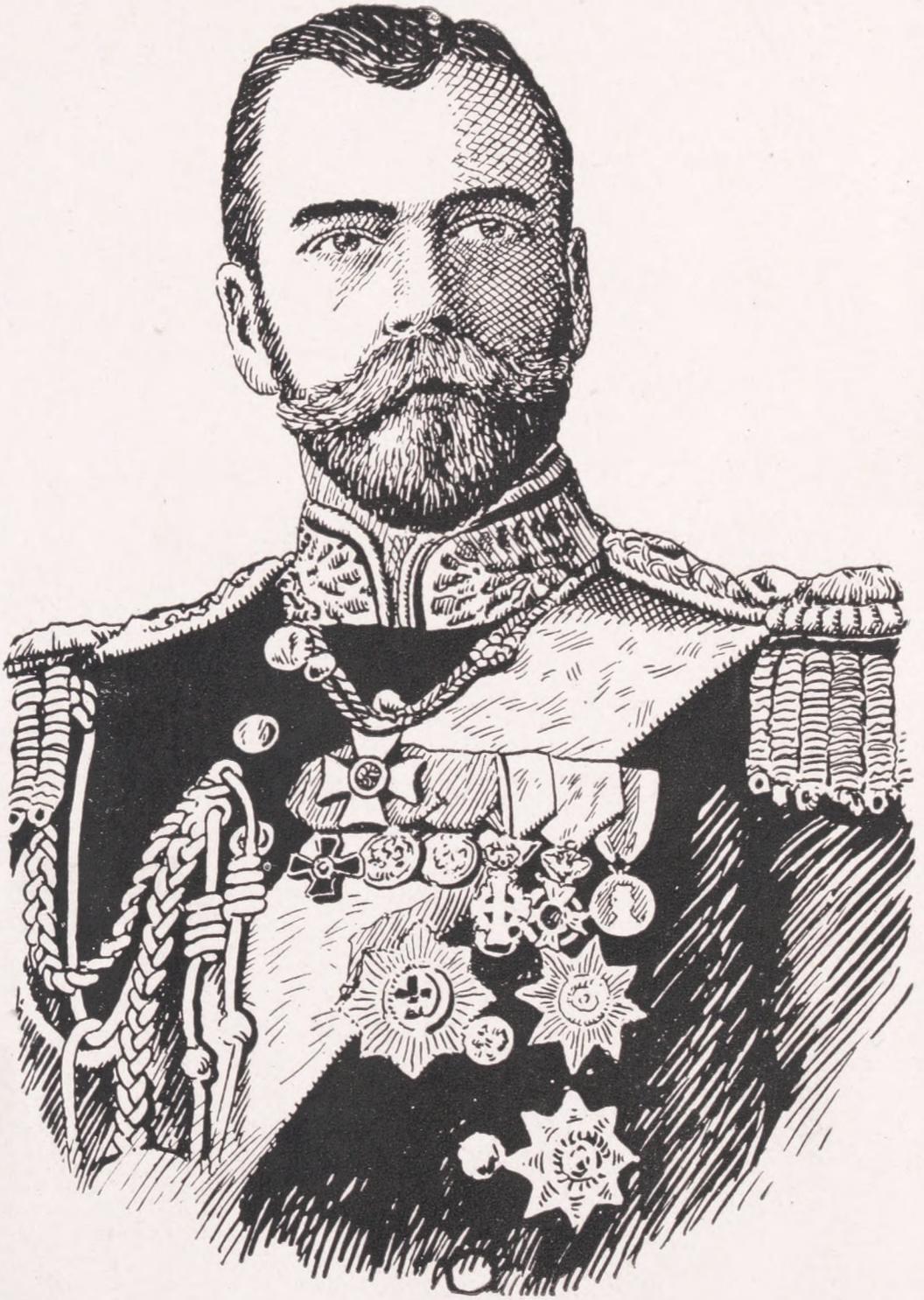


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“Poland shall be free.”

ELIZABETH

The Polish Exile

A Story Founded on Fact

*Translated from the French of Madame
Sophia Ristand Cottin*

Cottin, Marie (Ristean) called Sophie

BY

CLARINDA M. COPE



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*Gift-
Translator
S. 6-22*



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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE
MEMORY OF MY SISTER MARTHA,
WHO, BY HER GENTLE AND LOVING
CARE, MADE SMOOTH THE PATH-
WAY OF MY CHILDHOOD YEARS

PREFACE

THERE is less known of the history of Poland than that of any great nation. It is for this reason that I am giving an outline history of this country, believing that it will be of interest to the reader at this time.

In so short a space I can deal only with the important events of her long career; events which moulded her destiny and changed the map of Europe.

I have tried to make clear the fundamental reasons for her early growth and prosperity, and the causes which led to her decline and fall.

To Mr. N. L. Piotrowsky, authority on Polish history, I am indebted for some important points contained in the following sketch:

From the tenth to the eighteenth century Poland existed as a great and powerful nation.

From a simple agricultural people with a communal system of government, she had grown in the sixteenth century to be the greatest power of Eastern Europe.

In remote times Poland was made up of numerous petty suzerainties, each connected with the state, but acknowledging no feudal superiority or feudal dependence. No Polish noble was the vassal of a superior lord; even the retainer of every nobleman shared the political rights of his master. The meanest peasant had as full enjoyment of liberty as that accorded to the most distinguished subject. And herein lies the fundamental difference between the Polish constitution and those of the feudal states of the West and the despotism of the East.

Poland had homogeneity of race, unity of language and unity of traditions. She had national unity. She had all the requisites with which to build and hold a permanent place among nations except one. She had no coast defense. The lack of a strong natural boundary was the chief cause of her downfall.

For centuries she added to her territory and to her strength.

The right of habeas corpus was granted to her in the twelfth century about the same time that it was granted in England.

She had one of the first printing presses in Europe. After her union with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the sixteenth century she occupied more territory than that of any nation in Europe today except Russia.

Cracow, which was made the capital in the fourteenth century, was celebrated for its beauty of architecture, its palaces and works of art.

The university, built in 1364, had sixty-nine professors and fifteen hundred students annually.

Her library contained one hundred and forty thousand volumes and numerous manuscripts.

Here were trained poets, sculptors, artists and scientists. This famous seat of learning attracted students from all parts of Europe.

After the partition of Poland the castle, where kings were crowned, was turned into a barracks and hospital by the Austrians.

In 1609 the capital was transferred to Warsaw, a city of one hundred thousand inhabitants.

This splendid city with its beautiful river, its ample commercial resources, universities, schools of medicine and art, and scientific societies became the center of intellectual culture.

The university library, which was one of the largest in the world, was confiscated in 1794 and transferred to Petersburg, where it became the nucleus of the present imperial library. This historical city was surrounded by villas, palaces and battlefields.

Here was one of the most beautiful open-air theatres in the world, situated in a garden of seventeen acres, adorned with an artificial lake, fountains, statues and flowers. The beautiful national costumes of the Polish peasants gave a brilliant coloring to all public gatherings.

For more than a century Warsaw, the heart of the Polish nationality, was the football of the surrounding nations.

In 1655 Charles Gustavus, King of Sweden, took the city; in 1656 the Poles retook it. In 1702 Charles the Twelfth took it and it was retaken by Russia in the following year. The first partition was in 1772, the second partition in 1793 and the third in 1795. In 1806 Napoleon occupied Warsaw; in 1809 the Austrians took it; in 1813 the Russians recovered it and have held it since that time.

In the fifteenth century in the zenith of her power and glory, Poland sowed the seeds of her national decay.

The nobles began to wrest special privileges from the crown. They demanded exemption from taxes and the exclusion of the royal family from all high offices, reserving them for themselves.

The power of the King was circumscribed so that he became a mere puppet in their hands.

They appropriated all the land. The peasants and burghers were deprived of their communal possessions and became serfs.

The monarchy degenerated into a military aristocracy and then into an oligarchy of the nobles.

It was in 1454 that the great charter of the "rights and privileges of the nobility" was granted. Mischievous laws were enacted. It was declared by the General Diet that the decision of a measure should depend upon a unanimous vote instead of a majority. A single member or his deputy could annul the united resolution of all the rest of the assembly. This was called the "liberum veto." The peculiar character of the "liberum veto" made it difficult to enact measures beneficial to the state.

After the peasants and burghers were deprived of their rights Poland had no middle class, her trade fell into the hands of Jews and Germans, and between them and the nobles there was no common bond of sympathy. They did not understand each other.

Religious animosities were beginning to be aroused throughout Europe, and Poland did not escape. She was always tolerant with regard to religion. She did not believe in settling religious difficulties with the sword.

The order of the Teutonic Knights began to

send its missionaries through Poland. An attempt was made to convert Poland to the Lutheran doctrine and to the Greek Catholic Church, but Poland as a nation had long since accepted the Roman Catholic faith. For centuries she was the bulwark of Christianity in Europe and the protector of Western civilization.

It was against the breasts of Polish warriors that the Turks and Tartars broke their lances until they were finally crushed by the great John Sobieski under the walls of Vienna.

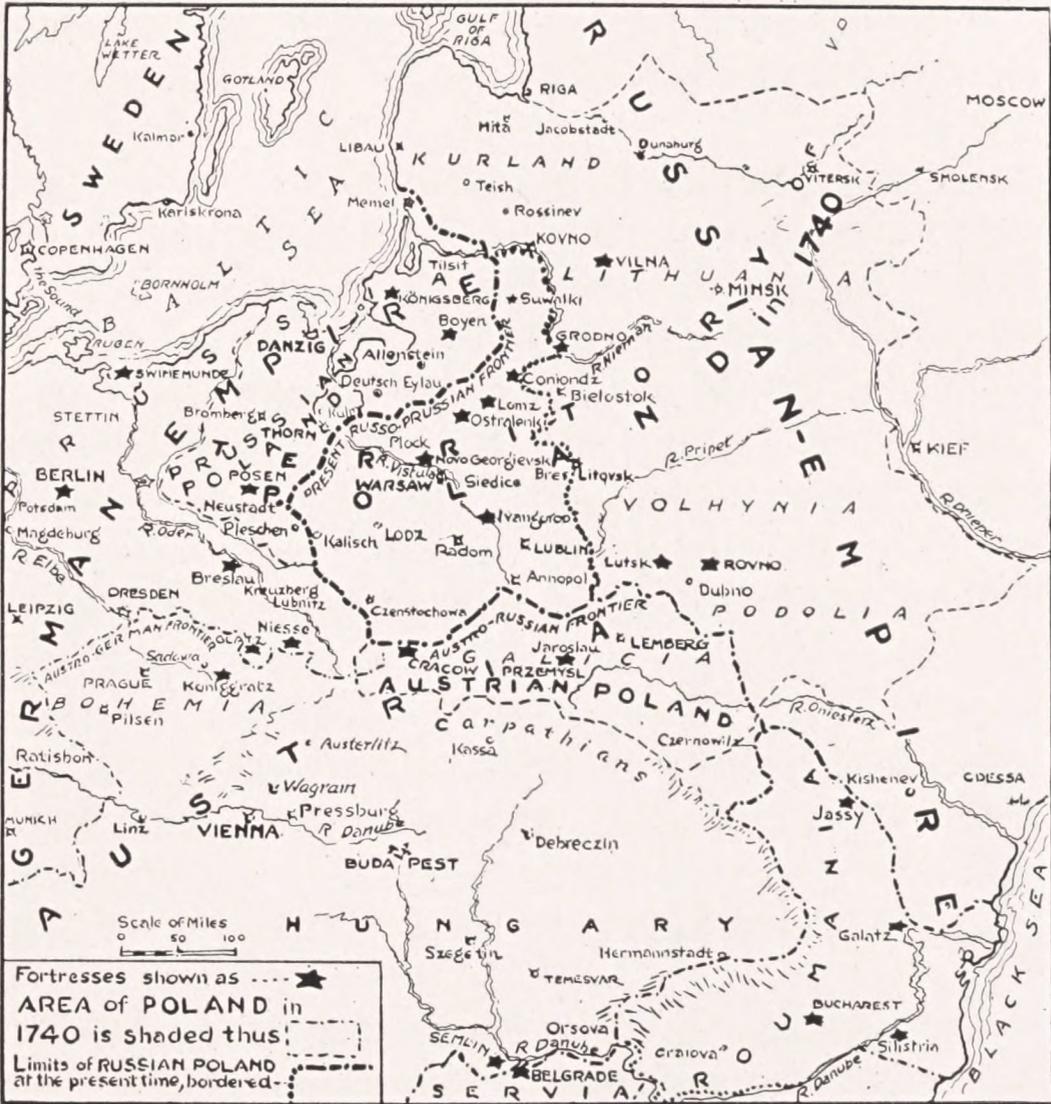
It was in the sixteenth century that Poland gave to the world Copernicus, one of its most illustrious astronomers, whose glory resounded through the world.

The crown had become elective. While the diet was in session for the election of a king the gallant Sobieski, who had just returned from a successful war against the Turks, came into the diet and proposed the Prince of Conde.

Some one shouted "Let a Pole rule over Poland."

The shout became universal, and Sobieski was elected by storm under the title of King John III.

Under the reign of this monarch, 1674-96, there was a temporary return of national prosperity, the confidence of the people was re-



stored and there was a revival of the national spirit, but the kingly power was neutralized by the absurd "liberum veto." The King wanted a large standing army which was needed to keep the Tartars and Mongols from overrunning Europe, but this and other important wishes of the King were ignored and the measures vetoed.

In 1683 these Mohammedan hordes, with an army of three hundred thousand men, invaded Germany and reached Vienna. With an army of seventy thousand soldiers the King met these Mohammedan forces and delivered Vienna from their clutches.

This was one of the greatest military achievements of the century.

The autocracy of the nobles prevented much needed reforms which otherwise would have been granted to the people during this reign. The King was constantly thwarted, and disappointed in his attempts. He could do nothing to awaken them to the dangers about them and the importance of preparing for national defense.

With his death the glory of Poland began to wane. In another century her sun had set.

During the eighteenth century Poland had intervals of peace and prosperity, but she was gradually losing strength. National spirit and national unity were lacking. On the eve of a

great crisis she had a weak King to wield the scepter. Fibers of strength she still possessed, but they were woven together by flimsy threads, by false ideals of liberty.

She had not deemed it necessary to keep a large standing army to protect her borders. Her impractical constitution put her to a disadvantage.

During the reign of the last Polish King, (Stanislaus Augustus Poniatowski) 1764-1794, the "liberum veto" was abolished, but through Russian influence was restored; the ruin of Poland had been resolved upon and the country was already drifting into the hands of her enemies.

Russian troops laid siege to the capital of Warsaw. The King entered into a humiliating peace by yielding a portion of her territory.

The people, maddened by the national dishonor, arose in arms, under the leadership of Kosciusko. With an army of fifteen thousand men he met the combined forces of Catharine of Russia, Frederick the Great of Prussia, and Joseph, Emperor of Germany, who, like hungry wolves, sought to destroy her, that they might add to their own empires. Overcome by superior numbers and their leader wounded, Poland was forced to surrender. Each conquering nation took a share of the spoils.

In 1895 Poland as an independent nation ceased to exist.

Thirty-five millions of people were left without a country they could call their own.

America has cause to bless the name of Poland. Some of her greatest Generals have fought in our own wars.

The names of Pulaski, Kosciusko, and Sobieski are familiar to all.

At the foot of the blood dripping altar of patriotism, Poland lies bleeding today; crushed and devastated, with property losses amounting to five hundred millions, fifteen hundred villages destroyed, and her women and children crying for bread.

The most tragic thing in the bloody conflict now raging in Europe is the position of the Polish soldiers.

Drafted into the army both in Russia and Germany, they are forced to meet, on the field of battle, Pole against Pole.

Czar Nicholas has promised those under his dominion that after the war "Poland shall be born again free in her language, her religion and her autonomy."

Russia lighted her torch of liberty ten years ago, when she established the duma.

The most bureaucratic government in the world is merging into the freedom of democracy.

In the Russia of today there exists a common fellowship such as in her past she has never dreamed.

All racial differences and enmities are lost sight of; bound together by common sorrows and mutual interests, her soldiers stand side by side on the field of battle, meet as brothers for the first time in the nation's history.

The civilized world is watching and waiting to know her doom; are giving their sympathy, their prayers and their tears, hoping that she may soon see the light of the new day.

ELIZABETH

THE POLISH EXILE

CHAPTER I

IN the northern part of Siberia are immense forests which extend nearly to the frozen sea. In this region are some mountains entirely barren, being covered with eternal snows. There are uncultivated plains where the earth never thaws a foot. The sad streams run through no meadows and see no blooming flowers.

Advancing toward the pole the cedar and fir and all large trees disappear. Some bending, creeping larch and birch, dwarfed by the severe climate, are the only ornaments which nature supplies to this desolate country.

Some marshes show a mossy covering as if nature sought to give expression to her expiring efforts, then suddenly all traces of vegetation disappear; yet in this scene of an eternal winter nature furnishes a magnificent display of aurora lights, frequent and majestic, un-

known to the people of the south. This meteoric phenomenon sometimes appears in the form of luminous clouds or arches, and again in wavy, shifting pillars of light reaching from the zenith to the horizon.

At the south of this frigid country is the circle of Ishim. Its surroundings are gloomy like its sunshine and melancholy like its climate. However, this region is called the Italy of Siberia because it has some warm days and the winter lasts but eight months.

When summer comes it is wonderful the speed with which the trees are covered with leaves and the plains with verdure; one can almost hear her advance so swift is her onward march.

In a few days she has awakened with her caresses all Nature's children. The buds of the trees burst into leaf and bloom, the flowers, laden with beauty, creep from their slumbering beds, and the breezes answer back to the notes of bird and insect. The birch trees exhale a sweet fragrance like that of the rose; spotted ducks, storks and wild geese appear on the lakes, the white crane plunges into the marshes and makes its nest in the solitary reeds; the squirrel, fox, hare, otter, sable, ermine, elk and other animals return from their winter's sojourn or emerge from their retreats in the forest; the birds come back to their sum-

mer quarters and begin their merry carols; and thus there are some happy days for these animate creatures which live in this desolate country. But for the exiles there are none.

In the government of Tobolsk, near the village of Saimki, in a forest, marshy and full of splashes of water on the shore of a circular lake, there lived early in the nineteenth century a family of exiles consisting of three persons: a man about forty-five, a wife still young in appearance and a daughter in the early freshness and bloom of youth. Except a poor Tartar country woman who served them, no one could enter their cottage, none knew their native country, their birth or cause of their banishment. The Governor of Tobolsk alone knew their secret. In placing these exiles under the care of his lieutenant established at Saimki he had given orders that they be permitted no freedom of outside communication and, above all, to intercept all letters addressed to the court of Russia.

The man was given the name of Peter Springer. The cruel severity toward this exile gave suspicion that this simple name concealed some great injustice and perhaps the identity of a man as illustrious as he was unfortunate.

Occasionally a traveler or hunter wandering in the neighborhood observed a man with dark,

piercing eyes, dark complexion and hair, with a general appearance half military, half royal; a brow furrowed by thought; an expression steadfast, silent and sad. And the stranger knew him for an exile.

Peter Springer built for himself and family a house of firwood and birch bark close by a mass of granite rocks which protected them from the sudden gusts of the north winds and the inundations of the lake, and these rocks also reflected the heat of the sun in the early days of spring; and in their clefts mushrooms sprang up, furnishing a substantial article of food.

Through the forest trees one might observe some heaths covered with tombs, the burial place of an ancient colony. These tombs had been plundered and the bones of the dead lay scattered round about. All knowledge of this colony would have remained in oblivion had not the jewels buried with them revealed their identity. At the east of the heath or plain a small wooden chapel had been erected by some Christians. Next to this chapel the tombs had been respected. Before the cross, which recalls all the virtues of man, they dared not profane the dead.

It was on these heaths that Peter Springer spent his mornings in hunting. Here the elk, marten, sable, ermine and other animals

roamed at large. In exchange for the fur he was able to procure from Tobolsk some necessary articles for housekeeping and clothing and books for his daughter.

When the snow melted away and the hot sun warmed the earth the family might be seen cultivating the soil. The small inclosure used for a garden was surrounded with a palisade of white and black elder, cornel tree and a species of birch esteemed in Siberia for its fragrant blossoms; the flower beds were bordered with shells by the hands of Elizabeth.

The strong winds bring to this region seeds of new species from the neighboring tracts. Thus are new varieties constantly struggling for existence. Springer made a collection of these flowers and protected them from the severities of winter. With their bloom he would decorate the brow of his daughter, saying: "Like you, Elizabeth, these flowers grow and embellish in exile; they flourish in a foreign land. May your lot be more fortunate than theirs."

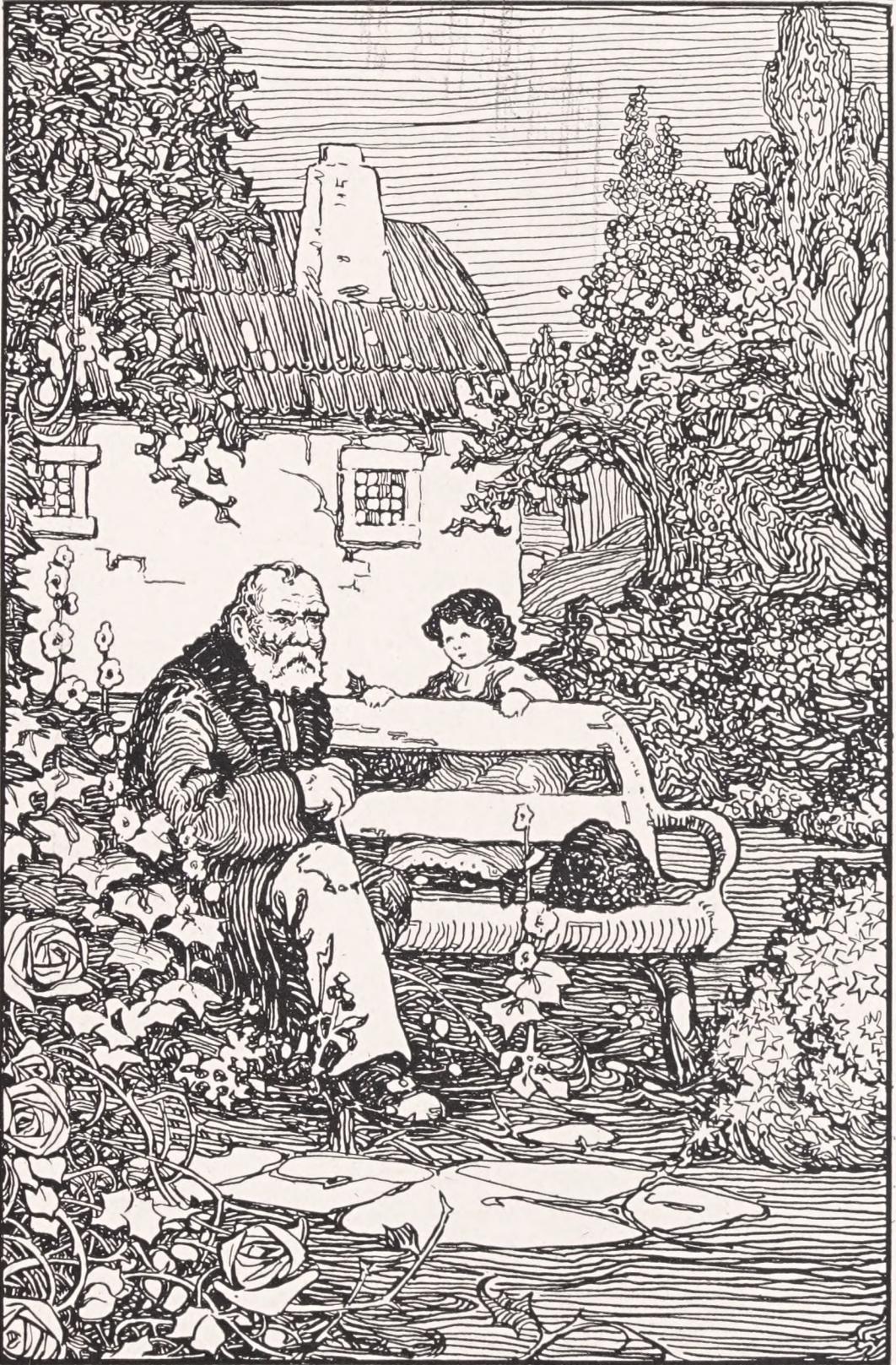
Except at times when he expressed to his wife and daughter tender and delicate affections or was explaining the daily lesson, he was as silent as the grave. For hours he would sit on a bench in the garden or at the window overlooking the lake buried in pro-

found thought. The caresses of his wife and daughter at such times rendered his sorrow more bitter. With intense feeling he would ask his wife to take Elizabeth away, as the distress was too great to bear, saying that he could be content if only his wife and child were free.

The gentle Phedora so loved her husband that she could have found pleasure even in exile if he had not grieved so.

Phedora, though past thirty, had retained the freshness and beauty of youth. Simplicity and grace of manner distinguished her as a woman of gentle birth and breeding. Her devotion to her husband and daughter taught her to anticipate their wishes in everything. Order and comfort reigned in their humble abode. The walls of the living room were decorated with drawings, the work of Elizabeth, and embroideries, the handiwork of Phedora. Elizabeth's room was decorated with shells, lichens and mosses, and such novelties as she found in her forest wanderings. The kitchen which served as dining room was occupied by the Tartar peasant woman, the family servant and only attendant.

Elizabeth and her mother made winter garments out of reindeer skin; cotton cloth procured from Tobolsk was made up after the fashion of peasants for summer apparel, and thus the days passed from season to season.



“For hours he would sit in the garden.”

When Sunday came Phedora lamented that they were not permitted to attend church and spent much of the day in prayer. While prostrate before the image of St. Basil she gained strength to bear with fortitude her own misfortunes and to console her husband.

The young Elizabeth, knowing no other life, was contented and happy. She gathered flowers, climbed the rocks in search of eggs of the vulture and hawk; she tamed the young wood pigeons by feeding and caressing them, and gathered from the shoals beautiful tinted shells which she used to decorate the garden borders.

She knew no sister, no brother, no playmate, but the dwellers of the forest; she had heard no music save the rustic melodies of the wood. When darkness came, and the winds sobbed in their passing or shrieked the miseries which they could not reveal, it sounded like music in her ears, for she did not know that she lived in the land of sighs.

In the electric display of the aurora lights, and the dazzling beauty of the ice-coated forest she took delight; but when she grew older she observed that her mother was often in tears and her father frequently sighed. When she questioned them about their past, they would reply that they regretted being so far from their native country.

The name of that country, their rank, the cause of their isolation they withheld from her, fearing that it might cause her unhappiness.

After the careless years of childhood had passed Elizabeth began to reflect on the possible cause of her parents' unhappiness.

She had sometimes pressed them to tell her of their past lives, but they had avoided answering her questions.

She sometimes overheard her mother address her father as Stanislaus. This was a familiar name in Polish history—the name of Poland's last King. In his teaching, her father had often dwelt with much intensity of feeling on the misfortunes of that nation.

Her father she suspected was a Pole and the country for which he and her mother sighed was that of Poland.

She determined to become more familiar with the history of this country that she might be able to unravel the mystery of her father's exile and form some plan by which to set him free.

This project became the controlling purpose of her life. She kept her secret, not wishing to disturb her parents until the time of her departure.

She had resolved to go to Petersburg on foot and alone, if need be, to beg of the Emperor her father's pardon. If she spent less time in

wandering over familiar paths and the forest resounded less frequent with her voice than formerly it was because she was intent upon relieving the grief of her parents.

CHAPTER II

IT was the middle of May. Summer had returned. Elizabeth was now past sixteen years of age. Feeling that the time had come for her to act she repaired to her favorite haunt in the forest to form systematic plans for the execution of her enterprise. Here seated upon a rock, underneath a canopy of larch, pine and overhanging vines she studied her map, or read from books, seeking such information as she deemed necessary to guide her on her pilgrimage to Petersburg.

She recognized impediments to her journey which must be overcome. She reflected that she had never passed the boundary of the district in which she lived. How could she travel over large stretches of territory, through forest, bog and impassable streams without a guide.

She would encounter people of unknown tongues and would each day be compelled to live upon the charity of strangers. Her father had spoken of mankind as inflexible. She dreaded the necessity of begging for charity.

Elizabeth became convinced that it would

be impossible to undertake the journey without a guide.

Living in a forest separated from the rest of society and in a house interdicted to every human being, outside its inmates to whom could she apply for aid, what steps could she take toward furthering her project?

Only the listening silence heard her questions and the breezes answered back in tremulous sighs.

The shadows of night closed in the embellishments of the day and the stars kept vigil while the maiden in exile slept and dreamed of the morrow.

The summer was passing and Elizabeth had not solved the difficulties which barred the way to the execution of her plans.

She recalled the fact that some years before her father had come near meeting with a fatal accident while hunting bear among the rocks bordering on the Tobol, and that he had been rescued by a stranger.

The young man was the son of M. de Smoloff, the Governor of Tobolsk, who came during the winter to the land of Ishim to hunt elk, sable and sometimes bear which are often found in the neighborhood of Saimki.

In this chase he had encountered Springer in danger and saved him from what might have been a fatal accident. Since that time the

name of M. de Smoloff was often mentioned in the home of the exiles. Elizabeth and her mother hoped at each return of the hunting season that some chance might give them opportunity to assure him of their gratitude, but they had hoped in vain. Since Elizabeth had become convinced that aid was necessary in carrying out her plot, she had often thought of the young Smoloff, who could better explain the details of the route from Saimki to Petersburg or advise the best way to deliver her petition to the Emperor; and should her flight offend the Governor of Tobolsk, who could better allay his anger or enlist his sympathy and prevent the punishment of her parents than his son? Thus did she recount all the advantages which might result from a meeting with M. de Smoloff, and she determined not to permit the hunting season to pass without an effort to learn if he was in the country, and if so, to seek an opportunity to talk with him.

During the summer months the thermometer in this region reaches ninety degrees, and the heat is almost incessant.

Grain planted at the close of May is ripe by the end of August. Thus nature is prompt in her provisions for harvest as if conscious of the shortness of the season.

In Siberia the winters are extremely cold,

even in the southern part. This severity arises more from its geographical structure than its latitude. The extensive plateaus of Central Asia prevent the moderating influences of the sea. The lowlands and elevated plains are exposed to the influence of the Arctic Ocean. The warm south winds have to cross the elevated plains of Persia where they deposit much of their moisture before reaching Siberia. If a current of warm air comes from the West it is felt only on the high lands.

Winter lasts eight months; trees are frozen to the heart; rivers are frozen to the bottom; the soil freezes many feet deep; the inhabitants find it necessary to wear a double thickness of fur indoors and an extra mantle of heavy fur on going out in order to resist the assaults of the weather. The storms often destroy whole herds of cattle, which are out of reach of shelter. Most wild animals go south for refuge during the winter months.

A heavy fall of snow congealed into a solid mass had covered the earth when on a bright morning in December Springer took his gun and started on a hunting trip. He embraced his wife and daughter and promised to come home before the close of the day. Night came and he did not return. Since the adventure which came near costing him his life this was the first time he had failed to return at the appointed hour.

The cold was extreme; the trees were encased in ice; the ground was as smooth as glass, but Elizabeth was accustomed to such weather and started out in search of her father.

In a few minutes she had reached the plain, where all was silent and desolate.

She heard the report of a gun, and ran in the direction from which the sound proceeded.

She saw a man in a bending posture apparently searching for something on the ground.

“My father, my father, is it you?” she cried.

The man turned hastily. It was not her father; she was frightened.

The stranger wore a hunting suit, was young, and of pleasant address. He looked at her amazed and then gently said:

“My child, are you alone?”

“I am in search of my father,” she replied. “Have you not seen him on the plain?”

He inquired the name of her father. “Peter Springer,” she answered.

“What!” he exclaimed, “Are you his daughter? I have seen your father not an hour since. He must be home ere this.

“You are in danger, child, here alone at this hour.”

“Oh, I fear nothing but losing my father,” she said.

Elizabeth hastened home not knowing until she arrived that the stranger had followed her.

Springer immediately recognized him and presented him to his wife and daughter as M. de Smoloff, son of the Governor of Tobolsk.

Phedora expressed great pleasure in the meeting, and thanked him most earnestly for the service he had rendered her husband while in danger on the rocks of the Tobol.

“Many times since then,” she said, “we have implored a blessing in your behalf.”

“Then your prayers have been answered,” he responded, “since I have been guided to this cottage. The act did not merit so great a recompense.”

Elizabeth was clothed in the style of a Russian peasant. She wore a petticoat of scarlet cloth and a vest buttoned at one side which displayed her perfect form. Her shapely arm was exposed by her sleeve folded back from the wrist, and long dark curls hung over her shoulders.

Her eyes were like her mother's, but her tall and stately form and general bearing were strikingly like that of her father.

The charm of the picture did not escape the notice of Smoloff. He thought that he had never before seen such symmetry and unaffected beauty.

Elizabeth was keenly interested in young

Smoloff, but it was with the accompanying thought that he would be able to assist her in her project. This one object at present excluded all others from her mind.

“M. de Smoloff,” said Springer, “it is late and the night is cold and dark; but alas! you know that I have not the liberty to invite you to remain with us over night,”

Smoloff addressing Springer said, “I know what my father’s orders are, and the motives that compel him to use such severity, but on this occasion I am sure that he would release you from your promise.

“If you will permit me to remain, I will soon return to thank you for the protection you have given me. To return to Saimki tonight is not without danger, as the forest is infested with robbers, as you must know.”

Springer consented for him to remain and, seated beside him by a warm fire, they conversed while the evening meal was being prepared.

The devotion of the daughter to her parents was inexpressibly tender and earnest at all times; the mother less determined in manner made Elizabeth seem the stronger of the two.

“M. de Smoloff,” said Springer, “you might think that such devotion should bring a father happiness even in exile, but I am constantly reminded of the great sacrifice which is the price they pay for their devotion to me.”

“My father,” said Elizabeth, “I have known only happiness here.” “We do not feel our life a privation,” replied Phedora, “so long as we may be with you. As for Elizabeth, M. de Smoloff, you will not find a girl among all your acquaintances whose childhood has been happier.”

Smoloff had reflected with much bitterness since entering the cottage and had talked but little, for his voice had choked.

Addressing Springer, he said: “From the melancholy position which my father holds, I am not a stranger to the sight of sorrow. I have often traveled through various districts under his jurisdiction, and what solitary lamentations have I witnessed; what extreme wretchedness have I observed! In the desert of Beresow, near the frozen sea, I have seen men who had not in the world a friend, who never received a caress, nor a word of kindness. Isolated from all the world their lives are but living deaths.”

“Had not my wife followed me here, I would have shared their fate,” said Springer. “God knows I appreciate the blessing of their presence and devotion.”

In the morning young Smoloff prepared to take his leave. Elizabeth observed this with great regret, for she had not found an opportunity to speak to him with regard to her

project. Her parents had not quitted the apartments for a moment, and she dare not address him in their presence.

As he was leaving, she said in the most anxious manner, "Will you not come often, M. de Smoloff?"

Springer observed this with apprehension and inwardly resolved that he would not again violate the Governor's orders.

Smoloff replied to Elizabeth that he would see his father without delay and that he felt assured that he would make an exception in his case.

Turning to Springer he said, "Is there no message I can deliver for you? Is there no favor you wish to ask?"

"None," answered Springer.

Smoloff then asked Phedora the same question.

"I should be glad," she replied, "if the Governor would permit me and my daughter to go to Saimki on Sundays to attend mass."

Smoloff promised to deliver the message and departed.

During his walk to Saimki, Smoloff could think only of Elizabeth. He recalled his first meeting with her in the forest and the scenes he had witnessed between her and her parents, and particularly did he recall the tender expression of her face when she invited him to call again.

He thought of her radiant beauty, of her unfettered mind and grace. Among the myriads of beautiful women at the Court of St. Petersburg he had found none so perfect. The consciousness that she was doomed to exile brought great grief into his life: one that had taken hard hold upon his heart.

Visions of a future arose in Smoloff's mind, bright dreams in which Elizabeth was the central figure.

He saw her restored to her native land, to the social rank in which she was born, surrounded by wealth and happiness and admiring friends.

He pictured himself as the accepted lover among the many suitors who knelt at her shrine.

It was only a dream, but it stayed with him, and was a solace through many a lonesome hour.

Smoloff's visit caused Springer to indulge in melancholy reflections. He thought of his generosity, his manliness and gentleness of character. He was a person such as a parent would choose for a daughter's companion; but circumstances forbade such a possibility, and he did not wish this attractive young man to return.

One evening while in deep thought with his head resting upon his hand, Elizabeth came to him to lay her plans before him.

“My father,” she said, “will you permit me to ask you a question?”

He raised his hand and made a sign for her to proceed.

“When M. de Smoloff inquired of you if there was any favor you desired from the Governor, you replied, ‘none.’

“Is it true there is nothing you wish?”

“Nothing that he could procure for me,” he replied.

“And where is it to be found, my father?”

He answered, “In heaven, my child, on earth, nowhere,” and he resumed his dejected manner.

After a pause Elizabeth continued:

“Father, I have today completed my seventeenth birthday. From this day I wish to devote my life to the restoration of our freedom. I have known no life but that of an exile and I was content until I realized that you and my mother were unhappy. Because you did not wish to mar my pleasure you have kept your sorrows a secret; but I most earnestly desire to share your misfortunes, if they must continue.

“Will you not tell me why you and my mother are sad and what your misfortunes are, while I have none?”

“Tell me your name, the name of your country, and why you are here and unhappy?”

“I am no longer unhappy,” he said, “for I have learned a lesson from my daughter.

“My country is where my daughter is; the name bearing the greatest glory for me is to be the father of Elizabeth; but I promise you that in a few days I will give you the information you desire.

“I cannot do it today.”

Hope, endurance, and patient waiting in times of stress are said to be stronger in women than in men. These qualities combined constitute fortitude, which is the bulwark of character and achievement and is abiding.

Elizabeth had fortitude. This qualified her for the perilous undertaking she had in view. It enabled her to keep up her courage, and to ignore obstacles which to others seemed insurmountable, otherwise she must have yielded to discouragement and abandoned her object.

Time passed. Elizabeth did not press her father for a reply to her questions. She waited patiently for the time when he might feel inclined to talk to her; but she waited in vain. He appeared to avoid her; he had divined her project.

Although it did not seem right to refuse her, his affection for his child caused him to hesitate in granting what he knew she would entreat, yet this seemed the only way open for him and his family to be reinstated in their

rights, and to place Elizabeth in the rank into which she was born. Willingly would he have given his own life to save his family, but for his daughter to risk her life in securing their freedom seemed more than he could bear.

The silence of her father made Elizabeth feel that he had anticipated her designs and disapproved of her plans; otherwise he would not use such precautions, and avoid speaking on the subject. Indeed, when she thought the matter over she felt that it was wellnigh impossible to accomplish such an undertaking without the aid of M. de Smoloff, whom she felt could divest her scheme of obstacles which at present seemed insurmountable.

CHAPTER III

SIBERIA is subject to sudden storms terrible in aspect. A thick fog arises impelled from the opposite sides of the horizon. When the currents meet the strongest trees cannot resist their violence. The flexible birch trees bend to the ground. The snow rolls from the hilltops carrying with them great masses of ice which dash against the rocks, scattering the fragments in all directions. Huts which are used to shelter animals are sometimes raised and dashed to the ground, causing ruin and death.

One morning in January, Elizabeth was overtaken by one of these storms. She was on the plain near the little chapel. The darkness of the sky announced a tempest. She entered the chapel for protection, and while prostrate before the altar she was not afraid, so profound was her belief in the power from above. While the winds warred outside and the building shook she was serenely wrapped in prayer. Overcome with weariness she fell asleep at the foot of the altar.

It was on the same day that Smoloff re-

turned from Tobolsk to Saimki and proceeded at once to the cottage of the exiles. He brought the permission to Phedora for her and her daughter to attend mass at Saimki on Sundays; but the courts increased their vigilance over Springer. His house was to be searched more frequently, all mail was to be intercepted. He was forbidden to go further than two versts* from his home in hunting and was not to be permitted to purchase any more books or writing paper. Smoloff's visits were to be discontinued. His father exacted a solemn promise from him that this would be his last. Smoloff was much disturbed over the increased severity toward Springer and the enforced cessation of his own visits, and was determined to make the most of his final opportunity.

A storm was coming from the north and Elizabeth had not returned.

Springer expressed alarm and prepared to start in search of her.

Smoloff insisted on accompanying him. In doing this he saw the opportunity to express his interest in Elizabeth, knowing that to enter the forest in such a storm was a risk of life.

They were obliged to dodge fragments of trees and ice while a blinding snowstorm pelted their faces.

“Let us proceed to the plain,” said Spring-

—*Verst, 2/3 of a mile.

er. "She goes there every day, and we may find that she has taken shelter in the chapel."

On the open plain the danger was less, but the violence of the wind drove them from their course.

At length they reached the chapel. Smoloff was the first to enter, and was astonished to find Elizabeth asleep at the foot of the altar. As the father bent over his child she awoke, and perceiving him threw her arms about his neck. "Ah, I know you watched over me," she said. "My child," he answered, "what anxiety have you caused your mother and me." "Oh, my father," she replied, "I beg pardon; let us hasten home and relieve my mother."

On rising she observed Smoloff, "and you, too, are here," she said. "Three protectors have been guarding me, Heaven, my father and you."

She walked between her father and Smoloff who protected her with their fur mantles. But the storm soon abated and the clouds passed and then she declared that she no longer needed their assistance, and hastened home ahead of them. Phedora thanked Smoloff for his kindness, but dared not ask him to remain. Elizabeth hearing that it was to be his last visit, said in a tone of regret, "and shall we never see you again?" "Oh, yes," he replied, "as long as you live in this cottage and I am at

Saimki, I shall see you at church, and I shall see you on the plain, and on the banks of the lake whenever you will permit me.''

With the certainty that she would meet him again, Elizabeth took leave without regret.

When Sunday arrived Elizabeth and her mother set out for church at Saimki. Springer was left alone for the first time in his thirteen years of exile; he concealed his feelings and gave them his parting blessing.

The Tartar peasant woman guided them through the forest to Saimki.

On entering the church all eyes were turned toward them. They advanced to the altar and reverently bowed their heads in prayer. The concert of voices piously chanting the sacred hymns made a deep impression on Elizabeth. When the music had ceased she raised her veil and glancing over the church she observed young Smoloff leaning his head against one of the pillars a short distance away, looking intently at her. She noticed the kindness which beamed in his face and it inspired her with a feeling that she could trust him.

Smoloff read in her eyes all that she felt. Those soft dark orbs had not yet learned the art of disguise.

On leaving the church Smoloff invited Phe-dora and Elizabeth to ride in his sledge to the edge of the forest. Elizabeth was disappointed

as she felt that in the course of a walk she might have had the opportunity to talk with him in private.

The sledge conveyed them to the lake beyond this he dare not go. Phedora alighted first and taking his hand said, "Will you not sometimes walk this way?" Elizabeth who followed her mother hurriedly said in a suppressed tone, "No, not this way, but to the chapel on the plain tomorrow morning." Thus did she innocently delude Smoloff into believing that it was to be a lover's meeting; but in her own mind and heart, her father's interests only were considered. Her face beamed with joy when Smoloff promised to meet her, for she felt that her plans were nearing completion.

Smoloff returned to Saimki with feeling akin to ecstasy. How could he doubt longer that the attraction was mutual.

To him Elizabeth was the most winning and beautiful creature he had ever known. Her frankness he attributed to her inexperience and unsophisticated nature. While it astonished him he excused it as an undisguised expression of her fondness for himself.

CHAPTER IV

IT was not with the embarrassment attending a stolen meeting that Elizabeth repaired to the chapel on the plain the following day, but with all the security of innocence and ardent hope in the success of her plans. Her heart was lighter and her walk more swift than usual, as she considered that she was taking the first important step toward the liberation of her father.

The sun shone with brilliant splendor on the icy plain; myriads of icicles fringed the branches of the trees. Nature smiled sweetly as if to encourage Elizabeth in the pursuit of her object. She entered the chapel at the appointed time; but Smoloff was not there. She was alarmed lest some circumstance might have prevented his fulfilling his engagement and feared that, after all, her plans might fail. She was kneeling in prayer before the altar when Smoloff entered. On seeing him she exclaimed, "Oh, M. de Smoloff, how impatiently have I awaited your coming. I have sought this opportunity of meeting you that

I might beg your assistance in the attempt to restore my father to liberty.”

Smoloff's heart sank on hearing these words, for they made known to him that, after all, it was her affection for her father and not for him that had suggested to her to plan this meeting.

“Through all my life, M. de Smoloff, my parents have been the sole objects of my affections. In my home here in this forest I have had only them. I have not missed the things I know not of, but one thing has disturbed me. My parents are dissatisfied here. M. de Smoloff, I have determined to go to Petersburg to solicit my father's pardon. I cannot tell you when I first thought of doing this, but it was a long time ago, and the thought has never left me. All day it follows me. It is with me when I go to sleep, and it comes at waking each day. It takes full possession of me when with you, and it was this that impelled me to seek this interview. I dread neither fatigue, poverty nor opposition, nor even death, so determined am I to go on this errand. I have resolved to leave Siberia and nothing can shake my determination.”

The flattering hopes of a lover were buried in this interview; but respect and admiration were supreme in the young man's heart. The tears came to his eyes as he replied:

“I feel flattered beyond expression in being the chosen counsellor of one who, in a brief acquaintance, I have learned to revere. But, Elizabeth, are you aware of the great obstacles that must be overcome?”

“Two obstacles have occurred to me,” she said, “but I thought that you might be able to remove these. I am a stranger to the road and my flight might injure my father. The latter weighs more heavily on me than the former. I would willingly give my life to secure my father’s freedom; but to fail in the attempt, or to be the cause of increasing the burdens he already bears, that I could not endure.

“I rely upon you for advice in everything concerning my journey. The road I am to pursue, the places where I am to stop which furnish relief to travelers; and I wish also instructions with regard to presenting my petition to the Emperor; but above all, M. de Smoloff, can you assure me that your father will not punish mine for his child’s offense?”

Smoloff pledged his word on this. He well knew that the Governor would do all in his power to grant the wish of his son.

“But, Elizabeth,” said Smoloff, “do you not know that the Emperor considers your father his most inveterate enemy?”

“I do not know,” she replied, “of what

crime he is accused. They have not told me. I do not even know my father's name, or the name of his country, but I know that he is innocent."

"What!" said Smoloff, "do you not know the rank your family held, nor their name?"

"I know neither," she said.

"Astonishing! Then you do not know the honors of which your father is deprived. You know not the honor and station that would revert to you did you reclaim your liberty?"

"These are secrets which my father has withheld from me," she said, "and I must hear them from him only."

Elizabeth resumed by asking how soon he could give her information regarding her expedition.

"I must take time to consider," he answered; "but, Elizabeth, do you think it possible for you to traverse the thirty-five hundred versts, which divide Ishim from the province of Ingrai alone, on foot, and without money."

"God will not desert me," she replied.

"It is impossible at least until summer to undertake such a voyage; even the sledges are stopped now.

"The blocks of floating ice in the marshy forests of Siberia would swallow up the traveler who would rashly attempt to cross them.

“I will see you again in a few days and will give you my opinion concerning your contemplated trip. I will go to Tobolsk and consult my father. He is the best of men, and believe me, your father and other exiles would fare much worse if he were not Governor of the district. He cannot assist you directly, his duty forbids; but I pledge my word that my father, so far from punishing yours would be only too glad to serve him in part for his own son's sake.

“Pardon me, Elizabeth, if my feelings declare themselves. I know that you cannot respond. I know that you are occupied with other thoughts. But if the day should ever come when you and your parents are restored and happy in their native land I beg of you to remember that in the land of exile Smoloff saw and loved you, and would have preferred a life of obscurity and poverty with Elizabeth in this forest to all the glory that the world can give.”

Tears came to his eyes and he said no more lest he should appear weak.

Elizabeth, amazed, stood motionless scarcely comprehending the meaning of his words. She was unaccustomed to compliments. Her sense of decorum which was such as is suggested by the instincts of a guileless heart made her feel that she should not remain alone in the chapel

with a man who had declared his love and she prepared to leave.

Smoloff imploringly asked pardon for his offense. "Oh, you have not offended me," she said, "and I shall not be so ungrateful as to forget your kindness to me. No; I shall never forget you."

Smoloff at parting promised to do all in his power to assist her in her undertaking.

They each went their way, Smoloff to indulge in dreams of his heart's first and purest awakening. Love had come to him in its completeness and filled all space. From this day forth it was his life.

Elizabeth's heart was filled with gratitude, which is frequently the forerunner of love.

CHAPTER V

WHEN Sunday arrived Elizabeth accompanied her mother joyfully to Saimki.

At parting Smoloff had looked forward to this meeting with the thought that he would again behold the maiden he adored; Elizabeth with the eager desire to receive instructions which might be the means of promoting her enterprise; but Smoloff was not there.

She inquired the cause of his absence and was told that he had departed two days previous for Tobolsk.

She was greatly disappointed. Everything seemed to have deserted her. She feared that the Governor of Tobolsk had disapproved of her plans and had prohibited his son giving his assistance; yet she did not lose faith.

She tried to conceal her disappointment from her parents. She retired early, that she might yield to the grief which overwhelmed her; but Phedora had noticed the change in Elizabeth. She talked it over with her husband. "At the mention of Smoloff's name," she said, "she turns pale. She avoids our

company, is anxious and unhappy. I heard her inquire after him in church. When told that he had gone to Tobolsk she looked grieved. Elizabeth is not too young to love. No, Stanislaus, I was but seventeen when your name mentioned made me blush, and an unexplained absence turned my cheek pale; but I fear that Smoloff would scorn the love of an exile's daughter."

"Phedora," Stanislaus replied, "I am certain that another matter is occupying Elizabeth's mind.

"I am certain also that Smoloff would not scorn the hand of our daughter, even here in this forest; but she is not in love with him; she seeks his assistance, that is all.

"I feel that Elizabeth need not always live in exile; such virtue and beauty cannot remain in obscurity; she was born for happiness; so much goodness obscured would defy the justice of heaven."

It was now near the middle of May. The Siberian sunshine, as if to make amends for its tardy coming, had suddenly kissed into being the beautiful flowers of the forest.

White blossoms thickly covered the boughs of the thorn bush over which the bees made merry; the blue budded campanula, the downy mothwort, and the iris bloomed about the roots of the trees and along the water's margin.

The beautiful Persian mallard of a bright flame color with tufted head and ebony beak sported on the banks of the lake; this bird always utters the most piercing cry when a gun is fired.

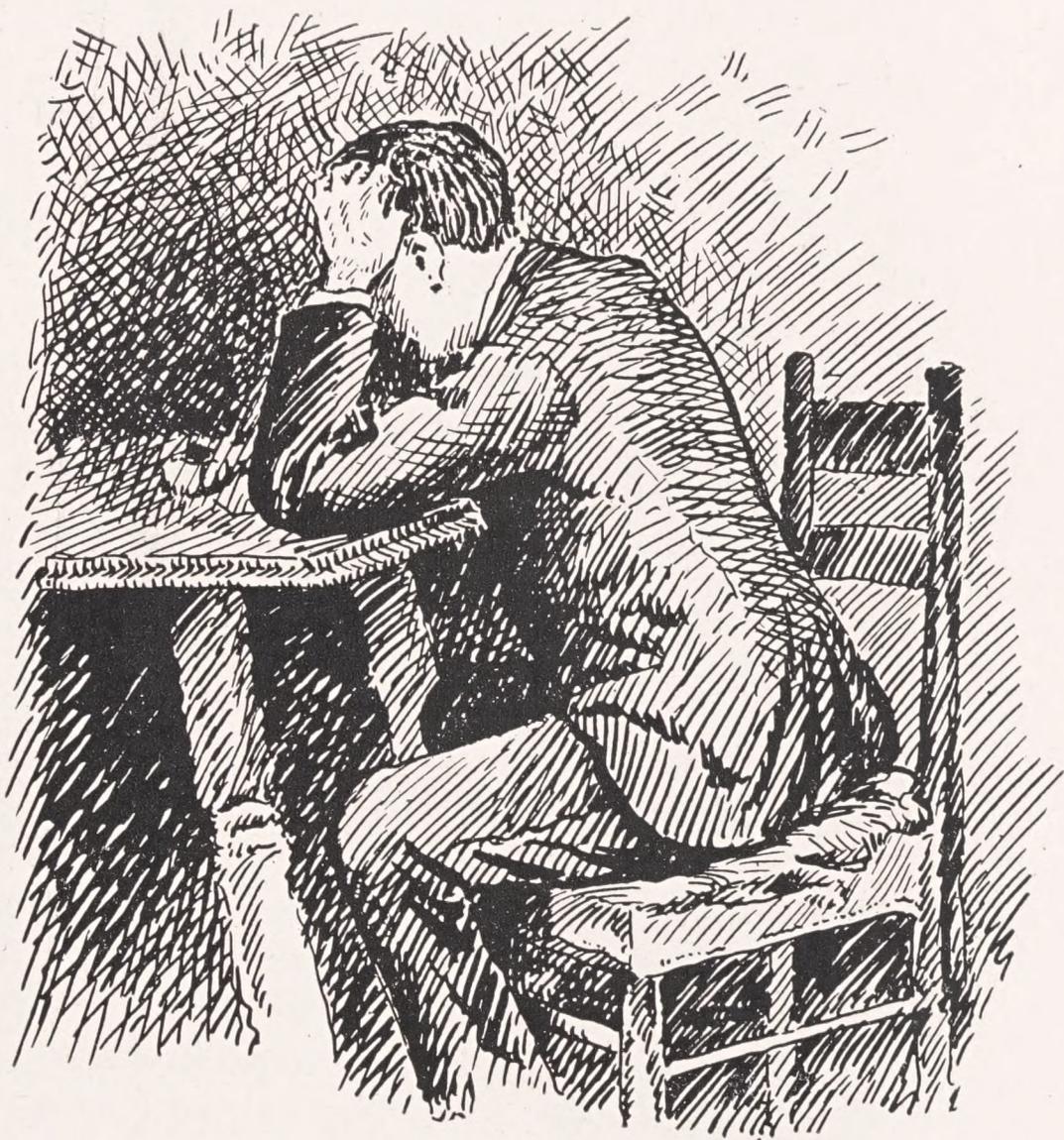
Woodcocks of various species, some black with yellow beaks, others speckled with feathery ruffs, strutted o'er the marshy grounds or hid among the rushes.

Blackbirds descended in flocks on the forest trees. All nature proclaimed the return of summer.

For two months Elizabeth went every Sunday to church with the hope of seeing Smoloff, but he was not there; she could hear nothing of him, except that he had left Siberia.

This caused her bitter grief, but she concealed it from her parents, giving vent to her overwrought feelings only in her private room, and in the silence and solitude of night; but in Smoloff she never lost faith. She knew not of the world's disappointments and uncertainties; her heart had not yet learned to doubt; she fully believed that time would bring about the fulfillment of her plans which would enable her to secure her father's freedom.

If she failed in getting the aid of M. de Smoloff she believed that some means would be provided by the unseen hand of Providence for the execution of her desires.



“Smoloff writes a letter to Elizabeth.”

Elizabeth, realizing that the time had come for her to depart, decided to go unaided depending on heaven and her own fortitude for success.

One morning while Springer was employed digging in the garden, Elizabeth, a short distance away, observed him in silence.

He had not yet explained to her the cause of his misfortunes. A delicacy of pride and fidelity to her father's wishes had prevented her from seeking the knowledge which he had withheld from her; yet, how could she go to solicit pardon for an offense of which she knew nothing. She had depended on Smoloff's assistance, and now that this opportunity had failed her, she must find other means of executing her plans.

Elizabeth had reflected much upon the objections which her parents would be likely to offer.

Smoloff had told her of many obstacles which were in the way of success, and she felt that her parents, through their devotion to her, would exaggerate them. She wished to be able to answer all their objections. Overcome by the thought of a possibility of her plans being defeated she burst into tears.

Her father hearing her sobs turned hastily to her, and begged her to tell him the cause of her grief.

“Oh, my father,” she replied, “it is in your power alone to relieve me. You know my wish. Will you not grant it?”

“Only this can make me happy. I feel that I cannot live if I must abandon the thought of delivering you from exile.”

The young peasant, their domestic, running toward them, cried:

“M. de Smoloff, M. de Smoloff is come!”

Elizabeth uttered an exclamation of delight and pressed her father’s hand. “Heaven has sent him,” she said. “He will help me break the chain which holds you a prisoner.”

She ran to meet Smoloff. Meeting her mother, she embraced her, saying: “M. de Smoloff has come!”

On entering the cottage she perceived a stranger, a man apparently fifty years of age, in military dress, accompanied by several officers.

Amazed, the mother and daughter started back.

Elizabeth turned pale and her eyes filled with tears. Phedora noticed this and attributed her emotion to disappointment in not meeting young Smoloff.

The Governor of Tobolsk, the stranger in military uniform, dismissed his attendants and turning to Springer said:

“Sir, since the Court of Russia deemed it

expedient to condemn you to banishment, this is my first visit to this remote spot; and it is pleasant to me to testify to so an illustrious an exile how sincerely I regret his misfortunes, and that my sworn duty forbids me to offer assistance and protection I would otherwise gladly bestow.”

“I expect nothing from men, sir,” replied Springer coldly. “As I hope nothing from their justice, neither do I desire their commiseration. My misfortunes have placed me in banishment. Here will I remain content to suffer for my fidelity to the cause of my country, since the world cares not to understand.”

“Oh, sir!” interrupted the Governor, “for a man like you to live so far away from his country is a destiny to be deplored.”

“There is one, sir, more lamentable still,” replied Springer, “which is to have no country.”

He paused, for another word might have added a tear and the illustrious sufferer wished to appear above his misfortunes.

Elizabeth watched the face of the Governor to see if she could discover in his countenance sufficient sympathy to warrant her in approaching him on the subject nearest her heart.

Turning to Elizabeth the Governor said: “My son has mentioned you to me.”

“Did he tell you,” interrupted Phedora, “that Elizabeth is indebted to him for saving her father’s life?”

“No, madame,” answered the Governor, “but he told me how ready she was to devote her life to that father and to you.”

Addressing Elizabeth, he continued: “It is two months since my son left Saimki. He received an order from the Emperor to rejoin the army then assembling at Livonia, and was obliged to go without delay. Before his departure he left with me a letter to deliver to you. I dared not trust it with a messenger without great risk and until the present time have not been able to deliver it myself.”

Elizabeth, blushing, took the letter which he presented to her while her parents looked on with apprehension.

The Governor recalled his attendants and in their presence said to Springer: “Sir, the commands of my sovereign prevent me from allowing you to receive visitors here, nevertheless if any traveling missionaries, who I am told sometimes cross these forests on their return from the frontiers of China, should come to your dwelling to beg a night’s lodging I give you permission to receive them.”

The Governor departed. Elizabeth still held the letter unopened.

“My child,” said her father, “if you are

waiting for permission to open your letter you have it."

With a trembling hand she broke the seal. As she read the contents she made frequent exclamations of joy. When she had finished, she said excitedly:

"The time has arrived, everything is favorable.

"Oh, my father and mother! will you not give your consent?"

Her father understood her meaning, but had not explained Elizabeth's plans to his wife.

Phedora excitedly asked for an explanation of the mystery. "What does that letter contain?" she asked.

"Oh, my mother, pardon me," said Elizabeth, "if in my desire to spare you pain I have not confided to you the plans which I have conceived to restore my father to his native country."

"My child," said Springer, "it means a separation."

"No! No!" exclaimed Phedora in tears. "Ask my life; but do not ask me to consent for you to leave us, Elizabeth."

"But, my mother," asked Elizabeth in a trembling voice, "if to restore my father to liberty, to happiness, to home and friends I ask for some days only, would you not con-

sent? For the love you bear us both, would you not do this?"

"Oh, not for a day," exclaimed her mother. "What could liberty be at such a price? No, not for a day! Do not ask me to grant so great a sacrifice."

These words sank heavily into the heart of Elizabeth.

Unable to utter words which would distress her mother, she handed the letter to her father, requesting him to read it aloud. In a faltering voice he read the following lines written by M. de Smoloff at Tobolsk, dated two months previous:

"The greatest regret I have in leaving Saimki, Elizabeth, comes from the fact that necessity forces me to leave without an opportunity of seeing you and explaining the obligations which force my absence.

"I can neither see nor write to you without disobeying my father, and also risking his safety.

"With the example which you have given me of duty to a father, I could not thus risk the life of mine; although I will acknowledge that it nearly broke my heart to obey his request by returning to Tobolsk without performing the services you desired, and which I would have considered a great honor to grant.

“I have explained everything to my father and I believe that he will visit the district of Ishim this year and it will be for the purpose of seeing you. He will convey to you this letter, and, Elizabeth, I depart with less apprehension that I have placed you under his care. But do not think of starting on your journey until I return, which I expect will be in less than a year.

“Let me be your guide and companion, Elizabeth. Let me present you to the Emperor.

“My father informs me that an official order calls me a thousand miles away, and I must depart without delay. You do not know what pain it gives me to leave you.

“Do not fear that I will address you again on the subject of my love. No! I ask only that you will allow me to be your friend, and if you will but permit me the honor of serving you, you will not have reason to regret that you have trusted M. de Smoloff, who would be only too glad to aid you in restoring your honored father to the station where he rightfully belongs.

“Should this letter get miscarried and be made known abroad, I would be called a traitor; but the brand would come as it has to many another, in the service of justice and freedom.

“I have the honor, Elizabeth, to subscribe myself,

“Your sincere friend,

“M. DE SMOLOFF.”

Underneath was a postscript written by the governor as follows:

“Elizabeth, I have given permission for some one to enter your dwelling whom you can trust.

“It is better so. My son could on no account, for various reasons, attend you on this trip.

“Were it made known that I am aiding you, it would be my ruin, but I know in whom I am trusting and I do not fear.

“M. DE SMOLOFF, Governor.”

As he finished the letter, Springer's voice became more firm and a look of animation lighted up his splendid countenance. He was flattered by the confidence shown in his daughter, and the letter inspired a hope which revived his long depressed spirits;—but the mother thought only of the danger to which her daughter would be exposed.

She pictured her traveling alone, on foot, and without aid.

“No, not for a moment would I consider it,” she said.

“My mother,” answered Elizabeth, “I beg of you, do not oppose me.

“It is the only means by which we can secure our liberty.

“Do not thwart my plans. I have been long in maturing them; so long that I cannot remember when they began. Could my companions of the forest—the birds, the trees and the flowers—answer back, they would all bear witness to the secret which I have confided only to them.

“I ask pardon, my parents, for grieving you, but, while I implore you, all nature seems to proclaim that the time for waiting has passed.

“I promise you that I will allow nothing to discourage me, neither suffering, contempt, hunger nor fatigue. Only the refusal of your permission will daunt me.”

“My child,” replied her father, “it pains me exceedingly to refuse to grant your request.”

“I cannot consent,” interrupted her mother. “Your desire to free your father is noble, but such an undertaking would endanger your life. No, I cannot for a moment give my permission.

“My child, what would life be to your father and me without you, either in a land of freedom or in exile?”

“Your nobleness of soul exceeds your strength and judgment.”

“My dear mother,” said Elizabeth, “if you desire me to abandon my plan and remain, I will pray for strength to obey without regret; but may I not yet hope to receive your consent?”

“This plan is not the result of hasty consideration, but of years of reflection.

“What other means exist for restoring us to freedom?”

“During my father’s thirteen years of exile, what friends have undertaken to secure his release? And if one should dare to attempt it, could he do as much as I could do?”

“Tell me what it is that is so alarming that you should insist on a disapproval of my plans.

“Is it temporary absence? Is it danger? I have heard you lament that in exile there was no hope of bestowing me in marriage, and would not a husband separate me from you?”

“As for danger, there is none. I am accustomed to the rigor of the climate. My youth will be my protection. The young and the weak meet with assistance everywhere.

“I shall not be alone. Do you not remember the words in the governor’s letter?”

“The poor missionary he speaks of to take shelter under our roof is to be my guide.

“You see, all is ready. I need but your consent and your blessing.”



“Elizabeth learns from her father that she is
a princess.”

“And my daughter must beg her bread!” exclaimed Springer.

“The ancestors of your mother once reigned in this territory, and mine reigned over Poland, and a princess of their name must beg her bread in that Russia which divided Poland that she might add more provinces to her empire!”

“My father, if I am a descendant of monarchs who have worn with honor royal diadems, I desire to prove myself worthy of them and of you.

“Will you not permit me to honor their illustrious names by service in the cause of freedom?”

“Poverty alone cannot dishonor a name. Many great men of whom you have told me have become impoverished in the service of their country,—as you may have done, my father, although you have not deemed it wise to disclose to me the circumstances which banished you from your native land.”

Springer looked with pride upon his daughter, who displayed all the virtues of heroism such as had distinguished her royal ancestors. It aroused in him feelings which had long been dormant, and it made him reflect that he could no longer resist her appeal.

“My beloved Phedora,” he cried, “let us give our consent. We must not condemn our child to remain in exile.

“In her plan lies the only hope we have to be restored to freedom.

“I care not for myself, but shall we deprive Elizabeth of the prospect which the world offers to such as she is by birthright and by nature?”

“Shall we withhold from her the pleasures of society, the privilege of being a wife and mother, and the honors which would revert to her in her native land?”

“Let us give our consent.”

“No, never,” replied Phedora, “never will I consent to my child going on such a voyage.

“We would at some future time hear that she died from cold, or had perished of starvation or sickness, or was killed by robbers. No! I shall never give my consent. Never!”

“Elizabeth,” said her father, “without your mother’s consent you must not go.”

“I will not disobey my mother,” she replied, placing her arm gently around her mother’s waist and kissing her; “but I shall still hope and pray for wisdom to guide us to a better understanding of what is best for me to do. Let us seek in prayer the will of our divine Father.”

While in prayer relief came to all. When belief in a divine power exists in honest hearts, it takes the highest range of thought and sentiment, giving consolation and support. It was

this sustaining power that kept this family from the depths of despair.

Elizabeth at this time was the greatest sufferer and most needed the inward strength to bear up under disappointment; but through it all she exhibited the fortitude of a strong woman, remaining tearless and calm.

The soul's greatness is measured by the tests which sorrow and disappointment bring. If found wanting it may not rise above despair.

Elizabeth had disciplined herself through years of patient waiting. She had learned to wait calmly and trustingly and her strength did not fail her at this trying hour.

CHAPTER VI

ON the following day Stanislaus related to Elizabeth the story of his misfortunes. He told her that Poland, his native country, had for eight centuries existed as a great nation; how a train of misfortunes, resulting from misrule, religious persecutions and the jealousy of neighboring powers resulted in her decline and fall; how the people, maddened by the national dishonor and the plotting of traitors within their own borders, arose in arms to preserve the nation's existence and her credit; how they were overcome by the combination of three rival powers, assassinated in their own stronghold, and Poland blotted from the map of nations.

“My only crime, my child,” he continued, “was that I loved my country too well to endure the sight of her slavery. The blood of some of her greatest monarchs flowed in my veins; but for the misfortunes of war the throne might have passed to me. I loved my country as I loved my life. I rejoiced in her glory as I was distressed by her defeat. When her cause was wellnigh lost, I defended her

at the head of a small army of nobles against the three great powers which combined to destroy her; and when overpowered by numbers we were forced to yield under the walls of Warsaw,—in my heart I resisted still.

“Reduced to the last extremity, I sought foreign aid to assist in restoring to my country her independence and her name, but all in vain. A nation’s allies do not pay back their obligations in time of distress, and conquering nations give not back what they take.

“Poland’s success was a stumbling block to rival neighboring powers, and they combined to destroy her. The love of conquest outweighed their love of justice. What they could not take by Tartar statesmanship, they wrenched from her in her staggering fall; and by tripartite agreement divided her once glorious dominions into three sections, each nation receiving its share of the spoils.

“Thirty-five millions of people, speaking a common language and bound together by common traditions, were made exiles in their native land, were left without a country they could call their own.

“The home of my ancestors was in the part of Poland which fell under the dominion of Russia. My open protest and the large number of malcontents who came to my house attracted the attention of an arbitrary and suspicious monarch.

“One morning I was taken from your mother, from you, my child, and my home.

“You were then three years of age. You cried because you saw your mother weep, but not for your own misfortunes.

“I was confined in prison at Petersburg. Phedora followed me there.

“We lived nearly a year in a dreadful dungeon, deprived of air and of light, but not of hope.

“I believed then that the Emperor would be willing to forgive me for having defended to her death my beloved country, and that he would trust me if I promised future submission, but I judged him too favorably.

“I was condemned unheard and banished for life to Siberia. Here you and your mother accompanied me, or I would have been sent to the prison of Beresow, the solitude of Baikal or Kamptschatka.

“To you, my child, and your beloved mother, I am indebted for my milder doom.

“Your mother would not have forsaken me had my destiny been ten times as miserable. She has shared all my misfortunes, and sacrificed her own comfort that she might add some consolation to my darkened life.”

“But, my father,” said Elizabeth, “should you call her life a sacrifice when spent with you? How much more of a sacrifice would

hers have been, and mine, were we doomed to live apart from you.

“Surely life in exile with those we love is far more desirable than all the honor and wealth which the world has to give apart from those we love.

“I know but little of the outside world, but you have told me that it contains much uncertainty and unhappiness; that the Emperor has enemies in the guise of friends at his own door, and even in his own household. After all, have we not been much blessed, my father?”

“Such sentiments, my child, are worthy of one who bears your name. May you live to further honor your parents and (returning Smoloff’s letter to his daughter), may you see the day when you may have cause to bless your benefactor.”

Elizabeth, blushing, went to her room to re-read the letter and to reflect.

For some days the subject of her departure was not mentioned, but she was convinced that her father had persuaded her mother to cease resistance.

On Sunday evening while the family were engaged in prayer, there came a gentle tap at the door, and a venerable stranger presented himself.

A missionary begged for a night’s lodging.

His long white beard and bent form showed him to be a man of toil and age, toil such as weakens the body, while it strengthens the soul. His was a face of sorrow, illumined by a consciousness that his suffering had not been in vain.

“Sir,” said he, addressing Stanislaus, “I enter your dwelling with joy in my heart. The blessing of God is upon this household. I have come to beg a night’s lodging.”

Elizabeth asked him to sit down.

“Young maiden,” said he, “you have chosen the path of virtue and wisdom, and even in the early springtime of your life have left us older ones far behind.

“May you know no other path; may you have but roses in the background of your remembrance. As your steps lead you to the midday of life, may you have none to retrace, may you have no byways of remorse to travel.”

With these words a heavy sigh shook his stalwart frame, and Elizabeth wondered in her heart whether the venerable missionary could have committed a single sin in the byways of life, of which she had heard but knew not of.

Phedora began to weep.

“Why do you weep, Madame?” he said. “Is not your daughter blessed above women?”

“If you grieve at the loss of your daugh-

ter's company for a short time while engaged in a righteous cause, what must a mother such as you suffer who lose their daughters by the ways of sin and are lost to them forever?"

"Oh, father!" exclaimed the afflicted mother, "I fear that I shall never see my daughter again if she undertakes this journey."

"Heaven will protect your daughter, Madame," the missionary replied.

"You will see her again,—if not on earth, in the celestial paradise; for the Lord careth for his own."

Phedora bowed her head and was silent.

Stanislaus spoke not a word. The trying hour had come.

Elizabeth reflected. "The time is near when I shall cease to hear my father's voice; I shall no longer receive my mother's caress," and a momentary doubt came to her mind whether her undertaking could make amends for so much grief; but she resolved that she would not outwardly yield to discouragement and she reminded her parents that the supper hour had arrived, and the remainder of the evening she sought to turn the conversation by asking the missionary questions with regard to his travels.

This aged missionary had spent fifty years of his life in a foreign land, laboring for the

conversion of a people whom the religious world considered spiritually benighted.

At the court of Peking he had astonished the mandarins by his great learning and by the rigid practice of the virtues and self-denial, which he proclaimed to the people as necessary for the purification and salvation of the soul.

He had assembled the unlettered natives and taught them the principles of righteous living.

Men became more humane and family life more sacred.

Whole communities under his teaching advanced in civilization.

These people who were averse to missionaries in general learned to revere Father Paul, for such was his name.

Unlike many missionaries within the borders of China, he was a living example of the creed he preached.

In the charity and love which he bestowed on his fellow man, whom he always addressed as brother, they beheld the incarnate virtues of the Savior whose doctrines he promulgated.

Father Paul informed the exiles that he had been recalled by his superior and was on his return to Spain, his native land.

He would pass through Russia, Germany and France on foot. His return to civilization was a source of spiritual delight. The journey

on foot across two continents he had looked forward to with satisfaction. He did not dread the fatigue since he would daily come in contact with Christian people.

In his mission work, Father Paul had suffered many persecutions and encountered great obstacles which, by faithful and persistent effort, he had been able to overcome.

He had planted the cross in remote spots where commercial travelers had not dared to enter.

In the Tartar country his sufferings had been most severe. He traveled through vast deserts without shelter from storm and the severities of both heat and cold, often living for days on a little rice flour moistened with water.

He was not in the habit of relating the story of his own crosses, but on this occasion Father Paul desired to turn the attention of the household to greater sorrows, that their own might in a measure seem lessened.

Her father and mother knew not when it was Elizabeth's intention to start on her journey, but they felt a suspense, such as comes with the near approach of serious events.

Phedora followed her continually with her eyes, and would place her arm around her waist and lay plans for the following day and the next, and the next. The silence of her daughter gave her a sensation of alarm.

One day at the dinner hour she remarked to Elizabeth, "If the weather is clear tomorrow, you shall go with your father in your canoe to fish in the lake." Elizabeth did not respond.

"My child," said her father, "do you not hear your mother? Tomorrow you are to go with me to fish in the lake."

Elizabeth leaned over on his shoulder and whispered:

"Tomorrow you must console my mother."

Her father turned pale. Phedora said no more. She divined her daughter's meaning and she did not wish to hear the spoken words.

Stanislaus had need at this hour of all the fortitude which had kept him from madness during his years of trial. He not only had himself to support but his wife also.

Personally he had much hope of Elizabeth's success and safe return. It was the first ray of light which had crept in upon his darkened soul since his banishment.

Within the past few days a feeling of hope had come to his rescue; had reappeared after many weary years of despair.

A contraction in his throat prevented his eating; but, concealing his emotion, he conquered it and talked in a cheerful tone, not of Elizabeth's departure, but of the promise of an early spring.

When night came, Elizabeth knelt in prayer in behalf of her parents.

Her father went to her with tears streaming down his face; Elizabeth held out her arms to him, but she was too much oppressed to weep. This she expected to be her last embrace. Turning to her mother, she said:

“And my mother, will not you, too, bestow a blessing on me?”

“Tomorrow, Elizabeth,” she replied.

“But why not now, my mother?”

“Oh, yes,” said Phedora, going toward her, “today, tomorrow and every day.”

Elizabeth bowed her head while her parents joined their hands, and with trembling voices pronounced a benediction.

The missionary, with the cross in his hands, raised his eyes to heaven. It was the picture of virtue praying for innocence.

It was nearing the end of May. At this time of year, in this latitude, there is scarce two hours between the shades of twilight and dawn of day. Elizabeth spent this time in preparing for her departure. She had made herself a traveling dress and supplied an extra pair of shoes and stockings. These articles she stowed in a little bag made of reindeer skin.

For nearly a year she had worked on these garments after night in her own room, keeping them secreted from her parents.

She had saved some dried fruit, and a little flour that she might, as long as possible, avoid asking charity from strangers.

She had ten kopeks (about six cents of English money). This was all the coin she possessed when she started on her voyage of more than eight hundred leagues.

Morning dawned. "Father," she said, knocking softly at the missionary's door, "let us go now, while my father and mother are asleep. Let us be quick that they may not awaken. They will weep soon enough.

"The window of your room is not high. I will jump down and can assist you in alighting."

They entered the forest. Elizabeth turned her eyes toward the cottage. Her feelings almost stifled her.

"Father," she said, "wait here while I go back and look once more upon my parents. They are asleep and will not know."

As she arrived at the window she saw her father coming toward her.

"Why did you come?" she said.

"To see you once more, Elizabeth, and bless you," he answered; "to say to you that if at any time during your life I have neglected showing a proof of my love for you; if I have caused your tears to flow; if a look or word from me has ever clouded your heart, forgive me before you go."



“The benediction of a father marked the parting of the ways.”

“My father, do not talk to me thus,” she said.

“And your poor mother, Elizabeth. What shall I say to her? She will seek you everywhere.”

Elizabeth, overpowered, could not speak. Her father, reproaching himself for showing less fortitude than his child, said calmly: “Elizabeth, I will comfort your mother; I will help her to be patient till you return to us.”

He walked with her to the edge of the forest. To the missionary he said: “Father, I trust to you my jewel; may the angels guard and protect you.” Then, turning, he hastily walked back to the cottage.

The morning’s dawn illuminated the summits of the distant mountains and gilded the tops of the trees in the forest. Nature was still silent in sleep; no wind ruffled the surface of the lake or fanned the leaves of the trees. Birds and insects were still slumbering. The benedictions of a father marked the parting of the ways.

If the father’s grief was poignant in expression, that of the mother was indescribable.

Stanislaus called to her mind the misery of a life in exile, and the prospect of Elizabeth’s success.

“As for me,” he said, “my hopes in life went out on the field of Warsaw; but I wish to see you and Elizabeth restored to the world, to liberty and to friends.

“Let us be strong, my beloved wife. I believe Elizabeth will succeed, and that is my comfort; let it be also yours. Let us have hope, Phedora.”

PART II

CHAPTER VII

IT was near the end of May when Elizabeth and her guide set out on their journey.

They were a full month crossing the marshy fields of Siberia, which during this season of the year are subject to inundations. At times they are wellnigh impassable on foot.

Occasionally the peasants permitted them to ride in their sledges for a slight compensation. At night they found shelter in huts so miserable that had not Elizabeth been accustomed to hardships, she could scarcely have rested. She slept in her clothes in the most wretched of beds, where the winds entered the crevices through the wall and broken windows, the whole family and sometimes animals occupying the same apartments.

On the border of Siberia is a wood in which a row of posts mark the boundary line. Here families often bid goodby to their exiled friends.

Fathers, husbands, brothers, princes, nobles and peasants bid their last farewell to home and country.

By these consecrated pillars thousands of despairing exiles have kissed the dust, and then with the order of march hope and all that is dear in life receded in the background.

Some have scratched their farewells on the boundary pillars and then moved slowly past forever.

As Elizabeth passed this mark she felt that she was taking a second leave of her parents and a terrible sense of loneliness took possession of her. Then she recalled the pride which her father had expressed in her heroism and, resolving to prove herself worthy, she walked with lighter step and cheered Father Paul on his way.

She had learned from her father that Europe was celebrated for its enlightened inhabitants; that wealth and talent were in abundance. She recalled her wayworn appearance, her lack of modish manners and her meager knowledge, and at times she had doubts whether she would receive sympathy from those who had not themselves experienced privation and suffering.

There was one person who often entered Elizabeth's mind. M. de Smoloff seemed to her to be the only inhabitant of Europe since he was the only one she knew there. If she

could only hope to meet him at Petersburg and secure his assistance, she would have been at peace, but the Emperor had ordered him to Livonia and she had little hope of finding him.

She had only Father Paul to rely on, but to Elizabeth a man who had for fifty years devoted his life to the service of mankind must have great credit in the courts of kings.

Perma is nearly nine hundred versts from Tobolsk.

The roads here were good and the fertile land well tilled, extensive fields mixed with woods of birch, opulent villages inhabited by Russians and Tartars were scattered along the way, whose inhabitants seemed contented and even happy.

Elegant inns were found here; the fine tapestry, beautiful images and ornamental surroundings astonished Elizabeth who had been accustomed only to extreme simplicity.

The village of Perma was the grandest of any she had seen, but she was shocked at the narrowness and filth of the streets, and the elegant mansions were intermixed with dirty hovels.

Wealth and poverty stood side by side as if to emphasize the contrast.

The town was surrounded by marshes and

the country as far as Kassan was interspersed with sterile heaths and dark forests of fir, giving to the traveler the most gloomy aspect.

During the stormy season the lightning frequently strikes trees which burn with great rapidity. Elizabeth and her guide often passed through these forests while on fire. Father Paul suggested that these pyramids of flames resembled the ancient piles on which pagans burned the ashes of their heroes.

Notwithstanding the hardships which Elizabeth had encountered, she had not become discouraged but believed that the difficulties of the voyage had been exaggerated. The weather had continued fair and they frequently had opportunity to ride in the wagons which were returning from Siberia, whither they had transported new exiles. But the aged guide was losing his strength and Elizabeth felt that he needed her care more than she needed his guidance.

They had now reached the banks of the Thama, which was but two hundred versts from Kassan, having traveled over nearly half the distance between Saimki and Petersburg.

So far Elizabeth had experienced no reverses and had she been able to travel the entire distance under so favorable circum-

stances she would have considered that her father's freedom had been easily purchased, but the winter season was approaching and the strength of the missionary was rapidly failing. It was difficult for him to walk and Elizabeth was obliged to spend much time for him to rest. While riding in the wagons the roughness of the road jarred his feeble frame, exhausting his strength.

On arrival at Sarapul, a village on the banks of the Thama, the good missionary found himself too weak to proceed further; they found lodging in an inn with miserable accommodations near the residence of the superintendent of the district. The only room vacant was in a garret.

A bed of straw, a chair and a table were the only furniture the room contained. The wind came through the broken casements and Father Paul's suffering was so great that sleep was impossible.

Elizabeth could find no physician in the place and the people of the inn gave no attention to the sufferer.

She hung some pieces of old tapestry, which she found on the floor, across the window and went out to the field to search for some wild herbs, such as she had seen her mother use

for medicine; but the tea she made did not help him.

At night, Father Paul grew alarmingly worse; Elizabeth lighted a rosin taper and seated herself by his bed to spend the night in watching, moving quietly about the room, taking care lest she disturb him.

She had often heard her father say that the world was not kind, and she wondered as she watched alone on that dreary night why he wished to return to it.

Toward morning Father Paul grew worse; hearing Elizabeth's sobs, he grieved for her sorrow which he could not relieve, for he well knew that he should rise no more from his bed of straw.

Death to him had no terrors, held no remorse; but he regretted being called away while so much was left unfinished.

Closing his eyes, with raised hands he said in a weary voice:

“Oh, Most High, supreme in wisdom, I murmur not at Thy decrees, but had it been Thy will I fain would have been spared to guide this unprotected child to her journey's end; death would have come with less regret.”

A little before the morning's dawn Elizabeth offered the missionary a drink of water;

he raised himself slightly from his pillow. Taking the cup from her hand he lifted it upward, saying:

“Oh, my God, I commend her to Thy keeping, who hast promised that a cup of cold water in Thy name shall receive reward.”

Elizabeth realized that death was near, she knelt beside his bed. He continued: “My Savior, look down with pity on Thy child.”

Her anguish at this moment disturbed him and he said with firmness, “Compose thyself, daughter, and listen to me.

“Do not presume, my child, while completing your journey to accept protection from those you meet, no matter to what extremity you may be reduced; lose not sight of your sacred claims, your self protection.

“Stand fast to your noble piety, your resolutions, your untarnished womanhood. A glorious recompense awaits you, my child; if not on earth it will be accorded you in the celestial sphere.” Supporting himself against the board placed across the head of his bed and exerting all his strength, he continued:

“Elizabeth, I repeat to you, stand sacredly firm to your trust in God, let no discouragement weaken your courage and you will return in safety and triumph to your parents.

“You will find in my cloak a purse which the Governor of Tobolsk gave me. I have saved its contents lest some misfortune should overtake you, my child.

“Preserve the Governor’s secret, his life depends upon it. This money will pay your expenses to Petersburg. When you arrive there, go to the Patriarch, tell him Father Paul sent you. He will protect you and no doubt assist you in meeting the Emperor.”

His voice failed; the death dew was on his brow, Elizabeth clasped his hands in hers and wept.

After a silence of some minutes he released his hands and untying an ebony crucifix suspended from his neck he gave it to her. It was the only earthly treasure he possessed.

“Fear not,” he said feebly, “possessed of this I wanted not. Take courage, the Master deserts not His lambs, confide in his goodness.”

“Father; Oh father!” she said entreatingly, “I cannot let you go.”

“Heaven wills it, my child,” he replied. “In a few brief moments I shall be in paradise, and will watch—”

He could not finish; the words he attempted to utter died feebly on his lips.

He fell back on his couch, and raising his eyes he made one more feeble effort and the missionary's voice was silenced forever.

Elizabeth's sobs attracted the people of the inn; a crowd soon gathered, more from idle curiosity than compassion.

The keeper of the inn discovered with delight the purse which Elizabeth in her grief had neglected to secure.

He took possession of it, telling her that after the expenses of the funeral were paid he would return to her what was left.

In Russia, people who are employed to attend the ceremonies of interments are called popes. At the hour set for the funeral services the popes entered with torches, threw a pall over the deceased and placed the body on a bier.

Elizabeth, penniless, alone and unprotected for the first time, fully realized her helplessness.

She retired to the farthest corner of the room during the chanting of the funeral hymns. She kept her handkerchief over her eyes as if to shut out the world.

When the time arrived for the burial she had gained strength and courage, she could not think of departing before the conclusion of the funeral services.

The burial ground at Sarapul is a short distance from the town at the foot of an eminence on the north side of the Thama. It is surrounded by a hedge. In the center is a building used as an oratory, around which the mounds, surmounted by crosses, mark the interments of the dead.

Some straggling wild flowers grow round about, as if nature resented the neglect of the sleepers who inhabit the lowly city within.

The train of mourners which followed the coffin was composed of persons of all classes; several nations and as many languages were represented; those who were indifferent to the sufferings of the living chanted their meaningless wails over his bier.

The keeper of the inn, who had stolen the missionary's purse and thus defrauding Elizabeth of the means of subsistence during the remaining part of her travel, was not the least among the mourners.

When the coffin was lowered into the grave the pope who officiated put a small coin into the hands of the deceased, according to the rites of the Greek church, to pay for his passage to paradise.

Elizabeth remained in the cemetery for some hours after the burial.

With a sharp stone she inscribed on the cross which was placed over Father Paul's grave the following:

“The just perisheth and no man layeth it to heart.” Isaiah, lvii-1.

Night approached and Elizabeth returned to her dismal apartment; and except that Father Paul's spirit seemed to pervade the room she would have been overcome with sorrow.

Thus the departed leave behind them the reflection of their lives. The dead often impart to the living a consolation even to joy.

Elizabeth, believing that her guide looked down upon her in compassion and understanding, sank into a sweet and profound slumber from which she did not awaken until dawn.

Next morning as she started on her journey, the host gave her three rubles (about \$2.25), assuring her that it was all that remained of the missionary's purse after paying the funeral expenses.

During her lonesome travel the next few days the tears almost constantly flowed; but she thought of Father Paul and his parting injunctions; and it strengthened her spirits.

If a peasant or inquisitive traveler questioned her with curiosity she hastened on without reply.

She dare not now ask for passage in the empty sledges which passed, fearing refusal or insult, and the few coins which she possessed must be saved for greater need.

She chose the poorest huts for shelter and ate the coarsest food. Winter was at hand and traveling was often impossible.

Strong winds from the northwest had collected ice on the Wolga which rendered the passage of the river wellnigh impossible. It could be crossed only by going part of the way in a boat and in part by foot, jumping from one block of ice to another; even boatmen accustomed to dangerous navigation would not attempt it without a high reward.

Elizabeth attempted to enter one of the boats, but was rudely thrust back. She was told that she must wait for the river to freeze, which would be in about a fortnight.

“In the name of Heaven, I beg of you,” she entreated of the boatman, “assist me in crossing the river.

“I came from beyond Tobolsk and am on my way to Petersburg to petition the Emperor in behalf of my father, who is now in exile in Siberia.

“If I must remain here a fortnight I cannot continue my journey.”

The boatman, softened by this appeal, gave her his hand and said:

“Come, my child, I will try to ferry you over. The fear of God and the love of your parents are your protection.”

When they met the blocks of ice he took her in his arms and soon landed her in safety on the opposite shore.

Out of her slender purse she offered him a reward, but the boatman, observing that she had so little, would not accept it.

“Nicholas Sokoloff will not accept a single kobol,” said he. “No, rather let him add a little to your store; it will bring a blessing to him and his six little ones.”

He handed her a small coin, and returning to his boat, he said, “May God watch over and protect you.”

Elizabeth accepted the coin, reflecting that she would pay it back to him on her return.

CHAPTER VIII

A KEEN, chilly atmosphere gave warning that winter was near. No house was in sight. Weary with walking Elizabeth sought shelter at the foot of a rocky summit. Near this hill was an extensive forest. She was now in Europe. She felt that she was nearer Petersburg, but farther from her parents; even familiar trees began to disappear. Her beloved fir trees were nowhere in sight in this forest, but were replaced by other varieties which were strange to her.

The view of Kassan was in the distance. Upon the high rocks the ancient fortress of Chams of Tartary presented a picturesque view.

In the course of her journey, Elizabeth met with scenes of misery far greater than her own; for she traveled over the same route as the exiles who were on their way to the place of banishment.

She had met three and four hundred men,

women and children marching wearily past, surrounded by a cordon of armed officers.

The men were in chains and leg fetters. Some were condemned for life to the mines of Siberia, others to the bleak arctic regions of Angora or the confines of China. This punishment was supposed to be a milder doom than death.

These were not all common criminals. By far the larger portion of them were persons against whom no crime was charged, but who had been arrested on suspicion of "having evil designs against the government" and condemned without a trial.

Occasionally she met exiles escorted by officers of state. These were nobles or other persons of rank who had been condemned to banishment under the political inquisition of the Emperor Paul. She turned her sight from these, sometimes closing her eyes.

On her arrival at Vladimir, Elizabeth had but one ruble (78 cents) in her purse. She had been nearly three months traveling from Sarapul to Vladimir, but through the kindness of Russian peasants, who never take payment for bread and milk, her little store was not yet exhausted; but her shoes were worn; her dress was ragged and the weather was ex-

tremely cold, the thermometer being thirty degrees below freezing point. The ground was covered with two feet of snow, sometimes the snow congealed while falling, and was like a shower of ice. At other times, torrents of rain rendered the roads almost impassable.

She was sometimes forced to protect herself from the weather by digging a hole in the snow, which she covered with the bark of trees as she had seen done in Siberia.

In one of these blinding snow storms, unable to see the road, Elizabeth took refuge by a pile of rocks. She observed nearby a rude hut. Here she found an old woman living in the most abject poverty.

“My poor child,” she said to Elizabeth, “where are you from? Why are you traveling alone and in such weather?”

She made the usual reply: “I am from beyond Tobolsk and am on my way to Petersburg to solicit my father’s pardon.”

At these words a man in the corner of the room raised his head from his hand and exclaimed: “Is it possible, child, that you have traveled such a distance, and alone, during the severest of weather and to ask your father’s pardon? Alas! my poor daughter would have done as much for her father, but they took

her from me, and she knows not if her father is alive.

“I felt at first that the separation would kill me. I would gladly have welcomed death rather than be doomed to live apart from my child, whom I loved so well.

“I could write to her before I cross the confines of Siberia, but the hounds have stripped me of everything; even to my last kopek, and the postman returning to Riga would not convey a letter for me without a compensation.”

Elizabeth gave him her last ruble knowing that it would enable him to send a letter to his daughter.

When the storm had subsided Elizabeth prepared to start on her journey. To the old woman who had been so kind to her, she said: “Gratitude is all I have to give.”

“My poor child,” said the woman, “have you given away your last coin?”

The exile exclaimed: “Angel thou art. Can I make no return to you?”

A knife lay on the table. Elizabeth took it up and cut off a lock of her hair.

“Sir!” she said, “you will see the Governor of Tobolsk. Give him this. Tell him it is from Elizabeth to her parents.”

He promised to grant the request, and if

given the liberty, to hunt up her parents and inform them of her welfare.

With the hope of being able to convey a message to her parents, Elizabeth felt much encouraged and her spirits revived. She had still the small coin given her by the boatman.

CHAPTER IX

FROM Vladimir to the village of Pokroff, the road passes through swampy lands, and forests of oak, elm and wild apple.

In summer time these trees present a beautiful appearance, but afford refuge for robbers which infest these regions.

In winter when the trees are bare of foliage, the shelter being less secure, the robbers are fewer in number, and therefore the traveler is in less danger.

Elizabeth heard many stories, on her way, of the plunders of these highway robbers, which would have kept her in constant terror, except that she had nothing to lose. Her poverty was her security. She could see no reason why they should harm a defenseless traveler.

A few versts from Pokroff the high road had been inundated by the Wolga, and travelers were obliged to make a circuit through the swamp. This road was now frozen over and all traces of its former outline were lost.

She attempted to follow the course pointed out to her, but missed her way; and after wan-

dering about more than an hour, she found herself in a desolate frozen swamp, not knowing what direction to pursue.

Ascending a hillock she sat down to rest in the sun.

No human habitation was visible. Everything looked dreary, sad and forsaken. On one side of her was the frozen swamp she had crossed. In front of her lay a dense forest, with no trace of a roadway. Darkness was approaching. She was extremely weary, but she must seek shelter for the night. She listened, hoping to hear a human voice, when suddenly she heard several voices and a group of men emerged from the forest. Thinking they might give her information with regard to the road, she advanced toward them. On nearer approach their savage countenances terrified her, for she knew that she was encountering a band of robbers. She thought of Father Paul and his assurance of divine protection in the hour of danger. She knelt in prayer, taking no notice of the advance of the robbers.

There were seven in the band. Seeing her kneel, they paused and talked together in a low tone. One, who seemed to be the leader, demanded of Elizabeth that she tell from whence she came and whither she was going.



“Elizabeth encounters a band of robbers.”

“I came from beyond Tobolsk,” she said. “I am the daughter of an exile, and am going to Petersburg to solicit my father’s pardon.” She added that the high road had been inundated by storms, and she had lost her way in the frozen marshes.

They asked her how much money she had to convey her on her journey.

She showed them the coin given her by the boatman on the Wolga.

They then held council together and concluded that she was possessed of some supernatural power. Fearing punishment which they believed was certain to result if they interfered with the divine decree, they motioned her to pass on; then crossing themselves, they withdrew in the forest to watch her movements.

Elizabeth hastened on. She had walked but a short distance when she came to four cross-roads. Here she found a little chapel dedicated to the Virgin; and upon the four sides of a post were the names of four towns to which the different roads led.

She knelt before the chapel. The robbers still watched her, and being confirmed in the conviction that she was protected by supernatural power, they retired into the forest.

Elizabeth's spirits began to revive as she discovered her way to Pokroff; and she walked rapidly, that she might regain the time she had lost.

She soon arrived at the Wolga, which runs past the village and sweeps the walls of a nunnery. Here Elizabeth was warmly received. The nuns listened to her story of hardships; and, although they were very poor, being themselves dependent on charity, they received her with hospitality and acquainted the community with her story. She was shown the most affectionate attention. Caresses and motherly endearments reminded her of home. They lamented that they could not replenish her purse; but they took of their own scanty wardrobe and supplied her with clothing, of which she was in dire need.

Elizabeth now started on her journey to Moscow. She was surprised at the number of carriages, carts, horses and people of all ranks which were hastening in the same direction.

In a little village, where she stopped over night, the houses were so crowded with strangers that she could scarcely procure lodging, even in the poorest hovel.

She was permitted to sleep in a shed which was so open that the snow drifted in on her

bed of straw; but feeling that she was nearing her journey's end, she was full of hope and good cheer.

She was awakened at dawn by the ringing of bells from all the country round. And from all sides she heard proclaimed the name of Alexander.

The report of cannon alarmed her, for she had never heard one before. Inquiring the cause of the noise from a group of persons in rich livery, they looked amazed at her ignorance and replied:

“It is in honor of the Emperor, whose coronation is to be celebrated in Moscow.”

“Is not the Emperor, then, in Petersburg?” Elizabeth inquired.

“He is in Moscow, as everyone else already knows,” was the contemptuous reply.

Elizabeth was in ecstasy. She would hasten to Moscow. She would see the Emperor there, thus shortening her journey several hundred versts. So eager was she to start on her journey that she forgot that she had eaten nothing for eighteen hours.

Her mind wandered back to her parents and in imagination she was relating to them the joyful tidings that her journey was almost at an end.

CHAPTER X

IT was early in March when Elizabeth entered the great city of Moscow. Although in reality at the end of her journey, there were difficulties yet to be overcome that she did not realize.

Magnificent as was the display of wealth in this city, Elizabeth observed an intermixture of wretched cabins on every hand, where untiled coverings and broken windows offered but scant shelter to their inmates.

Throngs of people almost entirely obstructed the passage in the streets and alleys. She found herself on a grand avenue, lined with rows of birch and linden; well dressed people thronged the avenue, all discoursing on the subject of the coronation.

Trains of elegant carriages passed continually and the bells of the cathedrals rang. The sound of the cannon was almost lost in the incessant roar of the multitude.

Night was coming on. Elizabeth had not eaten a morsel all day. Tired and faint she

wandered to the public square, where great fires were lighted. Here she sat down to rest. Hunger, weariness and cold had exhausted her spirits.

She watched the crowd passing to see if she might find a kind face that would encourage her to ask for assistance.

She had approached some cottages, but was rudely repulsed.

Night came and the cold was intense. As Elizabeth's mind wandered back to her home, she became discouraged.

She recalled the content and happiness she had known there; of the suffering of her parents on account of her absence and the uncertainty of her return.

The purpose of her mission came to her with intensified meaning, and the reflection that after all she might fail in her object startled her and she began to weep.

An old woman inquiring the cause of her sorrow expressed her sympathy by returning with a piece of brown bread; but Elizabeth's appetite had fled. She feared that she would be obliged to remain in the streets all night, and she continued to weep.

Placing one hand over her eyes she reached out the other to the passersby, hoping to attract the attention of some charitable stranger.

A man soon approached and addressing her, said:

“Young woman, what do you follow for a living?”

The night was far advanced and the crowd had dispersed.

A guard, in making his round, demanded of Elizabeth to explain why she was abroad at so late an hour.

The harsh manner of the soldier frightened her so that she could not speak.

Other soldiers gathered about her and questioned her with familiar rudeness.

She gathered courage and related her errand to Moscow, explaining that she had no money to pay for a night's lodging.

The soldiers burst into a laugh and insolently seized her.

She calmed herself, closed her eyes and repeated:

“Oh, my Father in Heaven, forsake me not in this hour of need.”

Some persons passing, hearing her appeal for help, and observing the rude manner of the officers, expressed their indignation loud enough for Elizabeth to hear.

She repeated that she was the daughter of an exile, and had come hither to seek her father's

pardon, and had nothing to pay for a night's lodging.

A man came forward and addressing the soldiers, said:

“I keep the Inn of St. Basil, nearby. The girl's story seems to be true. I will give her lodging for the night.”

Elizabeth was released, and trembling with fear, she followed her guide in silence.

Jacques Rossi, which was the name of her host, conducted her to his wife's apartments in St. Basil's Inn, introducing her and requested that she be well treated.

The young wife received her compassionately, gave her a warm supper and listened with tears to Elizabeth's story.

There was no spare room in the house, but she was permitted to share the family apartment for the night, while the husband slept on a pile of straw in a shed. Thus are the poor good to the poor. Those with little, give it cheerfully, knowing the full value of the gift.

Jacques Rossi returned to assist his wife in entertaining the stranger and became an interested listener to the story of Elizabeth's misfortunes and the object of her mission to Moscow.

“I have but little influence in the town,” he

said, "but all I have shall be directed to your service," and he bade her be of good cheer.

Elizabeth wished that she dare mention the name of Smoloff, but feared that it might involve him in difficulty.

There were many soldiers in the city, might he not possibly be one of them? She would watch for him everywhere.

"The Emperor Alexander is to be crowned tomorrow in the Church of the Assumption," said Jacques Rossi. "I will accompany you thither, and you must place yourself in his way.

"He is a virtuous sovereign, and cannot on such an occasion pass by an appeal for mercy." Elizabeth's heart bounded with joy.

"Oh, my benefactor!" she exclaimed, "perhaps you may be the means of restoring my father to liberty.

"My parents will bless you for your goodness. Had I been less unfortunate, you might not have taken pity on me."

She felt that success was in sight, and her spirits had again revived.

Since coming to Moscow she had heard much said in praise of the Emperor's goodness. This gave her hope.

She was reminded of the lateness of the

hour by her kind host, and the necessity of repose that she might be prepared for the morrow.

The result of years of waiting, of planning, of hoping, was to culminate before another nightfall; and Elizabeth resolved to be patient and steadfast to the end.

In her dreams she returned to her far away home and soothed her sorrowing parents by telling them that soon all would be well.

CHAPTER XI

THE artillery and rolling of the drums announced the dawn of the day on which the coronation of the Emperor was to be celebrated.

Elizabeth, clothed in garments loaned to her by the kind lady of the inn, accompanied by Jacques Rossi, joined the throng on the road to the Church of the Assumption where the ceremonies were to take place.

The holy temple was illuminated by a thousand tapers and decorated with the dazzling splendor of oriental magnificence.

Upon a throne surmounted on a dais, under a canopy of rich velvet, was seated the Emperor and his youthful consort in magnificent apparel, which added to the scene an air almost celestial. Prostrate before the Emperor, she received from his hand the imperial diadem, the pledge of their eternal union.

Seated opposite the royal pair in the sacred chair of truth was the venerable Plato, the Patriarch of Moscow, who in a discourse, eloquent and pathetic, recalled to the mind of the

youthful Alexander, the great responsibilities of a sovereign.

Amidst the throng of nations assembled in the cathedral he pointed out hunters from Kamptschatka who bring tributes of fur from the Thurile Isles; merchants of Archangel, whose vessels were loaded with rich commodities from every part of Europe; the Samoyeds a people from the Jeniffer, and the nations of Astrican, whose fertile fields furnish melons, figs and grapes of the finest flavor; inhabitants of the Black and Caspian seas, and of the great Tartary, which is bounded by Persia, China and the Empire of the Mongols, extending over nearly half the globe and almost reaching the north pole.

“Sovereign of the greatest empire on earth,” said he, “thou art this day to take the solemn oath of presiding over the destinies of a state that contains a fifth part of the globe.

“Bear ever in remembrance that you must answer before your God for the fate of millions of your fellow creatures, and that any injustice done, must be accounted for on the final day of reckoning.”

The young Emperor seemed deeply affected by this discourse; but there was one in the

multitude that was even more affected; she was a suppliant for a father's pardon.

Elizabeth imagined that such a discourse must soften the heart of the Emperor toward the meanest of his subjects, and when he took the solemn oath which was to bind him to the promise to devote his life to the happiness of his people, she felt assured that he would grant her father's pardon.

Feeling that the time had come for her to act, and afraid that if she allowed the opportunity to pass none other might be offered, she rushed toward the Emperor, forcing her way through the crowd, but was seized by the guards and led out of the church.

She burst into sobs so loud as to create a general commotion, interrupting the ceremonies and attracting the attention of the Emperor, who turned to one of his guards and requested him to make inquiries concerning the girl.

As the guard advanced toward Elizabeth, he heard her explaining her errand and begging permission to return to the church.

The officer, hastening forward, seized her hand, exclaiming:

“Elizabeth, is it indeed you?”

“Whence do you come?”

“From Tobolsk,” she replied.

“From Tobolsk alone and on foot?”

“Yes,” she responded, “and now they are trying to prevent me from imploring my father’s pardon.”

“I will conduct you to the Emperor’s presence, Elizabeth. I will present you to him, and will plead in your father’s behalf,” said Smoloff.

The meeting of Elizabeth and M. de Smoloff was the source of unbounded gratitude to both.

All fear for the future had fled from Elizabeth’s mind. As she hastened through the throng, led by her deliverer, her heart was light and her step was buoyant.

Smoloff forced a passageway through the crowd to the Emperor’s presence, and addressing him, said:

“Sire, I present to you the daughter of Stanislaus Poniatowski, who has traveled on foot, alone and unprotected, from the forest of Isham, where she and her parents have lived in exile for thirteen years.

“She has come to ask for her father’s pardon.”

“Forgiveness for my father,” Elizabeth repeated.

A murmur arose from the crowd. The Em-

peror was deeply affected. His countenance dropped for a moment.

She was the daughter of an enemy, but now that he tried to recall the incident, however, he could not recollect what accusation had been preferred against the distinguished prisoner; were it otherwise he could not on such an occasion withhold his clemency.

The tender sympathy expressed in the Emperor's face and manner assured Elizabeth that his reply would be favorable, but she observed a hesitation, and the tears came to her eyes.

The beauty and intelligence of Elizabeth's face aroused the sincere admiration and sympathy of the Emperor, and he doubted whether the father of such a daughter had been justly condemned to punishment.

After looking into her face some moments, in silence, he said, in a tremulous voice, "Your father is pardoned."

Elizabeth could not speak. Supreme joy had overcome her feelings, but Smoloff expressed to the Emperor gratitude in her behalf, while exclamations of praise for the new monarch was heard on every hand.

As Smoloff guided her to the house of Jacques Rossi, the crowd stood aside with re-

spectful consideration, and murmurs of approval.

Two days later M. de Smoloff called with the pardon in his hand. Three more days, however, would elapse before the formal scroll of parchment, sealed with the imperial signet, could be procured.

On receiving the scroll containing her father's pardon, a flood of recollections came to Elizabeth, and she began to weep.

When she recovered, Smoloff was kneeling beside her.

"Elizabeth," he continued, "I have not yet told you all.

"Our kind sovereign has restored to your father all his large possessions, his honors, the rank of noble, which he formally held.

"A carrier will deliver the order to my father, and the Emperor has given his consent for me to accompany him."

"And may I not, too, accompany him?" asked Elizabeth.

"Most certainly!" replied Smoloff, "and from you, your father will learn that he is free.

"Presuming that this was your desire, I expressed it to the Emperor, and he commissioned me to inform you that you have his per-

mission to depart in one of his carriages with two female attendants, and he sends you a purse of two thousand rubles to defray the expenses of your journey.”

“M. de Smoloff,” said Elizabeth, “I cannot express to you my gratitude. Since the first day I met you, you have done all in your power to aid me.

“Your advice was my inspiration, while preparing for my undertaking. The remembrance of you cheered me while on my journey. Had I failed to meet the Emperor on this occasion I should have searched for you everywhere, and implored your assistance before abandoning my object. But for your presence, I would not have secured my father’s pardon.

“I have no means of repaying you. Indeed, such service is beyond price.

“My father, my mother and I must ever remain your debtors.”

Smoloff was silent; a blush came over his face. He thought of a way in which Elizabeth could repay him a thousandfold; but he would not tell her now, he would bide his time.

He no longer doubted the possibility of winning her love; no other eyes are as scrutinizing, none so keen in perception as the eyes of a lover; and in none other are the impressions

of the heart so unwittingly betrayed as in that of an unsophisticated maiden.

The three days intervening before the official scroll containing the pardon could be obtained Elizabeth spent in making preparations for her long journey. She was to return to her exile home as become a princess of royal blood, and M. de Smoloff was her adviser and counsellor in everything—the selection of her raiment and the smallest details concerning the necessary preparations for her comfort while traveling.

It was his desire to provide every convenience for her homeward trip which money could procure.

Their separate carriages would travel in the same suite, and he would have opportunity to extend his supervision over her to the end of her long journey.

CHAPTER XII

IT was now the middle of March. Ten months had elapsed since Elizabeth started on her journey. It would be six weeks before the greeting of spring.

The preparations for her homeward trip was complete.

On leaving Moscow she did not forget to reward her kind host and hostess, and with their blessing she entered the carriage which was to convey her back to her parents.

Except that every possible provision for the prevention of delay had been provided for by the post stations on the returning route, much time would necessarily have been consumed on account of the weather and bad roads.

Elizabeth was in such haste to reach her parents that they traveled night and day, frequently shortening the distance by one hundred miles within twenty-four hours.

Not a day passed that Smoloff did not spend a part of it in Elizabeth's company.

Cheerfulness and rest from the fatigue of her journey had restored the bloom to her

cheeks. Her beauty was enhanced by the style and richness of her traveling robe.

Never was knight more gallant, than M. de Smoloff; but he was deeply conscious of his obligations, his sacred trust, and maintained a respectful reserve; his silence and constant vigilance only suggesting his deep attachment.

They occasionally passed exiles en route to banishment, for they traveled over his majesty's highway.

This road was laid out and in some parts adorned with trees by the Empress Catharine.

Whether Catharine sought to furnish shade for the weary exiles, or to embellish her own name, matters not; it has been a great blessing to the traveler in the heat of summer, and thousands have praised her memory for the deed.

Elizabeth was not content to pass the nunnery at Pokroff without delivering the glad message to the sisters who had so tenderly cared for her; and she did not forget to repay their kindness by a generous contribution to their empty purse, and as they recrossed the Wolga before Kassan, she called to see Nicholas Sokoloff, the boatman, who had carried her over the broken ice.

The poverty of this man with a family of

motherless children, excited Elizabeth's compassion and she gave him a hundred rubles.

He did not recognize her, transformed as she was, until she showed him the coin he had given her.

“Charity faileth not to bring reward,” he said. “Heaven has returned it to me more than a thousandfold. May the blessings of God rest upon you.”

Arriving at Sarapul, she stopped to visit the grave of the missionary. The cross was still there with the inscription she had engraved on it. She did not now shed tears of sorrow over the death of Father Paul, whose life had been so full of kindness and self-sacrifice, but dropped a tear of consolation, feeling that he was at rest in the celestial paradise he had dreamed of while on earth.

As Elizabeth related to Smoloff the events of her journey to Moscow tears often came to his eyes. This beautiful princess maiden who had by accident entered into his life had awakened the most exalted sentiments of his being, and all nature assumed a new aspect. With the ardent impetuosity of youth, he was yet impelled by his supreme respect for her to defer the declaration of his feelings until such time as prudence dictated.

He would wait. And in the forest which she loved so well, or on the plain where the moonlight shining on the icy landscape first made her known to him, he would repeat to her the story of his love.

M. de Smoloff had traveled much; was a man of education and military experience. Though scarce twenty-five years of age he had won the recognition of the Emperor as a man of ability and one worthy of high trust.

He seemed to Elizabeth to be very learned. She had met no others like him except her father and the Governor of Tobolsk. The people she met on her journey gave her the impression that opportunity and intelligence are very unequally distributed among men.

There was a scene of joy exhibited at Tobolsk when the courier made known his errand and young Smoloff presented the beautiful Princess Elizabeth to his father.

From him Elizabeth learned that her parents were well, and this information was still further confirmed at Saimki.

CHAPTER XIII

ELIZABETH'S journey is about to end, and therefore this story is near completion. Her emotions as she crossed the plain and forest, recognizing the familiar trees, rocks, and lake, adjacent to her home; the fear as she alighted from the carriage lest some sudden ill might have befallen her parents; her re-entrance to the cottage where the days of her absence had been numbered with sorrow and anxiety, I will not attempt to describe.

As she reached the threshold, her father opened the door and Elizabeth fell into his arms, exhausted with excitement and suspense.

The scroll bearing the official testimony of the pardon in her hand seemed of less importance to her parents than the safe return of their child.

After the excitement caused by the delirium of joy had passed, Elizabeth informed her parents that M. de Smoloff was outside in the carriage. He was invited to come in, but declined, saying that he would call the next day.

A description of the scenes following Elizabeth's return would represent the parents relating the suspense, apprehension and alarm which they suffered during her absence; Elizabeth rehearsing the perils of her long journey; the blessing invoked by her parents on those who had given her assistance; the devoted mother exhibiting the lock of hair which Elizabeth had sent by the venerable exile, who had related to them Elizabeth's experience and hopes of success; the exhibition of devotion between daughter and parents, and at the family altar, gratitude for Elizabeth's safe return, and blessing on the Emperor for the scroll which bore the words that made them free.

Smoloff became a daily visitor and was received with a cordial welcome which assured him that his hopes would not be in vain.

Elizabeth noted with delight the growing friendship between her parents and her lover. She had never before heard her father talk with such freedom and eloquence. The dejected expression which had overshadowed his face in the past had departed. Cheerfulness and enthusiasm marked her mother's demeanor and all were happy.

The Siberian summer had returned and nature was chanting her roundelays.

Elizabeth was now eighteen years of age. One afternoon while wandering over familiar grounds, she pointed out to Smoloff the rock where she sat with map in hand the day she had commenced planning for her trip to Petersburg.

They sat down and rehearsed the scenes of their early acquaintance.

Smoloff referred to their meeting in the chapel. Elizabeth did not need to be reminded of this incident in order to understand the look and manner of her lover. The finale of this tete-a-tete on the rocks we leave the reader to guess.

CHAPTER XIV

ELIZABETH is restored to her parents; she is by them conducted to the place of her birth; reinstated to the rank of her ancestors and united in marriage to the man of her choice.

Years pass, the lives of this worthy pair were gladdened with joys, such as honor and domestic love bestow.

It is evening; the sun sinking in the west casts a glow of splendor over the earth.

Young Paul, leading his little sister by the hand, may be seen meeting in the garden a white haired man with keen restless eyes, like one who searches for something he cannot find. His wife Phedora beside him is still beautiful. She caresses the children, remarks to the little girl, "Elizabeth, how you remind me of your mother."

She takes her on her knee and tells her of the story of her mother's life in exile. She turns to Paul and relates to him the tale of the good

missionary whose life went out in service to the world.

Darkness comes; and around the family altar Stanislaus prays that the pall of night may be lifted from his beloved Poland.

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