

RURIC NEVEL.

A TALE OF RUSSIA TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

CHAPTER I.

The time at which we open our story is mid-winter, and towards the close of the seventeenth century. Russia had passed through the long and bitter ordeal of national night. The Tartar yoke had been worn till the very bones of the nation were galled; and when this was thrown off civil dissensions and insurrections commenced. The Poles and Swedes plundered the country, and amid general tumult and confusion some half dozen men were clamoring for the throne. At length a few patriotic citizens, pledging everything they held dear on earth to the cause of freedom from this curse of anarchy, and headed by a noble prince and an humble, patriotic butcher, made a bold stand to save the country. Moscow was retaken, and Michael Romanoff was chosen Czar;—and this illustrious family still occupies the imperial throne. And now the day of Russian greatness dawned; but the sun was not fairly up—and the broad light opened not upon the empire—until Peter came to the throne.

In the department of the Sloboda—the suburbs of Moscow—and very near the river Moskwa, stood a humble cot, the exterior of which betrayed a neatness of arrangement and show of taste that more than made up for its smallness of size. Nor was it so very small, in fact, but only in contrast; for near at hand about it stood many large, shabby, dirty-looking structures that overlooked the prim cot, as bleak mountains may look down upon a verdant hill. And within this cot was as neat as without. The two apartments in front, one of which was only used in winter, were furnished not only with neatness, but with a fair show of ornament and luxury. Back of these were a large cooking and dining room, and two small bedrooms; and back still from these was an artisan's shop, and other out-buildings. This shop was devoted principally to the manufacture of fire-arms. Some swords, and other edged weapons, were made here upon special application.

The gun-maker now stood by his forge watching the white smoke as it curled up towards the throat of the chimney. He was a young man, not over three-and-twenty, and possessed a frame of more than ordinary symmetry and muscular development. He was not large—not above the medium size—but a single glance at the swelling chest, the broad shoulders, and the sinewy ridges of the bare arms, told at once that he was master of great physical power. His features were regular, yet strongly marked, and eminently handsome; his brow, which was full and high, was half covered by the light brown curls that waved over it; while his eyes, which were of a bright, brilliant, deep gray in color, lent a cast of genius to the intellect of the brow. His name was Ruric Nevel. His father had been killed in the then late war with the Turks, and the son, leaving his mother properly cared for, went to Spain soon after the bereavement. There he found work in the most noted armories; and now, well versed in the trade, he had returned to his native city to follow his calling, and support his mother.

Near by stood a boy—Paul Pespoff—a bright, intelligent lad, some fifteen years of age, who had bound himself to the gun-maker for the purpose of learning the art. His hair and his eyes were darker than his master's, and if he possessed not so much sound intellect, he certainly possessed an unwonted degree of keen, quick wit, and unswerving integrity.

The sun had been some time below the horizon, and the only light of any consequence that made things partially visible within the shop came from the dull blaze of the coals on the forge, as Paul ever and anon bore down upon the brake that moved the bellows. Suddenly Ruric started back from the forge as his mind broke from the deep reverie into which he had fallen, and having bade his boy to see that matters were properly disposed for the night he turned towards the door, and was soon in the kitchen, where his mother had supper all prepared and set out.

Claudia Nevel was a noble looking woman, if the impress of a noble, generous soul can be called such, and the light of her still handsome countenance was never brighter than when gazing upon her boy. She had seen the snows of fifty winters, and if they had left some silver upon her head, and some age-marks upon her face, the sunshine of full as many summers had left her with a thankful, loving heart, and a prayerful, loving soul.

"It is snowing again, faster than ever," remarked Paul, as he took his seat at the table.

"Ah," returned Ruric, resting his knife a few moments while he bent his ear to listen to the voice of the storm. "I had hoped 'twould now no more for the present. The snow is deep enough now. And how it blows!"

"Never mind," spoke the dame, in a trustful easy tone, "it must storm when it listeth, and we can only thank God that we have shelter, and pray for those who have none."

"Amen!" responded Ruric, fervently.

After this the trio remained some minutes silent, seeming to be busy in listening to the storm-notes that came pealing about the cot. The wind was high, and the snow was now dashing upon the windows with a dreary, melancholy sound. The meal was at length eaten, and the table set back, and shortly afterwards Paul retired to his bed. It was his wont to retire early, for he rose early to build the fires and prepare for the labors of the day.

Ruric drew his chair close up to the fireplace, and leaning against the jamb he bowed his head and pondered again. This had become a habit with him of late. Sometimes he would sit thus during a whole hour without speaking, or even moving, and his mother did not interrupt him, as she supposed he might be solving some mechanical problem that had arisen to bother him. But these fits of thought had become too frequent, too lengthy, and too moody, for such a conclusion, and the good woman was forced to believe that they were caused by something more remote than the business of the forge or the lathe. The youth now sat with his brow resting upon his hand, and his eyes bent upon the hearth. For half an hour he had not moved, and his face wore an anxious, troubled look.

"Ruric, my son," spoke the mother at length, in a low, kind tone, "what is it that occupies your thoughts so much?"

The young man started and turned his gaze upon his mother.

"Did you speak to me, my mother?" he asked, after having recalled his mind to things about him.

"Yes, my boy," she said, "I did speak to you. I asked you what it was that occupied your thoughts."

"Oh—nothing—nothing," Ruric answered, after some moments of hesitation. "I was only thinking—that was all."

"I know you were thinking—and I know that was all at the time; but of what, Ruric? Come—hide no secrets from your mother. I have noticed you of late, and I know you are changed. That old smile is gone from your face, and sometimes I have feared the gladness was gone from your heart. I have seen you bent in thought over your work when I knew that of your work you were not thinking; and I have seen you buried in deep thought when you should be reading or conversing with me."

"Have I then offended you, my mother?"

"No, no—oh, no, my noble boy. Never did such a thought enter my mind. If I have been made uneasy thereby it is only in love for thee, and the fear that thou wert not so happy as in the past. Will you not tell me all? Oh, I hope my boy fears not to trust his mother with his thoughts."

As she spoke thus she moved her seat close to where Ruric sat, and placed her hand upon his arm.

"Tell me, my boy," she added, in a low, persuasive tone, "what it is that dwells thus upon your mind."

Ruric reached out and took his mother's hand, and having gazed for some moments into her face he said:

"Surely, my mother, I have nothing in my soul that I would hide from thee. If I have kept my thoughts to myself with unmeaning silence, it has been because I feared you would laugh at me if I told you of them."

"Ah, no, my son," the mother replied almost reprovingly; "nothing that could claim such deep and absorbing consideration from a mind like yours would move me to derision. Speak plainly, and be sure of my sympathy."

A few moments more the youth gazed silently upon his mother, and then he answered:

"All this thought has been of one person—of—Rosalind Valdai."

Claudia Nevel started as she heard that name, and for the while the color forsook her cheeks.

"What, my dear boy—what of her have you thought?" she asked, tremulously.

"What, but of one thing, could I think, my mother? You have seen her?"

"Yes, Ruric."

"And you have marked the grace, the loveliness, the soul-given beauty of the noble girl?"

"I know she is beautiful, my son; and also that she is good—at least so I think."

"Then what but love could move me with deep thought of her? Oh, my mother, I do love her. I love her with the whole strength of my heart and soul."

"Alas, my Ruric, she will never love thee."

"You know not that," the youth quickly replied, his eyes burning deeply, and his open brow flushing. "Did I not know she loved me he sure I would never have allowed my thoughts such range. We were children together, and even then we loved. Fate has dealt differently by us in the years that have passed since those childhood times; but yet I am sure that her love for me is not changed, save as increasing age must change all the emotions of our nature into deeper, stronger lights and shades."

"But think, my boy; you, a mere artisan—the off-spring of nobility and the ward of a duke—a stern, cold, proud aristocrat, who looks upon our station only as harsh masters look upon their beasts of burden. I fear you will find little else but misery in such a course of thought."

"At least, my mother, I will see Rosalind; and if she loves me as I love her—and if she would accept my hand—"

"Hush, my boy. Do not cherish such hopes. Why should she mate with thee when the richest nobles of the land would kneel for her hand?"

"Hold!" cried Ruric, starting to his feet, his handsome face flushed and his bright eye burning. "Speak not thus—at least, not now. I flatter not myself; but I claim a soul as pure, and a heart as noble, as any man in the land. My mind is as clear, my hopes as high; my ambition as true to real greatness, and my will as firm as any of them. If Rosalind seeks the love of a true heart, and the protection of stout arms and determined success, then I fear not to place myself by the side of any suitor in the land. But if she seeks immediate wealth, and the glitter of some high-sounding title, then—ah, I know she does not. But let it pass now. I will see her."

Claudia would not oppose the wishes of her son, and she said no more upon the subject. For a while nothing further was said, until Ruric remarked upon the increasing force of the storm.

"Hark!" uttered his mother, bending her ear in a listening attitude. "Was that a knock upon our door?"

"Surely no one is out on such a night that could seek shelter here," returned Ruric. "You must have—"

The youth did not finish the sentence, for at that moment the knock came so loud that it was not to be mistaken. The youth caught up the candle and hastened to the door. He opened it, but the blast came roaring in, whirling a cloud of snow into Ruric's face, and extinguishing the light at once.

"Is there any one here?" the gun-maker asked, bowing his head and shielding his eyes from the driving snow with one hand.

"Yes," returned a voice from the Stygian darkness. "In God's name let me in, or I shall perish."

"Then follow quickly," said Ruric. "Here—give me your hand. There—now come."

The youth found the thickly gloved hand—gloved with the softest fur—and having led the invisible applicant into the hall he closed the door, and then led the way to the kitchen. As soon as the candle was relighted Ruric turned and gazed upon the new-comer. It was a monk—and he habited something like one of the Black monks of St. Michael. He was of medium height, and possessed a rotundity of person which was comical to behold. He was fat and unwieldy, and waddled about with laughable steps. His huge black robe, which reached from his chin to his toes, was secured about the waist with a sash of the same color, and the snow, which lay upon the shoulders and back, presented a striking contrast. Ruric brushed away the snow with his own hand, and having taken his visitor's thick fur bonnet, the latter took a seat near the fire.

Before a word was spoken the youthful host carefully examined his guest's features; and the latter seemed equally desirous of discovering what manner of people he had fallen in with. The monk's face was a peculiar one. The features were very dark and prominent, and almost angular in their strongly marked outlines. His brow was very strong in mental development, and his eyes were dark and brilliant. The slight circle of hair that escaped from beneath the tight skull-cap which he retained upon his head was somewhat tinged with silver, though his face did not betray such advanced age as this silvery hair would seem to indicate.

"You have been caught in a severe storm, good father," said the youth, after his guest had somewhat recovered from the effect of the cold.

"Aye—that have I, my son," the monk returned in a deep, rumbling tone. "I left the Kremlin this morning, little thinking of such a change. This storm has commenced since I started on my return. About half a mile from here my horse got fondered in the snow, and I left him with an honest peasant, and then started to make the rest of my way on foot, but I reckoned wildly. The driving storm blinded me, and the piling drifts swallowed me up at every dozen steps. My body is not very well adapted to such work—ha, ha, ha! But I saw your light and I determined to seek shelter here for the night. By St. Michael! but this is a most severe storm; yet you are comfortable here."

"Aye, father—we try to be comfortable," said Ruric. "My mother could hardly survive a winter in some of the dwellings which stand hereabouts."

The monk made no answer to this, save a sort of commendatory nod; and shortly afterwards the youth asked:

"Do you belong here in the city, good father?"

"Aye—at present I do," the monk returned. "And then, with a smile he added, 'I suppose you would like to know whom you have thus received. My name is Valdimir, and my home is wherever I may chance to be on God's heritage. At present I am residing here in Moscow. There—could you ask me to be more frank?'"

Ruric smiled, but he made no direct reply. He was too deeply interested in the face of the monk to enter with much eagerness into conversation. At length the guest asked if he could be accommodated with some sleeping-place, and having answered in the affirmative the youth lighted another candle and conducted him to a chamber which was located directly over the kitchen, and which was very well warmed by means of several iron tubes that connected with the furnace below.

"Mother," uttered Ruric, as soon as he had returned to the kitchen, "who is that man?"

"How should I know?" the woman replied.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Broken in Health

That Tired Feeling, Constipation and Pain in the Back

Appetite and Health Restored by Hood's Sarsaparilla.



Mr. Chas. Steele, St. Catherine's, Ont.

"C. I. Hood & Co., Lowell, Mass.: 'For a number of years I have been troubled with a general tired feeling, shortness of breath, pain in the back, and constipation. I could get only little rest at night on account of the pain, and had no appetite whatever. I was that tired in my limbs that I gave out before half the day was gone. I tried a great number of so-called blood purifiers, but with no good results. I was also under the care of several doctors. Frequently I had such bad spells that I had to be brought home from work—'

during the day and have a doctor called in, but did not get any permanent relief from any source until, upon recommendation of a friend, I purchased a bottle of Hood's Sarsaparilla, which made me feel better at once. I have continued its use, having taken three bottles, and

I Feel Like a New Man. I have a good appetite, feel as strong as ever I did, and enjoy perfect rest at night. I have much pleasure in recommending Hood's Sarsaparilla." CHARLES STEELE, with Eric Preserving Co., St. Catherine's, Ontario.

Headache and Impure Blood

Hood's Sarsaparilla Quickly Cured.

"C. I. Hood & Co., Lowell, Mass.: 'About a year ago I had an attack of the grip, followed by a continued headache and dizziness. And shortly after this my face broke out in blotches like ring-worms. I tried numerous medicines to see what they would do for me, but never found anything to take effect until, at last, I thought I would give Hood's Sarsaparilla a trial. I purchased one bottle which soon took effect for the better, and by the time I had taken

HOOD'S Sarsaparilla CURES

half the bottle the headache had ceased and the blotches had all left my face. I have never felt better than I do now, and I think Hood's Sarsaparilla the best blood purifier on the market and readily recommend it to anyone in need of the same." MISS LOUISE LONG, Kelly's Commercial House, Cul-de-Sac Street, Quebec, P. Q.

Hood's Pills are prompt and efficient, yet easy in action. Sold by all druggists. 25c.

For Sale at SHORT'S DRUG STORE.

WESTMORLAND Marble Works, T. F. SHERARD & SON,

Dealers in Monuments, Tablets, Headstones. Cemetery work of every description neatly executed. Orders promptly filled. MONCTON, N. B. (reg 314)

A. E. LANDRY, SAINT LOUIS, N. B., DEALER IN

Dry Goods, Boots & Shoes Rubber Goods, etc. Selling Cheap for Cash.

Watchmaker and Photographer Clocks and Watches repaired at the notice and satisfaction guaranteed. Agent for the celebrated Laurance Spectacles.

Thos. L. Bourke, IMPORTER AND WHOLESALE

WINE & SPIRIT MERCHANT,

11, 13 AND 25 WATER STREET, ST. JOHN, N. B.

LOTS OF LAND FOR SALE!

I am instructed to offer for sale the following lots of land:

- In Galloway, Richibucto:—A lot containing 75 acres known as the Danis Young lot, and granted to him in 1863.
- In Carleton Parish:—A lot containing 66 acres, known as lot M, in block R, on the "Allen Road," north side of the Kouchibouguac River, adjoining John Potter.
- A lot containing 100 acres on the Acadiaville Road, adjoining the James Potter lot, and distinguished a lot No. 72 in block 11.
- In the Parish of Wellington:—A lot containing 50 acres on the north side of the Big Bouctouche River, and known as the John Donaher lot. These properties will be sold cheap if applied for at once. J. D. PHINNEY, Richibucto, March 6th, 1894. All parties are hereby forbidden to trespass upon any of the said lots. J. D. P.

SMELT NETS.

Best quality.

At Lowest Prices.

W. H. THORNE & CO.,

MARKET SQUARE,

St. John, N. B.

MANCHESTER, ROBERTSON & ALLISON,

WHOLESALE DRY GOODS & MILLINERY, CARPETS, OILCLOTHS & HOUSEFURNISHINGS.

27 and 29 King Street, ST. JOHN, N. B.

RICHARD SULLIVAN & CO. —WHOLESALE—

Wine and Spirit Merchants, —IMPORTERS AND DEALERS IN—

TEAS, TOBACCOS and CIGARS 44 & 46 DOCK STREET, ST. JOHN, N. B.

Bonded Warehouse No. 8.

J. H. CARNALL

Taxidermist and Naturalist, 98 King Street, (up stairs) St. John, N. B.

Birds and Animals mounted in the best style of the art. Moose and Caribou Heads mounted in the best style. Furs of all kinds dressed. Good collection on hand for sale. Skins tanned and made into mats. Rare birds bought and fair prices paid. Arctic Owls particularly required. I guarantee that no moths will appear in my work.

CARD. TO THE GROCERY TRADE IN KENT COUNTY.

WE have engaged the services of Mr. BEV. SMITH, late of the B. & M. Railway, to represent us in Kent County. Mr. Smith will call on you at regular intervals, and as we have a very large and well assorted stock, purchased for cash, he will offer Goods at

Lowest Market Prices. We bespeak a share of your orders for him. We take this opportunity to thank our customers in Kent County for past favors and would ask a continuance of your confidence. P. S.—We sell only to the trade.

F. P. REID & CO., MONCTON, N. B.

Henry O'Leary,

DRY GOODS, GROCERIES, HARDWARE, BOOTS & SHOES,

Dry and Pickled FISH, SALT in Bulk and in Bags always on Hand, and Sold Very Low for Cash.

CALL AND SEE OUR STOCK BEFORE BUYING ELSEWHERE.

ESTABLISHED 1889.

The Review,

RICHIBUCTO, NEW BRUNSWICK.

Published every Thursday at \$1.00 per year in advance; \$1.50 if not paid within three months.

THE PEOPLE'S PAPER! THE PEOPLE'S FRIEND!

Furnishes its readers every week with more reading matter than any other paper in the Province, outside of the cities.

SUBSCRIBE NOW—\$1.00 will pay for THE REVIEW from now till January 1, 1896.