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How a Russian Schoolmaster Fooled the Deaf Inspector

And Received the Reward of His Faithful Work—A Most Interesting Sketch

By Dr. Rabinowitz.

(Written for the Sun by Dr. Rabinowitz.)

A gaunt and lanky figure, weedy complexion, stiff, dagger-like side whiskers, a pair of hungry-looking weasel eyes, and the right sleeve of his coat fastened to his side and tucked snugly in his pocket—this was the portrait of my Russian schoolmaster, as I am able to draw today from memory.

He was a veteran of the Russo-Turkish war, having fought under Skobelev by Plevna, where he lost his right hand and won a bronze medal instead of it. Upon his return he was granted a pension of eight roubles and sixty-five kopecks (a little over \$4) a month; and as he was known to be a "grammatist" (literate) he was also given the post of school teacher at the town of K— (my native town).

For a better elucidation of the subject in hand, I find it necessary to state that in Russia, at the time of my school-age, the official educational classification of the people recognized only two sharp divisions—"Grammatie" and "Beggarmatnie," i. e., "literate" and "illiterate," as the different shades of literacy no one bothered his head about.

Ivan Ivanovich filled in my town the dual function of general and schoolmaster. That he was not too iron-handed in the performance of either of his duties may be evidenced by the fact that both the jail and the school house of my native town had a very scanty attendance during his administration.

His salary was fifty roubles a year (not including the pension of eight roubles and sixty-five kopecks) on which income he was supposed to maintain a family of nine and, what would seem to my readers almost miraculous, is that he really maintained them according to a standard of living which in that country and at that time was spoken of as "princely."

How he accomplished this miracle was not a secret at K—. The fact was that he derived an additional income of from \$80 to 1,000 roubles from "at home money" or as he used to term it in euphonistic language when dealing with his patrons, "Compulsory Education Act money."

Instead of a lengthy explanation of this peculiar source of income, I will give my readers a brief conversation between Ivan Ivanovich and one of the "patres families" of the town of K— shortly after taking charge of his new post.

"Andree! I am told that you have two boys between the ages of 8 and 15. What is the reason you don't send them to school?"

"Barin" (marier) began Andree, timidly, "I am a poor farmer with a family of ten to support, and no one to give me a helping hand except these two boys that you want to send to school."

"I send them to school the cattle will be stolen from the pasture, and the poultry will die out in the hen-house. Besides, your highness will pardon me for speaking thus, I am only a poor, ignorant peasant, but more a stringer, says that those who send their children to the government schools are selling their souls to the devil."

"Look here, Andree," spoke in the Uchtitel's furiously. "Did you hear of the Compulsory Education Act, which his grace majesty promulgated on the first of this year?"

"Yes, your highness," murmured Andree humbly. "There is a rumor in town, concerning a decree."

"A rumor! concerning a decree," repeated the irate school master mockingly. "By Skobelev's scabbard! I say it is no rumor but a stringent decree of the Tsar that all male children between the ages of eight and fifteen shall be obliged to attend the public schools. You know Andree what you may bring upon yourself by a violation of this law? Why, fine, imprisonment, confiscation of property, exile to Siberia!"

"Enough enough!" wined Andree, "I am willing to send the boys to school if there is not way out of it."

At this Ivan Ivanovich softened considerably being afraid lest he may have oversteered his mark.

"Not so hasty, Andree, not so hasty. When I was in charge of the 56th Ekaterinsky Dragoons, under Skobelev by Plevna, I used to say, 'Boys! Don't turn your backs as long as there is a cartridge left in your belt.' Now I say the same to you, Andree. Seeing that you are a sensible person and that you really need the boys at home, I deem it my duty to inform you that there is no need of bringing ruin upon yourself as long as there is a cartridge left in your belt."

Here the simple peasant, who had no ear for figurative language, began to shuffle uneasily and to feel his belt for the imaginary cartridge whereupon the schoolmaster broke out in an uncontrollable peal of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha! You simpleton! I did not really mean a cartridge. I meant—well—er, I meant exemption fees."

"Exemption fees!" repeated the peasant with a look of stupid amazement.

"Yes, Andree," explained the schoolmaster, "there is an additional clause to the Compulsory Education Act, which exempts any one from sending his children to school by simply paying a moderate sum annually to the government coffers. In your case twenty roubles a year would permit you to keep your boys on the farm."

Needless to say that Andree complied and his case was by no means a solitary one. There were others who, though perhaps not so simple as Andree to believe that the money was to the government coffers, found it nevertheless most convenient to pay the Uchtitel ten roubles per head and thus the schoolmaster was enabled to live a comparatively easy life, with a very small attendance in the schoolhouse

and a constant flow of roubles to his pocket-book.

As to the real "Compulsory Education Act," I must inform my readers that it existed only in the imagination of the school-master, as such an act has not been passed in Russia up to this day and is not likely to be passed as long as the rule of Tsar continues.

Respecting the subjects which Ivan Ivanovich taught to the children of those who did not seek to evade the "Compulsory Education Act," it will suffice to state that they were all selected with a view to fit the pupils for the army "Natchito mine Arifmetika" (What good is arithmetic to me?) was his favorite dictum. "Give me a pupil who can go through the drill service as we used to do when I was in charge of the 56th Ekaterinsky Dragoons under Skobelev by Plevna, and who is able to run off the entire catalogue of the royal family without a hitch, and I tell you, I will not be afraid to present him before the Tsar himself for examination."

The most humorous situations presented themselves in our schoolhouse at the time of the inspector's visits, which occurred irregularly about once in every two or three years. A few months prior to the visit of that august personage (who, as the reader will see later in this article, was himself an old relic of some battle-field) there was a great bustle and busting in our schoolroom. The Uchtitel was generally flustered and fidgety. He made us go through his favorite drills and rattle off the royal family a dozen times each day. And yet he felt uneasy. Somehow or other he was conscious that all is not well in his school. First of all he was afraid lest the inspector should take it into his head to demand a grain of that useless stuff "Arifmetika," but above all he feared lest some unlucky caprice seize the inspector's mind and induce him to ask the question, "How comes it that with a population of five hundred souls there are only ten pupils in the public school?"

To provide against such a catastrophe the Uchtitel sent word to a number of his paying members, that on such and such a date (the day of the inspector's visit) their children must attend school. The parents were somewhat alarmed, but when the Uchtitel assured them that it would be only for one day they easily consented.

When the dread day arrived the school-house saw for the first time in its existence an attendance of thirty children, many of whom had never set eyes on the Uchtitel before.

But it is one thing to drum up an attendance and another thing to make a crowd of entirely illiterate boys go through an examination before a school inspector. The handful of old pupils poked one another in the ribs and giggled audibly when the crowd of awkwardly dressed boys shuffled in timidly into the school-room.

"He, he, he," John, the oldest, spoke in like so many bags of potatoes. "Wonder what Old Skobelev is going to do with them?" (Old Skobelev was the name by which the Uchtitel was spoken of between boys.)

But Old Skobelev was equal to the occasion. He took half of the new comers, set them apart at one end of the room, and whispered something to the handful of old pupils, who could not hear at the time, but which we found out afterward was a strict order to the terrified shepherd boys that on no occasion should they open their mouths to speak or answer any question, but matter by whom put) except by gestures or motions by the head or hands.

The other half of the "reserves" (as we termed to call them afterward) he dove-tailed in among the old pupils and ordered them at the same time to follow the drills and recitations of the old pupils as closely as possible.

"Boys!" he said with much agitation, when all was arranged. "If you pass through this examination, created by you shall have a bag of nuts and five kopecks each. What boy, and especially a Russian country boy, will not do his best under such prospects?"

At last the hour of trial arrived. A uniformed old man, accompanied by a young secretary, entered the school-room pompously and made his way straight to the Uchtitel's desk. The latter rose from his seat at once, bowed very low, and delivered himself of a brief address of welcome, which he studied and rehearsed for the last three months.

"What does he say?" asked the inspector of his secretary when the Uchtitel was through.

"He says," replied the secretary pertinently in a very loud voice, "that your excellency is welcome to his humble school-rooms, and that he rejoices to have the opportunity to prove to your excellency that he is devoting his best energies to the education of the young in this district."

At this little dialogue the face of our Uchtitel brightened visibly. He sees at once that he has to deal with an inspector who is a stone deaf, and the success of the "examination" was assured.

The inspector was an aged old salt with a weathered countenance, and a sea captain's cockade on his cap. How he came to be appointed inspector of schools was a mystery to us boys at the time. In later years, however, I found out it was a favorite method with the government to shelve superannuated military and naval officers by creating them inspectors of schools, prisons, hospitals, etc., thus saving it an enormous sum which would have to be paid out to them in pensions.

The inspector took up the Uchtitel's place at the desk while the latter stationed himself at the head of his specified class.

"Your excellency will take notice," he began, that I am a strict disciplinarian,

I consider the drill exercises to be the ground-work of all education. With your excellency's permission we will go through the exercises, which are closely copied from the system which was in vogue at the time I was in charge of the 56th Ekaterinsky Dragoons under Skobelev by Plevna.

Right about! March! One, two, three! One, two, three! Halt! Left wheel! Shoulder arms! Level bayonet! Ground arms! Salute! . . .

To the credit of Ivan Ivanovich it must be stated that his mixed company, although hampered very much by the new recruits, went through the usual manoeuvres, if not like veterans, at least in a creditable manner.

"Khorocho!" (very well), said the inspector. "I am only doing my humble duty," rejoined the Uchtitel, flushed with victory.

"Now," continued the inspector, "we will hear them recite the catalogue of the royal family, but they must do it loud, for I am somewhat hard of hearing."

"Very well," said the teacher with a smile (aside). "If it please your excellency I will make the entire class recite it in chorus. 'You may stand children and give us an accurate account of his majesty's family.'"

Whereupon the entire class rose to their feet and began in a droning monotone:

"Turn Alexander Alexandrovitch III. born March 10th, 1845, ascended the throne March 1st, 1881. Tsarina Maria Feodorovna, born November 26th, 1847, married to the Tsar November 9th, 1880. Nicholas Alexandrovitch Tsarevitch, born May 18th, 1880. George Alexandrovitch, grand duke, born May 8th, 1881. Xenia Alexandrovna, grand duchess, born April 6th, 1876. Michael Udoev of Ontario, Mr. Clarke was born December 5th, 1878. Vladimir Alexandrovitch, grand duke, born April 22, 1847. Sergius Alexandrovitch, grand duke, born May 11th, 1857, etc., etc."

"Khoroch!" said the inspector, rubbing his hands with satisfaction. "Well done, Ivan Ivanovich! I shall commend your services to the minister of education."

Ivan fairly danced for joy, thinking that this ordeal was over. But his happiness was a little premature. "Well done, Ivan Ivanovich!" I shall commend your services to the minister of education."

"See here, Ivan!" began the inspector, casting his eyes on the group of children which were set apart at the furthest end of the room. "Who are these children?"

"These—er, your excellency," began Ivan in a nervous tone. "I forgot to tell your excellency that when I took up my position in this town, I saw fit to organize a deaf-mute class without extra pay from the government."

"Maladitzi!" exclaimed the inspector, "most excellent teacher. Come here, I will shake your hand for sacrificing yourself to this noble work of your own free will and without extra pay. But, wait a bit! How is it that you have so many deaf and dumb in your community? Why, goodness gracious! more than 35 per cent of deaf and dumb children in one village!"

"This is really extraordinary, your excellency," replied the Uchtitel, regarding his composure and it was this very fact that I found such an alarming number of deaf-mutes in this community which induced me to sacrifice my time and labor for the organization and instruction of this class."

"Now, all children of the deaf-mute class will please rise!"

"Up went the entire company as if by magic."

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"Now, all children of the deaf-mute class will please rise!"

A New Idea on The Cause of Colds

Pneumonia, La Grippe and Consumption, and a Reminder of the Phenomenal and Continued Success of Dr. Chase's Syrup of Linseed and Turpentine.

Scientists have a new explanation for the great prevalence of colds, la grippe and pneumonia.

They tell us that when we pass out of doors we enter an atmosphere where the humidity averages about 70 per cent. when it might have been as low as 30 in the house or office.

The sudden change from the dry and overheated air of the house to the cold and moist air of out doors is a shock to the mucous membranes which induces colds, la grippe or pneumonia.

This evil is largely due to modern methods of heating and can be overcome by keeping the air moist in buildings.

But there are colds to be cured, sufferers from la grippe that require treatment, and every day these ailments are developing into pneumonia and consumption. In these cases Dr. Chase's Syrup of Linseed and Turpentine is at hand as a tried and proven medicine of far more than ordinary merit.

CURES

- Croup.
- Whooping Cough.
- Severe Chest Colds.
- Bronchitis.
- Asthma.
- Pneumonia.
- La Grippe.
- Throat Irritation.
- Tickling in the Throat.
- Soreness and Dryness in the Throat.
- Irritation and Inflammation of the Bronchial Tubes and Lungs.

You know something of the value of turpentine as a medicine. You know something of the healing and soothing properties of linseed or flaxseed as it is most commonly called. In Dr. Chase's Syrup of Linseed and Turpentine these ingredients are so combined with half a dozen others as to make a treatment which is at the same time pleasant to the taste and of most exceptional curative power.

But you need not accept this medicine on theory, or on what we say, for it has been before the people for many years, and each year has witnessed a great increase in the quantity used.

Ask your friends and neighbors about it. Ask the mothers who have saved the lives of their children when in the clutches of croup.

Ask the men and women who have shaken themselves free from the grasp of la grippe, pneumonia, bronchitis or asthma by its use.

Ask the thousands of people who have learned to trust to this great medicine to cure coughs and colds and prevent such deadly diseases as consumption and pneumonia.

Dr. Chase's Syrup of Linseed and Turpentine

25 cents a bottle; family size, three times as much, 60 cents, at all dealers, or Edmondson, Bates & Co., Toronto. Dr. Chase's Nerve Food fortifies the system against disease by forming new, rich blood and revitalizing the wasted nerves.

DEATH OF E. F. CLARKE, M. P., FROM TORONTO.

Brilliant Member from Toronto Centre.

Passed Away at Six o'clock Last Friday.

--Was a Prominent Orangeman.

TORONTO, March 8.—E. F. Clarke, M. P., Centre Toronto, died at his residence here at 6:30 this evening. He came home from Ottawa two weeks ago suffering from congestion of the lungs, which developed into pneumonia. He had a relapse, but this week was steadily gaining, and his entire recovery was expected in a short time. At 5:30 this evening unfavorable symptoms appeared. Doctors were sent for, but he was beyond help when they arrived. He died at 6:30, surrounded by all the members of his family, F. D. Monk, M. P. for Jacques Cartier, who is in the city to attend the bar dinner this evening, was also present.

Edward Frederick Clarke was the third son of the late Richard Clarke, merchant of Bellefleur, Cavan Co., Ireland, by his first wife Ellen, daughter of the late Chas. Reynolds of Bellefleur. He was born at Bellefleur April 24th, 1855. In 1884 he came to Canada and served his time as a printer in the Globe office, Toronto. He was one of the leaders in the printers' strike in 1872 and was arrested at that time for alleged intimidation. In 1877 he was chosen manager and editor of the The Sentinel and subsequently became sub-proprietor of that journal.

TO ADOPT MUNICIPAL LIGHTING.
Town of Sydney is Trying to Borrow \$60,000 to Erect a Plant.

SYDNEY, C. B., March 4.—A committee representing the city council of Sydney has gone before the local legislature at Halifax to secure passage of an act to enable the city to borrow the sum of \$60,000 for the purpose of erecting and equipping a civic owned and civic operated electric light plant. This is a definite move in the matter of municipal ownership. There is some opposition manifested to the proposal, chiefly on the grounds that the financial status of the city does not warrant such a large expenditure of money on an undertaking that may or may not prove in the course of time a successful or paying proposition. The town of Gloucester Bay or two ago installed a civic owned plant and last year the corporation realised the sum of \$5,000 on it net profit. Those opposed to the scheme at Sydney aver that the project at Gloucester Bay has not been sufficiently long established to prove whether it is a successful venture or not. It is pointed out that in the course of time new machinery and new apparatus will have to be installed, that many possibly wipe away all the profits that it will have made since it has been operated. There is a splendidly well equipped plant in the city now owned by the Cape Breton Electric Company, and even if the city did erect one of its own, there are probabilities of meeting with some strong competition from the present concern. The plant which it is proposed to build will cost in the vicinity of \$60,000, the

money to be borrowed on debentures repayable in thirty years.

AMHERST NEWS.

Bachelors' Ball a Pleasant Affair— Reception to Bishop Worrell— Other Matters.

AMHERST, N. S., March 6.—Mrs. Max M. Sterne and son Ralph are spending a week in Halifax with her son and daughter, who are students at Dalhousie law school and the ladies' college.

George Douglas, of the office staff of Rhodes, Curry Co., Ltd., is off on an interesting mission. He will be married this week in Cambridgeport, Mass., to Miss Bradley, daughter of Dr. Bradley, formerly of Moncton. Mr. Douglas has purchased the residence on Girard avenue, formerly owned by Mrs. (Capt.) Carter, which he expects to have ready for occupancy early in April. Mr. Douglas is expected to return with his bride the first of next week.

The "bachelors' ball" on Friday night passed off most pleasantly. Instead of confining the invitations to the unmarried, as was at first announced, they were made quite general.

Mrs. K. C. Fuller returned on Saturday from her visit to South Carolina and New York, accompanied by her daughter, Mrs. Warren Steele, who will probably visit her mother for some time.

His Lordship Bishop Worrell officiated in Christ Church on Sunday. A reception will be given him this evening in the Parish house. He goes to the Joggies on Tuesday, will also visit Springfield and Passmore this week and

expects to spend next Sunday in Pugwash.

The ladies' auxiliary of Christ Church have presented the reading room with a writing desk well stocked with writing materials, etc., for the use of the members of the same. The stationery is all suitably stamped.

Mr. Watt of Mount Allison Academy spent Saturday and Sunday with his friend Ernest Bent of the same institution, with Mr. and Mrs. B. D. Bent, "Hillside," Eddy street.

LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE

[To correspondents—Write on one side of the paper only. Send your name, not necessarily for publication, with your communication. The Sun does not undertake to return rejected manuscripts. All communications are promptly consigned to the waste basket.]

THE KENT NORTHERN.

PETITCODIAC, N. B., March 1st, 1905.

To the Editor of the Sun:

Sir—In the Moncton Daily Times of this date I notice an interview with Thos. Murray, manager of the Kent Northern railway, in which he congratulates himself over the fact that his road is the only branch line in the maritime provinces that has been able to maintain a regular service this winter.

As my business connections take me over nearly all the branch lines in this province—the Kent Northern included—and from what I have seen with my own eyes of the quantity of snow with which some of the roads have to contend, with when compared with the small quantity found on the Kent Northern, Mr. Murray has no reason for boasting over the fact that he has been able to keep his train running regularly, even though it has been an unprecedented winter.

During the month of February I was on the Moncton and Beauséjour, the New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, the Salisbury and Harnby, as well as the Kent Northern railway, and in justice to the three first mentioned permit me to say that at that time there was more snow to be found in one mile on any one of these roads than was distributed over the entire length of the Kent Northern, so that to my mind it would be to the discredit of the management of that railway to