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PLUCK AND LUCK

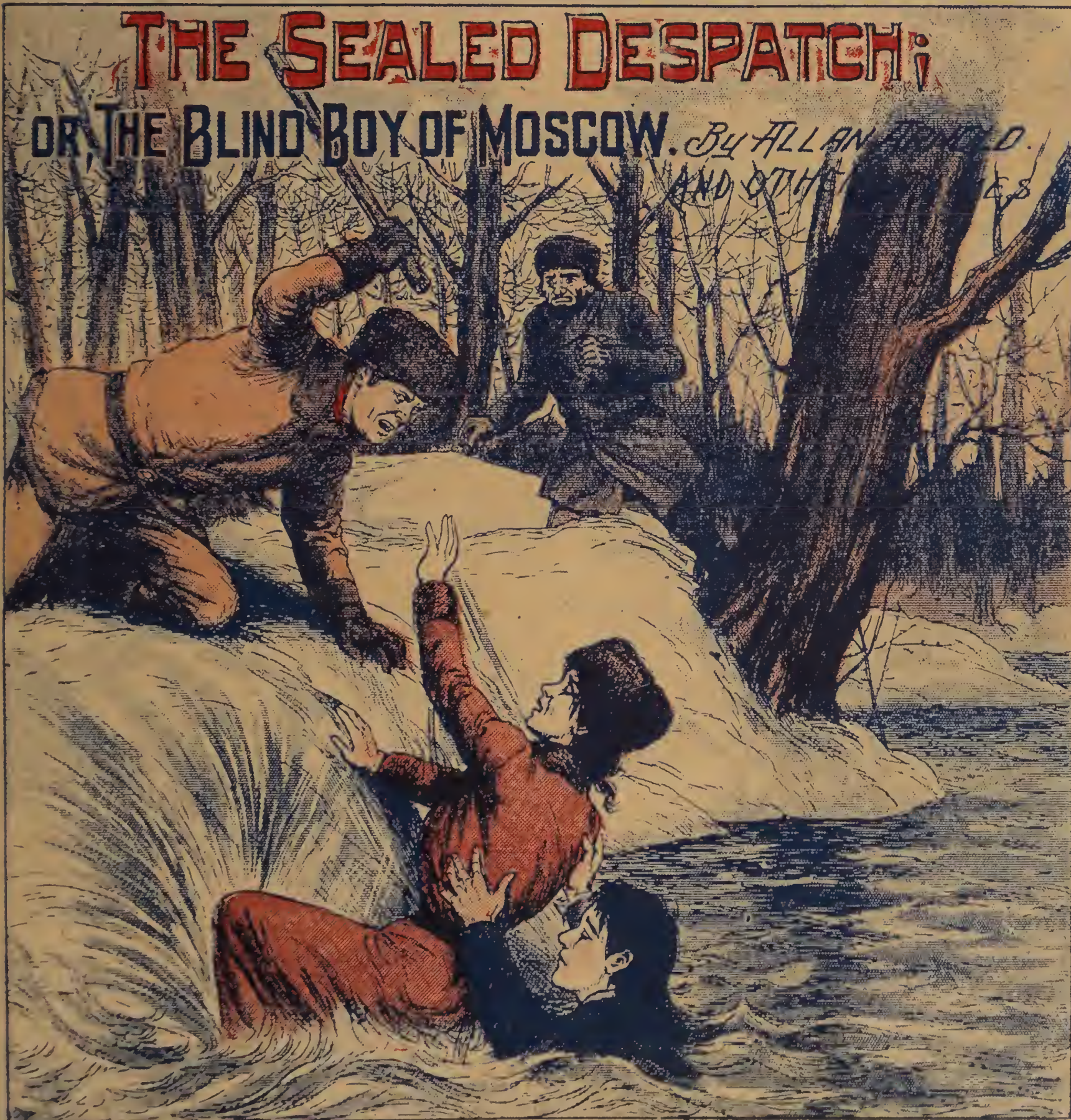
STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

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No. 1317

NEW YORK, AUGUST 29, 1923

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The girl attempted to seize the stick with both hands, and the blind lad released his grasp on her at that moment. The young rascal then suddenly raised the stick and let it fall with great force, aiming to strike the unfortunate youth.

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PLUCK AND LUCK

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THE SEALED DESPATCH

OR, THE BLIND BOY OF MOSCOW

By ALLAN ARNOLD

CHAPTER I.—The Three Special Couriers.

A terrible and secret civil war has been going on in the great Russian Empire for several years. The Nihilists of that country, who claim to represent the people, aim to overthrow the emperors and the nobles supporting them. The emperors and their supporters have striven to crush out their enemies, by putting them to death, or by banishing them to the cold wilds of Siberia, while the Nihilists use the silent dagger and the loud bomb against their foes. One night a soldier of the guard walked out of the emperor's palace at St. Petersburg in a careless manner, as if relieved from duty for the night. The soldier was a tall man, with a huge gray beard, and he carried himself with the air of a veteran who had seen many battles. On reaching one of the public streets he turned into a drinking place and called for and drank some cheap wine, casting quiet glances around the while. Having disposed of the wine, the veteran walked out again, without suspecting that keen eyes were on him. The veteran then strolled on, looking to the right and to the left, and saluting the officers he met on his way. On after him walked a rough-looking fellow in the garb of a poor mechanic, and whose face was also covered with a full gray beard. The soldier turned down into a narrow side street, making toward the river, and the man after him increased his speed, as if in haste to get home to his humble dwelling. The mechanic was soon abreast of the soldier, and the latter did not appear to notice the fellow. An old blind man, who was led on by a small dog, was walking along on the other side of the street. On passing the soldier a few steps, the rough-looking mechanic wheeled about suddenly and drew a long dagger, as he exclaimed in low tones:

"Thou perish all tyrants."

While thus speaking, the man made a thrust at the soldier's breast with the dagger, when the latter sprang back and drew a short sword with a quick movement, and cried:

"Fool, who do you take me for?"

Before the old mechanic could answer, the dagger was knocked from his grasp and the soldier's sword entered his breast. The man fell with a deep groan, and the old veteran stepped over his prostrate body to pass on his way as he muttered:

"Another idiot disposed of."

The blind man's dog commenced to bark on hearing the exclamation of the intended assassin, yet the soldier kept on his way without noticing the little dog or his blind master. The blind man drew up on the other side of the street, and bent his ear to listen while the brief struggle was going on, and he could hear footsteps coming along through the street. He then ordered his dog to keep on his way, but, before he had proceeded far, the old man could hear a hoarse voice exclaiming:

"By St. Peter, it is Nick Paulus, our leader, and he is wounded to death by one of the minions of the tyrant."

A deep groan escaped from the old blind man on hearing the name of the wounded man, but he moved on, muttering:

"What misery one must endure in this world! But I must on and do my duty."

Four rough men, who had followed the soldier and the mechanic from the drinking place, lifted the latter from the ground and bore him to a house close by. The house had some ground around it that extended down to the edge of the river, and it was in a very retired locality. The old veteran entered the house by a side door, and then ascended a narrow stairway until he reached a small doorway, on which he knocked five times. The door was opened on the instant by a man who would pass as a merchant in the city, and who appeared to be about forty years of age. On casting a cautious glance over the shoulder of the tall soldier, the stranger drew him into a small apartment, as he said, in the most humble tones:

"Sire, you are punctual, and I am ready for you."

"Remember, Maloff, that I am Sergeant Nole. You have agents here, I presume?"

"As many as you please to call."

The old veteran was the emperor of Russia in disguise, and the man who appeared to be a merchant was the chief of the secret police in St. Petersburg, known to the public as Colonel Maloff. The emperor gave orders for sending agents out at once to ascertain all about the man he had wounded, and as to whether he had survived that wound. When they were together in the small

apartment again the disguised monarch demanded:

"Are the couriers here ready for my inspection, and do you fully comprehend what I require of them?"

"The couriers are ready for your inspection, sergeant, but I cannot say what you demand of them until I receive instructions from you."

"You know that I am beset by secret enemies, even in the palace, and I could only send you word that I required three of your best agents for a most dangerous enterprise."

"So much I could understand only, sergeant."

"Your regular agents," resumed the emperor, "will not answer in this case. The person who will succeed in this mission must be able to pass from this city without attracting the attention of the spies or the traitors who abound among us. Are you certain that we are not overheard here?"

"I will answer for that with my life, sir," earnestly answered the chief of the detective force, "and that is why I beg that I may address you in becoming terms."

"Then to the subject. I desire to send a special sealed despatch to a person who resides twenty miles outside Moscow. I have decided to send three couriers to the person mentioned, who is an officer holding high rank in the army."

"Then I may infer, sire, that the sealed despatch must be borne by the person whom you select as the ablest, the bravest, and the most cunning among the three whom I have chosen."

"You understand me clearly, Maloff, and now for my inspection."

"If you will move to this corner, sire, I will place you in a position from whence you hear and observe those whom I have selected. I have brought them here on ordinary business, and without informing them of the honor in store for them in your service."

"That is well, Maloff; and now, proceed."

Some few minutes after Colonel Maloff was seated at a desk in a larger apartment, and a young girl, who did not appear to be more than seventeen, stood before him. The apartment was brilliantly lighted, and the face of the young girl was turned in the direction where the spying emperor was watching her every word and action. The clever chief commenced by asking the girl as to the work in which she had been recently engaged, and while calling on her to assume some of the disguise which she had adopted. The girl was dismissed, the chief telling her to be ready for important work that night. Without exciting the least suspicion on the part of the person under scrutiny, the chief managed to show the emperor some of her remarkable qualities as a spy and as an actress. The second person was then introduced, who appeared to be a young city rowdy of the lowest class. The young fellow was tall and stout, with reddish hair, roguish blue eyes, and with a caste of features denoting courage and determination of the brutal order. The chief put the second intended courier through his paces, bringing out all his strong points in speedy rotation, and then dismissed him, to await further orders. The third person introduced was the old blind man, who was led by his little dog. The emperor watched the blind man with intense

interest, and he noticed that his eyes had that stony glare so peculiar to people thus afflicted.

"What strange instruments we use," muttered the ruler of the great country, "and why does Maloff select an old blind man for such an important and dangerous mission?"

The question was scarcely asked when the old man changed his appearance in the twinkling of an eye. The emperor could then behold a youth of eighteen standing in front of the desk, and bright and handsome was the countenance of the lad. The flashing of the eyes alone was wanted to animate that face, as the stony glare still remained therein. The third intended messenger was dismissed in turn, but not before he had resumed his disguise. The chief soon stood before his emperor again, and the latter demanded:

"Why have you selected three such couriers, Maloff?"

"With your permission, sir, I will give you brief sketches of the characters thus presented to you, and then you may judge as to my wisdom in the affair."

"Proceed then."

"The young girl you saw, sire, is a Jewess, and her real name is Rachel Wagner. She is now engaged as an actress, and she is almost a stranger in this city."

"How long has she been in your employment then?"

"For the past three years, sire. Her father was a Jewish peddler who resided in Moscow when not abroad on business."

"He was a Nihilist, I suspect?"

"He was, sire; and he was one of my secret agents also. He was suspected by his friends of treachery, and he was put to death by them."

The emperor smiled as he remarked:

"And I presume his fair daughter serves under you in the spirit of revenge."

"That is the truth, sire. Rachel Wagner hates the Nihilists with all the hatred of her race, and she is particularly spiteful against that infamous and mysterious wretch known as Nick Paulus, who has twice attempted your life. She is invaluable to me, as she can assume so many characters, while she is possessed of indomitable energy, high courage, and a spirit that can never be subdued except by death."

"But is she not known as the daughter of the murdered peddler?"

"She is not, sire, as she was a mere child when her father suffered in your behalf. She was then at school in Poland, and she was not known either in Moscow or in this city. Her father left her considerable money, and she does not accept pay for her services in your case."

"Proceed then; and what of the young vagabond who looks as if he would make an excellent executioner?"

"And so he would, sire. The rascal's name is Julius Molt. He is a thorough scamp, but an excellent spy."

"But can you trust such a character, Maloff?"

"He adores me, sire, and he hates your enemies."

"How did you learn that he was attached to me, Maloff?"

"By mere accident, sire. He was arrested one night while declaiming against you when drunk."

I had him placed in one of the cells of the prison, from whence I could observe his movements and hear the words uttered by him. To my astonishment, I discovered that he prayed for your welfare in secret. I then put him to some severe tests, when I became convinced that he was one of your most devoted slaves."

"And you think this fellow has ability enough to carry out the mission I propose, Maloff?"

"I would again request, sire, that you hear about the third person you observed before giving my opinion."

"Before you state any more, Maloff, let me ask you if that youth or old man with the dog is really blind?"

"He is stone blind, sire, and his brief history is as follows: That lad's name is Paul Kosko, and he is in his nineteenth year. His father was a captain in your service, and a man of some fortune."

"Kosko, Kosko!" muttered the emperor aloud. "Was not an officer of that name put to death by the Nihilists about a year ago?"

"It was Paul's father, sire. Captain Kosko was a member of that order, and he stood high among them. The son was a member also, and he was a student in Moscow at the time of his father's death. Captain Kosko was accused by the wretches of treachery, and he was tried and put to death."

"Was he treacherous to them, Maloff?"

"He was not, sire, I assure you. Captain Kosko was a misguided fool, but he was not a spy on the Nihilists. The son was accused of treachery also, and convicted, but they did not put him to death."

CHAPTER II.—Who Bore the Sealed Dispatch?

The Czar pondered for some moments over the information he had received from the chief of spies, and he then asked several questions regarding each and all of the three messengers selected for his inspection. He then drew three small envelopes from his pocket, and held them up before the chief as he remarked:

"You can perceive, Maloff, that these three envelopes bear the same address, and that they are similar in every other respect."

Maloff examined the envelopes and replied:

"I cannot detect the slightest difference in either of them, sire."

"And there is not the slightest difference. I have decided that each of the persons chosen by you are capable in their way, but I will trust to fate."

"In which manner, sire?"

"In this manner. You see, I shuffle them together."

And the Czar shuffled the three envelopes as he would so many cards, while he remarked:

"Each of the envelopes contain a letter, written on ~~the~~ paper, to the general mentioned. One of them alone is sealed by my hand, and it contains a message in cipher."

"I cannot understand your wisdom at present, sire."

"Then I will strive to make it plain to you. I have received private information that a serious plot is forming against my life, as well as against

the members of my family. The spies of the accursed Nihilists invest the palace, and I cannot use the ordinary means of baffling the plot. The general to whom those letters are addressed holds the key to the plot, but he cannot stir from his house, as he is a helpless invalid, and he cannot communicate with me without risking detection by our enemies."

"I see better now, sire."

"And this much only I can tell you, Maloff. The messenger who succeeds in bearing the sealed dispatch to the general will be intrusted with the reply, which must be placed in my hands in this house."

The Czar went on to explain the danger surrounding the general alluded to. The man was an invalid, and he was living at a country seat about twenty miles from Moscow. He had been connected with the Nihilists, and he was still in their confidence, but he weakened in his fidelity to them as death approached. The dying man had managed to send a secret message to the Czar, in which he informed him that his country seat was watched by the secret agents of the Nihilists, and that all persons coming and going therefrom were under a strict surveillance.

It was necessary then that the Czar should communicate with the dying man through a trusted messenger. The Czar had therefore resolved on adopting a novel plan of communication. He would send three letters by trusted agents, one alone of whom would bear the all-important, sealed dispatch. Having explained himself so far, the Czar handed the letters to Maloff, saying:

"You will give one of these to each of your agents, and instruct them to use all secrecy in their missions."

The Czar then instructed the chief to warn the messengers that they would run great risks in gaining admittance to the general's residence, and that they may be beset on the way to Moscow, in that city, or on the journey out to the country seat.

"You may instruct them," continued the emperor, "to disguise themselves as they may deem best, to secrete the letter given to them, and to defend it or destroy it if suspected or captured by the Nihilists."

The three special messengers were so instructed by the chief, and they left the old house to go on their missions, each taking a different route from that secret office of the police spy. The Jewish girl was the first to leave the house on her mission, and she was disguised as a ragged boy. The young rowdy followed after; and he appeared as a regular dude when he gained the public street where the emperor had partaken of cheap wine. The blind boy returned through the narrow street disguised as an old beggar, and with the little dog leading the way. On reaching the house to which the dying Nihilist had been borne, the little dog stopped and uttered a low growl. The blind boy appeared to understand where he was, as he cast his sightless eyes up toward the window, and muttered:

"Brave Nick Paulus, I mourn your death, as you were an honest man, and my best friend since the death of my dear father."

The three special couriers of the Czar were thus sent forth on their perilous missions, and

none of them were aware that the others were engaged in the same work. The Czar regained his palace that night by another route, and in a different disguise. Before midnight a secret Nihilist meeting was held within a stone throw of the house by the river, where it was announced that the famous leader, Nick Paulus, had received a mortal wound. Before the meeting adjourned other important announcements were made. It was asserted that the slayer of the great Nihilist was the Czar himself. That the tyrant had paid a secret visit to his chief of spies, and that three of their ablest agents had been sent to Moscow on important missions, one of them bearing a sealed dispatch. Measures were then taken by the Nihilists to intercept the couriers, and to gain possession of their dispatches. Among the agents sent out by the Nihilists was a young Russian-American who called himself Darco Lamont. Darco's father was a Russian officer of the navy who had paid several visits to America, where he married a beautiful young lady belonging to the country. The young American wife died in Russia eight years after her marriage, leaving an only son. She left her husband another legacy also, and that was a love for liberty and an undying hatred to tyranny. Captain Lamont became a Nihilist before the death of his wife, and he was arrested and sent to Siberia for life thereafter. His son was seven years old on the death of his mother, who left the boy some means, and the lad was about fifteen when his father was banished for life. The police spies lost all track of the lad soon after his father's banishment, but Darco Lamont did not forget them or their master. The lad was serving under a civil engineer in St. Petersburg when the secret dispatch was sent forth. As the civil engineer was a Nihilist also, Darco could get a passport and a leave of absence when occasion required. The first train for Moscow leaving the other city on the following morning bore away the three couriers and the young agent of the Nihilists. At the last station before reaching Moscow an old lady got off the train with a small bright lad of fifteen. The old lady wore a veil, and she appeared to be infirm or blind, as the boy led her away from the station. That old lady was the blind boy, and his companion was an orphan cousin named Philip Gerard, who was half French. Another old lady who appeared to be a Jewess left the cars at the depot and hired a cab, directing the driver to take her to the house of a certain Jewish banker. The second old lady was Rachel Wagner, and the pretty actress was seeking shelter at the home of a rich cousin. Julius Molt was still made up as a well-dressed dude when he left the train, and he made his way to a small cottage outside the city where his mother and his young sister resided. The young civil engineer wore no disguise on reaching Moscow. Soon after reaching her cousin's house Rachel Wagner was told that Nick Paulus, the Nihilist leader, had been killed in a street quarrel in St. Petersburg. The Jewish girl was fearfully agitated on hearing the news, but she soon exclaimed, addressing the old banker:

"I cannot believe it, and it is but a trick of the accursed dog to throw his foes off his track. He is hatching another vile plot against the emperor, and he is not dead. I have sworn by

Father Abraham to slay the dog and to torture him, and it is fated that I will keep my oath."

Julius Molt heard the news before leaving St. Petersburg, and he was the first to tell his mother about the death of the great Nihilist leader. That mother, who was a severe, harsh-featured woman of forty, was also fearfully excited at the death of the Nihilist, and she said to her son:—

"What a loss to the great cause, and who will replace him in crushing the tyrant?"

"I will replace him," answered the young rough. "I am now in high favor with the chief of spies, and I am here on a special mission for the tyrant. If I play my game well, and I will, our revenge will be accomplished within a month."

Paul Kosko, the blind boy, heard of the death of the Nihilist on the following morning, when he reached Moscow in his proper character, and he sighed and muttered:

"I regret him, as he was true and kind, and he tried to save father. Would that it were his Nihilist companion who suffered, but that perfidious villain is destined to fall by my hand. Now to serve the emperor faithfully, and to deliver the secret dispatch."

It will be thus noted that two of the special couriers were faithful to the Czar and that the other sought his destruction. The traitor was the emperor's own son, and he knew that he was working to destroy his father, while his mother, who was known in Moscow as Maria Molt, urged on the son in the secret and unnatural strife.

CHAPTER III.—The Blind Boy and His Dog.

"Oh, mother, there goes the blind boy and his dog now. I have missed them for several days, and I have feared something has happened."

The speaker was Nadine Molt, a charming young girl of sixteen. She was Julius Molt's sister, and a daughter of the emperor, but she did not dream that such was the fact. The young girl was standing at the window of the cottage as Paul Kosko with a very large mastiff passed along the road on their way out into the country. It was early in the afternoon. Maria Molt advanced to the window and looked out at the blind boy, as she replied:

"Girl, you take too much interest in that youth. Can you tell me where he has been for the last two or three weeks?"

"How could I know, mother?"

"But you have spoken to him several times, and he must have made a confidant of you."

"He only told me that he is an orphan, that he lost his sight by an explosion, and that he lives with his aunt."

"But does he not tell you where he goes when he is away from here?"

"I never asked him, mother; but I will, if you desire it."

"Yes, I do; but you must not appear to be inquisitive."

The woman retreated from the window and went upstairs, where she found her son and a rough-looking man standing near a window and looking out at the blind boy and his dog. The

blinds were down, and they were peering out from the sides, as the rough man remarked:

"He is here again; and may the fiend take me if I don't fancy at times that his sight is not completely destroyed."

The young man chuckled and laughed as he replied:

"What nonsense you talk, Brower! As if I could fail to complete the job when I used the hot irons that night. You fixed the father and I fixed the son."

The man called Brower was one of the mysterious leaders of the Nihilists, and he was here to-day and away to-morrow, using disguises that baffled all the police spies in Russia. Brower continued to glare after the lad and the dog as he responded to the young rowly:

"Yes, I fixed the father, as I hated him; and I would have finished the son were it not for Paulus. That softhearted fool is gone now, and the young cub must not live to work mischief hereafter."

"Bah! What mischief can he work while he is blind?" retorted the young rowdy.

"But I doubt that he is blind."

The woman then interposed, saying:

"If you doubt as to his blindness, Brower, why not put him to some severe test?"

"What test can I put him to?"

"What a question for you to ask, who can foil all the tyrant's spies!"

"That is true; and I will put the young cub to a severe test if Julius here will aid me."

"What do you propose?" inquired the young fellow, who was ever ready for deeds of mischief and cruelty.

The cunning man pondered for a few moments, and he then said:

"You will not deliver that dispatch until to-night, Julius?"

"No; as I must make a big showing for the chief in St. Petersburg."

"And you cannot yet suspect who the other couriers are?"

"I cannot. That is for you to discover."

"And I will discover. Their deaths will show the tyrants that we cannot be baffled by their ablest spies. But about young Kosko."

"Well, what about him?"

"Let us out and follow him. I have thought of a test for the young cub, and you must aid me in getting rid of the dog."

The two Nihilists hastened out on the road, when they could perceive the young girl talking to the blind lad. Brower gave an order to the young fellow, who at once called on his sister in very rough tones. The girl hastened back toward the cottage as if terrified, and the blind lad walked on with the big dog. As the girl passed her brother, the latter scowled at her, saying:

"Back to the house with you, and no lovemaking with that blind cub."

The girl stole into the cottage without replying, when her mother said to her:

"Madine, follow your brother along the side path, but beware that he does not see you, or you will suffer. I fear that he means to play some trick on the blind youth."

The young girl seized a dark cloak and hastened out by the back door, muttering:

"What a cruel fellow Julius must be to play a trick on the afflicted youth. He must not do it, if I had to die thereafter."

The blind boy kept on the road with the dog, and the two men followed them, keeping well in the rear. Brower was explaining his plan of action to the young rascal, who chuckled and laughed merrily while he responded:

"What a trick it will be, and what fun!"

On went the blind lad and the big dog, the animal leading his master by a long cord, which gave him a chance of frisking a little when no other travelers were near. Several horsemen and foot passengers, as well as carriages and wagons passed along on their way to and from the city. On the approach of a stranger the dog would draw close to his young master as if on the alert to protect him, sending forth a subdued growl all the while. They kept on for over three miles with the two men after them, when the young rascal remarked to Brower:

"Could it be possible that the blind cub ahead bears the sealed dispatch?"

The old Nihilist started at the suggestion, and he then eagerly responded:

"It is more than possible, if he can see, as he has been absent from Moscow for more than two weeks. It is not possible, if he is stone blind, as our enemies are not fools enough to use such an agent. We will try the trick as soon as possible."

The blind boy and the dog turned into a wood running along by the bank of a deep river on which Moscow is built. Paul Kosko seated himself under a tree, releasing the dog, as he said:

"Play around, Tartar, and see that no enemies approach."

The big dog then sprang toward his young master, who heard a pistol shot at the moment. Tartar fell on the ground, giving vent to a single moan, and Paul Kosko sprang to his feet and turned his head from side to side as if bewildered, while he exclaimed:

"What wretch has slain my dog?"

"I slew the brute," answered a rough voice, "as he flew at me like a tiger. I am a keeper in this wood, and we do not permit trespassers on Count Ruska's estate."

"But I am blind," protested Paul, "and I did not know that we were trespassing in here. As you have slain my guide, how can I get back to the city?"

The keeper pretended to pity the blind lad and to regret that he had slain the dog, while he said:

"I will lead you to the road, and you will soon meet a wagon going to the city. I will give you another dog if you will give me your name and address."

Paul gave his name and address, and then said:

"If you will guide me out on the road I will try and find my way back."

"Come on, then, poor youth."

The speaker was Brower, and he spoke in tones that could not be recognized by friend or foe. The cruel man took the blind lad's hand to lead him deeper into the wood and toward the deep-flowing and silent river, as he inquired:

"Can you tell when you approach the hard road, poor youth?"

"If I had a stick or a staff it would aid me, as I have trusted so much to Tartar."

"The way is clear out to the road now. If you walk on I will cut you a branch."

The blind lad did walk on in that faltering manner so peculiar to those thus afflicted, and he was only six or seven steps from the edge of a high bank above the deep and silent river.

"Step out and you are on the road," cried Brower, as he hacked away on the limb of a tree.

"Hold, hold, Paul!" screamed a female voice from the road. "Oh, mercy, the fiends send him to his death!"

Paul Kosko heard the warning voice when it was too late, and a cry of alarm burst from him in response as he went over the high bank into the deep water. Then out on the bank sprang Nadine Molt, crying:

"Oh, save him, save him, you wretches, or I will denounce you."

"Then you will share his fate, you meddling fool!" cried her rascally brother, as he darted out to seize the girl.

One terrified scream burst from Nadine as the muscular brute raised her aloft and flung her over into the deep water, to struggle there for life with the blind boy. Did Paul Kosko hold the sealed dispatch during that fearful ordeal?

CHAPTER IV.—The Jewess on the Scene.

Another piercing scream burst from Nadine as she struck the water. Paul was rising to the surface at the moment, and he threw up his hands as if bewildered as he cried:

"Where am I, and whose voice is that! Fiend, why do you so trick the unfortunate?"

Brower and Julius Molt walked along the high bank, the latter whispering to the other:

"Are you convinced that he is stone blind now, obstinate?"

"I am. But let him perish, and we will rescue the girl."

Nadine rose to the surface and cried:

"Mercy, mercy! Who will save us? Paul, Paul, swim this way."

Paul struck out in the direction of the voice, as he responded:

"Oh, Nadine, it is you! Yes, I will save you, and Heaven aid me!"

"Strike for the shore, you fool!" cried Julius, who had sprang into the water, "and I will save the girl. You are face to it now, and strike ahead."

The young rascal had grasped his sister by the arm, but she repulsed him with horror as she cried:

"You wretch, you meant to send the blind youth to his death, and you killed his dog."

"Silence, you fool!" hissed Julius, "or I will leave you to perish. It was but a trick to prove that he was really blind, and we meant to rescue him."

Brower was making violent signs to the young rascal from the bank, and they meant:

"Let them both perish."

Paul was guided by the girl's voice, and he swam toward her, crying:

"Nadine, I will aid you. My sweet-voiced friend, what means this outrage?"

The blond lad seized the girl's shoulder, as she answered:

"I will tell you afterward. Away, you wretch, as I prefer death to your aid."

Julius uttered a savage growl and pushed the girl and the blind lad from him, as he yelled:

"Then perish together, you fools. You may swim, young cub, but you are not on the bank yet, and you won't be, either."

The current was bearing them all down the river, and Brower ran along the high bank as he kept signaling to the young rascal. Not another human being appeared in sight on either bank. Paul held the girl up with one hand, while she guided him in striking out for the shore, and saying:

"It was a cruel trick, but they meant not to kill you."

Julius swam to the bank in a lusty manner, and his companion reached down a stick to draw him up, as he whispered:

"They must both perish!"

The active young rascal soon reached the bank, and he then cried out to his sister:

"Now, fool, see if you can get up here with your blind friend!"

Julius seized the stick from his companion's hand and shook it at the girl, while he continued:

"You will denounce me, will you, when I only meant to play a trick on the young fool."

Those in the water were very close to the bank, and the young girl answered:

"If it was but a trick, Julius, then aid us out of the water with that stick."

"Yes, I will aid you."

The bank became lower as they moved down with the current, but it was not easy for those in the water to regain it without assistance, as it was quite steep. Julius flung himself flat on the ground and reached down the stick, as he cried:

"Seize it, girl, and I will draw you up first."

The girl attempted to seize the stick with both hands, and the blind lad released his grasp on her at that moment. The young rascal then suddenly raised the stick and let it fall with great force, aiming to strike the unfortunate youth on the head. The girl gave another piercing scream as she saw the blow falling, and she reached forth her arms and clasped Paul around the neck, as she exclaimed:

"Oh, mercy, mercy! they mean to murder you. Push back out again."

The stick struck the young girl on the right arm, but she did not appear to heed the blow. The blind lad appeared to understand the situation, as he pushed out from the bank again, bearing the screaming girl with him, as he cried:

"You perfidious fiend, why should you attempt to kill a helpless youth?"

"It is but a trick, you blind youth, and you can come in safely now."

At that moment a fierce growl was heard in the wood, and then out on the bank plunged the big mastiff. The dog sprang at Brower and seized him by the leg, only to plunge into the river a moment after, and dragging the little Nihilist in with him.

"The dog alive again!" yelled Julius Molt, as

he stood on the bank and glared down. "Ha, ha, ha! I looked for fun, and I have bushels of it. Can you swim, old friend?"

"Save me! I cannot swim."

"Then seize the stick, old fellow. Perdition take me, I must get in again after you," cried Julius, springing in as Brower sank for the second time.

The dog soon reached his young master barking joyously, when Paul cried out:

"Thank fortune that you are alive. Tartar. Save the girl and guide us to the shore."

The faithful dog seized Nadine by the back of the cloak and struck out for the shore, sending forth joyous grunts at his young master. Paul was exhausted, and he could not have swam much longer with the girl as a burden. As they neared the shore a boyish voice above them cried out:

"I will assist you up to the bank."

Nadine looked up and saw a rough-looking boy in the garb of a peasant standing on the bank with the stick in his hand which Julius had flung aside. The bank was not more than a few feet high at that point, and the boy soon drew the dripping girl up. He then assisted the blind boy as he remarked in very simple tones:

"Your friends are big enough to aid themselves."

The faithful dog remained in the water until the others were safe on the bank, and he then swam down to a still lower point, while Nadine said to the blind boy:

"Let us into the wood and hide before the wretches get out of the water again. I will guide you."

The girl led the blind lad into the wood on a run.

The simple-looking peasant boy followed after, as he inquired:

"What sort of a frolic was that you played?"

"Come with us, and guide us, and I will tell you," answered the girl.

When the dog regained the bank, he commenced barking furiously at his enemies in the water, facing out at them as if he meant to oppose their landing. Julius Molt laughed as well as he could while supporting the Nihilist, and he cried:

"Call off your dog," yelled Julius in his loudest tones, "or I will kill you hereafter, you blind fool."

"Guard him well, Tartar," yelled back the blind lad, "and follow when you hear my whistle."

"May the fiends take you!" cried Julius, as they were borne down with the current. "If my revolver will work I will send another ball at you."

The dog followed them down, threatening every moment to spring in and attack his enemies in the water. The old Nihilist did not utter a word, as he was almost insensible. The half-exhausted swimmer was gaining a point where the bank was almost level with the water, when a whistle was heard in the distance. The huge dog then made a spring into the water and seized the little Nihilist by the back to shake him two or three times as he would a rat, while Julius cried

"He will finish Brower, and I cannot aid him."

As if satisfied with his work, and hearing another whistle, Tartar released his grasp on the helpless Nihilist and swam to the bank. He then turned once more to snarl at his foes, shaking himself and growling forth, as if he meant to say:

"I would like to finish you, but I will meet you again some other day."

In the meantime the blind boy and the girl were hastening along through the wood, and the peasant boy kept with them as a guide. The strange boy asked several questions about the scene in the river in a simple way, but Nadine gave him evasive answers and pretended that the affair was an accident. The good girl did not care to betray her rascally brother, although she feared his enmity thereafter. They were moving away from the direction of the city when the huge dog overtook them. After caressing the animal for a moment, Paul said to the girl:

"My guide is here now, and I can get safe out to my cousin's. I will be silent about what happened to-day for your sake, good Nadine."

The girl trembled a little as she replied:

"Well, I will return then, and I know that mother will protect me."

They were close to the high road, and the peasant boy said to Paul:

"I am going along this road, and I will bear you company on my way."

"Come along, my good little friend. Nadine, I will never forget your sweet voice."

The blind lad pressed the young girl's hand, and they parted on the high road. The girl hastened back, as if fearful of meeting her brother and Paul walked on at a brisk pace as he said to the boy:

"How far on this road do you go?"

"About three miles more, but I will go farther with you if you need a guide."

"My dog here is the only guide I need, as he can take me to my cousin's without any trouble, while I thank you very much; and I will reward you. Look back and see if we are followed."

The boy did look back, and answered:

"I can see no one but the girl on the road. Did those men fling you into the river?"

"They did not, as I walked in while my dog was straying in the wood."

Paul had examined the dog, and he was surprised that he could not find a wound of any description on him. He did find something else, though, and it was an article which he sought. It was the secret dispatch which he had ingeniously secured in a small water-proof covering under the dog's long hair. The peasant boy accompanying Paul was no other than the faithful Jewess, and they were both bent on the same errand. At that very moment the third courier was hastening through the wood in pursuit of them, accompanied by the cunning old Nihilist. And on before the faithful messengers were other enemies lying in wait for all suspicious persons who may attempt to enter the country seat of the dying general.

It must be fully understood that neither the Jewess nor Paul Kosco knew that other messengers were on similar missions.

Brower had succeeded in gaining the shore. He now said to Julius:

"It is getting late, and you must set out to deliver your despatch. We will get a conveyance."

Meantime Paul and his companion were on their way, when the latter told Paul two men were following them.

"We must turn into the wood, then, and let them pass." The dog kept quiet.

The two followers passed and they proved to be Brower and Julius.

Then our two friends came out on the road and resumed their journey. On reaching the village the Jewess entered a tavern with Paul and the dog, where they had refreshments. When they came out the blind youth insisted on going on alone, and so they parted company. As the Jewess was passing another tavern a rough fellow came out and seized her, saying:

"Come in here with me, you young dog, as I want to ask you a few questions."

The man who had seized her was Julius Molt, who was in disguise. Brower was also there and came up now as they entered the tavern.

They now proceeded to search the disguised girl, but they could not find a document of any kind.

Then Julius led the girl to the door of the tavern and said: "Away home with you, dog, and I will skin you alive if you denounce us."

They had found a little Testament on the disguised girl, and had flung it out of a window. As she went out she looked around for it, and Julius, perceiving her doing so threw a pewter mug at her just as she was about to pick up the little book. The mug struck her and she fell over just as she clasped the little book. It contained the secret despatch.

CHAPTER V.—Darco Makes A Discovery.

Darco Lamont was riding into the tavern yard to put his horse in the stable at the very moment when the Jewess received the cruel blow. Uttering an indignant cry, the young man sprang from his saddle and hastened to the side of the bleeding victim, crying:

"By St. Peter, that was a dastardly act!"

The young man was not disguised, and Julius Molt recognized him on the instant. The young man belonged to the same lodge in St. Petersburg, but they were not on intimate terms. In truth, they disliked each other. Darco Lamont was a noble-hearted young fellow, and he had joined the Nihilists from what he believed to be the best of motives. Julius Molt, on the other hand, was a Nihilist in order to gratify an unnatural revenge. Darco raised the disguised girl in his arms, and bore her into the tavern, as he cried:

"Some water and a bandage, landlord, and send for a surgeon. What brute flung that mug at the boy?"

"What a fuss to make about an accursed Jew!" responded Julius Molt, as he walked out from the inner room, trusting to his disguise to escape recognition on the part of his fellow member. Darco did recognize the young rascal, however, and he glared angrily at him as he said:

"This is some of your work, I warrant."

"And what if it is?"

"Then I have to say that you are a brute and wolf at that, unless you had great provocation."

"And I have to say that I will make you answer for your words, you young puppy. I will beat you into jelly when you get away from that little Jew!"

The little Jewess was sensible at the moment, and since the young man bore her into the tavern. Darco was applying cold water to the cut, and still calling to the landlord to send for a surgeon, when she opened her eyes, saying:

"I do not require a surgeon, as I will soon have strength enough to go to my home."

The little testament was still clasped in the girl's hand. While the young man was tying a bandage around the wound the girl slipped the little book into her pocket, and she said to him:

"I am able to walk now, and I wish to leave here."

Julius Molt stood near jeering at the little Jew and at Darco Lamont in the most insulting manner until Brower drew him aside. The pretended boy staggered when placed on his feet, and Darco insisted on him drinking a glass of the best wine in the house. The Jewess girl complied, saying:

"You are very kind to the poor, Jew, sir, and he will never forget it."

The wine appeared to revive the pretended lad very much, yet he staggered a little as he left the tavern. Darco followed him out into the street, and the blind lad and his dog were walking along. The dog sprang to salute the pretended boy, who caressed him, saying:

"I see you do not forget me, Tartar."

The blind boy also recognized the voice, and he inquired:

"Have you not got home yet?"

"No, sir, as I met with an accident."

"What has happened to you?"

The boy did not answer at once, and Darco Lamont answered for him, saying:

"The lad was struck by a brute in there, and I fear he is too weak to walk home. If you are his friend, I would request you to take care of him for the present."

"Most willingly."

The pretended boy sided to the blind lad, and whispered to him:

"It was the big rascal, you know, who assailed me. But I must away home. Farewell, and the poor Jew boy will never forget either of you."

The disguised girl then turned down a side road, and Darco Lamont followed her at a distance, muttering:

"I have made a discovery, and I will see what comes of it."

The disguised girl kept on, but she soon perceived that she was followed.

Her first idea was to run for it, but she was weak from loss of blood and excitement. On gaining an open plain outside the village, Rachel seated herself on the ground and bent her head on her hands, as she muttered aloud:

"Why does he follow me? Can such a noble youth be a spy of the Nihilists, and could he suspect my secret?"

The young civil engineer was soon standing over the disguised girl, and saying to her in gentle tones:

"Young girl, I have discovered your secret. Why do you masquerade in that costume?"

"Oh, sir, you will not betray me! I am in this garb because I wish to escape from an enemy who is in pursuit of me."

"Why did that man assail you in the tavern?"

"Because he is possessed of a fiend, sir. He dragged me into the tavern and robbed me. Oh, sir, you will not betray what you have discovered?"

"I will not, on condition that you return to the tavern with me, where I promise you my protection. How did you come to know that blind lad?"

Rachel gave an account of her meeting with the blind boy and their subsequent adventures on the road. The conversation was interrupted by footsteps coming along from the village, and Darco turned to recognize Julius Molt striding toward them.

"Still doctoring the Jew, I see," said the young rowdy, as he glared at Darco, and held up his hand in a threatening manner. "Will you call me a brute out here, you young upstart?"

"I will call you a brute anywhere I should meet you."

"Then take that."

The disguised girl drew herself up to her feet, and pulled a small pistol from Darco's pocket as she cried:

"I will slay the inhuman brute."

The young civil engineer was in the act of springing back to avoid the blow aimed at him, and the disguised girl interposed herself between him and her brutal assailant. Before Julius could spring aside or draw a weapon, the pistol exploded, and he fell on the ground, crying:

"The dog of a Jew has slain me. Lamont, I demand that you avenge one of your order. I am No. 24 on the river in St. Petersburg."

While thus speaking, the wounded man made some mystic signs, which could be only understood by the initiated. Having fired the pistol, the young girl turned to fly along the road, but Darco sprang after her and seized her as he cried:

"Boy, he deserved the punishment, but I must arrest you."

The weapon in the girl's hand contained two barrels, and she pointed it at Darco, as she cried:

"Release me, or I must slay you."

The young engineer heard a fierce growl behind him, and the next moment he found himself seized by the back of the neck and dragged to the ground, the young girl crying:

"It is Tartar who has come to my rescue."

The young girl shouted:

"Tartar, that is a friend you are attacking."

The blind boy came up at this instant and called the dog off.

Then the blind boy, the dog and the disguised Jewess moved on toward the village.

Darco Lamont lingered long enough with Julius to set him upon his feet, when he also started for the village, Julius heaping vows of vengeance after him.

In the meantime other spies of the Nihilists were looking for the little Jewess, the blind boy and his dog.

Rachael returned to the home of the old Jew. Darco Lamont put up at a tavern in the village,

determined to seek the disguised girl, as he suspected her as one of the secret messengers. It was only the next day, as Rachael stole out among the trees to examine the little Testament that she had in her pocket, that Julius Molt struck her down and seized the book. He then said as he made off:

"I have secured one of the secret dispatches."

In a short while Darco Lamont was riding that way when he came upon the senseless little Jewess. It was some while before she was herself again, but could not explain how her injury had occurred. She looked around for her book, but it was gone. It was while in this occupation that the blind boy and his dog appeared. Darco explained what had happened. After a short stay the blind boy and his dog departed and Darco placed the little Jewess on his horse and led her to the old Jew's house. When Darco reached his tavern it was quite late. Brower was there and soon Julius came in, glanced at Darco and said to Brower:

"I accuse that young fellow of treachery, and I demand that he be seized at once."

CHAPTER XI.—The Blind Boy and Nemo.

Paul advanced along the road with rapid strides, after parting with the others. They made splendid time, and it was not yet nine o'clock when they arrived on the outskirts of the village, close to the country seat of the dying general. Before reaching the village the blind lad drew up as he said to the dog:

"Give tongue here, Tartar."

The dog gave one or two sharp barks, when his master said to him:

"That will do now, Tartar."

A low whistle was then heard from the wood close by, and then out from the wood appeared a small boy in the garb of a peasant, who said to the blind lad:

"This way, Paul."

"Very good, Nemo," was the brief response as the blind lad and the dog followed the little fellow into the wood.

When they had gained a small opening in the wood the little fellow drew up, saying:

"This is a good place to change, Paul."

"Then I will change here, and I will ask you a few questions while doing so. I suppose you have followed my instructions to the letter."

"To the letter, Paul."

"Then you have been near the house?"

"Quite close to it."

"Did you speak with any one of the people about?"

"I spoke to a little girl who is a daughter of one of the women servants in the house, and she gave me some information that may be of use to you."

"What did she tell you, Nemo?"

"She told me that the old general was expected to die any moment, and she pointed out the room where he is lying."

"But who waits on him?"

"His male servants only, and they neglect him very much, as they spend the time in drinking in the kitchen and in carousing in the village."

While the conversation was going on, Paul was altering his appearance by means of certain articles taken from a small bag, which the little boy had drawn from under a bush. The little fellow was Paul's cousin, and he was called Nemo on certain occasions. When the disguise was completed, Paul had the appearance of a very old peasant.

"Now we will proceed. Place the bag under the bush again, and Tartar will watch it until we return."

The blind lad bent down as if to caress the dog, when he drew the secret despatch from its hiding place and concealed it about him, while he said to the dog:

"Watch the bag, Tartar, and do not speak or move until I return to you again."

The dog flung himself on the ground beside the bag, as if to indulge in a good sleep, and the blind lad and the boy went on their way through the wood. Skirting the village on the right, they entered a grove on the grounds of the country seat, and that grove was close to the deep river before mentioned. The country house was a large building, with a balcony running along the second floor. The blind boy and his guide walked out to the edge of the grove, and the former said:

"Do you note the window where the general lies?"

"Yes, as there is a dim light burning there now."

"Then guide me directly under that window."

It was but a short distance to the house across a small lawn, and the blind lad and his guide were soon standing under the balcony.

"Place my hand on the post directly under the window," said Paul, "and then keep watch here under the balcony until I return."

The little boy obeyed the order, and the blind lad was soon climbing up the post to the balcony. Having reached the balcony, he moved to the window, which was a little open at top and bottom, where he listened intently for some minutes. He then gently raised the window and stole into the room of the dying man, saying, in subdued tones:

"General Tosco, are you awake and alone?"

"Who are you that intrudes on me at this hour?"

"I am one who comes to you from our great father in St. Petersburg."

"Are you blind?"

"Yes, I am blind, general. I know your voice, and you knew me and my father in other days. I am Paul Kosko."

"This is amazing. I recognize your voice now, poor youth. How is it possible that you gained admittance here when I am beset with spies?"

"I have not time to explain, general. Here is the special despatch sent to you by our father in St. Petersburg."

The old general seized the envelope handed to him and tore it open. A heavy footstep was heard outside the door at the moment, and the old general said to Paul in alarmed tones:

"Hide under the bed on the instant!"

Paul slipped under the high bedstead, and the old general thrust the despatch under the bedclothes. The door was opened a moment after,

and a small man in the garb of a servant entered the room. The man looked at the old invalid, who appeared to be in a doze, and then said:

"General Tosco, I am here to see you on important business. Who was talking to you as I approached the door?"

The general opened his eyes and stared at the speaker, exclaiming:

"You here, Brower?"

"Yes, I am here, and I wish to know who was with you as I approached the door?"

"There was no one with me, and I must have been talking in my sleep."

"General Tosco, we have received positive information that you are a traitor to the cause, and that you are in communication with the tyrant."

"Bah!" responded the old general. "What do I care for such accusations now, when I am within a few hours of entering the dread hereafter!"

"But you are plotting to betray us and you must not live another moment, traitor."

The wretch drew a dagger from his breast while speaking, and he was in the act of striking the dying man with it when he received a powerful kick above the pit of the stomach which hurled him back on the floor. Paul then crawled out from under the bed and flung himself on the prostrate wretch, as he hissed forth, in hoarse tones:

"Dastard, you must not murder a dying man!"

CHAPTER VII.—The Accusation.

When Julius Molt accused Darco Lamont of treachery the young engineer's first impulse was to strike his accuser in the face. He refrained, however, and turned away in disgust as he remarked:

"I will not pay any attention to a drunken rascal like you."

"But I am not drunk," said Julius, turning to Brower. "I have been watching that traitor for the last hour, and let him dare deny the charges I bring against him."

Brower looked at Darco as he remarked:

"This appears to be serious, brother."

"I know it is serious," said Julius. "If you say so, I will make the charges here before you, and then before the committee."

"Let us hear them, then," responded Brower, as he closed the door, "but speak with cautious tones."

The three Nihilists took seats around the small table, and Darco Lamont's eyes were blazing with indignation as he addressed Brower, saying:

"I am ready to answer any questions, providing that they do not conflict with the oath I have taken."

Julius drew his breath and pondered a few moments before he commenced:

"Did you not ride forth from here over an hour ago?"

"I did."

"Did you pursue one who appeared to be an old Jew?"

"That is true."

"Did you not find that Jew in the wood and bear him back to the village, to the house of the old usurer, on which a watch was set this afternoon?"

"You are asserting the truth so far," replied Darco, as he glared at his questioner.

Julius paused again as if to consider his course of action, when he inquired:

"Did you not receive a certain dispatch from the disguised Jew?"

"I swear that I did not," solemnly asserted the accused youth.

"Then I assert that you did, as I saw him placing it in your side pocket as you gave him in charge of the old usurer, while you said: 'I will keep my promise as well as I can.'"

Darco started on hearing the words, as he had used them on parting with the Jewess, but he answered in firm and manly tones:

"I used the words mentioned, but I solemnly avow that I did not receive a letter from the lad."

"And I solemnly avow that you did," retorted Julius, with a wicked grin. "If you have not hidden it since, it will be found in your side pocket there now."

Darco put his hand in the pocket mentioned, and he started and turned pale as he drew forth a letter. He grew pale as he read the address thereon. Having read the address on the letter, the accused youth handed it to Brower as he said in solemn tones:

"Brother, I swear to you that I was not aware that I had this letter in my possession."

"The address is in the handwriting of the tyrant!" hissed the old Nihilist, "and it is one of the secret dispatches."

"Then it must have been borne by the Jewish lad," asserted Darco. "Listen to me, and I will explain my connection with him."

The open-minded youth then gave an account of his adventures with the little Jew, from the time of finding him insensible in the woods until he left him at the house of the old Jewish merchant. The noble-hearted youth did not betray finding the wounded lad, all of which were answered by the young member in the most explicit manner. He then bent his fierce little eyes on the accused and demanded:

"What did you promise the Jew when you parted with him?"

"I promised that I would not betray a certain secret concerning him, providing that it did not conflict with the duty I owe to the order."

"And does it conflict with that duty?"

"In the light of what has occurred since, brother, I fear that it is my duty to confide that secret to you, and then you may judge of my guilt or innocence."

"I desire to hear it," said Brower, as he arose and walked to a corner of the room.

Darco followed him, and placed his mouth to the old leader's ear, as he whispered:

"While dressing the boy's wound this afternoon out there I discovered that he was a girl!"

"Did she make the least allusion to the secret dispatch?"

"On my solemn oath she did not. She mentioned that she had lost a little Testament which she prized very much, and no more."

"It is for me to judge in this matter, and I will put you to the test, Lamont."

"In what way, master?"

"In this manner: It is evident that the tyrant's agents are approaching the house of the old gen-

eral. This second dispatch must be delivered to him to-night, and you will do it."

"I understand you, master, and I am prepared to set out at once."

"You will come with us also, Julius," continued Brower, "and you will play your part."

"I am ready," answered the young rough.

The old Nihilist was in the act of placing the secret dispatch in his side pocket, when the window was flung open, a pistol-shot flashed out, and the lamp on the table exploded. Cries of alarm burst from all those present, and the old Nihilist was the first to spring to the window, as he yelled out:

"A spy has been watching us."

Brower sprang out of the window, drawing a small revolver, as he cried:

"I can see no one out here."

An unseen hand dealt him a stunning blow at the moment, and he fell prostrate on a manure heap. Darco Lamont sprang out after Brower, and he perceived a boyish form darting around the side of the tavern. The young man stumbled over Brower as he darted in pursuit of the boyish figure, and he only saved himself from falling by clutching the wheels of a wagon. Julius sprang out after the young engineer, and he stumbled over Brower also. The young rough struck the heap of manure as he fell, but he was soon on his feet again. He then saw Darco Lamont darting around the corner of the tavern, and he ran after him, crying:

"You can't get off that way, traitor."

The young engineer turned on the instant and struck his accuser full in the face, crying:

"I will kill you if you use that word to me again."

Brower regained his feet and sprang between the enemies, pointing his pistol at Julius Molt as he said to him in very severe tones:

"I command you not to insult this youth again. If you use another offensive word to him in my presence, I will slay you as I would a wolf. Where is my assailant?"

The pistol shot and the cries of the three Nihilists aroused the people of the tavern, and the landlord and three or four others rushed out. Brower was as calm as if nothing had occurred, and he at once gave orders to search for his unknown assailant. Calling on Julius and Darco to follow him, he entered the tavern by the window, putting his hand in his pocket at the same time. "It is just as I expected," he said to the others, as he drew forth his empty hand. "The little Jew has regained the secret dispatch. This is very mysterious, but we will away to the general's house and fathom the mystery there."

"Then you think it was the little Jew who assailed you?" inquired Darco Lamont.

"I am certain of it."

The old Nihilist gave orders to the landlord, and three horses were soon led forth. On reaching the next village Brower stopped at the tavern to make some inquiries. He then learned that only one traveler had passed through the village that night, and that the traveler was a boy on horseback.

"It is the little Jew," said Brower to the others as they rode on again, "and we must ride as fast as we can. We have a cunning little fiend to deal with now, but we will baffle him in the end."

CHAPTER VIII.—Julius Plays His Game.

After resting a while at her old friend's, Rachel ordered a horse. It soon came and she mounted and armed with a revolver she rode back to the tavern, placed the horse in a secure hiding place and returned to the tavern and was the person who raised such a rumpus as appeared in the preceding chapter. Then away again she rode, passing the blind boy and his dog near the village and rode close to the general's house. She saw Paul mount to the balcony outside the window and enter the room. Rachel climbed up then and, looking in through the window, saw all that took place between Brower and Paul. The blind boy had Brower at his mercy as the kick had completely knocked him out. Brower was then bound and dragged by Paul to a closet and the door locked on him. Then Paul returned to the general's bedside.

"You must return to St. Petersburg immediately, and here is your dispatch."

The old gentleman put his hand under his pillow to draw forth the dispatch, when a footstep was heard outside the door and Paul slipped under the bed again. Then the door was pushed open and Julius Molt strode into the bedroom, crying:

"Where are you, brother? I am getting impatient for my game."

Julius Molt glared around the bedroom in some surprise, as he expected to meet Brower there. The old general pretended to be asleep again. Julius then advanced to the bedside and shook the invalid, saying:

"I would speak with you on important business, General Tosco."

The invalid looked up at the intruder for a few moments ere he demanded:

"Who are you, and how did you get here to my room, as you are a stranger to me?"

"I am a messenger from the emperor, as you will see. Here is a dispatch that nearly cost me my life to deliver, and I will bear back the reply at all risk."

The invalid tore open the envelope and commenced to read the inclosed sheet. Julius watched him as he muttered:

"I am not the bearer of the sealed dispatch, but I will take back the reply."

The Jewish maiden still kept outside the window watching those inside, as she said to herself:

"Then there are three messengers, and that young wretch knew it. He will not take back the answer to the emperor, as he is a traitor and in league with the Nihilists."

Having read the message, the old invalid said:

"I thank you for your fidelity, but I have to inform you that there is no reply."

"But I was informed by my chief that there would be a reply from you, general."

"And I have to inform you that the reply to the emperor has been sent by another faithful messenger. Good-night, sir."

The old invalid closed his eyes and turned his head to the wall, as if anxious to get rid of the rough messenger. Julius saw him fumbling under the bedclothes, and the young rascal made a grasp for the old invalid's right hand, saying:

"You have something under the cover, and I must have it."

The young rascal seized the old general's throat, adding:

"I will bear back the dispatch you have written to the emperor, and here it is."

While thus speaking Julius Molt drew forth the sealed dispatch delivered by Paul, as well as the reply prepared by the dying man. The old invalid groaned in agony as he saw the young rascal placing the two documents in his pocket, grinning the while, as he cried:

"You see that I am the one destined to bear your reply back to the emperor and receive the reward of my fidelity. What noise is that I hear in the closet, general?"

Brower heard the young man's voice, and he was working in the closet to attract his attention. Julius was advancing in that direction when he stumbled over an object on the floor and fell forward, striking his head against the bed-post with great violence. The shock stunned the young rascal a little, and he groaned as if in pain.

"Secure the dispatches, as he is powerless," cried the old general.

Guided by the groans, the blind lad crawled out again and flung himself on Julius. The young rough made an effort at resistance, recovering a little, but Paul struck him on the head with a short club, as he said to the old invalid, taking the documents from his victim's pocket:

"Is this the reply to the emperor with the seal on, general, as I can feel?"

"It is. Bear it to the emperor at once before you are assailed."

Having secured the weapons on the young rough, also, Paul arose as if to take his departure, Julius being insensible on the floor, when the door was opened for the third time, and Darco Lamont entered on the scene, crying:

"What does this mean? Brower, where are you, and who are you?"

The last question was addressed to Paul, who had no time to retreat under the bed again.

CHAPTER IX.—Rachel's Bold Charge.

Darco Lamont did not recognize the blind youth in his disguise, and he took him for one of the peasant followers of the old invalid. The house was governed by the Nihilists that night, and a special meeting of the order was to be held downstairs, to take action as to the treachery of the old general, and to punish him even when a natural death was drawing near. With the precious documents in his possession, the blind youth felt that he was in a ticklish position at the bedside of the suspected man, but he did not despair or falter. Guided by Darco's voice, Paul answered him in simple tones, saying:

"I wait on General Tosco, and that rascal assailed him!"

Julius Molt was lying insensible near the foot of the bed. Darco had no love for Julius Molt, but the young rascal was a Nihilist, and the young engineer must do his duty. Saluting the old general in a respectful way, the young Nihilist said to him:

"I regret to intrude on you, General Tosco, but

I came here on important private business. What has become of my old friend who entered here a short time ago?"

Instead of answering the question, the old general addressed Paul Kosko, saying:

"Close that window, Peter, as the night air is too severe on me."

Guided by the cold draught, Paul made his way to the window. Darco was bending down over Julius Molt as he said to the general:

"Good sir, I regret that this person assailed you; but where is my old friend?"

Brower made a slight commotion in the closet, and Darco sprang toward it, crying:

"There's some one in here."

He flung himself against the closet door with all the force he could command. The young engineer was a powerful fellow, and the door went in. An exclamation of surprise then burst from Darco as he beheld Brower lying on the floor of the closet, with his arms and legs bound, and gag on his mouth. Dragging out the leader of the Nihilists, and taking the gag from his mouth the young engineer demanded:

"Who did this, brother?"

Brower gazed fiercely around the room before he answered:

"Look under the bed, and be on your guard against spies."

Drawing a revolver, Darco sprang to the side of the bed and looked under it, crying:

"There's no one here. Where is that old man who was waiting on you, general?"

"He has gone downstairs," answered the invalid.

"That old man is a spy in disguise!" cried Brower. "Raise the alarm and release me."

An alarm was raised throughout the house, and Brower was set free. Julius regained his feet and fumbled in his pocket as he cried:

"May the fiends take me if the old dog has not taken the dispatches from me! I will after him and cut his throat!"

"Remain here and explain," cried Brower, as he grasped the young fellow by the arm. Julius did explain in as few words as possible as to the manner in which he had secured the all-important dispatches.

"This old traitor may have the dispatches now," cried Julius, as he sprang at the old general and pressed his hand on his throat. "Give them up, you old dog, or I'll choke you!"

Darco Lamont sprang at the young rascal and flung him back from the bed, as he cried:

"Shame on you to thus assail a dying gentleman! Have you the papers, sir?"

The old general raised his head from the pillow and glared at Brower, as he cried:

"Murderers, wretches, I have baffled you at the point of death."

He then turned his gaze on Darco Lamont, as he continued:

"I swear to you that the dispatches are not in my possession, and that they are now on their way to the Czar. Brower, I defy you and your vile associates. When I joined your order I hoped to aid in freeing Russia, but I know now that you are vile assassins and selfish hounds. In death I defy you!"

The old man's head fell back on the pillow, and he gasped for breath as if dying.

Then all was still, and Darco cried:

"He is dead, and he spoke the truth regarding the dispatches."

"Let us away to intercept the messenger then," cried Brower, "and may the fiends receive the old traitor for dying so soon."

The three Nihilists then darted out of the bedroom, banging the door after them, while Darco Lamont said to himself:

"Would that my duty to the cause did not compel me to witness such scenes, but I must find the Jewish maiden and recover the dispatches."

Rachel was still looking in at the window through all, and she could tell what became of the old man who had disappeared. The brave girl realized that the blind youth was the bearer of the message back to the Czar, yet she must perform her task. She saw the pretended old man approaching the window with the implied purpose of shutting it, when he slipped out on the balcony and down to his little companion. Rachel could then see the pair hastening away to the grove just as the alarm was raised in the sickroom. The three Nihilists had scarcely left the sickroom when Rachel entered it and approached the bed, muttering:

"I trust he is not dead."

One glance at the face on the pillow told Rachel that the old general was dead. Taking the dispatch from her cap, she placed it on the dead man's hand, saying:

"I have fulfilled my mission as well as I could, and I will return with the dispatch."

The girl was about placing the letter in her cap again, when it was torn from her grasp, and she was dashed to the floor, while a hoarse voice cried:

"You are baffled, dog of a spy, and now death awaits you."

The disguised girl looked up and saw a powerful man with a full gray beard, who pointed a revolver at her, and she gasped forth:

"Nick Paulus, the Nihilist leader, and I was assured that he was dead!"

"I am dead to my enemies, boy, but not to my true friends. Prepare to die, as you are the tyrant's spy, and this letter was from him to his dead traitor here."

Rachel saw that her fate was sealed, but she did not tremble or plead for her life. The man before her was the wretch, as she called him, who put her father to death as a traitor, and her only thought then was to how she could be revenged on him before sacrificing her own life. At that moment Darco Lamont entered the bedroom, crying:

"Brother, we are on the track of— Ah! there he is now!"

"Read that," said Paulus, as he handed the letter to Darco, "while I keep guard over this young imp of a Jew."

Darco gave a pitying glance at the disguised girl, and then opened the letter. After reading it he handed it back to the leader, saying:

"That is not the sealed dispatch, and another messenger must be found."

"Seize that young spy and drag him down before the committee," cried Paulus, as he turned to read the letter.

Darco bent another pitying glance on the young

girl, and seized her by the arms as he whispered into her ear:

"I pity you from my heart, but I must do my duty. Why did you place that letter in my pocket this evening?"

Rachel shook her head, as she answered aloud:

"That letter was stolen from me this evening by a wretch who sought to murder me. With death staring me in the face, I swear that I did not even give it to you."

"Do you know who bore the sealed dispatches?" demanded Paulus.

"I do," was the prompt reply.

"Then put us on the track of that messenger, and your life will be spared."

Rachel hesitated a few moments, while she said to herself:

"I must gain time, and live for vengeance; but I will not betray the blind youth."

"She then answered in emphatic tones:

"The young man called Julius Molt was the bearer of the sealed dispatch from the Czar. He delivered it to General Tosco to-night, and he received the answer."

Both the Nihilist started on hearing the assertion, and the old man demanded:

"How do you know so much?"

"Because I was watching out there on the balcony when Molt entered here and delivered the sealed dispatch, when the dying general gave him the answer, which was also sealed, and the message for the emperor as well."

The two Nihilists exchanged significant glances, and Paulus inquired of Darco:

"Where is Julius Molt now?"

"He is away after the old man who assaulted him in here."

"That assault was a farce," asserted Rachel. "The pretended old man was one of young Molt's companions from Moscow; and I will swear that they are both riding to the city."

Loud voices were heard on the lawn under the balcony, and Darco Lamont sprang to the window, crying to those outside:

"Have you caught the old fellow?"

"No, but we have caught Paul Kosko, the blind young traitor," answered Julius Molt.

"What a misfortune!" gasped the Jewish maiden to herself, forgetting her own danger on hearing of the capture of the bearer of the sealed dispatch.

CHAPTER X.—Another Test for the Blind Lad.

Paul Kosko succeeded in reaching the grove with his little cousin, when the latter said:

"We are pursued, Paul, as I see people coming out of the house."

Paul pulled off his disguise on the instant, and handed the articles to Nemo, as he replied:

"If we are closely pressed, you hasten away to Tartar, and tell him to come in search of me; but be careful to secure this little packet on him."

"But we can escape if you will run."

"I don't wish to escape, as I have an object in being led back to that house. I hear footsteps coming close now, and away with you, Nemo."

The little fellow pressed Paul's hand and darted away. The blind boy stood in the grove

and listened to the approaching footsteps for a few moments, when he cried aloud:

"Tartar, Tartar, you bad dog, why do you desert me in this way? Stranger, will you not guide me to the highroad, as I have been deserted by my dog?"

Julius Molt and Brower sprang at the blind lad. They both seized the blind lad by an arm and dragged him back, Brower demanding:

"What are you doing here?"

Paul did not pretend to recognize the Nihilists, and he said:

"I am blind, and I lost my way. I had a dog as a guide, but he deserted me to go in quest of rabbits."

"Do you know where you are?"

"I only know that I have been roaming through the woods for hours."

"Did you hear any footsteps here lately?"

"I heard running footsteps some moments ago, when I called for help."

Three other Nihilists approached, and Brower sent them away through the grove in quest of the mysterious old man. Julius and the old Nihilist then dragged Paul back to the house. The blind lad was dragged into the house, and then down into a large basement. Several Nihilists had assembled there, all of whom wore masks. Julius and Brower put on masks also, before entering the basement. Darco Lamont and Nick Paulus entered soon after, with the Jewish maiden as a prisoner. Julius Molt started on seeing the little Jew, and he cried:

"That is the little dog of a Jew who escaped us to-night."

"And who accuses you of deep treachery," added Nick Paulus, and the Nihilist leader repeated the charge made against the young rascal by the distinguished maiden.

Julius laughed in the most scornful manner on hearing the charge, and he then said:

"My brother who was confined in the closet will refute that."

Being thus called on, Brower said:

"I can solemnly declare that the charge is false, and I believe that this blind youth here is in league with the little Jew."

Brower then drew Nick Paulus aside and informed him that the little Jew was a girl.

"I am aware of that fact," answered the great leader, who hastened to make some inquiries about Paul Kosko.

Paulus kept watching the blind youth as he listened to Brower's narrative of the adventures of the day, and he then said:

"I have always maintained that the youth and his father were true to our cause, and I would not be surprised if Paul were serving our enemies now after what he has suffered, but what can a blind boy do? We will have him searched, and the Jewish maiden also, and they will be put to death if the dispatches are found on them."

"And what of Julius Molt?" inquired Brower.

"You keep a sly watch on him, and so will I. He is a cunning dog, and he is capable of treachery, I fear. But his mother hates the tyrant and prays for his death. The young cub may also truly hate the father who despises him."

The blind boy and the Jewish maiden were searched, but the sealed dispatch or the answer

could not be found on them. Paulus then turned to the blind youth and inquired:

"Do you recognize my voice, Paul Kosko?"

"Yes, as you are Nick Paulus, who was once my father's friend."

"And I will be your friend still, if you will answer me truthfully."

"Put your questions, then."

"Are you now an agent of the tyrant who rules over Russia?"

"What a question to ask of a helpless youth like me!"

"Then you deny it?"

"I scorn to deny or assert anything when dealing with wretches who led me into a death-trap to-day."

"Why did you stray so far from your cousin's house to-night?"

"My dog deserted me, and I was lost in the deep woods. He must have been shot again, or he would not have deserted me so long."

A loud bark was heard outside, and the blind lad cried:

"There is Tartar now."

"Open the doors and admit the dog," said the leader.

The doors were opened, and the dog rushed in, when the blind lad cried:

"Peace, Tartar, and lie down."

The dog glared savagely at the masked men around, but he obeyed his young master. Nick Paulus then gave a few whispered orders to the Nihilists. The Jewish maiden was led from the apartment by two of the men. A rope was flung around the dog's neck, and he was dragged forth, the animal howling and struggling in a fearful manner. Paulus, Brower and Julius Molt alone remained with the blind youth, and the former then addressed Paul, saying:

"We are convinced that you are a spy for the tyrant, and that you can see. Much as I loved your father and yourself in former days, my duty to the people compels me to sacrifice you. Paul Kosko, you must die!"

The blind youth smiled as he replied:

"Then put me to death, as life has no charms for me."

The famous Nihilist advanced and stood right in front of Paul, pointing a revolver full at his face, as he cried:

"I am compelled to slay you, but your death will be painless."

The man fired two shots from the weapon, and Julius Molt struck the blind youth two sharp blows on the forehead at the same moment.

CHAPTER XI.—The Effect of the Test.

When Paul Kosko fell on the floor as if dead, the mysterious Nihilist bent down over him and glared fiercely at Julius Molt, crying:

"Wretch, you have exceeded your instructions, and you struck as if to kill."

"I did but strike him with my knuckles, and the weapon may have been loaded."

"I withdrew the balls with my own hands, you cruel dog," growled Paulus. "If you have killed him, you will suffer, as I warned you to deal light blows."

Julius drew back grumbling something about mistaking his own strength, and Paulus examined the blind lad as he said to the others:

"I trust you are both convinced now that the youth is blind."

"I am," answered Brower.

"And so am I," assented Julius.

Paul soon recovered from the effects of the blows he received, but he acted in a dazed and blind manner, rubbing his head with his hands as he muttered aloud:

"Am I in the other world now? It cannot be, as there is light for the soul."

"You are not dead or seriously injured, Paul Kosko," answered Paulus, as he placed the blind youth on a seat.

"Was I not shot twice, then?"

"You were not shot, as the weapon I fired at you contained no balls. My companions here doubted that you were blind, and I put you to a test to convince them."

"It was a cruel test, Paulus."

"It was cruel, but it was necessary. You are now free to return to your cousin's house, and I will take you back in a conveyance."

Paul was anxious to know how the great Nihilist recovered from the wound he had received and he inquired:

"How is it, Paulus, that you are alive, as I heard in Moscow that you had been slain in St. Petersburg?"

The Nihilist hesitated a moment, and then replied:

"I did receive a wound that caused me to swoon as if dead, but I soon recovered, and I am here now to defeat the tyrant."

Paul was then led forth to the yard, the dog being released also. Paul and the dog soon found a resting-place in a large wagon drawn by two horses, and the watchful old Nihilist stretched himself beside them. Another Nihilist drove the horses. As they were passing the grove where the little fellow awaited Paul the dog uttered a sharp bark, and Paul said to him:

"Be quiet, Tartar, as I wish to sleep."

The watchful old Nihilist ordered the driver to stop, saying:

"There is some one in the wood that the dog knows. Watch over this youth until I return."

The old Nihilist was not more than five minutes in the wood when he appeared on the roadside again, holding the small bag in one hand, and dragging Nemo with him. Flinging Nemo into the wagon Paulus sprang in after him, as he said to Paul:

"You were masquerading as an old man to-night. Your object in doing so I will soon discover."

"He found the things in the bag, Paul," said the little fellow, "but I wouldn't tell him any more, although he threatened to shoot me."

The all-important dispatches were safe with the dog, but how could they both escape from the watchful Nihilist, so that Paul could bear them to the Czar? The old Nihilist gave orders to the driver to turn the horses back again, and Paul whispered to his little cousin, saying:

"When the man who captured you speaks to me again you jump out and hasten into the wood, and I will follow you with Tartar."

The cart was on its way back when Paulus addressed Paul, saying:

"You cannot deny that you are a spy now."

Guided by the man's voice, the blind youth struck him in the face with his clenched fist, as he cried to the dog:

"Shake him, Tartar."

Nemo sprang out on the road, crying:

"This way, Paul."

Paulus was a little staggered by the sudden blow, but he cried to the driver:

"Draw up and assist me to——"

The old Nihilist could not utter another word, as the dog was at his throat. Guided by his little cousin's voice, and feeling the side of the vehicle, Paul sprang out on the road, and into the wood, crying:

"Here, here, Tartar, and guide me."

The dog released his grasp on the man's throat, and sprang into the wood. The dog was soon at his young master's side, and Paul seized the animal's long tail, as he cried out to the little fellow ahead:

"Away with you now as fast as you can, and you be silent, Tartar."

The driver sprang down from the wagon, while Paulus gasped forth:

"Shoot the dog and secure the blind youth. Raise an alarm so that our brothers can come to our aid."

Darco was one of those who led the disguised Jewish maiden from the apartment where the dead general was lying, Darco saying:

"I want to see if we cannot yet find the despatches we seek."

Rachel was planning escape all the time. Refreshments were brought in, among them a bottle of wine. Rachel seized a glass full of wine and dashed it into Darco's face and dashed through an open window out onto the lawn. But Darco was after her immediately and caught her before she reached the gate. There she was put through a course of questioning by Darco. She again, while Darco was looking away from her, broke away and managed to mount her horse, who stood near. Darco turned and attempted to seize her when the dog Tartar suddenly appeared and bore him to the ground. The girl in the meantime had gotten safely away. The blind boy now arrived on the scene and called the dog off of Darco, and then the blind boy and the dog retreated to the road. Darco was in pretty bad shape. The blind boy soon met Rachel, when they proceeded together.

CHAPTER XII.—The Dash for Life.

No living being appeared to be around then to oppose them, as all the inhabitants of the place appeared to be locked in slumber. The dog ran on beside the horse, and no sound escaped from him while they dashed through the village. After passing the houses, Paul said:

"Watch well, Tartar, and warn us if you see enemies, but be silent now."

The dog sprang out ahead of the horse, with his nose on the ground and his eyes glaring along the silent road.

"What a treasure 'hat dog must be to you," remarked Rachel.

"He is a treasure," answered Paul, as he thought of the secret despatches concealed on the animal.

A fierce growl escaped from the dog, and he drew back to the side of his young master. Rachel peered ahead, saying:

"I do not see any one on the road yet."

"Then dash on at full speed. Watch well, Tartar."

Tartar darted forward again, while the Jewish maiden said:

"I see a large object now, and I think it is a wagon."

"Then it must be Paulus and his companion. Which way is it moving?"

"It is going on ahead of us, but we are drawing on it."

"Back here, Tartar. Get behind us."

The dog drew back and ran on behind the horse. In as few words as possible Paul told Rachel of his escape from the Nihilists, and he continued:

"I believe that those ahead are my pursuers, and that they are driving on now to intercept me at the village. What say you if we dash on before them?"

"I am willing; and I will use my pistol if they attempt to stop us."

"Then dash on. Keep behind, Tartar."

The horse dashed on, and they were soon close to the wagon. Paulus and the driver were in that wagon. The leader of the Nihilists had recovered from the shock he had received, and he was hastening on to the other village to intercept the blind lad. On looking back Paulus saw the horse, but he did not perceive the dog. He was on the alert, and he called on the driver to stop. The wagon drew up and the galloping horse dashed along. When the animal and his two riders were within a few yards of the wagon, Paulus cried out:

"Halt there!"

The horse kept on until the riders were abreast of the wagon, when Paulus again cried:

"Halt, or I will fire on you."

A shot from the revolver in Rachel's hand was the answer, and the driver fell back from his seat with a groan.

CHAPTER XIII.—Going Back to the Czar.

Defeated and disgraced by a blind youth and a Jewish maiden! Such were the bitter thought put forth by young Darco Lamont on recovering his senses in the wood. On thinking over the incidents of the day and night Darco became fully convinced that the blind youth was the bearer of the sealed despatch, and that the Jewish maiden had been his assistant. He then wondered that the chief or the czar could select such couriers, if Paul Kosko was really blind, and he had his doubts on the last point. Having reflected on the blind lad and on his own ugly position, Darco Lamont nerved himself for action. Darco shook himself and walked briskly out toward the high road, clenching his hands and grinding his teeth as he muttered:

"May I die a disgraceful death if I do not baffle them before they reach the emperor. It will be

a race and a struggle for life; but I will succeed or perish!"

When Darco reached the road, he was on the run, and he increased his speed as he faced toward the village. He stopped at the tavern only long enough to get out the horse he had used in getting there, when he galloped on at full speed, muttering:

"They cannot be far ahead, and it is over twenty miles to Moscow, while they may be intercepted or delayed on the way."

Darco was unarmed, but he knew that he could procure arms at the village tavern where he had stopped that afternoon. In the meantime he had no bitter thoughts as regards the Jewish maiden or Paul. They were faithful servants of the Czar, and he was struggling against them on behalf of the enslaved people. Darco urged his horse on at full speed for several miles, well on the lookout. As he drew near the village mentioned, he could perceive a dark object moving ahead, and he soon made out that it was a wagon drawn by two horses. The driver of the wagon was urging the horses on, yet Darco was soon up with him. Then the driver cried out:

"Why do you ride so fast, brother?"

Darco recognized the voice, and he answered:

"Well met, Brother Paulus. Did you perceive two youths riding this way?"

"I did, and I am in pursuit of them, as they have slain our brother there."

Paulus pointed to the former driver, who was lying dead in the wagon, and continued:

"They are those we captured to-night, and they must be hunted down, as they bear the dispatch back to the tyrant."

Darco only paused to secure the revolver of the dead driver, when he galloped on, saying:

"I will intercept them, brother, and secure the papers, even at the gate of the tyrant."

Rachel and Paul were only about two miles ahead. The horse under them showed signs of fatigue after the swift journey, and the huge dog was panting vigorously as he ran on before his young master. Tartar then turned and growled, as if to warn his friends that they were pursued. Paul understood the signal, and he said:

"Urge the horse on, as one swift rider at least gallops after us."

Rachel urged on the willing horse, saying:

"We are not far from Moscow now."

They were soon on the outskirts of the city, and not very far from the cottage where the Molts resided. The fugitives had just reached the road in front of the cottage when the horse tumbled and fell on his side, pitching the two riders out near the gate. The girl was the first to rise and she assisted Paul to his feet, as she inquired:

"Are you injured, friend?"

Paul limped as he answered:

"I fear that my knee is injured."

"That is unfortunate; and I fear that the horse is disabled."

The animal was disabled, as he could not get on his feet again. Tartar stood beside his master and growled as he faced back the road. The blind lad could then hear the pursuing horses, and he said to Rachel:

"Our pursuer is approaching, and we must seek

shelter until he passes on, when we may take to the fields."

The girl drew the lad into the little garden around the cottage, saying:

"We will find shelter in here; and you order the dog to be silent."

A window of the cottage was then flung open, and a harsh voice inquired:

"Is that you, Julius?"

"It is that young scoundrel's mother," whispered Rachel, as she drew Paul back into the garden, "and the rider has stopped outside."

Darco Lamont had pulled up in front of the cottage, and he was staring down at the disabled horse, when the voice from the cottage fell on his ear, crying:

"Is it you, Julius?"

The young engineer knew the stern woman known as Maria Molt, and he answered:

"I am not your son, Madam Molt, but I am in the service. Where are those who rode this disabled horse?"

The woman had hastened to the front door, and she retorted:

"Who are you, and who do you seek in the good cause?"

Darco dismounted, and approached the woman to utter a private password, before he said to her:

"I seek two youths and a large dog, and they must have sought shelter near here, as the horse they rode lies disabled out here."

"Yes; I heard some prowlers entering the garden a short time ago. Let us seek and slay them, if they are spies of the tyrant."

"One of the spies is a blind youth known as Paul Kosko. He bears that sealed dispatch your son was in quest of."

"Then we will slay the young dog, and my son will bear the dispatch. Follow me, and we will soon find them."

Paul and Rachel had reached the back of the cottage when a door was opened, and a soft voice said:

"This way, Paul, and I will aid you."

"It is my sweet friend, Nadine," said Paul to Rachel, drawing the Jewish maiden to the back door, "and we will confide in her."

The good girl drew the fugitives into the cottage, the dog following them, and she closed the door softly, as she whispered to Paul:

"I recognized your voice out on the road. And why are you thus pursued?"

"I have no time to explain, sweet friend; but I would get onn to the city with my young friend here."

The girl listened at the back door, when she said:

"They seek you back in the grove now and the other horse is in front. With your little friend to guide the horse, you can ride away."

Nadine led the way to the front door, and Paul and Rachel hastened out to mount Darco's horse.

Three riders were dashing along the road at full speed when the horse started toward the city with his double load. Darco Lamont heard his horse starting, and he dashed back through the garden, with the woman crying:

"We have been tricked, and they are away on my horse. Who comes here?"

"Friends of the good cause," answered Paulus, as he dashed up to the cottage with Julius Molt and Brower.

"Then ride on after the spies, as they have tricked me," cried Darco.

The three men rode on in hot pursuit, Julius crying:

"Look to that young rascal, mother, as he is a traitor!"

CHAPTER XIV.—In Close Pursuit.

With their three foes in close pursuit, the two fugitives rode on to the outskirts of the city. The dispatches were still concealed on Tartar, and they could not stop to take them from him, as their foes were close behind them. Darco Lamont was hastening along on foot also, as he dashed on at his best speed before the grim woman could attempt to carry out the advice of her treacherous son. Rachel aimed to reach the Jewish quarter and then desert the horse, so that they could escape their foes in some of the dark and narrow streets. After receiving a few hurried instructions from his famous leader, Brower drew up at a small hotel, to send forth messengers throughout the city, and the others kept on in pursuit. On gaining a certain narrow street, the girl pulled up a little, as she said to Paul:

"Hasten from the horse with me now, and we will baffle the wretches."

Having dismounted from the animal together, Rachel struck him with the revolver, and sent him forward, taking Paul's hand, as she continued:

"Send the dog to your home as soon as possible, friend."

They were hastening down the side street, and Paul drew the dispatches from their concealment, as he said to the dog:

"Hasten home with you now, Tartar, and farewell for the present, good fellow."

The spot where the fugitive dismounted was very dark, and their pursuers did not perceive them deserting the horse. Darco Lamont reached the tavern where Brower had stopped, and he was admitted. The young man drew the old Nihilist aside at once, and said:

"I have been baffled thus far, but I am not a traitor. Give me a chance and I will recover the dispatches."

About ten minutes after Darco left the tavern disguised as an old Jew. Darco kept on through the city until he reached the Jewish quarter, when he took a position behind an old wall to watch a certain house, as he said to himself:

"It is my fate to be pitted against Rachel, but I must do my duty."

The young engineer was watching the house of the wealthy Jew where Rachel often stopped on visiting Moscow. Darco watched patiently until the day was breaking, when he perceived two old women with veils leaving the house arm in arm.

"The blind lad and Rachel," he said to himself, "and they cannot suspect me in this novel disguise."

He then followed the old woman at some distance, when he noticed that they were making toward the railroad depot. On reaching the de-

pot, the young engineer perceived Paulus in a disguise well known to the younger Nihilist. The old women passed on to secure seats in a select car. On passing Paulus, Darco whispered a few words in the old Nihilist's ear. The train started soon after, and the principal actors in the drama were on board. Paulus, Brower, and Darco Lamont were on the train, and so were Maria Molt and her son and daughter. Julius wore a fresh disguise, while all the Nihilists were altered in appearance. The two old women mentioned were Paul and Rachel, and they were aware that some of their enemies still hunted them. The girl had recognized Paulus and Julius Molt at the depot. Rachel soon noticed the old Jew, and she whispered to the blind lad:

"There's an old man of my race sitting back who acts as a spy on us, and I fear he is Darco Lamont in disguise."

It was close on midnight when the train reached St. Petersburg, and then Darco became more alert than ever. The two suspected old women were among the first to leave the train, and they soon entered a small cab outside the depot. The disguised Jewish maiden whispered a few words to the driver, and the vehicle started off at a good pace, going in the direction of the old house by the river. Darco hired another cab and started out alone in pursuit, having whispered a few words to his leader on the sly. The two old Nihilists hastened on foot to a small hotel near the depot, where they were certain to meet some members of the order. In less than an hour after Nihilist spies were on the watch around the palace of the Czar, while the conspirators waiting on the emperor himself were notified of the arrival of the messenger bearing the sealed despatch and the communication from the dead general. Julius Molt escorted his mother and sister to a friendly resting place, and the young rascal then made haste to report to the chief of the detective force. Nick Paulus, Brower, and about twenty other Nihilists, in parties of three and four, hastened toward the old house occupied by the chief of detective force, in order to watch for the blind lad and the Jewish maiden. Paul Kosko and his girl friend soon discovered that a cab was pursuing them through the streets, and the youth said:

"They are on our trail yet, but we must baffle them before reaching the chief."

The girl then proposed a plan, which Paul readily accepted. An order was given to the driver, who soon after pulled up at an eating saloon. It was in the neighborhood of the theater where Rachel was employed, and she had rooms over the saloon. The pretended old woman entered the saloon, and the girl made herself known to the proprietor, introducing Paul as an old lady friend.

They had scarcely adjourned upstairs when Darco Lamont entered, still disguised as an old Jew, and called for some refreshments. He looked for Rachel as he said to himself:

"I will soon discover whether I am on the right trail or not."

The young man then put some sly questions to the proprietor, who at once answered that the ladies who had entered were actresses just from Moscow, who always stopped with him. In the meantime Rachel and Paul were changing their

disguises in the rooms above, the young actress having plenty of material for such purposes on hand. Then they left the house by a side door.

They turned down into the lonely street where the disguised emperor had been attacked by Paulus, and the pretended old Jew followed close after them. Darco Lamont had noticed the pair as they passed the saloon, and he recognized Rachel at a glance, as he had seen her on the stage in such a character. Pushing on through the dark street, Darco was soon close to the blind man, when the disguised girl suddenly turned and demanded, in rough tones:

"Are you a robber, to thus follow us this dark night?"

Darco was in the act of springing forward to seize the girl, when she fired at him, crying:

"You see the blind old man has a defender."

Six or seven men sprang suddenly out of doorways close by, and Rachel and the blind lad were seized and overpowered before the brave girl could use the revolver again.

CHAPTER XV.—The Blind Lad's Struggle.

Rachel Wagner and Paul Kosko struggled furiously when assailed by the Nihilists, but they did not make an outcry. On finding resistance useless Rachel and the blind lad permitted themselves to be dragged into a house close at hand, and where Nick Paulus had been taken after he was stabbed by the Czar. One person alone had noticed the struggle from the main street above. That person was a tall man wearing miserable garments, and whose face was almost covered with a white beard. The observer waited until the Nihilists dragged their prisoner and the insensible youth into the house, when he turned away, and muttered to himself:

"That was the blind boy in disguise, and he may be the bearer of the sealed dispatch. I must seek Colonel Maloff at once."

That ragged old man was the Czar himself, and he was abroad once more to consult with his chief of police. Paul and Rachel were dragged into a large room at the back of the house, where several of the Nihilists had assembled. Nick Paulus was the first to address the prisoners, saying:

"We have caught you in the act of shooting one of our brothers, who accused you of being spies of the tyrant."

"I shot your friend because we believed him to be a robber. This blind old man has a little money, and he hired me to guide him and to defend him with the weapon."

Julius Molt entered the room at the moment in his rough attire. After staring at the blind man and Rachel for a time, the young rascal drew Paulus aside and said to him:

"I have seen that old fellow entering Colonel Maloff's private office, and he always had a little dog with him. He is a police spy."

Paulus stared at the blind lad in turn and then sprang toward him to tear the false beard from his face.

"What fools we all are. This is Paul Kosko himself, and who is his companion?"

"May I sink to perdition," cried Julius Molt, staring and springing at Rachel, "if this is not the pretty actress I have been making love to, and the boy who tricked us at the village."

Paul and the girl were thoroughly searched, but the important documents could not be found on them. The Nihilists there assembled then decided to torture the prisoners into confessing what had become of the dispatches, and Julius Molt, his mother, and Brower were appointed to carry out the cruel punishment. Paulus addressed the Jewess, saying:

"Is not your real name Rachel Wolfe?"

"It is, you wretch, and I will live to put you to death for murdering my father."

The prisoners were dragged down into a large cellar, where a bright fire was burning in an open stove. Two large pokers were placed in the stove by Julius Molt and his mother, the young wretch crying:

"I will make certain of blinding the young dog now."

The prisoners' arms were bound behind them, and Brower held the blind lad. Another Nihilist held the brave girl, while Paulus and the others awaited upstairs. Maria Molt was the first to draw the red-hot poker from the fire, and she approached Rachel, crying:

"Will you confess where the documents are, or must I burn your handsome eyes out?"

"I will not confess, cruel wretch."

"Then suffer, treacherous spy of a tyrant."

The cruel woman had raised the poker to the brave girl's face, when a cry of rage burst from the blind lad, and he tore himself away from Brower. The cords on the prisoner's arms gave way with a snap as he sprang at the cruel woman and tore the hot poker from her grasp, yelling:

"The struggle is not over yet, and the fiends will suffer."

Then he felled Brower with the poker. The barking of a dog was then heard above, followed by cries and pistol shots.

"The police are on us!" cried Julius, as he darted for the door, with the hot poker still in his hand.

CHAPTER XVI.—Where the Sealed Dispatch Was Found.

Then into the apartment rushed the emperor and the chief of police, followed by a strong force of armed men.

"Secure those wretches!" cried the ruler.

"Leave this young wretch to me, sire!" cried Paul, as he dealt Julius a fearful blow across the eyes. "He sought to blind me, and I will slay him!"

"Spare my son!" cried Maria Molt, as she glared at the emperor.

The great ruler stared down at the woman as he cried:

"Is it you, countess?—and is this traitor your son?"

Julius Molt was lying on the ground, groaning in agony, when he raised his head and cried:

The Czar glared at the woman and then at her son, crying:

"You are mad fools, as I trusted you both well. Secure them, and see to that fellow lying there."

Another groan escaped from Julius Molt, and he glared up at Paul as he inquired:

"Will you not confess that you can see, as how could the blind fight as you did?"

Paul smiled and turned to the prostrate Brower, crying:

"Base Brower, will you not confess now that my father was true to the cause?"

"This fellow is dead," answered the chief of police, as he felt Brower's heart.

"Then my father is avenged," cried Paul, "and I will punish this young wretch."

Paul then spoke to his chief in low tones, and the man hastened from the cellar. Maria Molt was bound, but she bent down over her dying son, as she exclaimed:

"Oh, and must you die, just as we were on the eve of destroying the tyrant!"

"Peace, woman," said the emperor. "If the wretch knew that I am his father, he deserved death as a traitor."

The chief of police then entered the cellar with a wig in his hand. It was part of the disguise used by Paul on being captured. The man handed the wig to the youth, as he inquired:

"Is this what you want?"

Paul examined the wig and then drew forth a small packet, as he answered:

"The fools were baffled. Sire, this is your sealed dispatch and the answer to it from General Tosco, who is now dead."

The emperor seized the important document and hastened to read the answer from the dead general, when his eyes sparkled as he exclaimed in excited tones:

"The plot is baffled, and the plotters will suffer. A few words to you, Maloff."

The Czar gave some hurried instructions to the officer in subdued tones, and the man left the cellar, saying:

"You will be obeyed, sire."

The great ruler then drew Paul aside and inquired about his adventures. Paul made a hasty recital, giving full credit to Rachel for the part she had played throughout.

"I will confess to you, sire, that I can see with one eye since the night that young wretch attempted to burn my sight away."

The Czar seized the lad's hand, as he said to him:

"I will keep your secret, if you so desire, brave lad. What favor can I now grant you, as you have saved my life and all dear to me as well."

Before Paul could answer the emperor a shot was heard above, followed by a cry of agony, and then the girl's voice could be heard, exclaiming:

"Thus do I avenge my dear father. Nick Paulus, I swore that I would slay you, and I have kept my oath. A life for a life is our doctrine!"

The emperor rushed upstairs, followed by Paul, when they found the Jewish maiden in the hall, standing over the prostrate form of a man. That man was the famous Nihilist, who had several times attempted to take the life of the emperor. The girl dropped the weapon on the floor and bent down over the prostrate man as she continued:

"He is dead, and my task is accomplished, sir. I can serve you no longer as a spy."

"You are a brave girl," answered the emperor, "and I am ready to grant you any request you may make."

"Then pardon the young man who lies wounded by my hand in that room, sire. He is a

Nihilist, but he is a noble youth, and his father is now serving in Siberia."

"I will pardon the father and son also, out of gratitude to you, brave girl, and I will reward you otherwise, as you have slain my worst enemy."

When they returned to the cellar Julius Molt was dead. Maria Molt and her daughter were sent out of the city that night, and they retired to the cottage near Moscow. That woman was once a countess in Germany, and she believed that the Czar would make her his wife. On the following morning St. Petersburg was fearfully excited over the arrest of many prominent citizens and soldiers. Men holding high positions were thrown into prison and afterward sent to Siberia. Some two years after the attempted plot the Czar left his place in a carriage surrounded by his officers. On passing along the canal two fearful explosions took place, and the emperor, who had alighted from his carriage after the first report, was mortally wounded. Within an hour after the explosion a woman was seated in an old house near the scene of the assassination, and muttering.

"I planned that well, and the tyrant has perished. I now live only to avenge my son!"

A knock was heard at the door, and a young man with a full beard, wearing spectacles, entered the door.

"Who are you, sir, and what do you want?" demanded the woman, who was no other than Maria Molt.

"I am an officer, and I came to arrest you, madam."

A cry of rage burst from the woman as she struggled with the man, when a young girl rushed into the room, saying:

"What is the trouble, mother?"

"This wretch has come here to arrest me for a crime, Nadine."

The young girl stared at the young man for a moment before she exclaimed:

"Oh, Paul, Paul! Remember that I once saved you from your enemies, and release my mother."

"And is this wretch Paul Kosko?" demanded the woman, as she glared at the young officer.

"Yes, madam, I am Paul Kosko," and I will release you on one condition only."

"What is that, you wretch?"

"Consent to give me your daughter's hand in marriage, when we will all away to France together, and strive to forget the dreadful crime perpetrated to-day?"

"I consent," answered the woman, "as you were but doing your duty in defending the emperor. I regret that I plotted against him now, but he treated me in a base manner."

Paul Kosko married the beautiful girl four weeks after, the stern mother having escaped from the country three days after the assassination. The young couple started for England, but Nadine never met her wicked mother again. On arriving in England they set sail for America, where Paul Kosko met one who had shared his danger when he was the bearer of the sealed despatch.

Next week's issue will contain "THE SWAMP RATS; or, THE BOYS WHO FOUGHT FOR WASHINGTON."

CURRENT NEWS

BISCUIT 100 YEARS OLD

An Indian biscuit, believed to be more than 100 years old, has been plowed up by Frank H. Hanks of Peru, Ind. The biscuit is a deer paunch stuffed with a mixture of meats. Indian lore tells of the burying of stuffed deer in days of plenty, to be dug up in lean days.

MINISTER GETS A BIG TIP

It pays to be a head waiter, the Rev. Fred F. Brown, pastor of the First Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tenn., and one of the most prominent Baptist ministers in the South, believes. When the Good Fellowship Club of the church gave a dinner to the Woman's Missionary Society, Dr. Brown served as head waiter.

At the conclusion of the dinner he was handed a "tip" from the women, a check for \$1,500. Dr. Brown was told to use it in defraying the expenses of his trip to the Baptist Alliance gathering at Stockholm, Sweden.

SNAP PHOTO IN A TEN-MILLIONTH

Through an apparatus operated by rapidly revolving mirrors, Dr. J. A. Anderson, a member of the staff of Mount Wilson Observatory, can take a photograph with an exposure of one ten-millionth of a second. Dr. Anderson disclosed his discovery before members of the American Physical Society at a session held at the California Institute of Technology.

The instrument which was built at the observatory and is in successful operation, is usually set at one ten-millionth of a second, but by adjustments the speed can be increased to one-one-hundred-millionth of a second in rare instances.

"JAPANESE" REGIMENT IS LOYAL TO THE UNITED STATES

It may be "the largest Japanese regiment outside of Tokyo," but in spite of the fact that it is composed almost entirely of young men of Japanese ancestry, every cadet is a loyal citizen of the United States.

The reference is to the R. O. T. C. unit at the McKinley High School, Honolulu, which has more than 700 cadets, the forbears of a majority of whom were born in the Japanese Empire.

It is, perhaps, one of the finest illustrations of the method by which the territory of Hawaii is carrying out an exhaustive program of Americanization. By virtue of having been born within the territory, every cadet of Japanese ancestry is a citizen of the United States, and they were among the first to bring about the establishment of an R. O. T. C. unit at the school when it was suggested.

The McKinley unit excels in drilling. It has its own band, organized under army direction, and a splendid drum and bugle corps. During the recent session of the Legislature it was reviewed by the lawmakers.

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The Vanishing Of Val Vane

— Or, —

THE TROUBLES OF A BOY MILLIONAIRE

By WILLIAM WADE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XXIV.

Conclusion.

Lying on the stone floor of a cave, bound hand and foot, was Val Vane at the time Jack and Ellen with Mr. Masterson came dashing into Cross Creek in their car.

He had been brought there by Jerry and Mike, who drove him to a certain point on the mountain where they left their team with an old colored man, the rest of the distance being covered on foot.

Val was tied up as soon as his tormentors got him inside, Jerry displaying the greatest brutality as he did it.

Little had been said to him on the journey; since entering the cave not a word had been spoken. Mike was very tired and half drunk. He flung himself down and promptly went to sleep, while Jerry filled a pipe, and lighting it, sat smoking in silence for over an hour, and Val remained silent, too, wondering, as well he might, what the end of it all was to be.

At last Jerry got up, and knocking the ashes out of his pipe, growled out:

"Why the mischief don't you say something, young feller? Youse give me de creeps. If I had as much dough as you are given credit for, hang me if I'd lay there long."

"What do you mean by that?" asked Val, quietly. "That you can be bought to set me free?"

"Sure! What else? Every feller has his price. I've got mine. While dat guy lies dere snoozin' dere hain't de least reason why we shouldn't be on de move, you an' me, if only you bid high enough."

"Is that so?"

"Of course."

"But I have no money with me."

"What odds? I can help you to make a get-away. I can go to New York along with you and once there you can cash in—see? Now, then, do you want to know my price to put you over and save you from Dubey's hands?"

"You interest me. Name it."

"One million; no more, no less. Just one million."

Val was silent. It seemed too absurd.

"Pay it?" demanded Jerry, after a little.

"I can't put my hand on a million at a moment's notice. You ought to know that."

"Know what'll happen if Ralph Dubey catches

you here? He's a-comin'. May be here any minute. Know what will happen, I say?"

"Tell it."

"You'll sign them papers and then he'll kick you out of this here cave—biff! Just like that! It's only a thousand feet to the bottom out there—see?"

Val knew that a precipice began right outside the cave.

"He means to kill me anyway, then?"

"He certainly does. I'm giving it to you straight. So you see you better make up your mind to part with one of your many millions and save your life."

"And you will take me right out of here if I consent?"

"I will—I swear it."

"What security can I give you that I'll keep my word?"

"I don't ask none. I shall stick to you like a brother. If you welch on me I'll kill you—that's all."

"Bang!"

A shot rang out through the cave and Jerry fell heavily.

"Gee! I'm a-goner!" he groaned, and then as Ralph Dubey came striding forward with a smoking revolver in his hand he seemed to sink into unconsciousness; and Mike slept through it all.

"There's one traitor who has earned his reward," said Dubey, coolly. "I heard every word he said. He could not have saved you, my much beloved cousin. You two would never have got farther than the foot of the rocks leading up to the hole. Confound the snorts of that drunken pig. I've a good mind to silence him, too! Well, Val, my time seems to have come. I'm not so particular now whether you sign or not since Lorraine and I have come to an understanding, and he has suggested a scheme which will work out as well as mine. Still, if you will sign I—— Help! Mike! Save me!"

Val clutched at a crevice in the rock floor and held on desperately, and he had need!

Suddenly Jerry sprang to his feet. Blood was streaming down his coat from a wound in the back, but the man still had strength enough to clutch Ralph Dubey by the throat and to try to force him out through the wide opening close to which Val lay.

Dubey stumbled over the boy and they both fell on Val; the struggle was but a matter of seconds and then, locked in each other's embrace these two scoundrels vanished and a fearful cry rang out.

And Mike slept through it all. He was still sleeping when Val opened his eyes and realized what he had escaped.

The boy lay there all weak and nerveless. All that he had endured since he struck Cross Creek seemed to pass through his brain like moving pictures on a screen. He closed his eyes, but still he seemed to see, and strange to say there was one person whose face did not come and go as did the others.

It was the girl Anna Wheelock. In fancy she was standing beside him.

"Courage, Val! Your troubles are all over," the boy seemed to hear her say.

(To be continued.)

GOOD READING

TANNING VATS 100 YEARS OLD

Workmen excavating a sewer on Plum street, Portland, Me., have unearthed tanning vats that are at least 100 years old. Pine planks of which the vats are constructed are as sound as the day they were laid, apparently. A small piece of leather was found in one of the vats.

SERVICE RECORD BROKEN

All records for length of service in the same job have been broken in France by Alexis Fauchon, a farm-hand of Glos, in Normandy, who has completed seventy-six years in the same position. Fauchon, who is eighty-five, entered the Mouton Farm when he was nine as a herder. He is now serving the great grandson of his original employer.

FINDS RING IN GIZZARD

When Henry Wagaaner of Peoria, Ill., lost a \$250 diamond ring recently, he reported the loss to the police, who learned the ring had been missed soon after he fed his chickens. They advised him to search his chickens. Wagaaner did.

After killing eighteen he found the missing gem in the gizzard of one. He has invited his neighbors to a chicken dinner.

HISTORY OF GOLD LEAF

The process of making gold leaf has been known since the eighth century B. C. It is found in connection with the most ancient known mummies, having been used for covering teeth, tongue, skin, etc. Sometimes it is also found on the coffins. Gold leaf was also used on the tomb and monuments of ancient Egypt. In the eleventh century it seems to have attained as high a degree of perfection as to-day.

A POSTAL IMPROVEMENT

Another time and labor-saving device for use in expediting the mails has passed the experimental stage and is being tested by the Post Office Department. The device will pre-cancel stamps put up in coils for use on other than first-class mail by large mailers, before the stamps have been affixed, and will then recoil them in the original sized coil. Heretofore many large users of such mail have purchased uncanceled stamps in coils which were then placed on outgoing mail by stamp-affixing machines already in general use, necessitating the running of such mail through the cancelling machines at the post-office. With the new device in operation, however, the stamps would be purchased already canceled. The mail with the canceled stamps affixed would then be sorted and tied in bundles by the mailer according to destinations and sent to the post-office where it would go to the trains, leaving the cancelling machines at the post-office free for other work. The new device is called the pre-

cancelling machine. Various types have been developed by a number of manufacturers to a point which the Department believes warrants giving them a try-out.

THE SCOTLAND YARD SYSTEM

"That lost and found property department at Scotland Yard is one of the best things they have in London," said a woman who has spent much time in England. "Last summer I had experience with it. I fell into a sort of habit of losing things. First it was a valuable umbrella. I did not miss it until I got to my hotel after an after theatre supper. The next morning I made by husband take me to the theatre and two restaurants where we had been the night before, but without result. Then an American friend suggested Scotland Yard. I went there, and there it was. It had been turned in by a cab driver. Twice afterward I lost that umbrella and got it back in the same fashion, each time leaving as a reward for the cab driver a per cent. of the value of the umbrella, as required. Then I lost a fine pair of opera glasses and I got them back. It is an excellent system the police over there have of encouraging honesty. A cab driver who finds anything in his vehicle is required to turn it in, and he knows that if the owner claims it he will be rewarded."

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INTERESTING RADIO NEWS AND HINTS

The Reinartz Receiver and Amplifier

No circuit has aroused more interest among amateurs than the Reinartz radio receiver. It is small, compact, simple to construct, and not costly, as it requires only very few parts. This receiver will do almost everything that the more expensive sets will do, if constructed and tuned correctly. Any boy could make one, as all the instruments are bought ready made. You only have to put them in their proper places and wire them together. It does not require much skill to do that, as everything is laid out on the diagram in its best position. If you fold the plan lengthwise, just over the lamps, and bend upward the part containing the jacks, rheostats and condensers, you can see how it looks when finished. The Reinartz coil, at one side in the drawing, really sets on the baseboard behind the 23-plate condenser, but the taps from it go up over the

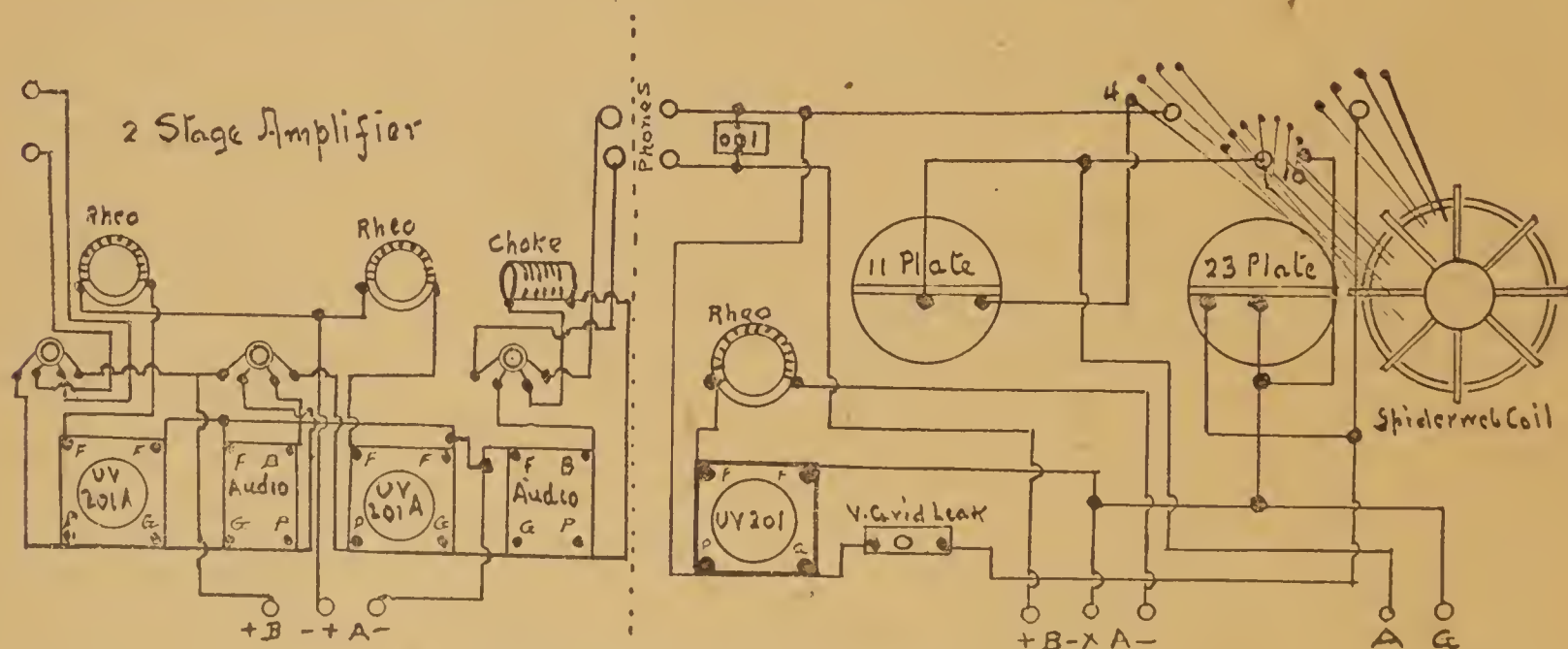
A close study of the hook-up printed below will show two separate instruments separated by an upright dotted line. You can make one or both instruments, as you please, but with the amplifier you get much louder signals.

The diagram shows you the receiver and the amplifier wiring just as it would look if you were viewing it laid flat on a table.

For each one you will, however, need a baseboard and a drilled panel to hold the various instruments.

Let us examine the receiver first. To build it you will need:

- 1 Panel 6 x 10 inches, rubber or Bakerlite.
- 1 baseboard 6 x 9 inches $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick.
- 1 UV-200 or 201 lamp and socket.
- 1 23-plate variable condenser (vernier).
- 1 11-plate variable condenser.
- 1 vernier rheostat, 6 to 8 ohms.
- 1 variable gridleak.
- 1 001 mica condenser.
- 1 switch.
- 18 switch points.



The Reinartz Receiver and Amplifier

condenser and are attached to the back of the switch points, as indicated. Before boring your panel make an angle of panel and baseboard, and set up the various instruments to see where they had best be placed, in order to keep the leads as short as possible. Then they can be assembled where they belong. The shorter your wiring is from one instrument to another, the better your set will work. The lamp sockets can be set about an inch away from the panel to best advantage, and this helps to shorten the wiring. Where possible bend your busbar first, with slightly rounded angles, and force it into the spaghetti afterward, as the spaghetti is liable to break at the angle if bent with the wire between the jaws of a pair of pliers. Try to do all your work neatly, so you can take pride in showing it to your relations and friends when it is finished.

7 binding posts.

1 Reinartz spiderweb coil.

Some busbar and spaghetti.

The lamp socket, gridleak and coil are fastened to the baseboard, also the battery ground and aerial binding-posts.

The panel carries the two condensers and rheostat, the switch points and the switches.

The 001 condenser is joined between the wires ending behind the phone posts, the rheostat is below it, and the lamp stands behind the rheostat. Be sure to join the gridleak close to the grid terminal of the lamp socket.

The spiderweb coil is fastened behind the 23-plate condenser (as stated before) above which the switches are placed as shown. When everything is assembled the spiderweb coil leads are the last to go on. Four go to one set of switch

points, four to the other, and ten to the middle set. The coil was drawn at one side to show you how it was connected, but a bracket holds it to the baseboard. You will notice a wire end is soldered to switch point No. 4 on one side, and another to No. 10 of the middle set of switch points. The inside of the panel should be shielded with copper tissue stuck on with shellac, but the copper must be cut away from around all the instruments, leaving at least $\frac{1}{4}$ inch clearance. You must solder a piece of copper wire to the shielding and fasten the other end to the ground binding-post. The connecting wires must be insulated by encasing them in spaghetti, and they must be bent at various angles to avoid running any two parallel with each other, excepting where they run to the battery, aerial and ground posts. Keep them as far apart as you can.

If you wish to build the amplifier, too, you will require the following articles:

- 1 panel 6 x 10 inches.
- 1 baseboard 6 x 9 inches.
- 2 201 or 201A lamps and sockets.
- 2 audio transformers 5 to 1.
- 1 choke coil.
- 2 double circuit jacks.
- 2 rheostats.
- 7 binding-posts.
- Busbar and spaghetti.

The two rheostats and three jacks are mounted on the panel and the choke coil on the back of the panel. The lamps and transformers are secured to the baseboard a couple of inches apart. It is safer to have the primary of one transformer pointed one way and that of the next transformer at an angle with it.

The choke coil can be made by winding 30 turns of No. 26 double silk-covered copper wire on a pasteboard tube $1\frac{1}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{4}$ inches. If the reception is not clear unwind or add a few turns of wire to the coil until it is corrected. These choke coils, like the spiderweb coils, can be bought of dealers in radio supplies if you do not wish to make one.

When soldering this set, use as little flux as possible, and be sure to avoid acids, as they corrode the wires. Solderall is a flux. It is cheaper and better to buy ready-made coils and flux than to try to make them. When using the amplifier with the receiver you must join the two with two pieces of copper wire from the phone posts on the receiver to the input posts on the amplifier, and use the posts at the extreme right-hand side for your horn. If a plug is used, the right-hand plug hole or the posts are for a horn connection, as the noise would be too loud for phones, but the phones can be plugged into either of the other two jacks.

The tuning operation of this set requires fine adjustment. The condenser dials must be turned till all the plates are out, and the plate switch—the one at the right, should be on the middle contact point. The tuning switch in the center must be placed on the center point, and the grid (left-hand) switch should be on the center contact. Then turn your rheostat until a hissing sound is reached. Next vary the center and left switches until you get the strongest signals. After that vary the right inductance switch and the left condenser until there is no distortion of the signals. Never burn your tube filament too brilliantly.

You will need a 100-foot aerial for this set, and if used in cool weather, late at night, very distant stations may be tuned in. The writer had no difficulty in picking up Miami, Florida, from New York, with a home-made set built from the plan given above.

You can use the same "A" or filament battery for both receiver and amplifier, but require two 45-volt "B" batteries, one for the receiver and the other for the amplifier to be attached where specified. This set has been arranged so that the battery, ground and aerial leads go to the rear, in order to keep cumbersome wires away from the panel.

In our next number we will have a diagram and directions to build a Cockaday receiver and amplifier.

ANTENNA CANNOT SERVE TWO

One antenna will not serve two receiving sets, owing to the different characteristics of the receiving circuits and the difference in the wave lengths to which they are tuned. Two or more antennae can be erected on the same roof, but in such a case the wires should extend at right angles and about twenty feet away from each other. The characteristics of some circuits make them act as small transmitting sets as well as receiving, and the result is that the nearby antenna picks up interference radiated from the other wire.

SUPPLEMENTARY RESISTANCE

New tubes which have recently appeared on the market seem to have created considerable confusion in the mind of the average radio listener relative to the use of rheostats for proper control.

There are four tubes which require special consideration. They are the UV-201-A, UV-199, Cunningham 301-A and Cunningham 299. The UV-201-A and Cunningham 301-A are designed to operate with a six-volt storage battery in connection with a 4- to 6-ohm rheostat. However, a higher resistance rheostat will serve more efficiently to keep the filament voltage as low as is consistent. The UV-199 and the Cunningham 299 operate on three dry cells in series and require a 30-ohm rheostat. Practically all of the other tubes function with a standard 4- to 6-ohm rheostat and for that reason the majority of "A" battery rheostats on the market have a resistance of 4 to 6 ohms.

If the operator desires to use one of the three volt tubes in connection with a 4- to 6-ohm rheostat he can do so by adding a small variable 25-ohm resistance unit to the rheostat already on the set. This supplementary resistance transforms the 4- to 6-ohm rheostat to a 30-ohm rheostat. The supplementary unit can be connected between the negative terminal of the "A" battery and the rheostat. Resistance units of this type are now on the market.

A BIT OF ADVICE

When hooking up a set keep the grid leads as short as possible, and do not use acid to solder joints, as it slowly corrodes and ruins your wires.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, AUGUST 29, 1923.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

IT'S A BIG JOB FOR A BEE TO MAKE
A POUND OF HONEY

A Washington figure shark has estimated that to turn out one pound of honey, bees must have taken the nectar from more than 62,000 clover blossoms and that to accomplish this, there would be required same 2,750,000 visits to the blossoms by the bees. In other words, to collect sufficient nectar to make up one pound of honey a bee must proceed to hive, to flower and back again 2,750,000 times.

JAPANESE PEARLS INFERIOR

Something approaching consternation swept the London market when it became known that the Japanese were producing what were declared to be real pearls by introducing into one oyster a particle of mother-of-pearl sewn up in shell-producing tissue taken from another oyster. New York jewelers were not so readily driven into panic, and they now state that the unnatural stimulation induced by the method results in a pearl of distinctly inferior quality; held to the light, the difference is readily seen. The surface lacks the lustre and pinkish glow of the natural pearl; it has a dead, waxy appearance, and the texture is not so fine. As an additional precaution the X-ray is used; this never fails to differentiate the natural from the forced variety, and shows the nucleus of the latter to be large and solid instead of small and often hollow, as are the cores of natural pearls.

SWIMS LAKE ERIE IN 20 HOURS 15
MINUTES

Carbis A. Walker of Cleveland swam across Lake Erie, arriving at Lorain, Ohio, Aug. 2, at 5:30 A. M., from Point Pelee, on the Canadian shore, which he left at 9:15 A. M. Aug. 1. He roused himself from his exhaustion long enough to say say:

"Never again!"

Walker, who represents the Cleveland Y. M. C. A., landed at Lorain just 20 hours and 15 minutes after he started. He had traveled thirty-three

miles in the water. A skiff manned by four watchers accompanied him.

The powerboat Argus, which also traveled part way with Walker, lost the swimmer when it left him to take a sick newspaper man to shore.

The fresh water swim sapped Walker's strength. His legs were partially and temporarily paralyzed. He slept exhausted on a cot in the United States Coast Guard Station here.

"We were without a compass," he said when aroused, "and during the day followed a course directed by the sun and depended upon the moon and stars last night.

"Once in the night I was on the verge of giving up. It was when we hit a heavy fog and lost track of the moon.

"But I was nearing my goal and, tired as I had grown, something within me spurred me on and we sighted Lorain lighthouse at 9:30. The battle was the toughest from there in. I had to fight a choppy sea and there seemed to be a strong current that wanted to pull me to the west.

"At daylight we were about three miles out of Lorain and a new determination to reach the goal arose. I seemed to get renewed strength and made good time from there on."

LAUGHS

"That's what I call a Judas kiss." "What's that?" "One from my wife, to see if I have been drinking."

Browne—Why did you refuse to shake hands with Smith? Towne—He's a great secret society man, and I was afraid I'd get the grip.

Customer—I paid fifteen cents for that last cigar you sold me, didn't I? Clerk—Yes, sir. Customer—Let me have one for about one thousand dollars.

"Men's promises," the young wife said, between sobs, "are like pie crust—" "That's tough," said the young husband, and then she got angry enough to cry.

Minnie—What frauds these beggars are! I met a "blind" man, who said "Please give me a penny, beautiful lady." Mamie—Yes, he said that to make you think he really was blind.

"That new manager seems to be a big gun," said the stenographer. "Yes; and he is quick-firing, too," said the cashier. "I have already received notice that my services are not wanted."

First robber (who formerly lived in a boarding-house)—Sh! These people must be rich. Second Robber—Why? First Robber—I went into the pantry and found a strawberry shortcake with strawberries in it!

Claude—I thought you were not going to pay more than \$50 for a wheel. Maud—I didn't mean to when I went into the store, but he said if I'd take the \$60 wheel he would let me have a dollar pump for 89 cents.

INTERESTING NEWS ARTICLES

HELP TO REFOREST EUROPE

Seeds from American trees are being sent to Europe to renew forests destroyed during the war. The American Forest Association has supplied 25,000,000 seeds from Pacific Coast trees to England alone. These include Douglas fir, Sitka spruce, and Western larch, which seem especially suited to climatic conditions there.

PALESTINE CENSUS

A recent census of Palestine shows that 10 per cent. of the population is Christian. The total population, 757,182 approximately, equals that of Boston. Seventy-nine per cent. is Mahometan and 11 per cent. Jews. Jerusalem and Tiberius have more Jews than other cities. In the former, out of 62,000, 34,000 are Hebrews. Nazareth has 7,525 inhabitants, nearly two-thirds of whom are Christians, and in Bethlehem Christians predominate, there being 5,830, with only 818 of Jews and Mahometans.

The principal seaport, Jaffa, has about 47,000 people, of whom there are 20,000 each of Jews and Mahometans and about 7,000 Christians. The other large centers of population are very largely Mahometan.

The *Palestine Weekly*, a Zionist organ, declares that according to Roman figures this country has supported a population of 7,000,000, which is legend and not fact. When one considers that the area of Palestine is about equal to that of Vermont and that it has about an equal amount of arable land, one questions seriously whether, with the highest development of her natural resources, it will be possible for Palestine ever to support a greatly augmented population. Vermont in 1920 counted 352,428 people within the State.

NEW 10,400-ACRE N. J. PARK

New Jersey's new 10,400-acre park at High Point, N. J., the gift of Colonel Anthony R. Kuser, was opened recently. The reservation is at the highest point of Sussex County, and is 1,806 feet above sea level, at the north end of Kittatinny range.

The park affords a splendid view over three states—New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York.

The park land includes Marcia Lake, the state's highest body of water. It also includes the residence built by Colonel and Mrs. Anthony R. Kuser of Bernardsville, a number of years ago. The Kusers have deeded this tract with the building to the state for recreation purposes.

Under an act of the legislature Governor Silzer appointed a High Point Park Commission, with Wayne Dumont of Paterson as chairman, and John J. Stanton as secretary, and this commission has taken over the property for the state, and had charge of the formal opening. There was a luncheon at 1 P. M., in charge of the Highway Point Park Commission.

The Kuser residence, which is turned over to the state with the tract, was built in 1911, and stands in the center of High Point Park. It con-

tains several large rooms and many small ones. There are other buildings on the estate, all of which will fit into the scheme of recreation development. The residence stands at an elevation of over 1,600 feet, the highest site of residential occupation in New Jersey.

High Point Park is easily reached by motor or by rail over the Erie to Port Jervis, or over the Susquehanna and Western Railroad to Sussex.

Another way is by the Lackawanna Railroad to Newton or Branchville, and by motor from these points to Sussex and from there to the park. The park is six miles by motor from Port Jervis.

A SALT INDUSTRY IN THE BAHAMAS

Salt City, one of the Bahamas, like Lot's wife, was turned into a pillar of salt. This little group of islands known as the British West Indies stretch lazily out on the blue waters of the Caribbean under a still bluer sky. One of them is now owned by John McCutcheon, the famous cartoonist, who bought this "treasure island in the tropics" as a honeymoon goal and has made it his permanent winter residence. The very last of this group, so small as to look like a pin point on the map, is Turks Island, of which Grand Turk is the largest. Ten miles away is Salt City, a little strip three miles long and about only three-quarters wide. Here is a salt industry which has been in the possession of an American family for many years.

The present ruler of this diminutive salt domain is W. B. Harriot; he and his family are the only white people on the island. It is like a feudal estate whose serfs are blacks. These three hundred and more inhabitants are all engaged in shipping salt for export trade.

The island is shaped like a shallow bowl. Huge pumps force sea water into the interior, where the sun evaporates the water and leaves a residue of salt. This is then collected, ground and shipped. Men and boys use varying shaped rakes to collect the salt from these ponds and load it into carts, when it is taken to the beach and deposited in pyramidal piles. After exposure the salt soon gets very hard and the men use pickaxes to break it up so that the women can fill the bags. These bags are then placed in carts and carried to the lighters and taken out to the ship; for, since even the beach is salt instead of sand, all vessels lie almost a mile from land. Each bag holds half a bushel and these are emptied and brought back for refilling, the salt being shipped in bulk.

The architecture of this salt island is unique. A two-story bungalow has its upper story made entirely of open shutters, while the entire first floor is filled with salt. The curious reason for this is that the salt serves as ballast and often keeps the whole house from blowing away in a sudden hurricane, which in these tropical islands happens along with the fickleness of an April shower.

At Grand Turk the British Government also ships fiber as well as salt. This town boasts a library, tennis courts; yes, and even a jail.

HERE AND THERE

CANNON-BALL IN TREE

While cutting down a tree on a farm near Blue Springs, Mo., Noah Russell and William Brown found a cannon-ball embedded in the trunk. It had apparently penetrated the trunk of the tree during the Civil War battle near Blue Springs and had whitened with age. The tree which died about two years ago had completely covered the cannon-ball and all evidence of its entrance.

FIRELESS RAILWAY LOCOMOTIVE

It was in Germany that the fireless cook stove was perfected, and there is now, it is reported, on foot in France a plan to develop an efficient fireless railway locomotive. It is equipped with a boiler after the manner of other locomotives, but the water in it is heated to the necessary temperature from a stationary plant. Enough power can be stored in it to operate it four hours for switching purposes in a railway yard, and it does not, it is contended, take more than fifteen minutes to charge it.

A BED OF GIANT SCALLOPS

The discovery by the United States Bureau of Fisheries of an inexhaustible bed of giant scallops off the Atlantic coast was reported by Commissioner Hugh M. Smith to Secretary Redfield recently. It is said to extend all the way from Block Island to the Virginia Capes and appears to be thirty miles or more in width. William M. Welsh and Dr. Henry B. Bigelow, two of the bureau's scientists, who have just completed a trip from the New England coast to Norfolk in the Fish Commissioner's vessel, the *Crampus*, said that at each haul the dredge brought up from one to three bushels of scallops. Another trip is to be made at once to map out the bed, but from the information already secured the fisheries officers feel confident that a virtually inexhaustible supply of edible bivalves has been found. Heretofore the giant scallop had been found only in spots along the Maine coast, although the small variety is common.

3½-POUND BOTTLE RAISES 15 TONS

In a steel bottle thirteen inches long and weighing three and a half pounds, there is stored enough power to lift 30,000 pounds at one operation. Walter S. Josephson, a consulting engineer, has perfected this portable device which makes use of a highly expansible fluid. A demonstration was given recently in Long Island City when a ten-year-old girl turned a small screw on the bottle and let loose enough pressure to raise a truck weighing 11,500 pounds.

Many uses have been suggested for the power bottle. For emergency purposes it could be applied to a piston jack for lifting a street car off a victim several seconds after an accident. It will facilitate operations around terminals, wharves and freight yards when other and more expensive stationary machines are not at hand. An attachment is supplied to enable the inflation of tires.

"Our appliances expound no new principle in nature. They simply take advantage of an old one and adapt it to new uses. We propose to establish stations where our containers can be inexpensively charged and to sell them at popular prices. With one of these steel bottles a man could climb to the top of a mountain or carry to any part of the world in his pocket a power capable of lifting fifteen tons at one operation. He may, if he desires, hold the power for ten years before he draws any of it off, and he will find there has been no change in its efficiency all that time."

BENDS TACKS WITH TEETH

The average man thrown out of work when he was forty would probably twiddle his thumbs and sit on the veranda. But Peter Gluntz of Antwerp, Minn., was not an average man. He sat in the kitchen looking for opportunities. One day he noticed his wife having great difficulty hammering a tack straight.

Tack after tack was inserted in the oilcloth only to be knocked awry by his pretty young wife. Gluntz plucked out a number of these and examined them. Save for a slight bend in the middle the tacks were perfectly good. Gluntz went back to his chair, but an idea began to work in his busy brain. There must be millions of spoiled tacks like that that could be reused if properly straightened out. Why not?

But how? Other men would have stopped right there, but not Peter Gluntz. To think with him was to act.

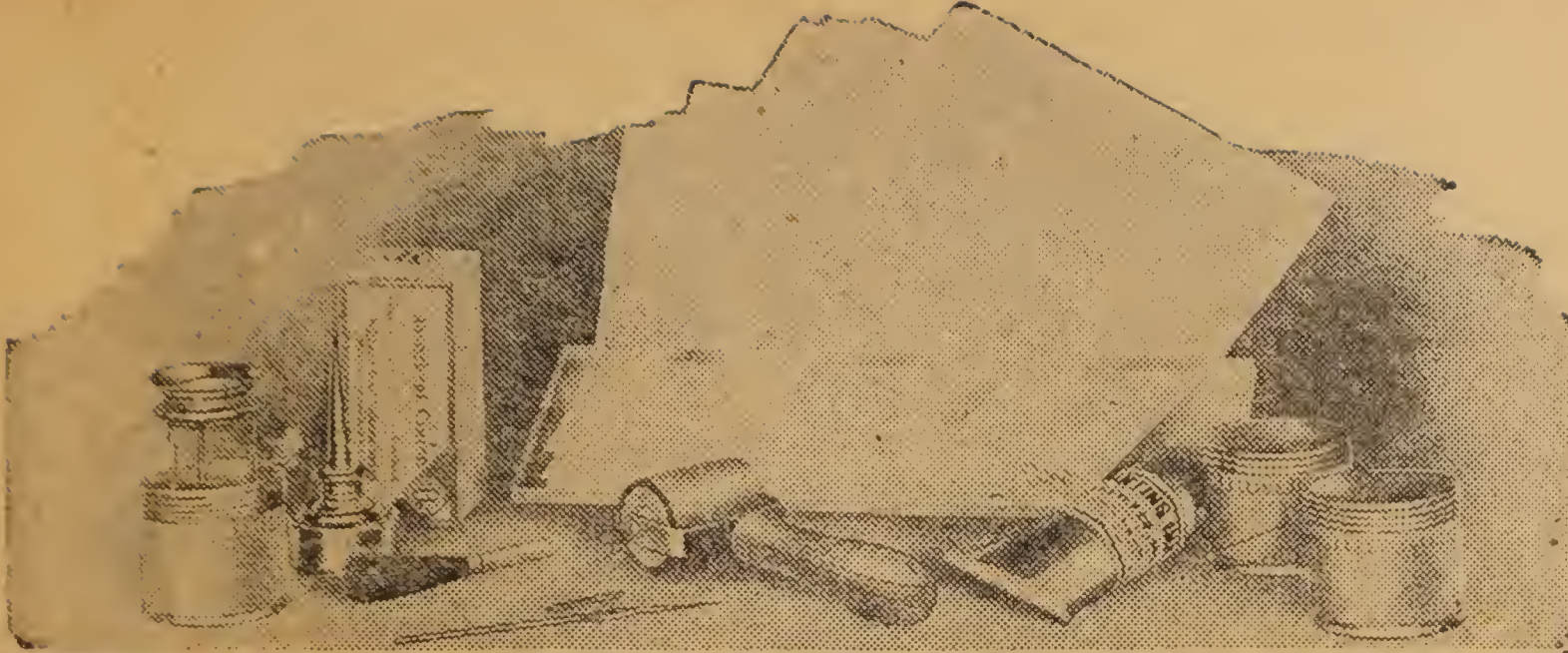
Gluntz had a wonderful set of plates made for him by a Kansas City dentist whom he had once saved from a bad scrape. Gluntz could crack nuts with his teeth. They never came out. That night he departed for Kansas City and had his friend cover the molars with steel. And thus was born a great new industry—tack straightening.

Gluntz had his den fitted out with a Morris chair and tack chute. At first only one tack could be straightened out at a time, but Gluntz was not discouraged. He set his teeth, resolved to succeed. Within a week he was gulping up mouthfuls of tacks at a time and discharging them straightened and ready for reuse into a crude, homemade tack carrier on the right.

Gluntz advertised for useless tacks all over the country. People were interested in the "Tack-head"—his trade name—and soon Gluntz had a big hill of tacks in his back yard. He converted his parlor into a shipping station for the straightened tacks and soon had salesmen on the road everywhere distributing his unusual product. The straightened tack, bearing the marks of Gluntz's teeth, was a self-seller.

There were obstacles, of course, such as fatigue of the jaws, blood poisoning and so on, but gradually he could afford to take months off at a time, leaving the business in the care of his wife, who by this time had also made a visit to the Kansas City dentist.

Gluntz has no children, so his only regret is that the business will have to pass into strange mouths.



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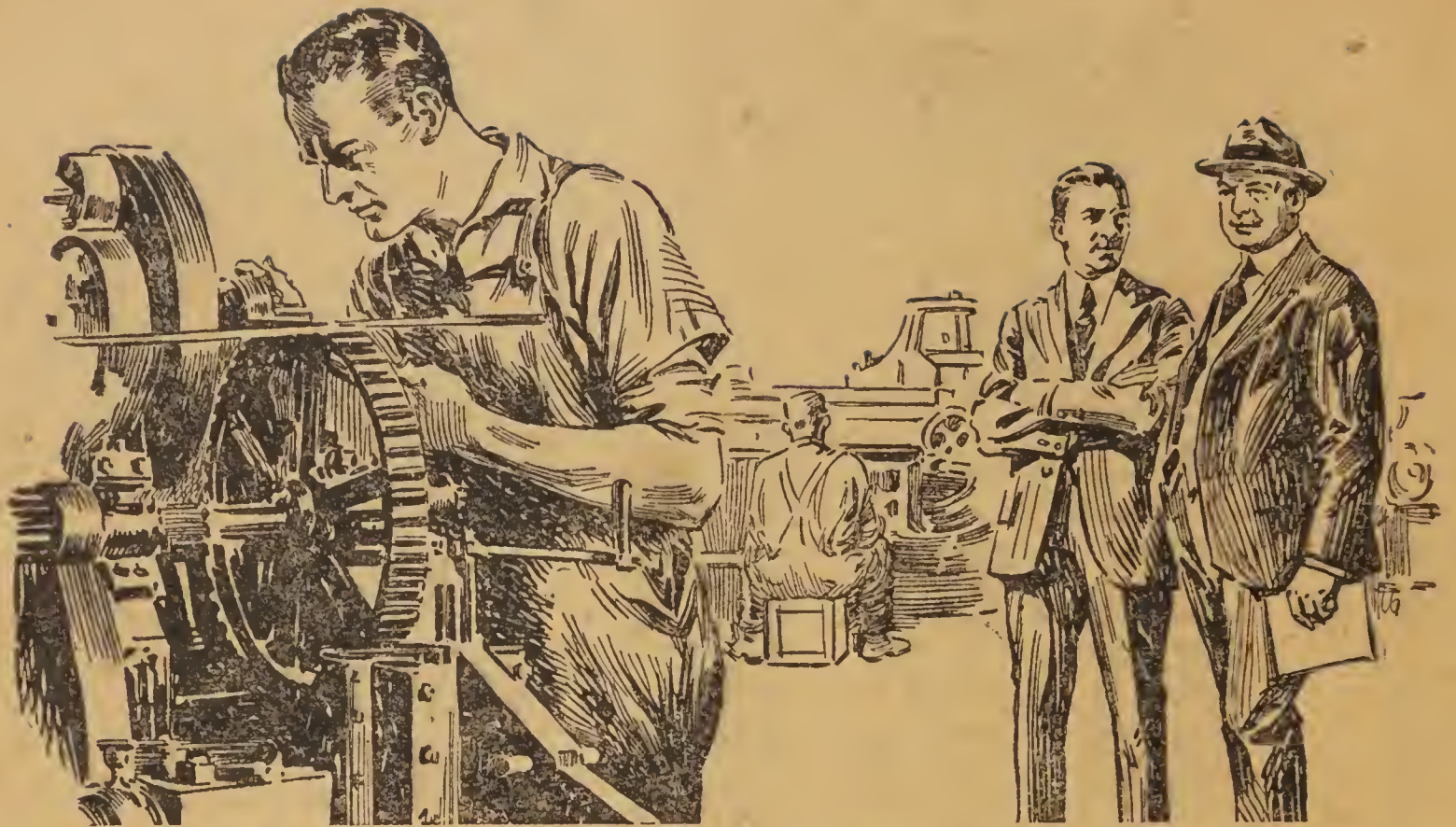
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“Then, gradually, I noticed an improvement in his work. He seemed to really understand what he was doing.

“One day he came into my office and said he had worked out a new arm for the automatic feeder. I was a little skeptical at first, but when he started explaining to me, I could see that he had really discovered something. And when I started questioning him, I was amazed. He certainly did know what he was talking about.

“So we sat down and talked for over an hour. Finally, I asked him where he had learned so much about his work. He smiled and took a little book from his pocket.

“‘There’s no secret about it,’ he said. ‘The answer’s right here. Four months ago I saw one of those advertisements of the International Correspondence Schools. I had been seeing them for years, but this time something inside of

me said, *Send in that coupon.* It was the best move I ever made—I knew it the minute I started my first lesson. Before, I had been working in a sort of mental fog—just an automatic part of the machine in front of me. But the I. C. S. taught me to really understand what I was doing.’

“Well, that was just a start. Three times since he has come to me with improvements on our machines—improvements that are being adopted in other plants and on which he receives a royalty. He is certainly a splendid example of the practical value and thoroughness of I. C. S. training.”

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WHAT BECOMES OF PINS?

It has been stated on what is supposed to be good authority that the world's total output of pins is at the rate of 200,000,000 a day. If so, it may seem surprising that the world isn't becoming carpeted with pins. We know how easily they are lost — where do they go to? Most of them decay into nothingness, for actually the pin is not such a time-defying article as it seems. Every pin dropped in a damp place soon turns into a few grains of rust. With new pins turned out by machinery in such immense numbers in this century they are not considered very valuable, but in the fourteenth century, when pins were first introduced they were valuable articles not to be lightly lost, recalls Everyday Science. An old law permitted the sale of pins on only two days in the year, the first and second of January. It was then the custom of all the womenfolk to buy their pins for the following 12 months. As is still customary they went to their husbands or fathers for the wherewithal, and hence the term "pin money."

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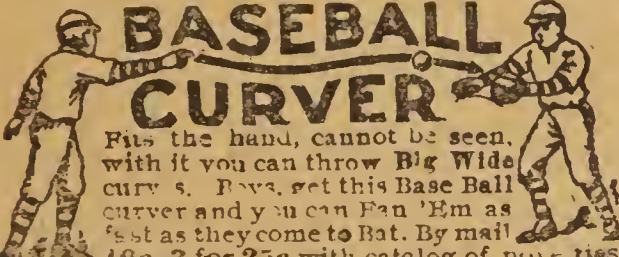
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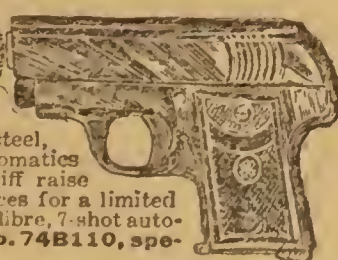
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