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MY ADVENTURES IN RUSSIA.

THE French and English detectives have always had the fame of being the keenest and shrewdest officials in that line of business, but the oldest Bow street official, or the keenest Parisian man-hunter, is a mere apprentice compared with a majority of the spies encountered in Russia.

These Russian spies are everywhere in Russia, and are sometimes met with outside of the country. Without doubt, all are in the pay of the czar, directly or indirectly, for it is only in his interest that they labor. Had the people no czar, there would be no need of spies. Having a czar, who has been led to believe that his position is safe only so long as the millions stand in awe and fear, he rules with a hand of iron, and his greatest cause of anxiety is the fear that his rule is too lenient.

A wealthy citizen, employing ten servants, realizes from the start that he has ten spies in the house. Each servant stands ready to pick up and turn over every word and action of his master and mistress, and if he secures the slightest foundation for a case, he will lie himself to the officials and give them notice. If the words do not warrant an arrest, they are written out, the date is entered, and they are filed away to come up as proof if the accused is ever brought up on any other charge. The informer is rewarded with a word of praise, a small piece of money, or secures the promise of a regular position as government spy as soon as a vacancy occurs. And the ten servants are no less interested in spying each other. One would think that mutual grievances would unite them against the common enemy whose yoke they bear, but the contrary is the rule. Every servant in this country is at liberty to criticize the president, congress, or any other official or body, and to talk politics, national finance, or whatever he wishes, but no Russian servant talks of such things more than once, unless he halts at every other word to put in, "God bless our wise czar—there is no ruler like him!" And even then it is not safe; brought before the officials, they would give him to understand that the less a servant had to say about the government the better for him.

No one landing on the shores of Russia is exempt from the operations of the spy system. The American, Englishman, or any other tourist or official, is watched and dogged from the moment he lands until the very moment of his departure. In the case of the American, English and French ministers, the espionage is not bold enough to allow of detection, but it is nevertheless strictly maintained. Not many years ago, an American minister who resigned his position called upon a government official for some books of record which he had loaned. Similarity of size and binding led him to carry away a book whose contents amazed and enraged him. He did not open it until on his way to America, or he might have created a diplomatic muss. Commencing with the moment of his arrival, the book contained his name, age, height, gait, dress, and followed his every movement through eight hundred and seventy-one days and nights. The following samples serve to show the nature of the espionage:

"June 10th.—American minister walked out in the morning; wrote a little in the afternoon; read a book in the evening, entitled, 'Christian Work in India'; retired at ten.

"June 11th.—American minister rose at eight, light breakfast; shaved himself, walked out; wrote some; talked some with his secretary; overhauled some books.

"June 12th.—American minister rose at the usual hour, complained of headache; walked out before breakfast; he has a brother in New York and a sister in Bos-

ton; the sister has four children, and her husband is a merchant; minister wrote most all day; wrote a letter to his brother; he thinks Russia a dreary country."

In these three extracts were facts which the minister would have sworn were never obtained from himself or staff. He did not believe that a single person on that side of the world knew how many children his sister had, or could know what he had written to his brother, but the officials had recorded exact facts. The matter was brought to the attention of his successor, and to that of the English and the French minister, and though their statements and protestations were courteously treated, the espionage was undoubtedly maintained.

It seems to be the theory of all Russian officials that all foreigners have a contempt for the czar, and will endeavor to incite rebellion, and so they become enemies the moment they land, and are looked upon and dogged about as such. Not that the Russians are lacking in politeness or courtesy; on the contrary, they are only excelled in these qualities by the French. The government spy who wrought my downfall could not have been more friendly courteous had I been officially granted the freedom of Russia in a gold box. Servants are polite to masters, masters are courteous to servants; servants are courteous to each other, and yet each one is watched with the vigilance of the lynx.

A number of years ago an uncle of mine from political merit or political wire-pulling, was appointed minister to Russia. There was a consul at Cronsadt, and when I asked that my relative should make his profit my profit, I was sent to Cronsadt, as a sort of second fiddle to the regularly appointed consul—a place undoubtedly as high as my merits entitled me to fill. The consul, a Mr. Morrow, cordially welcomed me, and informed me that neither of us would have much work outside of sending off the slim reports and drawing salary. The information pleased me, strange as it may seem. I have noticed that almost every one employed by Uncle Sam endeavors to do as little as he can and to get as much pay as possible; and it may be said that the old chap never offers any inducement for one to do contrary by increasing the salaries of the vigilant and industrious, and cutting down those of the idle and shiftless. However, this bit of old news was intended as a preface to explain the statement that I had a good deal of time on my hands after the first day. Mr. Morrow had been there so long that Cronsadt had nothing new for him. He had grown fat and lazy, and he read or slept a good deal of the time while I was dashing about.

"I want to give you a little advice," he said, on the second day of my arrival. "Be careful what you say; every word will be picked up and treasured, and spies will dog your every step. Say nothing about the government one way or the other, and praise everything you see."

"And who is the czar that he should be above criticism?" I replied, indignantly.

"My dear young man," continued Mr. Morrow, lowering his voice, "there is no one in sight, and certainly no one in this room but you and I, yet it is not certain that your expression will not be recorded at police headquarters within half an hour!"

I saw that the man was anxious and frightened, and felt a little sorry for my rash words. Calling me over to him he took down a book, and while pretending to point out certain things on the page, he whispered words of warning, and related the case of an American named Warner, who disappeared from Cronsadt three years before in a very mysterious manner, after having uttered a less rebellious expression than mine. I was sobered for the moment, but, unluckily for me, was not born a diplomat, and before the day was over I felt as independent as before.

What I then regarded as a very fortunate thing, I found out after a while to be an unlucky matter. I could speak the Russian language very well, having berthed with a Russian sailor all through a whaling voyage. There were some idioms which I could not get over, and some long words which I could not pronounce, but I could take a part in common conversation on almost any subject.

"Better not let on that you know a word of their lingo," continued the consul. "You can go all over the city, make your purchases and do any kind of business without a word of Russian. If it is known that you speak the tongue, the spies will suspect you of having learned it for some evil purpose."

I decided to adopt the advice until I

found it advantageous to let out the secret, but it was betrayed in a manner least expected. Mr. Morrow had advised me to employ a guide in my first day's ramble around the city, and one stood at the door as I stepped out.

"Which way go?" he asked, in broken English.

"Down among the shipping," I replied caring more for the sight of a big ship than for any spire or tower.

"I wish you would speak Russian," he said, in his native tongue, as we started off. "I can use only a few English words, and you speak Russian well."

"I do not understand," I replied, after the first shock of surprise.

"Beg pardon, but you speak our language well," he continued. "You were at St. Petersburg two weeks, and you used the tongue every day."

"You must be mistaken; you probably refer to my uncle."

"I am not mistaken," he went on.—"For instance, three blocks from the hotel down street, at noon on the third day of your arrival, you asked the man who keeps the little shop with red doors if he had any chewing tobacco, and you purchased a pound!"

I made no reply, owing to my surprise, and he continued:

"At the hotel you asked the clerk in Russian what time the train started, and you used the tongue in many other instances. I see no reason why you should deny it."

"Nor I," I replied, in Russian, laughing. "But I'd like to know how you collected your information?"

He pretended not to have heard the query, and I did not press him. We went down to the quay, wandered among the shipping, and it was half a day before I returned to my quarters. If the counsel had warned me on the setting out that the man was a spy as well as a guide, it would have saved me much peril and affliction in days to come. As I did not so regard the man, he worked into my confidence without my knowing it. A young man of twenty cannot be expected to exercise the prudence and discretion of his father, though he should know enough to look at a trap before walking into it. The fellow was a great flatterer, and he soft-soaped me neatly and beautifully. He soon knew what I had come for, how long I intended to stay, the standing of my relatives, and such other information as he wanted.

On the other hand, he told me a great deal of news about himself, and gave me much information in regard to the manners and customs of the people. In a word, that was the pleasantest day I passed in Russia. The spy, whose name was Vlitchy, did not once speak of the government, and I could not remember that I let fall any imprudent expression except when I was speaking of the condition of some very poor and lowly people encountered on the quay.

"They are a miserable set, not knowing enough to write their names or to read a printed ukase," explained Vlitchy, as we stood looking at a group.

"Born in slavery, they have had no opportunity to educate themselves," I replied. "There is not that chance in Russia for the poor which is held out in America. Wherever you find kings, there look for ignorance and vice."

The fellow shrugged his shoulders and laughed, and he remembered my words to my cost. The same guide attended me next day, and then I found him a great politician. He sharply criticized the czar's financial plans and most of his laws, and seemed well pleased when I agreed with him in his criticisms. Not until I had been pumped dry did Mr. Morrow say:

"Dear me! I forgot to caution you about saying anything before the guide; he is said to be the keenest government spy in Cronsadt."

The arrow had been launched, however, and I could not take back what I had said. I did not see the man again for a week, but on the fourth day of my stay in the city I saw some one else. Mr. Morrow was ailing at home, and I was in the office writing letters to friends in America, when a Russian softly entered and saluted.

"Does the gentleman intend leaving Cronsadt to-morrow?" he asked after he had seated himself.

"Not that I am aware of," I replied. "When I get ready to go, I shall know I'm going at least a day beforehand."

"I think I would go if I were the gentleman," he continued. "The people and the country are distasteful to you."

"I've seen cleaner people than Russians,

and better weather than this," was my reply, "but I have no thought of parting company just yet. I'll send you round word if you are anxious."

I had no idea who he was, nor did I care. His insinuating way annoyed me, and I forgot that I was in Russia. He frowned a little over the words, and then, as he rose to go, he asked:

"Then the gentleman went go to-morrow?"

"Not if I know what I am about," I replied; and he bowed himself out.

That evening, when Morrow came over, I related the incident, and he began to sweat before I was half through.

"You will have to go," he said; "the caller was a police official, and you have been saying something against the government. What is worse, you insulted him."

"Suppose I don't go?"

"I don't know what would be the consequence," he replied. "Your position here as a representative of the American government saves you from arrest and sentence, but they will dog and annoy you until your patience is exhausted, and you will leave Cronsadt in order to secure peace."

Ten years more of experience would have been a good thing for me just then, but as I did not have it, I replied that I would cure them of seeking to annoy me, and soon forgot Morrow's advice. He was not sick, but had indications of typhoid fever, and during the next week stuck by his house and left all the business to me. The very next morning after the call of the police official another man from the same department was admitted. He sat down and waited until I had sealed up some letters, and then he asked, with a pleasant smile:

"Did the gentleman intend leaving Cronsadt to-morrow?"

"No, I did not. Why do you ask?" I replied, not yet understanding what he was coming at.

"I was so informed by a police official," he said with a very low bow.

"Will you do me a great favor?" I asked, now seeing the drift, and as mad as a hornet.

"With pleasure," he replied.

"Then tell that police official and all other police officials to go to Texas!"

"Where is Texas?" he innocently asked.

"Perhaps you will understand better if I give you another name," I replied. And I mentioned a certain mythical location which gave him a sudden start.

"Ah! ah! O!" he exclaimed, putting on his hat; and he left the room without another word.

It is natural enough that when Americans are abroad they should regard their own as the most powerful nation in the world. They think that the mere pronunciation of the word "American" ought to make everybody stand back, including princes and kings. I thought so then. The American flag hung at the door, a steel engraving of the reigning president was on the wall, and I felt that Uncle Sam would speedily avenge any insult thrown at me, his representative abroad. Feeling thus, I did not repent of what I had said, not even when Morrow lamented, and his wife seemed strangely anxious.

That evening, in whispered words, the lady gave me such information about the spy system as has been given above. She had resided in the country nearly four years, and knew, partly from experience, of what she asserted. During the first month of her arrival she paid no heed to what her tongue said about the strange manners, and was waited on one day and frightened nearly to death by a police official, who asked her such questions as I had been asked. One of her female servants, the one who had played the part of informer, left her service a day or two after the visit, and being arrested for theft, discredit was thrown upon her former statement, and Mrs. Morrow was not annoyed again. It was worse than a hermit's life, the one they led there. Where one has to weigh every word and guard every look, it is about as well to see no faces and hear no voices. The counsel and his wife were frequently invited out and went, but they never took any pleasure in going.

"Siberia" is a word which a Russian scarcely ever mentions above a whisper. The knout or capital punishment has no such terror for him as a sentence to that sterile dreary country. When a prisoner goes to Siberia, he or she goes for life.

There are rare instances where a royal pardon has been granted, or an escape effected, but there is no foundation to build hope on. It is not quite so bad as slavery, after one gets there, but its main features

are horrible enough. A man is torn from his family, allowed no time to settle his business or say a farewell word, and is on the road almost before his wife has heard of his arrest. If he lives to reach Siberia he must settle on a spot indicated, and marry some female prisoner, and report himself to the local authorities just so often. Old ties are broken, new ones formed, and any hope of pardon which he may have foolishly entertained soon dies out.

Trials are mere farces in Russia, where the prisoners are charged with an offence against the government. In the case of a noble, he might be allowed a lawyer and given some show to clear himself, but the common man would be granted no privileges. I saw an instance of this during my second week at Cronsadt. I had my attention attracted one day to a curious case which a laboring man was carrying, and took a sharper look at the man himself than I should otherwise have given. Half an hour after he had passed me he came back in charge of a policeman, handcuffed and weeping.

"You have been speaking treason!" I heard the officer saying.

"I only said that the pay of the soldiers was too small and our taxes too high!" replied the man.

But he had said enough. He was taken before some government official, ordered to stand up, and was sent to prison for a long term. The statement of the police official was not even supported by an outsider, but it was all that was needed.

The poor Poles are the worse sufferers. They are singled out, and annoyed, and dogged, until they must quit the place or give utterance to some word which can be taken as a pretext to send them to Siberia. Mrs. Morrow had one in her employ for a short time. She was a tidy active woman, and knowing that her personal safety depended upon her silence, she seldom spoke of anything out side of her work. The woman had never seen a photograph, and her astonishment was great when Mrs. Morrow allowed her to inspect her album one day. She had in her box a sketch portrait of her grandfather, an officer of the Polish army who had given the Russians cause to hate him. The officer had been dead twenty years, within three hours after exhibiting the sketch the girl was arrested on charge of entertaining treasonable sentiments. The sketch was seized and destroyed, and the girl disappeared from Cronsadt, either sent to prison or Siberia.

There is another matter which goes far towards compelling the people to submit to the iron rule of the emperor, and to have a due regard of what they say. In most cases, any witness who came forward and attempted to swear the prisoner free would be looked upon as an accomplice, and the sentence of the one would be the sentence of the other.

Mr. Morrow was right in his belief that the Cronsadt officials would give me annoyance, as I found out the first day I started out on a walk. Continued next week.

Lost All.

An avaricious old farmer named Higginson, residing near Toledo, has had \$11,000 in the bank for several years. Some foolish neighbors worked upon the old man's fears, and he resolved to draw out his money. He took it from a real place of safety, and took it home, hiding it in a bed tick. The following night he was awakened from a profound slumber by a sense of something cold pressed against his temple, and opening his eyes, found three masked men in the room, all armed, and one of them holding a cocked pistol, demanded the money, threatening to blow out his brains in one minute in case of refusal. The old man surrendered the money, and the robbers departed in high glee. Now the farmer wishes he had left it in the bank, and refuses to be comforted.

Such transactions will be quite common all over the country. People who have no use for their money will find it much the safest plan to leave it in the bank or loan it to some responsible business man.

A singular circumstance, one doubtless without a parallel in the history of the country, is recorded in Schuykill county, Ill. A man named H. M. Wheeler, of Birmingham, in that county, enlisted in the United States Army in Missouri, under General Lyon, in 1861; was wounded, captured, and paroled, and by some strange oversight was not discharged from service until a few days ago, when the proper papers were made out, and his back pay and pension, amounting to near \$4,000, were paid him.