and Bersieneff, Insaroff having perched himself on the box. Urban Ivanovitch, the steward, and Shoubine rode in the coach. Urban Ivanovitch had himself, by a mysterious pantomime of his fingers, invited Shoubine to sit next to him, thinking that he would serve to amuse him on the road,—for the fat civilian and the young sculptor were fast friends,—but on that occasion Shoubine left his fat friend in peace, and was strangely silent and distracted.

The sun had already risen high in a perfectly cloudless sky when the carriages rattled up to the ruins of the castle of Czaritchina, which looked gloomy and threatening even in the clear noonday. The whole company dismounted, and began strolling in the gardens. Ellen and Zoe went in front with Insaroff, followed by Anne Vasilievna, leaning on Urban's arm, and evidently satisfied with the success of her

picnic. He puffed and fumed with the unusual exertion of walking; his new straw hat chafed his forehead, and his feet were terribly pinched in his new tight boots; but for all that he was in an excellent humor. Shoubine and Bersieneff brought up the procession. "My dear fellow, we are the reserve, mere veterans," Shoubine whispered to him: "the Bulgarian is there now;" and he pointed to Ellen, who was at the moment talking with Insaroff.

The weather was lovely. Surrounded by gay flowers, the noise of buzzing insects, the song of birds, and the soft rippling of a stream in the distance, the soul was filled with a sense of joyous freedom. "How beautiful! how beautiful!" was Anne Vasilievna's constant cry, and Urban Ivanovitch graciously bent his head in confirmation of her enthusiastic exclamations; once even he murmured the words, "Of course it is beautiful." Ellen now and then exchanged a word with Insaroff: Zoe, whilst shading her face with the flap of her large, round straw hat, took care to show from beneath her rose-colored barège dress a pair of pretty little feet, and was constantly turning round to give coquettish glances at those who were walking behind her.

"Ah!" Shoubine suddenly exclaimed in a low voice, "it is not for nothing that Zoe looks round so often. I shall go and join her. Just now Ellen Nicholaevna despises me, and esteems you, my dear Andrew, most highly; but I don't see much difference

between her contempt and her esteem. I shall go—it is awfully dull. As for you, my good friend, I advise you to do a little botany; in your present condition of mind it is the best remedy I can propose: it is at once consoling and highly profitable. So, good-bye."

Shoubine ran up to Zoe, and putting a biscuit into her hand, and saying, "*Ihre hand, Madame,*" gave her his arm, and walked on by her side. Ellen too stopped for a minute, and took hold of Bersieneff's arm, but continued talking with Insaroff. She was asking him what the Bulgarian was for oak and some other words. "Nothing but Bulgaria!" thought poor Andrew to himself.

Suddenly a cry was heard in front; all looked up, and Shoubine's cigar case was seen flying in the air, having been hit out of his hand by the lively Zoe. "Just wait a moment, I'll pay you out," he exclaimed, leaping into the bush where it had fallen: but scarcely had he returned with it in his hand before it was seen flying a second time across the road. This was repeated some four or five times; he half-laughing, half threatening; Zoe grimacing and giggling as, with the agility of a cat, she wriggled from his grasp. At last he succeeded in seizing hold of her fingers, and giving them such a squeeze that she shrieked with pain, and for a long time she continued blowing on her hand, evidently angry at his violence. But he

whispered something in her ear, and peace was apparently restored.

"Children! What it is to be young!" gayly observed Anne Vasilievna to Urban Ivanovitch, who at once began playing with his fingers.

"What a girl that Zoe is!" said Bersieneff to Ellen.

"And Shoubine?" was her answer.

In the meantime the whole party entered the famous arbor, known as Belle Vue, and stayed there a long time enjoying the view of the Czaritchina lakes. For miles lake succeeds lake, and beyond the last of the series stretches a thick, dense forest. The swarm of gnats that literally covered the hill rising up from the side of the principal lake was so great that they gave to its waters a strange greenish, emerald tint. Everywhere, even close to the bank, the stream was swollen and covered with foam; its calmest ripples flowed unequally and restlessly. As in some massive but clear mirror the sky was reflected in the spacious lake, and the rustling trees bent over and peered downward in its transparent depths. All gazed on the scene long and silently; even Shoubine was quiet, and even Zoe was thoughtful. At last they all expressed a wish to go on the water. Shoubine, Insaroff, and Bersieneff immediately raced off to see who could first find a boat. Before long they found a large gorgeously painted one, hired a couple of oarsmen, and summoned the ladies, who immediately joined

them, and were followed by Urban Ivanovitch puffing and blowing in his eagerness to keep up with them. There was a good deal of laughter as he got into the boat and seated himself.

"Look out, sir, don't upset us," cried one of the boatmen, a young snub-nosed lad dressed in a striped shirt.

"Be quiet, you rogue, be quiet," answered Urban good-humoredly.

The young people would have liked to row, but Insaroff was the only one who knew how to handle an oar. Shoubine proposed to sing in chorus some Russian song, and himself struck up with, "She gazed down the river." Bersieneff, Zoe, and even Anne Vasilievna joined in—Insaroff could not sing—but they did not keep together in tune, and at the third verse they were obliged to break off. The boatmen winked at one another, and silently grinned.

"Well," cried Shoubine, turning to them, "do you think gentlefolks can't sing if they like?"

The lad in the striped shirt only shook his head.

"Well Impudence," continued Shoubine, "we'll just show you what we can do. Zoe, sing us Indermeyer's *Le lac*, and you, stop rowing, will you?"

The oars were thrown up in the air like feathers, from which drops of water fell sharply on the surface of the lake, the boat continued to move for awhile, almost veered round, and then stood still like a swan. Zoe at first refused. "*Allons*," said Anne Vasilievna,

coaxingly; and then Zoe, taking off her straw hat, began to sing, "*O lac, l'année à peine a fini sa carrière.*" Her voice, weak but pure in tone, glanced as it were along the surface of the waters, and in the distant forest every word was echoed as though there, too, was singing some mysterious voice of heaven, not of earth. Zoe had scarcely finished when an uproarious "*brava!*" burst forth from behind one of the copses on the bank, and out of it ran a party of Germans, whose red faces showed plainly enough that they were "making a day of it" at Czaritchina. Some of them were without coats, others without waistcoats; and so loud were the cries of "*bis*," that Anne Vasilievna ordered the boatmen to row as quickly as possible to the other end of the lake. But before they reached the shore Urban Ivanovitch once more succeeded in astonishing his friends. Having remarked that in a certain part of the forest there was an unusually clear and loud echo, he all at once began imitating the cry of a quail. His first attempt startled them all, but they soon begged him to repeat the cry, which he imitated with great success. This encouraged him to try to mew like a cat; but not doing this so well, he took to imitating the quails' cry again, and then with a proud glance at his admiring audience sank into silence. Shoubine threw himself forward to embrace him, but Urban pushed him back. At this moment the boat touched the shore, and they all got out, and began strolling in the wood.

Meanwhile the coachman, lackey, and chambermaid were busy in dragging the baskets out of the carriage, and preparing a dinner beneath some old lime trees. When all was ready, they sat down round a table-cloth that had been spread on the grass, and did full justice to the pastry and other eatables before them. For they all had excellent appetites; and Anne Vasilievna, whilst eating heartily herself, kept on inviting her guests to follow her example, and assured them that to eat heartily in the open air was very healthy. She even thought it necessary to impress this truth on Urban Ivanovitch. "Do not fear," was his invariable answer, though each time he spoke his mouth happened to be so full that his replies were somewhat indistinct. "How fortunate we are in having such glorious weather!" she was also constantly exclaiming. She was another being from what she was at home, and seemed to have grown twenty years younger. In fact Bersieneff told her so. "Yes, yes," she replied, "I was worth looking at in my time, and out of any ten among them all, you would have chosen me." Shoubine lolled next to Zoe, and every few minutes was pouring her out wine, which she refused, in spite of his entreaties; and it generally ended in his drinking off the glass himself, and immediately filling up another for her: he also swore to her, that, could he but lie there with his head resting on her knees, he should dream that he was in paradise itself; but she told him that she would never allow

him to take any such liberties. Ellen seemed to be more serious than the others, though her heart was far more at rest than it had been for many a day. She was filled with a feeling of sympathy and gentleness, but she did not care to have any one near her, save Insaroff,—and perhaps Bersieneff. Andrew Petrovitch tried to read her thoughts, but in vain, and was tormented with something like envy and discontent.

The time flew on, and evening had already approached. Anne Vasilievna suddenly observed this. "Ah, *bátoushke*,* how late it is!" she exclaimed: "drink up the wine, and wipe your beards; it is time to go home." So they began busily packing up the things, and then set off for the castle, where the carriages were waiting. As they passed the lakes, they stopped to admire for a last time the beautiful scenery. All the heavens were dyed with the clear evening red; the sky was fantastically streaked with fleecy clouds; the leaves of the trees rustled slightly under the soft movement of the gentle breeze; the rays of the setting sun were reflected in the liquid gold of the troubled stream; and the shell caves and quaint grottoes that dotted the garden stood out clearly from the dark-green foliage of the trees.

* *Batoushke*, the plural of *batoushka*, father: a term of familiarity constantly used in ordinary conversation, and corresponding to our "dear fellow."

"Adieu, dear Czaritchina! we shall not forget to-day's trip," exclaimed Anne Vasilievna. But at this moment there happened something so strange and so unexpected, that the visit to Czaritchina was not likely to be ever forgotten.

This was what happened. Anne Vasilievna had scarcely bidden adieu to Czaritchina, when, a few steps in front of her, from behind a tall lilac bush, there burst forth loud exclamations, shrieks, and cries; and the whole company of gallants, the same enthusiastic amateurs who had lately so warmly applauded Zoe, stopped up the road before them. They were all evidently in a very merry mood. They stood for a moment dumbfounded at the sight of the ladies; but one of them, with a bull-neck, flaring ox-like eyes, and immense stature, stepped forward, and with an awkward ill-bred bow came close up to Anne Vasilievna.

"*Bon jour, Madame,*" he said in a hoarse gruff voice; "*comment vous portez-vous?*"

Anne Vasilievna in evident alarm drew back.

"And why," continued the Hercules in very bad Russian, "did you not favor us with an *encore* when we shouted out *bis* and brava?"

"Ah! why, why?" cried out the rest of the company.

Insaroff had gone on in front; but Shoubine, who was always with Zoe, hurried up to protect Anne Vasilievna.

"Illustrious stranger!" he began, "allow me to

express to you the unfeigned astonishment your conduct has caused us. As far as I can judge, you belong to the Saxon branch of the Caucasian family: consequently we have a right to infer your acquaintance with the customs of society, and yet you enter into conversation with a lady to whom you have never been introduced. Believe me, under other circumstances, I should be charmed to become more closely acquainted with you, for I remark in you such an extraordinary development of muscles, biceps, triceps, and deltoides, that, in my capacity of sculptor, I should consider it a rare piece of good fortune to have you for a model. But as it is, I must ask you to leave us in peace."

The "illustrious stranger" listened to Shoubine's speech with his head lolling on one side, and his hands clasped behind him.

"I don't in the least understand how you dare to speak so," he muttered after a pause. "Perhaps you think I am a shoemaker, or watchmaker, or something of that sort. Let me tell you I am an officer in the service."

"I don't dispute that at all, but——" began Shoubine.

"And this is what I say," continued the unknown, pushing him aside with his wrinkled hand, as one would a branch from the road, "I ask why didn't you sing again when we cried, *bis?* And now I'll go directly, this minute, if only this young lady—not she, that is not

necessary, but either this one or the other (pointing to Ellen and Zoe) will first give me *einen kúss*, as we say in German, a kiss. Well, what do you say? "

"Ah, what do you say?" *einen kúss;* come on," his companions cried out in chorus. "*Ach! Sakramenter!*" exclaimed one who seemed to be further gone than the rest.

Zoe clutched Insaroff's hand; but he, gently loosening her grasp, came close up to the insolent Hercules.

"Be so good as to go away," he said in a low but decided tone.

The German burst into a hoarse laugh. "Well, I like that. 'Go away!' And pray, why may I not walk in just what direction I choose? Why must I go away?"

"Because your presence is displeasing to these ladies," answered Insaroff, quietly as before, "and because you are drunk."

"What? I drunk! You hear that! *Hören Sie das, Herr Provisor?* He dares to say to me—an officer.—I demand instant satisfaction; and, by God, I will have *einen kúss.*"

"If you come one step nearer," said Insaroff.

"Well, what then?"

"I will throw you into the lake!"

"Into the lake? *Herr Je!* Really? Well, I confess, that would be curious—into the water; but if—"

The officer raised his hand threateningly, and

at the same time moved two or three steps forward, when, apparently without any cause, so instantaneously did it all happen, he gave a cry, his whole body was lifted high from the ground, his legs were sprawling in the air, and before the ladies knew whether they should scream or not, or any of the company were quite sure what was taking place, our fine officer's bulky form was seen struggling in the lake, and in a minute had sunk under the surface.

An exclamation of pity burst from the ladies, and a cry of "*Mein Gott!*" was heard on the other side.

A moment passed, and a round head, almost hidden in a mass of wet hair, appeared puffing and blowing above the water, and two hands convulsively struggling to catch hold of some support.

"He will be drowned! save him, save him!" shrieked Anne Vasilievna to Insaroff, who was standing on the bank, his legs planted wide apart, breathing heavily.

"That depends on whether he can swim," he answered with a contemptuous and cool indifference. "But let us be going," he added, taking her by the hand. "Come on, Urban and Ellen."

"At that moment the unhappy German, having succeeded in clutching hold of some reeds that grew by the side of the stream, was heard whining and grumbling as he wrung himself dry.

They all followed Insaroff, and kept close to him as they came to where the Germans were standing.

These were evidently dispirited, and casting down their eyes, let them go by without a word; only one, the bravest of them all, grumbled as he shook his head: "Well, really, this—God knows what—what may happen—when this is allowed to pass unnoticed:" and a second even took off his cap, and saluted them. Insaroff seemed to them a rather dangerous character, and in truth there was a baleful and threatening look about him just at that moment. The Germans therefore wisely contented themselves with attending to their unlucky companion, who, as soon as he felt himself to be once more on solid ground, began to declaim in a whining tone against these "Russian blackguards" and to threaten that he would complain to the police, and to his Excellency Count Von Kieseritz himself.

But the "Russian blackguards" paid no attention to his wrath, and hurried on as quickly as possible toward the castle. All were silent till they reached the garden, except Anne Vasilievna, who occasionally relieved herself by an audible sigh. But they had no sooner come up to the carriages than they stood still, and, like the divine heroes of Homer, were seized one and all with an irresistible and protracted fit of laughter. Shoubine was the first to break into a shrill peal, then followed a hoarse laugh from Bersieneff, Zoe next joining in with a kind of hysterical giggle; the example proved too contagious even for Anne Vasilievna to resist any longer, whilst Ellen was unable to refrain

from smiling, and Insaroff himself was obliged to unbend and laugh with the rest. But louder, longer, and more noisily than any of them, laughed Urban Ivanovitch; his huge frame shook, as he laughed, sneezed, and coughed all at one and the same time. And when he recovered, it was only to say, as the tears ran from his eyes, "I was wondering, 'What is that noise?' I look round, and there he is, flat, sprawling in the water!" And as he uttered the last words with a sort of convulsive jerk he burst forth into another gruff shout of laughter. Zoe's perpetual undercurrent of giggling only provoked him the more. "Yes, there were his legs, high up, and then a splash, and he was lying flat, sprawling in the lake! And weren't they surprised, seeing that he was three times as big as any of the rest?" he asked Zoe. "But I tell you," he continued, wiping his eyes, "I saw it all; it was done beautifully with one hand so on his hip, and his feet firmly set, and then a heave, a splash, and there was the German on his side, gulping and splashing about."

A considerable portion of the journey homeward had been already made, and Czaritchina Castle was far out of sight, but Urban Ivanovitch continued to be as noisy as ever in his delight at the German's mishap. Shoubine, who was seated with him in the coach, at last succeeded in shaming him into silence.

Insaroff was evidently ill at ease. He was sitting in the carriage opposite to Ellen,—Bersieneff as be-

fore occupied the box,—and did not speak a word; she too was equally silent. He imagined that she condemned his conduct, but in reality she did not condemn him at all. For the first minute she had been alarmed and struck by the strange expression of his face, but now she was reflecting over what had happened. She could form to herself no clear idea of the judgment she had passed on the events. The feeling that had been awakened in her during the day had passed away, but she had no distinct conception of the new feeling by which it had been replaced. The *partie de plaisir* had lasted far too long, and evening had imperceptibly given way to night. The carriages rolled on swiftly, now by the side of fast ripening grain fields, where the air was sultry and laden with the stifling fragrance of wheat, and now by the side of some broad meadow, where a light fresh breeze blew on the face. The horizon was, as it were, steeped in a heavy mist. Later, the moon was seen rising dull and red. Anne Vasilievna fell into a half-doze; Zoe thrust her head out of the window, and looked at the road. At last it occurred to Ellen that for more than an hour she had not spoken to Insaroff. She turned to him with some trivial question, and he at once brightened up as he eagerly answered her. The air began to be filled with indistinct mutterings, the sound of a thousand voices talking in the distance, and Moscow came in sight. In front could be caught glimpses of lighted windows, which every

minute became more and more numerous, and before long the wheels were rattling over a stone road. Anne Vasilievna woke up; they were all talking, though from the noise of the wheels and the clatter of the thirty-two hoofs of the horses, no one could be quite sure of what was said. The ride from Moscow to Koontsoff was long and dull; all fell asleep or kept silent, bumping their heads against the corners of the coach; Ellen alone did not close her eyes, but kept them fixed on Insaroff. Shoubine's usual good-humor abandoned him; the wind blew straight into his eyes, and annoyed him; he buried his head in his cloak, and consoled himself by grumbling at everything. Urban Ivanovitch was snoring most complacently, as he bobbed to the right and left. At last the carriages pulled up. Two lackeys handed out Anne Vasilievna; she was quite worn out with the day's pleasure, and in bidding her friends good-bye informed them that she was "half dead:" and when they began to thank her for the pleasant trip they had had, she only repeated the assurance that she was "half dead." Ellen for the first time gave her hand to Insaroff, and on retiring to her room, before she began undressing, sat long by the window thinking. Shoubine, on leaving them, whispered in Bersieneff's ear, "Well isn't he a hero? to throw a drunken German into the lake!" "And you have never done even that," answered Bersieneff, and turned homewards with Insaroff.

It was already dawn when the two friends reached

home. The sun had not yet risen, and there was a cold freshness in the air; a grey dew covered the grass; and the morning lark was singing high in the sky, half hidden in the dim abyss of heaven, where glittered and sparkled the last lonely star of night.

CHAPTER XVI.

ELLEN'S JOURNAL.

SOON after her acquaintance with Insaroff, Ellen began (for the fifth or sixth time in her life) to keep a journal. The following are some of the entries which she made:—

June.—Andrew Petrovitch has brought me some books, but I cannot read them. I feel ashamed to confess this to him: to return them with a falsehood, and to say I have read them, I will not. I think it would hurt him. He notices everything I say or do. He seems to be greatly attached to me. He is a thoroughly good man, is Andrew Petrovitch.

What is it I wish? Why is my heart so heavy and so sad? Why do I look with longing eyes at the birds as they fly by? Oh that I could fly away with them, fly, I know not where, but far, far away! But is it not a sin to wish such a thing? Here I have a mother, a father, relations. Can it be that I do not love them? No, I do not love them as I should wish to love them. It is terrible to make such a confession, but it is true. It may be I am a great sinner; it may be because I am so unhappy, so ill at ease. Some heavy hand is laid upon me, is strangling me. It is exactly as if I were in a prison, and there, there, the walls are now closing in around me! Why is it that others do not feel this? And whom shall I love, if I am cold to those of my own blood?

I see, father is right; he often reproaches me for loving only dogs and cats. I must think well of this. I pray too seldom; I must pray oftener. And yet, I think I could love!

I am still very shy with Mr. Insaroff. I do not know why I am so: I am not so very young, and he is so simple and so good. At times his face has a very serious expression. He is evidently occupied with some important business. I feel this, and am, as it were, ashamed to take up his time. Andrew Petrovitch, that is another thing. With him I can chatter the whole day long. But he too is always speaking to me of Insaroff. And such a strange history! Last night I saw him in a dream with a dagger in his hand, and I fancied he cried out, "I shall kill thee and myself." How absurd!

Oh! if some one would but tell me, This, or that, is what you ought to do! To be good, that is not enough; to do good, ah, that is the great thing in life. But how to do good? If I could but conquer myself! I do not know why I think so often of Mr. Insaroff. When he comes, and sits down and listens so quietly, never trying to show himself off, and never talking noisily or ridiculously, I look at him, and find it pleasant, but no more: and yet, when he has left, I remember his every word, and am agitated and disturbed, without myself knowing the reason why. He speaks French badly, and is not ashamed of it; I like him for that. It is true, however, that I always think a great deal over the character and ways of a new acquaintance. When talking with him to-day, I suddenly remembered our brother William, who rescued an old cripple from a burning cottage, and was nearly killed himself. Father declared that he was a brave fellow, mamma gave him five roubles, and I felt ready to hug him. And he had such a simple, even stupid expression, and afterwards he took to drinking.

To-day I gave a penny to a poor beggar-woman, and she asked me why I was so sad. I had no idea that I looked sad. I think it must be because I am alone, quite alone, left to my own thoughts, whether good or bad. I have no real friend. He who would be a friend, I do not require; and he whom I would have, passes by.

I do not know what ails me to-day; I feel distracted, as though I must fall on my knees, and beg and implore for mercy. It is as if some one, I know not who, were murdering me, and my soul sinks within me, I am seized with shudderings, burst into tears, and am unable to calm myself. O my God, give me peace and rest! Thou alone art able to give me quiet, all else is vain and powerless: neither my little deeds of charity, nor my occupations, nor anything, nothing save Thou, can aid me. To what end has my youth, my life, been given me? Why have I a soul? oh, why is all this?

Insaroff, Mr. Insaroff—truly, I do not know how to write of him—continues to occupy my thoughts. I should like to penetrate to his very soul, to know him really. He seems to be so open, so unreserved, and yet I can decipher nothing. At times he looks at me with such inquiring eyes, or is it merely fancy? Paul still annoys me more than ever; I am quite angry with him. What is it he wants? He is in love with me, but I do not need his love. He is in love with Zoe too. I am unjust to him; he told me yesterday that I can never be unjust by halves: and it is true. Alas! I feel that one must be unhappy, or poor, or ill, really to know one's self.

Why did Andrew Petrovitch tell me to-day about those two Bulgarians? He evidently had some object in telling me it. What have I to do with Mr. Insaroff's affairs? I am very vexed with Andrew Petrovitch.

Though I have taken up the pen, I scarcely know what to write. How unexpected was our conversation in the garden! What tenderness and truthfulness in his every word! And how soon it has all come about! Now we are quite old old friends, each knowing the other thoroughly and without reserve. How is it that I never understood him till now! How near he has grown to me! And what is stranger than all, I am beginning to be much more composed. It seems absurd that only yesterday I was angry with Andrew Petrovitch, angry with him too, and called him Mr. Insaroff, and to-day— At last I have found a true man; one in whom I can trust. There is nothing false about him; he is the first man I have ever come across who is not false; the rest are all false, false altogether. Andrew Petrovitch, good, kind Andrew Petrovitch, why do I thus insult you? No! Andrew Petrovitch may be more learned, wiser: this may be, but he is so little when compared with him. Whenever *he* speaks of his fatherland, his form becomes fuller, his face wins a strange beauty, and his voice swells into a manlier tone; then, indeed, there is not a man in the whole world to whom he need yield. And he not only talks, but he acts, and will act. I will ask him— How he turned towards me and smiled! None but brothers smile as he did. I am so happy. The first time he called upon us, I little thought that we should be so intimate. And now I am very glad that I was indifferent at first. Indifferent! Can it be that I am not indifferent now?

It is long, long since I have been so thoroughly at peace as I am now. I am perfectly at peace. Nor have I anything to write. I see him constantly, that is all. What more need I say?

Paul has shut himself up; Andrew Petrovitch begins to come much seldomer than he did. Poor Andrew! I sometimes fancy that he—but yet, that cannot be. I like talking with Andrew

Petrovitch; never a word about himself, but always about something serious, something useful. Not like Shoubine. Shoubine is as gaudy as a butterfly, and is vain of his gaudiness, which is more than butterflies are. Still both Shoubine and Andrew Petrovitch—well, I know what I mean.

He likes coming here, that I can see. But why? What can he find in me? It is true, we have both the same tastes; neither of us can bear poetry, and neither of us has the slightest idea of art. But how infinitely greater he is! He is quiet, and I in perpetual agitation; he has a work, an aim; but I, what is my work, where is my goal? He is quiet, but his mind is ever busy. The time will come when he will leave us forever, and go to his own country, far away, beyond the sea. What then? God grant he may! I shall always be glad that I knew him whilst he was amongst us. Why is he not a Russian? No, he never could be that. And mamma likes him: she says he is an excellent young man. Good mamma! But she does not understand him. Paul is silent; he understands that I was not pleased with his rude hints; but he is jealous of him. The silly fellow! What reason has he; as if I ever— But all this is folly: how could such thoughts come into my head?

It seems strange that up to this time, up to my twentieth year, I should never have loved. I think that the reason why D. (I shall name him D. in my journal,—I like the name of Demetrius) is so tranquil is because he has devoted his entire self to one work, to the realization of one dream. What can disturb him? He who gives himself up entirely, entirely, entirely, is superior to all contingencies. It is not *I* wish, but *it* wishes. By the way, we both of us like the same flowers. To-day I plucked a rose—one of the leaves fell, and he picked it up. I gave him the rose.

For some time I have had terrible dreams. What do they forebode?

D. comes to see us very often. Yesterday he remained the whole evening. He wishes to teach me Bulgarian. I get on with him as if he were one of ourselves. Better than if he were one of ourselves.

How the days fly! All is well with me, and yet with my happiness there is at times mingled a feeling of sadness, and, whilst thanking God for His goodness, tears come into my eyes. Oh, warm bright days!

All is well with me as before; only seldom, very seldom, do I feel sad. I am happy. Am I happy?

It will be long before I forget our picnic yesterday. What strange, new, terrible impressions! When he so quickly seized that giant, and hurled him, as though he had been a tiny ball, into the lake, I was not frightened, but he terrified me. And then there was something evil in his expression, something almost cruel. In what a tone he said those words, "Let him swim!" I felt as if I were estranged from him by those words. But it may be I did not comprehend him. And then, when they all laughed, and when I laughed too, how sorry I felt for him! I could see that he was ashamed, ashamed because I was there. He told me so afterwards, in the carriage, when it was quite dark and I tried to see his face, but feared to look at him. Yes, one cannot joke with him, it is no playing matter, and he knows how to defend himself. But why that evil look, those trembling lips, that strange, concentrated passion in the eyes? Or, must it be so with men like him? Is it impossible to be manly and brave without throwing off much that is tender and gentle? "Life is rough and cruel," he said to me not long ago. I repeated his words to Andrew Petrovitch, but he did not agree with D. Which of them is right? And how joyously the day began! How glad I was to walk by his side, though neither of us said a word! But I am glad at what happened, seeing how it all ended.

I am again restless and disturbed—probably, I am not well.

All these days I have written nothing in my journal; I did not wish to write anything. I felt that, write what I would, it would be no true reflection of my soul. And what is it that agitates me so strangely? I have had a long conversation with him, from which I have learned much. He told me all his plans. By the way, I know now why he has that wound in his neck. Good God! when I think that he was at death's door, completely riddled with wounds, and only rescued with the greatest difficulty. He anticipates war, and is glad of it. And yet in spite of all this I never saw D. so sad. What is it that can make him so sad? Papa returned to-day from town, found us sitting together, and seemed angry at seeing us together. Andrew Petrovitch came in the evening; I fancy he has grown thinner and paler than he was. He was not so friendly with me as usual; I fear I have been cold with him; and he suddenly went off to Shoubine's room. I have quite forgotten Shoubine. I will go and see him, and will try to make amends for my neglect. Now I am not angry with him at all, or with anybody in the whole world. Andrew Petrovitch spoke to me in a kind of reproachful tone. What does it all mean? Why is all around me and within me so dark? It seems as if around me and within me was something enigmatical, something I must solve, and that before long.

I could not sleep last night, my head ached terribly. I cannot write. He came to-day quite early, but scarcely stayed at all, and I wished so much to speak with him. He appeared to avoid me. Yes, I could see that he tried to avoid me.

The enigma is solved; light has broken in upon me. Great God! be merciful to me. I love him!

CHAPTER XVII.

SILENT LOVE.

ON that same day on which Ellen had written those last tender words in her journal, Insaroff was sitting in Bersieneff's room, Bersieneff standing by the table with an expression of perplexity in his countenance. Insaroff had just informed him of his intention to return to Moscow the next day.

"But, my dear fellow," cried Bersieneff, "the fine weather is only now setting in. What in the world will you find to do at Moscow?" And so sudden! I hope you have had no bad news?"

"I have received no news of any kind," answered Insaroff; "but I am convinced that I ought to stay here no longer."

"But why can't——"

"Andrew Petrovitch," interrupted Insaroff, "be so kind, I pray you, as no longer to insist on the matter. It is painful enough to have to leave you; but there is nothing to be done."

Bersieneff looked earnestly at his friend.

"I know," he said at last, "there is no persuading you. So, it is decided."

"Quite decided," answered Insaroff, as he got up and left the room.

For some time Bersieneff remained lost in thought, then took up his hat, and set off towards the Stachoffs.'

"You have something to tell me," Ellen said to him, as soon as they were alone.

"I have; but how did you guess it?"

"That doesn't matter: but tell me, what is it?"

Bersieneff told her of Insaroff's intention.

Ellen grew visibly pale, and continued silent for a while.

"What does it mean?" she asked, but the words were spoken with difficulty.

"You know," replied Bersieneff, "that Demetrius Nikanorovitch does not like giving an account of his actions. But I think—let us sit down, Ellen Nicholaevna, you are not quite well—I think I can guess what is the reason of this sudden departure."

"But what can be his motive? what can it be?" repeated Ellen, as she unconsciously, and with more than a woman's strength, grasped Bersieneff's hand. Her own was icy cold.

"Well," began Bersieneff, with a sad smile, "how can I best explain to you what I mean? Let me go back to the spring of this year, to the time when I began to be acquainted with Insaroff. I met him one evening at the house of a relative: this relative had a daughter, an extremely beautiful girl. I fancied

that Insaroff was struck with her beauty, and told him so. He only laughed, and assured me that I was mistaken, that his heart was as yet untouched, but that he would at once leave the place were anything of the kind to happen, since he was resolved—these were his words—never to sacrifice his duty and the work of his life to his own personal pleasure and happiness. 'I am a Bulgarian,' he said, 'and have no need of the love of a Russian girl.'"

"But—what then—you——" muttered Ellen, as she turned aside her head, like a man dreading the fall of some heavy blow; but all the while keeping a convulsive hold of Bersieneff's hand.

"I think," said Bersieneff, in a hesitating tone and with his head cast down, "I think, that what I then wrongly guessed to have taken place, has now happened."

"That is—you think—for God's sake, don't torture me any longer!" Ellen cried with sudden vehemence.

"I think," hurriedly continued Bersieneff, "that Insaroff loves a Russian girl, and in accordance with his oath is determined to quit us at once."

Ellen clutched his hand with a still tighter grasp, and bent down her head still lower, as if desirous to hide from another's gaze the blush of shame that suddenly crimsoned all her face and neck.

"Andrew Petrovitch, you are as good as an angel!" she said; and then added in a hesitating

voice, "but I suppose he will come and bid us good-bye."

"I imagine so;—yes, he is sure to come, since he leaves us against his will."

"Tell him, tell him——"

But here the unhappy girl broke down, her eyes slowly filled with burning tears, and all pale and trembling she rushed from the room.

"How passionately she loves him!" thought Bersieneff, as he made his way slowly homewards. "I had no suspicion of it, never realized that she loved him so passionately. She told me that I was good—good as an angel! But who shall say what was the feeling that urged me to reveal it all to Ellen? There was no virtue in it—it was not because I am good. It was nothing but a cursed wish to know all, to be convinced, even though the conviction should strike me a death-blow. Well, now I may be content: they love one another, and I served to fan their love into a flame. The future mediator between science and the Russian public is what Shoubine calls me. And in truth it would seem that my destiny is to be a mediator. But if, after all, I am mistaken? No, that cannot be."

Andrew Petrovitch felt miserably wretched, and had no heart to sit down to the study of Raumer.

On the following day, about two o'clock, Insaroff came to the Stachoffs'. As if on purpose, Anne Vasilievna was engaged at that hour with a visitor, the

wife of a neighboring priest, a very excellent and worthy woman, but in constant hot water with the police, owing to her persistent obstinacy in bathing, in the very middle of the day, in a pond by the side of a road, along which a certain important general's family frequently passed. In the first impulse of the moment Ellen, whose face became perfectly bloodless the instant she heard Insaroff's footstep, was inclined to be glad at the presence of a stranger; but then her heart died within her at the thought that Insaroff might depart without saying one word to her in private. He too seemed troubled, and noticeably avoided her glance. "Can it be that he will go away so abruptly?" murmured Ellen to herself. And as she thought thus, Insaroff had already risen to say good-bye to Anne Vasilievna, when Ellen got up hurriedly from her seat, and called him aside to the window. The good vicaress appeared to be astonished, and turned round to satisfy her curiosity as to what the young people were doing, but was so tightly laced that her stays cracked at every movement. She therefore resumed her former posture.

"Listen," hurriedly whispered Ellen. "I know why you have come; Andrew Petrovitch has told me of your plans: but I beg you, I implore you, do not leave Koontsoff to-day, but come again to-morrow, only earlier, say eleven o'clock. I have two words to say to you."

Insaroff silently bent his head.

"I will not try to keep you here. It is a promise then?"

Insaroff again bowed his head, but said nothing.

"Nelly, come here," cried Anne Vasilievna; "just look what a pretty reticule *mátoushka** has."

"My own work," simpered the vicaress.

Ellen left the window. Insaroff did not stay above a quarter of an hour. Ellen with furtive glances watched his every motion. He did not remain in one place, did not know where to look, and when he left, quitted the room in an unconscious, abstracted manner.

Slowly passed that day with Ellen, and still more slowly the long, long night. For hours she sat motionless upon the bed, her hands clasped around her knees, and her head bent listlessly over them; and then she restlessly moved to the window, pressing her burning forehead against its cold pane; and all the while she pondered and pondered and pondered one and the same thought, till the brain, weary with the long effort, refused to think any longer. Her heart ceased to beat within her, her whole frame seemed robbed of life, all feeling had passed away; only the veins of her temples throbbed as if they would burst, her head was burning hot, and her lips feverishly dry, "He will come—he did not say good-bye to mamma—

* Mátoushka, literally "little mother," employed as a term of affection towards women in the same way as bátoushka is used for.

he will not deceive me. But is it true—what Andrew Petrovitch said? He may be wrong, have misunderstood. He did not promise in words to come; but it cannot be that I shall never see him again." Such were the thoughts that all that night perpetually haunted her; she could not banish them from her mind, for they did not come and then depart like idle fears, but literally filled her soul like some heavy mist. "He loves me!" suddenly flashed through her whole being, and she gazed eagerly into the dark night, as a secret smile, unseen by any one, played on her lips; but she mournfully shook her head, clasped her hands behind her neck, and again, like some heavy mist, a shuddering fear seized upon her soul. Before the morning she undressed, and lay down on the bed, but was unable to sleep. The first rays of the morning sun played on the floor of her room. "Oh if he only loves me!" she suddenly cried out, and, unabashed by the light that shone in upon her, threw off the clothes.

She got up, dressed, and went down stairs. No one was stirring in the house. She went into the garden; but in the garden all was so still, so green and so fresh, the birds singing with such joyous confidence, that nature's very gladness only made her more weary and more sad. "Oh," she thought, "if it be but true, there is nothing in the whole world happier than I am; but is it true?" She returned to her room, and, in order to kill time, began changing

her dress. But the dress fell and slipped idly through her fingers, and she was still sitting half-dressed before the looking-glass when she was summoned to breakfast. She went down stairs. Her mother remarked her paleness, but merely observed, "How interesting you look to-day!" and then with a meaning glance added, "That dress suits you admirably; I advise you to wear it whenever you want to captivate any one." Ellen made no reply, and sat down to the table.

In the meanwhile the clock struck nine; two long hours before it would be eleven! Ellen took up a book, then began to sew, and then returned to her book; she then determined to walk a hundred times up and down a certain path in the garden, and did so; then came back and seemingly for hours watched Anne Vasilievna lay out the cards and settle down to a quiet game of patience; and then she looked at her watch, and saw that it was not yet ten o'clock. Shoubine came in, and she tried to get into conversation with him, and began excusing herself to him, though she had no clear idea of what it was she wished him to pardon. Every word she spoke was not only uttered with a visible effort, but made her more and more confused. Shoubine bent down and looked at her fixedly. She evidently expected from him some mocking word, but looking up she saw before her a sad but friendly face. She smiled at his woe-begone look. Shoubine smiled in return, and then silently getting up, left the room. She wished to call him

back, but at the moment could find no words. At last she heard the clock strike eleven. She began to wait, to wait, to wait, and to listen. She could no longer do anything; she could no longer even think. Her heart beat quickly and loudly, and what was stranger than all, the time that had passed so slowly before, now seemed to fly. A quarter of an hour passed, half an hour, then, as Ellen fancied, a few minutes, when she suddenly shuddered, as she heard the clock strike, not twelve, but one. "He will not come, he will go away without even saying good-bye!" and with this thought the blood rushed feverishly to her head, she felt as though she could not breathe, and her throat swelled with convulsive sobbings.

She hurried to her room, and burying her face in her hands threw herself upon the bed. She lay there motionless for half an hour, the hot tears trickling on to the pillow through her close-pressed fingers. She suddenly raised herself up into a sitting posture; a marvellous change had come over her, the whole expression of her face was altered; her eyes, but now wet with tears, dried of themselves and gleamed with an unnatural fire, her brows were closely knit, and her lips tightly pressed together. And so passed another half-hour. For the last time Ellen heaved a bitter sigh—was it the sound of a familiar voice that called her?—rose up, put on her hat, threw a cloak over her shoulders, and hurrying unobserved from the house, flew with eager steps along the road that led to Bersieneff's lodging.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE.

ELLEN hurried on, with her head slightly bent down, and her eyes peering eagerly forward. She experienced no fear, had formed no definite plan as to what she meant to do; her only desire was to see Insaroff yet once more. So she hurried on, without observing that the sun had long been buried behind heavy thick clouds, that the wind in fitful gusts was howling among the trees, and that the dust began to rise along the road. Large drops of rain began to fall, but she did not notice it; in a few minutes the rain poured heavily, accompanied at frequent intervals with vivid flashes of lightning and heavy peals of thunder. Ellen then for the first time stopped and looked timidly about her. Fortunately, not far from the spot where she had been overtaken by the tempest, there stood an old tumble-down oratory, built over a dried-up well. She hastened towards it, and took refuge under its low roof. The rain now came down in torrents, and the whole sky was black with dense clouds. In dumb despair Ellen looked out to see if

there were any prospects of the storm soon clearing up. All hopes of seeing Insaroff were now destroyed. An old beggar-woman came into the oratory, and shaking herself said, with a low bow, "Allow me to take shelter, *mátoushka*," and then, puffing and sighing sat down on the steps of the well. Ellen put her hand into her pocket: the old woman observed the movement, and her yellowish shrivelled face, which even still bore faint traces of former beauty, brightened up "Thank you, my dear good foster-lady," she muttered. Ellen discovered that she had forgotten to put her purse in her pocket, but the old woman was still stretching out her hand.

"I have no money, *báboushka*," said Ellen; "but take this, it may fetch something;" and she gave her her pocket-handkerchief.

"Oh, oh, my beauty," cried the old woman, "and what do I want with your handkerchief? Is it, then, a wedding present for my little grand-daughter, who is soon to be married? The Lord reward you for your goodness!"

A heavy peal of thunder broke overhead.

"The Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on us!" murmured the old woman, as she crossed herself three times. "I surely have seen you somewhere before," she added after a short silence. "This is not the first time you have given me something, I fancy?"

Ellen looked attentively at her, and then recognized the old woman.

"Yes, *báboushka*," she replied; "you once asked me why I was so sad."

"To be sure, *golúbka*,* to be sure. I thought I knew you. And you are not happier now than you were before. Just look at your handkerchief, wet with tears. Ah, you young chickens have one and all the same great sorrow."

"What sorrow, *báboushka?*"

"What sorrow? Ah, my pretty dear, you can't deceive me, I am too old to be cheated. I know what ails you; yours is no orphan's sorrow. I too was young once, my little heart, and have passed through it all. And now, because you are good and charitable, I will tell you what it is. You have come across a good, brave man: you are no flirty girl; you will cling to him alone, cling to him till death. It has been so before, and will be so again, seeing such is God's will. You are surprised at what I tell you, but know I am a fortune-teller. Never mind, I will take your handkerchief, and with it will take away all your sorrow. I will take it all away—that is enough. You see, it is not raining so fast now, but you stay under shelter a little longer. I shall go on—it is not the first time I have been out in the wet. So you understand: you had a great sorrow, but it is passed away, and you may now forget it. O Lord! O Lord!"

* Another of the terms of affection in which the Russian language is so rich—signifying literally "little dove." The masculine form is *golubchick.*

The old woman got up from the steps, left the oratory, and proceeded on her road. Ellen followed her with a wondering look as she asked herself, "What does she mean?"

The rain gradually lessened, and the sun gleamed out for a minute or so. Ellen was already making ready to quit her shelter, when suddenly, not ten steps from the oratory, she saw Insaroff. With his head buried in a cloak, he was going along the same road in which Ellen was bound. He was apparently hurrying homewards.

Ellen leaned heavily on the crazy rails of the well steps, tried to call out his name, but could not utter a word. Insaroff had already passed her without raising his head.

"Demetrius Nikanorovitch!" at last she found voice to cry out.

Insaroff suddenly stopped and looked round. For the first minute he did not recognize Ellen, but quickly came towards her. "You! you here!" he exclaimed.

She went back, without saying a word, into the oratory, and Insaroff followed her. "You here!" he repeated.

She continued silent, and only looked up to him with a long, questioning, loving glance. He lowered his eyes.

"You have come from our house?" she asked him.

"No, not from yours."

"No?" repeated Ellen, and she tried to smile.

"And that is how you keep your promises; I was waiting for you all the morning."

"But, Ellen Nicholaevna, remember I made no promise yesterday."

Ellen again smiled faintly as she stroked her forehead with her hand. Both face and hand were deadly pale. "Then, you meant to go away without saying good-bye to us?"

"I did," replied Insaroff, in a dry, low tone.

"How? After our friendship, after those confidences, after all that has passed! And so, but for my having happened to meet you here"—Ellen's voice trembled, and she was obliged to pause for a moment—"you would have gone away without giving me a farewell shake of the hand, and not been sorry at the pain you caused!"

Insaroff turned his face away. "Ellen Nicholevna, I pray you, do not speak so. I have trouble enough without that. Believe me, it was no easy matter to determine to leave you thus. If you but knew——"

"I do not wish to know," interrupted Ellen, with almost fright, "why you leave us. I see it is necessary. I see we must part. You would not grieve your friends unless you were obliged. But should friends part in such a way? And we are friends, are we not?"

"Not friends," said Insaroff.

"How, not friends?" murmured Ellen, and her cheeks became tinged with a faint blush.

"It is for that reason I go away, because we are not friends. But do not force me to say what I do not wish to say, what I never will say."

"Once you were frank and open with me," answered Ellen, in a half-reproachful tone. "You remember."

"Then I could be open, then there was nothing to conceal; but now——"

"But now?" asked Ellen.

"But now—but now I must go. So, good-bye."

Had Insaroff at this moment raised his eyes, he must have seen that Ellen's face became paler and paler in proportion as his grew gloomier and darker; but he kept them obstinately fixed on the ground.

"Well, good-bye, Demetrius Nikanorovitch," she began. "But at any rate, since we have met, give me your hand."

Insaroff stretched out his hand "No, I cannot," he muttered, and hastily drew it back.

"You cannot?"

"I cannot. Good-bye." And he turned round to quit the oratory.

"Wait, if only a moment longer," said Ellen. "You are afraid of me. But I have more courage than you," she continued; but while she spoke her whole body trembled. "I can tell you—do you wish it?—why you have found me here. Do you know where I was going?"

Insaroff looked at Ellen with a puzzled glance.

"I was going to your house."

"To mine!"

Ellen hid her face with her hands. "You wished to force me to say I love you," she whispered: "well, I have said it!"

"Ellen!" cried Insaroff.

She seized his outstretched hands, gazed up at him, and fell upon his breast.

With a passionate, but silent embrace he held her to his bosom. He had no need to tell her that he loved her. That one exclamation of his, the sudden transformation which the entire man had undergone, the agitated heaving of that breast on which she so confidingly reposed, the caressing play of his fingers in her light-brown hair, told Ellen that she was loved. He did not say so, and she felt no need of words. "He is here, he loves me—what more do I want?" The rest of heavenly peace that lends to death itself a beauty and a rapture, filled her soul. She wished for nothing now, because she possessed all. "Oh, my brother, friend, and darling!" whispered her lips; and she scarce knew whose heart it was, whether his or hers that beat so softly and so gently.

But he stood silent and motionless, as he clasped to his bosom with a firm, strong embrace, this young girl who had given her life into his keeping, and pressed to his breast this new and ever-precious charge; a feeling of tenderness, a feeling of undefined thankfulness, broke through his selfish pride,

and tears, such as he had never shed before, filled his eyes. She, however, did not shed a tear; but only murmured, "Oh, my brother! Oh, my friend!"

And so passed a quarter of an hour, he still embracing her as she leaned her head on his bosom. "And so," he at last said, "you will go with me, wherever my fate may call me?"

"Anywhere to the end of the world: where thou art, there will I be."

"And you do not deceive yourself; you know, your parents will never consent to our marriage?"

"I am not deceiving myself; I know it."

"You know that I am poor, a mere beggar?"

"I know it."

"That I am not a Russian, that I never can live in Russia, that you will have to break all the ties that bind you to your fatherland and to your family?"

"I know it, I know it."

"And you also know that I have dedicated myself to hard and thankless work, that I—that we shall have to endure not merely danger, but deprivation, it may be even ignominy?"

"I know it, I know all—I love you."

"That you must give up all your habits and comforts of life; that there, alone, among strangers, you may be compelled to work——"

She put her hand upon his mouth. "I love you, my darling!"

He covered her small fair hand with warm and

passionate kisses. Ellen did not seek to remove her hand from his lips, but with a kind of childish glee and innocent curiosity watched him devouring her hand and fingers with burning kisses.

She suddenly grew crimson-red, and hid her face on his bosom.

Tenderly he raised her head, and, gazing fixedly into her eyes, cried out, "Hail to thee, my wife, before God and the people!"

CHAPTER XIX.

JOYFUL ASSURANCE.

AN hour later, and Ellen, with her straw hat in one hand, and her cloak in the other, quietly entered the drawing-room. Her hair was slightly disordered, a little red spot was burning on either cheek, a smile was playing on her lips, and through their half-closed lids could be seen the bright gleaming of her eyes. She was almost dead with fatigue, but this fatigue was pleasant to her, at that moment everything was pleasant and delightful. Everything seemed to her to be kindly and delicious. Urban Ivanovitch was sitting by the window; she came up to him, put her hand on his shoulder, and, slightly bending over him, smiled, as it were involuntarily.

"What is it?" he asked in surprise.

She did not know what to say. She longed to hug Urban Ivanovitch, and to give him a good kiss.

"Sprawling!" she whispered at last.

But Urban Ivanovitch did not even smile, but continued to regard Ellen with a look of astonishment. She threw over him her cloak and hat.

"My darling Urban Ivanovitch," she went on to

say, "I want to sleep, I am frightfully tired." And she again smiled, and sank into a chair that stood beside him.

"Ah!" muttered Urban Ivanovitch, and began to play with his fingers: "ah! well, then of course—yes, certainly!"

But Ellen in the meantime glanced around her, and thought: "Soon I must part from all this, and yet strange that I have no feeling of fear, hesitation, or regret—but no! mamma will grieve!" And then once more she saw the little oratory, once more she heard his voice, once more she felt his arms encircle her. Her heart beat joyously, but weakly; it too was wearied and exhausted. She thought of the old beggar-woman. "She was right," Ellen thought to herself; "she divined my grief. Oh, how happy I am! what undeserved joy! and how soon!" She felt that if she only gave way to her emotion for a moment, she must burst into tears. She could only restrain them by forcing herself to smile. Whatever position she assumed, it seemed to her that nothing could be better, nothing more comfortable; it was as if she were lulled by some cradle-song. Her movements were now measured and slow, her former restlessness and nervous activity had disappeared. Zoe came in; Ellen decided that she had never seen a more pleasing face. Anne Vasilievna soon afterwards came in; Ellen felt a choking in the throat, but rose up and tenderly embraced her good mother,

kissed her on the forehead, and softly stroked her hair, which was already fast getting grey. She then went to her own room, and how cheerful everything looked there! With what a feeling of modest triumph and contentment did she sit down on her bed,—that same bed on which, but three short hours ago, she had writhed in such agony and despair! "But even then I knew that he loved me," she said to herself, "and long before then. 'Hail to thee, my wife'!" she murmuringly repeated, as, covering her face with her hands she fell on her knees.

Towards evening she became more thoughtful. She was filled with sorrow at the thought that it must be long before she could see Insaroff again. He could not, without exciting suspicion, remain with Bersieneff, and for this reason he had arranged with Ellen that he should at once leave for Moscow, but come to see her two or three times during the autumn. She, for her part, had promised to write to him, and if possible find the opportunity of occasionally meeting him in the neighborhood of Koontsoff. She came downstairs to tea, and found the whole family assembled, together with Shoubine, who looked up meaningly as she entered. She wished to speak with him in their old friendly manner, but feared lest he should discover her secret, and feared still more lest she should betray it herself. She felt that it was not without a reason that he had left her for two weeks in peace. Shortly afterwards Bersieneff called, with Insaroff's

compliments to Anne Vasilievna, and excuses for having left for Moscow without coming himself to say good-bye. It was the first time since their interview that the name of Insaroff had been pronounced in Ellen's presence; she felt that she blushed; at the same time she understood that it was only proper she should express regret at the sudden departure; but she could not bring herself to say a word, and sat motionless and silent. She tried to keep close to Bersieneff; for she did not fear him, though he in part knew her secret; but she felt that he was a protection to her from Shoubine, who all the while kept his eyes fixed on her, watching and noting her every moment. Bersieneff too felt puzzled that evening: he had expected to see Ellen much more cast down than she appeared to be. Fortunately for her, a discussion about some question of art was started between Bersieneff and Shoubine; she drew a little aside, and only heard their voices as it were in a dream. Little by little, not only they, but the whole room, and all that were in it, seemed to her but as a dream—everything, the tea-urn on the table, Urban Ivanovitch's short waistcoat, Zoe's little feet, and the oil portrait of Prince Constantine that hung on the wall—everything grew indistinct, became covered with a cloud, ceased to exist. She experienced a kind of pity for them all. "For what do they live?" she asked herself.

"You are sleepy, Nell," exclaimed her mother; but Ellen did not hear her words.

"A suspicion that is altogether well founded, you say?" Those words, spoken in a sharp tone by Shoubine, were the first that aroused Ellen from her meditations. "Granted," he continued; "but do not forget that is the very criterion of true art. A suspicion that is entirely just will fall dead; the most criminal will bear it with calm indifference; but if only half true, it will be more than he can bear, it will vex him and make him impatient. For instance, if I say that Ellen Nicholaevna is in love with one of us here, what sort of suspicion is that, pray?"

"Let me tell you, Monsieur Paul," interrupted Ellen, "I should very much like to prove to you that I am vexed with you, but I am really too tired."

"Why don't you go to bed?" muttered Anne Vasilievna, who herself liked to doze of an evening, and was consequently always ready to send others off to bed. "Say good night, and God bless you. I am sure Andrew Petrovitch will excuse you."

Ellen kissed her mother, and with a slight curtsey to the rest left the room. Shoubine followed her to the door. "Ellen Nicholaevna," he whispered to her on the threshold, "you delight in crushing Monsieur Paul, you trample on him without pity, but Monsieur Paul worships you, worships your feet, and the shoes on your feet, worships the very soles of your shoes."

Ellen shrugged her shoulders, reluctantly gave

him her hand—not the one Insaroff had kissed—and, withdrawing to her room, at once undressed, lay down, and fell fast asleep. Her sleep was sound and unbroken as the sleep of a child,—a slumber such as we can only enjoy in our infancy, whilst our mother sits by the cradle, watches over us, and listens to our breathing.

CHAPTER XX.

GENTLEMANLY REVENGE.

"COME to my room for a minute," Shoubine said to Bersieneff as soon as they had taken leave of Anne Vasilievna: "I have something to show you."

Bersieneff accompanied his friend. He was struck with the number of studies, statues, and busts, all covered with wet towels, which were arranged in all the corners of the room.

"I see you are working in earnest," he observed to Shoubine.

"One must do something," replied the latter. "If you don't succeed in one thing, try another. Besides, I am a Corsican, and go in rather for the Vendetta dodge than for true art. *Trema, Bisanzia!*"

"What do you mean?" asked Bersieneff.

"Well, wait an instant. Now, please to look around, my dear friend and critic; this is revenge number one."

Shoubine uncovered one of the figures, and Bersieneff recognized in it a bust of Insaroff, marvellous for its exact resemblance. The features were Insaroff's, exact to the minutest detail, the expression

was admirably given in all its winningness, nobility, and daring. Bersieneff was enthusiastic in his praise of it.

"It is admirable!" he exclaimed. "I congratulate you heartily on your success. You ought to send it to the Exhibition. But why do you call this magnificent production revenge number one?"

"Because, sir, I intend to present this magnificent production, as you are pleased to style it, to Ellen Nicholaevna on her birth-day. Do you understand the allegory? We are not blind, we can see what is going on under our very noses; but we are gentlemen my good sir, and our revenge shall be gentlemanly too.

"And here," continued Shoubine as he uncovered another figure, "since artists, according to the newest æsthetical canons, enjoy the enviable right of incarnating any horror, provided they only idealize it sufficiently, so we, in the production of this ideal, have taken our revenge number two, though no longer as gentlemen, but simply, *en canaille*."

Whilst thus declaiming, he dexterously whipped off the covering, and exposed to Bersieneff's view a statuette of the same Insaroff, but in the Dantesque style. It were impossible to imagine anything more devilish and cunning. The young Bulgarian was represented as a goat, his hind-legs slightly extended and his head bent down ready to butt. The stupid air of importance, the brutal anger, obstinacy, and awkwardness of the animal, combined with the striking like-

ness of the features, rendered it impossible for Bersieneff not to laugh at the grotesqueness of the figure before him.

"What? you find it droll?" continued Shoubine: "did you recognize the hero? Do you advise me to send this also to the Exhibition? This, my dear friend, I intend as a present to myself on my own birth-day. I lowly bend my knee in homage before your imperial greatness!" And Shoubine bent his knee three times, each time touching the ground with his forehead.

Bersieneff took the cloth from the floor, and threw it over the statuette.

"Yes, you are magnanimous," Shoubine exclaimed; "in history you will be known as Andrew the Magnanimous! But it is all the same. And now," he continued as with mock solemnity he proceeded to uncover a third statuette, "you will see something to convince you of your friend's humility and sagacity. In this you have a proof that he, like all genuine artists, feels the need and the blessing of being buffeted. Behold!"

The cloth was removed, and Bersieneff could see two heads in a line, and almost touching one another. He did not at once guess for whom they were intended, but upon looking more attentively recognized in one of them the features of Annette; in the other, Shoubine himself. They were, indeed, caricatures rather than portraits. Annette was represented as a

pretty, stoutish girl, with a low forehead, watery eyes, and a turned-up nose. There was a smile of effrontery on her thick lips, and her whole face wore an expression of self-assurance, sauciness, and cold-heartedness. Shoubine was represented as a used-up, worn-out, fast-liver, with sunken cheeks, with thinish locks of grey hair, hollow expressionless eyes, and the sharp-pointed nose of a corpse.

Bersieneff turned away in disgust.

"A loving pair, are they not?" asked Shoubine. "And what do you think of my inscriptions for them? I have already hit on a title for the first two. Under the bust I shall write, 'The Hero resolving to save his country;' under the statuette, 'Look out, my German Friends!' and for the third, what do you say to 'The fate of the illustrious artist, Paul Jakovlevitch Shoubine?'"

"Stop that!" interrupted Bersieneff. "Was it worth your while to waste your time on such—" he hesitated, as if searching for a word.

"Disgusting abortions, you wish to say. No, my friend, you must not be so prudish; you will find plenty such groups in our modern exhibitions."

"They are exactly so—disgusting," continued Bersieneff. "And what does this folly mean! You have none of those tendencies towards the nasty, which unfortunately, so many of our artists in the present day exhibit. You are merely doing injustice to your talents."

"You think so, do you?" sulkily rejoined Shoubine. "And if I haven't them, but they are beginning to grow upon me, who is to blame? One person, and only one. Do you know," he continued, knitting his brows in a tragical manner, "I tried what drink would do?"

"Nonsense!"

"I did, word of honor; but it left a nasty taste in the mouth, couldn't get it to go down the throat easily, and had a splitting headache for my pains. The great Loustchichin himself—Charlampius Loustchichin, the first of Moscow artists, though for the rest a thorough Russian bear—told me that I had better give it up, as I was not one of the sort to be inspired by drink."

Bersieneff raised his hand threateningly to the group, but Shoubine prevented him.

"Hold on, my boy, don't destroy it. It is a good lesson, it is a kind of scarecrow."

"In that case," Bersieneff said, laughing, "I consent to let the scarecrow remain: but now, give your homage to the eternal and the true in art."

"Homage to the true in art," echoed Shoubine. "To succeed in it, is well; to fail in it, is no dishonor."

The two friends shook each other warmly by the hand, and separated.

CHAPTER XXI.

REACTIONARY FEELING.

THERE was a gladness mingled with fear in Ellen's first waking thoughts on the next morning. "Is it true; is it true?" she kept asking herself, and her heart overflowed with joy. Recollections crowded upon her, and she was lost and perplexed in them. And then, once more, a happy, rapturous feeling of peace came over her. But in the course of the day Ellen grew more and more restless, and on the morrow was weary and depressed. True, she knew now what she had so longed to know, but the conviction that she was loved did not give her ease. That never-to-be-forgotten interview had taken her out from the old world; she no longer lived in it, she was far removed from it, and yet all the while everything around her remained the same, everything went on according to the regular routine, as though no change had taken place in her, and Ellen was expected to take her wonted part and share in the daily business and trifles of household life. She tried to write a letter to Insaroff, but was unable; the words she scrawled on the paper seemed

to have no meaning, to be neither dead nor alive. She put away her journal, having first drawn under its last entry a thick black line. All that was past; and she in her thoughts, in her whole being, only lived now in the future. She could not interest herself in what was passing around her. To sit with her mother, who suspected nothing, to listen to her idle chat, to answer her endless questions, to talk with her, seemed to Ellen almost a crime; she felt that she was acting the part of a hypocrite; her conscience was troubled, though she knew she had no cause to blush; and more than once she was tempted with an almost irresistible desire to reveal all, let the consequences be what they might. "Why," she thought to herself, "why did not Demetrius then and there, in the oratory, bid me follow him? Did he not declare before God I was his wife? Why then, am I here?" For the first time she began to avoid the others, even Urban Ivanovitch, who was much more thoughtful than usual, and was constantly playing with his fingers. They no longer seemed to her to be kindly or caressing; like some nightmare, they weighed upon her as a dead and heavy burden; they appeared to reproach her, to upbraid her, to be unwilling to acknowledge her as one of their own. Even her pets, abandoned nestlings and homeless animals, looked at her—at least, so she fancied—suspiciously and with unfriendly glances. She began to be ashamed of herself for entertaining such ideas.

"This is my home," she murmured, "my family, my country." "No, this is no longer thy home or thy country," answered another voice. Fear took possession of her; and again she reproached herself for her lack of courage. The struggle had only just begun, and she had already lost the power to endure. Was this the fulfilment of her promise?

It was only gradually that she mastered her fears: one week passed after another, and Ellen little by little grew more composed and more habituated to her new position. She wrote two short notes to Insaroff, and took them herself to the post; partly from pride, and partly from shame, she was unwilling to trust them to the care of a servant. She was already expecting his arrival. But, one morning, there arrived—not Insaroff, but Nicholas Artemvitch.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE NEW BRIDEGROOM.

NO one in the house could remember ever to have seen Lieutenant Stachoff so severe, and at the same time so self-important and pompous, as he was that day. He marched into the sitting-room in his paletot and cap with slow, measured steps, his sword jingling noisily as he walked; stalked up to the looking-glass, took a long view of his handsome self, as he complacently nodded his head and stroked his moustache. Anne Vasilievna welcomed him in her usual fussy manner; but he did not take off his cap, or address a word to her, but silently gave Ellen his gloved hand to kiss. Anne Vasilievna began to question him about his cure; he gave her no answer. Urban Ivanovitch entered the room; he merely looked at him, and exclaimed, "Bah!" With Urban Ivanovitch he was generally cold and grand, though he acknowledged him to be "of the pure Stachoff race." It is well known that nearly every Russian noble family prides itself on its exclusive and particular possession of some special physical quality, granted by a merciful Providence to them, and them

alone. Thus, you will hear them talk among themselves of the "Podsalackinsky" nose or of the "Pereprievsky" neck. Zoe next came in, and made a low curtsey to Nicholas Artemvitch. He gave a grunt, sank into an arm-chair, ordered coffee to be brought to him, and only then took off his cap. The coffee was served, and when he had drank it, addressing them each in order, he grunted through his teeth, "*Sortez s'il vous plait:*" but turning to his wife, added, "*Et vous, madame, restez, je vous prie.*"

All left the room, except Anne Vasilievna. She was trembling with excitement. The solemn manners of Nicholas Artemvitch alarmed her. Evidently something terrible had happened.

"What is it?" she exclaimed almost before the door was closed.

Nicholas Artemvitch looked at her with a dignified and stately glance. "Nothing extraordinary, that you should at once put on the appearance of a martyr at the stake," he began, quite unnecessarily wrinkling the corners of his lips at each word: "I only wished to inform you that to-day we shall have a new acquaintance to dinner."

"Who?"

"Gregory Andreevitch Cournatovsky. You do not know him. First secretary in the Senate."

"He will dine with us to-day?"

"Yes."

"And it was only to tell me this that you ordered the others to leave the room?"

Nicholas Artemvitch again looked at his wife, but this time with a lofty ironical glance. "That surprises you? You can keep surprised."

He said no more, and for awhile Anne Vasilievna too remained silent.

"I should wish—" she began.

"I know," he muttered, "you have always regarded me as an immoral man.

"I!" cried Anne Vasilievna, in a frightened tone.

"And perhaps, with justice. I do not wish to deny that at times I have given you just cause for dissatisfaction—(the grey horses, thought Anne Vasilievna)—though you yourself must allow that with your health and sickly constitution——"

"I have never in any way accused you, Nicholas Artemvitch."

"*C'est possible.* In any case I am not disposed to justify myself. I leave that to time. But I consider it my duty to assure you that I know what my obligations are, and am able to protect zealously the interests of—of—of—a family that reposes—reposes confidence in me."

"What does all this mean?" Anne Vasilievna asked herself. She could not know that only the evening before there had been a discussion among some of the members of the English Club as to the incapacity of a Russian to make a speech. "Who amongst

us is there that can speak? Just point out one if you can," exclaimed one of the disputants. "Well, there is Stachoff, for example," answered the other, as he pointed to Nicholas Artemvitch, who was standing close by, swelling and puffing with pride at being thus singled out.

"For instance," continued Nicholas Artemvitch, "there is my daughter Ellen. Do you not find it time that she should at length take that serious step in the path—that she should marry, I mean. All that philosophy and all that philanthropy of hers is very well, but only to a certain degree, only up to a certain age. It is full time that she should give over dreaming, take pleasure in the society of others than artists, writers, and Montenegrians, and live like the rest of the world."

"May I ask in what sense I am to understand your words?" inquired Anne Vasilievna.

"Be so good as to give me your attention for a few minutes," replied Nicholas Artemvitch, still keeping up his oratorical pose, "and I will tell you simply, and without any further digressions. I have made acquaintance, I have formed a friendship, with this young man, Mr. Cournatovsky, in the hope of his becoming my son-in-law. I venture to believe that when you see him for yourself, you will not accuse me of having formed a partial or hasty judgment." (Nicholas Artemvitch was a great admirer of his own powers of eloquence.) "He is highly cultivated, was

educated to the law, his manners are irreproachable, he is only thirty-three, is first secretary, is a college accessor, and has a Stanislaus on his neck.* I hope you will do me the justice not to reckon me among the number of those *pères de comédie* who dream only of ranks and orders; but you yourself have told me that Ellen Nicholaevna will tolerate none but men of business, men who are actively engaged. Gregory Andreevitch is the first in his profession. Then, again, my daughter has a weakness for magnanimous actions. Well, you must know that Gregory Andreevitch, as soon as it is possible for him to do so—you understand me—as soon as he is in such a position that he can live becomingly on his salary, he will renounce in favor of his brothers his share of the allowance assigned to them by their father."

"And who is his father?" asked Anne Vasilievna.

"His father?" answered Nicholas Artemvitch: "his father is also in his way a remarkable man, moral to the highest degree, *un vrai stoicien;* a major on half-pay, I believe; manages the whole of Count B——'s property."

* The civil *employées* under the Russian Government, as well as those in military service, are divided into fourteen ranks, or classes. A college accessor corresponds to a major in the army. The cross of St. Stanislaus is one of the numerous orders given by the crown to those in its service. Only the higher orders are worn round the neck; the inferior ones are attached to the upper button-hole of the coat.

"Ah!" muttered Anne Vasilievna.

"Ah! what does 'Ah!' mean," exclaimed Nicholas Artemvitch. "Can it be that you are the slave of prejudices?"

"I said nothing," timidly replied Anne Vasilievna.

"Yes, you did: you said, Ah! However, I have thought it my duty to advise you of my opinion on the matter, and I venture to believe—I venture to hope—that Mr. Cournatovsky will be received *à bras ouverts*. He is no Montenegrian."

"Of course he will: but we must call John, and tell him to prepare an extra dish."

"You know, I never concern myself with such domestic details," replied Nicholas Artemvitch, as he got up, put on his hat, and whistling as he went, turned into the garden for a stroll. Some one had once told him that it was only proper to whistle when at home, in the country, or in the stables.

At ten minutes to four a hired carriage drove into the Stachoffs' courtyard, and a young man, of pleasing exterior, and plainly but well dressed, got out. He announced himself as Gregory Andreevitch Cournatovsky.

The following is an extract from a letter which Ellen wrote the next day to Insaroff:—

"Congratulate your little wife, my dear Demetrius, on her new fiancé. He dined with us yesterday: it seems, papa became acquainted with him at the English Club, and invited him here.

Of course, you understand he was not already my fiancé when he arrived. But good mamma, whom papa had already informed of his wishes, whispered in my ear who our new guest was. His name is Gregory Andreevitch Cournatovsky, and he serves as first secretary in the senate. First of all, I must describe to you his outward appearance. He is of medium height, not so tall as you, and well formed; his features are regular, his hair is cut close, and he wears large whiskers. His eyes are small, like yours, brownish in color, and piercing; he has flat, broad lips; there is a perpetual smile playing in his eyes and on his lips, a kind of official smile, which tells you at once that he is in government service. His manners are very simple; he speaks precisely—everything he does is precise; he walks, laughs, eats, does everything in the same precise way. 'How closely she has observed him!' you are most probably thinking at this moment. Yes: that I might be able to describe him to you. And besides, who would not observe her fiancé with the greatest of attention? There is something stern about him, and, at the same time, something dull and empty; and he seems honorable—they say, in fact, that he is very honorable. You, too, appear to me to be stern, but it is a different kind of sternness. He sat next to me at the table, Shoubine being opposite to us. In the beginning, the conversation turned on some commercial undertakings; they say he is well versed in business affairs, and all but threw up his government place to become manager of a large manufactory. To look at him, one would never imagine it! Then Shoubine began to talk of the theatre; Mr. Cournatovsky gave his opinions, and without any false modesty, I must confess,—proved that he knew nothing about art. It made me think of you; but I thought, 'No! Demetrius and I, we understand art in quite a different way.' He did not say so, but you could see he meant, 'I do not understand art, and indeed it is not necessary, though in a well-constituted empire art may be allowed its place.' He is, however, sufficiently indifferent as to the charms of St.

Petersburg, and to all that is *comme il faut;* he once even called himself a proletariat. 'We,' he said, 'are workmen.' I thought, 'If Demetrius had said that, I should have been vexed; but he may say what he likes, and let him boast as much as he chooses. With me he was very polite; but yet I fancied he talked with me like a superior who wished to be condescending. Whenever he wishes to praise any one, he says, that so-and-so has a principle: that is his favorite phrase. I am sure he is very self-satisfied, industrious, capable of making a sacrifice—you see, I am impartial—that is, of sacrificing his own interests; but he is a great despot. Woe betide the man or woman who falls into his hands! During dinner we spoke of bribing. 'I grant,' he said, 'that in many cases the man who takes a bribe is perfectly inno cent. It is impossible for him to act otherwise. But if he is discovered, he ought to be severely punished.' 'Punish an innocent man!' I cried out. 'Yes, for the principle's sake.' 'What principle?' asked Shoubine. Cournatovsky was not at all put out or confused by the question, but simply said, 'That is self-evident.' Papa, who is apparently a worshipper of his, echoed his words, 'That is self-evident,' and, to my regret, the subject dropped. In the evening Bersieneff came and got into a hot dispute with him. I have never seen our good Andrew Petrovitch so excited. Mr. Cournatovsky did not in any way deny the advantages of a scientific training, of a university course, and so on, but yet I could well understand why Andrew Petrovitch was so angry. He looks upon all this as a kind of gymnastics. After dinner Shoubine came up to me, and said, 'Both he and the other—he never mentions you by your name—are practical men, but what a difference there is between them! the one has before him a living, genuine, ennobling ideal; the other, without any feeling of duty, a mere red-tapist, with no higher idea of honor than what the administration exacts.' Shoubine is right, and I give you his opinion; but, to my mind, the real difference consists in this: you *believe,* and he does not, since he is only able

to *believe in himself.* It was late before he left us, but not too late for mamma to assure me that I pleased him, and that papa was in raptures. He actually condescended to say of me, that I was evidently a well-principled girl. I was very nearly telling mamma that I was sorry to disappoint them all, but that I had already a husband. Why is it that papa dislikes you so much? With mamma things might yet be managed. Oh, my darling! I have given you this minute description of our new guest only if possible, to stifle my unrest. Without you life is no life; not a moment but I see you, and hear your voice. I expect you, only do not come to our house, as we first intended; it would only be unpleasant and awkward for both of us: but you know where I wrote to you—in the arbor. Oh, my darling! How I love you!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.

IN the third week after Cournatovsky's first visit, to Ellen's great delight, Anne Vasilievna removed to Moscow, taking up her winter quarters in her large wooden house, near Pretchiskenky Square,—a house with plaster columns, a white plaster wreath and lyre under each window, a wing for the servants' rooms, a garden at the back, a large courtyard in the front, having a fountain in the middle, and a dog's kennel at the entrance. Usually Anne Vasilievna did not leave the country so early; but this year the first autumnal colds were supposed to be prejudicial to her health, and Nicholas Artemvitch, whose course of treatment was now finished, found his wife's society dull. Besides which, Augustina had gone to Reval on a visit to a cousin of hers, and a foreign company of artists had arrived in Moscow, and were now giving there a series of representations, consisting of *des poses plastiques*, a glowing description of which in the *Moscow Gazette* had greatly excited Anne Vasilievna's curiosity. In a word, all were heartily tired of the country, and moreover, as Nicholas Artem-

vitch expressed it, their further sojourn there "was incompatible with the carrying out of his plans." The last fortnight of their stay seemed interminable to Ellen. Cournatovsky came twice every Sunday: during the week he was engaged. He came avowedly to see Ellen, but for the most part talked with Zoe, who was in raptures with him, and could not sufficiently admire his fine voice, his manner of speaking, and his exquisite pronunciation. "*Das ist ein mann!*" she thought to herself, as she gazed on his brown manly face, and listened to his conceited and condescending speeches. Insaroff did not come to the Stachoffs, but Ellen met him once secretly in the arbor on the banks of the river Moscow, where she had appointed to meet him. They had only time to exchange a few words. Shoubine returned to Moscow with Anne Vasilievna, and Bersieneff followed them a few days later.

Insaroff was sitting alone in his room, and, for the third time, was reading a letter which had been privately forwarded him from Bulgaria, since it was dangerous to trust to the post. Its contents greatly disturbed him. Affairs in the East were becoming serious, the occupation of the Principalities by the Russian troops had excited a general uneasiness throughout Europe, the storm was quickly gathering, and the dullest could foresee the signs of a speedy and inevitable war. All around, the fire was smouldering, and none could predict where it would break

out or where it would extend to; old hatreds and long disappointed hopes were reviving. Insaroff's heart beat feverishly, his dreams were on the eve of being realized. "But is it not too soon? will it not be all in vain?" he asked, as he wrung his hands in perplexity. "We are not ready: but be it so! The blow must be struck."

A light noise was heard outside the door, it was quickly pushed open, and Ellen entered the room.

Insaroff, trembling all over, rushed towards her, fell on his knees before her, and passionately pressed her to his bosom.

"You did not expect me?" she said as soon as she had recovered her breath, for she had run quickly up the stairs; "Oh, my darling! my darling!" She laid both her hands on his head, and looked around. "So this is where you live? I soon found your lodging. Your landlady's daughter showed me the way. We arrived the day before yesterday. I did think of writing to you, but after all, thought it was better to come myself. I have only a quarter of an hour to stay. So, get up and shut the door."

He rose up, hurriedly locked the door, came back to where she was standing, and took her by the hands. He could not speak—his joy choked him. She smilingly gazed into his eyes, which beamed with happiness, and slightly blushed.

"Stop," she said gently releasing herself from his grasp, "let me take off my bonnet."

She untied the bonnet-strings, threw it on a chair, let her cloak fall on her shoulders, smoothed her hair, and sat down on a small old sofa. Insaroff did not move, but continued gazing upon her as if bewitched.

"Sit down," she said, without raising her eyes towards him, and pointing to the place by her side.

Insaroff sat down, not on the sofa, but on the floor at her feet.

"Now take off my gloves," she continued in an agitated and troubled tone. She evidently began to feel ill at ease.

He first began to unbutton and then to pull off one of the gloves, but had only half drawn it off, when he eagerly pressed to his lips her thin, white, soft wrist. Ellen shrank back, and tried to push him away with her other hand, but it was only in vain, and he began to kiss the hand he held. Ellen drew it towards her; he bent his head forward; she looked, half-inquiringly, half-doubtingly, into his face, leaned down, and their lips were joined together.

A moment passed. She snatched herself from his embrace, rose up, murmured, "No, no," and went hurriedly to the writing-table.

"Considering I am the mistress here, you must have no secrets," she said, trying to appear unconcerned, and standing with her back to him. "What a mass of papers! And what letters are those?"

Insaroff knit his brows. "Those letters?" he

asked, getting up from the floor. "You can read them."

Ellen took them into her hands. "There are so many, and they are so closely written; besides, I must go directly; so God be with them. They are not from a rival of mine? They are not in Russian, either," she added, turning over the thin leaves.

Insaroff came up to her, and put his arm round her waist. She immediately turned towards him, looked up with a bright smile, and let her head fall on his breast.

"These letters are from Bulgaria, Ellen; my friends write that I am wanted there."

"Now? there?"

"Yes, now. There is yet time; soon it will be too late to go."

She threw both her arms round his neck. "But you will take me with you?"

He clasped her to his breast. "Oh, my darling girl! my brave heroine! how nobly you spoke those words! But is it not a crime, a wicked, thoughtless act, in me, who have no home and am alone in the world, to take you with me—and whither?"

She put her hand upon his mouth. "Ts-s-s! or I shall be angry, and will never come to see you again. Was it not all arranged, all settled, between us? Am I not your wife? Should a wife be separated from her husband?"

"Wives do not go into battle," he answered.

"Not when they can remain behind. But can I possibly stay here?"

"Ellen, you are an angel! But understand, I may have to leave Moscow before a fortnight is over. I can no longer think of continuing at the university, still less of finishing my course there."

"Is it so?" interrupted Ellen. "You must go soon? If you only wish it, I will now, at once, this minute, stay with you, remain with you for ever, and not go home; do you wish it? Let us go at once; do you wish it?"

Insaroff with redoubled passion clasped her to his breast. "May the just God punish me," he exclaimed, "if what I do now be a crime! From this day we are one for ever."

"Shall I stay?" asked Ellen.

"No, sweet; no, my precious love. Go home to-day, but be in readiness. This business cannot be done at once, everything must be well provided for. We require money, passports—"

"I have money," said Ellen, "eighty roubles."

"Well, it is not much," observed Insaroff, "but it is always useful."

"But I can get more, I can borrow, I will ask mamma. No, better not ask her. I can sell my watch; and then I have earrings, two bracelets, and a quantity of lace."

"Money is not the difficulty, Ellen, but the passports; your pass—how can we manage that?"

"Yes, what is to be done? A passport is absolutely necessary?"

"Absolutely."

"You know, an idea has come into my head,' Ellen answered, with a smile. "I recollect when I was quite young, one of our servants ran away. She was caught, pardoned, and lived for a long time with us: but in spite of all our liking for the girl, she ran away again. I little thought then that I too, perhaps, might have to run away like her."

"Ellen, aren't you ashamed?"

"What is there to be ashamed of? Of course, it is better to go with a passport: but if you haven't one?"

"We will arrange all that afterwards,—afterwards; only wait a little," muttered Insaroff.

"Give me time to look about me and to think. Of course, I shall consult you about everything; that is only right. But I have money."

Ellen stroked back the locks of hair that had fallen over his forehead. "Oh, Demetrius, how pleasant it will be to travel together!"

"Yes," said Insaroff: "but there; where we are bound for—"

"What?" interrupted Ellen: "would it not also be happiness to die together? But why should we die? We shall live, we are still young. How old are you? Twenty-six?"

"Twenty-six."

"And I am twenty. We have still a long life before us. Ah, you wished to run away from me? You, a Bulgarian, had no need of a Russian's love! Try now to leave me! What would become of you, were I not by your side?"

"Ellen, you know what was my reason for wishing to go away."

"I know: you loved me, and were afraid. But could it be that you never suspected that perhaps I loved you?"

"I give you my word, Ellen, I did not."

Ellen quickly and suddenly gave him a kiss. "There, I love you for saying that. But, now, good-bye."

"You cannot stay any longer?" Insaroff asked.

"No, darling. You think it was easy for me to come out alone? Our quarter of an hour has long passed by." She began putting on her cloak and bonnet. "But you will come and see us to-morrow evening. Oh, no, the day after to-morrow. It will be dull and ceremonious, but there is nothing to be done: at any rate, we shall see each other. Good-bye. Do let me go." He was embracing her for the last time. "Ah, look, you have broken my chain, you dear awkward fellow; but it doesn't matter. It is all the better. I shall go to Blacksmith's Bridge, and leave it to be repaired; and if I am asked where I have been, I shall say to the watchmaker's." She had already turned the handle of the door. "Ah, by the way, I forgot

to tell you that in a day or so Monsieur Cournatovsky intends offering me his hand. But you know what answer I shall give him; this." She put the thumb of her left hand to the end of her nose, and stretched out the other fingers as far as she could.* "Well, good-bye. *Au revoir.* I know the way now. But see that you do not lose any time."

Ellen half opened the door, listened for a moment, and then, turning round, nodded to Insaroff and hurried from the room.

Insaroff stood for a minute by the closed door, and listened too. The door down stairs, opening into the courtyard, was heard to bang. He went to the sofa, sat down, and buried his face in his hands. Never before had he experienced such feelings as now possessed him.

"What have I done to merit such a love?" he thought. "Is it not all a dream?"

But the faint fragrance of mignonette, which Ellen had left in his dark shabby room, reminded him of her presence. Together with it he fancied that he still could hear the sound of her young voice, the noise of her light youthful step; still breathe the warmth and light of her young graceful form.

* The reader need hardly be reminded that this was in Russia.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PERPLEXITY, AND ITS SERIOUS RESULTS.

INSAROFF determined to wait for more positive information from Bulgaria, but at the same time began making preparations for his departure. This was no easy matter. For himself there was no difficulty—he had only to apply for a passport; but how was he to manage with Ellen? To obtain her passport by legal means was simply impossible. To marry her in secret, and then go to her parents—"They would pardon us," he said to himself. "And if not! We still must flee. But if they make a complaint before the police; if— No, better get the passport anyhow."

He resolved, of course without mentioning any name, to apply to one of his acquaintances, a certain lawyer, who (voluntarily, or involuntarily was quite uncertain) had retired from business, and was well experienced in all matters of a delicate or secret nature. This respectable worthy lived in a distant quarter of the town, and the wretched cabman whom poor Insaroff engaged took more than an hour in bringing him to the house, and when Insaroff arrived

he had the pleasure of finding nobody at home. On his road back, thanks to a sudden and heavy shower, he got wet to the skin. The following morning, in spite of a violent headache, Insaroff again set off for the lawyer's. The lawyer listened to his request very quietly, whilst regaling himself with plentiful supplies of snuff from a box, whose lid was adorned with the figure of a full-breasted nymph, and gave many a side glance at his visitor with his cunning eyes, which were also of a snuffy color. He heard him out, and then asked for "preciser information as to the fictitious data;" and observing that Insaroff, who in reality had an inexpressible repugnance to the whole business, was unwilling to enter into details, dryly counselled him to throw away "all foolish reserve," and to be kind enough to come another time, "when you have," he added, taking a pinch of snuff, "a little more confidence and less distrust in honest people. As for the passport," he added, speaking as it were to himself, "it is a mere question of writing: you, for example, leave Moscow: who knows you, who you are, whether you be Marie Bredichin or Caroline Vogelmeyer?" A feeling of disgust began to take hold of Insaroff, but he merely thanked the lawyer, and promised to call for the pass in a few days.

On the evening of the same day he paid a visit to the Stachoffs. Anne Vasilievna received him in the most friendly manner, reproached him with hav

ing forgotten them so long, and, observing how pale he was, inquired after his health; Nicholas Artemvitch did not address a word to him, but when he received him there was a kind of half-thoughtful, half-idle curiosity in his look; Shoubine was cold and reserved in his manner: but what astonished him most was Ellen's marvellous tact and self-possession. She had expected him, and had put on the same dress which she wore at their first meeting in the oratory; but she was so completely at her ease, so amiable, and so unreserved in her gayety, that, to look at her, no one could have imagined that this young girl's destiny was already decided, and that the secret knowledge of her happy love gave animation to her features, grace and charm to her every movement. She helped Zoe in serving the tea, and was the merriest and noisiest of them all: she knew that Shoubine was watching her, that Insaroff was unable to act a part or to assume indifference, and she therefore put on a courage that she was far from really feeling. Nor was she mistaken; Shoubine did not once take his eyes off from her, and Insaroff was very dull and silent during the whole evening. Ellen was so happy that she longed to twit him with being so gloomy.

"Well," she suddenly asked him out loud, "have you carried out your plan?"

"What plan?" demanded he in a troubled tone.

"So, you have forgotten?" she answered laugh

ing: only he understood the meaning of that ringing merry laugh. "Why, your Bulgarian Reading-book for the Russians."

"*Quelle bourde!*" Nicholas Artemvitch grumbled through his teeth.

Zoe sat down to the piano. Ellen gave an almost imperceptible shrug of the shoulder, and then looked meaningly, first at Insaroff, and then at the door, as if to hint to him that he should go home. She next tapped gently with her fingers twice on the table, all the while looking at him significantly. He understood that she meant to give him a meeting on the day after the morrow, and she exchanged a quick smile with him when she saw that he had rightly comprehended her dumb-show. Insaroff soon after got up to say good-bye: he felt extremely giddy and weak. Just then Cournatovsky made his appearance. Nicholas Artemvitch jumped up from his chair, and with a boisterous and fervid shake of the hand welcomed the First Secretary. Insaroff prolonged his visit for a few minutes, that he might have an opportunity of examining his rival's appearance and manners. Ellen furtively shook her head, and the master of the house not having thought it necessary to introduce them to one another, Insaroff left, having exchanged a last glance with Ellen. Shoubine was buried in thought, and only aroused himself to begin an angry discussion with Cournatovsky on some dry and seemingly meaningless law question.

Insaroff could not sleep the whole night, and got up in the morning quite jaded and ill. He however busied himself with putting his papers and letters in order, but his head was heavy and confused. By dinner time he was hot and burning, and was unable to eat anything. The fever grew more violent towards the evening; every one of his members was aching, and his head was racked with the torturing pain. Insaroff lay down on the same sofa where so lately Ellen had sat. "I am well punished," he thought; "why did I go to that old knave's?" and he tried to get to sleep. But a violent illness had laid hold of him. His pulse beat with unnatural force, his blood boiled within him, and the wildest fancies filled his brain. He became unconscious. Like some crushed lifeless mass he lay on his back; when suddenly a low voice was heard speaking softly and whispering in his ear. With a violent effort he opened his eyes, but the light of the still burning candle cut into his flesh, as though it had been a knife. What is that? There is the old lawyer standing before him, in his bright belted dressing-gown, exactly as he appeared the evening before. "Caroline Vogelmeyer," muttered the toothless old knave. Insaroff looked at him with eager, devouring eyes; but the old man began to grow wider, fuller, taller; he was no longer a man—he was a tree. Insaroff had to crawl through a dense thicket; he got entangled, fell, and struck his breast against a sharp stone. On the stone, in the

form of a peddler, was squatted Caroline Vogelmeyer, crying out, "Cakes to sell! cakes to sell! cakes to sell!" and there, just there, was a large pool of blood, and in the distance could be seen the blinding glitter of swords. Ellen! and all vanished in a red indistinguishable chaos.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SICK-ROOM.

"THERE is somebody down stairs, I don't know who, a locksmith or something of that kind, who wants to speak to you," said Bersieneff's servant, who prided himself on his irreproachable manners toward his superiors, and on the sceptical tendency of his mind.

"Tell him to come in," answered Bersieneff.

The "locksmith" entered. Bersieneff at once recognized in him the tailor, master of the lodging where Insaroff lived.

"What do you want?" he asked him.

"I have come to your honor," began the tailor, as he kept shuffling his feet, first forwards and then backwards, with an occasional flourish of his right hand, the three last fingers of which were nervously twitching the corner of his apron, "I have come to tell your honor that our lodger is very ill."

"Which? Insaroff?"

"Just so: our lodger. No one knows how, but yesterday morning he was still on his feet; in the evening he merely asked for something to drink; our good woman took him some water; but in the night

we hear a thump on the other side of the wall; and this morning he is without a tongue, but lies like a clod; and feverish, ah! my God! Well, thinks I, he will die for sure; better go and tell the police, thinks I, seeing he is quite alone. But my woman says to me, You go to that gentleman, in whose country-house he lived this summer; perhaps he'll tell you what to do, or, may be, will come himself. So, your honor, I have come, because, you see, it wouldn't do."

Bersieneff snatched up his cap, and having given the man something for drink-money, hurried off with him to Insaroff's lodging.

He found him lying full-dressed on the sofa in a state of unconsciouness. The expression of his face was terribly changed. Bersieneff at once ordered the landlord and landlady to undress him and put him to bed, whilst he himself hastened to a doctor's, and brought him to his friend. The doctor prescribed the immediate application of leeches and a plaster, gave him a dose of calomel, and directed that he should be bled.

"He is in danger?" asked Bersieneff.

"In great danger," answered the doctor. "The lungs are very much inflamed; the nerves are greatly excited, it may even be that the brain is affected; and the patient is young. His very strength tells against him. I ought to have been sent for long ago; but all that science can do shall be done."

The doctor was still very young, and believed in science.

Bersieneff stayed all night. The landlord and his wife proved themselves to be kind-hearted and active; they only required some one to tell them what to do.

Toward the morning Insaroff woke up for a few minutes, recognized Bersieneff, muttered the words, "It seems I am not well," looked around him with the dull uncertain glance of a man who is seriously ill, and again became unconscious. Bersieneff went home, changed his dress, made up a small packet of books, and returned to Insaroff's lodging. He determined to stay there at least during the first stage of his illness. He surrounded the bed with screens, and arranged for himself a little place near the sofa. It was very dull for him, and the day passed slowly. Bersieneff only left the house to dine. The evening came on. He lighted a candle, shaded it with an *abat-jour*, and sat down to read. All was silent in the room. On the other side of the wall, in the landlady's room, could be heard the low murmur of conversation, an occasional yawn or sigh. Some one sneezed, and then a low scolding ensued; from beyond the screen was to be heard the heavy unequal breathing of the patient, not seldom mingled with a dull groan, or the feverish tossing of the head on the pillow. Strange thoughts filled Bersieneff's mind. He was by the bedside of a man whose life hung on

a thread, a man whom, as he well knew, Ellen loved. He recalled to memory the night when Shoubine overtook him, and reminded him that Ellen loved him,—him, Bersieneff. But now—"What shall I do now?" he asked himself: "inform Ellen of his illness? or shall I wait a little? It will be still sadder news than that which I once took to her. Strange, how fate wills me ever to play the part of a mediator between them!" He determined it would be better to wait. His eyes fell on the table covered with a mass of papers. "Will he ever fulfil his designs, or can it be that all has come to an end?" He was touched with pity for this young life, wrecked so early, and swore to save it from the clutches of death.

The patient passed a bad night, and was delirious during nearly the whole time. More than once Bersieneff got up from his seat, approached the bed on tiptoe, and listened sadly to the sick man's incoherent babblings. Once Insaroff cried out with a sudden and terrible distinctness, "I will not have it! I will not have it! you shall not!" Bersieneff shuddered as he gazed on Insaroff: his features, which bore at the same moment the traces of passion and of death, were fixed and rigid, and his hands lay powerlessly on his breast. "I will not have it," he repeated in a hoarse whisper, so low that the words were scarcely audible.

The doctor came early the next morning, shook his head, and prescribed some fresh medicine. "The

crisis will not be for some time yet," he observed, as he took up his hat.

"And after the crisis?" asked Bersieneff.

"After the crisis? One of two things; *aut Cæsar, aut nullus.*"

The doctor went away. Bersieneff took a few turns in the street; after the stifling atmosphere of the sick room a little fresh air was necessary. He returned and once more sat down to his book. He had already long finished Raumer, and was now engaged on Grote. Suddenly the door slightly creaked on its hinges, and the head of the landlady's daughter, as usual wrapped up in a thick handkerchief, was to be seen peeping cautiously in.

"The young lady who gave me the sixpence," she said in a half-whisper, "has come."

Her head was as suddenly withdrawn as it had appeared, and at the same moment Ellen entered the room.

Bersieneff leaped up as if he had been shot; but Ellen made no sign of recognition, gave no cry of surprise. It seemed that she instantly comprehended all. Her face was ghastly pale, as going behind the screen she looked at the motionless figure that lay stretched on the bed, and with her hands tightly clasped she stood as one petrified. Another moment and she had thrown herself upon Insaroff, but Bersieneff stayed her. "What are you doing?" he exclaimed in a low whisper: "do you wish to kill him?"

She tottered and all but fell to the ground. He gently held her up, led her to the sofa, and made her sit down beside him. She looked up into his face, gazed at him long and earnestly as though she would read his most secret thoughts, and then fixed her eyes on the floor.

"You think he must die," she said in a tone so cold and quiet that it terrified Bersieneff.

"In God's name, Ellen Nicholaevna, what do you mean? He is ill, very ill—even dangerously ill. But we will save him, I give you my word."

"He is unconscious?" she asked in the same calm, collected tone.

"For the present he is unconscious. It is always so at the beginning of those illnesses, but it is nothing, it is nothing, I assure you. Drink a little water."

She raised her eyes from the ground, and from her expression he could see that she had not heard a word of his replies.

"If he dies," she continued, always in the same cold, subdued tone, "I die with him."

At that moment Insaroff gave a light groan; she shuddered as she heard it, put her hands vacantly to her head, and then began untying the strings of her bonnet.

"What are you doing?" Bersieneff asked her.

She made no reply.

"What are you doing?" he asked a second time.

"I shall stay here."

"How—for long?"

"I don't know: it may be all day, for the night, for ever; I don't know."

"For God's sake, Ellen Nicholaevna, return home. I certainly never expected to see you here; but as it is, I suppose you have come here only for a few minutes. Think only, they may discover your absence at home."

"And what then?"

"They will look for you—will find you."

"And what then?"

"Ellen Nicholaevna! You understand. He cannot protect you now."

She let her head fall, as if lost in thought, raised her handkerchief to her mouth, and her breast suddenly heaved with convulsive sobbings, whose violence seemed to rend her whole body. She hid her face in the sofa, and tried to stifle them, but it was all in vain; her whole frame quivered and shook, like some young bird that has been caught in the hand.

"Ellen Nicholaevna! for God's sake!" Bersieneff kept repeating.

"Who is there? what is that?" Insaroff was heard to murmur.

Ellen gave a violent start, but Bersieneff remained as it were rooted to his seat. A few minutes passed, and he went up to the bed. As before, Insaroff's head lay helplessly on the pillow, his eyes closed.

"He is delirious?" whispered Ellen.

"Apparently," answered Bersieneff; "but that is nothing; it is always so, particularly if—"

"When was he taken ill?" interrupted Ellen.

"The day before yesterday; since yesterday I have been here. Trust in me, Ellen Nicholaevna. I will not leave him. Everything that is possible shall be done for him. If necessary, we will call in a physician."

"He will die without me," she sobbed out, wringing her hands.

"I give you my word to send you news of him every day, and should there be any actual danger—"

"Swear to me that you will instantly send for me, no matter what hour it be day or night: write a note direct to me. All is the same now. Do you understand! You promise to do so?"

"I promise before God."

"Swear!"

"I swear."

She suddenly seized his hand, and before he could release it, pressed it passionately to her lips.

"Ellen Nicholaevna, what are you doing?" he stammered.

"No, no, it is not necessary," disconnectedly muttered Insaroff, with a heavy sigh.

Ellen went toward the bed, and, with handkerchief tightly pressed to her lips, gazed long on the sick man. Silent tears flowed down her cheeks.

"Ellen Nicholaevna!" Bersieneff whispered to

her; "he may come to, and recognize you, and God knows whether that would be well. Besides, I expect the doctor every minute."

Ellen took up her bonnet from the sofa, put it on, and stood still. Her eyes wandered over the room with an expression of utter woe. It seemed she was recalling to mind her former visit.

"I cannot go," she at length whispered.

Bersieneff took her by the hand. "Collect your strength," he said in a hurried voice: "do not be anxious; you leave him in my care. This evening I will call at your house."

Ellen looked tenderly at him, exclaimed, "Oh, my good friend!" and sobbing piteously hastened away.

Bersieneff remained leaning against the door. A sad and bitter feeling, not altogether unmixed with a sentiment of pride and joy, filled his heart. "My good friend!" he repeated to himself, and shrugged his shoulders as he uttered the words.

"Who is there?" Insaroff faintly inquired.

Bersieneff hurried to the bed. "I am here, Demetrius Nikanorovitch. What do you want? How do you feel?"

"Are you alone?" asked the sick man.

"Alone?"

"And she?"

"Whom do you mean?" demanded Bersieneff, in an almost frightened tone.

Insaroff was silent. "Mignonette," he muttered

CHAPTER XXVI.

GOOD NEWS.

FOR a whole week Insaroff lay hovering between life and death. The doctor was most regular in his visits, and besides, like a young hand, was greatly interested in the case. Shoubine heard of Insaroff's dangerous illness, and frequently called to hear how he was progressing; several of his compatriots came also, and among the number Bersieneff recognized the two uncouth figures, whose unexpected appearance at Koontsoff had aroused his curiosity. One or two of them offered to take Bersieneff's post, but he refused to quit the invalid's bedside, as he remembered the promise he had made to Ellen. Every day he saw her, and secretly gave her—sometimes by word of mouth, and at other times by letter—the minutest details as to the state of his patient. With what a beating heart she awaited the hour of his visit! how eagerly she listened to the report he had to give her! and how anxiously she questioned and cross-questioned him! She burned with impatience to see Insaroff, if only once more; but Bersieneff prayed her not to go, since Insaroff was rarely alone. The first

day she knew of his illness she herself all but fell ill; immediately on returning she shut herself up in her room, and when summoned to dinner, she came down stairs with a face so ghastly pale that Anne Vasilievna was with difficulty restrained from sending for the doctor. But Ellen succeeded in forcing herself to keep well. "If he die," she constantly repeated to herself, "I shall not long survive." This idea served to compose her, and endued her with strength enough to assume an air of indifference. Besides, she was fortunately left very much to herself; Anne Vasilievna was taken up with nursing a cold she had caught; Shoubine was suffering from an unusual fit of industry; Zoe was seized with a melancholy mood, and spent nearly her whole time in reading *Werther;* Nicholas Artemvitch was highly displeased at "that student" so frequently calling, the more so as his "plans" with reference to Cournatovsky were as far from realization as ever. Our practical First Secretary still hesitated, and could not be brought to the point. Ellen did not once thank Bersieneff; there are services for which it is difficult and irksome to express one's thanks. Once,—it was on the fourth day of Insaroff's illness, and he had passed such a bad night that the doctor advised a consultation,—but only once, she reminded him of his oath. "In that case I will come," she said to him: and she got up and began dressing herself. "No," he advised, "wait only till to-morrow." Toward the evening Insaroff was slightly better.

And thus passed a week of doubt and uncertainty. Outwardly, Ellen was quiet and composed, but she was unable to eat anything, and could not sleep at night. A dull heavy pain cramped all her limbs, a kind of dry hot smoke seemed to fill her head. "Our young mistress," said the chambermaid to one of the other servants, "is melting away like a candle."

At length, on the morning of the ninth day, the crisis had passed. Ellen was sitting with Anne Vasilievna in the breakfast-room, and, without understanding a word of what she read, was reading aloud to her the *Moscow Gazette*. Bersieneff came in. Ellen looked up,—how quick, timid, anxious, and searching was that first glance with which she invariably greeted him!—and at once guessed that he was the bearer of good news. She smiled, and when he slightly nodded by way of reply, she hurriedly rose up to meet him.

"He is conscious," whispered Bersieneff, "he is saved; another week or so, and he will be all right again!"

Ellen stretched forth her hands, as if warding off some impending blow, and made no answer; only her lips quivered, and a bright red spot slowly widened till it suffused her whole cheek. Bersieneff went up to Anne Vasilievna, and began retailing the news of the day; but Ellen hastened to her room, and throwing herself on her knees long and fervently prayed to God. Tears of joy and gratitude rose to her eyes.

Suddenly she felt a strange weariness creep over her; she laid her head down on the pillow, and murmuring the words, "Poor Andrew!" fell into a soft slumber. It was long, long since she had been able either to sleep or to weep.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CONVALESCENCE.

BERSIENEFF'S prediction was only in part fulfilled: Insaroff was no longer in danger, but he recovered his strength very slowly, and the doctor spoke forebodingly of the thorough and complete shock which his constitution had received. Notwithstanding all this, he left his bed, and could even walk across the room. Bersieneff returned to his own lodging, but every day called to see his sick friend, who still continued excessively weak, and Bersieneff as before, every day kept Ellen informed of the state of his health. Insaroff did not dare to write to her, and only indirectly, in conversations with Bersieneff, made any allusion to her; but Bersieneff, with an affected indifference, told him of his visit to the Stachoffs, and tried to make him understand that, though Ellen had been seriously distressed, she was now tranquil and composed. Neither did Ellen write to Insaroff; and it was not, indeed, necessary, considering the resolution she had secretly formed.

Once, when Bersieneff, his countenance beaming with pleasure, had just told her that the doctor had

already allowed Insaroff to eat a mutton chop, and that probably he would soon be able to go out, she listened with her eyes cast down on the floor, as if lost in thought.

"Guess what I wish to say to you," she said.

Bersieneff looked vexed. He understood what she meant. "Probably," he answered, turning his face away so that she could not see its expression, "you want to tell me that you wish to see him."

Ellen blushed as she answered, "Yes," in a scarcely audible tone.

"Well, I fancy it is very easy for you to do so." And his heart beat violently as he made this reply.

"You mean, I have already been there," continued Ellen: "but I'm afraid to go now; you say, he is very seldom alone."

"That can be easily managed," Bersieneff replied, with his face still turned from her. "Of course, I cannot tell him that you will come; but give me a note for him. Who can forbid your writing to a friend in whom, considering his late illness, you are naturally interested? There can be no harm in doing that. Make an appointment—that is, tell him when you will call."

"I am ashamed to do it," whispered Ellen.

"Give me the note; I will take it to him."

"That is not necessary; but I wished to ask you —do not be angry with me, Andrew Petrovitch—but don't go and see him to-morrow."

Bersieneff bit his lips. "Ah, yes; I understand: very good, very good," he said; and almost immediately afterwards got up and left her.

"So much the better, so much the better," he thought to himself on his way home. I have learned nothing new, nothing that I did not know before; but so much the better. Why hanker after another man's food? I have no reason to be ashamed; I merely did what I thought to be right: but now it is all ended. Let them go! It was not without reason that my father used to say to me, 'You and I, my boy, are not aristocrats, pleasure-takers, fortune's pets; nor are we, on the other hand, fortune's martyrs,—we are workers, workers, mere workers. Put on your paper-cap, like a good workman, take your place behind the counter, in your dreary warehouse! Let the sun shine on others! Our life, too, however hard and dull, is not without its pleasures and rewards."

The next morning Insaroff received through the city post the following brief note: "You may expect me to-day: so, take care that you are quite alone. A. P. will not call this morning.

"ELLEN."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

REPEATED VOWS.

IMMEDIATELY on reading Ellen's note, Insaroff began to put his room in order, told the landlady to take the medicine bottles away, took off his dressing-gown, and put on his coat. Partly from weakness, and partly from excitement, his head swam around, his heart beat violently, and his feet trembled under him. He lay upon the sofa, and holding his watch in his hand kept looking to see what the time was. "It is now a quarter to twelve," he muttered to himself; "she cannot be here before twelve: I must try and think of something else for a quarter of an hour; earlier than twelve she can't be here."

The door opened, and, dressed in a light silk robe, all pale, fresh, young, and joyous, Ellen entered, and with a soft cry of joy threw herself on his breast.

"You are living, my own!" she kept repeating, while she tenderly stroked his forehead. He sat perfectly still, and could scarcely breathe, so stifling was the sense of happiness at once more having her close to him and by his side.

She sat leaning her head on his shoulder, gazing

up at him with that caressing and tender glance which sparkles only in lovers' eyes. Suddenly her countenance became overcast.

"How thin you have grown, my poor Demetrius!" she said, and then added, as she stroked his face with her hand, "and what a beard you have got!"

"And you too have grown thinner, Ellen," he answered, pressing her hand to his lips.

She laughingly pushed her hair off from her face. "Nonsense!" she cried. "Just look, how stout I am getting! The storm has passed over, exactly as it did the day we met in the oratory: it burst upon us, and then cleared off. Now we shall be happy!"

He only answered her with a smile.

"Ah, what days these have been, Demetrius, what wretched days! How can people survive those whom they really love? I always knew beforehand what news Andrew Petrovitch would bring: I did indeed: my life ebbed and flowed with yours. Oh, I am so glad, so happy!"

He did not know what to say: he felt as if he must throw himself at her feet.

"I noticed then, too," she continued, pushing back her hair from her forehead,—"it is wonderful how many things I noticed at that time from mere wretchedness,—that when one is very, very unhappy, everything that passes around one at once becomes absurdly interesting and important. Will you believe

it, the sight of a mere fly often made my blood run cold with fright. But that is all passed, all passed, is it not? The future is all bright now, is it not?"

"It is you who have made my future bright," answered Insaroff.

"And you mine, too! But do you remember when I was at your room, not the last time, no, not the last time," she repeated with an involuntary shudder, "how, while talking together, we spoke of death? We little suspected then, how near it was. But you are really quite well now?"

"I am much better, nearly well again."

"You have recovered, you will not die. Oh, how happy I am!"

A short silence ensued.

"Ellen?" asked Insaroff.

"What, my darling?"

"Tell me truly, has it never occurred to you that this illness has been sent as a punishment to us?"

Ellen looked seriously at him as he put the question.

"The thought did come into my head that it might be so, Demetrius. But then, I asked myself, Why should I be thus punished? What duty have I neglected, or against whom have I sinned? Perhaps, my conscience is not so tender as that of others, but it did not accuse me: or, perhaps, I have sinned against you. I impede you, I stop you."

"You, impede me, Ellen! we shall go together."

"Yes, Demetrius, we will go together, I will go with you. That is my duty. I love you. I know no other duty but that."

"Oh, Ellen!" murmured Insaroff, "what a heavy responsibility each word you utter seems to lay upon me!"

"Why speak of responsibilities?" interrupted Ellen. "In all, I have acted of my own free will. "Yes," she went on, looking thoughtfully on the floor, "I have experienced much within the last few weeks, of which I had previously no idea. If any one had told me that I, a young lady of a good family, and well brought up, should ever under various false excuses leave home in order to visit a young bachelor, how angry and insulted I should have felt! And all this happened, and it seems to be quite natural that I should come here; it does really," she added, turning to Insaroff.

He looked at her with an expression of such passionate devotion, that she quietly ceased stroking his hair, and covered his eyes with her hand.

"Demetrius!" she began again: "you don't know that I saw you then, there on that horrible bed, saw you in the clutches of death, unconscious."

"You were here?"

"Yes."

He was dumbfounded. "And Bersieneff was present?"

She nodded her head.

Insaroff bent over her. "Oh, Ellen," he whispered, "I dare not look at you."

"Why not? Andrew Petrovitch is so good! I feel no shame before him. And what have I to be ashamed of? I am ready to tell the whole world that I am yours. Besides, I trust Andrew Petrovitch as I would my brother."

Insaroff fixed his eyes searchingly on Ellen. "He loves you, does he not?"

Ellen lowered her face. "He did love me," she murmured in a low tone.

Insaroff threw his arm round her as he exclaimed, "Oh, you Russians are noble-hearted! And he, he watched over me day and night. And you, you, my angel! Not a word of reproach, not a moment's hesitation—and all for me, for me."

"Yes, yes, all for you, because I love you. Ah, Demetrius! how strange it is that—I have already told you, but all the same, it is pleasant for me to repeat, and it is pleasant for you to hear—the first time I saw you—"

"Why are there tears in your eyes?" interrupted Insaroff.

"I? tears?" She wiped her eyes with her handkerchief. "How foolish! he does not yet know that one can weep for over-joy! But I wanted to tell you: the first time I saw you, I did not find anything extraordinary in you; that is the truth. I remember, that when I first saw him, Shoubine pleased me much

more, and as for Andrew Petrovitch,—ah, there was a minute when I thought, *Is he not the one?* But you—nothing at all: and then—and then—"

"Enough, enough!" hurriedly exclaimed Insaroff. He tried to get up, but fell back, pale and helpless, on the sofa.

"What is the matter?" anxiously inquired Ellen.

"Nothing—nothing: I am still a little weak; I am not strong enough to bear so much happiness."

"Sit quiet then. Don't say a word, not even a whisper," she replied, holding up her finger threateningly. "And why have you not got on your dressing-gown? It is too soon to be fine gentleman. Sit down, and I'll tell you something. You need only listen: after your illness, it is not good to talk much."

She began to speak to him of Shoubine, of Cournatovsky, of all she had done during the last fortnight, of the certainty of war soon breaking out, and how, the instant it did commence, it would be necessary for them, without losing any time, to find a means of leaving Russia. All this she told him, as she sat by his side, leaning her head on his shoulder.

He listened to all she said, his face at moments growing ashy pale, and then again flushing crimson: several times he tried to stop her, and at length, pushing her gently from him, cried out in an unnaturally strained voice, "Ellen, leave me! for God's sake, go away!"

"What do you say?" she asked in surprise. "Do you not feel well?" she quickly added.

"Yes, I am quite well; but, I pray you, leave me."

"I don't understand you. Do you drive me from you? What is it you are doing?" she hastily exclaimed, as he bent down from the sofa, and madly pressed his lips to her feet. "Don't do that, Demetrius—Demetrius!"

He raised himself up. "Then leave me! You see Ellen, when I fell ill, I was not at once deprived of consciousness: I knew I was on the brink of the grave; ay, and in all my fever and in all my wanderings I knew and felt that death was upon me, that I must bid farewell to life, to you, to all; that there was no longer hope! And then, this sudden resurrection, this light after darkness, you—you—here by my side—your voice, your breath,—all this is more than I can bear! I feel that I love you madly; I hear you call yourself my own; I have no command over myself, I cannot answer for anything! Leave me, then, Ellen! leave me!"

"Demetrius!" Ellen softly whispered, nestling her head on his breast. Now she understood what he meant.

"Ellen," he continued, "you know how I love you, you know that I am ready to lay down my life for you; why, then, do you come to me now, just now when I am so weak, when I have no power over

myself, when all my blood boils within me? You are mine, you say—you love me—"

"Demetrius!" she again exclaimed, nestling still more closely and fondly on his breast.

"Ellen! closer, closer! Leave me—and, I feel I must die; I am too weak to bear this excess of joy—my whole soul yearns toward you—recollect, once already death has all but separated us—and now, you are here, in my arms—Ellen! dear Ellen!"

She was all trembling with emotion. "Take me, am I not your own?" she whispered in a voice so low and broken that he could scarcely catch her words.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A DISCOVERY.

NICHOLAS ARTEMVITCH, with knit brows, was marching up and down his study. Shoubine, his legs crossed, was sitting by the window, quietly smoking a cigar.

"Do leave off, for mercy's sake, striding in that fashion from one corner to another!" he exclaimed, knocking the ashes off his cigar. "My neck quite aches with hoisting my head about in order to catch what you say. Besides, there is something affected in your march; it is too theatrical."

"It is very easy for you to talk," answered Nicholas Artemvitch. "You do not put yourself in my position, you do not remember that I am accustomed to that woman, that I have at last become attached to her, that her continued absence tortures me. Here is October already, the winter set in. What can she have to do at Revel?"

"She probably has to knit some stockings for herself—this time for herself, not for you."

"You may laugh and joke as you like, but I tell you, she is honesty and disinterestedness personified."

"By the way, did she sue you for the payment of that bill?" asked Shoubine.

"Her disinterestedness," repeated Nicholas Artemvitch, in a louder tone, "is something extraordinary. And then, they tell me that a million such women, just as good as she is, can be found in this world; but I say, show me the million; show me the million, that is what I say; *ces femmes, qu'on me les montre!* But not to write to me, it is terrible!"

"You are getting eloquent and excited," observed Shoubine: "but you know what I would advise you to do."

"What?"

"When Augustina comes back—you understand?"

"Well, what then?"

"When you see her—you follow the order of my ideas?"

"Yes, yes: what then?"

"Try the stick with her, and see what that will do."

Nicholas Artemvitch turned away angrily. "I thought he was going to give me some really useful advice. But what can one expect from him, an artist, a man without fixed principles?"

"A man without fixed principles! Yes, that is the favorite phrase of your new friend, Mr. Cournatovsky, the man of such high principles, that only yesterday he won a hundred roubles from you."

"Well! we were playing at speculation. Of

course I had no right to complain if I lost. But there is not one of you capable of appreciating his true worth."

"Of course, he thought—but let that pass!" interrupted Shoubine. "Whether he will be my father-in-law or not, that is still a mystery; but a hundred roubles is not a bad catch for a man who never takes a bribe."

"Father-in-law! The devil a father-in-law! *vous revez, mon cher.* Certainly, any other girl would be only too glad to find such a husband. Judge yourself: affable, clever, mixes with the best people, has himself been a high dignitary in two of our provinces."

"Simply because the governor was fool enough to be led by the nose," added Shoubine.

"That may be. There is no other way of managing things. It only proves that he is a practical man—understands the world."

"And plays his cards well," Shoubine again added.

"Yes, and plays his cards well. But Ellen Nicholaevna—it is impossible to make her out. I should like to know where the man is who can guess what it is she wishes. To-day she is all gayety, to-morrow as dull as death: then she all at once grows ill and thin, till you cannot bear to look at her, and then again she is all at once quite well: and all these changes and caprices are without the slightest reason."

At this moment an ill-looking lackey entered the

room, bearing on a tray a cup of coffee, a cream jug and a sugar basin.

"The husband pleases the father," continued Nicholas Artemvitch, brandishing the sugar tongs, but what does the daughter care about that? That was all very well in the olden times, in the patriarchal days, but now it is quite different *Nous avons changés tout ça.* Now, young ladies talk with whom they like, read just what they please, set off alone to Moscow without a servant, just as in Paris, and all that is *comme il faut.* A few days ago I asked, where is Ellen Nicholaeva? I was told she had gone out. Where to? We don't know. What is that? is that proper?"

"Take your cup of coffee, and send the man away," muttered Shoubine. "You yourself say that one must not talk *devant les domestiques.*"

The servant gave a sharp look at Shoubine; but Nicholas Artemvitch took his cup, and poured some cream into it, and sweetened his coffee with something like ten lumps of sugar.

"I wish to say," he began as soon as the lackey had gone out, "that in this house I count for nobody. That is the whole affair. In our day every one judges by outward appearance; this man is a stupid, empty fellow, but gives himself airs, and all respect him; but another, who is clever it may be, who might confer lasting benefits on his country, but who is modest—"

"Are you going for the statesmanship, Nicholas Artemvitch?" said Shoubine in a dry tone.

"Enough of your nonsense!" exclaimed Nicholas Artemvitch, angrily. "You forget yourself. You yourself are a proof that in this honse I count for nobody; I am literally nobody."

"Anne Vasilievna bothers you, poor fellow!" replied Shoubine, drawlingly. "Ah, Nicholas Artemvitch, you are a sad sinner! You had far better be thinking of what present you mean to make Anne Vasilievna. In a few days it will be her birthday, and you know how she values the least attention on your part."

"Yes, yes," Nicholas Artemvitch hurriedly answered: "I thank you very much for reminding me. Certainly, certainly. I have a little thing by me, a little work box I bought at Rosenstrauch's; only I don't know whether it will suit."

"I suppose you bought it for that Revel young lady?"

"Well—yes—I had thought—"

"Ah, then it certainly will not do."

Shoubine got up from the chair.

"Where are you going this evening, Paul Jakovlevitch?" Nicholas Artemvitch asked in a friendly tone.

"You will be at the club, I suppose."

"But after the club—after the club."

"No, Nicholas Artemvitch, no; I must work to-

morrow. Another time I shall be very glad." And he left the room.

Nicholas Artemvitch knit his brows, marched once or twice up and down the room, took out of his *bureau* the velvet-covered work-box, examined it and its contents for a long time, and then, by means of the looking-glass in the lid, carefully arranged his thick black hair, nodding his head with an air of importance, first to the right and then to the left, but not taking his eyes off from the part in the middle. Some one gave a slight cough from behind the chair on which he had sat down; he turned round, and discovered the lackey, the same who had served him with the coffee.

"What do you want?" he asked him.

"Nicholas Artemvitch!" answered the lackey in a solemn tone; "you are our master."

"I know that: what about it?"

"Nicholas Artemvitch, don't be angry with me; but I, having been in your service from my youth, from my very infancy, out of mere gratitude ought to tell you—"

"What does all this mean?"

"You were pleased just now to say," he stammered out, "that you did not know where Ellen Nicholaevna went to a few days ago. I can tell you for sure."

"What are you muttering about, you fool?"

"As you please, but four days ago I saw her go to a certain house."

"Where? who? what house?"

"In King Street, near the Povarsky—not far from here. I asked the *dvornick* who lived in the house."

Nicholas Artemvitch began tapping the floor with his foot. "Silence, you wretched fool! How do you dare to say such a thing? Ellen Nicholaevna, out of the goodness of her heart, condescends to visit the poor; and you—get out of the room, you fool!"

The frightened lackey had already reached the door.

"Stop! where are you off too?" cried Nicholas Artemvitch. "What did the *dvornick* tell you?"

"Nothing—nothing; he merely said that a stu—a studen—"

"Silence, you miserable fool! Listen, if you only dare to breathe a syllable of this rubbish to any one——"

"Do you think——"

"Silence! if, I say, you only breathe a word, and I hear of it, or any one comes to know of it— You are in my power, and you shall never get another place as long as you live. Do you understand? Now, go to the devil!"

The lackey quickly disappeared.

"Good heavens! What does it all mean?" thought poor Nicholas Artemvitch when he was alone. "What has this ass been telling me? I must find out what house it is, and who lives there. I must go myself. So, this is the end of it all. *Un laquais! Quelle humiliation!*"

And repeating aloud the words, *un laquais!* Nicholas Artemvitch put the work-box back into the *bureau*, and went to look for Anne Vasilievna. He found her in bed with a bound-up face, but the sight of her sufferings only angered him the more, and he soon succeeded in working her up to a state of the utmost excitement and alarm.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE STORM BURSTS.

IN the meanwhile the storm which had long been gathering in the East, burst forth. Turkey had already declared war against Russia; the time fixed for the evacuation of the Principalities had elapsed; the day destined to witness the destruction of Sinope was close at hand. The last few letters received by Insaroff urgently impressed upon him the necessity of immediately setting out for Bulgaria. His health was far from being re-established, he still had a nasty cough hanging about him, was excessively weak, and had slight symptoms of an attack of consumption. But in spite of all this he was rarely at his rooms. His mind was so strongly excited by the news from home that he had no time to think of illness. He was perpetually riding from one end of Moscow to the other, visiting in secret his different Bulgarian friends; he would sit up whole nights writing letters, and for entire days was nowhere to be found. He had informed the landlord of his intention to quit his lodging before long, and at the same time made him a present of his somewhat cumbersome furni-

ture. Nor was Ellen, for her part, less busy in making preparations for an immediate departure. One rainy evening she was sitting in her little room, hemming a pocket-handkerchief, listening, as she worked, with an involuntary feeling of sadness, to the howling wind. Her musings were interrupted by the entrance of a servant, who told her that her father wished to speak with her in her mother's bedroom. "Mamma is weeping," she added as Ellen was leaving the room, "and your papa is in a terrible rage."

Ellen slightly shrugged her shoulders, and hurried to Anne Vasilievna's bedroom. Nicholas Artemvitch's simple-souled wife was reclining languidly in a folding-chair, and holding to her nose a handkerchief strongly scented with eau de Cologne. He himself was standing before the fire-place, every button of his military coat duly and tightly fastened, in a high tight cravat and stiffly starched collar, having evidently got himself up in his favorite pose of a parliamentary orator. With an oratorical wave of the hand he motioned his daughter to a chair, and when she, failing to understand his meaning, looked up inquiringly into his face, he said in the most dignified of manners, "I pray you to be seated." Nicholas Artemvitch always said "*you*" to his wife, but to his daughter only on extraordinary occasions.*

* In Russian, as in most modern languages, "*thou*" is used in addressing near relations, or those who are inferior in social rank.

Ellen sat down. Anne Vasilievna gave a tearful sniffle, and Nicholas Artemvitch put his right hand between the two centre button-holes of his coat.

"I have sent for you, Ellen Nicholaevna," he began after an effective silence, "that I may have an explanation with you, or I should rather say, to demand an explanation from you. I am dissatisfied with your conduct—or no, that is saying too little; your conduct has deeply grieved me, has shocked me—me and your mother—your mother, whom you see before you."

In delivering this speech Nicholas Artemvitch used only the deepest bass notes of his voice. Ellen silently glanced, first at him, and then at Anne Vasilievna, and became deadly pale.

"There was a time," continued Nicholas Artemvitch, "when daughters trembled in the presence of their parents: when parental authority was revered and feared. Those times are past, unfortunately (so at least many think); but you must know that we have still laws that do not permit—that do not permit—in one word we have still laws. I beg of you to pay attention to that fact, we have still laws—"

"But, dear papa," Ellen began.

"No interruption, I pray. Let us turn our thoughts to the past. I and Anne Vasilievna, we have fulfilled our duty. I and Anne Vasilievna, we have spared nothing in the way of expense or trouble to give you a sound education. What profit you have made from

that education is another question. But I had the right to think—I and Anne Vasilievna, we had the right to believe, that you would sacredly observe those laws of morality which—which we imparted to you as our only daughter, which, in a word, *que nous vous avons inculqués.* We had a right to hope that no new 'ideas' would ever undermine your faith in these, so to say, sacred principles. But what has happened? I do not now speak of any thoughtlessness that might be excused as natural to your sex, natural to your age; —but who could have expected that you would so far forget yourself—"

"Papa!" interrupted Ellen, "I know what it is you wish to say."

"No, you do not know what I wish to say!" Nicholas Artemvitch cried out in a shrill voice, for the moment forgetting the necessity of keeping up his parliamentary pose, and speaking in a stern bass tone; "you do not know, you wretched child!"

"For God's sake, speak more calmly, Nicholas," simpered Anne Vasilievna; "*Vous me faites mourir.*"

"Don't tell me, Anne Vasilievna, *que je vous fais mourir!* You have no idea what horrors you will hear in an instant. I can only warn you to prepare yourself for the worst."

Anne Vasilievna sank back in quiet despair.

"No," said Nicholas Artemvitch, turning to Ellen, "you do not know what it is I wish to say!"

"I am to blame—" she began in a low tone.

"Ah, at last!"

"I am to blame," Ellen went on, "in that I did not long ago confess—"

"Do you know, interrupted Nicholas Artemvitch, that by one single word I can cover you with confusion?"

Ellen raised up her head, and looked inquiringly at him.

"Yes, Miss, with one word! Do not look at me in that way." He crossed his hands over his breast. "Allow me to ask you whether you know a certain house in King Street, not far from the Povarsky." Each word he spoke was marked by a stamp of the foot. "Answer me, you worthless child, and no evasions! People, common people, the very servants, *des vils laquais*, Miss, have seen you go there, have seen you go to visit your—"

Ellen's eyes sparkled with anger, and her whole face crimsoned. "I have no wish to tell a falsehood," she answered; "it is quite true, I have been to that house."

"Very good! You hear, you hear, Anne Vasilievna? And, perhaps, you know who lives there?"

"Yes I do; my husband."

Nicholas Artemvitch's eyes almost started out of his head. "Your what?"

"My husband," Ellen repeated. "I am married to Demetrius Nikanorovitch Insaroff."

"You!—married?" stammered Anne Vasilievna.

"Yes, mamma. Pardon me. We were married secretly a fortnight ago."

Anne Vasilievna fell back in her chair; Nicholas Artemvitch strode two steps forward.

"Married! to that vile beggar of a Montenegrian! The daughter of Nicholas Stachoff, of the old nobility of Russia, married to a vagabond, to a plebeian! Without her parents' blessing! And you think that such a marriage will stand good, that I shall not complain, that I will allow you—that you—that I——? You will be sent to a monastery, and he to the galleys, *aux travaux forcés*. Anne Vasilievna, be good enough to tell her this moment that she is disinherited, is no daughter of yours."

"Nicholas Artemvitch, for God's sake, spare me!" groaned Anne Vasilievna.

"And when, in what manner, was all this done? Who married you? where? how? Good heavens! what will all my friends say? what a scandal! And you, you shameless imp, you dared after such a crime to live quietly beneath your parents' roof! Did you not fear that God's thunder might strike you dead?"

"Papa!" said Ellen, whilst her whole body trembled, though her voice was firm and steady; "you are free to do with me as it pleases you; but you wrong me when you accuse me of shamelessness and falsehood. I did not wish to grieve you unnecessarily, but in a few days I must have told you all, since next week I am going away from here with my husband."

"Going away? Where to?"

"To his home, to Bulgaria."

"To the Turks!" cried Anne Vasilievna, and fell back unconscious.

Ellen hurried towards her mother.

"Away!" cried Nicholas Artemvitch, seizing his daughter by the hand: "away! you worthless child!"

But at this moment the door opened and a pale face with flashing eyes was seen peeping in. It was Shoubine.

"Nicholas Artemvitch?" he bawled at the top of his voice, "Augustina has come back, and wants to speak to you!"

Nicholas Artemvitch turned angrily round, pushed Shoubine out of the room, hesitated for a moment, and then hurried after him.

Ellen fell down before her mother, and clasped her knees.

Urban Ivanovitch was lying in bed. A colorless shirt, fastened with a capacious round button, encircled his full neck, and fell in wide, easy folds over his breast, which was almost womanly in its softness and whiteness, leaving exposed to view a small cypress cross which he constantly wore. A thin sheet covered his out-stretched legs. A candle was burning dimly on a small night table, on which stood a jug of beer, and on the bed, at Urban's feet, Shoubine was sitting and talking.

"Yes," he said in a thoughtful tone, "She is mar-

ried, and intends leaving us. Your nephew was furious, and bellowed through the whole house; he shut the bedroom door, to keep it all secret, but ranted so furiously that not only the servants in the kitchen, but the very coachman in the stables, could hear every word he said. And he is still fuming and declaiming—all but quarelled with me—and, like a bear beating a drum, tries to frighten us all with a father's curse; but all the while he means nothing. Anne Vasilievna is half dead, though it is her daughter's journey to Bulgaria, rather than her secret marriage, that grieves her."

Urban Ivanovitch was all the time playing nervously with his fingers. "A mother," he at last remarked, "a mother; well, you know."

"Your nephew," continued Shoubine, "swore he would complain to the archbishop, the governor-general, the prime minister, and I know not who else; but the end of it all is, that she is going away. It is not easy to ruin the future of one's own daughter. There is nothing to do but to give a loud crow, and then to drop one's tail!"

"True, they have not," sagely observed Urban Ivanovitch, and without finishing his sentence turned to the beer jug.

"So, so. And then, what a host of calumnies these Moscow chatterboxes will spread abroad! But she does not fear them; she is far above them. She is going away—but where to? it is horrible to think

of! Such an out-of-the-way place, altogether out of the civilized world! What a destiny! I think I see her on the road, just setting off from some station, in the middle of the night, in a thick snow-storm, thirty degrees below the freezing-point. To be separated forever from her countrymen, her family, from all! But I understand how it has come about. What is there to keep her here? What friends has she? Cournatovsky, Bersieneff, and our good friend who is the best of them all. Why, then, pity her? There is only one bad thing in this business; they say her husband— Devil take it! how that word sticks in the throat!—they say Insaroff spits blood; that's a bad sign. I saw him a few days ago: his face a perfect model for the face of Brutus. You know who Brutus was, Urban Ivanovitch?"

"How should I know? I suppose he was a man."

"Just so, '*he was a man.*' Yes, a remarkable face, but unhealthy—terribly unhealthy."

"Just as good for fighting," laconically observed Urban.

"It may be for fighting, and I don't dispute the justice of your remark, but it is not just as good for living, and I suppose they wish to live together, not merely die."

"Living! that is a question of youth—constitution!" remarked Urban.

"Yes; youth, fame, courage, make up life. But

death, life, strife, quarrels, triumphs, love, liberty, slavery !—well, well, such is the lot of man. Yet that is no reason for sitting up to your neck in a bog, and trying to look as if it were all the same to you, when it is very far from being a matter of indifference. And there—life hangs on a thread that may snap at any moment ! "

Shoubine hid his face in his hands.

"Besides," he continued after a long silence "Insaroff is not worthy of her. But that's nonsense ! No one is worthy of her. Insaroff—Insaroff—What's the good of false humility ? Let us grant that he is young, lives honorably, though up to now he has been exactly like any of us poor sinners, still, after all, are we really so little worth ? What do you say, Urban Ivanovitch, am I really good for nothing at all ? Has God then been really so miserly towards me ? Has He endowed me with no capacities, with no talents ? Who knows, but that the name of Paul Shoubine may in time become illustrious ? Look at that copper penny lying there on your table. Who knows, but that in a future century it may be worked into a statue raised up to the memory of Paul Shoubine by an admiring and grateful posterity ? "

Urban Ivanovitch raised himself up slightly in the bed, and fixed his eyes on the enthusiastic artist. "The old singers," he at last remarked, playing with his fingers as usual, "chose other themes ; but you, yourself—nothing more."

"Oh, illustrious philosopher of Russia!" cried Shoubine; "each word of yours is pure gold. Not to me, but to you, will be erected the statue, I will model it myself. Just as you are lying now, in that exquisite pose, wherein are blended both dignity and ease,—I will take you so. You have justly reproved me for my egotism and self-love. What avails it to speak of ourselves? what profit is there in all our boasting? There is nothing good in any one of us; search where you will, you will not find a man among us all. We are all of us mere sprats and worms; either mooning Hamlets, grovelling and crawling between heaven and earth; or else noisy charlatans, beating an empty drum with a rotten stick. And while we are such as these, why probe and discover our very soul's innermost workings? to what end scrutinize our every feeling and sentiment? merely to say at the last, This is what I am, thus I feel, and thus I think! Useful, practical study! No, if by chance there be among us all one that is really good, let us take good care that this pure being do not escape us, do not wriggle out of the net like a fish into the open sea! What do you say, Urban Ivanovitch? When will our time come? When will there be men among us?"

"Give us time," answered Urban Ivanovitch; "they will come!"

"They will come! Solid reasoner! Profound philosopher! You have said, it shall be. Mark well,

sage thinker, thy words shall be written down. But what are you putting out the light for?"

"I want to go to sleep: good-night."

CHAPTER XXXI.

MATERNAL AFFECTION.

SHOUBINE was right. The unexpected news of Ellen's marriage almost killed poor Anne Vasilievna. She became seriously ill, and was obliged to keep her bed. Nicholas Artemvitch forbade her to see her daughter; he was almost glad of this unlooked-for opportunity of showing off his authority as master of the house, and became unusually noisy and severe toward all the servants, as much as to say, "I will let you know who I am, you had better take care!" Therefore while he was at home Anne Vasilievna could not see Ellen, and was obliged to be contented with the company of Zoe, who, to tell the truth, attended her with the greatest care, but frequently muttered to herself, "*Diesen Insaroff vorziehen—and wem?*" But no sooner was Nicholas Artemvitch out of the house—and he was now seldom at home, for Augustina had really come back from Revel—than Ellen flew down to her mother's room, and poor Anne Vasilievna would look at her long, silently, and in tears. This dumb reproach smote Ellen's heart far more keenly than all her

father's noisy taunts; she did not once repent what she had done, but she experienced a deep and intense sorrow that was strangely akin to repentance.

"Mamma! darling mamma!" she would repeat as she fondly stroked her mother's hand: "What could I do? I was not to blame; I loved him so dearly that I could not act otherwise. Fate is to blame for uniting me with a man whom papa does not like, and who will take me away from you."

"For mercy's sake," sighed Anne Vasilievna, "don't remind me of that. My heart sinks within me every time I think of where you are going to."

"Dear mamma," answered Ellen, "you must recollect it might have been much worse. Suppose I had died."

"Then I should have no hopes of ever seeing you again, and it is just so now. Either you will die out there, somewhere, in a filthy hut,"—Anne Vasilievna's ideas of Bulgaria seemed to be that it was something like the most distant of the Siberian colonies, only much worse,—"or else I shall not long survive our parting."

"Don't talk so, dear mamma; we shall see each other again. Besides, in Bulgaria there are large cities, just as there are here."

"What kind of cities, pray? Then there is war going on there; and go where you will, I fancy you will find all has been shot down and destroyed. You mean to go very soon?"

"Very soon—if only papa— You know he threatened to complain, and to get us stopped."

Anne Vasilievna raised her eyes toward heaven. "No, Nell, he will make no complaint. I would never have consented to the wedding, I would rather have died first. But what is done cannot be undone; and I will take care that my daughter's name is not made public."

So passed a few wretched days. At last Anne Vasilievna somewhat recovered her strength, and one evening was closeted with her husband in her bedroom. All was at once quiet and hushed throughout the house. At first nothing was to be heard; but before long the harsh tones of Nicholas Artemvitch's voice were audible, and then loud and angry exclaimations, interrupted at times by a woman's sobbings and ill-repressed cries. Shoubine and Zoe had already determined to force their way into the room, but the dispute evidently grew less and less violent, and soon subsided into a quiet and ordinary conversation, which was followed by a long silence. This silence was at first interrupted only by hysterical sighs, and these before long ceased entirely. The grating of a key as it turned in the lock, and the fall of the upper flap of the *bureau*, were then to be heard. In a few minutes the door opened, and Nicholas Artemvitch appeared. He looked sulkily at Shoubine and Zoe, crossed the passage, and getting into a carriage drove off to his club. But Anne Vasilievna at once

sent for Ellen, received her with a warm and long embrace, and bursting into a passionate flood of tears, exclaimed,—

"It's all arranged, there will be no complaint, and there is nothing now to hinder you from setting off, and casting us off as soon as you like."

"You will allow Demetrius to come and thank you," Ellen asked her mother, as soon as the latter had grown a little calm.

"Wait a little, my love; just now I have not strength enough to see the man who robs me of my all. But I will try before your departure."

"Before our departure," sorrowfully repeated Ellen.

Nicholas Artemvitch had consented to make no *scandale*, but Anne Vasilievna did not think it worth while to tell her daughter at what a price she had been obliged to buy his forbearance. She did not tell her how she had promised to pay all his debts, and had given him, then and there, a hundred roubles. He had, moreover, declared to Anne Vasilievna that, under no circumstances, would he see Insaroff, whom he to the last designated as "that beggar of a Montenegrian;" but, on arriving at the club, he of his own accord began speaking to his partner, a general on half-pay, of Ellen and her marriage. "By the way" he observed, in a careless tone between the deals, "you have heard that my daughter, who is a regular bookworm, has married a university student?" The

general looked at him through his spectacles, muttered "Indeed!" and then asked him what were the stakes.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE PARTING HOUR.

THE day of Ellen's departure was fast approaching. November was drawing to an end, and in two or three days at the most, it would be necessary to commence their long journey. Insaroff had made all his arrangements, and was burning with impatience to leave Moscow. The doctor too advised him to lose no time: "You must get to a warm climate," he told him; "here you will never recover." Nor was Ellen's impatience one whit the less; she was disquieted at Insaroff's paleness and weakness. She would often gaze with trembling and fear on his changed and haggard features. Moreover, her position at home began to be insupportable. Her mother evidently looked upon her as a dead child, while her father treated her with a cold disdain. It is true that the nearness of their separation was a source of no less real grief to him than to the rest; but he considered it to be his duty, in the character of a wronged and injured father, to hide his feelings and to conceal any such weakness. Anne Vasilievna at last consented to see Insaroff. He was introduced into

the house secretly through the back entrance. When he entered the room, she was for a long time unable to utter a word, and could not even bear to look up at him; he sat down by her on the sofa, and, with his head bent down, waited till she spoke. Ellen was sitting on the other side, holding her mother's hand in her own. Anne Vasilievna at length raised up her eyes, and in a low tone began, "God be the judge between us, Demetrius Nikanorovitch—" and then suddenly pausing, the reproach died upon her lips, and she cried out, "but you are ill! Ellen he is ill!"

"I have been unwell, Anne Vasilievna," Insaroff answered, "and indeed am not yet quite recovered; but I hope that my native climate will soon set me to rights again."

"Ah, Bulgaria!" murmured Anne Vasilievna. "Good God!" she thought to herself, "the Bulgarian is dying; his voice is hollow, his eyes sunken; he is little better than a skeleton; his coat sets like a sack upon him; he is all bones. And she is his wife, she loves him—it must be a dream, it cannot be." But she quickly recovered herself, and added, "Demetrius Nikanorovitch, must you really, really return to Bulgaria?"

"I have no choice; I must go, Anne Vasilievna."

Anne Vasilievna's eyes slowly filled with tears. "Ah, Demetrius Nikanorovitch, God grant that you may never suffer as I do now. But promise me, that you will never cease to love her, that you will take

care of her. You will, of course never suffer from want, so long as I live."

She could say no more, but mutely extended her arms, and clasped Ellen and Insaroff to her breast.

The fatal day had arrived. It had been arranged that Ellen should bid adieu to her parents at home, but should set off on her long journey from Insaroff's lodgings. Twelve o'clock was the hour fixed for their departure. At a quarter to twelve Bersieneff arrived. He had expected to find at Insaroff's some of his compatriots who were to accompany him, but they had already left, as had also those two mysterious strangers, of whom the reader has already heard, and who were the witnesses at Insaroff's marriage. The tailor received "the good gentleman" with low, but somewhat unsteady bows; he had been drinking heavily that morning, probably from grief, or it may be from joy at the furniture having been given him. His wife, like a prudent woman, very soon got rid of him. The room was filled with packages; a large portmanteau and two corded boxes were standing on the floor. Bersieneff stood by the window lost in thought; many were the painful reminiscences that crowded on his mind.

Twelve o'clock had struck long ago, and the coachman had already put the horses to, but "the young couple" had not yet made their appearance. At length hurried steps were to be heard on the staircase, and Ellen entered, accompanied by Insaroff and

Shoubine. Her eyes were red and swollen; she had left her mother in a swoon; the parting had been of the most harrowing and painful kind. Ellen had not seen Bersieneff for several weeks; his visits to the Stachoffs had of late been very rare. She evidently did not expect to see him, and crying out, "You here! that is kind of you!" threw herself on his neck. Insaroff also embraced him. A long and sad silence ensued. What could any of the three say? how speak without showing what each at that moment felt? Shoubine was first to understand the necessity of breaking the silence, no matter how his words might belie his real feelings.

"The trio has met once more," he said, "and for the last time. Let us submit to the will of fate, think of the happiness we have enjoyed together, and God give us good fortune in our new life. *God be with you, where'er you go!*" he began singing, and then stopped. He felt that it was a desecration to sing in the presence of the dead; and in that moment the past, of which he had spoken, had died,—the past of those three who were there gathered together to bid each other a last farewell. True, it had died but to rise again into a new life; but for all that it had none the less really died.

"Well, Ellen," Insaroff said, turning to his wife, "I think all is ready now. Everything is paid and settled. There's only this portmanteau to be carried down stairs. Landlord!"

The landlord came into the room, together with his wife and daughter. He was not quite steady on his feet, but listened to Insaroff's orders, hoisted the portmanteau on his shoulders, and hurried clamping down stairs.

Let us now, after the Russian custom, sit down,"* observed Insaroff

They all sat down, Bersieneff on the old sofa, Ellen by his side, whilst the landlady and her daughter stood, with their heads lowly bent, on the threshold. For a few minutes all were silent, and then each smiled at the other, though none knew why he smiled. Each wished to say something by way of farewell; and each—with the exception of the landlady and her daughter, who only wiped their eyes—felt that at such a moment they might be allowed to utter any commonplace, since any remark which betrayed either thought or deliberation would be affected and ill-placed. Insaroff was the first to rise and cross himself. "Goodbye, little room!" he exclaimed.

Then kisses were exchanged, traditionally loud but cold kisses that precede all partings, with kindly wishes for a prosperous journey—those half-uttered

* It is customary in Russia for a traveller, before starting on a long journey, to assemble together his relations, friends, and servants, when they all remain seated for a few minutes in perfect silence: each being supposed to be engaged in prayer to God, that He may be pleased to bless the journey, and bring it to a successful issue.

wishes that have all the sound of ordinary speech, but mean so much—promises to write, and the last hurried words of farewell.

Ellen, all in tears, had taken her seat in the carriage; Insaroff was busily engaged in wrapping her feet up warm; Shoubine, Bersieneff, the landlord, his wife, and his daughter, with the eternal handkerchief wrapped round her head, were all standing on the steps, when a richly caparisoned sledge came full gallop into the courtyard, and out of it, shaking the snow off from the collar of his cloak, leaped Nicholas Artemvitch.

"Thank God I am not too late," he cried as he ran up to their carriage. "Here, Ellen, is our last farewell blessing," he said, taking out from his pocket a small crucifix sewed on velvet, which he hung round her neck. He began to sob and to kiss her hand; the coachman, in the meanwhile, dragged out from sledge-box a bottle of champagne and three tumblers.

"And now," said Nicholas Artemvitch, whilst the tears in large drops ran down his cheeks, "we must wish you—drink to your—" He began to pour out the champagne, but his hands trembled so that the wine ran over on the snow. He took one of the tumblers, and gave the other two to Ellen and Insaroff. The latter had already taken his seat by her side. "God grant you," began Nicholas Artemvitch, but could not continue; he hurriedly drank off the wine, as did the others. "Now it is your turn, gentlemen," he con-

tinued, turning to Shoubine and Bersieneff; but at that instant the coachman began whipping the horses. Nicholas Artemvitch ran alongside the carriage: "Do not forget to write to us," he said in a broken voice. Ellen put out her head, cried out, "Good-bye, papa, Andrew Petrovitch, Paul Jokovlevitch; good-bye all; good-bye, Russia!" and sank back in her seat. The coachman again gave a whirl with his whip, and began calling to the horses; the carriage rolled out of the courtyard, and in a few minutes was out of sight.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A VISIT TO VENICE.

IT was a bright April day. Along the broad canal which separates Venice from the narrow strip of sea sand that is called Lido, floated a sharp-nosed gondola, whose easy motion answered to the long and regular sweep of the gondolier's oar. Under its narrow awning, on soft leather cushions, were reclining Ellen and Insaroff.

The features of Ellen's face had scarcely changed since the day of her departure from Moscow, but their expression was strangely altered; it had become much more thoughtful and more severe, and her eyes were more brilliant than before. Her whole body was fresher, and her hair seemed to lie in thicker and heavier folds over her white forehead and fair cheeks. It was only by her lips, when she was not smiling, that one could discern the conscious presence of a never-ceasing, secret care. The expression of Insaroff's face, on the contrary, was unaltered, but his features were sadly changed. He had grown thinner, was visibly older, no longer held himself upright, and was deadly pale: he was con-

stantly coughing, with a short dry cough, and his eyes sparkled with an unnatural glitter. On the road from Russia, Insaroff had been laid up at Vienna for nearly two months, and it was already the end of March before he and his wife arrived at Venice; he hoped, by going through Serbia, to be able before long to reach Bulgaria, that being the only road left open. War was already raging on the Danube; England and France had commenced hostilities against Russia; and the whole Sclavonic race was in a state of excitement, and actively preparing for revolt.

The gondola drew up at the inland extremity of the Lido. Ellen and Insaroff walked slowly along the narrow sand-path, planted with small half-withered trees—every year fresh trees are planted, and every year they die—which runs along the Lido out toward the sea.

They came to the farthest point. Before them rolled the dark-blue waves of the Adriatic, foaming and tossing, now rushing up to the very shore, and then with a long roll scudding backwards, leaving on the sand tiny shells and tangled morsels of sea-grass.

"What a dreary spot!" Ellen said. "I only fear lest it may be cold for you here; but I fancy I can guess why you insisted on coming."

"Cold!" Insaroff quickly answered, with a forced laugh; "I shall make a fine soldier, if I am afraid of a little cold. But I have come here—I will tell you why. I look out on that sea, and it seems to me that

I am nearer to my country. Look, it is there, in that direction," he continued, pointing toward the east. "And the wind blows thence."

"It's a favorable wind for the ship you are expecting, is it not?" asked Ellen. "See, there is a sail; who knows but that may be the ship?"

Insaroff looked eagerly at the distant sail which Ellen had pointed out.

"Renditch promised to arrange all in a week," he replied; "and he is to be depended on. Have you heard, Ellen," he continued in a voice that trembled with emotion, "that the poor Dalmatian fishermen have given their leaden balls—you know, those things fastened to their nets to make them sink to the bottom—to be turned into bullets? They had no money, they live only on what little fish they can catch; but they cheerfully gave to the good cause their last goods, and are now dying from starvation. A brave people!"

"*Aufgepasst!*" suddenly cried a stern voice from behind them. The dull tread of a horse's hoofs was to be heard, and an Austrian officer, before they had scarcely found time to move aside, galloped past them, in a short grey cloak and green casquette. Insaroff looked gloomily after him.

"He is not to blame," Ellen whispered: "you see, there is no foot-path here."

"He is not to blame," repeated Insaroff. "Perhaps not, but the sight of his grey cloak, and the

sound of his grating voice, have made my blood boil within me. Let us turn back."

"Let us go, Demetrius. It really is too damp for you here. You recollect, you were too careless after your Moscow illness, and suffered for it at Vienna. You must be more careful now."

Insaroff made no reply, but his face still wore a gloomy and bitter expression.

"What do you say?" continued Ellen: "let us go along the Grand Canal. Since we have been here, we have not had a good view of Venice. And in the evening let us go to the theatre: I have two tickets for the boxes. A new opera is to be given to-night. Let us to-day forget politics, the war, everything; let us think only of ourselves, that we live, breathe, care only for each other, that we are one now and for ever. Will you Demetrius?"

"Whatever you wish, Ellen, I wish too."

"I knew you would agree," Ellen replied with a smile. "So let us be going."

Whoever has not seen Venice in the month of April will find it hard to picture to himself the indescribable charm of this fairy city. The softness and mildness of spring are to Venice, what the bright summer sun is to glorious Genoa, or what the purple golden autumn is to ancient Rome. Like spring, the beauty of Venice excites and arouses our softest desires; it animates and stirs the unspoiled heart like the promise of some near, undefined, mysterious

pleasure. All is light and clear; all is surrounded with the dreamy haze of some baffling secret; all is tranquil and entrancing; all, from its very name downwards, is womanly, and not without reason has it been baptized Venice the Beautiful. Its majestic palaces and noble churches tower up with airy gracefulness, the harmonious creations of a young god's dream; there is something fairy-like and strangely bewitching in the greenish-grey tint and in the soft ripple of its canals, in the noiseless motion of its dark-colored gondolas, and in the absence of all the clamor and uproar of an ordinary city. "Venice is dead, Venice is deserted," its inhabitants will tell you: and it may be that this last of charms, the charm of decay in the very bloom and fulness of beauty, is also there. To understand the magic of this beauty, one must see Venice. Neither Canaletti nor Guardi—not to speak of our modern artists—have ever succeeded in portraying the soft silveriness of its sky, or the shadowy tints of the distant horizon, with its marvellous blending of colors gradually melting into one another. The man who is already fagged out with the struggles and defeats of life will visit Venice in vain; its beauty will be as bitter to him as the memory of the heavenly dreams of his early childhood: but it shall be sweet to him whose strength is as yet unimpaired, and who feels himself to be happy; let him sun his happiness beneath the sky of Venice, and, however radiant may be his lot, it shall be made

still more golden, still more promising, beneath that kind and gentle light.

The gondola in which Ellen and Insaroff had again taken their places, slowly passed the palace of the Doges, and entered the Grand Canal. Marble palaces succeeded marble palaces on either side; they seemed to float quietly by, nor was there time to take in and grasp all their varied beauties. Ellen felt deeply happy; in her heaven one dark cloud had long threatened to obscure all the light, but it was now fast dispersing: Insaroff was clearly much better to-day. They slowly floated down as far as the arches of the Rialto, and then turned back. Ellen feared to enter any of the churches, lest they should prove too cold for Insaroff, but recollected the Academy of Fine Arts, and ordered the gondolier to row there. They quickly ran through the different saloons of this small museum. Not being connoisseurs or *dilettanti*, they did not stop before each picture, or force themselves to admire everything they saw. A kind of unexpected gladness had stolen over them both, and they found amusement in all they met. It is a feeling most of us have experienced as children. To the great scandal of three Englishmen, who were n the gallery at the same time, Ellen laughed till the tears came into her eyes at Tintoretto's Saint Mark, darting from heaven like a frog in the water to save a tortured slave; for his part, Insaroff was enthusiastic over the vigorous and bold outline of the nobly

formed peasant in the foreground of Titian's Assumption, who with upraised hands is worshipping the ascending Madonna; and both were struck with the dignity and beauty of this same Madonna as she rises calmly and majestically to be caught up in the bosom of the Father. On leaving the academy they once more came across the three Englishmen with their long hare-like teeth and hanging whiskers, and they laughed; they descried their gondolier with his short-tailed jacket, and they laughed; they saw a seller of old clothes carrying on his head a little bundle of grey wigs, and they laughed louder than before; they looked one another in the face, and again burst out laughing; and no sooner were they seated in the gondola than they warmly and affectionately clasped each other's hand. They landed at the hotel, ran about their room like two children, and at last ordered dinner to be served. Their fit of gayety did not abandon them at table. They picked out the choicest bits for one another, drank to the health of old Moscow friends, applauded the waiter when he brought in a dish of tasty fish, and bothered him for some fresh *frutti di mare;* the waiter shrugged his shoulders, and scraped his feet, and went out of the room shaking his head; once even he muttered to himself with a sigh, *poveretti!* After dinner they set off to the theatre.

The new opera, of which Ellen had spoken, was, to tell the truth, common-place enough, but one which

has since obtained success on every stage, and is well known to us Russians, Verdi's *Traviata.* The season in Venice was over; and only second-rate singers took part in the performance; each, however, cried and screamed to the best of his or her power. The part of Violetta was filled by an artist of no celebrity; nor, to judge from her cold reception by the audience, was she a favorite, though she was not without talent. She was a young, plain-looking, dark-eyed girl, with an unequal and already somewhat faded voice. Her costume was naïvely flaunting and in bad taste; her hair was knotted up with a flaring red ribbon, she wore a dress of tarnished blue satin, and her arms were covered nearly up to the elbows with a pair of thick Swedish gloves: but how could the daughter of a poor Bergamo shepherd know the mysteries of a Parisian *camelia's* toilette? She was not quite at home on the stage, but there was a great deal of naturalness and unaffected simplicity in her play, and she sang with all that passionateness and rhythm of expression which is peculiar to the Italians. Ellen and Insaroff were seated in a small box close to the stage, and they were still under the influence of that sprightly mood which had come over them in the Academy of Arts. When the father of the young man, who had fallen a victim to the charms of the enchantress, appeared on the stage in a pea-jacket and a grey wig, the hairs of which stood on end, and, having opened his mouth, suddenly lost all his cour-

age, and could only utter a melancholy bass *tremulo*, they could neither of them refrain from laughing. But Violetta's playing affected them very differently.

"That poor girl gets very little applause," said Ellen, "but I prefer her a thousand times to a conceited second-rate celebrity who screams, throws herself about, and gives grand flourishes, merely to produce effect. But here there is no acting; just look, she pays no attention to the public."

Insaroff leaned over the box, and looked attentively towards Violetta. "Yes," he answered in a low voice; "she is not merely acting—death is really upon her."

Ellen made no reply. The curtain now rose, and the third act commenced. Ellen shuddered at the sight of the bed, the drawn curtains, the side-table covered with medicine bottles, and the shaded lamp. Did they recall to her mind the last few mournful months? "And the future? and the present?" she thought to herself. As if in response to the actress's assumed cough, there was heard in the box Insaroff's dry hacking cough. Ellen furtively looked up at him, but immediately forced her features into an expression of quiet contentment. The look, however, did not escape Insaroff, who began half-laughingly to hum the air that was at that moment being sung.

But he was soon quiet. Violetta's acting became each instant better and freer. She had lost all timidity, cast aside every mannerism, and—greatest tri-

umph for an artist, was herself. She had suddenly passed that limit which it is impossible to define, but beyond which is the province of the beautiful. The audience, taken by surprise, became less apathetic, and began to listen with sympathy and interest. In spite of her plainness, and in spite of her broken voice, she had them now at her command, and had touched their hearts. In truth, her voice no longer sounded as if broken, but there was passion and strength in its every note. Alfredo appeared, and Violetta's delirious shout of joy all but provoked that storm of applause which is called *fanatismo*, but which has no parallel among our colder audiences of the north.

A few moments passed, and the audience were again as cold as ever. Then began the duo, the finest piece in the whole opera, in which the composer has succeeded in expressing all the bitter regrets of a life that has been madly thrown away, the last struggle between despair and powerless love. Carried away and overpowered by the impulse of a common feeling, Violetta, with tears of pride in her art mingled with tears of actual suffering, surrendered herself to the passion that thus strongly possessed her, and her countenance became transfigured, as, in presence of the threatening signs of fast approaching death, the words, *Lascia mi vivere—morir si giovane*, were rung forth from her lips with an agony that seemed to pierce the very heavens, and the whole

theatre burst out into one loud tumult of genuine and enthusiastic applause.

Ellen involuntarily trembled as she heard those words. She began silently feeling for Insaroff's hand, found it, and pressed it tightly in her own. He responded to her clasp, but neither did she venture to look at him, nor he at her. How unlike this clasp was to that fond and careless one which they had given each other on the gondola!

They returned to their hotel by the Grand Canal. Night had already set in, a clear soft night. The palaces they passed were the same they had seen before, but appeared to be quite different. Those on which the moon shone seemed to be bathed in a golden light and in this light all details of ornament and outlines of windows or balconies were, as it were, lost: these could only be discerned in those buildings which stood shrouded in the light veil of the evening's shade. The gondolas, with their tiny red lamps, seemed to move, if possible, more silently and more swiftly than in the day-time; their polished steel beaks glittered above the stream; and silvery sprays, as they fell from the dripping oars, sparkled in the moonshine, whilst the hum of the gondoliers—was the only sound to break the silence that prevailed around them. The hotel at which Ellen and Insaroff were staying was situated on the *Riva dei Schiavoni;* on their way to it they got out of the gondola, and strolled several times round the square of St.

Mark, under the arcades, where a number of gay parties were assembled in front of different *restaurants*. There is something peculiarly pleasant in thus strolling about, in company with one who is dear to us, among a crowd of strangers in a strange city; all seems to us to be beautiful and to invite our admiration; we wish every one of those strangers to share in our peace, joy, and good-fortune. But Ellen found it difficult to abandon herself to this feeling of happiness; her heart, still under the fresh impression of the sorrows of Violetta, was sadly disturbed; and Insaroff, as they passed the Doge's palace, pointed silently to the mouths of the Austrian cannons peering out from its lower vaults, and at the same time brusquely pulled his hat over his brows. Soon afterwards he began to feel tired, and so, with a last glance at St. Mark's and its cupola, the lofty pinnacle of which glittered in the rays of the full moon like a ball of phosphoric light, they slowly turned homewards.

Their little room looked out on the broad laguna that stretches from the *Riva dei Schiavoni* to the *Giudecco*. Nearly opposite to their hotel rose up the sharp-pointed tower of St. George; on the right, high up in the air, glittered the golden dome of the Doge's palace; a little farther on stood the prettiest of all churches, richly adorned like some fair bride, the church of the Redemption; on the left were to be seen the black masts and rigging of ships and the funnels of steamboats, or a sail, looking like a huge

wing, hoisted half-mast, or a ship's pennon fluttering idly in the breeze. Insaroff sat down by the open window, but Ellen did not allow him to remain there long; he became all at once feverishly hot, and grew so weak that he was obliged to lie down. Ellen took his place, and sat quietly by the window till he fell asleep. How quiet and calm was the night! how soft and gentle the air! It seemed as though the bitterest of sufferings and the acutest of pains could not but be softened and tranquilized beneath the mild influence of that clear, bright, and innocent sky. "O God!" thought Ellen to herself, "why are there such cruel things as death, separation, illness, and tears? or why this beauty, this sweet feeling of hope? why the blessed assurance of an abiding home, an unchangeable defence, an eternal protector? What mean that smiling, peace-speaking heaven; this happy, pleasant earth of ours? Can it be that this is our all, that beyond us there is nought but eternal cold and silence? Can it be that we are thus cut off, thus isolated, and that there, in that wide space of infinite worlds, we have no interest and no concern? Why, then, these aspirations, and the ever-conscious need of prayer? Is it then impossible for us to propitiate, to avert, to save? O God! is it too hard for Thee any longer to work a miracle?" She pressed her hands to her head. "Enough!" she half murmured aloud. "But is it in truth enough? I was so happy, not for a minute, an hour, or a day, but for months

together. And what right had I to enjoy all this happiness?" The memory of the past happiness alarmed her. "But if it cannot be?" she thought. "If it be given only to those who can profit by it? Evidently it is the gift of heaven, and we are mere mortals, poor sinful creatures. *Morir si giovane!* Away, dark presentiment! Not for me alone is his life necessary.

"But if it be punishment," she thought again, "if we have now to pay the full penalty of our sin? True, my conscience is at ease, even now it makes no reproach; but is that necessarily a proof of innocence? Great God! are we then, for this, criminals in Thy sight? Can it be that Thou, maker of this night and this fair sky, wilt punish us because we have loved and love? But if it be so, if he be guilty, if I have sinned," she silently prayed in a sudden and overpowering transport, "then grant to him, Thou good God, grant to us both, that at last we may die an honorable and a noble death, there, in his native land, but not here, in this dull stifling room!

"And the sorrow of the poor lonely mother?" Ellen asked herself, and was frightened at the question, and could find no answer to quiet her fears. Ellen did not know that each man's happiness is founded on another's misery, that, like a statue, his profit and comfort require a pedestal, and that pedestal is invariably the loss and wretchedness of another.

"Renditch!" muttered Insaroff in his sleep.

Ellen went softly up to him on tip-toe, leaned over him, and wiped the perspiration from his face. He moved restlessly on the pillow, and then lay quiet again.

She returned to her seat by the window, and was again filled with uneasy thoughts. She began to reason with herself, and tried to persuade herself that there was no cause for fear. She even grew ashamed of what she called her weakness. "Can there be any danger? Is he not much better to-day?" she asked herself. "Of course if it had not been for the theatre to-night, no such thoughts would ever have come into my head." At that instant she saw, high above the water, a white sea-gull, that had evidently been frightened by some fishermen, and was flying in an uncertain course, as if seeking some place where it could safely alight. "If it only fly hither," thought Ellen, "that will be a good sign!" The bird hovered and flitted for a few minutes near the window, folded its wings as if to settle down,—and then, as though it had been shot, fell down with a piteous cry on to the deck of a boat in the dark distance. Ellen shuddered at the omen, though she felt ashamed at having shuddered, and, without undressing, lay down on the bed by the side of Insaroff, who was breathing heavily and with difficulty.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

DEATH.

INSAROFF awoke on the following morning with a dull pain in his head, and an ugly feeling of weakness, as he expressed it, in his whole body; but he got up as usual.

"Hasn't Renditch come?" was his first question.

"Not yet," answered Ellen, and gave him the last number of the *Osservatore Triestino*, which was almost entirely filled up with news about the war, the Sclavonic races, and the Principalities. Insaroff began reading, whilst she busied herself with preparing his coffee. There was a knock at the door.

"Renditch," thought both of them, but as the door opened a voice was heard to ask in Russian, "Can I come in?" Ellen and Insaroff looked at one another in surprise, but, without waiting for an answer, the stranger, who was dressed in the height of fashion, and who had a small pert face with sharp eyes, entered the room. He was smiling, and looked as pleased as if he had just won a large sum of money or received some pleasant news. Insaroff rose from his chair.

"You do not know me?" said the stranger, as he came up to him and at the same time bowed in a friendly manner to Ellen. "Lupoyaroff; you recollect, we used to meet at the Dolochoffs, at Moscow."

"Ah yes, at the Dolochoffs," replied Insaroff.

"Of course, of course; but I beg of you to introduce me to your wife. Madame, I have always had the greatest esteem for Demetrius Vasilievitch"—he corrected himself—"for Nikanor Vasilievitch, and am very happy at last to have the pleasure of making your acquaintance. Imagine," he continued, turning to Insaroff, "it was only yesterday evening that I knew you were here. I'm stopping at this hotel too. What a glorious city this Venice is—poetry, simple poetry! Only one thing is horrible, at every step you meet those damned Austrians—I cannot bear them! By the way, have you heard that there has been a decisive engagement on the Danube; 300 Turkish officers killed, Silistria taken, and Serbia's independence already declared. Is it not true that you, as a patriot, ought to be enthusiastic? I too feel my Sclavonic blood boiling within me! But I advise you to be more cautious; I am told you are watched. The spying system is carried on here to a frightful extent. Only yesterday a suspicious-looking fellow came up to me, and said, Are you a Russian? I told him that I was a Dane. But you seem to be very ill, my dear Nikanor Vasilievitch. You must physic yourself a little. Madame, you ought really to get

medical advice for your husband. Yesterday I was running about like a madman, doing the palaces and churches. I suppose you have been to the Doge's palace. What magnificence everywhere! Particularly that large saloon, and the place of Marino Falieri, with the black veil and inscription, '*Decapitati pro criminibus.*' I have been in the principal prisons too, and there my soul was filled with indignation: you, perhaps, remember I always liked to occupy myself with social questions and am a staunch anti-aristocrat; well, let those who defend the aristocracy just go and visit those dungeons. Byron has well said, '*I stood in Venice, on the bridge of sighs,*' though by the way Byron himself was an aristocrat. I have always been for progress. All the young generation is for progress. But this Anglo-French alliance! We shall see whether they will do much, Napoleon and Palmerston. You know Palmerston is made Prime Minister. No; you may say what you like, but a Russian fist is no joking matter. That Napoleon is a terrible rogue! If you like, I will lend you *Les Châtiments de Victor Hugo*—marvellous! *L'avenir, le gendarme de Dieu*, is somewhat daring in its style, but it has strength, strength, great strength. I am very fond of poetry. I have also got Proudhon's last book; in fact, I have everything. I do not know what you think, but I am glad the war has begun; only, as I am not wanted at home, I mean to go from here to Florence, and on to Rome: I cannot go to

France, so think of Spain; charming women there, only such terrible poverty and such swarms of insects! I would be off to California—one can't see too much of the world—but I have promised an editor to study in detail the question of the Mediterranean trade. You will say it is not an interesting subject, too technical, but that is just what we Russians want, special subjects, practical business subjects; we have philosophised long enough. But really, you are very unwell, Nikanor Vasilievitch, and perhaps I tire you; but all the same, you must let me stop a little longer."

And in this fashion Lupoyaroff chattered on for another hour, and when he did leave promised to come again before long.

Insaroff was tired out with this unexpected visit, and lay down on the sofa. "And that," he muttered bitterly, as he looked up at Ellen, "is our rising generation, our young Russia! They give themselves grand airs, and talk mighty fine; but it is all talk, and there it ends."

Ellen made no reply. At that moment Insaroff's weakness disquieted her far more than the follies of all young Russia. She sat down by his side, and took up her work. He shut his eyes, and lay motionless, all pale and haggard. Ellen looked at his sharply defined profile, his thin hands, and sudden fear seized upon her heart.

"Demetrius," she began.

He roused himself, but evidently with an effort. "What is it? Has Renditch arrived?"

"Not yet; but what do you think—you are very heated—you are really not quite well—would it not be wiser to send for a doctor?"

"That fool's talk has frightened you. It is not at all necessary. I will take a short nap, and shall be all right again. After dinner we will go out again somewhere or other."

Two hours passed. Insaroff was still lying on the sofa, unable to sleep, though he kept his eyes closed. Ellen remained by his side, her work had fallen from her hands, and there she sat, her eyes fixed on her husband's pale face.

"Why don't you go to sleep?" she asked him at last.

"Wait a little; there!" he said, taking one of her hands, and placing it under his head; "there! that is good! But wake me the instant Renditch comes. If he says the ship is ready, why, we can set off directly. Perhaps we had better be packing up."

"Oh, that will not take long," answered Ellen.

"That man said something about a battle, about Serbia," continued Insaroff, after a short silence; "but I don't suppose it is true. We must however be starting, the sooner the better. It will never do to lose time. Be ready."

He fell asleep, and all was quiet in the room.

Ellen leaned her head on the back of the sofa,

and gazed wistfully toward the window. The weather had changed for the worse, and the wind was rising. Large white clouds flitted across the sky, a thin mast was rocking to and fro in the distance, a long and narrow streamer with a red cross was fluttering in the breeze. The pendulum of the clock standing on a side-table ticked loudly, and with a kind of melancholy sound. Ellen's eyes were heavy, but it was long before she fell asleep, and then her sleep was broken and restless.

She had a strange and horrible dream. She thought that she was in a boat on one of the Czaritchina lakes, with some people who were unknown to her. They were all silent and motionless; no one was rowing, but the boat moved onward of itself. This did not strike Ellen as strange, but she was dull: she longed to find out who these people were, and why she was with them. She looked around her, and the lake suddenly grew broader, and the shores retired farther and farther: it was no longer the lake, but the wide and restless ocean. Its huge, azure, dumb waves dashed against the frail and tiny boat; something with a loud and terrible roar rose up from the depths of the ocean; her unknown companions suddenly leaped overboard with a hideous shrieking and wringing of hands. Then for the first time Ellen recognized them; her father was one of them. A white crest of foam flew along the summit of the waves, and in an instant all was swallowed up.

Ellen looked about her; all the surroundings were as before; but everywhere was snow, snow, endless snow. And she was no longer in the boat, but was travelling, as it were, from Moscow in a carriage: she was not alone; by her side was sitting a little creature, wrapped up in an old cloak. Ellen looked at her more attentively; it was Kate, her poor friend and playmate. A sudden fear fell upon Ellen. But surely she died? she thought to herself. "Kate, where are we going so fast?" Kate made no answer, but muffled her face in the cloak, for she was shivering with cold. Ellen too was cold. She looked out along the road; a city is glistening in the distance through the drifting clouds of snow — lofty white towers with silvered pinnacles. Kate, Kate, is this Moscow? No, Ellen thought, that is a monastery; there are a number of dark, dark cells; all is close and damp there; and there Demetrius is confined. I must free him. Suddenly a grey yawning precipice stretches before her. The carriage falls into it, but Kate only laughs. "Ellen, Ellen!" a voice is heard to cry from the bottom of the precipice.

"Ellen!" is heard, but this time clearly and distinctly, close to her ear. She hurriedly raised her head and was struck dumb with fright. Insaroff, white as the snow in her dream, was leaning over the sofa, gazing at her with his large, clear, glittering eyes. His hair hung over his forehead, and his mouth was wide open. Terror, mingled with an expression of

loving fear, was depicted on his suddenly transfigured face.

"Ellen!" he muttered, "I am dying."

With a cry she fell on her knees, and clung convulsively to his breast.

"It is all over," repeated Insaroff; "I am dying: farewell, my poor wife! farewell, my darling!" And saying this, he fell back on the sofa.

Ellen ran out of the room to call for aid, and a servant was sent to summon a doctor. She came back, and sat down at Insaroff's feet.

At that moment there appeared on the threshold of the door a broad-shouldered, sunburnt stranger, wearing a thick *paletôt* and a low cloth cap. He stood hesitatingly by the door.

"Renditch!" cried Ellen "it is you! For God's sake, come in and see what is the matter with him! He is ill! O God, O God, what is it? He was out only yesterday, and just now was talking with me."

Renditch made no answer, but gave way to a short man in a wig and spectacles who hurried past with a quick and noiseless step, up to the sofa. It was the doctor.

"Signora," he said after a moment's silence, "Monsieur is dead—*il signore forestiere e morto*—of aneurism, accompanied with an inflammation of the lungs."

CHAPTER XXXV.

DEPARTURE FROM VENICE.

ON the next day, in the same room, Renditch was standing by the window: Ellen was sitting close to him, wrapped up in a warm shawl. In the adjoining room Insaroff was laid out in his coffin. Ellen's face wore a frightened and lifeless expression; the forehead, between the brows, was deeply wrinkled, which gave a strained and sharp look to her dull fixed eyes. On the window-ledge was lying an opened letter from Anne Vasilievna. She invited her daughter to Moscow, if it were only for a month; complained of her loneliness, and still more bitterly of Nicholas Artemvitch; begged to be remembered to Insaroff, inquired after his health, and prayed him to let his wife come and see her.

Renditch was a Dalmatian, a seaman by profession, whose acquaintance Insaroff had made during his last visit to Bulgaria, and whom he had been waiting for in Venice. He was of a taciturn temperament, unpolished in his bearing, very courageous, and devoted heart and soul to the Sclavonic cause. He despised the Turks, and hated the Austrians.

"How long do you mean to stay in Venice?" Ellen asked him in Italian; and her voice was as lifeless as her countenance.

"A day, to get the cargo on board, and not to arouse suspicion. I shall have heavy news for our fellow-countrymen. They have been waiting for him a long time, and had great confidence in him."

"They had great confidence in him," Ellen repeated mechanically.

"When shall you bury him?" Renditch asked.

Ellen did not answer at once. "To-morrow."

"To-morrow? then I will wait: I should like to throw a handful of earth into his grave. Perhaps too, I can be of use to you. But it were better to lay him in Sclavonic earth."

Ellen looked up at Renditch. "Captain," she said, "take me with him, and bring us to the other side of the sea, away from here;—or is it impossible?"

Renditch thought for a while. "It is possible but difficult. We shall have to manage these damned authorities here. But suppose we succeed in burying him there, how shall I get you back again?"

"It will not be necessary for you to send me back.

"How? Where will you stop then?"

"I shall find a place somewhere or other. Only take us, take me."

"Renditch rubbed his chin thoughtfully. "Good but there will be a terrible fuss. However, I will go

and see about it. You wait for me here. I shall be back in two hours' time."

He left Ellen alone. She went softly into the adjoining room, and, leaning wearily against the wall, stood for a long time motionless like a statue. Then she fell on her knees, but could not pray. She did not feel rebellious against the will of Providence: she did not care to question God as to why He had been so merciless, so pitiless, so slow to succour; did not care to ask why He had visited the sin, if sin there were, more heavily than it deserved. Each one of us sins in that he merely lives; nor is there a great thinker or benefactor of humanity, who, by reason of his wisdom or by reason of his goodness, can believe that he has a right to live. But Ellen could not pray; she was without life, without feeling.

In the middle of the night a large broad boat was pushed off from the hotel where the Insaroffs were staying. Ellen and Renditch were sitting in the boat, and close to them there stood a long box, covered with black cloth. After about an hour's rowing they pulled up by the side of a small two-masted ship, which was lying at anchor at the entrance of the harbor. Ellen and Renditch went on board, and some sailors hoisted up the box. Towards the morning a storm arose, but the ship quickly made her way down the Lido. In the course of the day the storm grew more violent, aud the old sailors shook their heads, and boded no good. The Adriatic Sea between Venice,

Trieste, and Dalmatia is extremely rough and dangerous.

Within three weeks of Ellen's departure from Venice, Anne Vasilievna received the following letter in Moscow:—

"My dear Parents:

"I write to bid you good-bye for ever. You will never see me again. Demetrius died yesterday. All is finished, and I have nothing more to live for. To-day I start for Zara with his body. I shall bury him there, but what I shall do afterwards I do not know. Now I have no country, except his. There a general rising is preparing, war will soon break out, and I can engage myself as a sister of mercy, to attend the sick and wounded. I do not know what will become of me; but now that Demetrius is dead, I must remain faithful to his memory, to the cause to which he devoted his life. I have learned Bulgarian and Serbian. It may be that I shall not survive all this; so much the better. I have been brought to the edge of the abyss; God grant that I may fall into it. It is not in vain that fate united us together: who knows but that I may have caused his death? it is now his turn to call me to share his destiny. I sought happiness—and shall find, it may be, death. I can see now it was to be; I can see now where the sin was. But death covers all offences, and atones for all;—does it not? Pardon me the sorrow I have caused you; it was not voluntarily. But to return to Russia—for what? What have I to do in Russia? accept my last kiss, my last remembrances. Do not blame me, or judge me harshly.—E."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

CONCLUSION.

NEARLY five years have passed away since that letter was written from Venice, and nothing further has ever been heard of Ellen. Letters written from home have remained unanswered and all inquiries have proved fruitless. It was to no purpose that Nicholas Artemvitch himself went to Venice, and thence after the conclusion of the war to Zara: in Venice he only learned what the reader already knows, and in Zara he could meet with no one who was able to give him any positive information respecting either Renditch, or the ship in which he and Ellen had set sail from Venice. There were indeed mysterious rumors of the sea, during a heavy storm some four or five years back, having washed ashore a black coffin, in which was found the corpse of a man. But according to other and more trustworthy reports, this coffin was not washed ashore by the sea, but was brought and buried near the sea-shore by a foreign lady who had just arrived from Venice: some even added, that she had been later seen at Herzhaven with the army that was then being levied, and they

also described her as being dressed in black from head to foot. However all this may be, every trace of Ellen has been lost, and no one knows whether she is living, whether she has sought refuge in some distant and foreign land, whether the short comedy of life has been played out, her brief troubles ended, and death in its turn has come to make its claim. It will often happen that a man, with involuntary apprehension, asks himself, Can it be that I am already thirty—forty—fifty years old? How is it that life passes so quickly? How is it that death presses so closely upon us? Death is like a fisherman who has caught some fish in his net, but leaves it for a while in the water; the fish still swims about and fancies itself to be free, but the net encircles it, and the fisherman seizes hold of it whenever the fancy takes him.

A few words remain to be said concerning the other personages of our story.

Anne Vasilievna is still living: she has aged very much since her daughter's disappearance, and, though she complains less than before, is much more wretched and miserable. Nicholas Artemvitch has also grown older and weaker; his quarrels with Augustina are more frequent now than formerly. Indeed, of late he rarely, if ever, visits her. He is terribly bitter against everything foreign. His housekeeper, a pretty Russian woman of about thirty, goes about in the finest silk dresses, and wears a gold chain and earrings. Cournatovsky, as is generally the case with

dark-complexioned men, had a great weakness for pretty blondines, and married the fair Zoe, who in all respects was such an obedient and submissive wife, that she even left off thinking in German. Bersieneff resides in Heidelberg; he has been more than once sent abroad by the government on scientific expeditions, and has visited Berlin and Paris. The time he thus spent abroad was not lost, and there is every chance of his turning out an admirable professor. Two articles on ancient German law and punishment, published by him, attracted considerable attention in the learned world; it is only to be regretted that they were written in rather a heavy style, and disfigured by foreign idioms. Shoubine is at Rome: he has long devoted himself exclusively to his art, and is already considered to be one of the most promising of our young sculptors. It is true that purists find that he has not sufficiently studied the ancients, and is deficient in style; they accordingly place him in the French school; but, on the other hand, the English and Americans are very liberal in their patronage of the young Russian sculptor. During the last season, his *Bacchante* made a great noise; a Russian, Count Boboschkine, a well-known rich connoisseur, proposed to buy it for a thousand scudi, but at the last moment changed his mind, and gave three thousand to another sculptor, a Frenchman *pur sang*, for a statuette representing "A young villager dying of love on the breast of the Genius of Spring." Shou-

bine now and then corresponds with Urban Ivanovitch, who is the same as ever, and not in the least changed. "Do you remember," he wrote to him not long ago, "what you told me that night when I brought you the news of poor Ellen's marriage, when I sat on your bed and chatted I do not know how long with you? Do you remember, I then asked you whether the time would ever come when there should be men among us? and you answered: Wait a little, there will be. Oh, sage and solid reasoner! And so now, from this my distant home, I once more ask you, Tell me, good Urban, will your prophecy ever come true?"

Urban Ivanovitch, as he read these lines, played with his fingers, and with a puzzled glance looked out of the window of his room.

THE END.